**Conflict / Theme / Theory Group Assignment**

During the course of your academic career, you’ll be asked to find meaning in a wide variety of sources. For this exercise we are looking at conflict and theme identification and explication (clear, direct explanation). For each of the three short films we are going to view, try and answer the following questions as you begin to map out how you’ll: a) identify major conflicts and themes within the film; b) identify course theory in the film; c) be able to speak clearly about what message(s) the film is trying to give to its audience through your understanding of conflict and theory.

Of course, there are more factors in identifying meaning and thematic concerns than the criteria we will use here but these should give us a solid start for our film analysis and your subsequent presentation projects.

**Part 1** – View Film / Group Discussion / Notes

**Conflict**

1. **Who is the central character/protagonist? Describe them in terms of their character traits**: What kind of character are they? How do you know this? What factors lead to you understanding them in this way?
2. **What is the central conflict they are involved with and must overcome?** When you think about conflict for this question, work beyond the three types of literary conflict we studied; person vs. person, person vs. environment, person vs. self. While these types of conflict can be useful, we are going to work to be more specific to the film/source we are watching. When you discuss the central concept, try to think about our course theory and issues we have been working through to see if they apply to your discussion.

1. When the protagonist overcomes their conflict, how do they do it? What did they learn? Do we learn anything by thinking about the way they’ve overcome (resolved) this challenge? Do any of our course theories help to better understand the film and the resolution to the central concept? Explain.

**Theory and concepts**

**Here is a list of course ideas and theory you may consider in your discussion:** Gender, Race, Hegemony, Orientalism, Othering, Stereotyping, The Single Story, Encoding/Decoding, Representation, Identity, Social Constructivism, Essentialism, Cultural Appropriation, Media Convergence, Participatory Culture.

1. Which theory do you think is most important to understand as you work through this short film? Why? Which elements of the film can you connect with this theory? What does this theory allow us to understand about the film? Is it helpful to use more than one theory to better understand? Which ones and why?

Part **2** – Group Discussion / Compile notes and ideas / Create finished paragraph

As a group, you are going to collectively write and submit a paragraph that puts together your ideas about this film and its connection(s) to our course material. You will be required to discuss each question above, to create a series of discussions and notes with the goal of writing an academic paragraph that uses analysis to uncover some of the bigger ideas the film deals with.

Each group should assign someone to record discussion responses and to turn those responses into a finished paragraph. This person should not be responsible for doing all of the work for the group. Instead, you should think of them as a “recorder” of group discussion. Each student’s participation in this exercise is mandatory.

The paragraph should be double spaced, formatted to MLA or APA standards (including name(s), student ID(‘s), title of course and date). You’ll also need a title that lets your audience know the name of the film and the major issue at its heart (for example: Stereotyping and “the other” in Katherina Vermette’s “Annie of Red River”)

The paragraph should take the following prompts into consideration although I should add these prompts are **not mandatory but rather to be used as a rough guideline** for your work:

* What the film is about (context)?
* Who is involved (character(s))? Character traits.
* What conflict did they face? How was it overcome?
* What theory can you identify in the film and how does it help you to better understand the issues at the heart of this film?
* What does this mean to you (message), and what factors contributed to that meaning?