FST 205: Introduction to World Cinema
Research paper assignment

You are required to write an 8–10 page research paper investigating a specific film movement or case study that we have addressed in this class—German Expressionism, Soviet Montage, Reflexive Cinema, the French New Wave, etc.

Within this overall framework, you have options for how to go about your paper:

1) You may conduct a detailed analysis of a specific film in the context of the movement to which it pertains. For instance, you may write a stylistic analysis of an Italian neorealist film like *Umberto D*, analyzing its formal characteristics and functions. In what ways does the film exhibit neorealist principles and techniques? What functions do stylistic choices serve throughout the film, and what effects or meanings are created through these stylistic choices and techniques? Make sure that you also consider, along with your stylistic analysis, the historical and production context of the film, and the film’s ostensible role in the movement or case study you choose. In what ways is it typical or atypical of the movement in which it is placed?

2) You may write a comparative analysis of two texts, examining their roles within a single film movement or as representative texts of a 205 case study. For example, you might look at two different Soviet montage films, showing how each employs similar or different techniques of the Soviet montage style. You could also look at two films that manifest different degrees of a movement’s techniques; for example, the systematic Expressionism of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* versus the expressionistic technique in *M*.

3) Another alternative would be to compare two films made in different contexts but that nonetheless share aspects of a film movement’s techniques, for example comparing an Italian neorealist film with a Latin American film that evinces neorealist technique, or a German expressionist film with an American film noir that evinces expressionistic technique. There are numerous comparisons/connections you could make in analyzing the impact one case study may have had on another, and the films you choose need not be from the same time period. Please note that this is the only framework in which you may include an analysis of a film made in the U.S., but be clear that the U.S. model cannot be the basis for your paper; in other words, you can examine the influence or presence of a world cinema movement’s techniques on a Hollywood film, but not the impact of Hollywood on, say, a French film.

4) Your final option would be to examine the relationship between theoretical or historical writings about a film movement to a specific film. What is the relationship between theory and practice? How, and/or to what extent, does a particular theorist-practioner apply his or her ideas in the making a film? Here you could, for instance, examine Eisenstein’s writings on film sound alongside an analysis of sound in an Eisenstein film. Another option would be to examine the relationship between Third Cinema manifestos and the form and style of a Latin American or African film. You could also apply feminist theory to a specific film, or use to Cinema of Attractions model as the theoretical underpinning for a stylistic analysis of an early cinema or experimental short film.
Resources:

It is a requirement for this paper that you consult scholarly books and articles. You may also wish to read popular criticism, such as newspaper film reviews and magazine articles, but make sure that you approach all sources critically. Your paper should not be a report on what others—especially internet film critics—have thought about a certain film; in fact, you may take issue with existing scholarship or advance an interpretation that is at odds with the popular critical view. Either way, your paper must include a bibliography with at least five sources. At least three of these five sources must be scholarly sources. Papers must conform to MLA formatting.

See the library resource guide that has been set up for this course:
http://library.uncw.edu/web/research/subjects/film/guides/fst205.html

DUE DATES: