FILM3020 - The Australian Cinema
Course Outline

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Cassi Plate
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Email: cassi.plate@arts.usyd.edu.au
Consultation hours: by appointment

Course Code: FILM3020
Course Title: The Australian Cinema
Semester: 1 - 2006
Units: 10
Course Level: 3000
Managing Campus: Callaghan
Grading Basis: Graded

Course Overview

Course Description:
Examines the politics of representation - the way in which film as a fictional construct and an industrial product mediates collective memory and Australian identity. It will consider issues such as cultural difference and the effects of globalisation on the imagining and imaging of a 'national' community.

Course Outline issued and correct Week 1, Semester 1, 2006
CTS Download Date: 14 February 2006
Course Content: Topics include:

- film as a fictional construct and industrial product
- globalisation
- cultural difference
- the imagining and imaging of a national community
- film and the construction of national identity and national types

Assumed Knowledge: Students are expected to have completed 20 units of Film at 1000 level.

Contact Hours: Laboratory (screening) for 2 Hour(s) per Week for 12 Weeks; Seminar for 2 Hour(s) per Week for 13 Week.

Required Text:  

Recommended Text:  
FILM3020 Course Reader (Available from NUSA Printery) (A copy will be available on short loan at the Auchmuty Library)

Assessment:
- Examination: In Class-Test, worth 20%. To be conducted 1-3 pm, 30 May 06
- Essays / Written Assignments: A 2,000-word essay, worth 50%. Due by 4pm Monday 5 June 06
- Projects: Library research project. Length 1,000 words, worth 30%. Due by 1 pm Tuesday 11 April 06

Timetable:
Screening: Tuesday 1-3pm, MC132  
Lecture/Seminar: Tuesday 3-5pm, MC132

Course Design:
Dr Therese Davis (2006).

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system:  

Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.
Studentmail and Blackboard: [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

**Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

**Hard copy submission:**

- **Type your assignments**: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length**: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University coversheet**: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf)
- **Assignments are to be deposited in the relevant discipline assignment box:**
  - Callaghan students: School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127
  - Ourimbah students: Room H01.43
- **Do not fax or email assignments**: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments**: All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.
Online copy submission to Turnitin

In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:

- Library project
- Essay

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing.

Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

Penalties for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the **reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark** for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted **more than ten days** after the due date will be awarded **zero marks**.

Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications

Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student HUBS.

No Assignment Re-submission

Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Remarks

Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at:

Return of Assignments

Where possible, assignments will be marked within 3 weeks and returned to students in class. At the end of semester, students can collect assignments from the Student HUBS during office hours.

Preferred Referencing Style

In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the MLA system – see ‘Essay Writing’ in this course guide) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:

- Infoskills:  

Student Representatives

We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication

Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students

Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:

Assessment detail:

1. Library research project: Researching the Australian Cinema
Write a 1,000-word report on four sources of information for a particular aspect or period of the Australian cinema (for example: national identity; women in Australian cinema; independent film-making; Indigenous cinema; distribution; funding; 1920s, 1970s, 1980s) (approximately 250 words per source). Your report should include at least one example of each of the following sources:
  - book (other than set text)
  - government/film institution report
  - refereed journal article

You may also consult Internet sites, magazines, informational videos, non-refereed journal articles, ejournals, film encyclopaedias.

For guidelines on how to write a research report, including a sample report, see FILM3020 Blackboard site ‘Assignments’.

Value: 30%
Due: By 1pm Tuesday 11 April 06

2. Examination: In Class-Test
A short-answer test based on film screenings. You will be tested on your knowledge of basic bibliographic information for the set films such as the director and year of release of each film, as well as content (story, plot, characters, settings).

Value: 20%
Time: 1.10 pm sharp – 1.40pm, 30 May.
Location: MC132

3. Essay
   a) In Australian Cinema After Mabo, Collins and Davis contend that one of the defining characteristics of recent Australian cinema is a tendency to ‘backtrack’ over past ground. This backtracking includes a resurgence of period films dealing with shameful episodes from our national past. It also includes the revival and re-working of iconic features and figures from our cinematic past. Discuss the implications of this backtracking with reference to one of the set films in the course and another film of your choice.
   
   Or,
b) Some cultural critics question the relevancy of a national cinema in the age of global media. Discuss the relevancy of national cinema for Australia in the twenty-first century with particular reference to one of the set films in the course. Your discussion must demonstrate an understanding of concepts covered in the course such as national identity, nationalism, global-local strategies, internationalism, diversity and hybridity.

Length: 2,000-word essay.
Worth: 50%
Due: By 4pm Monday 5 June 06

Please read the sections on plagiarism, essay submission and essay writing in this guide before submitting your essay. There are penalties for plagiarism. And marks will be deducted for poor presentation and incorrect referencing.
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<th>Grade Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
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<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<td>85% upwards</td>
<td>High Distinction</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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### Course Content

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<td>Stories of Our Own: National Cinema and Nationalism - Newsfront</td>
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<td>5</td>
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| 8    | April 10       | Docs I: Documenting the Bush – Cunamulla  
|      |                | Library Project Due                     |
|      |                | **Mid-Semester Recess: Friday 14 April - Friday 28 April** |
| 9    | May 1          | Docs II: Up Close and Personal – Mabo: Life of an Island Man |
| 10   | May 8          | Sydney on Film – They’re a Weird Mob to Vacant Possession |
| 11   | May 15         | Backtracking in Rabbit-Proof Fence and The Tracker |
| 12   | May 22         | Escaping History in Coming of Age films in the 1990s – Beneath Clouds |
| 13   | May 29         | Trauma, Grief and Justice in Contemporary Australian Cinema – The Proposition  
|      |                | **In-Class Test**                        |
| 14   | June 5         | No seminar                              |
|      |                | **Essay Due**                           |
|      |                | **Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday: Monday 12 June** |
|      |                | **Examination period: Tuesday 13 June - Friday 30 June** |

### Seminar Topics, Readings and Discussion Questions

**Week 1: Feb 21**  
**Introduction to course**  
**No Screening**

- What is a national cinema?  
- In what ways does the Australian national cinema differ from other national cinemas and/or international cinemas such as Hollywood?  
- What is the social function of the Australian cinema?  
- What approach to the study of the Australian cinema does this course take?

**Suggested reading:**  
1. Chapter 1, Australian Cinema After Mabo  
2. Tom Weir, 'No Daydreams of our Own', in Course Reader  
3. Chapter 3, Australian National Cinema in Course Reader
Week 2: Feb 28
Through European Eyes: The Landscape Tradition in Australian Film
Screening: Walkabout (Nick Roeg, 1972)

- Why has the outback played such as significant role in the Australian cinema?
- What is the relation between land and national identity in Australia?
- In what ways does Walkabout mediate this relation?
- In what ways does the relation between the three children of this film serve as an allegory of indigenous-settler relations?
- Discuss the epilogue – what do you think it means?
- Suggest an alternative ending.

Set Reading:
1. Ross Gibson, ‘Formative Landscapes’ in Course Reader
2. Chapter 5, Australian Cinema After Mabo

Rec. Reading:
1. Richard Coombs, ‘Not God’s sunflowers: Nicholas Roeg on Walkabout’ in Second Takes
2. Louis Nowra, Walkabout

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Week 3: 7 March
‘Stories of Our Own’ - National Cinema and Nationalism
Screening: Newsfront (Phillip Noyce, 1978)

- What is the role of government play in the Australian national cinema?
- What is the relation between national cinema and nationalism?
- How does the Australian national cinema construct national types?
- Why are so many of the films of the revival period nostalgic in their vision of the nation’s past? Is this film nostalgic?
- What is the relation between independent and mainstream cinema in Australia? Where is this film situated in this ‘divide’?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 3, Australian National Cinema in Course Reader
2. Fiona Hooton, ‘Newsfront: a study of the impact of the experimental film movement on mainstream Australian Cinema’ in Course reader

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Week 4: 14 March
‘International Contamination’: From the Mad Max Trilogy to Wolf Creek
Screening: tba

- How have Australian films adapted international genres?
- What was the international reception of Mad Max and Crocodile Dundee?
- How were these film received nationally?
- Is there a rethinking the Australian outback in Mad Max?
- Is Max as a new kind of Australian hero?
- What about Mick Dundee?
- Why was Wolf Creek described as an ‘UnAustralian’ cultural product?

Set Reading:
1. Adrian Martin, ‘Mad Max, 1979’ from The Mad Max Movies in Course Reader

Rec. Reading:

Week 5: 21 March
The New Australian Cinema: Late 80's to Early 1990s
Screening: Muriel's Wedding (PJ Hogan, 1994)

- What forms of diversity and cultural hybridity characterise the new Australian cinema?
- What is the role of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism in these changes?
- Why is ordinariness of importance in these films?
- What is meant by Australian ugliness and the suburban grotesque in studies of Australian film?
- What are the class, gender and race politics of the post-revival films?
- Do these changes signal the end of our national cinema?

Set Reading:
2. Tom O’ Reagan, pp 243-257, Australian National Cinema in Course Reader
3. Chapter 4, The Imaginary Industry, in Course Reader
**Week 6: 28 March**

**Home and Abroad: AFI Wars**

Screening: The Dish (Rob Sitch, 2000) also see Moulin Rouge! (Baz Luhrmann, 2001) and Lantana (Ray Lawrence, 2001)

- How has Australian cinema become a ‘genre’ of international cinema?
- What is the new commercial-industrial ethos?
- What are the different stakes of internationalism and localism in Australian cinema debates?
- Is a film made in Australia but set in an imaginary Paris Australian?
- Is The Dish, which is about Americans, international?
- Why do you think Lantana scooped the awards?

Set Reading:

Rec. Reading:

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**Week 7: 4 April**

**Elites and Battlers in 1990s Cinema**

Screening: Australian Rules (Paul Goldman 2002)

- What affect has Hansonism and Howardism had on the Australian cinema?
- Have recent films revived old national types? Which ones, and why?
- Do these films represent a new national vernacular?
- Is there a new Anglo-celtic imaginary?
- How do these films help to reshape national memory? And to what effect?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 3, Australian Cinema After Mabo
Week 8: 11 April

Docos I: Documenting the Bush - From Back of Beyond to Cunamulla
Screening: Cunamulla (Dennis O’Rourke, 2001)

- Why are there so many documentaries of life in the bush in the Australian documentary tradition?
- Does this film invite us to rethink rural-city relations? In what ways?
- How does it represent social class?
- Does it attempt to redeem the battler? To what effect?
- What are the gender politics and ethics in Cunamulla?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 6, Australian Cinema After Mabo

Rec. Reading:

Library Project Due By 1pm Tuesday 11 April 06

SEMESTER BREAK

Week 9: 2 May

Docos II: Up Close and Personal - ‘An Intimate History’ of Native Title
Screening: Mabo: Life of an Island Man (Trevor Graham, 1997)

- How has Australian documentary cinema acted as a form of social intervention in the past?
- What are the so called new modes of documentary cinema?
- In what ways does this week’s film mediate national memory of our colonial past?
- Why has documentary cinema become more personalised? And to what effect?
- In what ways does this film enact a form of cultural mourning?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 5, Australian Cinema After Mabo

Rec. Reading:
Week 10: 9 May
Re-imaging the City: Sydney from They’re a Weird Mob to Vacant Possession and beyond.
Screening: Vacant Possession (Margo Nash, 2001)

- How has Sydney been represented in the Australian cinema?
- How has it been represented in relation to the bush?
- Have these dominant images changed over the years?
- How is Sydney represented in Vacant Possession?
- Discuss the treatment of home and belonging in Vacant Possession? Is this treatment similar or different to that of other films from this era?
- Is this a feminist perspective?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 7, Australian Cinema After Mabo

Rec. Reading:

Week 11: 16 May
Backtracking in Rabbit-Proof Fence and The Tracker
Screening: The Tracker (Rolf de Heer, 2002). Also see Rabbit-Proof Fence (Phillip Noyce, 2002)

- Why these period films now? How do they differ from the period films of the 1970s?
- What is the significance of the lost child and the tracker in the Australian cultural tradition?
- In what do these films revive these figures and/or transform them?
- What was the Australian reception of these films?
- What role do these films play in the history wars of the 1990s?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 8, Australian Cinema After Mabo

Rec. Reading:

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Week 12: 23 May
Escaping History in Coming of Age films in the 1990s
Screening: Beneath Clouds (Iven Sen, 2002)

- What is the relationship between this type of film and national identity?
- How have coming-of-age films changed over the years?
- What is the significance of personal shame in Beneath Clouds and what relation does it have to wider forms of national shame?
- How is the Australian landscape ‘historicised’ and/or ‘Indigenised’ in this film? To what effect?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 9, Australian Cinema After Mabo

Rec. Reading:

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Week 13: 30 May
In-Class Test: 1.10 pm sharp - 1.40 pm

Trauma, Grief and Justice in Contemporary Australian Cinema
Screening: The Proposition (John Hillcoat, 2005)

- Is this an Australian film or an international film?
- What is its relation to Hollywood and The Western?
- How does it differ from a typical western?
- Is this a realist film? If not, why not?
- In what ways does the film invite us to reflect on the ‘afterwardsness’ of colonial violence?
- Does this film perform what David and Collins call ‘grief work’? If so, what are the implications of this kind of cinema?
- Is the concept/practice of a national cinema relevant in the age of global media?

Set Reading:
1. Chapter 10, Australian Cinema After Mabo
And on question of the future of our national cinema see also,
2. Toby Miller, ‘Screening the nation: Rethinking Options’ in Course Reader
3. Eva Rueschmann’s review of Australian Cinema After Mabo in Course Reader

Essay due by 4pm Monday 5 June 06

Select Bibliography


Dermody, Susan and Elizabeth Jacka Eds. 1988b. The Imaginary Industry: Australian Film in the late '80s. Sydney: AFTRS.

Film Finance Corporation Review Committee. 1992. Review of Film Financing through the Australian Film Finance Corporation (FFC). Review of the the Australian Film Commission's Special Production Fund. North Sydney: FFC, AFC.


Langton, Marcia. 1993. 'Well, I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television...' An Essay for the Australian Film Commission on the politics and aesthetics of filmmaking by and about Aboriginal people and things. Sydney: AFC.


Moran, Albert and Tom O'Regan eds. 1985. An Australian Film Reader. Sydney: Currency P.


Reid, Mary Anne. 1993. Long Shots to Favourites: Australian Cinema Sucesses in the 90s. Sydney: AFC.


For an Excellent annotated bibliography on this subject, see:
http://wwwmcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/film/Annot.htm

Sample:

**Journals**

**Cinema Papers** sees itself as the journal of record for the Australian feature film industry.

**Metro** is published by the Australian Teachers of Media and regularly features articles on Australian cinema as well as producing study guides on Australian and international film titles.

**Encore** is the broadcast and film industry's trade paper.

**Media International Australia** published out of the Australian, Film, Television and Radio School is designed to provide a space for dialogue between academic and industry perspectives on communication, broadcasting and film.

**Continuum: the Australian Journal of Media and Culture** is a thematically based cultural studies journal with a primary focus on screen media.
GUIDELINES ON ESSAY WRITING

1. THE ESSAY
The majority of assignments you will be required to write in Film Studies will be in essay form. These guidelines address the essentials of essay design and academic style in fairly general terms. For more detailed guidance on writing specifically on film, see David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, Film Art: An Introduction, 5th edition (NY: McGraw-Hill), pp. 431-436.

An essay is not a mere presentation of facts. We not only want to find out how much you know; but also what you think and how you think. A good essay argues a case and supports it with evidence.

An unsatisfactory essay structure consists of: a first paragraph that restates the topic in other words; a middle essay that quotes from what other authorities have said, or from parts of the text that might be used to support a point of view on the topic, though no point of view is argued for; and a last paragraph that restates the topic in other words again.

It is better if you can find in the essay topic: a problem that requires solution; an issue which can be argued in more than one way; a point of view that is overstated unless other considerations are taken into account. The middle of the essay then becomes a marshalling of evidence: to find an solution to the problem; to weigh up arguments pro and con before giving a final judgement; to set out what can be said in defence of the topic statement but what, in view of competing formulations, would be a better definition of the case. If you conceive of your first paragraph as the proposal of a problem for solution, your last paragraph will become non-repetitive and easier to write.

2. THE ESSAY QUESTION
a) The instructional word “discuss”
“Discuss” means “examine by argument,” and it asks you to express your opinion about, or your point of view on, the idea that follows: e.g., “Discuss Renoir’s use of nature in The Rules of the Game.” In the context of a Film Studies essay, “discuss” does not mean “hold a leisurely conversation” or “toss about ideas that seem relevant”. Nor does it mean “provide a survey of all possible opinions about the course”. You are being asked to take a stand: to examine an idea, to formulate an opinion about it, and to support that opinion by a reasoned, coherent argument.

b) Other instructional words
Compare: examine similarities and differences.

Criticise: make a reasoned assessment (whether favourable or unfavourable)

Analyse: break the whole into parts so that you can interpret each part separately and examine internal relationships between parts, before reconsidering the whole.

Relate: describe connections.

Evaluate: analyse strengths and limitations, in order to pass a reasoned judgment.
c) The question

Having noted the instructional word, look carefully at the whole question: e.g., “Discuss Renoir’s use of nature in The Rules of the Game.” The question does not ask for a catalogue of natural imagery in The Rules of the Game: rather, it asks you to determine what use Renoir makes of nature — as an agent in the narrative, as a device for revealing character, as a means for creating atmosphere or as a source of imagery and recurrent motifs.

Your essay should be focused directly on the essay question. Read the question carefully, and read all of it. Do not simply seize on a few key words and use them as a launching pad for a general discussion of the text. The question should rather give you a basis for planning your essay structure.

d) The word limit

It is not there simply to tell you when to stop writing. A word limit forces you to be selective, to decide what you think are the most important issues, and to express your ideas as clearly and succinctly as possible. A 500-word essay may require less writing than a 2000-word essay, but it does not require less thought. Going substantially over the word limit indicates lack of an essay plan; falling well short of the essay limit indicates that not only forethought is lacking. You should have to plan carefully and write precisely to fit your argument into the word limit.

3. ESSAY DESIGN

Your essay will need an opening paragraph that is a deliberate beginning and not an accident: it should establish the character and tone of your argument, and its direction, telling the reader where you are going in the rest of your essay and why you want to go there. Your essay will need a substantial middle that defines and amplifies your argument, making it concrete and convincing. And your essay will need a conclusion that feels like a conclusion and not as if you have run out of steam: it should drive your point home, letting the reader know you have arrived, and precisely where. As has been suggested, conceiving of the topic as proposing a problem for solution (for the solution of which you will need to assemble data) is a more promising approach than considering the topic as indicating an area in which data needs to be assembled.

4. THE ARGUMENT

Your argument should not be based simply on personal taste or private belief but on reasoned judgement. The substance of your argument should consist mainly of evidence you provide to support your opinions or the approach you have taken. In a Film Studies essay “evidence” usually takes two forms:

a) Examples from the film

You should instance specific episodes, scenes, sequences, shots or lines of dialogue which support your ideas with concrete examples. When you refer to the film, avoid merely paraphrasing the plotline, or merely quoting lengthy passages of dialogue: summarise, criticise and relate. You should make clear how the example supports your argument, why it is relevant, what interpretation of the section of the film cited is suggested by your argument.

b) Use of authorities or critics

An authority or critic can provide persuasive support for an argument you have already made (or are about to make). The critic’s opinion can only be a support, never a substitute for your own argument. You should enter into dialogue with the
critic's theory or opinion; it should be placed within the structure of your own argument. Some authorities you may find good reason to disagree with. Citing a critical opinion which you are setting out to disprovevaluably establishes your essay's credentials as an argument.

Whenever you make use of a critic, whether you quote the critic directly or simply make use of his or her ideas, you must acknowledge the debt in a footnote. Where you quote directly, all the words cited should be enclosed in quotation marks. The borrowing should be introduced with an appropriate acknowledgment and the context from which the borrowing has been drawn should be noted. Consider this passage from Thomas M. Leitch, Find the Director and Other Hitchcock Games, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991:

Although Rear Window has unmistakable similarities with Hitchcock’s forties films, its more accepting view of society marks a dramatic change in the relation Hitchcock establishes with his audience. Instead of inviting them to identify with an innocent hero or heroine who is threatened by a hostile environment, a villainous double, or a treacherous intimate, Hitchcock makes their identification here far more equivocal, since Jeff is anything but innocent. (Leitch 174)

This is a correct citation from the passage:

In Thomas M. Leitch’s view, where the typical protagonist of Hitchcock’s films of the forties is an innocent “threatened by a hostile environment, a villainous double, or a treacherous intimate,” Rear Window presents us with a hero who “is anything but innocent.” (Leitch 174)

When you make use of an authority’s ideas, even if you do not repeat him or her verbatim, you should still acknowledge the source. The following paraphrase also sufficiently acknowledges a reliance on Leitch: “According to Thomas M. Leitch, the hero of Rear Window is a more morally questionable figure than any of Hitchcock’s protagonists of the forties (174).”

The brief note in brackets is sufficient to identify your exact source, as long as full details of the critical text are properly entered in your bibliography (see below, The Bibliography).

Simply placing a footnote at the close of your borrowing from a critic does not indicate where the borrowing (which might extend over many sentences) begins. This is why it is essential to mark the point at which your indebtedness begins with a phrase like “In Thomas M. Leitch’s view” and to mark the point of closure with a note. The following note does not adequately acknowledge indebtedness to Leitch:

Rear Window demands a very different response from viewers than Hitchcock’s films of the forties both because its view of society is more positive and its hero, conversely, “anything but innocent” (Leitch 174).

Acknowledging the critic by name at the beginning of the borrowing is more than simply a courtesy. Consulting critics and acknowledging them properly raises the level of scholarship of your essay. Students who fail to note adequately where they have drawn from their critical reading are falling into habits of plagiarism, and plagiarism is taken very seriously by the School of Language and Media and by the Faculty of Education and Arts (the Faculty plagiarism policy is set out at the end of this book).

5. THE BIBLIOGRAPHY
All assignments presented to the School should include a bibliography. Even if your bibliography includes no more than details of the video you have watched in order to write on a particular film, that information is of use to a marker. It informs the marker which version you have used, and it informs her or him that you have not consulted critical authorities.

You should list all the books and articles you have used in preparing an assignment, even if you have not quoted from them. Exceptions to this are a dictionary (though if you quote a dictionary’s definitions, you should name the dictionary in your essay) and the Bible (though if you quote from the Bible, you should cite book, chapter and verse in your essay).

Books and articles should be arranged alphabetically, by authors’ surnames.

Necessary publication details for a book are author, title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication and page number. Necessary publication details for an article are author, title of article, name of journal, volume number of journal, date of publication and page numbers.

Titles of films, books or periodicals may be either underlined (Citizen Kane, The Hitchcock Reader, Cinema Journal) or italicised (Citizen Kane, The Hitchcock Reader, Cinema Journal). The title of a journal article, a chapter or an essay from a book should be placed inside quotation marks.

An example of a book entry:


An example of an article in a book collection of articles:


An example of an article in a periodical:


An example of a film:

Citizen Kane (Orson Welles, 1941)

6 ESSAY PRESENTATION

Attach a cover sheet (available at the School of Language and Media office). Fasten the pages of your essay together with a single staple in the upper left-hand corner. Do NOT place it in a folder of any kind.
Please word-process or type assignments. Leave a wide left-hand margin for comments. Please double-space assignments, i.e., leave one line blank between each line of text.

A bibliography must be attached to every assignment (see previous section).

Give page numbers for the work(s) quoted. These should be keyed to your bibliography. If your essay is only about one work, or you have introduced the name of the author or critic you are discussing, you can simply enclose a page number in brackets: e.g., (206). If there is any doubt about the author or critic being referred to, include the author or critic’s surname: e.g., (Ellmann 103).

The recommended reference work to consult for further details of academic style is: Gibaldi, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.