

Professor Crawford Locke
College Writing I
Spring 2023

Assignment Three (III)
To See Or Not To See; That Is The Question

"There is much to be said about the story of "Children of Men," directed by Alfonso Cuarón and based on a lesser-known novel by P.D. James, who usually writes about a detective. But the story, like the stories of "Metropolis," "Nosferatu" or "Escape from New York," is secondary to the visual world we are given to regard. Guerrilla fighters occupy abandoned warehouses. The homeless live in hovels. Immigrants are rounded up and penned in cages. The utilities cannot be depended upon. There are, most disturbing of all, no children. Only dogs and cats remain to be cared for and cherished." From Roger Ebert's review of *Children of Men*, found at <http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071004/REVIEWS/710040307>

Whatever mental energy is left after you read endless chapters of your textbooks, cram for quizzes and exams, then write papers, one can somehow still find the answer to one of the greatest dilemmas ever to face mankind: "What am I going to do tonight?" Assignment three provides the opportunity for you to bear each other's burdens by providing possible answers to that question.

Living in the United States in the twenty-first century, we are blessed with an overwhelming amount of possible options for entertainment. Unfortunately, as anyone who has paid far too much for a completely underwhelming film will tell you, some of those options are to be avoided at all costs. On the other hand, some films enrich your life in ways that may feel like God has smiled upon you. For assignment three, ***your mission*** is to write an evaluation of a film with the entire class as your audience, all the while keeping the expectations of the academic audience in the back of your mind.

Evaluations are essentially arguments in which you determine whether an object or event is good or bad or indifferent and provide evidence to support your claim. You will have to describe your subject briefly; however, the focus will **not be** on description or summary, **but on analysis and argument.** You will need to provide the criteria by which you evaluate your subject, bearing in mind that much of your audience might not agree that *Citizen Kane* would be a better movie if it had ninjas or pirates or zombies. In other words, **your criteria must be reasonable and fair.**

As you work on this project, consider the following questions: *Is the film good, bad, both, neither? Why should we see the film? What does the movie teach us? Might the film appeal to a very limited audience, or does it have wide appeal?* If you write about a film that many critics believe to be

the greatest of its genre, but you disagree, beware of the weight of tradition that you will be working against. Finally, you will not need to refer to other critics' opinions of the film, unless you feel the desperate need to engage in scholarly discourse with a misguided colleague.

To effectively respond to this assignment, write a three (3) to three and a half (3 1/2) page ***thesis-driven*** paper that answers the following prompt:

What makes your movie worth watching (or avoiding)?
Your response should include *your criteria*

Don't rely on your memory to write about a film; see it again. And again, And again, And again.

Rough Draft Due: 3/27- 3/29

Final Draft Due: 4/3- 4/5