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Journal 9: American Cinematography

For this journal, we read "The Thematic Paradigm," "Creating the Myth," "Presenting Arguments," "Style in Arguments," "An Idiot's Guide to India," and "The Offensive Movie Cliché That Won't Die." Ray's "The Thematic Paradigm" discusses how American films portray many aspects of society. Americans have had conflicting ideas on civilization both in the real world and in films. There have been many figures in history and in films that are heroes that embodied many noble traits such as selflessness, considerate, and kind-hearted. At the same time, there are also many figures that display the "Robin Hood" theme which was to steal from the rich and give to the poor. Movies and history contain figures that have committed crimes in order to benefit society or a certain group of individuals. These types of film make to conflicting ideas that society has on civilization worse, especially when containing both archetypes: official hero and outlaw hero. Seger's "Creating the Myth" discusses how myths and archetypes are critical in creating a successful story or movie. She explains the process of creating the hero myth: the first step is to introduce the hero in a typical surrounding, then an event signals the start of the hero's journey, the hero will usually be reluctant to leave until another event pushes the hero over the edge, the hero obtains help from an unusual source such as a dragon, the hero then moves into the special world where he can evolve into an extraordinary being, the hero will have to pass all the tests and overcome the enemy in order to complete his goal, the hero then needs to hit rock bottom, he then reaches a turning point where he has the advantage, quickly followed by a chase scene, and ends showing the evolved hero. Another type of myth is the healing myth which focuses on a damaged character that needs to leave home in order to be

completed and healed. Most stories have a combination of myths that contain elements from each myth. Myths include archetypes which are the typical roles in classical stories. "Presenting Arguments" contain information regarding how to give an effective presentation. Some important elements of an effective presentation are to consider the audience, purpose, and structure. Arguments that are meant to be heard should have a strong introduction and conclusion, clear structure, and smooth transitions. "Style in Arguments" discusses how to write the essay in order to make the essay appealing and effective. The essential elements of style are the word choice, sentence structure, and punctuation. Figurative language is the special effects of style. Examples of figurative language include metaphors, similes, analogies, hyperboles, rhetorical questions, and irony. Sawhney's "An Idiot's guide to India" discusses the portrayal of India in the popular culture in the West. The economic rise of India has resulted in an increase of attention. The movie *Slumdog Millionaire* shows the old clichés of poverty in India without representing the current situation and the West's contribution to the country's problems. Seitz's "The Offensive Movie Cliché That Won't Die" discusses the "magical negro" archetype. This archetype is common in American cinematography such as Bleeding Gums Murphy in *The Simpsons*. This archetype describes a black person who teaches the white protagonist a skill that is essential in the story. This archetype is a way to represent the social inequality of black people in the past. This archetype is partly a result of white America losing complete control and power so this offensive archetype will not die. It is offensive because the word negro is outdated and offensive.

During the week of classes after Spring Break, the class had many presentations. The presentations continued to the next Tuesday and gave us useful feedback that can be utilized in essay 4. Last Tuesday, we finished the rest of the presentations and then proceeded to give peer

feedback to the rough draft of essay 4. That session was useful since we were able to obtain more feedback regarding essay 4. The peer feedback session also gives feedback on word choice, organization, sentence structure, thesis, and format which we were unable to obtain from the presentations' feedback. Last Thursday, we finally were able to do the in-class essay which was a punishment from the class before Spring Break because of the inappropriate behavior displayed during the class.

The presentation allowed us to obtain feedback about the topic of essay 4. The peer review feedback was very beneficial to find the flaws in essay 4 that we would otherwise have missed. The feedback on essay 3 was very helpful because it let us know what was wrong with the essay and how to improve on essay 4. The feedback on essay 3 is also useful because essay 3 and essay 4 are connected so the feedback on the topic and evidence can be applied to essay 4. Journal 8 was also useful because it allowed us to see how essay 4 includes all the essential components of writing.