

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Week Five

Analysis Refresher Seminar I

Dr. Richard Nowell

Agenda

Structure

Your Experience of Analysis

The Mechanics of Analysis

The Tarantino Interviews

Targeted Learning Outcome

Sharpening our Analytical Skills

What is analysis?

What have you been taught about analysis?

What types of analysis have you conducted?

Position + Evidence = Analysis

Analysis can be considered a concerted and focused effort to uncover the meanings or the significance of something under examination

Analysis is often contrasted to “description”; it is common for weak student work to be accused of being descriptive rather than analytic

Description is considered to fall short of illuminating submerged meanings or significance, because it simply conveys surface meaning

However, in reality description is always a part of analysis: it is the evidence that we cite in order to support a position we are taking up

In humanities and social-sciences, analysis is a process that leads to the articulation of a position about a text, supported with relevant evidence

Analytical Tendencies in Studies of Media/Arts

DEVELOPMENT	TEXTS	CIRCULATION
Human Contributions	Formats/Genres	Distribution/Delivery
Corporate Agency	Auterism	Promotion/Publicity
Social Influence	Aesthetics	Engagement/Memory
Cultural Influence	Structures/Narration	Consumption/Fandom
Political Influence	Inter-textuality	Journalistic Reception
Institutional Influence	Modes of Address	Academic Reception
Technological Influence	Themes	Political Reception
Market Influences	Representation	Adaptation/Seriality
	Cognition/Affect	Industrial Impact

Putting Position Before Description

1. ANALYTICAL POSITION

Old Hollywood films encouraged women to accept being looked at

Scary movies have tended to be racist against black people

The culture industries generate similar output to their hits

Stars/celebrities are not really real people but clusters of information

2. DESCRIPTIVE EVIDENCE

They pictured men looking at women; women being looked at

Black folks are presented either as monsters or disposable victims

It reduces risk to ape commercial successes like superhero movies

We encounter these individuals via media texts rather than first hand

Tips on Commentary Analysis

The analysis of media boasts a rich history in the humanities and social sciences, focusing on coverage generally and media coverage of media

It is helpful when analyzing such commentary to ask if you are interested in the coverage per se or its roles in something much bigger

Regardless of which, there are some tips to approaching such work that help us to generate insightful analysis and avoid recycling the coverage

Perhaps the most important thing is to approach these as performative acts driven by concealed agenda and underpinned by key assumptions

It is also helpful to try and identify the key topics, the assumptions that underpin them, and to consider why the speaker(s) chose to “go public”

The Tarantino Interviews

Based on this video, how is Tarantino constructed? In other words, what type of person does he come across as?

Can you distil his persona to a single term: “Mr. ...”

Do you have any thoughts as to why he is doing this?

How would you go about testing these suspicions?

QUENTIN TARANTINO Interview 1997

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DotEDHKLnVM>

Quentin Tarantino Interview (2003) - Jane

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7k4GQSGvx8>

Tarantino Interview

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7kQK4cbzWU>

Quentin Tarantino Interview (2009)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jz03ntGVEUs>

Interview 1: 1997



Mr. Renegade (?)



Interview 2: 2004



Mr. Taboo-breaker (?)

QUENTIN TARANTINO

KRON 4 STUDIO **NEW YORK**

KRON4.COM
SOUTH BAY HWY. 680 No Delays

8:26

1:40 / 4:16

Interview 3: 2007



Mr. Fun (?)



3:43 / 6:35



Interview 4: 2009



Mr. Visionary (?)



Would the Real QT Please Stand Up...

Each video may seem like a natural conversation providing entertaining access to a public figure who we are unlikely to ever meet in person

In reality, we are viewing a professional actor representing a corporate brand, one who is promoting multimillion dollar audiovisual software

In each case, this professional actor performs a distinctive aspect of a personal brand, one that invests himself and his products with values

In each case, this performance is carefully choreographed to calibrate Brand Tarantino in a way that promises to appeal to specific audiences

Oftentimes, Tarantino is clearly playing a role that either actively promotes his films for this audience or protects the films from criticism

Take-Aways

Humanities and social-science work is presaged on the conducting and presenting of analysis, as opposed to just describing something

Analysis is a process whereby we seek to tease out the logics, values or significance of a text's surface content; i.e. we excavate its meanings

There are myriad different forms of analysis in the Humanities and Social-Sciences, but all can be seen as a form of discourse analysis

Here we critically examine texts less as windows onto inarguable truth (empiricism) than as avatars of possible meanings (conclusions)

Presenting our conclusions involves taking up a position on something, and then describing its relevant aspects as a means of supporting them

Next Time

Date: 27.10.222

Instructor: Sarka

Topic: Work-in-Progress Seminar 1

Outcome: The Strengths and Potential Issues of Our Provisional Research Projects

Preparation: Prepare a **brief** overview, to be delivered in class, of the current state of your research project.