

Hi folks,

The paper that constitutes the assessment for this course is due fairly soon. Below, you will find the general information you need to know, including a reiteration of the five prompts (**remember you only need to respond to one**). However, beneath all of this, you will also find some general pointers about how best to respond to either prompt: the areas of assessment for each prompt, and below more general advice relevant to all of the prompts. We will also go over this assessment at the end of our final session on Thursday 14 December. I hope all of this is quite exhaustive, but if you do have any questions, please reach out to me by email and I will do all I can to help. An emailed response is guaranteed within 24 hours.

best,  
richard

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ASSESSMENT**

At the end of the course, students are to submit **one** circa. 1500–2000-word essay written in response to **one** of five prompts derived from the topics introduced on the course.

**Value:** 100% of Final Grade

**Due Date:** Midnight CET Sunday 14 January 2024

**Note:** examples screened on this course may **NOT** be used for final papers.

**Advice and Learning Outcomes:** Towards the end of the course, an advice sheet will be issued spotlighting the general qualities graded highly on this course. Time will also be set aside towards the end of the final session to discuss these matters.

### **Prompt A**

Hollywood of the 1980s is typically presented in supremely cynical terms; as a cold corporate machine churning out mindless trash. However, as Noel Brown's work suggests, much of the most high-profile and enduring output of this decade was assembled to could now be

considered the Comfort Viewing Mode. Accordingly, consider how an example of '80s Feelgood positions itself as Comfort Viewing.

**Targeted Learning Outcomes/Areas of Assessment**

1. 1980s Hollywood as soulless corporate machine.
2. Feel-good as a part of 1980s American culture.
3. 1980s feelgood as Comfort Viewing.

**Prompt B**

While postmodern irony, distance, and apathy are often cited as the preeminent mode of the last half century, Gry C. Rustad and Kai Hanno Schwind argue that a significant cultural variant is in fact characterized by oscillations between apparently incompatible ideas, especially ironic distance with emotional sincerity. Accordingly, consider how an example of Metamodern entertainment uses this approach to Comfort Viewing in order to raise serious issues within an audiovisual safe space.

**Targeted Learning Outcomes/Areas of Assessment**

1. Characteristics of Metamodernism.
2. Metamodernism as coping strategy.
3. Metamodern entertainment as Comfort Viewing

**Prompt C**

As Christine Quail's work indicates, the figure of the "nerd" or "geek" is pathologized for a variety of reasons including its supposedly unhealthy relationship to media products. However, it is clear that the cultivation of this high-investor audience has incentivized more flattering portrayals of the nerd. Accordingly, consider how an example of nerd-centered entertainment uses Comfort Viewing to offer support to the nerd (in all of us).

**Targeted Learning Outcomes/Areas of Assessment**

1. Characteristics of the nerd/geek.
2. The logics of cultivating nerd consumers.
3. Nerd media as Comfort Viewing.

### **Prompt D**

Diane Negra's analysis of 1990s women's tourist movies, suggests that such films promote expatriation as a fantasy solution to middle-class problems. However, it is clear that this format often promotes media depictions of tourism as a preferable alternative to the real thing. Accordingly, consider how an example of tourist media uses the Comfort Viewing Mode to invite audiences to reflect on the relative merits of home and abroad.

#### **Targeted Learning Outcomes/Areas of Assessment**

1. Tourist movies as fantasies of retreat.
2. Tourist movies as reflexive allegories.
3. Tourist movies as Comfort Viewing.

### **Prompt E**

By reading Geriaction in relation to extremist political rhetoric, Gregory Frame and others have argued that this format amounts to little more than inflammatory reactionary propaganda. However, the concept of Comfort Viewing suggests that this format is oftentimes used to encourage aging conservative American men graciously to accept their diminishing social and economic status. Accordingly, consider how an example of Geriaction encourages this target audience to adapt to progressive social changes.

#### **Targeted Learning Outcomes/Areas of Assessment**

1. Geriaction as reactionary hate.
2. Geriaction and inclusivity.
3. Geriaction as Comfort Viewing.

All Essays are to be submitted in PDF or word format to MS TEAMS or to [516779@mail.muni.cz](mailto:516779@mail.muni.cz). **Please include your name and the course title in the name of the file.**

### **GENERAL ADVICE FOR ALL PROMPTS**

In the case of all prompts, you are being invited to touch upon three main areas:

1. how some scholars have understood the topic in question.
2. how this has been complicated in the corresponding session.
3. how an example film relates to these two positions.

Accordingly, strong papers will consider all of these phenomena to some extent. Strong papers are therefore likely to include substantial analysis of the example film, but also significant contextualisation and conceptualisation of the topic, alongside engagement with the existing scholarly ideas. As a general guide, papers evincing the following qualities stand to score well, irrespective of which prompt they respond to.

1. A direct, focused, argument-driven response to the prompt. You are being asked to respond in a particular way; avoid speaking around the topic.
2. A direct, sustained, and overt engagement with the relevant scholarly ideas, referenced accordingly. The supplied readings suffice for the paper; however, you may include other scholarship as well, if you see fit to do so. Personally, I advise paraphrasing and referencing rather than relying exclusively on direct quotes; doing so demonstrates an unambiguous and deep understanding of the material in a manner cutting and pasting from the scholarship does not.
3. A solid assertion of argument and your position vis-a-vis the existing scholarship upfront in the introduction; this imbues all that follows with a clear sense of significance. Oftentimes it also renders a conclusive summary redundant.
4. Economical use of examples. Try to avoid over-describing the film. Also, avoid including a separate plot synopsis, as your examples will already spotlight the relevant aspects of the film (and this is a short paper).
5. Clear and economical writing - if you are unsure of a term, play it safe rather than risk being misunderstood. Given that many students are writing in a second or even third

language, significant leeway will be provided. The fact that the group consists of non-native speakers of English is always taken in to account.

**Grading/Evaluation:** Grades from A-F will be awarded based on the following criteria, please be aware that concessions will be made around language, given students will be writing in a language other than their mother tongue.

	<b>Argumentation/Understanding</b>	<b>Sources/Evidence</b>	<b>Communication</b>
<b>A</b> <b>90&lt;</b>	Insightful, vigorous, and demonstrating considerable depth of understanding and a significant amount of original thought; addressing prompt directly through a wholly coherent synthesis of ideas; demonstrating a degree of mastery over subject; demonstrating a deep and thorough understanding of key concepts.	Full range of set resources consulted; sources employed with significant discrimination and sound judgment; thorough assessment of evidence; use of a broad range of examples.	Near-Faultless typography and layout; near-flawless turns of phrase and expression; sophisticated and precise vocabulary; clear structure; exemplary citation and bibliography.
<b>B</b> <b>80 – 89.99</b>	Perceptive and insightful; some evidence of original thought; for the most part addressing prompt directly; mainly coherent synthesis of ideas; thorough and somewhat critical understanding of key concepts.	A fairly wide range of set resources consulted; solid assessment of evidence; sophisticated use of a fairly broad range of examples.	Very Solid typography and layout; few errors in grammar; mainly sophisticated turns of phrase and expression; mostly clear structure; strong citation and bibliography.
<b>C</b>	Solid understanding addressed, for the most part,	Some sources consulted; evidence	Good typography and layout; comprehensible and

<b>70-79.99</b>	to the prompt; good synthesis of ideas; reasonably solid understanding of key concepts; evidence of gaps in knowledge and some minor misunderstandings of key concepts.	of some assessment of evidence; use of mostly workable examples.	largely error-free grammar, turns of phrase, and expression; reasonable clearly structured; some attempt to provide citation and bibliography.
<b>D 60 – 69.99</b>	Indirectly addressed to prompt; no real synthesis of ideas; mainly descriptive rather than analytical; patchy understanding of key concepts; significant gaps in knowledge.	Restricted range of sources consulted; superficial understanding of evidence; limited range of examples, many of which are inappropriate.	Poor typography and layout; numerous errors of grammar; limited vocabulary; ambiguous or inaccurate turns of phrase; weak or missing citations and bibliography.
<b>E 50 – 59.99</b>	Barely addressed to the prompt; largely disconnected series of points; poor understanding of key concepts; major gaps in knowledge.	No sources consulted; poor understanding of evidence; few useful examples.	Poor typography and layout; numerous errors of grammar; limited vocabulary; ambiguous or inaccurate turns of phrase; no citations or bibliography.
<b>F &lt;50</b>	Not addressed to the prompt; largely incoherent; little evidence of an understanding of key concepts; demonstrating little knowledge of subject.	No sources consulted; poor understanding of evidence; no useful examples.	Poor typography and layout; numerous errors of grammar; limited vocabulary; ambiguous or inaccurate turns of phrase; no citations or bibliography.
<b>ZERO</b>	No paper submitted; or paper clearly showing no effort to respond to prompt.		