

- **Due:** Wed 2/27 via email to sarah.kersh@vanderbilt.edu
- **Length:** 750-900 words (about 3-4 pages)
- **Grading:** 15% of overall grade

Over the course of the semester, we have been/will be reading various film reviews. The film review is a particular type of writing which involves summarizing important plot points as well as developing an argument and performing close reading. For this assignment, I want you to write your own feminist review of a film we are *not* watching in class. What I mean by feminist, is that in this essay you must discuss issues of gender and/or sexuality within the film. I encourage you to incorporate any of the critics we have read in class, and you are free (but not required) to bring in other critical texts from outside of class.

Some Helpful Hints:

1. Don't forget to give some background about your film—title, year made, directors or any other interesting details about production. Then BRIEFLY summarize the plot of the movie. (This is hard! You will need to reread and revise in order to capture the film in a small amount of space.)
2. Film reviews are a kind of personal writing. This is your reaction to the film, so please use “I” and feel free to turn a critical eye on your own experiences and reactions to the film. In other words, film reviews are somewhat self-reflective.
3. I then suggest picking a moment to close read. *Pay attention to both* the cinematic aspects of the film as well as the literary and dramatic. Use your particular moment to then think about the film as a whole.
4. Finally, attempt to make an argument about gender or sexuality. Simply put this might come in the form of a sentence that says “This film seems to be about x, but it is really about y.” Or, “I think the film portrays women/sexuality in x way.”

**Literary & Dramatic** – The literary aspects pertain to the story, dialogue and characters. For example: What kind of genre is this film? What kind of story? Characters? Dialogue? Who was the protagonist? How is the conflict set up? Resolved? Etc. The dramatic aspects pertain to the acting, sets, locations and costumes.

**Cinematic** – The cinematic aspects pertain to the camera angles, composition, lighting, music and sound effects. Don't forget our reading from the 1<sup>st</sup> week of class. Greg Smith urged us to remember: “Nothing in a final film is there without having been examined by scores of professionals who have carefully chosen the components. You can trust that if something is in a film, it's there for a reason.”

**Online Film Reviews** (I suggest you stay away from reading reviews about your film, but instead consult reviews on other films to help you understand the genre of the review.)

[Nashville Scene](#)

[Bitch Flicks](#)

[Washington Post](#)

[The Guardian](#)

[New York Times](#)

[Delirious Hem](#) (this is a work in progress by another Vanderbilt professor)

**Potential Films (this is in no way exhaustive)**

Anything else by any of the directors we watch in class

Anything mentioned in any of our article or in *Cinema Studies*

Anything by John Waters

*A League of Their Own* (1992)

*A Question of Silence* (1982)

*A Woman's Face* (1941)

*Alien* (1979)

*All About Eve* (1950)

*Amelie* (2001)

*Antonia's Line* (1995)

*Batman Returns* (1992)

*Beauty and the Beast* (1991)

*Black Is...Black Ain't* (1994) (documentary)

*Blowup* (1966)

*Born in Flames* (1983)

*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992)

*Cat Woman* (2004)

*Chocolat* (2000)

*Cruel Intentions* (1999)

*Daughters of the Dust* (1991)

*Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995)

*Double Indemnity* (1944)

*Elizabeth* (1998)

*Fatal Attraction* (1987)

*Female Trouble* (1974)

*G.I. Jane* (1997)

*Gentlemen Prefer Blonds* (1953)

*I've Heard the Mermaids Singing* (1987)

*Imitation of Life* (1959)

*Juno* (2007)

*Knocked Up* (2007)

*Maltese Falcon* (1941)

*Mannequin* (1987)

*Miss Congeniality* (2000)

*Miss Representation* (2012) (documentary)

*Murder My Sweet* (1945)

*My Beautiful Launderette* (1985)

*My Fair Lady* (1964)

*Orlando* (1992)

*Pitch Perfect* (2012)

*Rebecca* (1940) (Hitchcock)

*Saved!* (2004)

*Silence of the Lambs* (1991)

*Some Like it Hot* (1959)

*The Color Purple* (1985)

*The Joy Luck Club* (1993)

*The Single Man* (2009)

*Thelma and Louise* (1991)

*Tootsie* (1982)

*Vertigo* (1958) (Hitchcock)

*XXY* (2007)

*Yentl* (1983)

See also this list from IMDB: <http://www.imdb.com/list/nHCF08M1ie0/>