**UNIT III: Latinx Film Analysis Essay**

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| **Genre** | **Role** | **Audience** | **Purpose** | **Rhetorical Situation** |
| Visual film analysis essay. | Under-  graduate researcher | Students/scholars using the Latina/o Studies Film Database [(linked here)](https://lsp.unc.edu/resources/film-database/). | To connect films housed in the Latina/o Studies Film Database to engaging visual film analysis essays. | You are a film scholar/student who has been asked by the Latina/o Studies Program to create a dynamic film analysis essay for a film in the Latina/o Studies Film Database. You will analyze a single scene from a film and consider how it contributes to film in its entirety. |

**Context & Topic**

In the Humanities unit, we will be partnering with [UNC’s Latina/o Studies Program](https://lsp.unc.edu/) to watch, research, and write about Latinx films. We will turn our attention to the rich library of films produced, directed, and written by Latinx people. Each of you will select one film [from this list](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/14u9oDgD0zsANxTKwWgZEgAcy2PlRuWuV4tyB7XDuOrQ/edit?usp=sharing) for a visual film analysis essay. If analyzing an entire film sounds daunting, don’t worry. **You will do a close analysis of one scene from your chosen film, then consider how that scene connects to the film’s larger meaning/themes.** **The essay will comment on Latinx representation in film -- see the guided questions below for more details.**

**Guiding Research Questions:**

*You may not address all of these in your essay, but your essay should engage with at least one of these guiding questions.*

* How are Latinx characters represented in this film? Are they complex, well-rounded individuals or flat and predictable?
* How have the actors, writers, directors, and other creatives expressed a Latinx identity in the film? (Think of language/dialect, costume, set design, religion, culture, etc.)
* Has the film/how has the film made sacrifices to appeal to a mainstream audience? What is the impact of this sacrifice?
* What is the film’s contribution to Latinx cinema and cinema in general? (Does it offer previously unseen representation of a Latinx experience, does it experiment with our expectations of narrative film, does it reinforce or undermine stereotypes?)

**Learning Outcomes**

*After this assignment, you will be able to...*

* Construct critical analysis arguments in the humanities discipline.
* Perform humanities research.
* Create innovative and visually engaging essays with Adobe Spark.
* Explain major themes, eras, stereotypes, and moments in Latinx cinema.

**Evaluation:**

*An effective assignment will:*

* Have a clear and concise thesis.
* Include a close-reading of a single scene from the film.
* Synthesize primary research with secondary research to add commentary, complicate your argument, or add background information.
* Include information about the history and context of the film’s content or film’s creation.
* Reflect on the film’s place in Latinx and mainstream cinema in response to the guiding questions listed above.
* Be creative -- Adobe Spark affords a great deal of imagination in terms of design and storytelling. Don’t be afraid to take a risk when creating your visual essay.
* [Follow the guidelines in this rubric.](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fPN1-PK5x_IvPE7Qm7xnywAfPv3Q-9j_Ckg6alVKOWo/edit?usp=sharing)

**What is Adobe Spark?**

Adobe Spark is an engaging website/presentation tool. It allows users to create dynamic visual content -- sort of like an elevated version of Prezi. It requires a subscription to the Creative Cloud, which can be downloaded here: <https://software.sites.unc.edu/adobe/>.

**Examples:**

[Here is a general model](https://spark.adobe.com/page/S1TIVwxehALwN/) for the assignment that I used in another class. Don’t be afraid to do something different.

[Here is a project](https://spark.adobe.com/page/B0LcXPlZf1u7r/) a student produced in a previous class. I recommend it for the quality of writing and high-level analysis the student produced.

**Feeder Assignments:**

**Feeder 3.1 Summary & “Close Reading” of Your Film (Worksheet)**

[**Save this worksheet to your Google Drive.**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lt63yO0dz6-au2qJDQVuffTib4istWeTJOlDt_iOJr0/edit?usp=sharing) **When you have completed it, submit to “Assignments” on Sakai.**

Part I: Compose a 150-250 word summary of your selected film/episode that covers major plot points, themes, and anything else that caught your interest.

Part II: After you have chosen your scene, complete the “Close Reading” Portion of the worksheet.

**Feeder 3.2 Reflection & Thesis Development (Worksheet)**

[**Save this worksheet to your Google Drive.**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1B4YSRCMr45kvTZY_yCpTgC1pQc7cCIv358geik6LUtk/edit?usp=sharing) **When you have completed it, submit to “Assignments” on Sakai.**

Part I: Complete the reflection portion of the feeder.

Part II: Follow the directions to develop a research question.

**Unit III Quick Guide**

Technology/Programs: [Adobe Spark](https://spark.adobe.com/sp/)

Citation Style: [MLA 7th Edition](https://guides.lib.unc.edu/citing-information/mla7-sample)

Word Length: 1000-1300 words

Rubric: Located [here.](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fPN1-PK5x_IvPE7Qm7xnywAfPv3Q-9j_Ckg6alVKOWo/edit?usp=sharing)

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| Assignment | Due Date |
| Feeder 3.1 |  |
| Feeder 3.2 |  |
| Peer Review Draft |  |
| Peer Review Feedback |  |
| Unit Project |  |

**Teaching Resources**

This is a non-exhaustive list of activities I assigned during this Unit -- supplemented by general discussion about writing/researching in the Humanities.

**Activity 1: Engaging Students in Questions of Race vs. Ethnicity, Terms Used to Self-Describe & Identify**

1. Watch [“Prof. DeGuzman explains the term ‘Latinx’” video”](https://www.wral.com/news/noticias/video/16334607/) (4 mins)
2. Watch: [“Are Hispanics White?” Decoded Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aosT6Kecj24&feature=emb_logo&ab_channel=MTVImpact) (6 mins)
3. Read: ["Can We Please Stop Using 'Latinx'? Thanx”](https://humanparts.medium.com/can-we-please-stop-using-latinx-thanx-423ac92a87dc)
4. Complete Latinx Terminologies Forum
   1. Q1: *What do you think the Decoded video means when the host says "Race doesn't exist, but ethnicity does"? Please write at least 100 words.*
   2. Q2: *What does the "x" in "Latinx" signify? Why does Kurly Tlapoyawa take issue with the term "Latinx"? What is a possible counterargument to their viewpoint? Please write at least 150 words.*

**Activity 2: Introducing Students to the History of Latinx Cinema in the United States**

1. Watch [*The Bronze Screen*](https://vimeo.com/349687470)(85 mins)
2. Complete *The Bronze Screen* Guided Reading
3. Complete Latinx Cinema Forum
   1. Q1: *Did you recognize any stereotypes, tropes, or themes noted in the Bronze Screen in your selected film? Discuss. Did your film reinforce negative stereotypes? Question them? Show a previously under-represented Latinx experience?* Write at least 150 words.
   2. Reply to two classmates’ posts in accordance with class standards.

**Activity 3: Latinx Film Research Database**

1. Following class discussion on humanities research, begin researching your film.
2. Topics to explore: The film’s context/creation (interviews with directors, writers, producers, performers, etc.), film reception (reviews), film scholarship (scholarly articles about the film), historical/cultural context (information about the film’s subject or a specific culture/identity represented).
3. Complete a deconstructed bibliography with five sources (at least three should be scholarly). Answer the following questions for each source:
   1. Complete MLA Citation
   2. Is this source popular or scholarly? How do you know?
   3. What is the main idea/argument of this source?
   4. How does this source contribute to the research of your topic?
   5. Share one excerpt that you might use/reference in your final project.
4. Post your research to the Film Research Database Forum. Reference your classmates’ work to find additional sources for your essay!