

## **Determining Good and Evil, Right and Wrong: Analyzing Ethics in Popular Media**

Many philosophers maintain that the arts like painting, music, dance and architecture are interesting not just aesthetically, but also because they engage our deepest questions about reality, knowledge, and human values. In this assignment you will explore how this could also be true of film/TV, with a focus on **ethics**.

**Task:** Select a film/TV show, then compose a paper that relates your chosen media to each of the following sections.

**a) The film/TV show synopsis**

Introduce the film with the title, date of release and genre of the film. Include a brief synopsis (5-8 sentences) of the plot and main characters.

**b) Explain the moral and/or ethical issue(s) presented in the film/TV show**

Describe the dilemma and explain WHY it is a moral/ethical issue (i.e. struggle between right/wrong, good/evil, good/bad etc...).

**c) Character(s)**

How does the character(s) handle the moral ethical dilemma(s)? What factors influence their decision?

**d) What would you do?**

If you faced the same moral/ethical dilemma as the characters in the film/show, how would you handle them? What factors influenced your decision? Explain with reference to your own moral code.

**e) Course connections**

Which philosophers/concepts/theories that we have examined so far in this unit were illustrated in this film? Connect to at least two (explain each separately and illustrate with an example from film/TV show).

***Reminders***

\*You are expected to review all powerpoints, worksheets and articles in the **ethics** unit in order to select which philosophers/concepts/theories are most relevant to your response. Your goal is to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of what you have learned in this unit. This is not a film/TV review – you are analyzing your selected media through an **ethics** lens. Be sure to proofread your work to ensure all of your answers are relevant to **ethics** and apply course concepts in a meaningful way.

Task Requirements:

1. Style: informal and analytic
2. Size 12 font, double spaced, 500-750 words
3. Due: Thursday March 18, 2021

Below is a list of suggested titles. Check with your teacher should you choose to select a film/TV show not on the list. You should ensure that issues and situations of ethical reasoning can be demonstrated. In the case of a TV show that is only thirty minutes in length, please watch three or four episodes so that you can establish a character's pattern of ethical reasoning.

| Suggested titles with ethical content   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>House of Cards</i></li> <li>• <i>Breaking Bad</i></li> <li>• <i>The Help</i></li> <li>• <i>Philadelphia</i></li> <li>• <i>Better Off Ted</i></li> <li>• <i>My Name is Earl</i></li> <li>• <i>Captain America: Civil War</i></li> <li>• <i>Thank You for Smoking</i></li> <li>• <i>Million Dollar Baby</i></li> <li>• <i>The Cider House Rules</i></li> <li>• <i>The Insider</i></li> <li>• <i>Wag the Dog</i></li> <li>• <i>Raising Arizona</i></li> <li>• <i>Norma Rae</i></li> <li>• <i>Casablanca</i></li> <li>• <i>The Good Place</i></li> <li>• <i>The Flash</i></li> <li>• <i>Alive</i></li> <li>• <i>The Reader</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Life is Beautiful</i></li> <li>• <i>The Pianist</i></li> <li>• <i>Lord of the Rings</i></li> <li>• <i>The Last Samurai</i></li> <li>• <i>Water</i></li> <li>• <i>12 Monkeys</i></li> <li>• <i>Wag the Dog</i></li> <li>• <i>The Emperor's Club</i></li> <li>• <i>The Commuter</i></li> <li>• <i>Sophie's Choice</i></li> <li>• <i>The Shape of Water</i></li> <li>• <i>Some Like It Hot</i></li> <li>• <i>12 Angry Men</i></li> <li>• <i>Quiz Show</i></li> <li>• <i>Dead Man Walking</i></li> <li>• <i>12 Years a Slave</i></li> <li>• <i>Up in the Air</i></li> <li>• <i>Awakenings</i></li> </ul> |

| Category   | Level 4   | Level 3      | Level 2 | Level 1 | Below Expectations |
|--|-----------|--------------|---------|---------|--------------------|
| <p><b>Knowledge:</b></p> <p>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the relevant key terms, concepts, and theories in ethics</p>  | Extensive | Considerable | Some    | Minimal | Lacking            |
| <p><b>Thinking/Inquiry:</b></p> <p>Demonstrates thorough use of critical thinking skills and thoughtful contemplation when responding to <u>all</u> parts of the assignment</p> <p>Student makes effective connections to at least <u>two</u> ethical concepts/theories/philosophers</p> | Extensive | Considerable | Some    | Minimal | Lacking            |
| <p><b>Communication:</b></p> <p>Clear evidence of proofreading with almost no errors</p> <p>Sentence structure is consistently clear</p> <p>Film introduction paragraph is complete, concise, easy to follow, and in your own words</p>  | Extensive | Considerable | Some    | Minimal | Lacking            |
| <p><b>Application:</b></p> <p>All answers are effectively illustrated by relevant examples from the film/TV show</p>   | Extensive | Considerable | Some    | Minimal | Lacking            |