

PERCEPTION KEY QUESTIONS (30): SET 2

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Due Jul 1 by 11:59pm **Points** 50 **Submitting** a text entry box or a file upload

Perception Key” Questions in the *Humanities Through the Arts* Text: As you will quickly notice when you begin reading the class text, there are blocks of questions throughout each chapter titled “Perception Key” questions. Some blocks have only 2 or 3 questions, while other blocks have up to 8 of them. These questions probe various works of art, artistic movements/styles, and mediums of art. So, because there are so many of these questions and they focus on such a wide variety of areas, I want to make the selection of the questions you answer as interesting and personally engaging to you as possible by allowing a high degree of flexibility in choosing them!

So, here's how it is done: you will *select* a total of 30 “Perception Key” questions from all of the question blocks in the assigned reading leading up to the first Perception Key Questions due date; then you will repeat this procedure for the second set of questions. **Now, in order to encourage variety and to work around the fact that questions appear in smaller and larger groupings throughout the chapters, here are the rules:** ALL required reading chapters each week leading up to each due date must be represented (no chapter can be ignored) and questions must be drawn from at least 5 “Perception Key” question blocks in each chapter!

VALUES

A value is something we care about, something that matters. A value is an object of an interest. The term "object," however, should be understood as including events or states of affairs. Positive values are those objects of interest that satisfy us or give us pleasure, such as good health. Negative values are those objects of interest that dissatisfy us or give us pain, such as bad health.

When the term "value" is used alone, it usually refers to positive values only, but it may also include negative values. In our value decisions, we generally seek to obtain positive values and avoid negative values. But except for the very young child, these decisions usually involve highly complex activities. To have a tooth pulled is painful, a negative value, but doing so leads to the possibility of better health, a positive value. *Intrinsic values* involve the feelings—such as pleasure and pain—we have of some value activity, such as enjoying good food or experiencing nausea from overeating. *Extrinsic values* are the means to intrinsic values, such as making the money that pays for the food. *Intrinsic-extrinsic values* not only evoke immediate feelings but also are means to further values, such as the enjoyable food that leads to future good health.

Values, we propose, involve a valuer and something that excites an interest in the valuer. *Subjectivist theories of value* claim, however, that it is the interest that projects the value on something. The painting, for example, is positively valuable only because it satisfies the interest of someone. If no one is around to project interest, then it is not a valuable object. Value is entirely relative to the valuer. *Objectivist theories of value* claim, conversely, that it is the object that excites the interest. The painting is positively valuable even if no one has any interest in it. Value is in the object independently of any subject. Jane is beautiful even if no one is aware of her beauty.

The *relational theory of value*—which is the one we have been presupposing throughout this book—claims that value emerges from the relation between an interest and an object. A good painting that is satisfying no one's interest at the moment nevertheless possesses potential value. A good painting possesses properties that under

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proper conditions are likely to stimulate the interest of a valuer. The subjectivist would say that this painting has no value whatsoever until someone projects value on it. The objectivist would say that this painting has actualized value inherent in it whether anyone enjoys it or not. The relationalist would say that this painting has potential value, that when it is experienced under proper conditions, a sensitive, informed participant will actualize the potential value. To describe a painting as "good" is a recognition that the painting has positive potential value. For the relationalist, value is realized only when objects with potential value connect with the interests of someone.

Values are usually studied with reference to the interaction of various kinds of potential value with human interests. For example, criticism tends to focus on the intrinsic values of works of art; economics focuses on commodities as basically extrinsic values; and *ethics* focuses on intrinsic-extrinsic values as they relate to moral standards.

Values that are described scientifically as they are found we shall call *value facts*. Values that are set forth as norms or ideals or what ought to be we shall call *normative values*. Smoking cigarettes is, for some people, a source of satisfaction, both physically and socially. The value facts known about smoking cigarettes tell us that they damage one's lungs and ultimately cause heart attacks and several forms of cancer. Smoking cigarettes conjures a conflict between the intrinsic value of satisfaction and the extrinsic value of early, painful death. Normative values tell us what our behavior should be. An ideal position on the smoking of cigarettes would tell us that good health in the future is to be preferred to pleasant satisfaction in the present.

The arts and the other humanities may clarify our normative value decisions, thus clarifying what ought to be and what we ought to do. We are beings who must constantly choose among various value possibilities. Paradoxically, even not choosing is often a choice. The humanities can help by revealing consequences of value choices that scientists do not consider. The other humanists help by clarifying consequences of value choices that escape both artists and scientists. For example, the historian or sociologist might trace the consequences of value choices in past societies. Moreover, the other humanists—especially philosophers—can take account of the entire value field, including the relationships between factual and normative values.

CONCEPTION KEY Value Decisions

1. You may have made a judgment about whether or not to smoke cigarettes. Was there any evidence—other than the scientific—that was relevant to your decision? Explain.
2. Reflect about the works of art we have discussed in this book. Which of them clarified value possibilities for you in a way that might influence your value decisions? If so, how? Be as specific as possible. Do some arts seem more relevant than others in this respect? If so, why?
3. Do you think that political leaders are more likely to make wise decisions if they are sensitive to the arts? Back up your answer with reference to specific leaders.
4. Is there any correlation between a flourishing state of the arts and a democracy? A tyranny? Back up your answers with reference to specific leaders.

Factual values can be verified experimentally, put through the tests of the scientific method. Normative values are verified experientially, put through the tests of good or bad consequences. Satisfaction, for ourselves and the others involved, is an experiential test that the normative values we chose in a given instance were

Read

Answer
Questions



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Chapter 16

THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF THE HUMANITIES

THE HUMANITIES AND THE SCIENCES

In the opening pages of Chapter 1 we defined the humanities as that broad range of creative activities and studies that are usually contrasted with mathematics and the advanced sciences, mainly because in the humanities strictly objective or scientific standards typically do not dominate.

Most college and university catalogs contain a grouping of courses called "the humanities." First, studies such as literature, the visual arts, music, history, *philosophy*, and *theology* are almost invariably included. Second, studies such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, business administration, and education may or may not be included. Third, studies such as physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, and engineering are never included. The reason the last group is excluded is obvious—strict scientific or objective standards are clearly applicable. With the second group, these standards are not always so clearly applicable. There is uncertainty about whether they belong with the sciences or the humanities. For example, most psychologists who experiment with animals apply the scientific method as rigorously as any biologist. But there are also psychologists—C. G. Jung, for instance—who speculate about such phenomena as the "collective unconscious" and the role of myth (see Chapter 8). Those psychologists belong in the humanities.

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Rigorous objective standards may be applied in any of the humanities. Thus, painting can be approached as a science—by the historian of medieval painting, for example, who measures, as precisely as any engineer, the evolving sizes of halos. On the other hand, the beauty of mathematics—its economy and elegance of proof—can excite the lover of mathematics as much as, if not more than, painting. Edna St. Vincent Millay proclaimed that “Euclid alone has looked on beauty bare.” And so the separation of the humanities and the sciences should not be observed rigidly. The separation is useful mainly because it indicates the dominance or the subordination of the strict scientific method in the various disciplines.

THE ARTS AND THE OTHER HUMANITIES

Artists are humanists. But artists differ from the other humanists because they create works that reveal values. Artists are sensitive to the important concerns of their societies. That is their subject matter in the broadest sense. They create artistic forms that clarify these values. The other humanists—such as historians, philosophers, and theologians—reflect upon, rather than reveal, values. They study values as given, as they find them. They try to describe and explain values—their causes and consequences. Furthermore, they may judge these values as good or bad. Thus, like artists, they try to clarify values, but they do this by means of analysis (see Chapter 3) rather than artistic revelation.

Artists may contribute to other humanists by revealing values and informing them through their media of the nature and importance of those values. This is the help that the artists give to the other humanists. Suppose a historian is trying to understand the bombing of Guernica by the Fascists in the Spanish Civil War. Suppose he or she has explored all factual resources. Even then, something very important may be left out: a vivid awareness of the suffering of the noncombatants. To gain insight into that pain, Picasso's *Guernica* (see Figure 1-4) may be very helpful. The same may be said of Francisco Goya's painting *May 3, 1808* (see Figure 2-3), showing the execution of prisoners of war. Art can provide an emotional understanding that data and information cannot.

Other humanists, such as critics and sociologists, may aid artists by their study of values. For example, we have concerned ourselves in some detail with criticism—the description, interpretation, and evaluation of works of art. Criticism is a humanistic discipline because it usually studies values—those revealed in works of art—without strictly applying scientific or objective standards. Good critics aid our understanding of works of art. We become more sensitively aware of the revealed values. This

CONCEPTION KEY Other Humanists and Artists

1. What is the relationship between Picasso's painting *Guernica* and the historical event it portrays? Was Picasso making a statement that can be thought of as contributing to history?
2. Picasso painted a night bombing, but the actual bombing occurred in daylight. Why the change? As you think about this, remember that the artist transforms in order to inform.

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Film Interprets Literature: *Howards End*

E. M. Forster's novel *Howards End* (1910) was made into a remarkable film in 1992 (Figures 15-1 and 15-2) by producer Ismail Merchant and director James Ivory. Ruth Praver Jhabvala wrote the screenplay. The film stars Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson, who, along with Jhabvala, won an Academy Award. The film was nominated as best picture, and its third Academy Award went to the design direction of Luciana Arrighi and Ian Whittaker.

The team of Merchant-Ivory, producer and director, has become distinguished for period films set in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Part of the reputation won by Merchant-Ivory films is due to their detailed designs. Thus, in a Merchant-Ivory film one expects to see Edwardian costumes meticulously reproduced, period interiors with prints and paintings, authentic architecture, both interior and exterior, and details sumptuously photographed so that the colors are rich and saturated and the atmosphere appropriately reflecting the era just before and after 1900.

All of that is true of the production of *Howards End*. But the subtlety of the interplay of the arts in the film is intensified because of the subtlety of the interplay of the arts in the novel. Forster wrote his novel in a way that emulates contemporary drama, at least in part. His scenes are dramatically conceived, with characters acting in carefully described settings, speaking in ways that suggest the stage. Moreover, Forster's special interest in music and the role culture in general plays in the lives of his characters makes the novel especially challenging for interpretation by moving images.

The film follows Forster's story faithfully. Three families at the center of the story stand in contrast: the Schlegel sisters, Margaret and Helen; a rich businessman, Henry Wilcox, his frail wife, Ruth, and their superficial, conventional children; and a poor, young, unhappily married bank clerk, Leonard Bast, whom the Schlegel

Read



FIGURE 15-1
Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson
in *Howards End*. Henry Wilcox (Hopkins)
and Margaret Schlegel (Thompson), now
married, react to bad news.

Source: Sony Pictures Classics



FIGURE 15-2
Emma Thompson and Helena
Bonham Carter in *Howards End*.
Margaret Schlegel (Thompson) tries
to understand her sister Helen's
(Bonham Carter) motives in helping
Leonard Bast.

Courtesy Everett Collection

sisters befriend. Margaret and Helen are idealistic and cultured. The Wilcoxes, except for Ruth, are uncultured snobs. When Ruth dies, Henry proposes to and is accepted by Margaret. Her sister, Helen, who detests Henry, is devastated by this marriage and turns to Leonard Bast. The story becomes a tangle of opposites and, because of the stupidity of Henry's son Charles, turns tragic. In the end, thanks to the moral strength of Margaret, reconciliation becomes possible.

Read the novel first, and then see the film. In one scene early in the novel, some of the protagonists are in Queen's Hall in London listening to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Here is Forster's wonderful description:

It will be generally admitted that Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated into the ear of man. All sorts and conditions are satisfied by it. Whether you are like Mrs. Munt, and tap surreptitiously when the tunes come—of course, not so as to disturb the others; or like Helen, who can see heroes and shipwrecks in the music's flood; or like Margaret, who can only see the music; or like Tibby, who is profoundly versed in counterpoint, and holds the full score open on his knee; or like their cousin, Fräulein Mosebach, who remembers all the time that Beethoven is "echt Deutsch" [pure German]; or like Fräulein Mosebach's young man, who can remember nothing but Fräulein Mosebach: in any case, the passion of your life becomes more vivid, and you are bound to admit that such a noise is cheap at two shillings.

Now that is a passage surely worth recording. But how could you get it into a film unless by a "voiceover," an awkward technique in this context? Observe how this scene is portrayed in the film. Also observe in the film the awkward drawn-out scenes of Leonard Bast pursuing Helen in the rain (she inadvertently had taken his umbrella when leaving the concert hall). One keeps wondering why the soaking Leonard does not simply run and catch up with Helen. In the novel, these events

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are much more smoothly handled. In such portrayals, written language has the advantage.

Conversely, the film captures something in 1992 that the novel could not have achieved in its own time—the sense of loss for an elegant way of life in the period before World War I. The moving images create nostalgia for a past totally unrecoverable. Nostalgia for that past is, of course, also created by Forster's fine prose, but not with the power of moving images. Coming back to the novel after its interpretation by the film surely makes our participation more complete.

**Answer
questions**

PERCEPTION KEY *Howards End*

1. Do the filmic presentations of Margaret Schlegel and Henry Wilcox "ring true" to Forster's characterizations? If not, what are the deficiencies?
2. Is the background music effective?
3. What kind or kinds of cinematic cuts are used in the film: jump cuts? Continuity cuts? Fades? How effective are the cuts?
4. In which work, the novel or the film, are the social issues of greater importance? Which puts more stress on the class distinctions between the Basts and both the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes? Which seems to have a stronger social message?
5. How does the film—by supplying the images your imagination can only invent in reading the novel—affect your understanding of the lives of the Schlegels, Wilcoxes, and Basts?
6. Is it better to see the film first or to read the novel first? What informs your decision?

VIOLENCE AND FILM

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Because it is so easy to shoot a scene in various ways, a good director is constantly choosing the shot that he or she hopes has the most meaning within the total structure of the film. When Luis Buñuel briefly shows us the razoring of a woman's eyeball in *Un Chien Andalou* (1928) (it is really a slaughtered cow's eyeball), he is counting on our personal horror at actually seeing such an act, but the scene is artistically justifiable because Buñuel carefully integrated the scene into the total structure. Unfortunately, many films show sheer violence without any attempt to inform—for example, *Nightmare on Elm Street* (1985) and its many sequels, the Arnold Schwarzenegger film *Predator* (1988), and similar films. *Kill Bill* (2003, 2004), both volumes, as well as *A History of Violence* (2005) move in a somewhat different direction, in that they are not specifically horror films despite their depiction of violence. These have been nominated for a number of awards in recognition of their seriousness.

A film that was ahead of its time in portraying violence, *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), won Quentin Tarantino the respect of movie critics and the movie public. Tarantino followed up with *Pulp Fiction* (1994), three related tales set in Los Angeles and



FIGURE 12-8

Jamie Foxx in *Django Unchained* (2009). Quentin Tarantino has made violence central to his work. His films have also been widely praised.

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reminiscent of the pulp fiction novels of Dashiell Hammett. While somewhat cartoonish in places, and laced with unexpected comedic moments, the film was nominated for several awards, among them the Palme d'Or at Cannes. *Django Unchained* (Figure 12-8) continued Tarantino's commitment to artful violence.

Clever directors can easily shock their audiences. But the more complex responses, some of which are as difficult to control as they are to attain, are the aim of the enduring filmmakers. When Ingmar Bergman shows us the rape scene in *The Virgin Spring* (1959), he does not saturate us with horror. And the murder of the rapists by the girl's father is preceded by an elaborate purification ritual that relates the violence and horror to profound meaning. In any art, control of audience response is vital. We can become emotionally saturated just as easily as we can become bored. The result is indifference.

PERCEPTION KEY Violence and Film

1. Many groups condemn violent films of the kind described as slasher films or films that gratuitously portray torture and gore. Do you agree with these groups? Do you feel that violent films affect viewers' behavior? How do they affect you? Is it possible to participate with a violent film?
2. Critics point to the fact that many of Shakespeare's plays—and the plays of his contemporaries—were often bloody and violent. They also say that violence in Shakespeare's plays is revelatory because it reveals the significance of the morality of his age. Do you feel that modern violent films are revelatory of the morality of our age?
3. Of the violent films you have seen, which one is certainly a work of art? Is violence the subject matter of that film? In what ways is the film revelatory?

Read

Answer
question



FOCUS ON The Americans

The Americans (FX, 2013–present) is a sleeper of a serial drama—in several senses. For one thing, it took a while for the series to catch on to the public and build an audience. But by the second season critics were calling it the best series on television. It is a sleeper in another sense: The major characters, Elizabeth (Keri Russell) and Philip Jennings (Matthew Rhys), are a sleeper cell of Russian spies living in Washington, D.C., as ordinary Americans (Figure 13-11). Such an arrangement might seem improbable except for the fact that the series is based on actual sleeper cells discovered in Massachusetts in 2005. There may be more.

Both Elizabeth and Philip were trained scrupulously in Russia before being placed in suburban America. They knew American customs and were warned never to speak anything but English, even to other Russian agents. As a result they appear totally ordinary, having dinner with friends and raising two children, Paige (Holly Taylor) and Henry (Kiedrich Sellati). They have to answer to their controls, Claudia (Margot Martindale) and Gabriel (Frank Langella) (Figure 13-12). But these controls constantly refer back to a superior power, the Center, which makes sometimes unreasonable demands on Elizabeth and Philip. In this sense, the characters have a license to kill and a demand to be improvisational, but at root they are pawns of the system.

From the first episode, Philip finds America remarkable and alluring. When he and Elizabeth arrive in their first motel room, Philip is astonished to find a working air conditioner. We think for a while that he may have his head turned, but Elizabeth is staunch and later even reports to Claudia that Philip may be unreliable. As a result, in a later episode, Philip is kidnapped and beaten to make him confess he is a spy. But his kidnappers are Russian agents testing him, and he realizes what Elizabeth has done. It shakes their relationship for an episode or two.

Elizabeth and Philip have an arranged marriage that changes and develops as the series progresses. They gradually begin to love one another and they wish well for their children. However, as Paige in season five begins to realize that her parents are not just travel agents, but also spies, she becomes involved and Philip fears for her (Figure 13-13). He wants her not to be a spy like him, but Gabriel, who acts as a grandfather figure to them, implies that he is unable to help him if the Center wishes her to be one of them (Figure 13-14). As it is, Elizabeth seems eager for Paige to be permitted to follow their path if she wishes.

Such tensions abound through the first five years of the serial. We see problems in episode one that show up in the fifth season. Allusions to Abraham Lincoln are frequent early and late, with comparisons to the current president, Ronald Reagan. The time period is that of the 1980s.

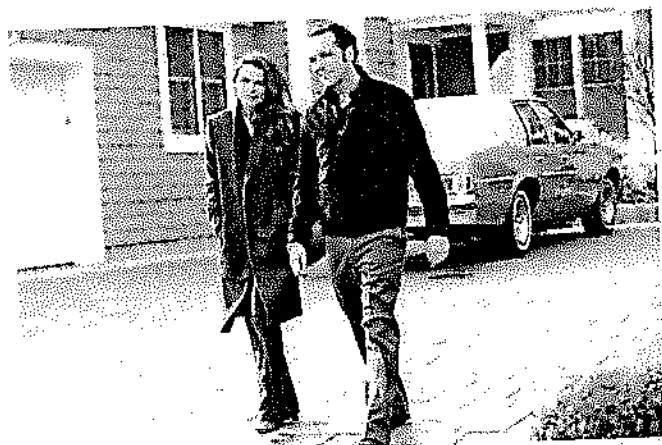


FIGURE 13-11
Keri Russell as Elizabeth Jennings and Matthew Rhys as Philip Jennings. They live in a modest home with period cars (mostly Oldsmobiles) and appear to live a normal life as owners of a travel agency. Their cover permits them to travel frequently on their operations and sometimes stay over for periods of time.

Source: FX



FIGURE 13-12
Frank Langella as Gabriel and Margot Martindale as Claudia in a late episode of *The Americans*. Just as Gabriel is concerned and sensitive, Claudia is hardnosed and determined.

Source: FX

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When Ronald Reagan was shot in March 1981, the Russian handlers feared that the blame would be put on Russia. The Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, without the actual authority, took over the White House and seemed to be staging a coup. Gabriel thought he would order a nuclear strike against Russia. The tensions among the Russians led Philip and Elizabeth to unearth munitions and weapons designed to kill the Secretary of State—and they came close to being caught. In that incident Elizabeth shot a policeman who had stopped their vehicle. The killings are often done by Elizabeth and are sometimes almost wanton.

Another source of tension early in the series is the arrival of Stan Beeman (Noah Emmerich), an FBI man assigned to counterterrorism who moves in next door to Elizabeth and Philip. Throughout the seasons Stan and Philip become friends and the two families interact with dinners and events. Stan's son, Will, and Paige become romantically close, making Philip and Elizabeth so concerned that they forbid her to see him (Figure 13-15). In season five they explain the risks she would be taking with all of their futures. Paige also moves slightly apart from her parents by joining a church and being baptized. This detail in season three has curious developments when Philip uses religion and prayer to dupe a young girl whom he needs in order to gain access to her father's top secret papers.

Both Elizabeth and Philip are expected to use sex to achieve their ends. Both have sex with people from whom they seek vital information. Early in the series that is not a major emotional issue, but as they grow more and more loving toward each other it begins to arouse deep feelings, even jealousy. In the process of their making sexual connections, Philip and Elizabeth usually wear disguises that include often fanciful wigs. In some cases they sustain their extra relationships over long periods of time.

The abrupt scene shifts from one sexual relationship—which constitutes, in essence, a specific spying operation—to another are often jarring and demand continuing attention from one episode to another. The effect is to keep the viewer off guard, which is a metaphor for the operatives who keep the FBI off guard.

The style of the show is marked by flashbacks to childhood in Russia, during very hard times. For example, Philip's father was a guard in a prison camp, and not a nice man. Elizabeth remembers a fatherless childhood with a mother who somehow avoided being the prey of a powerful government figure.

The Americans provides its audience with an introduction to the values and problems of a recent historical era, the era of the Cold War and its thawing in the 1980s. The threat of nuclear war was in the air. The changes in Russian government after the



FIGURE 13-13

Holly Taylor as Paige Jennings. She is an inquisitive child, very liberal in her politics, and developing a serious interest in religion. In season five she has to cope with the knowledge that her mother killed someone as part of her life as a Russian spy. She listens closely as her parents explain why they feel they are acting for the greater good of society.

Source: FX

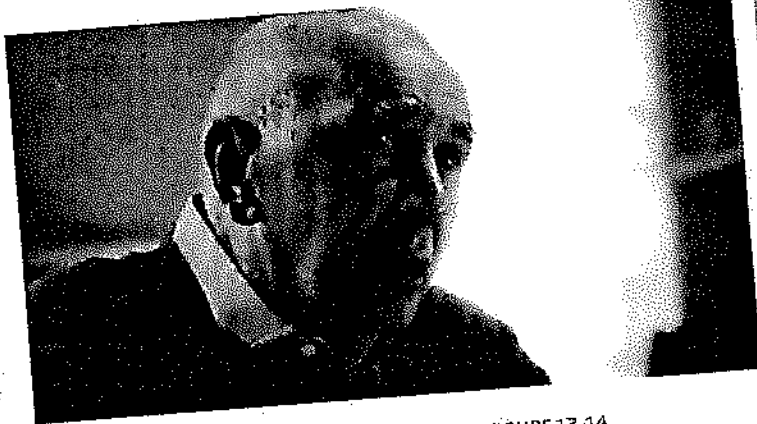


FIGURE 13-14

Frank Langella as Gabriel, the well-meaning and sensitive control to whom Elizabeth and Philip answer. Gabriel seems to have genuine feelings for Elizabeth, whom he knew as a child, and now for Paige, Elizabeth's daughter.

Source: FX

Read

death of its leader, Leonid Brezhnev, in late 1982 led to changes in American policies. Russia was fighting in Afghanistan, and the United States had recently been defeated in Vietnam. *The Americans* explores problems with Russian actions and, from Philip and Elizabeth's point of view, problems with what American authorities were doing.

The Americans has developed into a kind of time capsule recording a nervous period in international affairs, told from the point of view of people who were operatives on the ground trying to shape the direction of history. *The Americans* is not just an intense spy story but also a historical analysis that is revelatory of a period in international politics that shaped the world as we know it today.



FIGURE 13-15 Elizabeth and Philip explain to Paige how she might reveal their true identity if she continues to have Will as her boyfriend. Will is the son of the FBI agent next door. Elizabeth is giving Paige a way to hold her fingers to help her keep her secret even if she is in a romantic situation with Will.

Source: FX

Answer
Questions

PERCEPTION KEY Focus on *The Americans*

1. To what extent does *The Americans* contribute to your education? To what extent is the appeal of the series linked to what you learn from it about the late years of the Cold War between Russia and America?
2. A great deal of attention is paid to the composition of individual frames of the drama. Comment on the quality of individual images and on the nature of the pacing of the drama. To what audience do you feel this series has the most appeal?
3. How accurate do you think the portrayal of society is in *The Americans*? What dramatic qualities lead you to think it accurate or inaccurate?
4. Some critics have complained about the sudden violence and cold-blooded killing on the part of Elizabeth. Do you agree? Do you find that the series deserves the warnings that begin each segment?
5. How would you compare *The Americans* with another historical serial drama such as *Homeland*, *Mad Men*, or *Downton Abbey*?

DIRECTING AND EDITING

The two dominant figures in early films were directors who did their own editing: D. W. Griffith and Sergei Eisenstein, unquestionably the great early geniuses of filmmaking. They managed to gain control over the production of their works so that they could craft their films into a distinctive art. Some of their films are still considered among the finest ever made. *The Birth of a Nation* (1916) and *Intolerance* (1918) by Griffith, and *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) and *Ivan the Terrible* (1941–1946) by Eisenstein, are still being

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shown and are influencing contemporary filmmakers. These men were more than just directors. With many of their films, they were responsible for almost everything: writing, casting, choosing locations, handling the camera, directing, editing, and financing.

Directing and editing are probably the most crucial phases of filmmaking. Today most directors control the acting and supervise the photography, carried out by skilled technicians who work with such problems as lighting, camera angles, and focusing, as well as the motion of the camera itself (some sequences use a highly mobile camera, while others use a fixed camera). Among the resources available to directors making choices about the use of the camera are the kinds of shots that may eventually be edited together. A *shot* is a single exposure of the camera without a break. Some of the most important kinds of shots follow:

Establishing shot: Usually a distant shot establishes important locations or figures in the action.

Close-up: An important object, such as the face of a character, fills the screen.

Long shot: The camera is far distant from the most important characters, objects, or scenes.

Medium shot: What the camera focuses on is neither up close nor far distant. There can be medium close-ups and medium long shots, too.

Following shot: The camera keeps a moving figure in the frame, usually keeping pace with the figure.

Point-of-view shot: The camera records what the character must be seeing; when the camera moves, it implies that the character's gaze moves.

Tracking shot: A shot in which the camera moves forward, backward, or sideways.

Crane shot: The camera is on a crane or movable platform and moves upward or downward.

Handheld shot: The camera is carried, sometimes on a special harness, by the camera operator.

Recessional shot: The camera focuses on figures and objects moving away, as in Figure 12-10. A *processional shot* focuses on figures and objects moving toward the camera.

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When you see films, you probably see all these shots many times. Add to these specific kinds of shots the variables of camera angles, types of camera lenses, variations in lighting, and variations in approach to sound, and you can see that the technical resources of the director are enormous. The addition of script and actors enriches the director's range of choices so that they become almost dizzying.

The editor puts the shots in order after the filming is finished. This selective process is highly complex and of supreme importance, for the structuring of the shots forms the film. The alternatives are often vast, and if the film is to achieve an artistic goal—insight into its subject matter—the shot succession must be creatively accomplished. The editor trims the shots to an appropriate length, then joins them with other shots to create the final film. Edited sequences sometimes shot far apart in time and place are organized into a unity. Films are rarely shot sequentially, and only a part of the total footage is shown in a film. The old saying of the bit-part actor—"I was lost on the cutting-room floor"—attests to the fact that sometimes interesting footage is omitted.

FIGURE 12-2

Medium interior shot from *Tokyo Story* (1953), by Yasujiro Ozu. Ozu is considered one of the finest Japanese directors. *Tokyo Story* tells of older parents visiting their children in postwar Tokyo. The older generation realizes it has no place in the new Japan, as their children are too busy to spend time with them.

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In a relatively short time, the choice and editing of shots have become almost a kind of language. The parents on the left of the medium shot from Yasujiro's *Tokyo Story* (Figure 12-2) seem an essential part of the family because the physical space is so limited, but the irony is that later shots show them very much separated emotionally and psychologically from their ungrateful, busy children.

It helps to know the resources of the editor, who cuts the film to create the relationships between takes. The way these cuts are related is at the core of the director's distinctive style. Some of the most familiar of the director's and editor's choices follow:

Continuity cut: shots edited to produce a sense of narrative continuity, following the action stage by stage. The editor can also use a discontinuity cut to break up the narrative continuity for effect.

Jump cut: sometimes just called a "cut"; moves abruptly from one shot to the next, with no preparation and often with a shock.

Cut-in: an immediate move from a wide shot to a very close shot of the same scene; the editor may "cut out," as well

Cross-cutting: alternating shots of two or more distinct actions occurring in different places (but often at the same time)

Dissolve: one scene disappearing slowly while the next scene appears as if beneath it

Fade: includes fade-in (a dark screen growing brighter to reveal the shot) and fade-out (the screen darkens, effectively ending the shot)

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Wipe: transition between shots, with a line moving across or through the screen separating one shot from the next

Graphic match: joining two shots that have similar composition, color, or scene

Montage sequence: a sequence of images dramatically connected but physically disconnected

Shot-reverse shot: a pair of shots in which the first shot shows a character looking at something; reverse shot shows what the character sees

Our responses to film depend on the choices that directors and editors make regarding shots and editing almost as much as on the nature of the narrative and the appeal of the actors. In a relatively short time, film editing has become a kind of language—a language of imagery with close to universal significance.

When the editing is handled well, it can be profoundly effective, because it is impossible in real-life experience to achieve what the editor achieves. By eliminating the irrelevant, good editing accents the relevant. The *montage*—dramatically connected but physically disconnected images—can be made without a word of dialogue.

PERCEPTION KEY Editing

1. Study a film such as *The Bourne Identity* and identify at least three kinds of shots mentioned in the text. Find a point-of-view shot, a tracking shot, or a handheld shot. Which is most dramatic?
2. In such a film as *The Bourne Identity*, establish the effect on the viewer of shots that last a long time as opposed to a rapid succession of very short shots. Which of these two techniques contributes more to the participative experience of the film?
3. Find at least one jump cut and comment on the editor's decision to use it. How shocking or jarring is the cut? Is it effective in context?
4. Which continuity cuts does the editor of the film you have studied contribute most to your understanding of the film?

Read

Answer
questions

Alvin Ailey's Revelations

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DANCE

One of the classics of modern dance is Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* (Figure 10-8), based largely on African American spirituals and experience. It was first performed in January 1960, and hardly a year has gone by since without its having been performed to highly enthusiastic crowds. Ailey refined *Revelations* somewhat over the years, but its impact has brought audiences to their feet for standing ovations at almost every performance. After Ailey's untimely death at the age of fifty-eight, the company was directed by Judith Jamison, one of the great dancers in Ailey's company.

Some of the success of *Revelations* stems from Ailey's choice of the deeply felt music of the spirituals to which the dancers' movements are closely attuned. But, then, this is also one of the most noted qualities of a ballet like *Swan Lake*, which has one of the richest orchestral scores in the history of ballet. Music, unless it is program music, is not, strictly speaking, a pretext for a dance, but there is a perceptible connection between, say, the rhythmic characteristics of a given music and a dance composed in such a way as to take advantage of those characteristics. Thus, in *Revelations* the energetic movements of the dancers often appear as visual, bodily transformations of the rhythmically charged music.

Try to see *Revelations*. Several sites online present segments of the dance, but none show it in its entirety. We will point out details and structures, an awareness of which may prove helpful for refining your experience not only of this dance but of modern dance in general. Beyond the general pretext of *Revelations*—that of African American experience as related by spirituals—each of its separate sections has its own pretext. But none of them is as tightly or specifically narrative as is usually the case in ballet. In *Revelations*, generalized situations act as pretexts.

The first section of the dance is called "Pilgrim of Sorrow," with three parts: "I Been Buked," danced by the entire company (about twenty dancers, male and female);

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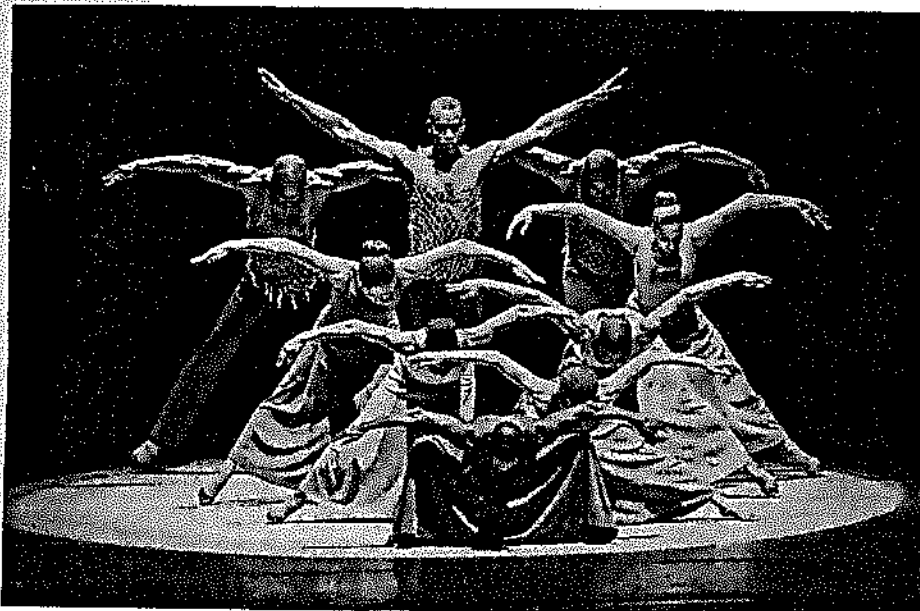


FIGURE 10-8
The Alvin Ailey Dance Company in
Revelations, a suite of dances to gospel
music.

©Zuma Press, Inc./Alamy

"Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel," danced by only a few dancers; and "Fix Me Jesus," danced by one couple. The general pretext is the suffering of African Americans, who are, like the Israelites of the Old Testament, taking refuge in their faith in the Lord. The most dramatic moments in this section are in "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel," a statement of overwhelming faith characterized by close ensemble work. The in-line dancers parallel the rhythms of the last word of the hymn: "Dan'-i-el," accenting the first and last syllables with powerful rhythmic movements.

The second section, titled "Take Me to the Water," is divided into "Processional," danced by eight dancers; "Wading in the Water," danced by six dancers; and "I Want to Be Ready," danced by a single male dancer. The whole idea of "Take Me to the Water" suggests baptism, a ritual that affirms faith in God—the source of energy of the spirituals. "Wading in the Water" is particularly exciting, with dancers holding a stage-long bolt of light-colored fabric to represent the water. The dancers shimmer the fabric to the rhythm of the music, and one dancer after another crosses over the fabric, symbolizing at least two things: the waters of baptism and the Mosaic waters of freedom. It is this episode that originally featured the charismatic Judith Jamison in a long white gown and holding a huge parasol as she danced.

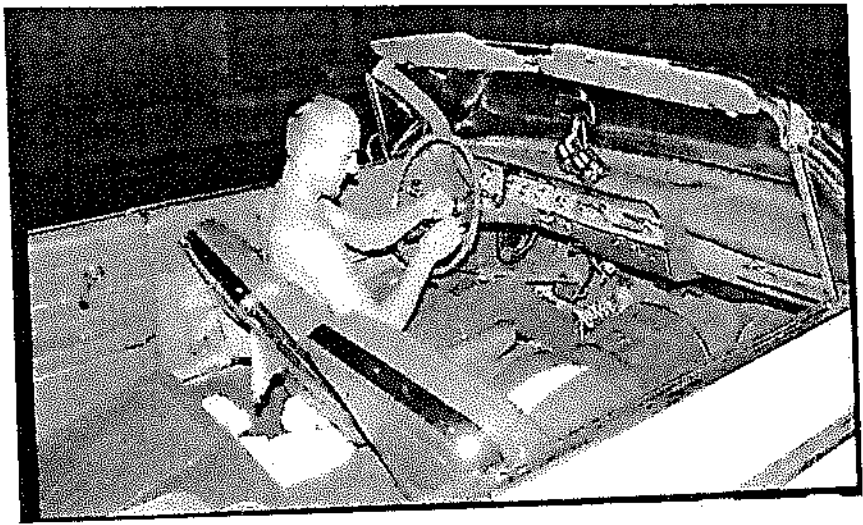
The third section is called "Move, Members, Move," with the subsections titled "Sinner Man," "The Day Is Past and Gone," "You May Run Home," and the finale "Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham." In this last episode, a sense of triumph over suffering is projected, suggesting the redemption of a people by using the same kind of Old Testament imagery and musical material that opened the dance. The entire section takes as its theme the lives of people after they have been received into the faith, with the possibilities of straying into sin. It ends with a powerful rocking spiritual that emphasizes forgiveness and the reception of the people (the "members") into the bosom of Abraham, according to the prediction of the Bible. This ending features a large amount of ensemble work and is danced by the entire company, with rows of male dancers sliding forward on their outspread knees and then rising all in one sliding gesture, raising their hands high. "Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham" is powerfully sung again and again until the effect is almost hypnotic.

The subject matter of *Revelations* is in part that of feelings and states of mind. But it is also more obviously that of the struggle of a people as told—on one level—by their music. The dance has the advantage of a powerfully engaging subject matter even before we witness the interpretation of that subject matter. And the way in which the movements of the dance are closely attuned to the rhythms of the music tends to evoke intense participation, since the visual qualities of the dance are powerfully reinforced by the aural qualities of the music.

PERCEPTION KEY Revelations

1. A profitable way of understanding the resources of *Revelations* is to take a well-known African American spiritual such as "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" (see Figure 9-4) and supply the movements that it suggests to you. Once you have done so, ask yourself how difficult it was. Is it natural to move to such music?
2. Instead of spirituals, try the same experiment with popular music such as rock and rap. What characteristics does such music have that stimulate motion?
3. Is there anything archetypal in the subject matter of *Revelations*?

Read
Answer
questions



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Chapter 11

PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTOGRAPHY AND PAINTING

The first demonstration of photography took place in Paris in 1839, when Louis J. M. Daguerre (1787–1851) astonished a group of French artists and scientists with the first Daguerreotypes. The process was almost instantaneous, producing a finely detailed monochrome image on a silver-coated copper plate. At that demonstration, the noted French painter Paul Delaroche declared, "From today painting is dead." An examination of his famous painting *Execution of Lady Jane Grey* (Figure 11-1) reveals the source of his anxiety. Delaroche's reputation was built on doing what the photograph does best—reproducing exact detail and exact perspective. However, the camera could not yet reproduce the large size or the colors that make Delaroche's painting powerful.

Read

PERCEPTION KEY Execution of Lady Jane Grey

1. What aspects of Delaroche's style of painting would have made him think of photography as a threat? In what ways is this painting similar to a photograph?
2. Why is it surprising to learn that this painting was exhibited five years before Delaroche saw a photograph—actually before the invention of photography?
3. Examine Delaroche's painting for attention to detail. This is a gigantic work, much larger than any photograph could be at mid-nineteenth century. Every figure is reproduced with the same sharpness, from foreground to background. To what extent is that approach to sharpness of focus like or unlike what might have been achieved by a photograph of this scene?
4. How does color focus our attention in Delaroche's painting?

Answer
Questions



FIGURE 11-1
Paul Delaroche, *Execution of Lady Jane Grey*. 1843. Oil on canvas, 97 x 117 inches. National Gallery, London, Great Britain. Delaroche witnessed the first demonstration of photography in 1839 and declared, "From today painting is dead." His enormous painting had great size and brilliant color, two ways, for the time being, in which photography could be superseded.

©HIP/Art Resource, NY

Some early critics of photography complained that the camera does not offer the control over the subject matter that painting does. But the camera does offer the capacity to crop and select the area of the final print, the capacity to alter the aperture of the lens and thus control the focus in selective areas, as well as the capacity to reveal movement in blurred scenes, all of which only suggest the ability of the instrument to transform visual experience into art.

Many early photographs exhibit the capacity of the camera to capture and control details in a manner that informs the viewer about the subject matter. For example, in his portrait of Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1857), a great builder of steamships (Figure 11-2), Robert Howlett exposed the negative for a shorter time and widened the aperture of his lens (letting in more light), thus controlling the depth of field (how much is in focus). Brunel's figure is in focus, but surrounding objects are in soft focus, rendering them less significant. The pile of anchor chains in the background is

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