

35334 Practical Criticism Applied to English Literature

Instructions for the critical essay

Topic assignment:

According to your surname in the table below, you are assigned a topic related to the screen adaptations of *Hamlet* directed by Michael Almereyda (1997) and by Gregory Doran (2006). These versions, together with the critical edition of the play you are using, will constitute your basic primary sources for your paper.

Essay outline:

Once you are familiarized with your primary and secondary sources, send an email to the instructor with an OUTLINE of your essay, including a specific title of your essay, other sources you may have found, and question(s) you are going to address in your essay.

Deadline for the outline and title: **end of the 8th week**

First version of your essay:

Submit a stapled printout of a complete first version of your essay by **end of the 12th week** to the instructor in the classroom or in his/her postbox (6th floor, English and German Department). Please do not use folders, plastic or otherwise, just the stapled sheets.

Please note that you are asked to write about specific performances of *Hamlet*, so you are expected to comment on issues and features that are peculiar to these productions and not only to the "general" *Hamlet* one can imagine from the critical editions.

Second / Definitive version of your essay:

Submit your definitive essay by the **end of the 15th week**, both by uploading it to Tasks/Aula Virtual and by handing in a hardcopy replica (together with your first version).

Requirements:

- Length: 1000 WORDS (excluding footnotes and bibliography)
- Document your essay by consulting at least FIVE secondary sources: at least THREE of them must be paper- or print-based references (from books or journals in the library) and ONE of them an article from a scholarly journal (e.g. *Shakespeare Survey*, *Hamlet Studies*, *Early Modern Literary Studies*, *Borrowers and Lenders*, etc.).
- Use the MLA style (in-text or parenthetical citations, author-page style)
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- Use a hour:minute:second code (e.g. 1:23:35) to refer to moments in the films as displayed in the time-counter of your video player
- Use Times New Roman, 12 point, line spacing 1.5 cm, horizontal and vertical margins 3 cms

Initial letter of student's surname	Assigned topic
A, C, E,	Relate Almereyda's and Doran's adaptations to the recent widespread concern about unchecked surveillance by governments on individuals. (You may consider current issues involving the Patriots Act, or the global surveillance troubles with the National Security Agency, etc.)
B, D, F, H, J, L, N, P,	Compare and contrast the portrayal of Gertrude in Almereyda's and Doran's adaptations with contemporary views of adult women
G, I, M,	Compare and contrast the portrayal of Ophelia in Almereyda's and Doran's adaptations with contemporary views of young women
R, S, T, V	Critically analyze the theme of revenge in the final scene (Act 5, scene 2) in Almereyda's and Doran's adaptations with contemporary attitudes to revenge in a contemporary film, play or novel of your choice

Further instructions for the essay (Practical Criticism Applied to English Literature)

§ How to refer to a print-based source that you have found through an online resource:

Since the usual Style Guides do not contemplate this situation, you may combine the instructions from both print-based sources (book, journal) and online sources. As an online source, you should add a reference (in italics) to the online service, the word "Web", and date of access. It is also convenient to add the url (between pointed brackets) if it is not too long.

An example: A student has found an essay called "The embassy of death: An essay on Hamlet", in Google Scholars, and has downloaded a doc file from it. She asks if the following reference is ok:

Knight, G Wilson. "The embassy of death: An essay on Hamlet." *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy* (1930): 17-46. April

20, 2013, [http://scholar.google.es/scholar?](http://scholar.google.es/scholar?hl=ca&q=the+embassy+of+death%3A+an+essay+on+hamlet&btnG=)

hl=ca&q=the+embassy+of+death%3A+an+essay+on+hamlet&btnG=.

This is not quite right. First, this is not a reliable source since the file is a transcription of a fragment from Knight's essay and we cannot be sure how accurate this transcription is. Second, the essay is part of an anthology of essays written by Knight: it is therefore a book, and should be referenced as a book (including city and publisher in it), while the above reference follows the format of a journal (and wrongly includes the url without pointed brackets). The reference should be as follows:

Knight, G. Wilson. "The embassy of death: An essay on Hamlet." *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930. 17-46. *Google Scholar*. Web. 20 April 2013.

However, you are best to find a more reliable source, such as The Internet Archive and Google Books, both showing scanned versions of the original printing. Note in the following reference for the Internet Archive reproduction that this online service uses the 5th edition of Knight's book, and so the publication information (city, publisher and year) refer to this 5th edition, and the year of publication of the first edition (1930) is included before the publication information.

Knight, G. Wilson. "The embassy of death: An essay on Hamlet." *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearean Tragedy*. 1930. 5th ed. Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1957. 17-46. *The Internet Archive*. Web. 20 April 2013.

§ How to refer to different critical editions of *Hamlet*:

Rather than using the following format, with both editions headed by the author's name:

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Ed. Harold Jenkins. London: Methuen, 1982

it is more useful to refer to the editor (Jenkins, or Edwards) and list them under the editor's name:

Jenkins, Harold, ed. *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. London: Methuen, 1982.

Edwards, Philip, ed. *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985.

§ References for the screen adaptations

Almereyda, Michael, dir. *Hamlet*. Perf. Ethan Hawke. Miramax Films, 2000. DVD.

Doran, Gregory, dir. *Hamlet*. Perf. David Tennant. Royal Shakespeare Company. BBC, 2009. TV film.

Begin your essay with the following format:

Surname, initial name

35334 *Practical Criticism* - Group A/B/C

First / Second Version

Date of Delivery

“Title of paper”

...

Please hand in your DEFINITIVE essay TOGETHER WITH YOUR FIRST VERSION, both in electronic format through the Tasks feature in Aula Virtual, and on “paper” (stapled) to the instructor either in the classroom or in his/her postbox (6th floor, English and German Department).