



Part III: Writing a Movie Review

Yeah we say “I liked it”, or “I didn't like it” when talking to friends, but to truly make a salient point, we need to say more; we need to say *why*. This is analysis. We're writing a movie review to really be clear about the *why*. You can like it. You can hate it. You just need to articulate *why*.

First, try to formulate a specific opinion in one sentence. Your job as reviewer is to give an opinion of the movie. Ultimately, this may come down to a "thumbs up" or "four stars out of five." But you want to have in mind a specific argument to drive your critique. For example, "I didn't like this sequel" becomes "the story had funny moments but it went on too long and merely rehashed the jokes of the original". "This horror movie is good" becomes "this horror movie works because it builds suspense right up until the end". So, try to find your own very specific opinion that will be the foundation of your film review.

Process

Step 1

Read a bunch of professional movie reviews. One website that aggregates many great reviews is rottentomatoes.com. Search for a film you've seen. Scroll down to the excerpted reviews. Reviews with a tomato indicate that the reviewer liked the film. Reviews with a splat indicate that the reviewer did not. Follow the links. Read a few. Notice each individual's opinion coloring the review. Now search for another film.

Step 2

Pick a movie you've recently seen and interact with it! Begin writing about it.

What you won't find next is steps 3-10. Figure it out. Write about the characters. Write about the acting. Write about the editing. Get stuck. Go back and read more reviews. Write about what the movie asks you to write about.

Movie reviews are typically 250 to 500 words. Yours should be the same. Have it printed and ready to hand in on the first day of class.

Need to know the name of the actor? Director? The year it came out?

imdb.com is a great site. (Internet Movie Database). Search for a film. Scroll down. Click around. Voila. All the information you can possibly need for your review.