
CINE 388: The Great Illusion

Spring 2011

Short Essay #2

Due: Friday, March 4, at 5:00pm



TOPIC

Choose **four** of the following prompts from the previous two films, and respond to each in approximately 500 words. You should focus on coming up with an original and creative response, and therefore do not need to use secondary sources (if you do, however, remember to use appropriate citations).

Keep in mind that your responses should be organized, well thought, and relevant to the corresponding prompt. Since these questions merit much more detailed discussions than the scope of this essay, be specific in your responses. You may find it useful to use an image or clip from the course web site.

***FAR FROM THE TREES* (JACINTO ESTEVA, 1970)**

1. Choose any sequence from the film, and relate it to an overall theme that the film presents, or discuss its relevance to New Spanish Cinema. Be sure to defend your ideas with a concrete discussion of the sequence you choose, and specifically identify the sequence at the beginning of your response.
2. Discuss the uses of sound in *Far from the Trees*. You may focus on the diegetic or non-diegetic sounds, including the voice-overs, and their relation to the images shown on the screen. How does the manipulation of sound impact the viewing experience?



***LAW OF DESIRE* (PEDRO ALMODÓVAR, 1985)**

3. Examine the way Almodóvar constructs a "punk" aesthetic through his unique *mise-en-scène*. How does the film recycle elements to create an effect of *bricolage* that reinscribes elements typically found in different situations?
4. Memory is a central factor in the diegesis of *Law of Desire*, and is uniquely linked to the cultural situation of Spain in the 1980s (and, as we have seen, even before). Choose one sequence that speaks about "memory" and how the discussion reflects a view on Spanish culture or Spanishness.
5. Almodóvar's films consist of a radical break with the social and cultural conventions during the Francoist dictatorship. How does *Law of Desire* reevaluate traditional topics, such as the family, sexuality, the church, etc.? Analyze one specific instance.

