

Media Literacy Spring 2025

Midterm Assignment: Exploring Based on a True Story

Due: March 26, 2025 (Before Class Starts)

To analyze “based on a true story” narratives, you will be asked to choose a film and complete a film review that critiques, analyzes, and fact checks the film. This is a creative assignment. You are playing the role of a film critic. You can either deliver a 4-5 page paper, a 5-10 minute podcast or a 5-10 minute video. It is your choice.

You will choose one of the following films to review:

- BlacKkKlansman (2018, Directed by Spike Lee)
- Lee (2023, Directed by Ellen Kuras)
- Sing Sing (2023, Directed by Greg Kwedar)
- A Complete Unknown (2024, Directed by James Mangold)
- Shirley (2024, Directed by John Ridley)

Regardless of what format you choose, you must do the following:

- Summarize the film plot.
- Critique the quality of the film including directing, cinematography, writing, editing and performances.
- **Fact check the film and explore the information that was altered, left out, and/or added and why you think the director/writer/producer altered the truth. (THIS SHOULD BE THE LONGEST PART OF YOUR ASSIGNMENT)**
- Analyze the film’s effectiveness in telling its story.
- Recommend changes to the film to make it better and more effective in telling the story it is based on.
- Evaluate the film on a scale of 1 (this film did a terrible job with this story) to 5 (this film did a perfect job with this story).

This assignment will be graded and counted as part of the 15% of your grade.

Remember, this is supposed to be a creative assignment. Be willing to play the role of film critic. Have fun with it.

*Please note if you deliver a podcast or video you must also include a written transcript.

See extra credit on back of this paper.

EXTRA CREDIT – Worth 5-10 points

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Write one-page answering these questions:

- What is one story in the news today that you think would make a great movie? Why?
- If you were writing this film, how would you alter the true story to make it an even better movie?
- If you were directing this film, who would cast to star in it? Why?