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Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan task) = 493 words

Task Two: Manifesto (Julia Task) = 530 words

Task Three. (Jon Task) = 470 words

Task 1: Semiotic Analysis – Ryan Moule



The Alliance Flag, Firefly (2002)

Media such as imagery is seen before words. We see before we read, which is something that makes understanding this imagery all the more important. Jon Berger mentioned in *Ways of Seeing* (Berger, 1972) that Magritte drew attention to “this always-present gap between words and seeing”. This gap could likely explain why an image is worth a thousand words. Understanding imagery requires looking at the signs within images. Images are constructed of multiple signs, usually in a syntagmatic fashion. These signs, when analysed for a perceived concept, give us a signified meaning (Barthes, 1977). For example, when research of national flags is carried out, the accrued information, along with the imagery of the flag, will reveal the concepts behind the flags. This is why I’ve decided to use a flag for my semiotic analysis.

This flag comes from a fictional Television Series, *Firefly* (Whedon, 2002). As a Film & TV student, it seems prudent to take my passion and insert it into my semiotic analysis. This flag represents the antagonistic faction, the Alliance. Although this flag is fictional, it alludes to reality through the use and manipulation of two flags, the United States and the People’s Republic of China.

The clear denotation here is that China and the US have joined forces when the Earth was depleted of resources and humanity had to find an array of new homes. Upon closer inspection of this fictional amalgamation of flags, there is an added large star to the Chinese flag and no stars on the US flag. This connotes that the Chinese were the more dominant force, and there are a couple of interpretations that can be speculated upon without further reading around the lore of *Firefly*. The first is that the alliance between the US and China was mutual, but China were stronger and therefore had the power to ensure their flag was most prominent. The second interpretation is that China had taken over the US in advance of Earth becoming depleted, and the second large star is to represent the conquering of the US.

“Images were first made to conjure up the appearances of something that was absent.” (Berger, 1972) The use of images described in this quote is still highly relevant today. We live in a world of abstracts, and few things are simultaneously as abstract and important in our modern world than geo-politics. The invisible borders that all of humanity is forced to recognise are completely invisible upon the earth, yet their absence from the earth doesn’t stop conflicting cultural ideologies and natural resource levels from sparking conflicts and wars all over the globe.

Although fictional, the above flag makes for an interesting debate. Both are military superpowers who’ve seldom, if ever, been on the same side of international conflicts. If there’s one thing made clear from history, it’s unlikely China and the US will be allying for the foreseeable future.

Task 1 Bibliography

Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. UK, Penguin

Barthes, R. (1977). *Image, Music, Text*. UK, Fontana Press

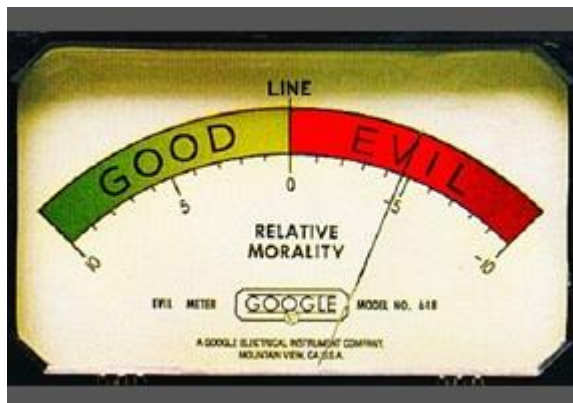
Firefly – The Complete Series. Writ. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. 20 Sep. 2002. 20th Television. 09 Dec. 2003. DVD

Task 2: Manifesto Writing – Julia Lockheart

- 1) I believe every man and woman should live by a code that they're ready to live and fight for.
- 2) We must be ready to endure great pains, both physical and spiritual, for our chosen professions.
- 3) In every corner of our lives we should strive to ensure vulnerable individuals and communities are protected from physical harm, and that we should highlight those who do harm the vulnerable.
- 4) I strongly believe that enemies should make themselves visible, and not hide among neutral parties.
- 5) Our work should be done with passion at every opportunity, else we may become complacent in mediocrity.
- 6) We should practice gratefulness for the things that bring us so much joy in a world filled with sorrow.
- 7) It is my belief that problems always seem smaller until you too have to experience them.
- 8) I believe willpower is only half the battle in dealing with major problems. The other half comes from mental wellness.

Key Words: Code

- 1) I believe every man and woman should live by a code that they're ready to live and fight for.

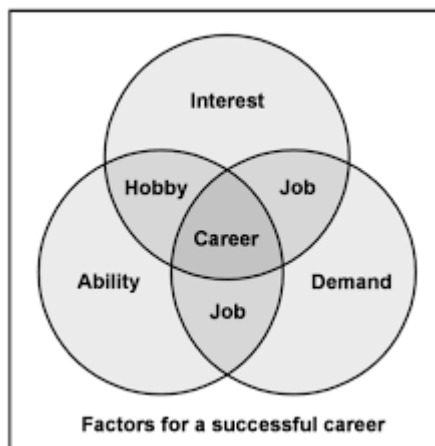


Morality Meter

The Oxford Dictionary defines a code as “a set of moral principles or rules of behaviour that are generally accepted by society or a social group”. In a society where authorities use the disgusting actions of the few to justify taking rights away from the many, it's more important that we live by our own codes now than it has ever been before. It's obvious that society is more sectarian now than it has ever been, meaning fewer people use a religious compass. By everyone developing a code that is deemed by the individual to be right and just, we can hope to see less unnecessary violence and more people standing up for what they believe is right.

Key Words: Passion

5) Our work should be done with passion at every opportunity, else we may become complacent in mediocrity.

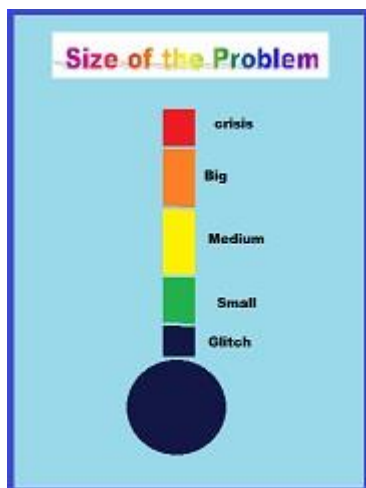


Recipe for Success

When we approach our work, we should do so with passion. Without passion, we would all be boring. For most of us, we simply do what we're asked almost all the time. That is, until it's something we're passionate about. When we hold passion for a subject, it can make a task not only easy, but fun for us. But regardless of what work you're doing, it's best to do it passionately. As was once written by Émile Zola, "I would rather die of passion than of boredom." (Zola, 1883)

Key Words: Problems

7) It is my belief that problems often times seem smaller until you too have to experience them.



Problem Scale

Problems are rarely as easy to deal with as we think they are when we hear about them. I've undergone an immense amount of struggle in my own life, experiencing brutal issues that few in civilized society understand before I was old enough to vote. It's my experience those who've never smoked have the easiest estimations of giving up. It also tends to be men who have the easiest estimations of given birth. We should do our best to apportion adequate weight to people's concerns.

Task 2 Bibliography

Zola, É. (1883). *The Ladies Paradise*. France, Charpentier

Task 3: Reflective Writing – Jon Pugh



As a passionate aspiring writer, I've chosen to use Firefly as something to reflect on from a narrative creation perspective. Joss Whedon's Firefly was ahead of its time, successfully blending two entirely contrasting genres to create something ahead of its time. As a writer, it's only fitting that I use a narrative structure as opposed to an experiential learning structure.

The work was influenced from a variety of places, with Whedon confirming in an interview that Firefly started as a "campaign for an old sci-fi RPG" (Jones C., 2016). The Sci-Fi RPG in question based on the source is Traveller, which has similarities to some of Firefly's core story points. The most prominent of these is the antagonist faction, The Alliance. It's unclear where the western influences come from, but history would be a good place to start with the likes of the American Frontier. Other influences could have come from any number of places with The Wild West being prevalent in American pop culture during what would have been Whedon's formative years.

Blake Snyder once wrote "A screenwriter's daily conundrum is how to avoid cliché" (Snyder B., 2005). Firefly very much stood out in its day. Prior to its airing, there hadn't been any space-faring Sci-Fi epics on TV outside of the Star Trek universe. In addition there are very few TV shows before Firefly where the protagonist is on the other side of the law, with The Alliance being the law enforcement of the galaxy after the civil war. Another oddity to the narrative that makes Firefly stand out is that we see the protagonist and one of the key antagonists lose the war, with that loss still being carried with them six years later, at the start of the first episode. Furthermore Shepherd Book, a religious man, shows himself to know a great deal about both crime and the fictional universe's criminal underbelly which is something never before seen on television. With so much to make it stand out, it's no surprise that it was an immediate success.

Shockingly such a visionary narrative and in the opinion of many, Whedon's seminal work was cancelled after just one season. The magnitude of the impact left on its viewership became apparent very soon after cancellation, with FOX being inundated with letters from fans begging them to revive the show. Even today there are calls for this television show to get a second season, but both its creator and its protagonist have both shown little interest. This short-lived TV series has had a profound impact upon me as a writer. It's shown me that contrasting combinations can still work, as well as illustrating the point that if something is written well enough, it can entertain for almost two decades from a single season and a movie.

Task 3 Bibliography

Snyder, B. (2005). *Save The Cat! The Last Book On Screenwriting That You'll Ever Need*. Canada, Michael Wiese Productions

Firefly – The Complete Series. Writ. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. 20 Sep. 2002. 20th Television. 09 Dec. 2003. DVD