

# Research Paper Guidance

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This short **guide** provides advice on how best to structure a 20-page research paper (R P) that focuses on U.S. themes in film & media.

- ✓ The **final deadline** for submission of the paper is September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007.
- ✓ A **paper copy** of the RP should be sent to:  
  
*Dr. Alan Taylor*  
*Strasse der Pariser Kommune, 17; Berlin 10243*
- ✓ For safety, a **PDF version** should be sent to: [a.taylor@balliol.oxon.org](mailto:a.taylor@balliol.oxon.org)  
Subject Ref: 'Completed RP, JFK-I. FILM'

## GUIDANCE OVERVIEW

Beginning the paper, we will assume that students:

- Have focused fully on their **theme & subject topic**
- Undertaken sufficient **range and depth** of research
- Have some fluent understanding of core **theories & technical terms**
- Located and have required access to **relevant source material** (journals/reviews/books)
- ...and media/film texts

## The focus is now on how best to shape the paper.

In keeping with virtually all forms of communication, the paper needs to function as an engaging narrative that takes the reader on a journey.

It needs to:

- Convince that reader of an argument
- & why that argument is important
- in three 'acts'...
- PTO...

The following is a *guide*, not a demand/law.

## 1. FIRST PRACTICAL STEPS

- ✓ Set out a WORD document of 20 blank pages. The ground is prepared.
- ✓ Write out your bibliography and filmography **first**
- ✓ Then include your abstract (final version) on the first page
- ✓ **Mark out the following headlines (1-20) into the WORD document**
- ✓ The alignment of content and page might slip, but **the structure** should help...

## 2. The Writing

### The SET UP /INTRO – the What & the Why

Page 1.....Intro theme, a juicy quote, a contemporary relevance, related conferences...

Page 2.....Your main focus within **the theme**...this is **your subject**, key references, texts...

### ACT ONE

Page 3.....The Beginning...overview contexts, USA 2007...core film/media texts...

4.....Some account of standard findings...some historical context...  
...references, authors...building towards your own argument...

### ACT TWO

5....."However..." The hook that kick-starts **your perspective** on the issues...problems

6.....Untangle some arguments, show you have a working insight into the debate...

7.....and focus on at least two core texts (film/media)

8.....**Text One**

9.....story overview

10.....detailed sequence analysis

11....."

12.....**Text Two**

13.....story overview

14.....detailed sequence analysis

15....."

16.....Summary key points from Case Studies, then towards conclusions

### ACT THREE

17.....Back to opening questions / issues / debates...how are these/you now different?

18.....Summary: at least three useful insights from your study

19.....Conclusion: overview of the theme, need for new research?

20.....Final overview, back to USA 2007...why? who for? Your reflections on your work.

**Dr. Alan Taylor. a.taylor@balliol.oxon.org**