READING ANALYSES 1

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Both readings this week: “It’s Just a Movie” by Smith, G. M. and “The Problem with Speaking for Others” by Alcott, L. challenge the reader to think beyond what is being written or spoken. They focus their pieces on individuality and uniqueness of differing analyses, whether it be through analyzing a film in a university class or analyzing a problem to which one will speak on behalf of. No matter the situation I believe that both readings have a clear message that interpretation can be flawed but is equally necessary to develop new ideas of the world.

In the piece “It’s Just a Movie” Smith, G. M. speaks with regards to his own experience in a university class teaching his students about the importance of film analyses. Greg explains various commonly asked questions with rich perspectives of film. What I, as the reader, have taken away most from this reading is relating to Greg’s claim that when analyzing art one should remove societal understandings of what and who is good and view art purely as it is and for what we truly interpret it to be.1 Furthermore we interpret and analyze pieces of art based on our experience with the world. For example, what we know, believe, understand and need at that time in our life all influence what we can take away when interpreting various pieces of art. To elaborate on this point Smith explains, “If we look for rich interpretations of a work, we may find them or we may not.”2 I believe this statement is a powerful one. It highlights how truly individual we all are in interpreting and analyzing art. This reading has taught me that analyses gives us the ability to reach into ourselves and into the piece of art to create new and enlightened understandings of the world. And what more could you as for?

The most important take away from these pieces that I can use in my academics and research must be the central idea that interpretation can be flawed. As human beings, we are unable to achieve this idea of perfect. What I believe, however, is that in knowing ideas and analyses are flawed this makes me more aware. And in being aware this allows me to be proactive, particularly in my academics, to effectively challenge those flaws and seek clarification or alternate perspectives.

**Bibliography**

Alcott, L., “The problem with Speaking for Others,” *Cultural Critique,* 20 (Winter 1991-92):5-

 32.

Smith, G. M., “It’s Just a Movie’: A Teaching Essay for Introductory Media Classes,” *Cinema*

 *Journal,* 41, 1 (Fall 2001): 127-134.

With a background in social work the importance of advocacy to not only children but to the special needs and handicapped adults, woman escaping domestic violence, youth escaping the sex trade, and so on can be life changing. There is an innate responsibility to speak on behalf of those who cannot necessarily speak for themselves or are in vulnerable situations that make speaking not always an option. So then, I pose the question, in not speaking for those who don’t have the capacity to speak for themselves, are we are we doing an inherent discredit to them? Are they better or worse off with having someone advocate for their best interests as human beings?