

Philosophy in the Cinema
Midterm Exam Essay Questions

50 Points Each

On Thursday, February 16th at 5:00 PM, we will randomly choose two of the following questions for you to write on. You will have until 6:55 PM that day to hand these two questions in, along with completing 30 multiple-choice questions, for which you will need a scan-tron sheet. You may use notes or completed answers to complete this assignment on Thursday. **The most important part of each essay question will be the explanation of your answer, which should always include specific references to the films as well as specific references to specific ideas presented in the essays we read.** Your answers should be **at least 400 words each.**

1. Given what we saw in the film *Adaptation*, how could Charlie Kaufman's life be improved by following the recommendations of Jean-Paul Sartre? Would you say that John Laroche follows Aldo Leopold's advice as expressed in "The Land Ethic"?

2. In a sense both René Descartes and the existential detectives in *I Heart Huckabees* are attempting to reveal the truth. Compare the techniques of the existential detectives to Descartes' procedure in the "Meditations". How are they similar and how are they distinct? Do you think either is more likely to get to the truth? How should we react to the poetry of Albert Markovski, according to Susan Sontag? And why ought we have that reaction according to her?

3. If William Poundstone were in Neo's place in "The Matrix," and he took the red pill (as Neo did) what would be his reaction to what he perceives afterward? What would Richard Rorty's reaction be?

Finally, remember that after the exam next Thursday at 7:00 PM we will have a very important discussion of your term papers. The more work that you can do on them before that date the more I will be able to help you.