

Name(s) _____

Period _____ Due Date ___/___/___

Twelve Monkeys/Vertigo

“I want the future to be unknown. I want to become a whole person.”

~ James Cole

“He chose me to play the part because I looked like her. He dressed me like her.”

~ Judy Barton

Essential Guidelines:

- clearly identify the questions you are addressing
- edit carefully and cite plenty of evidence
- you **must** type your responses
- properly head your paper
- you **must** use Word, Pages or OpenOffice
- print a hard copy *or* submit via www.DropItTo.Me/DeMiero using the proper file name structure

Part One – Vertigo: Pick **one** of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in roughly 2 ¶s or less. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source.

1. Hitchcock claimed – *sarcastically* – that he never used **symbolism** in his films. Well, “Vertigo” is full of symbols! Identify **two** effective examples of Hitchcock’s use of symbols in “Vertigo,” how these symbols are depicted and explain their meaning.
2. Analyze a memorable scene in terms of **Camera Placement**. Refer to your Film Production Vocabulary handout. Within the scene you chose, identify two or three significant techniques listed in your handout. Why do you think Hitchcock used these shots in the scene? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with his selection?
3. Midge is a key **character** in this film, yet she’s not even in the final third of the movie. Briefly analyze her role in this story and describe her character. What is her function in this story? What is her motivation?

Part Two – Twelve Monkeys: Pick **one** of the following questions below and answer it as thoroughly as possible in roughly 2 ¶s or less. Please cite evidence from the film and any other applicable source.

4. Director Terry Gilliam stated in an interview that he and his crew had successfully created a major studio “art film” in “Twelve Monkeys.” He also revealed that rather than using storyboards, he instead explored the cities of Philadelphia and Baltimore with a camcorder looking for what he calls “found art” to establish the look of the film. Considering the fact that this film takes place in several time periods, how successful do you think Gilliam was in establishing appropriate aesthetics – *the look and feel and ambiance* – for these time periods? You may want to choose one scene from two or more time periods in the film as the basis for your response.
5. Analyze a memorable scene in terms of **Camera Placement**. Within the scene you chose, identify two or three significant techniques listed in your handout. Why do you think Gilliam used these shots in the scene? What did the shots mean? Do you agree with his selection?
6. People in authority – *scientists, psychiatrists, detectives, etc.* – seem to be in control of reality throughout this film. Choose a scene where an authority figure asserts his or her view of reality and discuss how that impacts the story and/or James Cole’s experience of the story at that point.

Twelve Monkeys/Vertigo Assignment · DeMiero/Stoumbos

Part Three: Choose *two* of the following questions and answer them as thoroughly as possible in about 3-5 ¶s. For *one* of the two responses, specifically talk about how you think “Twelve Monkeys” was inspired by “Vertigo.” Depth of thought and analysis is what counts here, not hot air. Please cite plenty of evidence. *Part Three requires greater depth and support than parts One and Two.* **NOTE:** You may not use the scene in “Twelve Monkeys” when they are watching “Vertigo” as your main/only comparison for any of the questions, but you may allude to it for additional support.

7. **Focal Point/Vanishing Point/Line of Sight.** Choose a shot or shot sequence from one film that specifically makes use of a focal point. Describe what this focal point indicates, and why you think it was used at that time. Find a comparable shot in the other film that features dramatic use of a focal point, and describe how it is similar. Compare the images, symbols, characters, and settings of these shots; discuss whose point of view we might be taking; talk about what is outside of the frame of the shot, behind the camera, or implied in the vanishing point or beyond the horizon.
8. **Director and Audience Stand-ins.** In many of the scenes in both “Vertigo” and “Twelve Monkeys,” we find ourselves watching someone who is an audience to something else. In many of these cases, there is a “director” or “creator” controlling what is being seen or done in the film. Choose an example of this from each film and answer the following:
 - a. Who is the audience, and who is in control in the scene?
 - b. How do you feel about watching the audience?
 - c. How does your view toward the persons controlling or viewing these particular sequences compare in the two films? (*With whom do you sympathize more and why? Whom do you hate more and why?*)
9. **Reaction Shots and Close-Ups.** Choose **three** pairs of comparable close-ups/reaction shots from each film. For each shot, describe the context (scene in the film) in which it occurs. How are these shots revealing things about the characters, what they feel, and what they realize? How are these reveals similar, and why did you choose to compare them?
10. **Repetition and Parallelism.** In both films, sequences of events are repeated. The repetition might be interrupted or viewed differently, and sometimes characters acknowledge or comment on this repetition. Discuss something repeated in “Vertigo” that is similar to how something is repeated in “Twelve Monkeys.” How are they similar, and how does character acknowledgement of one or the other inform your understanding. In what ways do you think the repetition in “Vertigo” inspired the sequence you chose in “Twelve Monkeys.”
11. **Point of View.** In both “Vertigo” and “Twelve Monkeys,” there are a couple of dramatic shifts in point of view between the male and female main characters. Choose one such shift from each film, and analyze and respond to the following:
 - a. When does the shift occur in the plot of each film, and from whom to whom is it shifting?
 - b. How does our perspective, knowledge, and understanding change as an audience when we’re able to see from another character’s perspective?
 - c. In what ways are these shifts similar? How do the roles the characters play (at these points in the films) coincide? Consider if one or the other is considered “crazy” at this point in the movie and whether that is shifting as well.
12. **Questioning Reality.** In both films, the major characters have to question the realities with which they are presented. Sometimes they “know” that some version of reality happens to be a lie, but they are proven wrong later. The directions set up shot sequences that reveal that characters are questioning reality so they don’t need to say so directly. Choose an example of this in both “Vertigo” and “Twelve Monkeys.” Describe any camera, editing, and sound techniques used to make this apparent. What techniques are shared between both films?
13. **BONUS.** I rarely offer any kind of extra credit, but here’s an opportunity. Find the film “Le Jetée” by Chris Marker, watch it and write a short essay (3-5¶s) describing how “Le Jetée” was influenced by “Vertigo” and served as the basis for “Twelve Monkeys.”

“Vertigo” Notes:

Release Date.....1958
 Producer/Director.....Alfred Hitchcock
 Screenplay.....Alec Coppel and Samuel Taylor
 Music..... Bernard Herrmann

“Vertigo” Characters:

John “Scottie” FergusonJames Stewart
 Madeleine Elster/Judy Barton.....Kim Novak
 Midge Barbara Bel Geddes
 Gavin Elster Tom Helmore

“Twelve Monkeys” Notes:

Release Date1995
 Producer/Director..... Terry Gilliam
 ScreenplayDavid & Janet Peoples
 Based on.....“La Jetée” (1962) by Chris Marker
 Music Paul Buckmaster

“Twelve Monkeys” Characters:

James Cole Bruce Willis
 Dr. Kathryn RailyMadeleine Stowe
 Jeffrey Goines Brad Pitt
 Dr. Fletcher Frank Gorshin
 José..... Jon Seda