

ASSIGNMENT 4: Media Literacy

We are what we think about. The ideas, music, thoughts, movies, etc. we expose ourselves to become the basis of what we think; it might sound strange but far too few of us actually take the time to think about what we think about. We frequently just *believe* in more than we understand.

Metacognition, or being aware of one's own thoughts, is vital to becoming both a literate person and a critical thinker; this kind of self-awareness doesn't just happen though; it's the product of experience and learning how to consistently identify fallacious (or faulty) reasoning; it is also developed by learning how to tell the difference between reliable information (or genuine knowledge) and propaganda (information used only for entertainment or persuasion).

For the following assignment students will analyse the film *Kingdom of Heaven* in order to appreciate the difference between Hollywood storytelling (infotainment) and a genuine historical narrative.

Purpose: to enhance the media literacy skills of students as they relate to the study of history.

Procedure

- 1). Watch the film *Kingdom of Heaven*.
- 2). Watch the *Baloney Detection Kit* (again) and the documentary *History vs. Hollywood*.
- 3). Complete the following three tasks in the form of a paragraph (three paragraphs total):
 - a. Explain what makes a historical narrative genuine, reliable and trustworthy and what does not.
 - b. Identify and describe in detail three factual errors (historical inconsistencies) presented in the film *Kingdom of Heaven*.
 - c. Then answer the following question: is the primary purpose of Hollywood-based films to entertain or to inform?