Exit Through the Gift Shop – Movie questions Part 1



As you watch – **note on a separate sheet of paper**, any connections to any of the literary criticisms that you've studied. There are a LOT of italicized questions here – remember, **only jot down the nonitalicized answers during the movie**. I suggest you get Part 1 done by Thursday (while it is fresh in your memory, and after you have finished Topic 3, Author Intentionality) – except for those questions that require you to either finish the film or the unit on Literary Criticism. I will not collect it until we have seen the entire movie.

1. *Why this title? You'll find it's never mentioned directly in the movie*. *This question is definitely to be savored and answered after you are done with all of the other questions.*[1]

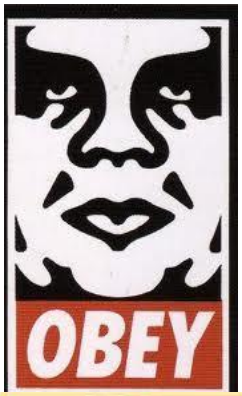
2. In the opening of the film, there is an interview with Banksy. Who or what does he say the film is about – what was it supposed to be about? *What is the implication of switching from the art to artist? At the end of the film, he will have a very different take on this movie is about – how does this wonderfully and specifically back up your work on Author Intentionality?*

3. Who is Thierry's cousin in France (the nickname will do)? Notice that when he accompanies his cousin he is not only filming it – he is assisting him. *Does this confuse the idea of the documentarian and what is being documented (Marshall McLuhan said "the medium **is** the message"- in other words, a protest being covered by a TV news crew might stop protesting when the cameras get turned off – the news becomes the news)? How does the artist – the documentarian – become the subject of the documentary? Artistically, is this a good idea – why or why not? Be specific.*

4. Banksy says that "most of all art is meant to last 100's if not 1000's of years" but Street Art doesn't - we needed a documentarian. *How can you relate this desire to what you have read about New Historicism and their central premise (that to understand a work, you must understand the details of that work's time)?*



5. Because it is so valuable, much of Banksy's work is often removed (with concrete cutters and the like) from the place where it was created (installed). How could a New Historian draw a metaphorical comparison to that act – and the act of reading/analyzing a text without knowing the historical context that it was created in? (Be specific and thoughtful). For instance, a famous work of Banksy depicts a little girl carried away by balloons. That artwork was originally created at the wall that separates Palestine from Israel. By removing the artwork from that wall (that is despised by the Palestinians) – how does it change the art itself? In a New Historicist's perspective – how does removing a work, such as Shakespeare's Twelfth Night from its context of Elizabethan England – change, alter, mar that text (consult your New Historicism Handout)





6. Thierry argues with a policeman that what his cousin is doing is not graffiti, it's art. *What's the difference? When Ben Johnson (an Elizabethan playwrite) published his plays together in a book – he called them his "Collected Work." Critics at the time, who did not take the theater very seriously, said that he was confusing "work" and "play." Comment – and connect this to the first part of this question. (ok, you could spend 10 hours on this question – give yourself some room to add to this).*

7. What piece of art is Shephard Fairey most famous for*? How does this (the use – and popularity of that particular drawing), at least perhaps in the public eye, make all of his work more legitimate? Think back to your reading for Feminism and <u>She's the Man</u>. The author objected that by tying <u>She's the Man</u> to Shakespeare – it legitimized what she saw as the film's anti-women message. What is the connection to the first part of this italicized question? (ps. There are 3 Shepard Fairey posters over our door).*

8. Fairey says that he likes the idea that the more of his work that is out there – the more perceived importance or power that it has – *explain.*

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[1] Think of most big museum special exhibits that you have been to – (or the "Sue" T-Rex exhibit at the Field Museum. In order to leave the exhibit, you must first pass through a gift shop). What is Banksy saying about Art & Commerce? Hold off till you finish the film.

9. Fairey says that Thierry was not just a filmer but an accomplice*? Link this to earlier movie questions and answers.*



10. Notice the conversation with the street artist where Thierry says "You know how to draw," and the artist replies it's a painting – *what's the difference – to whom? Expand on what you wrote for #6.*

11. Where, audaciously enough, does Banksy leave one of his paintings? BIG IDEA: *What do you think that this says about art (at least from Banksy's point of view)?*

12. What does the narrator mean that when he says that Thierry's documentary does not actually exist? *Why is it such a confused mess? He says what was important was not what it was but the capturing.* What happened in Thierry's childhood that gives us some insight into his constant filming of everything?[2] Why does he say he kept going*? New Historicism says that to understand a work of Art we must understand its context (History) – how does this (Thierry's documenting his entire life – then art) turn that notion on its head?*

13. *On the other hand, what if what we are told about Thierry's childhood is completely wrong (yes – think Asa Carter – answer after Author Intentionality)? What about those insights that you came up with? What school of literary criticism does this fit in with?*

14. Pay special attention to the artwork that Banksy creates on the Wall in the West Bank. *Is this graffiti (vandalism) or does it have a message, an importance? (this would be your informed opinion). How does this act (creating this particular drawing at this particular place) fit precisely into Marxist Theory of what art should be – answer after Marxism)?*



15. How do Thierry and Banksy meet? What are Banksy's conditions for allowing Thierry to film him?

16. Thierry in describing Banksy says that <u>he is what he represents</u>? *What do you take this to mean? Do you feel this way about all artists? Authors? Do their lives, their personalities reflect their work? What if it doesn't? Does this effect what their art is? Which theories of literary criticism come into play here and why?*

17. How do Banksy's friends react to Thierry?

18. What does Banksy do to a telephone booth? Notice how different people react to the artwork. What does Banksy like about what Thierry can do with his art – that Banksy can't*? Remember what Shephard Fairey said about why he kept repeating his same image (in different forms)? Explain the connection. How do the different people's reactions (and conjecture as to why someone would create such a thing) fit in with the idea of author intentionality? Directly connect this to the pertinent part of your answer for question #2.*

19a. How does Banksy (specifically) break the counterfeit laws? Whose picture does he put on the bill? *If you were to hazard an opinion, what could this be saying about money, about capitalism? Now go back to question #1 – connect the two.*



19b. What does it mean for something to be counterfeit? Can Art be counterfeited? Yes, there are forgeries – but I am going for something different here – something that you need to watch the entire movie to better understand (so wait on this question). If Banksy creates Counterfeit Money that then becomes Art – is it possible to make a Counterfeit of Great Art that is, in fact, not Art at all (wait till the film is over – think Mr. Brainwash – and think this through – talk to someone else if it helps).

20. What animal does Thierry see himself as being? While he is flying around – what is his wife doing? *What is the collateral damage of the life that he leads, to his family? How much of her (his wife) do we see in this film – and yet if she were not taking care of the family…. Relate this, as specifically as you can to your general reading on feminism and Woolf's "Shakespeare's Sister."*

[2] For a great movie on this theme, see *In America*.

21. How does Thierry start creating his own "street art"? Did he create or imagine the original image? BIG IDEA: *How is what he is doing <u>fundamentally</u> different than those that he has filmed? Go back to question #3 – how does the medium become the message here?*

22. What piece of art does Banksy leave at Disneyland? What is his motivation? *BIG IDEA (sorry, so soon) What is the end effect of this event on the relationship between Thierry and Banksy? Again, is what Banksy creates – art or vandalism? Explain. What does the location of this "art" and the date it was created have to do with the seriousness that is given by Thierry's interrogators? How does this fit in with the idea of New Historicism (that is a BIG thinking question) – and what you wrote for question 5. Would the same artwork put in someone's home carry the same importance or message? So does the artwork grow out of the context (what Banksy perceives as the problem with Disney and also 9/11) or does the context grow out of the art (a kind of chicken and egg problem).*

23. Read the news article below and link it directly to as many of the questions (and answers) as well as anything that you've studied in Literary Criticism.

Banksy street stall prints, sold for $60 in Central Park – worth tens of thousands (from The Guardian) June 12, 2014

It was not surprising that for most of the day the man selling black and white Banksy prints in New York got no takers. Coming from a pop-up stall in Central Park, among many others selling cheap tourist souvenirs, they were outrageously expensive at $60 each. Gift shops were selling artists' posters, greeting cards, mugs and coasters for a fraction of the price.A man who had bought two canvases from the stall, proved, by mid-afternoon, to be only the second customer for the prints.

But this buyer now stands to make a small fortune. The pictures have been authenticated by Banksy; they are going to auction at Bonham's, in London, and they could fetch up to £120,000.From the pile of canvases stacked up on the trestle table, and hung from its metal framework, the buyer had selected Kids on Guns – two sweet little children standing on a hillock of guns and bombs – and Pooh Bear, a version of AA Milne's winsome creation sitting weeping under a tree, honey pot (labelled with a dollar sign) discarded and his foot stuck in a bear trap.

The two pictures will be in Bonham's contemporary art sale next month, and the estimates are that they will make up to £70,000 and £50,000 respectively. They were bought during Banksy's visit to New York last year, when he played hide and seek with both the authorities and fans. He created street art, including a shoe signer polishing Ronald McDonald's boots, the location of which was revealed daily before admirers rushed to try to take selfies or the authorities went in to destroy the work. On one day the art site's message was: "Today's art has been cancelled due to police activity."



The Central Park stall was authenticated the day after the sale, with a message on Banksy's website saying: "Yesterday I set up a stall in the park selling 100% authentic original signed Banksy canvases. For $60 each." The website also warned: "Please note: this was a one off. The stall will not be there again today." Perhaps he was anticipating an entrepreneur stepping in to fill the sudden demand for art in the park.

Gareth Williams, head of contemporary art at Bonham's, said the Central Park stall was a coup. "The fact that his paintings were original and were being offered at a tiny fraction of their true retail value, raises real questions about the perception of worth and the nature of art as commodity within the marketplace – something that the artist must be acutely aware of."