

Assignment – Discussion Board Post (Canvas or Blackboard)

European Cinema (200 level)

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The “*banlieue* film” is a well-known genre in France. As Ginette Vincendeau describes in her chapter on *La haine* (*Hate*), this genre usually depicts jobless and futureless teenagers or young adults who have been held back by their socio-economic class and spatial surroundings—*la cité* (the projects)—marginalized neighborhoods that surround French big cities and that are socially constructed to be a racialized threat by mainstream French media.¹

Compare and contrast the *banlieue* films *Hate* (Mathieu Kassovitz, 1995) and *Girlhood* (Céline Sciamma, 2014) in three paragraphs finding inspiration from these prompts:

- **Character Types (Archetypes)**
 - What are the main differences and similarities among the protagonists of each film?
 - What are their **intersectional identities** and how do their identities affect their life experiences and (lack of) agency?
 - Is the main **protagonist** a group or an individual? What effect does the difference have on the film or audience identification with the characters?
- **Setting**
 - In which particular spaces within the *banlieues* do the films place the main characters? How do these characters “take up space” (or not)?
 - What might their **intersectional identities** have to do with this?
 - How do the characters’ trips to Paris differ? What might this represent?
 - How do their encounters with authority figures compare to those we have seen represented in the U.S. (and global) news in the past few years?
 - How are the U.S. and French contexts similar, and how do they differ?
- **Film Form**
 - How does each film use **mise-en-scene** and particular aesthetic (formal) choices to tell its story? What effect does this have on the film’s narrative and our reaction to it?
 - How do their **soundtracks** differ? How are they similar? How do the soundtracks affect your experience of the films’ settings and characters’ stories?

¹ Ginette Vincendeau, “Designs on the *Banlieue*.” *French Film: Texts and Contexts*, eds. Susan Hayward and Ginette Vincendeau (New York: Routledge, 2000): 310-327.