**Critical Analysis rough draft “thesis Statements”: Do these work?**

**Overview:** A **thesis** is your **main claim** about the film, an **interpretive statement** about what the film means and/or what makes it effective or ineffective (**analysis and/or evaluation**, but in this case preferably analysis).

Bottom line: a thesis statement must be ***arguable****.*

**Faux thesis statements**: Usually when a student puts the “thesis asterisk” by a sentence that isn’t actually a thesis, it is one of these:

* a brief **summary of the plot or the topic** (what the film is about in terms of the characters’ actions/experiences or a social issue), or
* an identification of the **themes** the film addresses (without telling us what the film says about those themes), or
* a **forecasting statement** of topics the paper will cover, or
* a statement of **personal taste**, not an arguable claim about the film’s quality, such as this: “I didn’t like this film because I think the idea of humans colonizing other planets is just stupid.” (No one can argue that you *don’t* think it is stupid, though one could make and support a claim that films about space colonization aren’t inherently stupid.)

Below is a list of thesis statements from a batch of critical analysis rough drafts (plus a few I threw in there for variety). Label them as (T) for thesis, (S) for plot summary, (JT) for just the themes, (F) for a forecasting statement, or (P) for a statement of personal taste.

Put an asterisk by the one that you think is the best, most complete thesis.

1. Unification and two sides setting aside their differences is what Mandela hopes for to win the Rugby World Cup and reunite his divided country through such a momentous event.
2. The film’s use of realistic characters, intriguing story, and perfect setting leads the audience to realize how children and teens are the ones who suffer most in poor parts of countries and how immigration is a dreadful journey.
3. As the title translates, *Sin Nombre* means “without a name,” and deals with the ever-present individual issue of identity and what “I” want to be in this world.
4. The film shows how cultural expectations can oppress women, and by dramatizing how one such victim learned to stand up and fight back, the film seems to be saying that we should all fight towards changing what being a woman means.
5. The Joseph family demonstrates the problems that many broken families around the world face today due to alcoholism and abuse.
6. Despite its painful depictions of early 20th century terrorism in Europe, the film effectively emphasizes the point that sometimes it is necessary to take drastic measures to achieve a revolution.
7. The film is effective at portraying extreme poverty as a pressing issue, and it accurately informs its audience about the world of microfinance in fighting this kind of poverty.
8. I totally agree with the filmmaker that FGM is horrible.
9. This analysis will discuss what the film says about family ties and how important they are.
10. Through the use of scenes that depict the impoverished but lively China, along with entertaining character development, Tianming capably shows both China’s colorful culture and difficult history. He also shows that some traditions of the old culture need to be changed in order to create a better world, while others are worth hanging on to.