

## **Title Sequence Essay**

Title Sequence is the method by which cinematic films or television programs present their title, key production and cast members, or all three by utilising conceptual visuals, sound, shots and sometimes computer generated images. I will be looking at four film title sequences from *The Damned United* (2009), *Shrek* (2001), *North by Northwest* (1959) and *Goldfinger* (1964).

*The Damned United* is a sports drama film. The film is centred around Brian Clough's failed tenure as Leeds United (lasting 44 days), Clough's successes and failures at Derby County and his love/hate relationship with assistant Peter Taylor. The opening title sequence of *The Damned United* serves as a prologue to the film detailing the short-term events which are the cause of what is to transpire in the film. The sequence begins with a black screen and white lettering detailing the main production companies involved with the film's production with the infamous chant "Glory, Glory Leeds United" signifying that the film will revolve around Leeds United. The sequence then cuts to archival footage of Leeds United's Championship season of 73-74 particularly excellent goals and moments of physical aggression with commentary detailing how disliked Leeds are despite their dominance. There is also archival footage of England's failure to qualify for the 1974 World Cup before ending with the caption "There is only one obvious choice" before an establishing shot of Elland Road (the home ground of Leeds United) with *The Damned United*. Despite this being the most modern film I used, the title sequence is almost entirely made up of archival footage. Whilst the title sequence of *Goldfinger* also uses archival footage, *The Damned United* does not reveal any main characters in the sequence and does not credit members of cast and production unlike the *Goldfinger* title sequence. It is also the only sequence of the three situation films which does not have raw footage e.g. whilst *North by Northwest* and *Goldfinger* contain film of actual people being filmed, *The Damned United* does not.

*Shrek* is a computer animated family film. The film is loosely based on William Steig's fairy tale picture book "Shrek!". The opening title sequence of *Shrek* is the only one of the four sequences which is entirely animated. The sequence itself begins with a voice-over of Shrek reading from a book detailing the story behind the plot. Then Shrek exits his lavatory and goes through his morning routine through which the four main cast members are shown to the song "All-Star" by Smash Mouth. This song is jovial and sets a positive tone for the sequence and indicates that the feature film will be light-hearted. The computer animation is utilised by manipulating various aspects of Shrek's environment to form names e.g. when Shrek pulls a fish out of the pond, the pondweed circulates to form the name Camren Diaz. The sequence also cuts from Shrek's swamp to a group of poachers preparing to hunt him. This is done to show how unaffected Shrek is as when they're are shots of poachers getting pitchforks (an offensive weapon), Shrek is seen lifting up a spoon. The peasant like clothing suggests that Shrek is based in a medieval era which makes it the oldest sequence in terms of period of setting despite it using modern technology.

*North by Northwest* is an American Thriller film. The film is set in 1959 New York and is a tale of mistaken identity, with an innocent man pursued across the United States by agents of a mysterious organization who want to stop his interference in their plans to smuggle out microfilm containing government secrets. The title sequence for *North by Northwest* is renowned for having the first title sequence to use kinetic typography (moving text). The