I. Three ways of looking at the death of the subject, consumer society, language, and knowledge/power

A. Jameson argues that the Enlightenment subject - the autonomous rational agent - and the existentialist subject
    1. what we call the individual is no longer a viable concept philosophically and
    2. an illusion in everyday sense

B. He links his argument to profound cultural transformation, what he calls "consumer society" and what we have called the "culture industry"

C. he claims either
    1. the subject or individual existed during the nineteenth century the height of industrial capitalism, and has been extinguished by the consumer society
    2. Enlightenment subject is not thing of the past but never really existed "a myth; it never really existed in the first place; there have never been autonomous subjects of that type. Rather, this construct is merely a philosophical and cultural mystification which sought to persuade people that they 'had' individual subjects and possessed this unique personal identity."

D. Three assumptions of Enlightenment subjectivity are question
    1. subject is capable of disengagment, objectivity, see the world and himself in an unbiased way
    2. identify own interests and needs, his/her desires what he lacks
    3. see world as means and develop course of action through reason to achieve

E. there is no "I" (1) no "own" (2) and no personal courses of action, or they are defined by society

F. The I and its desires, needs and created by consumers culture
    1. not implanted, but socialized,
    2. not just "I need that" "I want that" but
    3. Self-understanding of "i" as consumer
    4. being = consumption

G. This begins with childhood, consumption as a way of being permeates the world of the child

H. I is constituted as a consumer I, who claims to be free because he can choose between a Jeep and an Izusu

I. Consumer society mystifies interests
    1. confuses vital interests, relationship to environment, relationship with community

2. "unnecessary" necessary interests
3. consumer subjectivity is so constituted cannot even see what his in own interests

II. Subjectivity and Language
   A. Heidegger made this claim first in Being and Time -- is subjectivity, the self, prior, a given, or is it constituted, how does it come into being?
   B. Do these constitutive factors limit the attributes of subjectivity; freedom, reason, disengagement, subject- object
   C. Subject is constituted by language that precedes subjectivity
      1. not a subject that acquires language, subjectivity is function of language
      2. consciousness is linguistic, consciousness doesn't use language, it is language, language = consciousness
      3. the world is linguistically mediated, subject doesn't perceive a mind independent reality,
         - empiricists, ideas are made up of sensen perceptions
         - no, see a world from our cultures point of view
         - Whorf/Sapir hypothesis
   D. What is language? Isn't it just a system of signs to denote the outer and inner world
      1. language is just not denotive, just doesn't name, connotative, instrumental
      2. main medium for transmitting cultural world views
      3. it is bearer of meanings, values, orientations, norms
      4. to know a language is to know a world, can't translate one for one
         - translating poetry
         - philosophy
         - not a mirror of nature
      5. it mediated, expresses, a cultural world view, and is constitutive of subjectivity withing that cultural world view
      6. constructs a subjectivity within that worldview, main agent of aculturation
   E. Undermines Enlightenment idea of rational subject, through disengagement can find the truth about herself and the world
      1. Enlightenment presupposes a capacity to see the world and oneself objectively -- not be biased
      2. E subject is universal, endowed with reason, if reason prevails all will see the truth the same way
      3. Subjectivity is constituted as biased, prejudiced, in terms of cultural way of life
      4. no "God's eye view
   F. Raises the question of relativity?
      1. if cultureal world views constitute subjectivity and

2. we can't get outside of our own world view
3. is there any criteria by which we can determine truth or falsity of world views or truths within world views
4. question of relativity vs question of Enlightenment universal truth

III. Subjectivity is Power/Knowledge, Michel Foucault
   A. Enlightenment assumption, knowledge gained through Reason was going to set us free
      1. give us power over the natural world and its unpredictability -- natural sciences
      2. allow us to reorganize society, its institutions, in line with knowledge about human and social world -- human and social sciences
   B. Foucault, I don't thins so, knowledge is tied to power not as an end but in its constitutions
   C. Knowledge/power, truth and power
   D. Foucault sees E. society as panopticon, no need for propaganda or force, people internalize power, control themselves
   E. the Panopticon

Essay/Exam #1

The essay/exam should be typewritten, double-spaced and at least four pages in length. Answer two of the following questions.

The answer to each question must be in essay form and demonstrate an understanding of both lecture material and assigned readings.

1. The basis of our society's understanding of the self/individual lies in the Enlightenment concept of the self. Explain the Enlightenment concept of the self and how postmodern philosophy challenges this concept.
2. Compare and contrast Sartre's existential philosophy with Descartes' Enlightenment rationalism.
3. Analyze the three films we have viewed from the point of view of existential philosophy. Describe the characteristics of existentialism and then apply them to each of the movies.