James Cameron has a very distinctive style of directing. All of his films are controversial and no doubt packed with dramatic music and effective camera angles to portray an important idea for each film. Some of his master pieces include *Aliens, The Abyss* and *True Lies*, but the films I choose to study are *Avatar* and *Titanic* (1997). For Avatar the scene I'm analysing is "The Falling Tree" scene and for *Titanic* I choose "The Sinking Ship" scene, both extremely dramatic and melancholic components of the films, each filled with extremely convincing techniques.

Element 1: Sound effects and Music

In *Titanic*, James Cameron strived to, and successfully did, make the viewer's feel as if they were encountering the experience of being on a sinking ship through the careful and effective use of sound effects and music. James Cameron's purpose in *Avatar* was to show destruction versus peace, which was again successfully shown through useful sound techniques.

The well-known song "My Heart Will Go On", from *Titanic*, is continuously played throughout the film. The tune stays the same but the style of song switches from being sung emotionally with Opera singers to being played sadly on Violin to being played intensely by louder and dramatic instruments. James Cameron's decision to use this continuous use of tune is effective as it makes the audience feel comfortable since they know the tune well, and the use of changing the source of the song just helps add something a little different each time, and also helps to set the emotion for that certain scene. James Cameron has the superb talent of being able to make the audience feel emotionally sick and distressed, on behalf of the characters. In the "Sinking Ship" scene, when Rose is being dragged away from saving Jack's life, the sounds being heard begin to fade in and out. In the background we also hear a heartbeat pumping. The way James Cameron portrays this sense of struggle is highly effective because, as a viewer, I felt her anger and frustration. James Cameron also uses convincing sound effects to make the audience feel as if they're living through this traumatic experience. The consistent sound of the ship groaning is heard throughout the Sinking Ship scene, as well as the frightening sound of waves rolling and crashing. Another sound effect added to the painful scene is the consistent sound of screams and cries, and the only time the hectic wails are cut out is when Rose is being lowered to her safety. At this point, all that is heard is the "My Heart Will Go On" tune, and this is an extremely emotional jerking section. ==The overwhelming switch from sound effects to music is very memorable, and makes the viewer's feel Rose's pain, as if we're living in her shoes and we're losing someone close to us. James Cameron's main purpose of using these techniques (Sound Effects and Music) was to force the audience in to feeling as if they're on the Titanic and encountering this daunting contingency== (1). It was successfully reached, proven by the effect this film had on those who watched it, and the reviews it was prized with.

In *Avatar* James Cameron clearly enforces the idea of destruction verse peace, and does this through the use of Sound Effects and Music as well. At the beginning of the scene the huge 'Home' Tree is shown in all of its peacefulness, standing in the green forest, with only the sounds of nature being heard. Not long after huge aircrafts zoom around the corner and the near-silence is destroyed. An aggressive music track comes in to hearing as well, and along with the rowdy sound of helicopters, the natural sounds of the environment are drowned out. James Cameron's use of Music and Sound effects in this certain way is very cutting, and acts as a metaphor of the actual incident about to

take place; the aggressive Human's destroying the innocent Na'vi. Screaming is heard throughout the entire attack, and follows afterwards as well. This sound effect adds even more pain than the viewer is already feeling, so James Cameron's attempt to make this scene appalling and to emphasize the destruction was successfully reached. As Home-Tree falls to the ground, violins are heard and this adds to the emotions felt and makes us feel pain on behalf of the Na'vi. The sound track cuts out completely as the tree is on the verge of falling, and it's all silent except for the quiet rustling sound of leaves falling. This use of near-silence builds suspense and the audience holds on to see what's going to happen next. When the tree finally does fall, ours ears are filled with the creaking and groaning of the tree, as if it's crying in pain. James Cameron's use of sound effects in this particular section personifies Home-tree and the destruction of it instantly makes the audience feel sadder because it seems as if the tree is alive (2). James Cameron also discovered the effect that a certain "bang" noise has on the viewers. He uses it in important parts within this scene, one of which is when Neytiri tells Jake to never return, and the bang is heard as if representing the shock that hits him, like a bullet. After Hometree is destroyed and the Na'vi begins to walk away, all that is heard at this point is their wails of distress, emphasizing despair. Violin then comes in, and it switches between the Na'vi, and the Human's back at base who are responsible for this mess. Both races are drowned with sorrow, so in this case James Cameron has violin representing the sadness felt.

[Report edited here – discussion of mis-en-scene compared in the two films]

James Cameron uses many techniques throughout *Avatar* and *Titanic* to prove the importance of respect, and how you can gain it. He used music to represent emotions and sound effects to concrete ideas in to the viewer's minds. Cameron successfully used Mis-en-scene to reinforce his ideas. One of the techniques within the films which overlapped were the compositions; Home Tree in *Avatar* goes from horizontal to vertical and the Titanic went from horizontal to vertical. These both represent the lives of the species effected and the main symbols, after a disaster, were on the opposite angle, showing that their lives were turn upside down. Along with many others of James Cameron's, these films showed him at his best and each really portrayed his directing style. They were both very memorable due to the choice of techniques, and very moving. These films resulted in a huge change of people's lives so James Cameron has proved to be a very successful director.