



# SCREEN QUEENS

## Style Guide: Features

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### Pitching

Please make use of *SQ*'s search function via the About page to check if the topic you are proposing has already been covered, and to avoid any repetition of material.

For features we ask for around 50-150 words describing the intended topic of your essay and the themes/arguments to be explored, plus a title (this can be subject to change). It is also helpful to provide a potential submission date. Here is a great example from Staff Writer Daisy:

A Cinematic Odyssey of Women Cutting Their Hair in the Movies

Hair is seen as a key aspect of beauty, and the way we wear it can supposedly say a lot about us. But in cinema and television it can mean more, especially for female characters - who, of course, are so often designed around their looks. From Mulan to Evey in *V for Vendetta*, Arya Stark to Fantine in *Les Misérables*, emotional changes can be indicated by the symbolic cutting hair. I want to explore the motivations for these (from rite of passage, to hiding one's identity, a rejection of femininity, or even as punishment), and look into why hair and its meaning holds such power over female characters.

Would it be possible for it to go up on the 16th?

Don't worry if your pitch isn't yet fully formed; if you give us a sense of your ideas, we can usually make some suggestions to develop the piece.

### Submitting a Draft

Please submit work using Google Docs to allow for any necessary collaborative editing. You should email the link to the Features Editor with edit access turned on.

Your draft should include a title and some images evenly spread throughout the article. Stills should be good quality and credited with the film's distributor (or photographer if they are behind-the-scenes). The featured image (which will appear on the SQ home page), should be at the top of the article.

The title should be punchy but give a good indication of what your essay is about, to draw the reader in. If you're struggling to decide on a title, the editor can help with this.

Here is the drafted version of Daisy's pitch:



A Cinematic Odyssey of Women Cutting Their Hair On-Screen  
 Daisy Leigh-Phippard  
 05/05/19

A woman's hair is the ultimate symbol of femininity, linking back to traditions old ideas that beauty is power. Pretty much all the Disney princesses have flowing locks or crazy curls, from Ariel to Merida to Moana, it's the beauty norm. And so, a woman getting a haircut on screen, be it film or tv, can be used symbolically. Representative of rebellion, associated as it is with masculinity; as a way of disguising oneself; a self-destructive tool for coping with trauma; even as punishment or to inflict humiliation.

For accessibility, you can also provide alt text (brief descriptions of each image for visually impaired readers). This is not required, but it will quicken the editing process.

### Style and Formatting

At SQ we hope that individual writers' voices shine through within their work, so we don't aim for a strict writing style or voice. However, these are some important guidelines to adhere to for consistency:

- We only use British English spelling (ie. emphasise **not** emphasize).
- Italicise all titles of films, TV, books, albums and other media outlets (e.g. *Moonlight* or *The Guardian*).
- Put double quotation marks round episode titles, song titles, or book chapters (e.g. Episode Four, "Sorry Baby").
- When a character is first mentioned, indicate the actor who portrays them in parentheses.
- When an actor, director, or other crew member is mentioned, use their full name the first time, then refer to them by surname going forward.

- You should describe a film's narrative in present tense (e.g. Paddington is taken in by the Brown family).
- Sentences should rarely exceed two or three lines. Try to vary sentence length to make your essay more punchy.
- Please include relevant content warnings at the top of your essay if any potentially triggering themes are talked about at length.
- If your essay draws upon secondary research such as interviews, books, or news articles, you must provide a link to the source of any direct quotations you include.
- Quotations from secondary material, as well as dialogue from films, should be enclosed in double quotation marks.
- For quotations *within* quotations, single quotation marks should be used.
- Spell out numbers in full up until 20, after which digits can be used (there are some exceptions to this such as amounts of money, dates and times).

Whilst we avoid using first person in reviews, features are a great opportunity to discuss a film on a more personal level. We welcome essays that weave personal anecdotes into their analysis, emphasising your specific experience of a film or TV show.

### Word Count

Ideally, essays will come in at around 1000-2000 words. This is a much longer allowance than reviews, because we want you to run with your ideas and develop a great argument or compelling analysis.

Features should only exceed this limit if approved by an editor, as exceptions are sometimes made depending on the content.

### Proof Reading

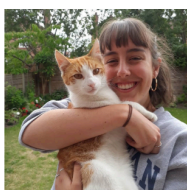
It might seem obvious, but please don't forget to run a quick spell-check on your essay and check for any grammatical errors, as this will also save time during the editing process.

A good way to proof your essay is to read it out loud to identify any clunky phrasing or sentences that are too long.

### Contributor Bio

You may choose to include a short bio (about you, pronouns, social media handles) and square headshot image to accompany your piece. This is optional – your piece will be credited with your name regardless. Here's an example:

**FEATURES EDITOR:** Megan Wilson [@bertmacklln](#)



**Megan** (she/her) is a northerner and Film Studies graduate now pursuing an MA in Gender, Sexuality and Culture at the University of Manchester. When not wrangling her cats or watching football, she dreams of being a professor and writing endless books on lesbian cinema just because she can. Her favourite films include *Carol*, *Moonlight*, and *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, and she'll always have a soft spot for *Matilda*. Find her on [Twitter](#).

## Editing

Given the voluntary nature of SQ's work, the editing process is not as demanding as it would be when pitching professionally. We welcome work from writers of all levels of experience, and want the process to be fun and collaborative.

If you have any queries that aren't covered within this guide, don't hesitate to get in touch with an editor via email.

## Social Media

We rely heavily on writers promoting the site to gain more traffic. Please consider following us on all social media and sharing your articles once they are published.

- Email: [girlsonfilm@outlook.com](mailto:girlsonfilm@outlook.com)
- Twitter: @screenqueenz
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/screenqueens.girlsonfilm>
- SQ Podcast: <https://t.co/Rpd7aZ9sLZ>