**Media Analysis Unit Overview**

During this unit you will look at and critically analyze some aspect of American pop culture or contemporary media. Your analysis should argue what the message contained within your aspect of popular culture is telling society, how it helps us better understand contemporary society, what is says about modern culture, or why that aspect of popular culture is so popular. Why does it matter? What is the “So What” moment? When looking at the connections between your subject and contemporary culture, your work should offer readers a way of better understanding the importance and meaning of you subject.

Your subject for analysis will fit into one of three categories:

**Popular culture icon or celebrity.**

This can be anything: a super hero (Wolverine or Deadpool), a web sensation (Psy from Gungam style), musician or band (Shinedown), character from a commercial (the Sasquatch from Jack Links), famous scientist (Stephen Hawking) etc.

If you choose this option the essay should be an analysis of the impact or importance of this figure in relation to modern culture. What impact do they have, how do they contribute to our perception of society, why do they matter? *It should not be a biography or summary of their life, accomplishments or works. It is an analytic argument, not an exposition.*

**A Print Advertisement or a commercial**

This is a look at a commercial or advertisement from a rhetorical perspective. What is its importance, what is its message? What is the intended audience and how does the advertisement’s use of rhetorical devices help to convey its message to that audience?

If you choose this option it should be a detailed analysis of the rhetorical positioning used within the digital text, *not simply be a regurgitation of what the ad is about, what happens in the ad or commercial or how it looks.*

**A scene from a film or TV show.**

This might be a look at how an exchange in *The Big Bang Theory* reflects the image of higher education within popular culture and how that image transcends reality. It could be a discussion of how Cersei Lannister’s walk of shame in *The Game of Thrones* categorizes the degradation or / empowerment of women in popular media. It is not a “book review” of the digital text in question. It is not a summary of events within the text or an expository essay.

In all three cases you are creating an argument using the rhetorical triangle and devices to establish a *position* on the relevance of your topic within current popular culture. You are drawing a connection between your subject and popular culture. You should create a research question that is specific enough to easily manage within 1800-2400 words and also addresses the cultural significance of the topic.

**General Assignments**

Please keep all of your assignments during this process. You will be turning in a process folder at the end of the assignment that contains all work for the unit.

**Topic and Thesis statement- 10 points.**

For this assignment you simply need to come up with a basic idea for a topic that you would like to discuss. Follow this idea with a written (brief) paragraph or two that explains the justification for your topic. Why do you want to discuss it, how is it culturally relevant, what are your points of argument? Complete this assignment by creating a rough draft of your thesis statement. Due 6-11-18

**The Critical Inquiry– 10 points**

For this assignment you will provide the following information by answering each of the following prompts Due 6-13-18:

**What Is Your Topic?**

What do you want to write about? (For example, Shinedown, The Jack Links ads, Wolverine, or a scene from *The Big Bang Theory* are possible topics.) Keep this portion simple and separated from the context of the issue, which you will write about in the section below.

**What Is Social Context of Your Topic?**

Why is this topic important? What about it resonates with you? Why should we care about your subject? What is the cultural significance, impact or implications of your topic? “What is the context of the subject of the text. What is the larger history of the subject and context, and how does this history affect the reading of this particular text (PC Guide 70)”?

***Frame your issue as a research question***. For example, “Does X scene in Y episode of *The Big Bang Theory* promote gender based stereotypes?

Do some basic research to answer your question. This research need not include an outside source and can be a close reading of the digital text, but must include actual evidence from the text for support.

**What is the Purpose of Your Text?**

If you properly formulate your question and consider its implications, you should be able to formulate a purpose for your argument. Why are you producing this text? What is your goal or intention? Is there a problem that needs solved? How do you plan to solve it? As you answer this question you will need to produce evidence to support your claim.

**Provide at least three examples evidence that either makes or suggests your proposed claim**. During this process you must produce a working bibliography that includes your primary source material, and any other sources you choose to use. While there are no requirements for sources other than your primary, any you use must be cited properly. For this portion of the exercise you will have at least one citation: your primary source.

**Use this Claim to Develop a Proposed Thesis Statement.**

Use the information you have gathered as part of this process to produce a thesis statement for your argument. This should be a revision of the statement you produced earlier in the process. This should be more refined and clearly articulate your proposed argument.

**How Will You Gain Your Audience’s Attention?**

Popular culture themes ideas and subjects are part of popular culture because they are interesting to at least a portion of society. They appeal to their audience. Consider your audience and then consider how you will appeal to them and gain their interest. Take your thesis and formulate an introduction around this idea. Generate an introductory paragraph(s) as a beginning to your argument.

**Determine How You will Use Rhetorical Appeals to Bolster Your Argument**

Examine each of the rhetorical appeals: logos, ethos, pathos, Kairos and then determine how you will incorporate one or more of these into your argument. Explain at least two specific ways in which you will consider and use rhetorical appeals to help formulate your argument.

**Provide at Least One Possible Point of Opposition**

In any argument, even an examination of digital media, there are more than one possible outcome. Briefly investigate possible opposing positions to your argument. For example: If you chose to note that a particular scene in *Game of Thrones* promoted violence… consider alternative lines of thought that might say it does not. How might that alter your perception of the argument and your approach to outlining your thoughts? Provide at least one alternative way in which to answer your research question and an accompanying thesis statement.

**Format for the Assignment:**

Place your name, and Assignment name Low Stakes Assignment #1 at the top of the page on the left hand side. Then simply cut and paste the question prompts for the assignment into a word.doc and respond to each question using TNR 12 point font, single spaced. Set your paper to 1” margins. Each of the 9 prompts are listed above in this document. Maintain the established headings and spacing between headings. Use full sentences to compose your answers. Make sure to check your work for grammar and spelling errors. Your writing should be a minimum of 1 full page of text (300-500 words), submitted to the Weebly website by Thursday 6-13.

**First Draft of Media Analysis –20 points**

This is simply a first draft of your paper. It should be a fully mapped version of your argument that includes an introduction, a thesis, at least three connected pieces of evidence from the text, a conclusion and a works cited page that contains—at a minimum—the primary text. The final paper should be roughly 1800-2400 words in length, but the first draft can be a work in progress that is at least 3 pages in length. The first draft should still be MLA 8 compliant. The more you have, the better as this will allow for more feedback and a better workshopping forum. Please bring a copy of your paper to class on 6-18 available for peer review and workshopping.

**Final Draft -50 points**

This is a final, polished draft of your paper that meets all assignment guidelines and is fully MLA 8 compliant. The paper must contain at least 3 properly vetted, outside sources. These sources need not be academic or scholarly. While it is not necessary to address any or all concerns mentioned during my feedback, or peer reviews, your revised draft should consider the merit of those comments, particularly if they are repetitive in nature and act accordingly. It should be noted that while you may choose which parts of the paper to revise it *is necessary to revise.* The final product should be substantively different from your first draft in ways that address potential opportunities in your first draft. It should not simply be a grammatical editing of your paper. Failure to revise your draft will result in a potential lowering of your grade including failure of the exercise if there is no revision at all. The final draft of this paper should be roughly 6-8 pages in length (1800-2400 words), excluding the works cited page. The final work must include a full works cited page that is MLA 8 compliant.