

## Popular Culture Genre Analysis (PCGA)

One of my favorite moments is when I go to a movie, read a book, or watch a television show expecting it to be a particular way, and then, unexpectedly, the popular culture item surprises me. One of the biggest surprises is when I expect a particular text to conform to generic expectations and it does something new and innovative. For instance, the horror genre was always considered too difficult for television, because it is hard to scare people week after week. And yet, in the last few years, *American Horror Story* and *The Walking Dead* showed that not only could horror be done on television but that it could be done well. In another example, the movie *Bridesmaids* was marketed as a Romantic Comedy, but in reality, it defied the expected conventions to such a degree that a much needed conversation emerged about women and comedy. In essence, the best popular culture does not just conform to a genre but reinvents it in a way that makes it seem fresh and new.

For this paper, I would like for you to select TWO popular culture texts from the same genre. This could include two pieces of music from say rap or country, two young adult novels, two movies, or two comic books. Pick two items that you would enjoy working with and about which you can think critically. I would like for you to do some brief research about your genre (on the Library Databases), and then I would like for you to compare and contrast how these two texts conform to the genre or break with its traditions. It is important that you integrate your analysis so that the two texts work together. So, for the structure of this paper, you need to identify key genre points that will be the focus of body paragraphs and then you need to analyze both texts in that body paragraph on that topic. Remember, you will also need to analyze these texts, so in selecting your two pieces, be sure that you will be able to review the material and take notes on the texts. Ultimately, pick two texts that you feel you can make a strong argument about how they work together but also will have enough time to review thoroughly for evidence that you can cite in your paper. In addition, I ask that you incorporate some research (at least ONE SCHOLARLY ARTICLE OR BOOK) in order to define the conventions of your genre through both direct quotation and summary. This will help you practice citing in order to avoid plagiarism and introduce you to MLA citation style.

**Format:** See page \_\_\_\_ in the syllabus

**Length:** 4-5 Pages

### Evaluation:

In your drafts, I will focus on the following key points:

- ✓ Did you select two texts from the SAME genre?
- ✓ Did you indicate a basic argument about how these texts conform with or confront the genre?
- ✓ Did you define your genre and discuss its key stylistic features?
- ✓ Did you cite at least ONE scholarly research article through both direct quotation and paraphrase?
- ✓ Do you have clear topics for each of your body paragraphs?
- ✓ In your body paragraphs, do you synthesize your analysis of both texts together?
- ✓ Do you compare and contrast how these texts relate to their genre?
- ✓ Ultimately, do you follow the conventions of grammar, syntax, and mechanics?

### Timeline:

- Conference Draft Due
- Peer Workshop Draft Due (with revisions from conference highlighted)
- Final For Now Draft Due (with revisions from peer workshop underlined)
- Final Draft due in Final Portfolio (with new revisions highlighted and underlined)