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## Level 2 Media Studies, 2016

### 91251 Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre

9.30 a.m. Tuesday 29 November 2016  
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre.	Demonstrate in-depth understanding of an aspect of a media genre.	Demonstrate critical understanding of an aspect of a media genre.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

**You should write an essay on ONE of the six statements in this booklet.**

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

High  
Excellence

TOTAL

8

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**INSTRUCTIONS**

Choose ONE **media genre** that you have studied.

Write an essay discussing **an aspect** of your chosen media genre, by responding to ONE of the statements below. You should aim to examine the implications of the aspect.

Use page 3 to write your chosen media genre, your chosen statement number, and to plan your essay.

Begin your essay on page 4.

**STATEMENTS** (Choose ONE)

The statements below relate to aspects of a media genre.

1. A media genre is always changing.
2. Money kills creativity in a media genre.
3. Audience expectation has a significant impact on a media genre.
4. Commercial considerations have a significant impact on a media genre.
5. A media genre must evolve to stay relevant.
6. Media genre is all about targeting specific audiences.

Media genre: Dystopian film genre

Statement number:

1

**PLANNING (OPTIONAL)**Description of an **aspect** of your chosen media genre:How and/or why this aspect has an **impact** on the media genre:

P.1 - metropolis establish conventions - fears + protagonist  
 Stuart Kaminsky author of American film genres  
 described dystopian film as being like "a shared dream...  
 a mythic representation of universal concerns and fears."

P.2 - Protagonist - Freder  
 then "Blade Runner"  
 fears always changing.

\$694.4

Suzanne  
Collins

65 mill copies

P.3 - Recent significant change - teen dystopian films

Gary  
Ross

P.4 - hybridise ~~to~~ with romance genre  
 and fears have changed.

**Likely implications** of this aspect for the media genre:

P.5 - Genres can only change so much, and if  
 producers are unable to continually provide  
 change the genre will one day fall.

~~Change +~~ Decline in commercial influence

Ben Child 2016 - The Guardian

Film producers must provide new, unexpected plots  
 and visuals

\$179.2    \$297.3

demise.

# A media genre is always changing.

The suggested maximum for your essay is 800 words (6–7 pages). The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay.

Support your discussion with **detail** from at least TWO media texts and any other relevant sources.

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Begin your essay here:

The dystopian film genre we have come to love hasn't always been like it is today. It is always changing ~~to meet~~ in order to meet audience expectations and survive. Audiences are always demanding more, so change is an essential aspect of any genre in order to gain financial success. A significant change that has occurred in the dystopian film genre recently is the rise of teen dystopian films, where the genre has adapted to appeal to teenagers, particularly those that are female. This has caused the dystopian film genre to change its conventions slightly and hybridise with the romance genre. An implication of ~~a media~~ the dystopian film genre always changing is that a genre ~~it~~ can only adapt so much, and if film producers are unable to continuously provide this change, the genre will one day fall.

The dystopian film genre is an established sub-genre of sci-fi. Over time it has developed distinct conventions which the audience have come to associate it with. These conventions are useful to film producers as they allow them to ~~to~~ create a formulaic film that targets a specific audience and is more likely to gain financial success. The dystopian film "Metropolis", directed by Fritz Lang in 1927, established two key conventions which have been used as a template for the films that followed in the dystopian genre. These conventions include the

use of a male protagonist who rebels against a controlling system, and the dystopia as a reflection of the current fears in society. At the time "Metropolis" was made, society held fears such as ~~the~~ anxiety about technology being misused, and fears of ~~the workers~~ uprising of workers. In "Metropolis" the fear of the misuse of technology was addressed when the antagonist of the film Rotwang created a robot named Hel, who he later altered to represent Maria, a woman all the workers listened to. Robot Maria encourages the workers to protest against their master and cause great destruction to the city. The workers ~~then~~ then start an uprising against the upper class and sabotage the central machine, causing fire and flood to spread. This represents 1927's society's fear of workers uprising, and links to the Russian Revolution in 1917. This Revolution would be in the minds of the audience, and a scene like this would have struck a chord with them. This convention that reflects the current fears of society & appeals to the audience as ~~it~~ they like to look into the future and imagine what may happen. Stuart Kaminsky, the author of the book American Film Genres described dystopian films as being like "a shared dream... a mythic representation of universal concerns and fears!" This refers to how this convention appeals to everyone, as it involves them because their own fears are ~~represented~~ reflected.

Another convention that was evident in the film "Metropolis" and has become established in the dystopian film genre is the use of a male protagonist who rebels against a controlling system. In "Metropolis" the protagonist

Freder, the ~~son~~ son of the city's leader, rebels against his  
 father's controlling system ~~when~~ that treats the working  
 class like slaves. Freder is haunted by the way the workers  
 have to live when he goes underground and witnesses the  
 torture they go through, and decides to become the 'Mediator'.  
 In a scene at the end of the film, he finally the two  
 halves of society, the ruling class and the working class, to unite.  
 In a way this division of society in "Metropolis" is a criticism  
 of the social and economic divisions between the well-off and  
 the working class post WWI in Germany, ~~where~~ when the  
 Great Depression began making its impact. This convention of  
 male protagonist against a controlling system is appealing to the  
 audience as they like an underdog who they can relate to and  
 root for. One film "Metropolis" largely influenced was the  
 movie "Blade Runner" directed by Ridley Scott in 1982.  
 In this film, the ~~current~~ convention which reflects the current  
 fears in society was apparent, but since the era had changed  
 so did ~~the~~ <sup>society's fears</sup> ~~convention~~. This means  
 'always changing, as <sup>it adapts to</sup> society's fears and expectations <sup>as they</sup> change over  
 time. The fears held by society in the 1980's included fear  
 concerns about environmental issues, and fears of Asian Corporation  
 taking over. These are shown in the opening scene of "Blade  
 Runner" where an establishing shot is shown of the <sup>decayed</sup> city of  
 Los Angeles, ~~decaying~~, and then focuses on the buildings  
 covered in large billboards of ~~geisha~~ and advertising of  
 Japanese corporation. The camera then ~~more~~ <sup>switches</sup> to a wide shot of  
 the ~~city~~ streets below which are full of people crammed together  
 and Asian food stalls. The high-rise buildings covered in advertising  
 and the crowded streets full of people highlights how ~~Los~~ Los  
 Angeles has become just like Asian cities such as Tokyo. This

V2

A media genre is always changing.]

and the Asian food stalls emphasises ~~the~~<sup>7</sup> the society's fear of Asians taking over. Like in the era of "Metropolis," society in 1986 also feared technology being misused. This fear of how advancements in technology may affect ~~us~~ us has been and will be a ~~rea~~ recurring concern for centuries. Daniel Chandler reinforces this in his article "Imagining futures; Dramatising fears" when he says that we all "fear losing control and our souls to machines." In "Blade Runner" the replicants represent this fear of technology being misused, ~~by corp~~<sup>as</sup> as the corporation Tyrell owns in the film has misused technology by creating these replicants that harm the citizens. This fear of the misuse of technology is still evident today in the way people worry about Facebook and Google's influence on the world. "Blade Runner's" male protagonist Deckard is given the job of killing the replicants. However, at the end of the film he rebels against the system and decides not to kill the replicant Rachel and runs away to be with her. In a way this reassures the audience, who root for Deckard, that not all technology advancements are bad. This change in ~~for~~ society's fears being reflected emphasises how the ~~media~~<sup>dystopian film</sup> genre is always changing as the audience changes.

A significant change that has occurred in the dystopian film genre recently is the way dystopian films have changed to appeal to a teenage audience comprising of mainly females. This change is due to the sudden success of young adult dystopian novels, which are mainly read by teenage girls. These dystopian novels ~~later~~ are very financially successful and have a large audience behind them, so film producers see making ~~these~~ teen literary spin-offs as an instant success. The ~~series~~ novels that initiated this change to the dystopian film genre are "The Hunger Games" series written by Suzanne Collins and published between 2008 and 2010.

These novels sold 65 million copies (goodreads.com). In 2012, "The Hunger Games" film directed by Gary Ross hit the box office and grossed 694.4 million US dollars (boxofficemojo.com). This completely changed the dystopian film genre, as film producers began to all start targeting a ~~teen~~ female teenage audience and basing films on dystopian novels in the hope of achieving the same financial success "The Hunger Games" did. One way the dystopian film genre significantly changed was by altering the ~~convent~~ original convention of a ~~ma~~ strong male protagonist <sup>to rebel</sup> against a controlling ~~society~~ <sup>system</sup> to a young, independent female protagonist such as Katniss Everdeen in "The Hunger Games". Katniss' rebellious traits and independence shown in the scene where she suggests to Peeta that they eat the poisonous berries so that neither of them win. Since it is the tradition that one competitor must survive, she is directly defying and rebelling against the controlling system of the Capitol and its Hunger Games. The audience would feel satisfaction in seeing Katniss, who is the ultimate underdog, rebel against the Capitol and become the hero. They would also enjoy the binary of good versus evil, ~~wh~~ with Katniss representing us as good, and the Capitol representing evil. This ~~would appeal~~ ~~par~~ change in convention to a independent female protagonist occurred to appeal to the female teenage audience. The reason film producers are targeting female teenagers is because the dystopian novel readers are mainly teenage females, and also because teenage females are more likely to actually go see the film at the



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Cinema. This is shown in the MPAA 2014 statistics where it showed 25% of film-goers are adolescents and 52% are female. This change in dystopian film's protagonist appeals to this new audience as they would find an independent female protagonist empowering. Previous dystopian films were typically sexist. They represented males with strong, dominant characters, while females were presented as sexual objects through a male gaze - Mulvey's theory that females are represented in movies through male's eyes. ~~Do~~ Older dystopian films like "Blade Runner" and "Metropolis" also fail to pass the 'Bechdel Test' as none of their female characters have a single conversation with each other. These show how insignificant females were portrayed in dystopian films before this new change. Since the significant change to teen dystopian films, all dystopian movies tend to pass the 'Bechdel Test' with their female protagonists. ~~It~~ "The Hunger Games" passed the 'Bechdel Test' within the first few minutes of the opening scene. In this scene, Katniss is comforting her younger sister Primrose who awoke from a nightmare about the Hunger Games. This conversation does not involve males. "The Hunger Games" also goes against 'male gaze' in the cave scene where Peeta ~~confesses his love for Katniss and they kiss~~ ~~this scene~~ is weak and vulnerable, and clinging to love. In a way he is a "damsel in distress" as he relies on Katniss to save him. This cave scene also ~~represents~~ emphasises how the dystopian film genre has gone through a change by hybridising with the romance genre. It has hybridised with the romance genre to appeal to its audience of female

teenagers, as ~~romance~~ <sup>romantic</sup> films are very popular amongst teenage girls and tend to attract a large audience. An example of this romance in the cave scene of "The Hunger Games" is when Peeta confesses his love for Katniss and they kiss. The camera switches from them kissing, to Peeta's hurt face as he watches them on TV in district 12. This emphasises the love triangle that attracts teenage girls and fandoms, ~~which~~ The change to ~~way~~ <sup>being</sup> females have started ~~to be~~ represented in a positive way ~~that~~ <sup>audiences</sup> appeals to modern ~~society~~ <sup>rise in the</sup> as the third wave of feminism and the ~~increase~~ <sup>rise in the</sup> equal pay between genders means that females in the audience no longer accept being represented as inferior to males in films. In fact, a study by ~~Eight Thirty Eight~~ <sup>FiveThirtyEight</sup> found that films that pass the 'Bechdel Test' make more money at the box office than those that don't. This ~~shows to~~ reinforces how ~~import~~ important this change to a ~~female~~ independent female protagonist was to the dystopian film genre, and how ~~important~~ <sup>crucial</sup> it is for genres to always be changing ~~in regard to financial success~~ in order to gain financial rewards.

An implication of the dystopian film genre always changing is that sometimes the change is only successful for a short period, ~~at~~ then the audience get bored and film producers must think of another change. For example, the significant change in the dystopian film genre to teen dystopian films has started to go downhill. The audience have become bored of the same plots, cliché love triangles, and similar visuals. This has caused the commercial influence to decline. This decline

Extra space if required.

Write the question number(s) if applicable.

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is shown by the most recent dystopian film to come out in the "Divergent" series, "Allegiant" which failed ~~at~~ at the box office with a return of only 179.2 million US dollars ~~Box of~~ (boxofficemojo.com).

This is a huge decrease compared to the film before it in the "Divergent" series, "Insurgent", which grossed 297.3 million US dollars at the box office (boxofficemojo.com). As a result of this decline, the last film of the series "Ascendant" has had its budget cut going into production and may have to be made into a TV show. This represents how much the dystopian genre has nose-dived since the release of "The Hunger Games". In order to regain ~~this~~ the dystopian film genre's audience and commercial success, film producers must ensure that each new dystopian film has exciting, unexpected plots and visuals to recapture the audience's interest.

Film producers could also alter the conventions again to appeal to today's society. The female protagonist was successful when there was a rise in feminism, now that there has recently been a rise in homosexual and transgender rights with gay marriage becoming legal in many countries, is it time for a ~~gay~~ homosexual or transgender protagonist? This may be a way for film producers to gain their audience's attention <sup>and</sup> broaden the audience.

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Write the question number(s) if applicable.

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or it would empower many. ~~If~~ The dystopian film genre is always ~~if~~ the film. An implication of the film's genre ~~is~~ dystopian film genre always changing is that if the film producers do not provide another change in the genre soon to appeal to the modern audience, it will ~~ent~~ fall and disappear as a ~~to~~ genre altogether.

The dystopian film genre is always changing as it needs to adapt in order to meet the audience's new expectations and survive. It has experienced many changes over the years, where its conventions and target audience has changed in order to gain financial success. If the dystopian film genre does not have another significant change soon, the genre will come to an eventual demise.

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<b>High Excellence exemplar for Media Studies 91251 2016</b>			<b>Total score</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Q</b>	<b>Grade score</b>	<b>Annotation</b>		
1	E8	<p><b>I = Implications</b></p> <p>The candidate provides a thorough examination of change in the dystopian film genre. Draws insightful conclusions based on their evidence. Integrates specific examples and evidence, including secondary source material, e.g. box office figures, expert quotes, and media theory (Bechdel Test). Implications and complexities are detailed and examined.</p>		