

91251



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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
Merit

TOTAL

6

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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: Slasher Films (Subgenre of Horror)

Statement number: 5

PLANNING (OPTIONAL)

Description of an aspect of your chosen media genre:

Violence in Slashers
Change in violence

Halloween (1978) Dir. John Carpenter - Laurie Strode, Michael Myers - \$4.7
A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984) Dir. Wes Craven - Nancy, Glen Lantz - \$25.5
Scream (1996) Dir. Wes Craven - Sidney Prescott, Billy Loomis, Stu Macher - \$105.1
Slasher must evolve the amount of violence to stay relevant to its audience

How and/or why this aspect has an impact on the media genre:

INTRO: Bloodlust in all of us, reptilian, primal brain/instinct still there, underlying, why we hunger for horror (and blood)

HALLOWEEN

* sets the bar for AMOUNT of violence in slashers
* establishes codes & conventions of slasher & horror (as well as Psycho, 1960)

NIGHTMARE

* impacts by shocking new audiences, upping anti of gore
* introduces supernatural horror because of dreamscape being in the film

SCREAM

* waves into a new generation of slashers & horror - META, where the characters & plot are self-aware, acknowledges modern audiences who know codes & conventions
* ushers realism back into slasher movies.

Likely implications of this aspect for the media genre:

HALLOWEEN - CLASSIC ERA

* sparks onleu of slashers, as it was the first popular slasher.
* Hollywood emulates success & creates template, codes & conventions for slashers in which every movie is practically the same.
* audience grows bored of these similar "cookie-cutter" slashers

NIGHTMARE - REINVENTION ERA

* wheels in a new era of supernatural slashers, brings forth gore & blood
* glut of bad supernatural slashers with some outlandish ideas but that are not as clever nor popular as N. lead to genre death for over 10 years
1986 - 1996 - slasher genre died

SCREAM - REVIVAL ERA

* revival of slashers, deal from '86 to Scream
* brings back realistic slashers, stalkers etc
* introducing META slashers! where everyone is self-aware of everything!

* genre SPLIT - goreno (R16+)

safe slash (PG, M)

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.

Begin your essay here:

There is a bloodlust in all of us. An underlying primal instinct hardwired for violence, and the urge to kill to survive. Underneath the morals of modern society, we have a reptilian brain that still today hungers for horror and thirsts for blood. The Slasher genre proves that as a race, humans still find murder more fascinating than many care to admit. Since the dawn of time, violence has been a popular pastime, as audiences watched gladiators battle to death in Ancient Greece and stage plays filled with nudity and torture in 19th century Paris. It is no surprise that the Slasher genre today is full of films expressing murder and torture in a safe way, on a screen, that audiences do not feel threatened or guilty for pleasuring in. But to please an ever-changing audience, a genre, as the Slasher genre has done from the year 1960 until 1996, must evolve to stay relevant to its audience, and their desires.

In the Classic Era of Slashers, the 1960s to 70s, slashers were very bare in terms of violence and gore, relying on stalking and action for the movie to remain exciting. When Halloween, directed by John Carpenter was released in 1978, it gave audiences what they

wanted at the time of its release; in the wake of the Jonestown Massacre, audiences were scared of reality in their own lives, and so they wanted a safe scare that would not put them in any real danger. With its blatant lack of violence and blood, Halloween graced the Box Office with a total of \$47 million being made, proving its popularity. When Laurie Strode, a suburban teenager babysitting for two children alone at night, is attacked by the deranged Michael Myers, the Unstoppable Masked Killer (or UMK) in the final scene of the film, she is strangled by Myers before she takes off his mask. Caught by surprise, he stumbles back into a bedroom, where Dr Samuel Loomis, Michael's doctor and psychiatrist, shoots him 6 times in the abdomen with no sign of blood before he falls back off a balcony. In this scene, it is the height of violence in the film, however tame and bloodless by today's standards for slasher films. It impacts the genre by not only setting the standard for the amount of violence in slashers, but by establishing the codes and conventions of slasher and horror films, an implication being that Hollywood wanted to emulate the success of Halloween, and so went on to create slashers from the exact same template and style used as in "Halloween". This led to an onstew of films with the same plot, boring audiences to death with predictability in terms of the violence seen. Audiences wanted to see something new, more violent, and so Hollywood responded by increasing the amount of violence and evolving the genre to stay relevant to its audiences.

In the Reinvention Era of the Slasher genre, all audiences had seen were Halloween replicas, plain, predictable, and bare of action, violence, and gore. From the start of the 1980s onwards, the era took a turn for the worst when the Vietnam War broke out, televised on every screen in America. Seeing the real-life horror turned audiences away from Slashers as they now had enough horror in their own lives - and what they wanted and needed was an escapism film; something filled with fantasy that didn't at all resemble the horrors of reality and war. When *A Nightmare on Elm Street* was released in 1984, directed by Wes Craven, audiences flocked to the dreamscape-set fantasy slasher, which reeled in a \$25.5 million Box Office. With a crazy DMK, Freddy Krueger, a disfigured and burnt man-monster with knives for fingernails tormenting teenagers in their sleep, it was only a matter of time before the final girl Nancy Thompson's boyfriend, Glen Lantz was taken into Krueger's supernatural hell, being killed off in an overly gruesome manner that the audience lapped up. After being advised by Nancy not to fall asleep where Freddy is able to kill you, Glen employs multiple ways of staying awake, when finally, he succumbs to sleep. As Freddy pulls him through his own bed in a sucking motion that brings half his room's furniture with him, we hear Freddy's laughing and butchering noises before a geyser of blood erupts from Glen's bed, covering the walls of his room in a fountain motion, as the audience is left reeling, wondering what possibly

could have happened for there to be that much blood, ~~imagining~~ as the film invites them to imagine what happened to his body for themselves. An impact this had on the genre would be the reinvention of slasher films: no longer are they only about stalking, they now had a supernatural element. But *Nightmare* was a unique film that was just strange enough to be hugely popular; ~~the~~ implications of the change in the type of violence led to two years of supernatural gore where ~~UKs~~ were completely unrealistic and even laughable - as movies with Santa Claus or monsters came out in a glut and the audience grew tired by supernatural violence, so the slasher genre died for over 10 years before it finally agreed to evolve to remain relevant to a changed audience.

In the Revival Era of the slasher genre, in the ^{late} 1990s, the slasher genre had completely died out for approximately a decade, leaving slasher fans with ~~old~~ only old films to rewatch. With the boom in the 90s of video stores, where hundreds of movies could be rented out to anyone, slasher fans of the time had access to over 3 decades of slashers, where they could learn their codes and conventions and where and what to look out for in order to predict a film. With the release of *Scream*, directed by Wes Craven in 1996, it was something audiences had never seen before - the characters and plot were self-aware of slasher movies and conventions of the past, even making a mockery of the codes and conventions. But bringing in a huge \$105 million in box office, it proved to be

RE

a bigger success than any of its Slasher predecessors. As the genre had evolved to stay relevant to the aware audiences of the time, the violence had increased - as one of the most famous opening scenes in history plays out in the first 15 minutes of the film alone. A teenage girl with starpower, played by Drew Barrymore, who lives onscreen no longer than 10 minutes, is at home ~~when~~ alone at night when she receives a phonecall from an unknown number, a man with a deep, gravelly voice asking her about her knowledge of "scary movies". It takes a turn for the worst when he asks her a question about horror film Friday the 13th, and she answers wrong, when he announces he is inside her house and going to kill her. She scrambles around the house before she sees her boyfriend outside, tied to a chair and watches as he is brutally gutted before she is caught by the masked killer, dressed in black robes and with a white screaming mask as she is stabbed several times, all seen and heard, before being dragged and hung from a tree, as her parents come home and listen as their daughter dies, all the while still on the telephone, and step outside to see their daughter's gutted and bloody, disfigured body. This had a massive impact on the genre because all of a sudden, this realistic murder had come back into play, scaring audiences with a human killer. When, at the end of the film, the killer turns out to be nothing more than two masochistic teenage boys, Billy Loomis and Stu Macher

who drew their inspiration from the Slasher movies they had watched, the audience was jolted with the new and evolved Slasher genre, realistic and self-aware. With this huge amount of gore included in the film however, the genre could not evolve the violence in its Slashers any further, and so an implication of the film was that the genre was at a crossroads. As the violence had increased, it had nowhere to go but up, so the Slasher genre split in two: violent, gory R18 films became Goreno, which, targeted at adults, began to incorporate nudity and porn into Slashers. Producers who still wanted to target a teenage audience created Safe Slash: M-rated or PG films that almost anyone could watch.

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The Slasher genre has evolved massively over the years to stay relevant to its audiences interests and trends; as it continues to evolve today. So long as there is an interest in violence, which the human race will always have, as it is nature, we will always have changes in violence within the Slasher genre in order for the genre to survive, in a world that constantly needs its films to remain relevant to its audiences.

High Merit exemplar for Media Studies 91251 2016		Total score	6
Q	Grade score	Annotation	
5	M6	<p>RE = Reasoned explanation RED = Reasoned explanation + detail</p> <p>The candidate provides a solid essay that explains how and / or why change occurs in the slasher genre. The essay is well supported with detailed examples.</p> <p>On page 9, the essay describes implications (the split in genre), however the discussion is not developed to an examination of this issue and lacks enough insight or understanding of complexities to achieve Excellence.</p>	