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3

91493



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## Level 3 Media Studies, 2016

### 91493 Demonstrate understanding of a relationship between a media genre and society

2.00 p.m. Tuesday 29 November 2016  
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Demonstrate understanding of a relationship between a media genre and society.	Demonstrate in-depth understanding of a relationship between a media genre and society.	Demonstrate perceptive understanding of a relationship between a media genre and society.

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 eight 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.**

Low  
Excellence

TOTAL

7

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**INSTRUCTIONS**

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

Write an essay discussing a **relationship** between your chosen media genre and society, by responding to ONE of the statements below. You should aim to evaluate how the relationship affects the genre and/or society, and you may agree and/or disagree with your chosen statement.

*Note: 'Society' refers to a community in a specific time and place, or the audience for a genre.*

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

Begin your essay on page 4.

**STATEMENTS** (Choose ONE)

1. Genre is a reflection of society.
2. Genre warns us about the dangers of society.
3. Genre is dominated by male concerns.
4. Genre is driven by technology.
5. A genre has to make money.
6. Genre ignores minorities.
7. Conflict is central to genre.
8. Genre is political.

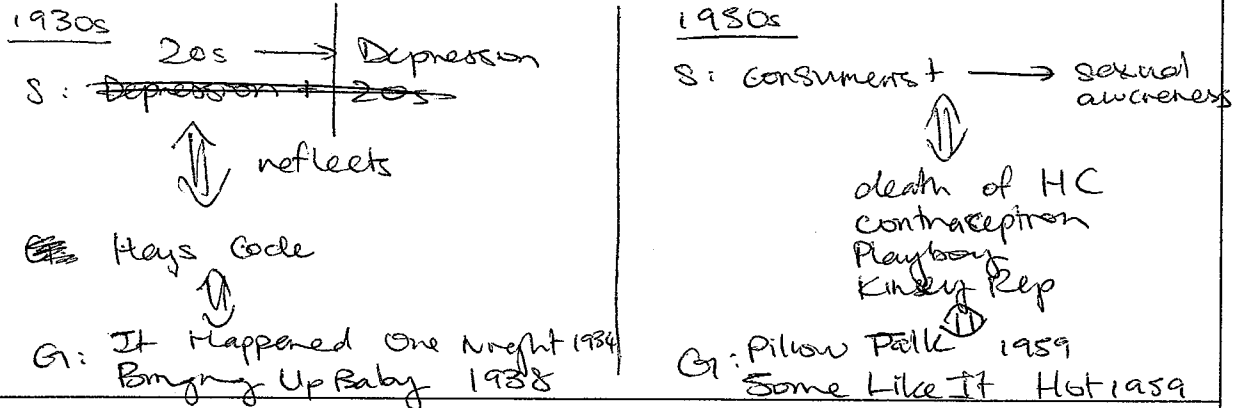
Media genre: Hollywood <sup>romantic</sup> ~~romantic~~ Comedy Film genre

Society: American society of the 1930s and 1950s

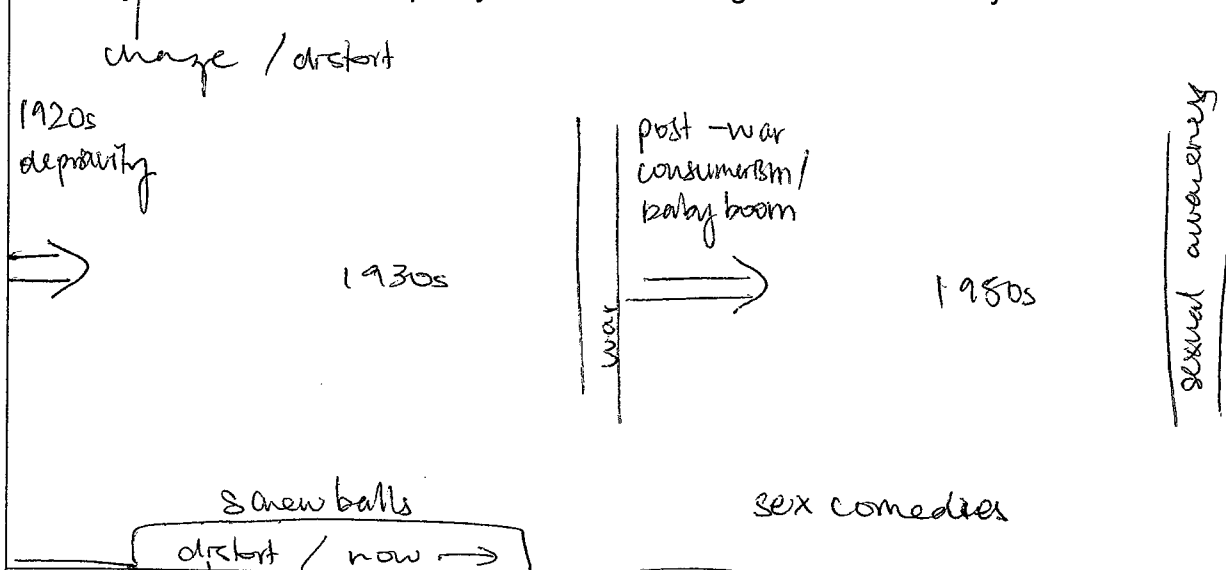
Statement number: 1

### PLANNING

Explanation of the **relationship** between your chosen media genre and society:



The **impact** of this relationship on your chosen media genre and/or society:



The **wider significance** of this relationship for your chosen media genre and/or society:

(Tudor 1974) "~~Genre~~ A genre ... defines a moral and social world."

(Johnston 2011) "Genres are cultural creations which are formed and reformed on a regular basis."

Now:

(Morgan 2014) "...feminism is suddenly hot — violence toward women."

(Orr 2013) "...there ~~must be~~ needs to be an ~~obstacle~~ status."

(Philip Hodgson) "Idealism has a role to play ... hope."

(Dr Bjarne Holmes) "Interesting — films."

The suggested maximum length for your essay is 1 000 words (7–8 pages). The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay.

Draw conclusions about the **wider significance** of the relationship between your chosen media genre and society by including **relevant, specific supporting detail** from media text(s) and/or evidence from other sources.

Begin your essay here:

As Tudor (1974) stated, "A genre... defines ~~a~~ a moral and social world." Indeed, the relationship between genres and their audience is ~~a~~ one which is closely linked ~~to~~ by the desire ~~to~~ of audiences to both see themselves and ~~see what they want~~ their ideals in texts. Thus, genres ~~become~~ have come to ~~reflect~~ reflect ~~to~~ their audiences, to change with their reflections and distort themselves ~~to~~ <sup>according</sup> to society's ~~desires~~ desires. The Hollywood romantic comedy film genre <sup>(RomComs)</sup> is no different. Through its reflection of <sup>American</sup> society in its first <sup>and second</sup> cycles ~~of~~ <sup>of the 1930s</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> sex comedies ~~of the 1950s~~ — and the changes ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> undertook, it is unequivocal that RomComs are ~~a~~ a reflection of ~~it~~ society.

~~From the 1930s~~

The ~~1930s~~ <sup>1930s</sup> Screenball cycle of RomComs reflected American society of the 1930s which was one of <sup>"a new age of conservatism in the face of</sup> ~~uneconomic~~ economic pressures on family life and a return to traditional gender roles and an emphasis on family values." (Mortimer, 2010:12) ~~This is~~ Society in the 30s ~~that~~ emerged from the Roaring 20s — a time of perceived moral

depravity. In Hollywood, this was observed by, in  
 "... Fatty Arbuckle charged for manslaughter, a  
 bisexual film director found murdered; more  
 stars dying of drug overdoses ..." (Mondello, 2008)

What this reflected was an era of heightened

Heidomism and lowered sense of morality. ~~Added to this~~

~~was the Great Depression following the 1929 Wall Street Crash which put pressure on~~  
~~families with unemployment women who worked during the war returning home,~~  
~~and at 1930s required a return to conservatism.~~

~~unemployment and men who leave to~~  
~~find work never returning.~~ In response to this, the conservative

Facet of Society had their desires for a "better"

society of stable relationships and families reflected in ~~motion~~ RomComs. The Legion

of Decency together with William Hayes established

the Hayes Code in 1930. According to Brooke,

"the code was found on the ~~ex~~ concept," if

motion pictures can present images that will

affect men for the better, it can become the

most ~~powerful~~ powerful force for the improvement

of mankind." Overall, the Hayes Code presented,

"... high standards of performance for motion-picture

producers." (Mondello, 2008) with a ban on ~~things~~

"moral conflicts" such as adultery, drugs,

sex before marriage, blasphemy and the like.

~~Thus~~ Thus, this social change stemming from

the milieu of 1930s America became reflected in

the birth of the genre: RomComs. Its first

cycle began <sup>in 1934</sup> with It Happened One Night which

pioneered the formula of a rich <sup>and farsy</sup> heroine

~~entering~~ entering the life of a normal, poorer

man and — in the end — being tamed by

him. ~~There~~ The film which was set in the contemporary society of the time — ~~Depression~~ Great Depression America — ~~It~~ reflected the social ~~at~~ climate with "Ellie ... learning life lessons while living amongst the poor and needy", adhered to the Hays Code in reflecting the changes of the climate with the "Wall of Jericho" ~~was~~ (a blanket) protecting Ellie's modesty and distorted the climate to ~~reflect~~ ~~a idea~~ reveals when, "It Happened One Night" sent such a message that poverty was morally superior to wealth and (was a) comfort ~~to~~ to ~~the~~ contemporary audience members." ~~It~~ (McDonald, 2007) made poor by the Depression.

Bringing Up Baby (1938) ~~also~~ was another Rom Com in the screwball cycle which reflected the conservation of ~~the~~ 1930s America. Although the film starts with a strong-willed, <sup>selfish</sup> ~~and~~ and entitled heroine and a ~~man~~ ~~hero~~ hero — an archaeologist — who had literally and figuratively "lost his bone", ~~the~~ ~~it~~ it ends with the heroine giving in ~~to~~ to the man and ~~the~~ marrying him, forming a stable and unbreakable ~~bond~~ bond due to love. ~~This reflects~~ ~~the need~~ As Cook comments in 1981, Rom Coms "can only ~~go~~ go in one direction (toward marriage)..." and this reflects the need in society for ~~a~~ ~~idealized~~ a desirable image

of marriage, for women who ~~were~~ were in the work force during World War I to return to domestic roles and for the reinforcement of "the image <sup>of hierarchical relationships between</sup> of the male ~~bread~~ breadwinner and the female homemaker." (Nichols 2010) Thus, through the genre of RomComs, society's state, ~~and~~ change and desires are reflected.

However, if RomComs was a mirror of American society, it was a mirror American society walked away from during ~~the~~ World War II. Mortimer ~~(2010:12)~~ (2010:12) talks about RomComs as giving "an exhilarating sense of ~~optimism~~ escapism and, ultimately, optimism as audiences <sup>remain</sup> comfortable in the knowledge that there will be a ~~to~~ happy ending." ~~The~~ World War II allowed for neither escapism nor optimism but ~~it~~ demanded ~~realism~~ Americans to be realistic and created a pessimistic ~~and~~ society of uncertainty and ~~and~~ tragedy. Thus, the genre was a mirror no one looked into until after the war had ended.

With the post-war consumerism of the 1950s, RomComs returned but <sup>this</sup> ~~the~~ second cycle — ~~sex comedies~~ — reflected a different society with different distortions and changes. As Mortimer (2010:12) states, RomComs reflect "the trappings of the typical American family unit. This

was the era of the baby boom. To be unmarried was unnatural." Pillow Talk (1959) is one ~~such~~ example of this. Doris Day's ~~protagonist~~ heroine Jan is the typical "career woman" created by the demands for women in the workforce during the war of the prior decade. However, the repeated ~~the~~ voiceover which echoes "bedroom problems" in her mind depicts the pressure of society ~~to~~ on women to now return to the family ~~and because that is how to be~~ ~~achieve~~ ~~causing a relationship~~ <sup>marriage</sup> to be the "natural" state of a woman, not work.

However, while this ideal distorted the reflection of women ~~toward the~~ from the "working woman" to the "homemaker" once more, another social change was at play. An undertone of this shift in society is ~~per~~ present ~~in~~ even in the ~~the~~ Code-approved screwballs in ~~which~~ which the ~~man~~ hero is characterised as a playboy whose ultimate goal is sex while the heroine desired marriage. According to McDonald (2007), "The man, assuming a different persona as a schemer, knows more than the innocent woman who is the ~~the~~ subject of his plotting..." This is already different to ~~what is~~ <sup>gender-</sup> ~~reflex~~ the ~~mutual~~ ~~view~~ view of "no sex before marriage" depicted in screwballs. Through the development of the 1950s, this



understone becomes more and more prominent in both society and <sup>the</sup> RomComs that reflects it.

~~the~~ The Kinsey Report Sexuality of the Human Female was published in 1953 to reveal that, shockingly, women were actually a lot more sexually active ~~than~~ ~~than~~ and aware than previously perceived. ~~Playboy~~ The popularity of <sup>the new</sup> Playboy magazine also ~~est~~ shows that ~~the~~ 1980s America was becoming more sexually aware. As Keller (2009) comments, ~~the~~ Hugh Hefner (creator of Playboy), "... was not selling steady dates and monogamy. He was selling one-night stands and variety. And plenty of bitches... wanted to buy." ~~And then~~

The reflection of this <sup>change</sup> in RomComs is that, "By ~~the~~ 1959, as long as a "moral conflict" provided "the proper frame of reference", a Code-approved film could deal with pretty much any topic but homosexuality." (Mondello, 2008). This shows that although theatres previously enforced the <sup>"suggested"</sup> Hays Code <sup>on producers</sup>, through only showing what adhered to it, they now had to bend their own rules ~~and now had the authority~~ because conservatism wasn't selling anymore. ~~the~~ ~~the~~ Even more evidence of this ~~was~~ came with the creation of, ~~the Code-approved~~ ~~and~~ ~~night~~ "Some Like It Hot (with ~~the~~ men) in drag... fending off male suitors..." (Mondello, 2008) and thus

dealing with the last stand ~~as~~ against homosexuality in the Code. As Mondello (2008) states, "When Sugar ... climbed into the train with ... 'Daphne' (a man) there was no longer a blanket hanging between them ... the code was dead." ~~Then~~ Through the death of the ~~code~~ Hays Code ~~and~~ and the RomComs which reflect it it is clear that Doris Day's "virgin" and Marilyn Monroe's "whore" reflect a wider significance in the <sup>idealized</sup> distortion and the reality of change in women's roles in society.

Although true for the first two cycles of the Rom Com, ~~this reflection~~ ~~the~~ this relationship of RomComs reflecting society is still true today. However, instead of American society, ~~the~~ technological advancement and the internet ~~has~~ brought the relationship to be one between Hollywood Romantic Comedy films and the Western world. Yet, RomComs still reflect ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~world~~ society ~~as~~ they target, but perhaps with their lack of ~~peers~~ ~~legitimate~~ legitimacy more than anything else. ~~As Hodson~~ ~~Philip Hodson~~ Philip Hodson observed that, "Idealism has a ~~at~~ role to play. ~~We~~ we all ~~do~~ need hope in our lives and Hollywood trades on hope." This has been true for the distortions in screwballs and sex comedies and is still true to day but what that idealism looks like

Extra space if required.  
Write the statement number if applicable.

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STATEMENT  
NUMBER

(Cont.)

- 1) IS changing ~~MALE~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~man~~ ~~as~~ with, (becoming) ~~is~~ ~~solely~~ ~~not~~ - "... feminism ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~end~~ a celebrity ~~can~~ culture which draws more attention to issues such as equal pay, full reproductive rights and ending violence towards women." (Morgan 2014). This emerging Neoliberalistic model of the woman is much like the "working woman" prior to the 1950s — a woman who doesn't need a man.

In addition, Orr (2013) observed that in a RomCom, "... there needs to be an obstacle to overcome and ~~also~~ such obstacles are harder and ~~a~~ harder to come by... ~~also~~ Love is increasingly presumed to transcend profession, class, faith, age, race, gender and (on occasion) ~~marital~~ marital status." meaning that RomComs are becoming unrealistic.

A combination of these social elements are what is reflected in RomComs today: a shift away from marriage to modern relationships and a shift toward ridiculous situations; it is ~~clearly~~ inherently a shift away from ~~the~~ romance and into comedy. This is evident in the 2016 film

(Cont.)

Extra space if required.

Write the statement number if applicable.

ASSESSOR'S  
USE ONLYSTATEMENT  
NUMBER

(cont.)

- 1) Bridget Jones's Baby which uses elements of Romantic comedy ~~tag~~ but depicts Bridget ~~being~~ in control of her own polygamous relationships and a bizarre obstacle of not knowing the father of her child. Perhaps if ~~the~~ films & today continue to develop as such, ~~the~~ RomCom may become ~~the~~ ~~less~~ ~~prominent~~ ~~and~~ ~~an~~ ~~insignificant~~ sub-genre of comedy.

~~the~~ Ultimately, from the 1930s to 1950s to today, Rom Coms. have proved to be a genre which reflects the society which hosts its audience. It is ~~not~~ not only a genre but also a mirror which reflects, changes with and distorts its image as the image itself changes.

91493

<b>Low Excellence exemplar for Media Studies 91493 2016</b>			<b>Total score</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Q</b>	<b>Grade score</b>	<b>Annotation</b>		
1	E7	<p>The candidate provides a detailed explanation of how and why the genre of romantic comedy reflects aspects of American society. The candidate further develops their discussion by analysing the impact of shifting social attitudes on developments within the genre. The candidate refers to a range of specific, relevant examples throughout their discussion to support their observations. The candidate also evaluates the relationship between American society and romantic comedies, by drawing valid conclusions and providing insight throughout their discussion. The candidate refers to secondary texts to validate their evaluations throughout their discussion. The candidate has provided a depth and breadth of understanding about the relationship between romantic comedies and American society.</p>		