

No part of the candidate's evidence in this exemplar material may be presented in an external assessment for the purpose of gaining an NZQA qualification or award.

SUPERVISOR'S USE ONLY

3

91493



914930

Draw a cross through the box (☒) if you have NOT written in this booklet

+



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 3 Media Studies 2023

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

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 four statements in this booklet.

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

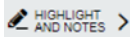
Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in any cross-hatched area (XXXXXX). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

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

Low Excellence

TOTAL 07



Page 1

INSTRUCTIONS

Choose ONE **media genre**.

Write an essay discussing the **extent** to which you agree with ONE of the statements below.

Respond critically to the statement by evaluating the **influence, impact, and wider significance** of a relationship between your chosen media genre and society.

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

STATEMENTS (Choose ONE)

1. Genre can subvert or reinforce societal norms.
2. Genre fosters social connection and identity.
3. Genre offers an escape from reality.
4. Genre tells us stories about ourselves.

Media genre:

Society:

Select your statement:

PLANNING

B *I* U | | |

Genre CAN subvert or reinforce societal norms.

Roscoe's Theory of Gamification - People play along (SCREAM, also through POV convention)

Baudrillard's Theory on Hyperreality - Self-awareness (SCREAM)

Henri Focillon's Model on the progression of genre

Hall's Reception Theory - Dominant, Negotiated, Oppositional

Uses and Gratification Theory? - if there is time and if relevant lol

Hanlin's Sphere of Consensus - Sphere of consensus, legitimate controversy, deviance

CONVENTIONS

First girl

Final girl

Phallic Weapon

Masked or Disfigured Killer

Group of Youth

The Terrible Place

The use of the POV shot

Psycho 1960 Alfred Hitchcock

Made 50 Million USD

Post WWII

Initiation of the Vietnam War

Halloween 1978 John Carpenter

Made 70 Million USD

Hippie Movement

Second Wave Feminism

Scream 1996 Wes Craven

Made 153 Million USD

Rise and development of Technology moving into a technologically advanced era

"Genre's are instances of repetition and difference" - Steve Neale

ESSAY

Type your essay in the space below. You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 800–900 words. The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay. (The counter will change colour when you reach the recommended word count.)

Make sure you **respond only to your chosen statement** *throughout* your essay, and include **relevant, specific supporting detail** from a range of media texts.

B *I* U |   |  

Steve Neale states "Genres are instances of repetition and difference". This statement refers to the use of particular conventions to identify a film as belonging to a particular genre while also needing differences to keep audiences engaged and entertained. The slasher genre demonstrates this and in doing so it has evidently both subverted and reinforced societal norms. Through the films, *Psycho* (1960, Alfred Hitchcock), *Halloween* (1978, John Carpenter) and *Scream* (1996, Wes Craven), we can identify how these particular films are examples of how the slasher genre has subverted and reinforced societal norms. In dissecting these films we will use theories such as Roscoe's theory of gamification, Baudrillard's theory on hyper-reality, Hanlin's sphere of consensus and many more.

The slasher genre is a sub-genre of the horror genre characterised by its distinct conventions. Slasher films commonly feature a masked or disfigured killer, hunting down and killing a group of youths one by one using a phallic weapon (knife, chainsaw, etc). Typically there is a first girl who is killed first and a final girl who is the last remaining girl out of the group of victims. According to the uses and gratifications theory, audiences seek out films that can fulfil desires and with the high intensity and suspenseful environment created in slasher films, audiences looking for a thrill could watch films that fall under the slasher genre to meet their needs.

Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* was a revolutionary film released in 1960, it came during a time where American society was fragile. Post WWII left American society in need of some stability, coupled with the initiation of the Vietnam War there was a lot of uncertainty which made American society more vulnerable and impressionable. The government needed a way to reinforce a vision of the American dream to unify the nation and strengthen American society. Thus, through the media the Hays Code was created as a set of rules that films had to follow such as no nudity, sexualised violence and crude language etc. The Hays Code was a means to reinforce conservative and traditionalist ideas and values that make up the American. The film *Psycho* broke the Hays code and opened up a whole new way films could be created, it changed the cinema-going experience and it became the blueprint for future slasher films. According to Henri Focillon's model on the progression of genre, *Psycho* would sit within the experimental stage as it experiments with conventions that would be used as the foundation for future slasher films. *Psycho* was the amalgamation of various cultural and societal events that regarded codes of gender and the youth which was symbolic of the future of the slasher genre. It can be argued that in breaking the Hays code it opposed societal norms but looking into the context of the film it also evidently reinforces societal norms through the conventions used. In *Psycho* we have our typical killer, Norman Bates who wields a phallic weapon, a knife, and goes on a killing spree. Marion, the first girl, is the representation of what society deems as a bad woman. She is unmarried, has sex and steals money to help support the man she is entangled with in the hopes that he can start making more money and they can get married. Using Hanlin's sphere of consensus, Marion's character would sit in the sphere of deviance as she is not the ideal woman and she defies the traditionalist values that were the societal norm. Marion is killed as a result of her actions and in the 1960s her death could be justified as she didn't fit societal norms. Lila Crane, our final girl, survives in the end of the film. She is representative of the ideal woman, she is married, pure and demonstrates all the conservative values that were socially acceptable at the time. She is rescued by a man and has no agency, her passiveness and overall character resemble that of the ideal woman in American Society. *Psycho* was commercially successful as it made 50 million USD, this reveals how it was well received by audiences. Using Hall's Reception theory, *Psycho* had a dominant response as audiences received the film positively even though it broke the Hays Code. Overall we can see how *Psycho* was subversive to its time by breaking the Hays Code as well as reinforcing the traditional values that align with societal norms.

Halloween, directed by John Carpenter was released in 1978 and was hugely successful making 70 million USD and it kick started the renowned Halloween franchise. Halloween evidently received a dominant response with its commercial success, and sits within the sphere of consensus due to its positive response. This first instalment of the franchise sits within the classic stage of Focillon's genre model. There is an understanding of the slasher genre and Halloween uses the typical conventions pertaining to slasher. Halloween came out at during the hippie movement which was a youth led movement focused on freedom and peace. It directly opposed the traditionalism and conservative values of the 60s. With the focus on youth Halloween shifts its target audience to teenagers by featuring a group of teens. This shift gave a way for Halloween to combat the rise of youth and oppose the hippie movement. In the film we have our typical masked killer, Michael Myers, kill off all the teenagers one by one. His victims reflect the values of the hippie movement and the rise of youth. Specifically looking at Annie, she dresses in a provocative way in one scene where she only wears a shirt and has her bare legs out, she also has sex, smokes and speaks crudely. At one point in the film Annie abandons the children she is supposed to be looking after by giving them to Laurie so that she can go off and have sex. Annie sits within the sphere of deviance and much like Marion is punished by getting killed off, [REDACTED]. This shows the ultimate dominance of hegemonic masculinity, the ability to [REDACTED] and kill the ideals opposing it. Our final girl Laurie Strode directly contrasts her friends. She can be seen wearing modest clothing and she also looks after the children. There is a maternal aspect to Laurie as she wears an apron and looks after the kids. Laurie's character overall is well developed compared to Lila Crane from Psycho as we get to see Laurie a lot more on screen and she has been further developed to represent traditional values. Halloween almost mirrors a coronet film. Coronet films were educational films that were made to show the youth how they should behave, they were conservative and traditional and directly opposed the hippie movement. Through the use of particular conventions, Halloween demonstrates the reinforcement of societal norms. Halloween also subverts societal norms by appealing to the second wave of feminism. The Second Wave Feminism focused on the right for women to work and earn as much as men. It was the girl-boss era. Halloween appeals to this era through Laurie's agency and costuming. In the film Laurie survives by actually defending herself against Michael, she uses knitting needles and a clothing hanger to fight back and even penetrates Michael with one of her weapons. Her costuming also changes from long modest skirts to pants by the end of the film. Compared to Lila Crane, Laurie Strode has more agency and adopts masculine traits to survive against Michael. At the time of the film's release this was well received by women as Laurie was recognised as a girl-boss for fighting back and wearing pants. From a modern viewpoint we can see how it is still misogynistic because Laurie still overall represents the traditional woman. As she adopts masculine traits we can interpret the message as being that the only useful traits for survival are masculine traits. Laurie's character has been coded deeply to represent the ideal woman while also appealing to second wave feminism by having her costuming and agency reflect the girl-boss era of the 60s and 70s. Overall like Psycho, Halloween both subverts and reinforces societal norms. Evidence shows how it appeals to the uprising of social and cultural movements at the time while also reinforcing traditional values which were the societal norms of the 70s.

Wes Craven's postmodern slasher, Scream from 1996 completely subverts its audience and the slasher genre as a whole. It made 153 million USD, receiving a dominant response in accordance with Hall's reception theory. It defied expectations by announcing itself as self-aware. This placed Scream within the Baroque stage of Focillon's genre model. Scream is aware of itself and the conventions of a slasher ultimately becoming a satire as it makes fun of the conventions of the slasher genre. Using Baudrillard's theory on hyper-reality, Scream becomes a hyper-reality by having the characters aware of the rules to a slasher, the lines between reality and fiction are blurred creating a sense of verisimilitude. This phenomenon of self awareness and hyper-reality became the blueprint for the upcoming unfiction genre which would rise 3 years after the release of Scream, with the release of the Blair Witch Project. In Scream, one of the characters states the rules and thus breaks the foundation of the slasher genre. Roscoe's theory of gamification looks into how audiences find it more fun and can retain more knowledge when there are game-like elements present within the text. When the youth announces the rules it creates a game like element in which the characters are aware of the conventions and rules as much as the audience is. This allows the audience to play along with the characters as they try to survive the killer. The gamification of Scream is further perpetuated through the use of the POV shots which situate the viewer into the shoes of the killer, allowing them to play alongside the killer in this game of cat and mouse. Scream goes onto to further subvert audiences and the slasher genre by having Gale Weathers survive. Gale Weathers is a news reporter set on tormenting the youth within the film, she isn't the final girl yet she still survives. Weathers represents the authoritative figure in the film and the media industry. The late 90s were the time in which the advancement of technology rose and rapidly developed. The internet was around and people were able to interact in new and different ways. Gale Weathers' survival is symbolic of the survival of the media industry and how it will always be around, the media industry develops and advances with time and Scream codes this message into itself through the character of Gale Weathers. "Movies don't make psychos, movies make psychos more creative" This quote from Billy Loomis, one of the killers, is a direct oppositional response to the older

generation's belief of the youth involved and influenced by the media and its technologies. The 90s provided a cultural shift from those traditional values and the rise of youth proved to be dominant in comparison to the conservatism of the 60s. Our final girl Sidney flips the typical convention of the final girl on its side. Sidney is sexually active and has a lot more agency in *Scream*. She doesn't conform to traditional and conservative values, instead she is a product of her time, the 90s, she is a more accurate representation of a teenage girl and still gets to be the final girl. This is another way in which the *Scream* subverts societal norms as well as the slasher genre itself. Sidney goes even further by wearing the killers mask and terrorising the killers. She has taken complete control and is able to break down the hegemonic masculinity and use it against the killers. Overall she defies the rules of the slasher genre and in doing so subverts societal norms and changes the status quo.

Overall the slasher genre has demonstrated ways in which it both subverts and reinforces societal norms. This proves our overall statement. Upon reflecting the societal norms coupled with films from its time we can see how certain films subverted and reinforced societal norms. We have have looked at the rise of traditional and conservative values from the 60s and the movements such as the hippie movement, second wave feminism and the rise of technology in the media that came about challenging these norms. Overall we have used *Psycho*, *Halloween* and *Scream* to dissect how the slasher genre subverted and reinforces societal norms in American society thus proving our statement.

2090 WORDS / 900 RECOMMENDED

Excellence

Subject: Media Studies

Standard: 91493

Total score: 07

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
1 (1)	E7	<p>The candidate demonstrated a strong engagement throughout the response with statement 1: "Genre can subvert or reinforce societal norms". There was a successful application of media theory – Baudrillard, Roscoe, Hanlin, and second-wave feminism. The candidate did not just name-drop these ideas, but instead explored them using explicit examples from the genre.</p> <p>It is evident that the candidate understood the complexities of the genre / society relationship, "although it can be argued that ... in breaking the Hayes code ... it also reinforces ... ". The candidate compared texts to show how the genre reflected or subverted the society it was created in, while demonstrating a critical understanding of the complex, and often symbiotic relationship between a media genre and society. There was strong use of secondary evidence – box office and critical material to support textual evidence. To gain a higher grade, the candidate could have provided stronger thesis statements and topic sentences could be used to focus on the genre rather than individual texts.</p>