

- ❑ Mid-term test 30% (Week 7: February 25)
- ❑ Essay assignment 30% (Week 12: April 1)
- ❑ Exam 30% (Week 15: April 22)
- ❑ Participation 10%

Essay Week 12	30%
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PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ESSAY ASSIGNMENT MUST BE SUBMITTED IN PERSON DURING CLASS:

- DO NOT EMAIL THE PAPER TO ME
- DO NOT PUT IT IN MY OFFICE
- DO NOT LEAVE IT WITH ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
- PLACE IT IN MY HANDS

Write a 1500 word critical essay analyzing and critiquing one icon (an extraordinarily famous person or thing) from Western popular culture (e.g. Humphrey Bogart, James Dean, Pepsi Cola, etc.).

1) Try to be unique in your selection:

20 essays on Madonna or Elvis can be quite boring; try unusual and challenging iconographic studies, whenever possible (e.g. The Pentagon: what does it symbolize in our culture? What did terrorists who attacked it believe that they were attacking, in a symbolic/iconographic sense?)

2) Of what is your icon symbolic? What does your icon represent in the culture? This section should be the *largest* section of your paper.

- Discuss the semiotics of your icon-- what are the signifiers in your icon's appearance? What is 'signified' by your icon?
- Discuss Maslowian applications with respect to your icon; on what levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs does your icon involve or "hook" *the perceiver*, and how/why?
- (c) What would Marshall McLuhan have to say about your icon and the way in which it/he/she has been used in popular culture? How is the medium actually the message in the various manifestations of your icon? Can your icon and its by-products be seen as an "extensions" of humanity (in the way in which McLuhan used this term)?

3) Be certain to discuss your icon's meaning for all perceivers-- for example, to many Americans, George Bush is a hero; to some, he is a war-hawk and a poor business manager; to many people internationally, he is an imperialist. To some, Eminem or Tupac are champions of free speech; to others, they may be offensive; to feminists or pacifists, they may be considered misogynistic or violent. It is imperative that you present a balanced view of your icon that discusses all aspects of meaning for all potential perceivers. Be very critical, even if you are a "fan."

4) Be analytical and critical of your icon's consumer applications-- discuss in detail, for example, how your icon has become a 'brand,' used to sell posters, t-shirts, and other merchandise (e.g. "Che Guevara, a revolutionary whose initial cause was a country's

liberation from fascistic oppression, is now a vague symbol of youthful resistance, whose meaning has become diluted and whose image is used to sell everything from t-shirts to vodka") and how your icon is used as an ideological symbol, to promote a lifestyle or belief system; e.g. The Pentagon ~ defense, American patriotism, secrecy, etc.; James Dean ~ youth & rebellion, resistance, counter-culture, etc.

5) Provide brief historical background on the 'story' of your icon only where it is crucial to a study of iconography; you should concentrate more on symbolism, semiotics, meaning, usages, and effects of your icon in the culture.

6) Discuss briefly (in about 200 words) the icon's impact on your own life and consciousness. How has this icon been a major influence on your own existence, beliefs, consumer attitudes, etc. Use the word "I," and talk about your feelings.

7) You must use 3 hard-copy sources, and create a bibliography (MLA or APA styles are acceptable). Any *fact* that you use must have an accompanying reference. Be sure to credit individual facts with in-text references, e.g... (Medaglia-Miller 34) or (Jones 128) at the end of the line in which the fact appears.

Even if you have not directly quoted from other sources, any ideas, historical facts, or opinions of authors other than yourself must be accurately referenced-- at a college level, you must give credit to those who contribute to your essay in any conceivable manner.

Valuable links to helpful websites (that explain in detail how to use referencing techniques) may be found on the "Essay Format" page of the Pop Culture website.

You may use some web sources, but these must be included *only in addition* to your three books, journals, or newspaper articles. You may not use a web source unless the following information is provided: author, title of article, web publisher name (organization posting the article), and the date of the article. In addition, you must, as per MLA/APA format, provide the date on which you 'retrieved' the article from the WWW. If the article does not provide this essential information (i.e. author, etc), then it is not an appropriate source to use.

8) Your work must be original-- the submission of even a partially-plagiarized paper will result in an automatic failure. Please write in your own words.

Mid-Term	Week 7	30%
Exam	Week 15	30%

Both the mid-term test and the final exam will consist of 30 questions that require (1) very short (one-to-six words) answers, or (2) sentence-long answers.

Students are responsible for all readings, films seen in class, and the major points covered in all lectures (see website for details).

For your sake, don't miss the MID-TERM TEST or the FINAL EXAM. Both the mid-term makeup test and the final makeup exam (for those absent from the scheduled tests) are spoken or oral exams, conducted on an individual basis.