

## Response Essay #2: Popular Culture Artifacts, 1830-2001

**Due Date:** March 13<sup>th</sup>

**Requirements:**

- Three pages, double-spaced
- 11-12 pt. font (Times New Roman, Calibri, Garamond)
- Minimum of three sources cited correctly using MLA format
- Uploaded via Lore by 5:00pm of the due date (late papers will not be accepted)

In this response essay, I want you to analyze an American popular culture artifact from the time period 1830-2001. This can be an artifact we have covered directly in class, have touched on in class, or have not discussed at all. By 'artifact,' I mean an object created by human beings designed for popular consumption. This can be as small as a popular toy and as big as a large feature film. Whether or not this artifact is a 'commodity' is something for you to determine.

After choosing your artifact, I want you to be aware of the historical contexts of that artifact. Ask questions such as: *Who created it? When was it created? Why was it created? What was its original meaning and intent? Has that meaning and intent changed over time?* This will most likely require research. **You must use a minimum of three sources for this essay,** but you are permitted to use as many as you wish.

In the final part of the essay, I want you to use one of the theories of popular culture we have covered so far to interpret that artifact. We have covered a wide range of theories and at least one theoretical model should be useful to you. If you cannot find a theoretical model that seems useful to your artifact, or you wish to use an alternative theoretical model, make sure to see me first.

Your essay should generally include all of the following:

- 1) Choice of a popular culture artifact from 1830-2001. **Do not** choose any artifact after 2001, as we will be covering this later during group presentations.
- 2) Historical contexts of your artifact. Use a minimum of three sources to fully explain the history of the artifact, its meaning and intent, and its purposes and uses.
- 3) Application of theoretical model to interpret that artifact. If you wish to use an alternative theoretical model, please see me first.

This essay will be graded based upon: 1) meeting all of the requirements of the assignment; 2) popular culture artifact 1830-2001; 3) historical contexts of artifact (minimum: three sources); 4) application of theoretical model to artifact.