

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

S

93303A



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

☐

+

OUTSTANDING SCHOLARSHIP



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Scholarship 2024 Media Studies

Time allowed: Three hours
Total score: 24

ANSWER BOOKLET

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Answer all THREE questions from Question Booklet 93303Q, and write your answers in this booklet.

Begin your answer to Question One on page 3, your answer to Question Two on page 11, and your answer to Question Three on page 19.

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 2–28 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in the margins (///). 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.



Page 1

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer all **THREE** questions. Plan and write your answers below.

For EACH question:

- You should refer to a wide range of specific evidence to support your analysis.
- You may respond by agreeing or disagreeing with your chosen quotation or statement, OR by considering a variety of points of view.

Do NOT use the same material to answer more than one question.

QUESTION ONE: The relationship(s) between media and wider society

With reference to ONE of the quotations below, **analyse the development** of a medium / media industry and / or the factors that shape it.

Quotations (Choose ONE)

1. "I feel that AI can still be a very powerful tool for us ... But we have to view it as a tool. The person who wields it still has to maintain responsibility for wielding that tool." *Christopher Nolan*
2. The biggest problem in movies [or other media industries] is too many formulas. There is a lack of originality, and that's why the industry isn't performing." *Jonathan Taplin*
3. "A healthy democracy relies on the ability of experienced journalists to decipher, in depth, the state of our country, our identity, and to hold power to account." *Sunday Team, TVNZ*
4. "Artists always get [exploited], no matter what time period or technology is prevalent." *Rosanne Cash*

SELECTED QUOTATION

Copy and paste the quotation you have chosen into the space below.

3. "A healthy democracy relies on the ability of experienced journalists to decipher, in depth, the state of our country, our identity, and to hold power to account." *Sunday Team, TVNZ*

PLANNING

B *I* U | | |

TVNZ believes democracy is tied to having journalists to tell stories.
If this is true, we are in dire straits. Linear TV and therefore the ability to present these stories declines

Holding power to account becomes impossible.
Social media versus traditional media
Who has already been silenced
Other countries - USA, China, Ukraine, Palestine

Development of streaming and digital media, and the effect on trad media

ANSWER

Type your answer to **Question One** in the space below.

B *I* U | | |

"A healthy democracy relies on the ability of experienced journalists to decipher, in depth, the state of our country, our identity, and to hold power to account." Sunday Team, TVNZ. Therefore, if we are to keep democracy and hold power in account, we must ensure we still have experienced journalists, and platforms on which they may decipher the state of our country. Recently, we have seen a rise in digital media and streamed content, and a subsequent decline in traditional media as the likes of linear TV. TVNZ is directly relevant to the statement made by their Sunday Team, as it remains as basically the sole channel from which news can be found at a national level. The development of streaming and on-demand has directly impacted the way media is distributed across the world, and in NZ, and it places implications on the state of our continued democracy as we see the likes of Newshub shut down, jobs being lost, and media literacy on the downfall.

Traditional media is declining, and with it, so will the ability of journalists to tell NZ stories that are relevant to our country and identity. As of July 2024, TV3, or Newshub, has officially been shut down. Established in 1989 as the first privately owned news channel, it delivered Kiwi stories for 30+ years before meeting this bitter end. It had a turbulent history, starting off as 3News and rising in popularity until 2013, when it was almost the largest source of news, competing with state-owned TVNZ 1News for audiences. They started experiencing a decline in revenue, with some changes to management that had employees comparing Mark Weldon to Darth Vader, before being sold in a shock for \$20 million to Warner Bros. in 2021. Newshub was now under the control of a foreign company, when it had prided itself on telling Kiwi stories that showcased the unique cultural identity of NZ. Then, Warner Bros. Discovery announced the termination of the Newshub programme. This resulted in many job losses and the loss of the second largest news channel in NZ, all for the sake of economic sustainability. Warner Bros decided that streaming was making much more money and Newshub was no longer enough of an asset to keep running. It is true, NZ on Air's "where are the audiences" 2023 report showed that the majority of adults now preferred streaming videos, movies, and music during the day as opposed to catching a programme on TV. Audiences for TVNZ at the peak times of 6-10pm had declined from over 40% to ~20% with people preferring international programmes, or most probably, signing into Netflix to rewatch their favourite shows. TV3 itself had been experiencing millions of dollars lost in revenue, prompting Weldon to resign, citing that they could not deal with the changing times. The problem is, now that the national news source is down to one government-owned channel, how can audiences be sure of democracy. It is true that everyone has an agenda, but the Orwellian fear of governmental surveillance is prevalent in many people.

Development of streaming has directly impacted the downfall of traditional media. NZ on Air's study showed that digital media as of 2023 had finally tipped over the majority line, being preferred and used more over traditional media, and linear TV. Digital media has also become more prevalent, with 40-59 year olds being the threshold for where digital media becomes preferred, when before it was a younger age group. Even those of age 60+ have increased their use of streaming platforms. It is easy to see why, with the convenience that streaming and OnDemand services offer. People will support what fulfills their needs, for entertainment, escapism, or otherwise. This is reflected in the numbers - Netflix made over 30 billion USD in 2023 alone, with 282 million subscribers globally. For perspective, a monthly Netflix subscription costs around \$20 NZD. In contrast, TVNZ has lost \$80 million after tax, yet seeing interest increase by ~15% in their own streaming service, TVNZ OnDemand. It is obvious that audiences prefer to spend their time, and money, on services they can control. Streaming was introduced in the 1990s, but became popular during the 2010s - likely due to the rise of online video platforms like YouTube and Vine. There was a big uptick in popularity over the years of the Covid-19 pandemic; with nothing to do and locked in isolation, people turned to streaming services and online videos as a way to pass their time. It also likely had something to do with a need for control in their lives. The Uses and Gratifications model states that audiences consume media in order to fulfill certain needs, whether this be social, identity needs, surveillance, or diversion. The mass confusion and fear during the pandemic would have definitely prompted many to turn to escapism, consuming entertainment to distract from the horrible situations around them.

It also prompts people to turn away from the news, and instead turn to social media to receive manageable bite-sized chunks of media, which has further implications on the placement of power. It was found that 36% of people actively avoid the news, as of 2023, because of the conflicts in the world. Streaming provides control of the media that audiences find themselves consuming, so of course they would lean toward it. However, the growth of streaming means companies no longer find it economically advantageous to continue with linear TV and traditional media, so they get rid of it. Jody O'Donnel, CEO of TVNZ, stated that they will try to make things work, but they had to consider the economic benefits, which was not comforting when paired with the information that there would be 90 jobs voided with the loss of some TVNZ programmes, and only 41 new ones created, so overall 50 lost. As the people working in the industry are reduced, so will the presence of that media. Because TVNZ is now focusing on their Demand programme, nearly shutting down their 1News website (ultimately reducing it), there are now many people, journalist, presenters, without a job. They can therefore no longer hold the power to account, as they have no platform to do it with. The state of our country is under question as the availability of streamed media at all times means the past and present get mixed up and confused.

The rise of streaming also shifts the power distribution, outside of NZ to large companies that now have control over our media. Warner Bros were able to terminate Newshub suddenly, much like Netflix can take away shows or cancel favourites like Stranger Things. We are worried about democracy in our country, and the state of news if our state controls the sole news channel, but what about the careless handing of control to companies not even from NZ? Audiences turn to Disney+ and Netflix to fulfill their needs of escapism, to fulfill their need for control over their lives, but what happens when that control gets turned on us? Even without exercising their power to cancel shows and remove pieces of media forever, what will NZ media look like when we are saturated with American TV programmes? So many local (or Australian, near enough) programmes have already been cancelled, Home and Away was once of the first to go. We will undoubtedly experience a loss in cultural identity when the new generations are growing up on shows that stem from international sources. It is good to experience diversity, but not when it comes at a loss for identity. Not to mention, the cultural heritage of New Zealand - Whakaata Maori, the Maori TV channel is like all other linear TV, experiencing a declining audience rate. Newshub prided themselves on telling Kiwi stories, Gower said what he was most proud of was that he was telling those stories. Once we have lost those, they are hard to regain. Returning to the power and control - we have already seen foreign companies, large corporations, cancel shows at the drop of a hat. This has more dangerous implications than losing a beloved rom-com. If companies - who focus on economic gain - can just delete media from the world, evidence of it being there, how do we preserve the integrity of media? Information control is the first step to creating a dystopian society, with the next goal to deteriorate the public's media literacy. We can see this starting online, with social media. Many people now prefer to gain news from social media rather than the news, but this has the danger of being misinformation and invalid. There is also selective bias online, and yet again large corporations controlling what gets to be seen.

By

silencing those who are uncovering truths, the depths of the states of the countries, we are resigning ourselves to a world of ignorance. Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, which the Uses and Gratifications is based on, states that physiological needs need to come first before others, like love and belonging and self actualization. At nearly the base is safety and security - this can be of all sorts, not just physical, and before we gained this through surveillance of the world through the media.

What was previously a source of gratification for users of social media and streaming will now be a source of distrust and bias. There will be no healthy democracy when stories that do go in depth on the state of our country, are not shown to the public. Media literacy will decline as people become reliant on the often unsourced opinions on social media, and it will be harder to return to democracy after the fact.

With the development of streaming and digital media, comes the decline of traditional media and linear TV. It also comes with the decline of accountability.

There is hope yet; Stuff is taking over a bulletin at 6pm, mimicking the old Newshub programme. An independently owned company and news source, their vision is to become the most trusted source of news in NZ, and their mission is to represent the diverse population of Aotearoa. They see their journalists as guardians, Pou Tiaki, of the cultural identity of NZ. Yet they seem to be following in the footsteps of other companies - adding a subscription service like the New York Times with games included. To bring back diversity and representation in media, we must first convince audiences to consume a diverse range of media. It is the only way to bring back media literacy, and accountability in our media industry. "A healthy democracy relies on the ability of experienced journalists to decipher, in depth, the state of our country, our identity, and to hold power to account." Perhaps we may be able to reach a healthy democracy, if only people allow journalists to do their jobs without censorship, so that we can continue to hold power to account. We only think it's a utopia until we realise we are living in a dystopia, so we need to act now.

Page 2

QUESTION TWO: Media production

With reference to ONE of the quotations below, **demonstrate critical understanding of one medium and its production context**, including reference to your own production experience.

Quotations (Choose ONE)

1. "Film-making [or other media] is not about the tiny details. It's about the big picture." *Ed Wood*
2. "Forget the audience, make what you want to see." *Sofia Coppola*
3. "The most personal is the most creative." *Bong Joon-ho*
4. "Nobody knows what you have in you until you've done it, so I just keep pushing those boundaries, and I figure it will all come out in the wash." *Greta Gerwig*

SELECTED QUOTATION

Copy and paste the quotation you have chosen into the space below.

2. "Forget the audience, make what you want to see." *Sofia Coppola*

PLANNING

B *I* U | |

Media caters to the audience it is directed at - conventions.
Teen Breathe, Frankie, National Geographic, Home & Garden,
vs. telling stories - Anzac tales from NZ
NYT editorials, Wall Street Journal style

My - survey, angles, percentages of ppl interested.
Initial testing letdown....

Ending making the article with the components I wanted.
"Journalism is about posting what they don't want you to - everything else is PR" Orwell.

ANSWER

Type your answer to **Question Two** in the space below.

B *I* U | |

"The customer is always right," yet another quote that is misunderstood by much of the public. In fact, it is that the customer is always right - in terms of taste, meaning you should let the consumer make their own bad decisions. You cannot control what other people think they like. Today's media industry is all about catering to the target audience, whether this be chronically online teenagers or the wisened elderly, but mainly the former. Sofia Coppola's statement "Forget the audience, make what you want to see." is a great reminder that the production of media can still be in the hands of the creator. It encourages the writer who is overwhelmed by the fantasy leagues, the artist that wants to create things outside the content that is formatted for 20 second videos on Tiktok. In my experience, this statement is incredibly validating, as it pertains directly to my chosen feature article topic - Lion Dance.

When tasked with the creation of a feature article - to be printed in a school magazine, I brainstormed ideas for days. My teacher had us look through many editions of different magazines to find inspiration. I pored through Teen Breathe and Frankie, took in the pastel colours and mindfulness sheets, which are the trend in recent years. I looked at sports magazines, fishing ones, nature articles. I also read through a printed edition of collected student's articles from previous years. I learnt that these articles, wrapped up in a magazine, were clearly catering for specific audiences. I could picture 14 year olds - year 9s and 10s - absorbed in the self-care page of Teen Breathe, the more adventurous type reading that mountain bike article, fashionistas reading interviews with famous actors. There was the ever-present environmental warnings about the rising oceans. From there, it was only obvious to go for the serious tone - the informative article on some issue or another that had gone unnoticed by the wider public. I had nearly settled on writing about the lack of representation in women's healthcare, I had even lined up some possible interviewees. There was just one problem; I could just not picture myself writing it, or making the finished design. It wasn't exactly a lack of passion - I have interest in this field of research, but there was no spark, no push to stretch my creativity and get going, no real drive to make this topic *seen*. As Marie Hondo says, if it doesn't spark joy, get rid of it. So I turned to my lesser known hobby. My team has been trying to promote Lion Dance in Christchurch for many years, running workshops and parades, community performances. I didn't realise how much effort it took to be seen until I was in the thick of it with them. Just little things like being mistaken for Line Dancing or Dragons were like gravelly roads that built up until you couldn't move forward. It was here I realised, I could be the one to start a different movement - one in the lane of journalism. Of course, the audience - high school students, staff, and their whanau - did not *want* to see this, but they probably didn't *not want* to either. I reasoned that because most people hadn't heard of Lion Dance in the first place, they wouldn't know they were missing it. Coppola's statement reminds us that although it seems like there is no space for the topic you can produce, doesn't mean there will never be. If we keep catering to the conventions - and make another article on global warming - we are only trying to water a saturated field. "Make what you want to see" is the part of the statement that reminds us that it is the creator's vision that ultimately defines a product, not the audience's expectations.

"Forget the audience" is almost too absolute of a statement for my sensibilities. I think we should still provide audiences with the things they are expecting - entertainment - but that it can be in a style they aren't expecting. However, Coppola's use of the language has a carefree touch that signals she doesn't believe we should completely discard the audience, just that we cannot hold their regard as absolute. If she does mean it in the complete way, then I do not completely agree with the statement. I do think the audience should have an impact on what we are writing, otherwise it is impossible to connect - my main purpose was to inform the audience of Lion Dance, but if I'd gone straight into jargon and technicalities, I would have lost the reader from the beginning and my purpose would be unachieved. Coppola's statement almost groups the audience into an "other", creating an us versus them viewpoint. I would argue that we, ourselves, are part of the audience. Even if we are creating what we personally want to see, is it not still catering to our audience of one? In this way, I contradicted Coppola's statement somewhat, by surveying the intended audience (my classmates) and asking them to vote on what angles they would be most interested in. This way, I would be able to cater somewhat by focusing on the ones they were more likely to read. Confirmation bias doesn't work when the surveyed don't agree - my classmates voted for the topics I thought least viable, and seemed to ignore the ones I thought most interesting. I was most excited for 'storytelling' yet the pie chart showed 0%. I was intending to show a short section only on physical parts of the costume, yet over 60% voted this one as first. It was here I was torn. I returned to the magazines, trying to decide how much stock to put into my stakeholder's opinions. As I read through a National Geographic, I realised that in this, I was the 'expert', perhaps not truly in the topic, but more than my audience, solely because I had experienced it and found it interesting. National Geographic may have interactive websites, but surely they do not survey audiences on every article they post - their journalists see a gap in information of something like Red Pandas or Mud Flats and they print an article so that people can learn. Sofia Coppola's statement aligns with my realisation then, that we can forget what the audience thinks they want, and focus on what we have to say. I wanted to see an article covering all parts of lion dance, from competition to storytelling, so I would have to be the one to make it. I kept all my planned angles, and started researching and drafting.

It came to a point in my writing, where I worried about information overload and being 'not-catchy' enough to keep readers' attention. I was reading some more Teen Breathe, and I saw bullet point notes, and thought - should I keep it simple. I thought I might reach people better than way, not to mention the simple repetitive designs on the pages. If this is what audiences expect, then surely I should change my plans? I was envisioning red and gold pages, like the book *The Art of Lion Dance*, written by Master Siow, regarded as the 'king' of lion dance. I had hoped to make some traditional cloud designs to reflect the Chinese origins, some bright colours like the fur of the lions. Unfortunately, the magazine I was reading was full of pastel summery colours, with light patterning. It had font in the style of handwriting - I was going to go for a more formal style - and the dreaded blocky Alegria art that was everywhere nowadays. It was meant to be 'diverse' and 'inclusive' but I thought it looked low effort and repetitive, like the book covers on bestsellers recently. Worst of all, I knew most people enjoyed this aesthetic - I even did, while reading. But I couldn't imagine creating it - it felt kind of disrespectful to my topic, and also like I was plagiarising. I should have dismissed the doubts; if only I had Coppola to remind me to forget the audience then. I was up to around 3000 words and well over the recommended when I asked one of my classmates to try reading some of the start of the article. I had gone for a Wall Street Journal style, a tried and true method that people were familiar with, catering to my audience by crafting a narrative lead followed by a factual nutgraf and then fleshing out my angles. My classmate told me it was 'not the most entertaining' article they had read (the first paragraph they had gotten to) and I was devastated. I wondered if I should restart, but the timeframe was already rushing by and I was working with an extension already. This point must be familiar to many writers and article creators, the pressure to produce something yet that something is not up to the standard you want. It is here that I think Coppola's statement is most applicable. "Forget the audience, make what you want to see," is now an encouragement - to push through and bring the vision to life. Of course, editing and iteration makes things of higher quality, but the first draft doesn't need to do anything but exist, as online authors have said. Luckily, I decided to continue with my article. I finished the writing itself, and recieved wildly different feedback from different stakeholders - my teacher and other non-media classmates. Unfortunately, it was much too long for the visuals I wanted. I was told to 'be brutal' with the editing, and I was sad to see some bits go - but it was necessary to "make what I wanted to see," as of course, in magazines the visual aspects are almost more important than the text. I ended up completely revamping my InDesign project; I stopped trying to make the pages fit neatly into boxes that could be bound and printed in neat A4 pages. I went for double page spreads, moved text freely and layered graphics and text boxes - something that made lots of error messages. I still followed Zutenberg design principles, I tried to keep a 'Z' shaped eye follow and put important information in the top left corner, but I finally stopped caring so much about my audience. That was when I truly enjoyed creating my feature article. Sofia Coppola would have been useful earlier in my design process, when all I was focused on was what the audience expected to see - should I make it more playful, more casual, should I cut the interviews down? Instead, I highlighted the bits I thought were important, and interesting. I placed the photos and quotes I thought were impactful front and centre. I finally felt like I was doing my topic justice.

I suppose the customer always right, but so is the creator - in terms of taste. Art is meant to disturb, and media is an extension of art in some ways, so it doesn't matter what the audience of high schoolers think, as long as the audience consisting of you is satisfied. Sofia Coppola states that you should "Forget the audience, make what you want to see." and although I don't particularly want to forget my audience, I also realise the benefit, and the freedom that comes from focusing on the things *you* find important. Next time, when I write a feature article, I will create first, then evaluate. I will make what I want to see.



Page 3

QUESTION THREE: The close reading of media texts

With reference to ONE of the quotations below, **analyse media texts (from any medium)** that you have read closely.

Quotations (Choose ONE)

1. "There is a different kind of vulnerability when a woman is directing." *Jane Campion*
2. "Cinema [or other media] is not only about making people dream. It's about changing things and making people think." *Nadine Labaki*
3. "My job is not to give you all the answers. My job is to ask the questions." *Taylor Sheridan*
4. "Whatever your style or subject matter, in the end, film-making [or other media] is about searching for authenticity – that is what the audience will divine*." *Paul Greengrass*
*divine to discover something by intuition or guessing

SELECTED QUOTATION

Copy and paste the quotation you have chosen into the space below.

2. "Cinema [or other media] is not only about making people dream. It's about changing things and making people think." *Nadine Labaki*

PLANNING

B *I* U | | |

Dystopian Sci Fi

Directors

Matrix - world that has been pulled over your eyes
In Time, Blade Runner - economic stability (also Metropolis ig)

ANSWER

Type your answer to **Question Three** in the space below.

B *I* U | | |

"Speculative fiction is about now, it always has been" says author Margaret Atwood. She is famous for *The Handmaids Tale*, a novel set in a dystopian world, rife with messages on the state of the world. Dystopian Science Fiction, as a genre for film and other media, has a primary purpose - to warn. This aligns greatly with Nadine Labaki's statement, "Cinema is not only about making people dream. It's about changing things and making people think." Directors and creators of dystopian scifi films often convey strong messages, drawn from the society in which they were living, about how things will end up if we continue the way we are headed. The films can be fantastical means of escape, yes, but also to provoke thoughts in the audience about the state of their society, and to prompt changes in said society. This could be about environmental concerns, economical concerns, class concerns, but is almost always about a not-so-distant future in which our world is at the same time familiar and completely upside down. Combined with a few thoughtful technological advancements and a antihero which to experience the world in, cinema, at least in dystopian scifi, is not just about making people dream, but about making people think.

Prompting change in audiences comes about most strongly when directors have something to say, often about an inequality or imbalance somewhere. *Metropolis* is often regarded as one of the first science fiction films, and was inspired by the towering New York City skyline. Released in 1927, director Fritz Lang produced a film that is "so audacious in its vision and so angry in its message that it is if anything, more relevant today than when it was first released" according to critic Roger Ebert. Set in 2026, *Metropolis* features two classes - the industrialists in skyscrapers and the workers in the depths, which is eerily reflective of today's society with the 1% of wealthy and the 99% of everyone else who now struggle to earn a living wage. In the film, we see conflict in the main character Freder, who is rich but meets Maria, an activist who is part of the workers, and discovers the horrible inequality of *Metropolis*, which is incidentally, controlled by his father. His father cares about profit over people, with workers living by the 10 hour clock as the way to tell their shifts, the only thing they live by. There are messages on hedonism, biblical references to the Tower of Babel, depictions of women in various contexts, but the main message in *Metropolis* is that the division of class benefits only the wealthy. During the 1920s, Germany was in the depths of great economical instability but industrial development, as part of the Weimar Republic when Germany had lost the war and owed money to the Allied Forces. 4.2 billion marks were worth only 1 USD, and money had become obsolete. The idealistic message of *Metropolis* was that "the mediator between the head and the hands must be the heart" in that the working class and the wealthy could be joined with some connection and human empathy. Lang later stated that he was too idealistic in this message, and that it didn't make sense in our society. Nonetheless, he attempted to convey this message to audiences through the repeated words of Maria, through Freder joining the hands of his father and the workers. The Weimar Republic was also a time of political unrest - uprisings were threatened by both Nazi and Democratic parties, due to the economical instability in the working class. We see this warned against when the uprising of the workers in *Metropolis* leads to the flooding and destruction of the workers city. They destroy the machines, which they think is at fault for their inhumane treatment, but it only serves to create more destruction. Lang, although probably unsuccessful at the time as the film was received as "unconvincing and overlong", was trying to warn audiences of what would happen both if they continued in this inequality, as well as what would happen if there was an uprising. It wasn't a guarantee, but it was speculative enough to prompt audiences to think of the consequences. As Ebert said, this film is even more relevant today, as the division between the wealthy and everyone else grows larger. Perhaps the mediator of the heart is too idealistic, but it prompts audiences to at least consider how to resolve class division.

One of the most influential pieces of media, both in cinema and elsewhere was released in 1999 at the turn of the century. The *Matrix*, written and directed by the Wachowski siblings, has become so prevalent in today's pop culture as well as having influenced so many films that it prompts change just by existing. It theorises that we are all living in a computerized, artificial 'Matrix', and in the real world are just slaves to Artificial Intelligence who harvest our bioelectricity as if humans are batteries. Neo, the hero, is oblivious until he is found by Morpheus, Trinity, and the Crew who introduce him to 'the real world' in a scene not unlike the rebirth of Christ. The Wachowski siblings stated, and this is echoed in the film, "The Matrix is the world that has been pulled over your eyes to blind you from the truth." It is a metaphor for all the misinformation and veiled existences we are living by continuing to follow the status quo. Neo and the people in *The Matrix* live a fictional world, one that has no meaning other than what they believe. If we are living this way, which the Wachowskis seem to believe, then it is no wonder there is stagnant inequalities in our world that do not change for the better. Morpheus, named for the god who brings dreams, is the one to show Neo the real world. Powerful quotes like "I can only show you the door, you have to walk through it" and "Why do my eyes hurt? You've never used them" all prompt audiences to think about the life they are leading and whether it is truly a life. Are we all slaves to the system we live in? In the end, Neo accepts his role as 'the chosen one' and decides to show people the truth. Here, the truth represents all the things people take for granted in our world yet do not realise the consequences of. It is all the inequalities and biases that are present yet we don't try and resolve. The *Matrix* also includes allegories on ideas 'smaller' than the big things - it is widely accepted as a trans allegory, with the character Switch originally intended to present as different genders in the real world versus the *Matrix*. With the Wachowskis being transgender themselves, it may have been yet another message they were slipping in about self-identity and the human independence. The *Matrix* has influenced other movie directors - *Blade Runner*, *In Time*, *Barbie* all are influenced or directly reference *The Matrix*, making it an iconic piece of media that has the added benefit of warning audiences about all sorts of things. It prompts audiences to think, not just on one piece, but also extended - fan culture has had people creating extended universes for *The Matrix*, mixed media creations that transcend film to make something more integrated into the way society works. They also popularised bullet-time, a slow motion effect, in terms of techniques for film creators. *The Matrix* has truly prompted change, not only in the audience, but also in culture and society. A literal dream, the *Matrix*, but also a thought-provoking experience.

Blade Runner (1982) and *In Time* (2011) are two films that also comment on economic sustainability and class division. *Blade Runner*, with its metaphors for dehumanized workers in the form of replicants, and *In Time*, with its literal portrayal of "time is money". In their futuristic settings and action scenes hide many a thought on the way society should (not) be run. *Blade Runner*, released in the 1980s, was according to writer Hampton Fancher, their rebuttal against Reaganism. Ronald Reagan was a republican who promised tax cuts and reduced government, which the middle class thought they wanted. However, *Blade Runner* shows a world in which this turns against the majority of people - those who cannot afford to go 'off-world' instead overpopulate the streets. Consumerism is rampant, and the familiar advertisements of Coke aren't just product placement, but a tie to our world to prompt audiences to consider who they have voted into government, and what that government to do to them. It is set in the future (2019), but that future has come to pass for us. Scott Ridley, the director, purposefully chose the settings and the dire environment to prompt audiences to think and to judge their own society. *In Time*, directed by Andrew Niccol, is another film that greatly draws on other films like it, enough that Niccol himself refers to it as 'the bastard child of *Gattaca*', but it has its own charms. Phillippe Weis controls time, in a world where people stop aging on their 25th birthdays and must ration out time. Time Zones range from poorest Dayton to Rich New Greenwich. Will Salas is a factory worker, who is used to having less than a day on his clock - when it runs out, he dies. In contrast, female lead Sylvia Weis longs for freedom and adventure, stifled by her father's protection. They tell us we should consider who has the power, and is it correct for the top 1% of people to control all the wealth while the other 99% suffer, and millions die because the cost of living is ever rising and literal for them? *In Time* is intriguing in its literal portrayal of money and time, and it makes audiences more ...

Overall, "Cinema is not only about making people dream. It's about changing things and making people think." is an especially true statement in regards to dystopian science fiction, which proves that it is likely true for other genres of media as well. Each of the aforementioned films carried their directors and writers messages and convictions against the societies in which they were created, which has the added benefit of prompting change in the audience as well as warning people about a future. Suzanne Collins sees dystopian fiction as a way to explore the possible futures from now, thinking through all the different ways our society could go with the systems we have in place today. It is important to think, because to think is to exist, as Descartes and Pris say. Humans exist, so we must continue to think, to evolve.

Outstanding Scholarship

Subject: Media Studies

Standard: 93303

Total score: 21

Q	Score	Marker commentary
1	7	The candidate selected Question One, quotation 3 and provided a convincing understanding of the current state of journalism in both New Zealand and a global context. They supported their argument with detailed analysis and compelling evidence, and offered perceptive insight into the current and future trends of journalism.
2	7	The candidate selected Question Two, quotation 2 and interrogated the quotation. They provided a compelling overview of their magazine production process, weaving detailed evidence in connection to the quotation in their answer. They referenced other magazine influences and demonstrated a clear and insightful understanding of the print medium.
3	7	The candidate selected Question Three, quotation 2 and provided a detailed and convincing argument in response to the quotation. They offered a clear analysis across a range of dystopian texts (Metropolis, The Matrix, and Blade Runner), developing an insightful argument by comparing film texts with compelling evidence, and offering consideration of wider critical perspectives.