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93303A



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## SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR



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 (XXXX). 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.

4. "Artists always get [exploited], no matter what time period or technology is prevalent." *Rosanne Cash*

#### PLANNING

**B** *I* U | | |

The music industry relies on people getting exploited with unfair payments

The way that labels pay artists - 30 Seconds to Mars

The impact of Spotify, iTunes, and TikTok on people not getting fairly compensated - top 10% of songs equate to 99% revenue

Concerts being such a huge avenue for money that it leads to artists getting overworked - Chappell Roan having BPD and not having the kind of training that is adequate for the levels of live content being produced - also similar link to Britney Spears and Elvis being overworked to the point that they had breakdowns

AI impact on musicians and their voices being exploited to promote other material - Melanie Martinez about a year ago

Intro

P1 - payment and the label cycle - 30 seconds

P3 - Impact of social media + AI - Melanie + Nkeeei

P2 - Concerts - Chappell + Britney + Elvis

Con

"Artists always get [exploited], no matter what time period or technology is prevalent." Rosanne Cash

#### ANSWER

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

**B** *I* U | | |

When a child picks up a guitar and finds the bliss that comes from the sound that they find they can make, there is a certain shift in the way that they function. Growing up music can become a vice, something that is used to channel the parts of oneself that are seldom expressed in other means. Famous music artists are all just children who have grown up to crave the creative expression that music can offer, which is what makes their eternal exploitation so heartbreaking. The Global Music Industry pulls in billions of dollars in profit a year and has done so for quite some time. From the humble beginnings of the cassette tape in 1963 to the ever blooming world of music streaming that has taken over in the last decade, music moves people, and what's better than profiting off of that movement? The industry would be glad to tell you, not much. Hence Rosanne Cash makes a strong argument that; "Artists always get [exploited], no matter what time period or technology is prevalent." and this can be proved through the way that labels manipulate payment schemes to keep artists in debt, and by consequence controlled. As well as the way that music streaming does a similar thing, the impact of social media and Artificial Intelligence, and the 'show must go on' attitude upheld at most concerts. Artists are commonly getting exploited for the sake of listeners and corporations no matter what changes are made to the way that the industry functions.

Record deals have been around since before on-the-go listening devices like the cassette or record were created. Labels are one of the first ways that artists have encountered exploitation as they are forced into payment schemes that inhibit them from independently existing without the label. Punk-rock, Jared Leto-headed band '30 Seconds to Mars' experienced this entrapment early on in their career in the 2010s, forcing them to deal with lawsuits, and publicity that actively took away from the band's reputation. As explained by the band the way that a record deal works is that artists are given a downpayment to make an album, once that album is released and brings in money that money is split to cover all of the costs that were associated with the production of the album. Things like costs for the recording studio, producers and advertisement are some of the first major costs deducted. Then even smaller costs are covered like the cost of packaging for CDs or breakage costs for transportation of said CDs. Then finally the original downpayment is deducted, leaving artists often in debt to the music company because the money pulled in by the album is not sufficient enough to cover all of the required costs. This leads to artists being told to release another album on the same scheme to come up with the money to repay the previous debts. Resulting in artists ending up in an exploitative cycle in which they are constantly indebted to their record labels. This has been occurring since record labels were first introduced as the main way to produce music, and still occurs today. Even though there have been cases like '30 Seconds to Mars', which led to a public display of disgust with the way that the industry was functioning, with the band nearly being completely shut down as funding was completely cut for any music that they wanted to make, the labels still trap artists with this payment method. So Cash begins to have a point, with the very first place that artists go when it comes to making music, already providing such a harsh payment scheme, artists are consistently exploited and left completely dependent on their labels which they then can't leave, as they owe them large sums of money. And this continues to be true no matter which time period we are in, with artists having these kinds of vicious cycles implemented since pre-cassette manufacturing, and occurring recently in the 2010s and the 2020s.

The problem also occurs because of how important it is to have a label if you want a chance to compete with today's music industry, to have a label is to have a foot in the door to getting popular and having your music available for more people to listen to. Even with an at home recording set-up, or paying for a distributor to have music on popular streaming platforms, nothing quite compares to the reputation that your music is able to have, once you sign with a label. Meaning that no matter what kind of technology is prevalent, there is always a high importance of having a label. Making the exploitation that these labels result in, almost unavoidable if you want to be able to achieve popularity in the music industry.

Along with helping to record music and get it advertised, record labels aid in setting up concerts. Live shows make up for the most profit in an artists career, as exhibited by Taylor Swift's recent 'Eras Tour' which has pulled in upward of a billion dollars in revenue since it's start late last year. Live shows and concerts pulling in so much money and advertisement leads to them being the most extreme level of exploitation that artists can face. After the re-birth of content surrounding Elvis Presley after the biopic about him in 2022, it seems topical to mention the way that he was exploited for money as far back as the 1960s. Elvis was forced by his manager The Colonel, to perform even after suffering medical events like illness and drug withdrawals, through emotionally devastating events like his mother's passing, and then eventually coerced him into performing every night at the same venue until the time of his passing. Rosanne Cash's statement that "Artists always get [exploited], no matter what time period or technology is prevalent." rings particularly true when it comes to concerts because of the sheer lack of concern that begins to develop when artists become sick or unable to perform. Even though there have been health and safety changes since the 1960s, even now we witness the extreme scrutiny and exploitation that comes from having artists be expected to continuously perform. Earlier in the year 26 year old sensation Chappell Roan was heavily berated online after stepping back from performing in a festival the day before her set was due to be performed. This resulted in the singer opening up about her Borderline Personality Disorder and the effects that it has on her performance abilities. Roan had been playing most festival line-ups around the United States for most of the year before this occurred and had been given very little time to rest due to her being so popular and in such high demand, especially after her pulling this biggest Lollapalooza Crowd in history with 110,000 people. The exploitation that is continually present when it comes to live performance means that artists become slaves to the expectation that they must perform no matter what.

Social media has been a technological advancement that continues everyday to become more prevalent in our lives. From Instagram and X to TikTok, one of the most used social media sites to date. TikTok primarily functions off of having short videos that have music behind them. Originating as an app where people would make up and film dances to songs, it now covers an immense variety of content. Working as an algorithm based app it promotes music which has been fed by certain labels which leads to specific songs from artist's catalogues 'going viral' or gaining immense popularity in a short amount of time. Although social media is such a new advancement to the music industry it still continues the unfortunate cycle of artists being exploited for financial gain. TikTok buys music for a set price to use on the site, any popularity that that music ends up having on the site is then not compensated for by the app as they have already paid a set price to have that music be available on the app. In 2022 TikTok paid out around 4 million dollars in royalties and compensation for music use, that year it's total revenue was over 7 billion dollars. Showing that the app very rarely pays appropriately for the music that is present. This exploits artists as they are having their music actively be used an intense amount, although are very rarely being properly compensated for it. TikTok and Instagram have also led to the birth of trends like AI songs. Where an Artificial Intelligence medium is tasked with making the lyrics of one song, sound like it's being sung by another artist. This leads to artist's own voices being exploited which can make it sound as if they have played a part in a song that they have had no part in, it also takes away from the artist's autonomy over their own voice and content. Singer Melanie Martinez took to social media last year after a few AI songs had been created using her voice, one of these was an AI recording of an unreleased song. Cash's point that artists will always get exploited no matter the time or the technology available is fed into directly by the rise of social media and AI where artists are given little control over how their music and image is used and are often not compensated accurately for the ways that their music is being used.

The Global Music Industry is one of the highest performing industries in the world. It provides people with the chance to experience music and live performances whilst also occasionally paying artists for their work. The industry sadly proves that no matter the time or the technology available, music artists will always be exploited if it is in the name of profit. Rosanne Cash has made a completely agreeable statement when she says this to be case, and unfortunately it seems as though this will continue to be the case.





## 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.

3. "The most personal is the most creative." *Bong Joon-ho*

#### PLANNING

**B** *I* U | | |

How much does anything mean to you?

Artists and their stories are pushing the documentary, art is completely subjective, it's a personal project for me as well as the people in it

Creativity comes from the originality of the people that it's about

Intro

P1 - How it's personal and creative for me

P2 - the people involved and how that makes the documentary creative

P3 - the subjective nature of art and how that combines with the documentary

Con

"The most personal is the most creative." *Bong Joon-ho*

#### ANSWER

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

**B** *I* U | | |

When creating a documentary it's not only about story being covered but also the way that it's all put together. The statement by Bong Joon-ho that, "The most personal is the most creative." directly applies to what the process and impact of creating a documentary can be like. I chose to focus on the underground art scene that is present in Christchurch with my documentary *How Much Does Anything Mean To You? The Underground Art Scene of Our Broken City*. A film about a city, irreparably damaged by the earthquakes, that houses a blossoming art scene that transcends from both physical art to the world of music. For me I found that through creating my documentary, the most personal stories and the aspects of the documentary that were the most personal to me, led to the most creative areas both in terms of content and editing. I was fortunate enough to have four people involved in the documentary, two physical artists, [redacted] a music producer and artist [redacted] and the vocalist and songwriter for band [redacted]. All of these people brought uniquely personal stories to the documentary and also allowed me to show personal sides of myself with the audience once the documentary was complete.

Film-making has always been something that I've been passionate in but I found that I was originally most inspired by coming up with my own ideas, until tasked with making a documentary. When I started making the documentary I had the purpose of making a film that covered how art was created, the spiritual and emotional sides of it, and the way that that fits into the society present in Christchurch. I felt as though it would be a powerful documentary for an audience of people at my school [redacted] as artistic expression and creation is pushed for in the school environment. The arts are taken seriously at [redacted] and I felt as though showing how the arts can be taken seriously outside of school would be engaging and an important building block in the community. After reaching out to various people who I thought about involving, I actually only ended up using one of them in my final product. I hadn't intended to use one of my close friends until one day when we were hanging out and I was reminded that she makes music under the alias [redacted]. It immediately felt like the right idea to use her in the documentary because I didn't have to worry about what she might be like on camera or the kind of things that she might say because I've known her for so long. This personal connection to her made her one of the most vital and creative parts of my documentary because she offers such a young voice to the content. A 17-year-old music producer brings a really commonly unheard voice to the table as she is able to explore topics of growing up and apprehension about what life after the routine of high school would be like. Using her enabled me to feel deeply connected to the content of my documentary whilst also allowing me to better connect to my target audience which overall made the project far more personal for me. This then in turn allowed me to feel more comfortable taking creative risks when it came to editing, with music choices and the way that I clipped the film together, I felt as though my personal connection to the people involved allowed me to express some of my own creativity to make the film have a more authentic link to how I wanted to present it. Because I made the documentary on my own, by the end I was able to see it as more than just an internal assessment and instead as a project that was able to reflect the kind of people that I am connected with, but also the way that I view the city that I have grown up in my whole life. Some of the people that I interviewed weren't in Christchurch for the earthquakes but I felt as though I was still able to connect how the earthquakes have impacted the creative side of Christchurch, through the personal approach and view that I had to the final product. Instead of just focusing on the artists themselves I was able to use music and dialogue that left the film feeling a little more emotional to directly connect my view on the art scene in Christchurch, which is all around us, from the centre of town to the places surrounding my school.

Creativity on a documentary front can be difficult sometimes because they tend to focus on things that already exist and aren't typically thought of as being 'creative'. I found this to be a bit of a mental stunt in the early stages of developing my idea because some of the only documentaries and documentary film-makers that I'd had access to were the likes of historical accounts like the work of Ken Burns who focuses on aspects of American History, and the 2002 documentary *Bowling for Columbine* following the school shooting at Columbine High School. However, upon unpacking my idea (which started at looking at how art exhibits are put together in art galleries) to look at the person creating the art instead of the art itself, I felt like I had a far more creative idea that looked into the uniqueness of different people. The leading voice in the documentary is that of one of the physical artists from [redacted]. His voice is used in a lot of narration, especially at the beginning of the film and towards the end looking at the impact of the earthquakes. He has a particularly unique view of life having moved from America to New Zealand and having to grow up being the only male in his family. He is constantly inspired by the things that he has come across in his life, like music artist [redacted], as well as the personal experiences that he has had that have led him to creating the kind of abstract and gritty art that makes. I am very fortunate that he was willing to be so open with me during the interviews to allow me to have content that reflects such a personal state. He offers a voice that is not always heard, one of being a bit of an outsider and having different interests to the masses. An important voice to be heard in a documentary that is targeted at a younger audience that will always be filled with people who need to know that they aren't alone because they are different from their peers. Bong Joon-ho stating that "The most personal is the most creative." I feel is very true in relation to my documentary because the people that are in it, lending their personal stories, enables the documentary to have a really individual motion as it's carved from the lives of people who themselves are creative and unique. Offering a voice that is not always heard to make a documentary that was put together in a way that can celebrate the artist that is within all of us.

With the documentary focusing on art it has to be taken into account how subjective the nature of art is. Everyone has a different perception on art that we come across and I feel that that particularly highlights how the personal aspect of watching the film leads to the documentary showing creativity because it can be interpreted differently by everyone. I aimed to make the documentary in a way that didn't cut out any of the context behind what people had said, after having read about how Micheal Moore deliberately cut up interviews and news clips in *Bowling for Columbine* to make his political agenda come across more accurately to how he wanted. I knew that purposefully making the footage seem like it expressed something that I wanted it to get across was not going to be the most beneficial for the story that I wanted to tell. So instead I let the artists speak and then matched it up with art that I felt reflected the tone of what they were saying. Ultimately any art that was presented in the film, like music by one of the musicians or the wall of paintings in the collective's studio was purposefully not matched with anything that would affect the way that people interpreted it. I wanted people that watched the documentary to be able to make their own personal assumptions and criticisms of the art and the artists so that they could lend their own subjective view to the topics discussed. When implementing music choices I tried to keep them in areas between interviews with the artists and only over B-roll footage so that people could be more creative themselves when judging the art and the people who made it to get the right message out of the documentary for themselves.

*How Much Does Anything Mean To You?* is the first documentary that I have ever made and it's one that came with its own challenges. Because I made the film by myself I didn't really have anyone to bounce ideas off of or to offer a different opinion on anything but I think that that made the film feel like a lot more of a creative project to me because I was able to connect with it all personally. The artists that are present in the film are the driving force of the creative nature of the documentary and I didn't want to take away from that by taking the audience's creative aspect out of it by dictating exactly how people should feel about the footage. With audiences being able to have their own subjective view of the content I feel like it's made even more creative and personal because everyone is allowed to connect with it in a personal way. I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know people through the making of the documentary, even though it differed from my original expectations, I feel as though it has managed to appeal to my target audience as it covers something that is relevant to our community, whilst also being a documentary that can offer a different perspective and voice.



## 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 | | |

Horrors of suburbia

The dream-like aspects and the often unanswered questions, the things that it makes people think about and the changes that it can bring unto society

Death, freedom, isolation, perversion, control, obedience, beauty, perfection

Happiness - 1998 Todd Solondz

Greener Grass - 2019 Jocelyn DeBoer + Dawn Luebbe

Don't Worry Darling - 2022 Olivia Wilde

American Beauty - 1999 Sam Mendes

Synecdoche New York - 2008 Charlie Kaufman

Intro

P1 - Dream-like state of suburbia and giving loopholes and unanswered questions - DWD, GG, SNY

P2 - Topics covered and the effect on humanity - death, alienation, perversion - H, AB, SNY

P3 - Psychoanalysis film theory, dreams and repressed feelings - H, AB, SNY, GG, DWDc

Conc

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

#### ANSWER

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

**B** *I* U | | |

"Cinema [or other media] is not only about making people dream. It's about changing things and making people think." Nadine Labaki brings up a fascinating point when it comes to the way that cinema is able to have an impact on society. One of the topics that can be covered in films that highlights aspects of this idea are ones that focus on the subconscious horrors of suburban living. Predominantly focusing on lives fuelled by the promised greatness of the American Dream, these kinds of films show how our ever changing society continues to focus on the same kinds of issues and fears that lead us to repeating the cycle over and over again. The idyllic, white picket fence, suburban neighbourhoods are continuously shown how they often hide the darkest secrets and promote the most internal reflection for audiences. From the late 1990s with Todd Solondz's *Happiness* and Sam Mendes' 1999 classic *American Beauty*, to the late 2000s giving us the postmodern mystery of Charlie Kaufman's *Synecdoche New York*, and finally films of the last 5 years, both pre and post covid, from 2019 black-comedy *Greener Grass* and 2022 thriller *Don't Worry Darling*, the horrors of an almost-perfect suburbia become opened up for audiences to see like a garish, at times bloody dollhouse.



When most people think of the classic, Hollywood enthused, American neighbourhood, the image of pristine, sparkling clean streets with sun streaming through vibrant green trees tends to come to mind. Women smiling in pastel dresses and men laughing in business suits, the image comes right out of the 1950s. The nuclear family has remained a staple in American culture, with the housewife and two perfectly obedient children the suburbia presented through Hollywood is that of a dream. Even when the films become almost nightmare fuelled they still have the backdrop of the dreamy and perfect neighbourhood. Labaki makes a point with her statement insinuating that cinema can make people dream, because it does. Especially for an American society so consistently unsettled by political unease, wars, and economical threats. Suburbia in cinema is almost always presented in a dream-like state to make people dream. It gives people around the first 20 minutes to enjoy living in a 'perfect' life. It's a time where the audience is told to imagine how good things can be and it works incredibly effectively when it comes to establishing the setting of a film. Co-directed by Jocelyn DeBoer and Dawn Luebbe *Greener Grass* is a thriller/black comedy that opens up in the world of perfectly primed lawns, golf-cart driving, overly polite neighbours, and pool water so clean you'd rather drink it than any other water. The world is certainly presented as a dream, everything seems just a little bit over the top, nothing is entirely natural. This makes for an effective opening to the film because this weird, slightly out of touch world, is presented to us and doesn't have to spend time explaining the norms or expectations of a place like this because it's all insinuated by the extreme, dreamy, perfection that we can see. Although this dream-like world is never quite complete. In Olivia Wilde's sophomore film *Don't Worry Darling* all of the people live in a simulation. Women are often forced into the simulation by their husbands (as is the case for main protagonist Alice Chambers) yet she's unaware for the better half of the film. The dreamy perfection of a 1950s life slowly crumbles once Alice begins to experience unusual things going on in her reality. From eggs breaking and being nothing more than an empty shell, to strange red planes circling, and random earthquakes that appear to have no cause, Alice's simulated reality is full of little holes and loose threads. These threads are the things that make audiences think and see past the perfection presented to us on screen. As a viewer you begin to unpack the meaning behind the oddities in these kinds of films and that leads to changes in the way that we think and view things in our real lives. *Greener Grass* presents the odd visual, something you might see in a dream, of everyone in the town wearing braces or the moment where Juilian (the main character's son) turns into a dog after getting in trouble. These odd moments which are never directly explained during the film could lead to the audience being forced to think and come to a conclusion on their own. Coming up with the idea that maybe nothing is ever perfect enough. Nothing is ever straight enough or obedient enough. This is a warning. A call for change as the directors of both of these films push for us to realise that nothing will ever be perfect, no matter how hard we try or how perfect things might seem on the surface. The grass isn't always greener on the other side, so we might as well stop worrying and just focus on living our lives instead of striving for the impossibility of perfection.

These kinds of films tend to be labelled as controversial, and often for good reason. They tend to explore aspects of humanity that provide audiences with an uncomfortable and unsettling experience. However, typically this uncomfortableness leads to films having a much stronger effect and imparting more of a push for us to change and think rather than just passively view. *Happiness* was made as director and writer Todd Solondz wanted to make a film that was almost 'unproduceable'. It follows the stories of three sisters and focuses on their love lives predominantly. Every woman has an issue of some kind, whether she knows it or not, and this is explored throughout the film. Joy is a hopeless single, the last man she was with, who she recently broke up with, has died and she finds herself stuck in the rut of not being able to find someone to settle down with. In stark contrast is her sister Helen who can't keep guys away from her but struggles to form a deep connection with anyone, until she starts getting pervasive phone calls from a stranger who she feels might understand her. Lastly is Trish who appears to have the most stable life, married with two kids she has the 'domestic bliss' lifestyle. *Happiness* deals with some of the most uncomfortable topics like perversion, feelings of alienation, failure, and death and these are all common themes that are not only covered in similar films, but are also commonly felt in real life by real people. 2008 saw the film *Synecdoche New York* come out, which focuses on theatre director Caden as he struggles with a mystery illness and the separation from his wife Adele. The film is incredibly odd and takes us out of the idyllic life almost immediately and only alludes to it being there in the first place. This film heavily focuses on feelings of alienation from others, death, meaninglessness, sickness and a lack of control. Once again all of these ideas are prevalent for people living their lives in reality, and so films like this offer the chance for people to think. Nadine Labaki's quotation that cinema is there to make people rethink and make changes to their lives is heavily prevalent in films that focus on the untasteful nature of suburbia because they explore themes that are dark and unsettling, yet are always there in the backs of people's minds. It might not be the most comfortable thing to see the things that you are subconsciously worried about displayed on the big screen, but seeing them there gives a space for people to be able to make active change by seeing how their anxieties can affect characters and their lives. Because we are all smothered by the fear of judgement and strive to make ourselves palatable for others we often neglect the things that cause us issues in our lives. Issues like feeling alienated and having no control can spiral when left rattling inside our skulls so it's important that films are able to give us the spaces to make changes for our lives and thought patterns so as to not let our dire concerns about our existences consume us.

Cinema can be analysed in a range of ways but one of the most beneficial when looking at who we are as people is the Psychoanalysis film theory. Originating from ideas presented through psychoanalysis by psychologist Sigmund Freud, the theory essentially states that cinema upholds a place for creative, protective, and subconscious ideals for both the creator of the film and the audience viewing it. Stating that films often take us subconsciously to places that help us to explore repressed emotions and feelings through the kind of things we are able to see on screen.

Our dreams are symbolic combinations of images and memories that provide us with the chance to see what our subconscious is working on while we are awake. Any kind of repressed trauma or feelings become more clear to us through our dreams and films that focus on the 'normal' person living a 'normal' life are no exception to that. This kind of cinema is responsible for helping audiences to not only explore their own psyche and forcibly repressed nature but also to explore what the collective dream of that 'perfect suburban life' tells us about our collective desires as a society. Especially because almost all of these films come with a dark twist, the blanket of the perfect life is always being unwoven.

"Cinema [or other media] is not only about making people dream. It's about changing things and making people think." Cinema focusing on the nature of a perfect suburban life, plagued with misfortune and disaster just below the surface, always makes people think. Symbolic and metaphorical, these kinds of films are made to not only express how society needs to change it's ideas about what should and shouldn't be discussed, but also to show how the perverse image of the American Dream will consistently crumble because we as humans are not perfect. We can dream that we are, and imagine what life would be like if everything could be perfect, but ultimately we are not. We will always be a little twisted and in need of change in some area or another. No matter how long you keep your braces on for, your teeth will never be perfectly straight.

## Scholarship

**Subject:** Media Studies

**Standard:** 93303

**Total score:** 15

| Q | Score | Marker commentary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 5     | <p>The candidate selected Question One, quotation 4 and demonstrated convincing knowledge of the music industry – both past and present – throughout their response.</p> <p>The candidate consistently engaged with the quotation, beginning with a clear overview of the industry and its exploitation of music artists. They provided a clear analysis of the exploitation of music artists, using a range of relevant examples (typical artist contracts, payments, live shows, TikTok, and AI), and offered some insightful reasons and consequences for the current state of the industry.</p> |
| 2 | 5     | <p>The candidate selected Question Two, quotation 3 and discussed their short film documentary in relation to Bong Joon-ho's quote. They provided a detailed analysis of their film production, with clear reference to the personal and creative elements of their documentary subjects. They referenced other documentaries in relation to their own production and offered insightful reflections / evaluations of their creative process. Overall, the candidate offered an engaging and thoughtful response that addressed the quotation.</p>                                                  |
| 3 | 5     | <p>The candidate selected Question Three, quotation 2 and provided a convincing understanding of the subconscious horrors of suburban living, via a diverse range of American film texts (Greener Grass, Don't Worry Darling, Happiness, Synecdoche, New York, and American Beauty). The candidate offered some film theory (psychoanalysis) and explored the consequences on suburban living within the selected film texts. Overall, the candidate created an engaging and insightful argument by weaving the two parts of Labaki's quote across their response.</p>                              |