Popular Culture: “That segment of a culture that incorporates the activities of everyday life, including the consumption of consumer goods and the production and enjoyment of mass-produced entertainments” (Maasik and Solomon 564). We live in a pop culture society, so it makes sense that we should be reading, studying, and writing about the culture we consume. After all, you are experts in this field, even if you do not realize it yet. This project allows you to further your expertise in this field and allows you to analyze a topic to its fullest extent. You will be researching, writing, and presenting on a popular culture topic of your choice. There are many topics that you can write about; you can focus on topics within film, television, gaming, music, academia, celebrity culture, etc. Your options are almost infinite, which means that you must narrow. Once you have your topic, then you are ready to begin the project, which includes an annotated bibliography and a research essay. Each are outlined below.

**Overview of the Project**

**Annotated Bibliography**

An annotated bibliography is a detailed list of the secondary sources you plan to use for your research essay. I say “detailed” because it goes beyond the general works cited entry. In the annotated bib, you will be asked to provide a citation for your source, give a short summary of the source, detail its credibility as a source, and show how you are going to use the source. The citation should be in 8th edition MLA format; the summary should detail the main idea of the source, along with important subtopics of the research; the discussion on credibility should tell me where you found the source, who the author is, when it was written, how it was published, and why it is credible; and lastly, the application of the source will include quote(s) that you think will work for your essay with explanations as to why they can help you prove your point. The quotes should be quoted according to MLA standards. You are responsible for **four sources**. Each source will need to come from the library or a credible alternative, and it should be set up like a works cited page (alphabetical order w/ hanging indents). You will also have your normal 4-line heading for MLA at the top, with pagination, and you will have a title (“Annotated Bibliography” is just fine). After the works cited entry, you will then do your paragraphs that includes the above information, and you will do this for each source until the last source.

The length will vary. I will grade on the following information:

- Is your annotated bib put together correctly? 10 Points
- Do you have works cited entries for each source? This will be worth 2.5 point each. If it is partially correct, I will give it a 1.25. If it is incorrect, 0.
- Do you have an accurate summary of each source? This will also be worth 2.5 points each. I will look at how clearly you convey the author’s point.
- Do you discuss the credibility of the source and the usefulness of the source? This will be worth 5 points. I will look at whether you answered the parts above and if you included a quote with adequate discussion.

The annotated bibliography will be due on (date).

**Research Essay**

The research essay is where you will present your findings on your topic in a well-written, cohesive, and enlightening essay. Your essay will follow the general format, meaning it should have an introduction that features your thesis, three to four body paragraphs that prove your thesis and expound on your topic, and a conclusion that brings us back around to the bigger picture and the implications of your research. Again, the topic is entirely up to you, but you should choose a topic that presents an argument and make us, as readers, think about the implications of your subject. For instance, you might look at how video streaming services like **Hulu or Netflix** affect the film and television industry, or you might look at the

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evolution of cosplaying and how cosplaying is a fan-made form of marketing for certain industries. You could look at how nostalgia indicates trends in millennial consumption (think about how millennials gravitate towards objects, shows, films of their childhood, such as the releasing of the NES classic from Nintendo or the remakes of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *Ghostbusters*). You could look at Shakespeare in popular culture. Again, the potential for ideas is limitless.

The length of the essay should be **4-8 pages** and should follow the general requirements for an essay (intro, body, conclusion). I would like to see you thoroughly discuss your research question, your findings, and the implication that it has on popular culture. You should follow MLA format for the essay and for the research elements. You should have at least 4 secondary sources to back up the ideas expressed in the paper. Lastly, your essay should be objective. **You will submit your essay in class on (date), but a draft will be due as early as (date) during an instructor workshop. This will be considered a graded draft, so even though the point value is less than the final essay, it will still be graded like an essay.** During this workshop, I will be reading your essays and giving you commentary.