

Throughout this course, we've looked at meaning in a variety of ways – from the author, to the reader, to what it means to be a “subject.” We have come to the conclusion that meaning is not made in a vacuum, it is not a preconceived or predetermined notion, but rather that authors, readers and subjects always “happen” in a cultural context. Because meaning is so strongly influenced by ideologies and cultural norms, it is important to remember that any attempt to define a group, to define what is “same” is always dependent on a process of exclusion – you must also define the “other” – to know what *is*, you must also know what *is not*. During this final Culture and Ideology unit, we've explored the ideology of several topics: consumerism, gender, sexuality and beauty, race and class and popular culture icons, as well as analyzed how each of these ideologies function in American culture.

Your task in this multimedia presentation is to select and problematize an issue/topic/question/phenomenon etc. from popular culture, examine the various ideologies, social constructs, rules, conventions, myths, and codes that distinguish the issue/topic, and bring to fruition a claim you have fully explored, developed and supported. Beyond simply deciding *what* the culture/ideology means, you'll need to explore *how* and *why* it creates meaning and *for whom*. Be sure to not only identify the areas of interest, but to also fully analyze and complicate them. Remember, a strong analysis not only answers the “Who?” and “What?” of an argument, but also explores the implications of the “So What?” question. A thorough discussion of the significance of the topic is crucial; you need to look beyond the obvious or your grade will reflect your languid approach.

Instead of writing a traditional paper, you will be making a visual argument. Once you have identified your argument and applied some of the theories discussed throughout the year, you will create a visual representation of your argument. It would behoove you to capitalize on intertextuality – adding appropriate pictures, music, clips etc. that serve to represent your claim. The format of your presentation is up to you; this is your opportunity to tailor the genre/format of your presentation to best fit the claim you are making.

**Requirements:**

- the visual argument presentation should be approximately 8-10 minutes in length
- minimum of three (3) theory-inflected ideas from throughout the course
- an invention portfolio which includes all of your notes, drafting and scaffolding work for the unit, along with a personal reflection is also due with the project

Hint: think of the odd hegemony video explanation we watched. Your goal in this project is to explain how and to what extent your topic turns the milk of American society pink...