

Here is my Literature/Media rubric that I designed.

Total Points: 100

3 Main Facets for Quality: I. Breadth, II. Depth, III. Consistency

1 Facet for Valence: Grimness

Conglomerate Facets:

- I. Breadth and Depth combine to make the Ideas superfactor
- II. Breadth and Consistency combine to make the Enjoyability superfactor
- III. Depth and Consistency combine to make the Refinement superfactor
- IV. Depth and Grimness combine to make the Conceptual Maturity superfactor

8 Octants:

B+ D+ C+ = Masterpiece

B+ D+ C- = Experimental Work

B+ D- C+ = Blockbuster/Bestseller

B+ D- C- = Amateur Work

B- D+ C+ = Classic

B- D+ C- = Esoterica

B- D- C+ = Comfort Media

B- D- C- = Factory-produced slop

Examples of Works in each octant:

Masterpiece (B+ D+ C+): Dream of Red Chambers

Experimental Work (B+ D+ C-): House of Leaves

Blockbuster/Bestseller (B+ D- C+): Jurassic Park

Amateur Work (B+ D- C-): Tomorrowland

Classic (B- D+ C+): Of Mice and Men

Esoterica (B- D+ C-): Angel Egg (1985)

Comfort Media (B- D- C+): New Girl (2011)

Slop (B- D- C-): Emoji Movie

Shorthand notation of each Octant in this literature/media typology:

Masterpiece: BDC

Experimental Work: BD

Bestseller: BC

Classic: DC

Amateur Work: B

Esoterica: D

Comfort Media: C

Slop: *

Alternate shorthand notation uses two different letters to represent each pole on each dimension:

Breadth: Broad (B) vs. Narrow (N)

Depth: Deep (D) vs. Shallow (S)

Consistency: Consistent (C) vs. Messy (M)

Hence, the eight distinct octants can be also notated as:

Masterpiece: BDC

Experimental Work: BDM

Bestseller: BSC

Amateur Work: BSM

Classic: NDC

Esoterica: NDM

Comfort Media: NSC

Slop: NSM

If we're including the affective valence/happiness dimension, which won't be included in the overall rubric/scoring system itself because, unlike Breadth, Depth, and Consistency, it doesn't objectively affect

quality of the media, the two poles for this fourth valence dimension could be represented by these shorthands:

Happiness: Happy (H) vs. Grim (G)

Then, simply append -H or -G with a dash to the end of the “quality octant” the work/media/literature sits in to represent this fourth, purely valence, dimension.

For instance, “New Girl” (2011) is the quintessential NSC-H (happy Comfort Media). Angel’s Egg or Erik Satie’s Vexations on the other hand both fall solidly into NDM-G (grim Esoterica).

If we were to come up with an archetypal example for each sedecimant (16-ant) based on these four dimensions (3 of them describing objective quality, the 4th describing valence), we have:

BDC-H (Happy Masterpiece): The Truman Show

BDC-G (Grim Masterpiece): Dream of Red Chambers or Dante’s Divine Comedy

BDM-H (Happy Experimental Work): Lord of the Rings

BDM-G (Grim Experimental Work): Donnie Darko

BSC-H (Happy Bestseller/Spectacle): Frozen

BSC-G (Grim Bestseller/Thriller): Hunger Games

BSM-H (Happy Amateur Work): Tomorrowland

BSM-G (Grim Amateur Work): Countdown (2019)

NDC-H (Happy Classic): Pride and Prejudice

NDC-G (Grim Classic): The Man Who Knew Infinity, Your Lie In April, and Wuthering Heights

NDM-H (Happy Esoterica): extremely rare and elusive
NDM-G (Grim Esoterica): Angel's Egg, My Dinner with Andre, or Erik Satie's Vexations, Golden Brown (The Strangers)

NSC-H (Happy Comfort Media): New Girl (2011)
NSC-G (Grim Comfort Media): The Fault in Our Stars and Class of '09

NSM-H (Happy Slop): Emoji Movie
NSM-G (Grim Slop): The Room

Facet I: Breadth (30 points total)

Subfacet 1-A: Premise (10 points)

Negative Traits: Flawed or hackneyed premise/central concepts, or no rich theoretical premise at all

Positive Traits: Inventive/riveting concepts and brainstorming

Subfacet 1-B: Worldbuilding (10 points)

Negative Traits: Unremarkable setting/exposition, lack of diversity in cast

Positive Traits: Rich and well-defined worldbuilding and setting

Subfacet 1-C: Plot (10 points)

Negative Traits: Predictable events, linear plot

Positive Traits: Original plot devices and twists, rich arcs, branching plot

Facet II: Depth (40 points total)

Subfacet II-A: Characters (10 points total)

Negative Traits: 1-dimensional caricatures, cardboard-thin tropes, hackneyed character dynamics without adding anything new (e.g. black cat and golden retriever couple)

Positive Traits: characters are well distinguished from each other and given well-defined identities via voice/internal monologues, they have complex arcs and develop nontrivially throughout the story, their motivations, personalities, and neuroses are nuanced

Note: Character sub-rubric should be divided into 3 tertiary-level subfacets: (1) Neuroses (4 points), (2) Relationships (3 points), (3) Obfuscation (3 points), for a total of 10 points

Subfacet II-B: Themes (10 points total)

Negative Traits: Paper thin or shoehorned themes, shallow tropes

Positive Traits: Philosophical depth, multilayered and full of gray areas, enhances the audience's worldview

Subfacet II-C: Subtlety (10 points total)

Negative Traits: Too much concrete narration, obviously forced symbolism or metaphors or none at all.

Positive Traits: Follows the "show don't tell" axiom of writing, layered and effective symbolism/metaphors

Subfacet II-D: Social Commentary (10 points total)

Negative Traits: Self-contained and lacks broader political or cultural commentary, or the points made aren't original or are shoehorned in

Positive Traits: Comments on or makes a thoughtful point about the current or past state of the world (in social or political terms)

Facet III: Consistency (30 points total)

Subfacet III-A: Logic (10 points total)

Negative Traits: plotholes, weak suspension of disbelief, continuity errors

Positive Traits: does well at suspending disbelief, characters' actions and events/cause and effect chain makes sense

Subfacet III-B: Chekhov's Gun (5 points total)

Negative Traits: Irrelevant filler padding, arcs that are left unresolved

Positive Traits: Ties up loose ends, no irrelevant/one-time characters or plot points

Subfacet III-C: Pacing (5 points total)

Negative Traits: Plot moves either too fast or too slow, or inconsistent speed

Positive Traits: Well structured narrative, good demarcation into character arcs/timeline of narrative makes sense.

Subfacet-III-D: Execution (10 points total)

Negative Traits: Low-budget, full of/easily noticeable errors/bugs/glitches, jarring to watch

Positive Traits: High quality, high effort, smooth, decently polished

Note on Breadth vs. Depth:

In my typology rubric, Breadth is essentially a measure of originality and variety the work offers outwardly, while Depth is a measure of intellectual engagement needed to properly appreciate the work. A work can very much be high Breadth but low Depth - imaginative/inventive premises that lean on the hypothetical or unexplored, rich and well developed worldbuilding and character cast (very detailed and immersive), a variety of plot and character arcs, but ultimately lacking thoughtful development of the characters

themselves or having only paper-thin themes. (e.g. Harry Potter, The Fifth Element, Da Vinci Code, Inside Out). On the other hand, a work can be low Breadth but high Depth - they could be retellings of things that exist or have already happened (a big category is documentaries like The Man who Knew Infinity), and/or have focused scope and a remarkably simple plotline or worldbuilding only containing a few characters (e.g. like Nightcrawler or Of Mice and Men), but require a good amount of intellectual or philosophical reflection to truly appreciate.

In general, in this rubric, Breadth is about the variety and novelty of ideas that are brought to the table, and Depth is about how intellectually and thoughtfully these ideas are explored.

Another notion that I would like to expound on is the notion of Conceptual Maturity (CM), which can range from age 3 to age 21, inclusive, in terms of minimum recommended age to read or consume the media in question. This is much different, and can operate quasi-independently, of conventional Content Maturity (what MPAA uses). Unlike Content Maturity though (which does not relate to any of the 4 dimensions - Breadth, Depth, Consistency, and Happiness in this typology whatsoever), Conceptual Maturity primarily is a function of high Depth and low Happiness (specifically when combined). In my typology notation, this is particularly “xDx-G” (which subsumes BDC-G, BDM-G, NDC-G, and especially NDM-G).

The argument for the espousal of Conceptual Maturity rather than Content Maturity as a framework is that
(1) it humanizes art/media as they deserve, since Conceptual Maturity directly relates to the Depth and Grimness polar ends (which is what

some media try to portray in an artistic way - social commentary of the corrupt and desolate world we live in), while Content Maturity is arbitrary and operates wholly independently of art/media quality and valence.

(2) It can be argued that sometimes, Conceptual Maturity is what makes a piece of literature or media “adult” rather than Content Maturity, at least if we think more long term. Sex, drugs, or concrete violence are all much easier for young people to understand/process than layered satire, political/social commentary, weighty philosophical themes, or character/emotional nuance (especially if paired with neurosis or mental illness). The harm in someone with an underdeveloped cerebral cortex (which implies immature and less abstract/farsighted thinking) either misconstruing the intentions of the work (for example, by kinning or identifying with a protagonist or character that’s not meant to be idolized due to the Halo Effect - examples: Lou Bloom or Patrick Bateman) or developing distorted and unhealthy worldviews due to not understanding the notion of unreliable narrators or layered satire/political commentary far outweighs the harm in a teen hearing some dirty joke or a use of the F-word.

To give an example of this framework in action:

Nightcrawler (2014) arguably has much higher conceptual maturity than content maturity, and is rated R despite not having sex scenes or overt violence at all. Indeed, I would categorize Nightcrawler as NDC-G (Grim Classic). The same goes for Wuthering Heights, as yet another NDC-G/BDC-G.

On the other hand, New Girl (2011), the epitome of the NSC-H (Happy Comfort Media) sedecimant, has much lower conceptual maturity than content maturity. The only reason it’s rated TV-14 is because of occasional innuendos.

Films with CM = 16-18 should require the viewer to be at least 18 years old to watch or accompanied by a parent or guardian 21 years of age or older (even when accompanied, the minimum age should be 16). films with CM > 18 (19-21) should require the viewer to be at least 21 years old to watch or accompanied by a parent or guardian 25 years of age or older (even if accompanied, the minimum age should be 18) Valid proof of ID should be required.

However, a potential problem with this system if implemented legally is that it might penalize actual young and curious minds that are very mature for their age, and also art might get reduced to cultural capital/proof of prestige and become assimilated indirectly because teens will watch CM21 films anyways without permissions and this will develop into forbidden fruit syndrome. Hence, it is best for the conceptual maturity (CM) framework to stay merely theoretical/as a tool for critique/analysis.

But, as Adorno said, art could be dangerous/harmful to undeveloped and uninitiated minds due to its alienation, dissonance, and inherent grimness/exposure of flaws, hence CM could still be useful that way to be implemented.

Note that again, only the three original dimensions, Breadth, Depth, and Consistency, objectively affect the quality of the media/literature.

Perhaps the scoring system could be made slightly different to align with how the general public or IMDb usually rates films and TV. Instead of a composite score out of 100 for all 3 quality facets (although this will still be used to determine overall broad quality), the score could just be simply the percentage the dimension that the work scores the highest on among all 3 quality dimensions (breadth, depth,

consistency). To distinguish this new metric from the composite score, we will call this the “signature score” of the work.

Example (applied to Donnie Darko):

Movie Review #1 (Donnie Darko)

1. Breadth - 8/10

Although this movie uses several common plot devices/concepts, such as time travel, doomed love, and multiverses, it blends them together in an imaginative and compelling way. A riveting mix of horror and sci-fi, and plot twists such as Gretchen's death and the dance team's final flight are well thought out especially near the climax and ending (the last few hours before the tangent universe ends).

Worldbuilding isn't as rich as Lord of the Rings, but key lore/story elements (such as Grandma Death's book) are unique and well-defined for the purpose of this story (e.g. chapter excerpts of her book are actually written out)

2. Depth - 10/10

This is the facet where this movie stands out. Philosophical themes such as free will vs. determinism are deeply woven into the central plot of the movie - Donnie Darko paradoxically has a choice to save the rest of the world from the tangent universe, yet the tangent universe itself is deterministic. A scathing but layered social commentary/critique particularly about the influence of authority figures and the hypocrisy of organized religion, particularly as a copout/way some of the characters cope with fear. Biblical allusions, such as Jim Cunningham representing Satan and Donnie Darko representing Jesus' necessary death (but ironically in the alternate, normal universe, Donnie Darko gets forgotten), are also present. Quite the epitome of "show don't tell" subtlety. This movie also intertwines sci-fi/philosophical elements with realistic neuroses or mental illnesses

which is illustrated through Donnie Darko's therapy visits. Due to this, this movie also is very open to interpretation (a hallmark of depth) - one could choose to interpret the whole timeline as Donnie's schizophrenic thoughts as well.

3. Consistency - 4/10

Does decently in Chekhov's Gun (new leads tend to all be all related back to the main plot in some way), particularly the initially seemingly irrelevant subplot of Donnie's sister's dance team. However, pacing is the main weakness of this movie - particularly, the romance subplot between Donnie and Gretchen seems forced/rushed in some way and could be stretched out/defined more clearly. Some parts of the movie's logic are not clear at first (why did the jet engine itself accidentally open a wormhole into a tangent dimension?), a high level of suspension of disbelief is required.

4. Valence/Grimness - 8/10

has a happy ending (or maybe not depending on your interpretation, because the world is reduced to a mundane average once again with its flaws, such as Cunningham's presence and influence, intact), but inherently is dark and disturbing in its themes and Donnie Darko's core character.

Octant - BDM (broad, deep, messy) otherwise known as Experimental Work.

Subtype - BDM-G (broad, deep, messy, grim)

Remark: this movie is pretty much the complete opposite of the sitcom New Girl (2011) on these 4 dimensions, which is instead NSC-H (narrow, shallow, consistent, happy).

Also, a good litmus test for evaluating how well developed or well written characters are is to put them into a boilerplate scenario like a zombie apocalypse and see if their interactions and personalities can still make the story interesting. It basically is squeezing out all the Breadth (especially any original premise or world building) from the story to isolate and stress test the facet of Depth.

Also, this rubric shows how even if the premise/plot/concepts aren't anything new, even if the work is derivative/unoriginal in that area (low Breadth), it can still be a high quality/revered work due to high Depth or high Consistency.

Refinement of this typology system (3 factor model -> 4 factor model):

Previously, the typology had Breadth as a singular axis and three total quality axes: Breadth, Depth, and Consistency. Now, we should split Breadth up into two independent dimensions: (1) Conceptual Breadth (subsumes the subfacet of Premise) and (2) Physical Breadth (subsumes subfacets Worldbuilding and Plot Complexity).

Conceptual Breadth itself should have the following subfacets (it could also be named Inventiveness):

- Originality

Positive Traits: Compelling/original/unique concepts/ideas that haven't been explored or done before. Could also combine multiple previous eclectic ideas in original ways (the whole is larger than the sum of its parts).

Negative Traits: Derivative concepts (for instance, Lycoris Recoil is largely derivative of 1984), story retellings without new concepts or

elements, hackneyed or tropey premise/ideas. One-trick ponies/gimmicks that don't really offer anything else.

- Theoretical Richness

Positive Traits: "what-if scenarios", hypothetical, imaginative, extrapolates from reality rather than staying anchored in it.

Negative Traits: Stays mostly grounded in existing "real" ideas and concepts rather than hypotheticals.

Physical Breadth has the same two subfacets (Worldbuilding and Plot Complexity/Unpredictability) as discussed earlier in this document. It could also be named "Scope" or "Unpredictability". Together, Scope/Unpredictability (Physical) and Inventiveness (Conceptual) make the conglomerate facet of Breadth.

We will notate the Conceptual Breadth dichotomy as Inventive (I, high scorers) vs. Quotidian (Q, low scorers). Similarly, the Physical Breadth dichotomy will be notated as Rich (R, high scorers) vs. Undeveloped (U, low scorers). Depth (Deep (D) vs Shallow (S)) and Consistency (Consistent (C) vs Messy (M)) will remain the same.

This is to account for literature/media that are neutral in Breadth as a whole depending on the aspect surveyed - For instance movies like *Meshes of the Afternoon* and *Angel's Egg* could have very inventive premises/concepts but very simple plots or minimal worldbuilding (Inventive but Undeveloped - IUxx). On the other hand, books like *Dream of Red Chambers* don't do much with strictly conceptual invention (other than an imaginative tie-in to mythology at the beginning), but are sprawling in its plot and worldbuilding (over 400 characters, many arcs that intricately tie together, branching storytelling) (Quotidian but Rich - QRxx)

Now, there are 4 quality factors/dimensions: Conceptual Breadth (Inventive vs. Quotidian), Physical Breadth (Rich vs. Undeveloped), Depth (Deep vs. Shallow), and Consistency (Consistent vs. Messy) and 1 valence dimension (Happy vs. Grim) which makes this rubric/typology now have 16 quality sedecimant categories (rather than just the original 8 octants), with 2 subtypes based on valence per sedecimant (making for 32 types of media in total), which will be notated -H or -G as previously described.

Here are all 16 quality sedecimants, their names/summaries, and archetypal examples for each:

Masterpiece/Classic family:

IRDC (Inventive, Rich, Deep, Consistent) - “Masterwork”

Example: Lord of the Rings, Dante’s Divine Comedy

IUDC (Inventive, Undeveloped, Deep, Consistent) - “Journey”

Example: Wuthering Heights

QRDC (Quotidian, Rich, Deep, Consistent) - “Saga”

Example: Dream of Red Chambers

QUDC (Quotidian, Undeveloped, Deep, Consistent) - “Classic”

Example: Nightcrawler, Of Mice and Men, or Your Lie In April

Experimental/Esoterica family:

IRDM (Inventive, Rich, Deep, Messy) - “Curiosity”

Example: Donnie Darko, Everything Everywhere All At Once, Mulholland Drive

IUDM (Inventive, Undeveloped, Deep, Messy) - “Esoterica”

Example: Coherence, Angel’s Egg, DDLC

QRDM (Quotidian, Rich, Deep, Messy) - “Morass”

Example: As I Lay Dying

QUDM (Quotidian, Undeveloped, Deep, Messy) - “Reflection”

Example: Golden Brown (The Strangers)

Bestseller/Comfort Media family:

IRSC (Inventive, Rich, Shallow, Consistent) - “Spectacle”

Example: The Da Vinci Code

IUSC (Inventive, Undeveloped, Shallow, Consistent) - “Excursion”

Example: Megamind

QRSC (Quotidian, Rich, Shallow, Consistent) - “Community”

Example: Lucky Star

QUSC (Quotidian, Undeveloped, Shallow, Consistent) - “Relax”

Example: New Girl

Amateur/Slop family:

IRSM (Inventive, Rich, Shallow, Messy) - “Anticipation”

Example: The Amazing World of Gumball

IUSM (Inventive, Undeveloped, Shallow, Messy) - “Shower Thought”

Example: Sausage Party

QRSM (Quotidian, Rich, Shallow, Messy) - “Fraternity”

Example: Lycoris Recoil

QUSM (Quotidian, Undeveloped, Shallow, Messy) - “Slop”

Example: Emoji Movie

Refined/complete 4-factor rubric:

Dimension I: Creativity (20 points)

Subfacet I-A: Ingenuity (10 points)

Positive Traits: Compelling/original/unique concepts/ideas that haven’t been explored or done before. Could also combine multiple previous eclectic ideas in original ways (the whole is larger than the sum of its parts).

Negative Traits: Derivative concepts (for instance, Lycoris Recoil is largely derivative of 1984), story retellings without new concepts or

elements, hackneyed or tropey premise/ideas. One-trick ponies/gimmicks that don't really offer anything else.

Subfacet I-B: Theoretical Richness

Positive Traits: "what-if scenarios", hypothetical, imaginative, extrapolates from reality rather than staying anchored in it.

Negative Traits: Stays mostly grounded in existing "real" ideas and concepts rather than hypotheticals.

Positive Pole: Inventive (I)

Negative Pole: Quotidian (Q)

Dimension II: Variety (20 points)

Subfacet II-A: Worldbuilding (10 points)

Negative Traits: Unremarkable setting/exposition, lack of diversity in cast

Positive Traits: Rich, immersive and well-defined worldbuilding and setting

Subfacet II-B: Plot Complexity (10 points)

Negative Traits: Predictable events, linear, bland, or repetitive plot

Positive Traits: Original plot devices and twists, rich and intricate arcs, branching plot

Positive Pole: Rich (R)

Negative Pole: Focused (U)

Dimension III: Depth (40 points)

Subfacet III-A: Character Complexity (15 points) (will expounded on in a tertiary level rubric)

Negative Traits: 1-dimensional caricatures, cardboard-thin tropes, hackneyed character dynamics without adding anything new (e.g. black cat and golden retriever couple)

Positive Traits: characters are well distinguished from each other and given well-defined identities via voice/internal monologues, they have complex arcs and develop nontrivially throughout the story, their motivations, personalities, psychology, and neuroses are nuanced. They also have complex relationships with other characters in the story and are not just shallow “hero/villain” archetypes.

Subfacet III-B: Commentary (15 points) - The heavy weighting and definition of this facet is based on the philosophical thesis “all art is political”.

Negative Traits: Paper-thin themes, generic or black and white view on morality (e.g. good vs. evil), either does not attempt to comment on societal or human condition or commentary is overt/shoehorned/too didactic rather than revealed through form.

Positive Traits: Philosophically reflective, layered themes that are open to interpretation, embraces gray areas particularly in knowledge and ethics, makes profound points about humanity, history, society, culture, or political ideologies, alludes to religion or other cultural movements.

Subfacet III-C: Subtlety (10 points)

Negative Traits: Too much concrete narration, obviously forced symbolism or metaphors or none at all. Elements/devices in the story mostly serve to advance the plot rather than for artistic intent.

Positive Traits: Follows the “show don't tell” axiom of writing, has layered and effective symbolism/metaphors.

Positive Pole: Deep (D)

Negative Pole: Shallow (S)

Dimension IV: Consistency (20 points)

Subfacet IV-A: Internal Logic (5 points total)

Negative Traits: plotholes, weak suspension of disbelief, continuity errors

Positive Traits: does well at suspending disbelief, characters' actions and events/cause and effect chain makes sense

Subfacet IV-B: Chekhov's Gun (5 points total)

Negative Traits: Irrelevant filler padding, arcs that are left unresolved

Positive Traits: Ties up loose ends, no irrelevant/one-time characters or plot points

Subfacet IV-C: Pacing (5 points total)

Negative Traits: Plot moves either too fast or too slow, or inconsistent speed

Positive Traits: Well structured narrative, good demarcation into character arcs/timeline of narrative makes sense.

Subfacet IV-D: Execution Quality (5 points total)

Negative Traits: Low-budget, full of/easily noticeable errors/bugs/glitches, jarring to watch

Positive Traits: High quality, high effort, smooth, decently polished

Positive Pole: Consistent (C)

Negative Pole: Messy (M)

Tertiary-level rubric for the Character Complexity subfacet of Depth (15 points total):

For each major character, they should be scored on the Individual Character rubric (10 points total) (Subfacet III-A-I):

Subfacet III-A-I-1: Neuroses (4 points total) - The inclusion of this subfacet is based on the Enneagram theoretical framework.

Negative Traits: Caricatures that are myopic stereotypes rather than archetypes/blueprints. Their motivations are simple and without subtlety, e.g. “to get the girl” or “to be the evil villain”. The character is dependent on the plot.

Positive Traits: Well-defined and nuanced motivations and beliefs for either taking certain actions or espousing certain belief systems. The character feels human, and their mental/emotional struggles are layered and authentic rather than shallow or artificial. Characters are complex rather than portrayed as just “good or evil”. The plot is dependent on the character.

Negative Pole: Hackneyed (H)

Positive Pole: Inspired (I)

Subfacet III-A-I-2: Individuation (3 points total):

Negative Traits: A redundant or shallow/low-fidelity personality that can be easily replaced by another character. Speaks and thinks the same as other characters in the story.

Positive Traits: A distinguishing voice, whether it be style of speech/patterns of thought, or internal monologue. A unique personality with well-defined strengths, weaknesses, behaviors, and character traits. Their physical design and involvement in the plot is not an accidental property.

Negative Pole: Redundant (R)

Positive Pole: Unique (U)

Subfacet III-A-I-3: Development (3 points total):

Negative Traits: A character that remains static/flat throughout the story, or a character whose change in personality only comes from events in the plot rather than through their own internal reflections or decision making.

Positive Traits: A character who is constantly reflecting or thinking about their motivations or beliefs, and/or whose beliefs change due to their own volition or underlying neuroses. The setting and plot points serve as the environment that shapes the character rather than some drug or medicine that forces a personality change.

Negative Pole: Static (S)

Positive Pole: Dynamic (D)

Then, their scores should be averaged (out of 10) for each character, but with the average weighted on how much each character is involved in the story.

For the set of characters in general, they should be scored on the Character Interactions rubric (5 points total) (Subfacet III-A-II)

Positive Traits: The characters' relationships feel organic, authentic, and have complexity, nuance, and developing variance. Romantic relationships that are more based on the compatibility (and incompatibility) between the characters' beliefs and motivations than their outward behaviors. Dialogue between characters is natural and cohesive, and reflects their personalities either clashing or harmonizing.

Negative Traits: Not thematically cohesive/the interaction feels shoehorned in to advance the plot. Relationships are overdone cliches such as the Golden Retriever x Black Cat couple trope. Each character fulfills an archetypal/generic role (e.g. "the bubbly manic pixie dream girl", "the comic relief") within the cast. Dialogue between characters is inane or exaggerated.

Positive Pole: Organic (O)

Negative Pole: Artificial (A)

NOTE: in stories with only one main character, an interaction between a character with another character doesn't have to be between physically distinct characters, it can be between the different personas of the sole character.

In total, this makes Character Complexity worth $4+3+3+5 = 10+5 = 15$ points.

Additionally, what might the analogy of "Duo types" (from the AB5C version of the Big 5) look like for this similar Big 5-esque framework? Use the original dichotomy letters for the trait codes.

Creativity: Inventive/Quotidian

Scope: Rich/Undeveloped

Depth: Deep/Shallow

Consistency: Consistent/Messy

Valence: Happy/Grim

Including valence there would actually be 40 duo types (5 choose 2 ways to select two dimensions; and 2^2 ways to select the poles for those two dimensions)

Also, Creativity, Variety, Depth, and Consistency cutoffs (for the dichotomy codings) should each be higher than 50% of the total possible points. My suggestions for the cutoffs are Creativity: 13+/20, Variety: 12+/20, Depth: 27+/40, and Consistency: 15+/20.

QUDC examples: of mice and men, the old man and the sea, the man who knew infinity, the pianist, whiplash, Zodiac, Your Lie In April. For some reason, QUDC examples are much easier to name and much more common than QUDM examples. In general, QUDM (“Reflection”) is probably the rarest sedecimant on my typology. All sedecimants one Hamming distance away from QUDM, which includes QUDC, QUSM, QRDM, and IUDM, are much more common than true QUDM works, at least when it comes to released works.

Another note:

Art films tend to be almost exclusively lxDM-x, often lxDM-G. lxDx-x is non-negotiable for art films.

Documentaries tend to be almost exclusively QxxC-x, often QUxC-x. True crime tends to be QUSC-G or QUDC-G.

Sitcoms tend to be QxSC-H.

Theoretical basis (Adorno):

According to the philosopher Adorno, what delineates art from non-art is its autonomy, non-identity, and subtlety/difficulty yet openness of interpretation. In my rubric, the ideal representing his concept of the purest form of art would be lxDM-G (inventive, deep, messy, grim). However, I slightly widen the delineation from pure art to pure non-art to the dichotomy between lxDM-x vs. QxSC-x.

High conceptual breadth/inventiveness makes the artwork explore novel forms and have autonomy rather than regurgitate existing tropes of our culture. Art or media that is quotidian or of lower conceptual breadth fails to satisfy the non-identity axiom of art, since ideas, tropes, and structure/form are inherently products of the zeitgeist culture.

The next facet that's absolutely non-negotiable in art is its difficulty/subtlety (which is subsumed as the facet Depth in my rubric). If the amount of intellectual reflection required to understand such media is not high enough, it will inevitably get normalized into the current culture and contribute to the shifting of cultural values, defeating the purpose of art as knowledge of the universal human condition, outside of current societal boundaries. Depth also crucially is the vehicle for the truth content itself of the work. A piece of media with high conceptual breadth but low depth, in other words art that scores 1xSx-x on my rubric (such as *The Fifth Element* or *Jurassic Park*), attempts to subvert existing boundaries but in a way that's too immediate and on the nose, resulting in eventual assimilation of the media into mainstream society and an inevitable shift (if the inventiveness + shallowness contrast is large enough).

The third facet that's also, according to Adorno, vital for art's authenticity is a (lack of) Consistency. Art should question existing systems of order and transcend interpretability by logical frameworks in general, or else it doesn't become art, it becomes formal science, philosophy, or math. Systems of axioms and rules (what people "view" as rational) is inherently bound to current society and culture, so a lack of consistency, combined with high conceptual breadth/inventiveness and high depth contributes to the work of art being non-identical and expressing universal truth via the negation current truths.

The variety (unpredictability, scope, expansiveness) of a work might be an accidental/non-essential property in Adorno's framework of art rather an essential one - it affects delivery/form but not the truth content intrinsically. I agree, and perhaps on this basis we could question including Variety as a quality dimension at all and move it in the category of Valence as an irrelevant modifier. However, this should be done later after more reflection.

Adorno sees art as inherently expressing its truth through suffering (that is repressed by social norms) hence Adorno's ideal of art would also be usually Grim > Happy on the valence scale by embodying alienation and marginalization. However, I impugn this claim and think Valence is an irrelevant dimension for delineating art vs. non-art. This is because emotional valence, behaviors, and attitudes is also a contingent product of current societal values - for instance it could be community or harmony as in organized religion, or it could also be skepticism or cynicism as in atheism or Social Darwinism.

It is worthy to point out that Consistency among the 3 critical dimensions is in my opinion the least important relative to Depth and Inventiveness, because an art piece could still have its own internal consistency/have its structure/form be self-dictated, even though Adornian ideal of art is almost always Messy (M) > Consistent (C). Low consistency is only a "symptom" of pure art rather than an inherent quality of it. Depth on the other hand is the most important dimension in my opinion if we were to subscribe to an Adornian framework. It is what drives the truth-content and makes art universal but only accessible to the initiated and resisting assimilation by the masses.

In general: purest art = IxDM-x (inventive, deep, messy)

Purest non-art = QxSC-x (quotidian, shallow, consistent)

Another crucial sidenote: the scores and classification on this very rubric are contingent on time period and culture from which we view the artwork or media.

An alternative splitting of my media framework into "Quadras" is this classification (each quadra contains four sedecimants and 8 sedecimant-valence combinations, for example Compromised Art subsumes QUDC, QUDM, QRDC, QRDM):

Pure Art: IxDx-x

Compromised Art: QxDx-x

Pretentious Art: IxSx-x

Non-Art: QxSx-x

Here are alternate (Adornian) labels for each pole:

Inventiveness: Autonomous.

Quotidian: Heteronomous.

Rich: Maximalist.

Undeveloped: Minimalist.

Deep: Knowledge.

Shallow: Pleasure.

Consistency: Closure.

Messy: Fragmented.

Grim: Alienating.

Happy: Reconciling.

In general, QUDC art/media/literature is the embodiment/category of the most accessible “higher art” - often a good entry point for people graduating to more sophisticated/intellectual tastes.

Categories ranked from highest to lowest openness (in my opinion):

IUDM > IRDM > IRDC > IUDC > QRDM > QUDM > QRDC > QUDC >
IRSM > IRSC > IUSC > IUSM > QRSM > QUSM > QRSC > QUSC

While Creativity (Q/I) in my rubric is form, Depth (S/D) in my rubric is content.

More about “Compromised Art” quadra (QxDx-x):

Art that still manages to infuse truth-content (Wahrheitsgehalt) but in a more conventional form or structure makes up the QxDx-x quadra. It is the quadra most laypeople think of when they hear the word “cultured”. “Oh, you’re cultured? You must be reading the timeless classics like *Of Mice and Men* or 1984. (note that even though 1984 during the time it was written (early 1900s) would score lxDx-x, nowadays it would score QxDx-x due to the oversaturation of the dystopian genre with the proliferation of tropes like authoritarianism and forbidden love) You must have great knowledge of Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin’s work!” QxDx-x, especially QUDC, tends to make up the most accessible “higher art” due to it having structure that is familiar and well-known. It resists complete assimilation by the laypeople due to its critique and truthful meaning in its content, and even if that depth has a lower barrier to entry due to the quotidian form it is presented in, there can still be effectively endless ways to interpret and intellectualize the work. The fruit is lower hanging but still rich in nutrients and intellectual nourishment. However, the avenue where it doesn’t as much resist the “predator-prey” cycle of ideology-art is not necessarily the cultural industry but zeitgeist academia, which is still part of current society and culture. Due to their conventional form, QxDx works tend to be very well-studied and make their way into academic canons, which makes them gradually become compromised art rather than pure art. A lot of QxDx literature like *As I Lay Dying* (QRDM) or *The Old Man and the Sea* (QUDC) are staples in high school curricula in Western countries. Other QxDx works become revered classics and essentially a cultural rite of passage towards maturity - for example the movie “*The Man Who Knew Infinity*” (QUDC-G) is viewed this way in the math community. QxDx art is

compromised in that they still do not serve art's purpose of autonomy/questioning the status quo as well as IxDx art even if they still contain the required truth-content - they instead often serve as markers of cultural prestige/cultural capital - reinforcing mainstream elitism. This makes for the paradox that even elitism can become common.

More about "Pretentious Art" quadra (IxSx-x):

IxSx quadra represents the assertion/movement "art for art's sake" - forced innovation and complexity without meaning, critique, or truth content. It is art that has the appearance of autonomy in form but in a merely performative way - it is in a more meta way heteronomous to society's constant demands for innovation and new forms, and it satisfies this by delivering original concepts or structures without ample critique or substance.

Cryptography analogy:

QxSx (quotidian-shallow Quadra) media: leaving the plaintext as just plaintext without any cryptosystem

IxSx (inventive-shallow Quadra) media: cryptosystems that either aren't secure/are easily decrypted by amateurs, or don't follow Kerckhoff's principle at all. In other words, secrecy only by obscurity/novelty (e.g. the Caesar cipher). The actual knowledge/data (plaintext) is easily and predictably derived from the cipher text (the cipher text is what the art is on the surface - taking current social values) hence it doesn't really critique current values at all.

QxDx Quadra (quotidian-deep Quadra) compromised art: crypto systems that are genuinely hard to decrypt but only because they rely on conventional problems that are "hard" to solve with traditional tools (lack of autonomy). RSA (factoring problem) and Diffie Hellman key exchange (discrete log problem) are examples - the knowledge

(plaintext encrypted by ciphertext) will easily get decrypted and disseminated by society because these hard problems they rely on are so commonly studied and quantum computing is on the rise.

lxDx Quadra (incentive-deep Quadra) pure art: crypto systems that are both state of the art (use novel one way functions or pseudorandomness) in methodology and extremely hard to decrypt. Often resists quantum computing. Knowledge of the plaintext (repressed values) is only available for the initiated to prevent its misappropriation by unauthorized users.

In the Adornian Ideal of art, low Consistency (messiness, $M > C$) is more prevalent and more effective than high Consistency to serve art's required social function. However, Adornian art need not be low Consistency (even though it often is low Consistency - lxDM), it could be lxDC as well if it operates within its own idiosyncratic logical framework that is autonomous from conventional narrative pacing or structure (which themselves are often imposed by the zeitgeist - for example see the often taught-in-schools exposition -> rising action -> climax -> resolution structure). This is what Adorno calls "immanent structure" in art. However, in my stance, the most effective art, however, is in fact low Consistency, not even possessing internal idiosyncratic logic, because the mere inclusion of rules (even if internal ones) in an artwork or piece of media moves the artwork closer to conceptual knowledge rather than non-conceptual, intuitive knowledge, the latter which art is supposed to embody (to understand the knowledge in the world that cannot be explained merely discursively).

I'm thinking of dropping the variety dimension (R/U) from my rubric entirely since it doesn't seem to matter that much in Adornian terms and return to the original 3 factor model but now, Breadth is stripped

away from Plot Complexity and Worldbuilding and only Conceptual Breadth (Premise Originality and Theoretical Richness) matters.

Also, I think we should rename the poles of breadth to Inventive (I) vs. Quotidian (Q) and rename Breadth as a facet to Inventiveness.

So now, we have:

IDC = masterpiece

IDM = experimental (adornian ideal)

ISC = bestseller

ISM = gimmick (reabeled from “amateur”)

QDC = classic

QDM = esoterica

QSC = formula (reabeled from “comfort”)

QSM = slop

These are the core dimensions that determine and shape an artwork's Adornian truth content.

Variety (Rich/Undeveloped) and Valence (Grim/Happy) become accidental/modifier dimensions that do not matter towards the core quality of an artwork and are only included as extra descriptors. (We separate the 3 immanent and the 2 contingent qualities with a dash, as usual)

An informal quadra system for contingent dimensions only:

xxx-GR (grim, rich): battleground

xxx-GU (grim, undeveloped): constriction

xxx-HR (happy, rich): fantasy

xxx-HU (happy, undeveloped): idyll

For example, now IUDM-G (now labeled as IDM-GU) would be named a "constrictive experimental" and QUDC-H (now labeled as QDC-HU) would be named an "idyllic classic"

Complete taxonomy with examples:

IDC octant: "Masterpiece"

Example of each subtype of IDC:

IDC-GR ("Battleground Masterpiece") - Divine Comedy

IDC-GU ("Constrictive Masterpiece") - Stalker

IDC-HR ("Fantasy Masterpiece") - Lord of The Rings

IDC-HU ("Idyllic Masterpiece") - The Truman Show

IDM octant: "Experimental"

Example of each subtype of IDM:

IDM-GR ("Battleground Experimental") - Donnie Darko

IDM-GU ("Constrictive Experimental") - Angel's Egg

IDM-HR ("Fantasy Experimental") - Everything Everywhere All At Once

IDM-HU ("Idyllic Experimental") - The Grand Budapest Hotel

QDC octant: "Classic"

Example of each subtype of QDC:

QDC-GR (“Battleground Classic”) - Dream of Red Chambers

QDC-GU (“Constrictive Classic”) - Your Lie In April

QDC-HR (“Fantasy Classic”) - Spirited Away

QDC-HU (“Idyllic Classic”) - Pride and Prejudice

QDM octant: “Esoterica”

Example of each subtype of QDM:

QDM-GR (“Battleground Esoterica”) - As I Lay Dying

QDM-GU (“Constrictive Esoterica”) - Golden Brown (The Strangers)

QDM-HR (“Fantasy Esoterica”) - not sure

QDM-HU (“Idyllic Esoterica”) - not sure

ISC octant: “Bestseller”

Example of each subtype of ISC:

ISC-GR (“Battleground Bestseller”) - Hunger Games

ISC-GU (“Constrictive Bestseller”) - Suicide Squad

ISC-HR (“Fantasy Bestseller”) - The Da Vinci Code

ISC-HU (“Idyllic Bestseller”) - Megamind

ISM octant: “Gimmick”

Example of each subtype of ISM:

ISM-GR (“Battleground Gimmick”) - Sausage Party

ISM-GU (“Constrictive Gimmick”) - Countdown (2019)

ISM-HR (“Fantasy Gimmick”) - The Amazing World of Gumball

ISM-HU (“Idyllic Gimmick”) - Tomorrowland

QSC octant: “Formula”

Example of each subtype of QSC:

QSC-GR (“Battleground Formula”) - Class of ‘09

QSC-GU (“Constrictive Formula”) - To Catch a Predator

QSC-HR (“Fantasy Formula”) - The Office

QSC-HU (“Idyllic Formula”) - New Girl (2011)

QSM octant: “Slop”

Example of each subtype of QSM:

QSM-GR (“Battleground Slop”) - not sure

QSM-GU (“Constrictive Slop”) - The Room

QSM-HR (“Fantasy Slop”) - Lycoris Recoil

QSM-HU (“Idyllic Slop”) - Emoji Movie

Idea for a Novella (title it “Intoxication” - not only referencing the legal age of 21 to drink but also the initial intoxicating, dissonant, and alienating feeling of Adornian art):

It is 2037, where MPA’s rating system was changed from Content Maturity to Conceptual Maturity (in my Adornian framework). Donnie Darko (a re-screening from 2001) is rated CM-21. These rules apply

and are legally enforced: Films with CM = 16-18 should require the viewer to be at least 18 years old to watch or accompanied by a parent or guardian 21 years of age or older (even when accompanied, the minimum age should be 16). films with CM > 18 (19-21) should require the viewer to be at least 21 years old to watch or accompanied by a parent or guardian 25 years of age or older (even if accompanied, the minimum age should be 18) Valid proof of ID should be required.

Yvonne, who is 18 years old, is extremely agreeable but of rather low openness on Big 5 (Openness 15%, Conscientiousness 50%, Extraversion 75%, Agreeableness 100%, Neuroticism 83%). She has a crush on the pretentious and pseudointellectual Andre (Openness 50% (intellectual but is pretentious about it), Conscientiousness 20%, Extraversion 30%, Agreeableness 10%, Neuroticism 100%), aged 17, and wants to accompany him to the Donnie Darko viewing partly to impress him and spend time with him. Andre's best friend is Jackson, aged 18, who is Openness 5% (anti-intellectual), Conscientiousness 0%, Extraversion 100%, Agreeableness, 40%, Neuroticism 40%. Jackson watches the movie out of the intention of a social media trend ("successfully watch a CM21 film while underage")

They all sneak to the theater presenting fake IDs, and each watch the film and react to it themselves. They come out of the theater to reflect on their viewing (but only Andre has substantial reflection, even if pretentious), and the novella ends with showing how the movie has altered each their personalities/worldviews.

Suppose that this novella takes place in Yvonne, Andre, and Jackson's senior year of high school, shortly before final exams in May 2037. Additionally, suppose the crux of the prologue of this novella takes place in AP Literature, where the curriculum is specifically curated based on the Conceptual Maturity construct. The

movie screening takes place the weekend before the AP Literature exam in May 2037.

Alternately, to avoid copyright concerns, another CM21 film other than donnie darko could be used for this short story. Or, just invent an in-universe CM21 film.

Let Yvonne be the protagonist/narrator here.

Additionally, let's name the AP Lit teacher Mrs. Lisa Thompson, who personally hates MPA's legal adoption of Conceptual Maturity even though she reasons it as an improvement from Content Maturity, but is forced to teach it to her students (and calibrate her AP Lit curriculum based on Conceptual Maturity) due to Conceptual Maturity extending to educational curriculum as well. Lisa Thompson's husband, Kurt Thompson, works at the movie theater as an easy, mind-numbing job, while he pursues his real passion in science and math but can't find a job in it. Kurt spots the trio of high school students and recognizes the fake IDs but gets convinced by Andre to let them in.

Also suppose that 1 year later (in 2038), with Andre, Jackson, and Yvonne all in college, Yvonne is dead due to suicide, Andre is a struggling student in philosophy (Andre one year later is a college dropout after failing his philosophy classes), and Jackson is in a coma from too much alcohol intoxication in college. However, the story should be purposefully opaque on how this happened.

In the end of the novella, there is an announcement of a newly released "sanitized"/"less conceptually mature" version of Donnie Darko, or whatever in-universe film this novella uses.

I should write the narrative text in how Yvonne would think - the vocabulary should be simple and to the point. Most of the narrative is supposed to be from Yvonne's simplistic and emotional perspective.

Character full names:

Yvonne Chen

Andre Dubois

Jackson Walker

Yvonne should have a crush on Andre, mistaking the latter's intellectual pretentiousness for true insight that she lacks.

The entire novella should use no more than 5th grade level vocabulary because it's written from Yvonne's perspective (maybe even after she kills herself, it could retain her own perspective)

The invented/in-world CM21 film (equivalent to Donnie Darko) should be called "Intoxication".

Andre uses development in that he's the embodiment of the Dunning Kruger curve.

Yvonne Chen could have a best friend named Kayla Peters whom she invites to the movie as well but for some unknown and only inferred reason, Kayla declines saying she's uncomfortable with the idea.

Yvonne could be an "artist" herself but her passion is simple pastel drawings and crafts (including miniatures of houses) that evoke immediate emotional pleasure and homeostasis. This way this novella both adopts and critiques Adorno's Aesthetics implicitly. We should also show and communicate that Yvonne's own art is ironically more autonomous than the fictional film "Intoxication" (or the whole conceptual maturity scale) which has become a symbol of intellectual and cultural prestige.

One of Jackson's lines within the story could be a moment of genuine reflection thinking that "maybe art isn't meant for us - maybe we'll too

immature to handle it and will ruin art and make it into a shitty tiktok trend or something”

Let's not name Adorno at all in this whole novella, and only hint at the fact that Andre reads aesthetic philosophy (tbh even maybe not hint that the book is about aesthetics, just about some sort of philosophy). If we explicitly mention Adornian aesthetics, this whole novella becomes didactic per Adornian aesthetics and collapses to propaganda or instruction.

Let's also mention Jackson is an underage alcoholic (at age 18), who once says “You don't want me to accidentally spill Jack Daniels all over your book, do you, Andre? Maybe you shouldn't slam your book on the table in front of you like you always do, even when you're not reading it.”

The weeks after the watching of the CM21 film Intoxication, Yvonne tries to “detox” by building her miniatures but inadvertently finds that her own art is subconsciously becoming dark and distorted.

Also, the in-universe film "Intoxication" in this novella should actually represent the Adornian ideal of true art. In addition, Yvonne should actually faint for around a few minutes during the screening of the movie “Intoxication”. Ironically though, Yvonne is the only person out of the trio engaging in “Intoxication” authentically and with autonomy, feeling the art rather than conceptualizing it via cultural ideology (Jackson's motivation to watch this for the “CM21” social media trend) or pretension (Andre's motivation), even if she doesn't really understand it but is at least smart enough to intuitively know something is very very wrong. In particular, Jackson taunts Yvonne for fainting and brags about how he didn't even feel queasy.

“In the end of the novella, there is an announcement of a newly released “sanitized”/“less conceptually mature” version of Donnie Darko, or whatever in-universe film this novella uses. “

Let’s expand on this. Perhaps in the very end despite this relegation, could be a subtle hint of a random person in a vintage DVD store asking for the “uncut”/“original” version - which hints at how in Adornian theory, art doesn’t just live and die like humans, it can re-emerge later in history.

What should the fictional film "Intoxication" be about? Could it be a meta recursion that dictates this very novella idea but in a twisted/warped way? Crucial Idea: The movie “intoxication” in my novel idea “intoxication” should literally foreshadow in its own content what might happen next in this very novella called “intoxication” but in a distorted and abstracted way. In the novella itself, what happened to the trio of high schoolers after the viewing of the film is intentionally left opaque - it is only revealed through very subtle symbolism during the fictional film “intoxication” that demands very careful reading.

Additionally, we do not let Intoxication (the film) contain any actual sexual content, direct gore, drug references, or profanity at all. The film if rated by the original MPA would be G.

Also, suppose Yvonne initially wanted to watch something much lighter, a cutesy aesthetic film that she liked, but was peer pressured by Andre and Jackson into watching Intoxication. (Jackson motivated by the “internet challenge of resisting vomiting or fainting during the movie, or watching the movie while taking a shot every time the screen flickered as some drinking game”, and Andre motivated by wantnig intellectual/cultural capital)

What if we make the director of Intoxication the film me (the person writing this novella idea)

To add depth to Yvonne's character, she is simultaneously bored by mundanity (which is why she seeks out Andre and develops a crush on him) but ultimately embraces it as comfort and happiness.

In the novella there should also be ongoing debates and chatter about whether the age restriction is even justified bc the film Intoxication would be rated G otherwise. The republican president of the time, Trinity Staples, is against the new conceptual maturity framework and calls for its abolishment, and she claims that her young children could watch it without any concern at all. Trinity as well as the majority of her republican cabinet argues that sexual innuendo and profanity or overt references to drugs are much worse things to expose kids to and that the MPA should revert to original standards.

Suppose there was considerable tension in the house and senate around spring 2037 since staples's inauguration on whether the conceptual maturity framework should be abolished and in May 2037 the senate was in the process of voting on the bill. Right after the main trio of the novella watches Intoxication, the bill gets passed and MPA reverts to its original criteria on censoring profanity, sex, and drugs.

More: What could a 2036 election season political debate between Trinity Staples (fictional republican candidate) and Hector Field (fictional democratic candidate) look like? Also, have Yvonne back in fall 2036 begrudgingly sit through the televised debates, because her family always played it on TV.

Suppose Hector Field was the fictional democratic president 2032-2036 and is running for reelection in 2036.

Let's make Hector Field born in 1953 and Trinity Staples born in 1992.

Yvonne should canonically have rather poor grades. In her senior year of high school, she could have around a 1.79 GPA.

The recursion here (Intoxication film containing basically an abstracted and muddled version of this very novella's plot) could potentially be infinite. (Think in terms of the joke "The B in Benoit B Mandelbrot stands for Benoit B Mandelbrot")

It should also be implied, although not overtly stated, that Yvonne Chen has a mild to moderate intellectual disability.

How would I explain Yvonne Chen being in AP Literature her senior year despite her intellectual disability? Perhaps this could be due to Yvonne's own drive and secret admiration of creativity and symbolic thinking, and her agreeable parents welcoming her stance on self improvement. Or perhaps, have some new law or rule passed by Field's administration in 2032-2036 that implements something similar to the "no child left behind" policy in schools. Have it be a combination of these two reasons. It could also be implied that Yvonne had to have an IEP meeting at her high school back in her freshman year, in 2033. Also, this scene could also include a psychometric evaluation (IQ test, Rorschach Creativity test, Alternative Uses test, and/or Big 5 test). It would be intriguing that Yvonne scores decently on the Rorschach Inkblot Creativity Test but very low on the Alternative Uses test.

Let's also make both Trinity Staples and Hector Field canonically Christians, but of different sects - Staples being Baptist and Hector being non-denominational.

Let's flesh out some characters more.

Yvonne Chen's parents (Let's call them Haoran Chen (father) and Rebecca Chen (mother) for now):

Haoran Chen: Judging from his refusal to fully assimilate into American culture when he immigrated from China (this is subtly implied through his name still being a Chinese name), he naturally

holds more traditionalist and conservative views from his Chinese upbringing. However, Haoran ends up paradoxically supporting the democratic candidate Hector Field despite his ingrained conservatism, due to being convinced by Hector's academic ethos and rationality/science/psychometrics studies. His stance is also motivated out of fear - he is constantly afraid that one day, Yvonne's low intellect and low tolerance of abstraction is what will cause her demise (in which he was ironically correct), and she wasn't built to tolerate meatier ideas. Maybe Haoran's less fluent English could also be a marker of his resistance to assimilation to American culture

Rebecca Chen: functionally apolitical, but in 2036, she supports Trinity Staples's populist republicanism over Field's democratic elitism only because she believes Yvonne isn't inherently intellectually disabled and she has great creativity in her miniatures and pastel drawings that she makes. Rebecca has repressed the horrifying memory of seeing her daughter's near-drown and suffer an anoxic brain injury back in the year 2024, and wants to believe her daughter can really succeed and start her own art studio in the future.

Also, perhaps Yvonne's implied intellectual disability could also be subtly referenced by a vague memory of a "drowning in a pool" when she was 5 (back in the year 2024 in this worldbuilding). (Realistically, drowning triggers v-fib and with slightly delayed CPR, neurological functioning quickly and irreversibly plummets.) The drowning could dually also serve as a symbol of "drowning" in sensory overload of the film "Intoxication" and of political and intellectual abstraction around her.

To develop more: what might be Yvonne's parents' opinions on the movie Intoxication in 2037, both before its release date in theaters on May 16, 2037 (the date when Yvonne, Jackson, and Andre go see it

and have their lives radically changed) and after? Also suppose that Yvonne's 18th birthday was on May 9, 2037 (she was born May 9, 2019).

Let's set this story in the fictional town of Eigen, California. (population of 59049 in 2037)

During the screening of the film *Intoxication* on May 16, 2037, Yvonne should have a latent subconscious realization (that she doesn't consciously realize) that the female protagonist in *Intoxication* (the film) is actually her and predicts her fate, which causes her to faint in the middle of it. Andre and Jackson on the other hand are not as perturbed or even aware that the film also encodes their own fates (negative truth-content that hasn't happened yet but is inevitable) but in a more abstract manner.

The tagline for the movie "*Intoxication*" could be "a poison much stronger than alcohol".

Let the AP Lit exam take place the week after the *Intoxication* screening. Let Yvonne really struggle on the exam and not articulate at all on her essays, but somehow suppose that she actually gets a 4 on the exam, a noticeable improvement from a mock AP Lit exam done before the *Intoxication* screening.

maybe Andre Dubois could be a 2nd generation french immigrant. During a particular lesson in AP Lit about the actual philosopher W.E.B. Du Bois, Andre Dubois tries to "correct" Mrs. Thompson that "his name was actually pronounced DOO-BWA! Show some cultural refinement please!" This could be a comedic relief in this overall unequivocally grim novel outline.

Field's stance could also be protecting art from misinterpretation from teens as much as it is protecting teens from alienation the art provides. Field is correct conceptually but the moment he tries to implement theory into law it invites catastrophe and collapses the very point of the theory, due to law now generating a new form of cultural virtue signaling and commodification.

To show palpable contrast yet similarity I think it should be shown that before the CM framework teens were just as rowdy about watching R rated movies. Maybe include in dialogue?

The intoxication movie poster should be just black all over except a single fuzzy white dot somewhere near the lower right corner. On the fateful night of the screening, Andre walking in the movie theater overanalyzes just the poster while Jackson scoffs and says "that white dot is clearly just the ink peeling off at the edge due to the weather getting hotter. It ain't that deep." It's not revealed whether Andre or Jackson is correct.

Also, have there be a different film contrasting from "Intoxication" that also makes its way to the cultural zeitgeist of 2037 America - this film is named "Danger Danny 4", the 4th installment in the series "Danger Danny", released in August 2036. Unlike Intoxication, Danger Danny would be unambiguously rated R (or even NC-17) by original MPA standards but has little to no conceptual maturity - it is crude, straightforward, and any attempts at subtlety just reduce to just gratuitous graphic imagery and shock value. "Danger Danny" is a generic spy film about an assassin named Danny who violently murders any enemy spies and along in the process has graphic sexual relations with quite a few women. Danger Danny hence is rated CM-10 and in 2036-2037, due to the still pending recall of Field's Conceptual Maturity framework, the age required to watch Danger Danny, despite its R rated material, is only 10. This becomes a heated

point of contention during the Field vs. Staples 2036 fictional presidential debates, particularly after a televised incident of a 14-year-old boy watching it and being inspired by Danger Danny (at least reported to have been inspired by Danger Danny) to wield a knife at school and stabbing random people for what the boy calls “[his] sadistic pleasures” (this happened September 2036, around the beginning of the 2036-2037 academic year). However, have it be intentionally ambiguous whether the 14-year-old boy, who ended up causing 1 death and 5 injuries, was even “inspired by Danger Danny” to begin with, even if the media reports (particularly conservative/republican ones that Staples condones) say it. Suppose that the boy was named Daniel so people, particularly the conservative Staples and her supporters, quickly drew connections/conclusions that Daniel saw the fictional “Danger Danny” as an idealized version of him. Staples uses the “Danger Danny” incident as leverage to back up her political campaign in the Fall of 2036. Staples uses it to impugn the practicality of the Conceptual Maturity (CM) framework because Danger Danny was rated only CM-10 due to its remarkably straightforward messages and delivery (no political commentary, no subtlety at all, just gratuitous shock content) but would've been easily NC-17 on the original MPA framework.

Actually, you know what, have the real Daniel be in the same high school Yvonne, Kayla, Andre, and Jackson are in. Suppose this happens in that very high school.

Jackson relishes the Danger Danny films (1st through 4th installations) and brags about handling the graphic gore without any trouble at all.

Suppose the original intoxication screening in May 2037 was in a small art theater where the main trio of students were the only people in the theater, and it was a very late night screening. This subtly provides more interpretive opacity - maybe the film could affect different people who watch it uniquely, either it latently could actually have supernatural capabilities for predicting fate or the subject watching the film intoxication is just projecting themselves in the film. It should be unclear whether the film actually does have supernatural or shapeshifting powers. It should never be confirmed nor denied in the story.

The actual writing of this novel should show equally plausible signs that the film Intoxication indeed does have supernatural predictive power, and that it doesn't inherently have such power and projection is instead the culprit for self fulfilling prophecy.

Suppose that since Yvonne was at the time of the screening 18 but under 21, she had the option to view Intoxication with parent guardianship but for some unknown reason both her parents refused to watch it with her and her mom only wanted Yvonne to watch it on her own. The exact reason for this is left unclear just like the exact reason Kayla declined the film viewing.

Jackson should at the fateful movie screening after discovering Yvonne has fainted attempt to film her fainting and waking up for views on social media. Andre reacts to this in a subtly performative manner but on the surface appearing to chastise Jackson.

Jackson could be a more nuanced character - reflecting Staple's populism but actually treating everyone equally deep down (even if he is crude and trend following). It is Andre who actually should have

latent and subtle misogyny and more in the intellectual rather than physical manner.

I should never state outright which fictional president is conservative and which is liberal.

Also, for scaffolding purposes, what if in December 2036 for the final essay for fall semester Mrs Thompson have her kids an assignment to write an essay reflecting on the danger Danny incident while citing literary theory.

After yvonne's implied suicide, it should be implied that the sanitization of Intoxication's abstraction as a film was pushed by yvonne's parents through petitioning. (or purposely leave this completely opaque). However, of course the epilogue scene shows another completely random guy in the future at a vintage niche DVD shop rediscovering the original cut while asking an employee for it.

It should also be subtly and symbolically implied that Yvonne's suicide method was drowning herself again.

Jackson could often be seen wearing Danger Danny merch T-shirts

Yvonne on the other hand could also wear graphic tees but those with cute comforting pastel pictures

This novel actually also critiques Adornian philosophy as well mainly by Yvonne's own art and stylistic choices - specifically the claim that art must be difficult and dissonant.

Along with Field's CM framework he adopts and implements, he also should support equality as with most liberals, applying his CM framework in his "no child left behind" policy in schools - making sure everyone has the same progression of "intellectual training" before

moving on to more conceptually mature and philosophically dense works as they move on, standardizing the CM framework in school curricula.

Also, let's canonically stylize the fictional film "Danger Danny 4" as "D4ng3r D4nny 4". Let's place Jack Daniels extensively within Danger Danny, and canonically let this be Danny's favorite drink. In-universe in this novella in 2036, Jack Daniel's advertisers could partner with the Danger Danny franchise and often deliver ads that crossover or amalgamate the two franchises.

Danger Danny 4 is a critique that grimness without depth is empty, despite grim valence being valued by Adorno. This fictional film is meant to be a satire on the real life thriller series James Bond.

Andre should canonically pretend to be a Gershwin connoisseur as well.

Andre could vociferously deny ever having seen Danger Danny 4 with his friend Jackson despite Jackson exposing him for it. Or, he pretends his outing with Jackson was only for the purpose of "sociological analysis of the zeitgeist cultural phenomenon".

The endings are crucial to hint at how true art hint at historical becoming and negative truth. They reflect how the characters based on their current habits will see their fate. The endings themselves are also literally encoded in the Intoxication film but in an abstract and symbolic way. Hence, they aren't just overly contrived at all, they serve deep thematic purpose.

Structured version:

Yvonne Chen is an intellectually disabled high school senior student in the years of 2036-2037 in the town of Eigen, California, who registers for Mrs. Thompson's AP Literature class both out of her own motivation to try to understand the more complex/extraordinary concepts more, and due to encouragement from her parents, as well as the incumbent president Field's policy to guide every student on equal paths to success. In her AP Lit class, she meets and befriends Kayla, an elusive but insightful girl of few words, Jackson, an outwardly crude but well-meaning thrill-seeker, and Andre, a boy of French heritage desperately wanting to appear cultured. In particular, Yvonne quickly develops a crush on Andre due to her perception of Andre's insight as genuine, and something she lacks. In Yvonne's spare time, she is passionate about her hobbies of drawing pastel art and constructing miniatures, but she also at the same time is bored by the concrete and mundane world she's constricted to due to her disability. Yvonne is also notably insecure about wanting to explore the novel and unprecedented more but lacking the intellectual capability to. Her intellectual disability, as she recalls it, came from a near-drowning incident "trying to explore waters too deep for her" at a young age.

In 2036, the AP Literature class is governed by a new policy implemented by then-incumbent president Field that screens movies and books for appropriateness to children based on their "conceptual maturity" (amount of philosophical depth, ambiguity, subtlety, moral nuance, and layered social commentary latently within the work), abandoning the old system of solely screening media based on the presence of graphic content, innuendo, or crude language. The notation CM-x is meant to denote Conceptual Maturity age x - the least age x such that a subject has the intellectual maturity to interpret the piece of media without oversimplifying it or stretching it out of proportion or original intention. Field's arguments are based on the

stance that all human beings, including children, should intuitively understand that murder is wrong and the good shall prevail over the evil, but on the other hand, ability to not miss the point of a layered satire or philosophical critique is less developed in adolescents. Field aims to stop the spread of misinformation by unqualified interpreters. The AP Literature class uses books of certain conceptual maturity/CM levels as scaffolding aimed to foster a curriculum that slowly and securely eases children into the world of more complex and subtle media. Even though Mrs. Thompson respects complex and authentic art in the form of literature, she only reluctantly teaches the CM framework due to force from higher-ups.

In the beginning of the 2036-2037 school year, an murder incident perpetrated by a freshman student at Yvonne's school propagates its way to national coverage, in which it is widely rumored that the student's rampage was inspired by the main character of a slasher thriller movie series Danger Danny. This specifically happened shortly after the release of the 4th installment - Danger Danny 4 in theaters. Notably, Danger Danny 4 is known for constant gore, profanity, and graphic content throughout, but Field's new Conceptual Maturity framework legally allows children as young as 10 to watch it unaccompanied, due to the fact that its plot is very simplistic and the morals are the standard "good defeating evil". This murder incident traumatizes the whole school, including Yvonne herself, who becomes ever more uncertain about the ambiguities and possibilities of the outside world and retreats further into her room making miniatures to cope. This murder incident also is leveraged as rhetoric against Field's Conceptual Maturity system by the challenger candidate Trinity Staples in the 2036 presidential debates in the intuitive absurdity that kids can be safely exposed to graphic violence in media just because the story is shallow or intellectually undemanding.

In fall 2036, other than on her artistic hobbies and homework, Yvonne spends her days at home in proximity of her parents watching the 2036 presidential debates. Her parents seem notably invested, and even at times voicing opposing opinions on the election, but Yvonne doesn't understand why they must be so worked up over politics - she just views the TV as an annoyance that disturbs her peace, particularly when sitting in the living room crafting new miniatures. Politics stubbornly remains ever so infused in Yvonne's life though - for example, in December 2036 as the fall semester final, Mrs. Thompson gives Yvonne's class an essay prompt to reflect on the Danger Danny incident from September from a literary theoretic lens.

As early 2037 turns around, Trinity Staples defeats the incumbent Hector Field and assumes office. Announcements of an upcoming elusive film named "Intoxication" begins to leak through the grapevine, with an unknown director and origin. Its conceptual maturity rating was only assigned by Field's remaining system with a several month delay after Intoxication's announcement (and only a couple weeks before the actual release in theaters), but the moment news spread that the film was one of the rare films to attain the highest possible Conceptual Maturity rating (CM-21), requiring all attendees to be at least 21 to buy tickets for it, social media challenges started to arise, particularly based on the public awe of the film's elusivity and mystic qualities. In particular, Intoxication would've been rated G on the old MPA framework due to lacking any concrete sex, violence, or profane language whatsoever. Jackson in particular plans to watch the movie on opening weekend partly to impugn the whole Conceptual Maturity framework as silly, arbitrary, and impractical, but another reason is he's particularly caught up on social media challenges like "Intoxication during Intoxication" (doing shots of alcohol during the film while avoiding actual fainting or blacking out,

whether from the alcohol or the film itself). Andre, desperate to appear well read and insightful, immediately wants to watch the film so he can, in his own words, deconstruct it, while not admitting the real reason is to feign sophistication.

The theater release of *Intoxication* is the weekend before AP Literature exams, and Andre derives an excuse to his parents that his purpose of watching the film underage is to prepare for the complex concepts (or perhaps serve as inspiration) on the upcoming AP Literature exam. Andre and Jackson are best friends, despite the former sometimes assuming an air of superiority over the latter due to the latter's perceived lack of refinement. Jackson did in fact suggest to Andre that they hang out together and watch *Danger Danny 2* right after its release in 2036, so he thought that he deserved to pay Andre one back by watching a film that Andre supposedly was really curious about, even if Jackson can't be bothered about analyzing artistic symbolism, and is also watching the film to participate in viral trends in social media. Hence, Jackson and Andre plan to meet-up at a late night art theater to watch the film alone so they could have the most riveting experience in a dark theater. In the upcoming weeks before *Intoxication*'s release, Andre pontificates about it more and more in AP Literature class, and even tries to suggest to Mrs. Thompson the final exam not be the traditional AP exam but an essay analysis on the *Intoxication* film, to Mrs. Thompson's refusal. Yvonne starts to overhear about Andre's pontification, which develops from casual ramblings from him straight up bragging about superior taste to Yvonne and not so subtly disparaging her own art as "kitsch". Despite this though, Yvonne becomes paradoxically even more attached to Andre, perceiving him as possessing the individuality and creativity that she lacks. Out of both wanting to impress Andre and a latent, subconscious curiosity on what really lies outside of her world of miniatures (the "*Intoxication*" film everyone is talking about), she

requests to join Andre and Jackson in their viewing of the film, in which they both agree, but not without first warning her (Andre smugly tells Yvonne that it might be “too complex” for her to understand, while Jackson, perceptive of Yvonne’s innocence, makes a genuine attempt to divert her from the film, even if he outwardly bashes on the CM system as “stupid”.) Yvonne in her innocent kindness offers to invite her friend Kayla Peters to the outing too, but the latter declines out of a short intuitive reason that she doesn’t think it’ll be good for them.

Yvonne’s mom supports her to open up her creativity and go view the film *Intoxication* with her “friends”, but her dad is skeptical, not only due to Field’s warnings about it, but also because he sees Yvonne’s intention as meaningless virtue signaling. In the final few moments before Yvonne, Andre, and Jackson head to a midnight showing, there are three posters side by side - a reshowing of *Danger Danny 4*, a cutesy pastel anime about friendship that Yvonne was originally very excited for, and the actual film *Intoxication*. Yvonne tries to back out and is tempted to just go for her comfort zone with the pastel anime movie, but is peer pressured by Andre and Jackson to come along with them to watch *Intoxication*, the “big boy film”. Andre and Jackson then debate on whether a faint white dot near the bottom of the poster is due to intentional symbolism or just the ink wearing off in the summer heat. Inside the ticketing booth, Andre in particular manages to convince Kurt Thompson, Mrs. Thompson’s husband and a ticketing employee at the art theater, to let them in the movie despite being under 21 using a point that it’s for his own inspiration/preparation of the upcoming AP Literature exam. When Mr. Thompson rolls his eyes at the lame excuse due to not accounting for Yvonne and Jackson’s presences, Andre doubles down by asserting that he brought along with friends to make the film viewing a “group study” for the upcoming exam. Kurt Thompson reluctantly agrees but only because he was an aspiring scientist and mathematician that

really disdained being relegated to such a monotonous job as a movie theater employee.

When Yvonne, Andre, and Jackson watch the film *Intoxication*, they each realize intuitively the real reason why the film is rated CM-21. The plot is non-linear or non-existent at all and replaced by shadowy and abstract fragments and symbolisms, with numerous unexplained glitches. The film *Intoxication* appears to be a simultaneous yet separate parallel of each of their own lives, including how they've lived their life to how their respective fates might occur later. The film appears to interact with the viewers as much as the viewers are reacting to the film. At a climax point of the film, Yvonne faints due to subconsciously viewing herself and what looks like her own fate manifest in the film. Andre watches the film without much immersion into the actual art and instead tries to intellectualize it as much as possible, bringing a pen and paper to write down his thoughts, being semi-serious with his excuse that the film could serve as a good inspiration for the rigorous AP Literature essays a week later. Jackson drowns out his experience of the film with the challenge of staying awake while shooting liquor back-to-back during it, and he brags to Yvonne that he was tough enough to not faint during the film. Andre condescendingly remarks to Yvonne that she missed the "moment of symbolic masterpiece" of the film by fainting during that part. The moment Yvonne faints, meanwhile, the Conceptual Maturity framework implemented by President Hector Field (2032-2036) is repealed and declared unconstitutional by Trinity Staple's presidential cabinet, although state laws might lag behind in following suit on dismantling the Conceptual Maturity framework. Staples in particular announces her repeal of the law on TV that "it is absurd my 5 year old children can watch the film *Intoxication* just fine and be unphased, yet you elitists are gatekeeping it to age 21 or above."

The Monday after the film's screening comes the AP Literature exam. Yvonne barely remembers what she even wrote for the essay portion and haphazardly marks random half-guesses in the multiple choice section, but somehow gets a 4 on it. Andre writes his essay portion of the AP Literature on the film *Intoxication*, trying his best to analyze it from a rigorous "postmodernist philosophical lens", only to get a 3 on the exam. Jackson failed to even show up to the exam.

Throughout the immediate next few months, Yvonne's mental health declines at an unprecedented rate. Her pastel artwork and miniatures slowly and subconsciously/uncontrollably become infused with not overt violence but incompleteness, darkness, and fragmentation. She withdraws herself even more, spending days in her room, and for the first time starts deconstructing/taking apart her miniatures that took months of polish to perfect. To her parents, Yvonne's 4 on the exam is only a piece of false reassurance for her parents that she might actually be more "creative" than they thought.

Some time later, Jackson lapses into a permanent vegetative state from his alcoholic usage, in particular, from drowning in his own emesis. Andre drops out of college supposedly due to failing grades and becomes an aimless vagabond not even qualified for most menial labor. Yvonne's corpse is found in a stagnant body of water near the school. By Yvonne's parents' later petitioning to the Californian senate which still hasn't officially followed suit with the repeal of the CM rating framework, a new, sanitized version of the film *Intoxication* is released overshadowing the original version by promising clearer and more concrete narrative explanations to interested people. This version overshadows the original version of *Intoxication* in mainstream discourse, particularly due to the intellectual prestige associated with high Conceptual Maturity becoming meaningless after its repeal by President Staples, and in the next several years becomes canonized

in many academic institutions around the country as an entry-level staple for any film studies major.

Sometime a decade or two later, a curious random person stumbles across the claimed “original cut” Blu-ray of the film Intoxication from some Ebay seller and buys it for just \$13.

FOR SPECULATIVE SCAFFOLDING PURPOSES ONLY (OR MAYBE NOT):

“Yvonne tries to back out and is tempted to just go for her comfort zone with the pastel anime movie, but is peer pressured by Andre and Jackson to come along with them to watch Intoxication, the “big boy film”.”

This fictional pastel anime movie could be canonically called “Authentic Noodle Recipe” where it follows a familiar but comforting story of an abandoned and isolated girl named Hokaga Akotu being tenacious enough to run her own anime store and derive meaning off of the simple pleasures of serving her customers rather than profit, the existentialist themes are there (this anime could pack unexpected depth for its conventional form) but packaged in a familiar and friendly cutesy moe style. Yvonne Chen could canonically sometimes wear merch shirts of this anime, just like how Jackson unironically wears his Danger Danny 4 merch. Yvonne Chen might dress for both passion and comfort - she canonically likes lounging around in a shirt featuring Hokaga Akotu on the center holding a bowl of delicious noodles with her canonical catchphrase below it: “Life is full of twists and turns, just like yummy noodles”

The catch is that authentic noodle recipe also has philosophical and thematic depth that danger Danny 4 is devoid of. It is rated CM-15.

Andre has European heritage and should be implied to have a prejudice against eastern media. To deepen Andre's character let's canonically make him come from an immigrant family from France who instilled into him that respect is only earned from being learned and well read, well due to his own parents successfully immigrating. Andre however did in fact watch Danger Danny 4 with Jackson and has but doesn't admit watching Authentic Noodle Recipe, in which he excuses by that he was trying to analyze cultural phenomena. It could also be very subtle that Andre does have also inversely a crush on Yvonne as he might be envious of the simple life he couldn't live due to academic and cultural pressure.

What could the canonical intros/theme songs of respectively Danger Danny and Authentic Noodle Recipe look like? Also note that the intoxication film should definitely NOT have any intro song or music in general.

Andre's character is also meant to critique the expectation in America that the canon in high art is Western and Eurocentric. How should Andre's French elitist background show up more subtly? Andre might also be canonically a big fan of David Lynch and postmodernism but only focused on the movement in Western countries.

Andre would be the type to have his MBTI and enneagram in his Reddit profile bio.

Perhaps Jackson supports Staples because under Fields's framework his love for Danger Danny wouldn't be a badge of honor anymore.

Yvonne after viewing the movie Intoxication could strangely been drawn to finding the little white dot (the same as the one appearing on

the poster for the film), eventually culminating in her dead body being found floating in some stagnant lake. This makes her suicide if it even was intended as one ambiguous.