

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 latters' 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.

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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.