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SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

QUALIFY FOR THE FUTURE WORLD
KIA NOHO TAKATŪ KI TŌ ĀMUA AO!

Scholarship 2015 Media Studies

9.30 a.m. Wednesday 18 November 2015
Time allowed: Three hours
Total marks: 32

ANSWER BOOKLET

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Choose TWO questions from Question Booklet 93303Q, and write your answers in this booklet.

Use pages 2 and 12 to write the numbers of your chosen questions and to plan your ideas. Begin your first answer on page 3 and your second answer on page 13.

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–23 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

19/32

(just above scholarship)

3C

For Subject Knowledge: 5/8

Convincing knowledge of the relationship between the Pentagon and the war movie is presented, although only from one perspective. Knowledge includes relevant use of statistics and studies. Only a limited awareness of media history is evident.

For Critical Thinking: 5/8

An original and interesting argument is developed that grapples well with the quote at the head of the question. The analysis is thoughtful and convincing at times, and well supported by appropriate evidence. The argument is rather one-sided, and does not consider other perspectives.

1E

For Subject Knowledge: 5/8

Convincing knowledge of documentary and its impact is presented at times, particularly regarding Black Fish. Accuracy is evident, as is up-to-date information.

For Critical Thinking: 4/8

The argument addresses the question well and is convincing at times, but also limited at other times. There are brief moments of insight, but generally the analysis is superficial. Central points like the money-driven nature of 'Kony 2012' and its lack of real impact (compared to Black Fish) are not convincingly established. Media texts have been used effectively.

Write the number of the **first** question and the quotation/statement you have chosen to respond to in the box below. Begin your answer on page 3.

Question number:

3

Quotation/Statement:

(c) 'Genre might certainly increase some of your narrative freedoms, but it also diminishes others. That's the nature of the genre.' - Junot Diaz

PLANNING

Use this space to plan your first answer.

Intro

P1 - base of narrative freedom being diminished through military entertainment complex

P2 - examples

P3 - More examples

P4 - underlying significance

Conclusion

Iron Man
Battlefield

~~Woolf letters~~

TOP Gun

X-men: First Class

An Officer and a Gentleman

Goldeneye

Summer of Love III

Independence Day

Begin your first answer here:

War films have a long-standing tradition which spans history and reaches into and influences many other genres and sub-genres. The narrative of a war film typically involves an admirable protagonist fighting the good fight, most often for the American military. This doesn't tend to deviate much. However this has a lot to do with the way the genre's narrative freedom is diminished by the control over the script exercised by the Pentagon through the military-entertainment complex. This has been the nature of the genre and, through its influence, many other related genres, for decades of American history, and only when control of the script is ~~fully~~ returned to the filmmakers can we see a more objective and free point of view on the American military.

Hollywood and the Pentagon have a relationship dating back decades to propaganda films created for recruitment of soldiers in WWI. The war ended, but the relationship continued, and in 1948 a film liaison office was officially set up as part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. The relationship functions on the basis that making a movie which requires military equipment is a lot cheaper when subsidised by Pentagon. There's a catch, though — the film liaison office has to approve the script before assisting the filmmakers by supplying very cheap military hardware. Through this, the Pentagon has influenced the genre of war films and how the world views the American military for a very long

time. The fact that the film liaison office is part of an office for 'Public Affairs' is key. The Pentagon views the way the American military are viewed as a crucial part of public affairs, and so have worked to control, through the military-entertainment complex, the narratives of an entire genre of film.

An Officer and a Gentleman (1982), directed by Taylor Hackford, requested military assistance in its production, but the film liaison office took issue with several things, including apart of the narrative where a soldier gets a Filipino woman pregnant out of wedlock, and a jogging chant sang by soldiers in the film: 'Fly in low and feelin' mean, find a family by the stream, pick off a pair and hear a em' scream, 'cos napalm stink to kids.' It was said that the pregnancy would damage US-Philippines relations, whereas the chant simply did not make the military look ~~not~~ good at all. The film's screenwriter and assistant producer had done their research, however, and knew that the dehumanising chant was still being sung by cadets at the time, and so refused to remove it. Another example like this exists with Independence Day (1996), directed by Roland Emmerich, which was denied script approval on the basis that a character in the film was military and dating a stripper, which was said to ~~be~~ not be consistent with military ethics. Once again, the narrative of the film was attempted to be controlled in order to influence the public view of the American military. Windtalkers (2002), directed by John Woo, is yet another example. Based on a

true story, it tells the tale of how in WWII Navajo Native Americans joined the Marines and used their native language as an unbreakable code against the Japanese. Each was partnered with an American Marine who had orders to kill their 'code talker' if captured. The film liaison office took issue with the inclusion of this, claiming it to be fiction, but these orders have been verified by surviving code talkers and US Congress. Time and time again, the Pentagon has exploited the nature of the genre, that is, the necessity for military equipment, in order to diminish the narrative freedom of each film to give its own military and country a better, false, public image.

The film liaison office's influence can be found in even the most unlikely of places. In *Jurassic Park III* (2001), directed by Joe Johnston, stranded protagonists are rescued by the Navy and Marines. This was not in the original script. Originally, they were saved by the State Department. The film gained access to cheap military hardware for filming in return for product placement of a Navy logo on a helicopter and a line of dialogue spoken by a cute little girl: 'You have to thank her now, she sent the Navy and the Marines!' This clearly casts the American military in a positive light, despite them not necessarily being a part of the disaster genre. Script approval from the film liaison office can be denied on the smallest of things, such as in *Goldeneye* (1995), directed by Martin Campbell, which was denied approval until a ~~threesome~~

traitorous member of the US Navy was changed to be a part of the French navy. The goal of all this influence over the narratives of various movies is to keep up the public image of the American military, and also to recruit and retain soldiers. The nature of the military-entertainment complex is rooted in older propaganda films where the direct goal is to get people to sign up to the military. This propaganda with roots in pop culture may be more subtle, but its goals are the same. One of the easiest movies to see this in is *Top Gun* (1986), directed by Tony Scott. After the movie screened, the Navy reported a 500% increase in naval aviation recruitment. Recruitment booths were even established in some of the cinemas screening the movie. Comparable to this is *X-Men: First Class* (2011), directed by ~~Matthew Vaughn~~ Matthew Vaughn. It was assisted by the Pentagon, and then used to create recruitment ads that aired in cinemas that made the life of a soldier look as fun, safe and easy as being a superhero. The ad was extremely effective, as shown by polls, taken of 17-24 year olds leaving the cinema, which showed that those who saw the ad were 25% more likely to say they ~~were~~ would consider joining the military as opposed to those who did not see the ad. The Pentagon sees war as a product to be sold and so does everything it can to influence the war genre and its related genres in order to sell the American military in order to recruit soldiers. This is absolutely clear through looking at those films which were not given ~~military~~ approval and why, and those that were. *Iron Man* (2008), directed by Jon Favreau, was given military assistance, as was *Battleship* (2012).

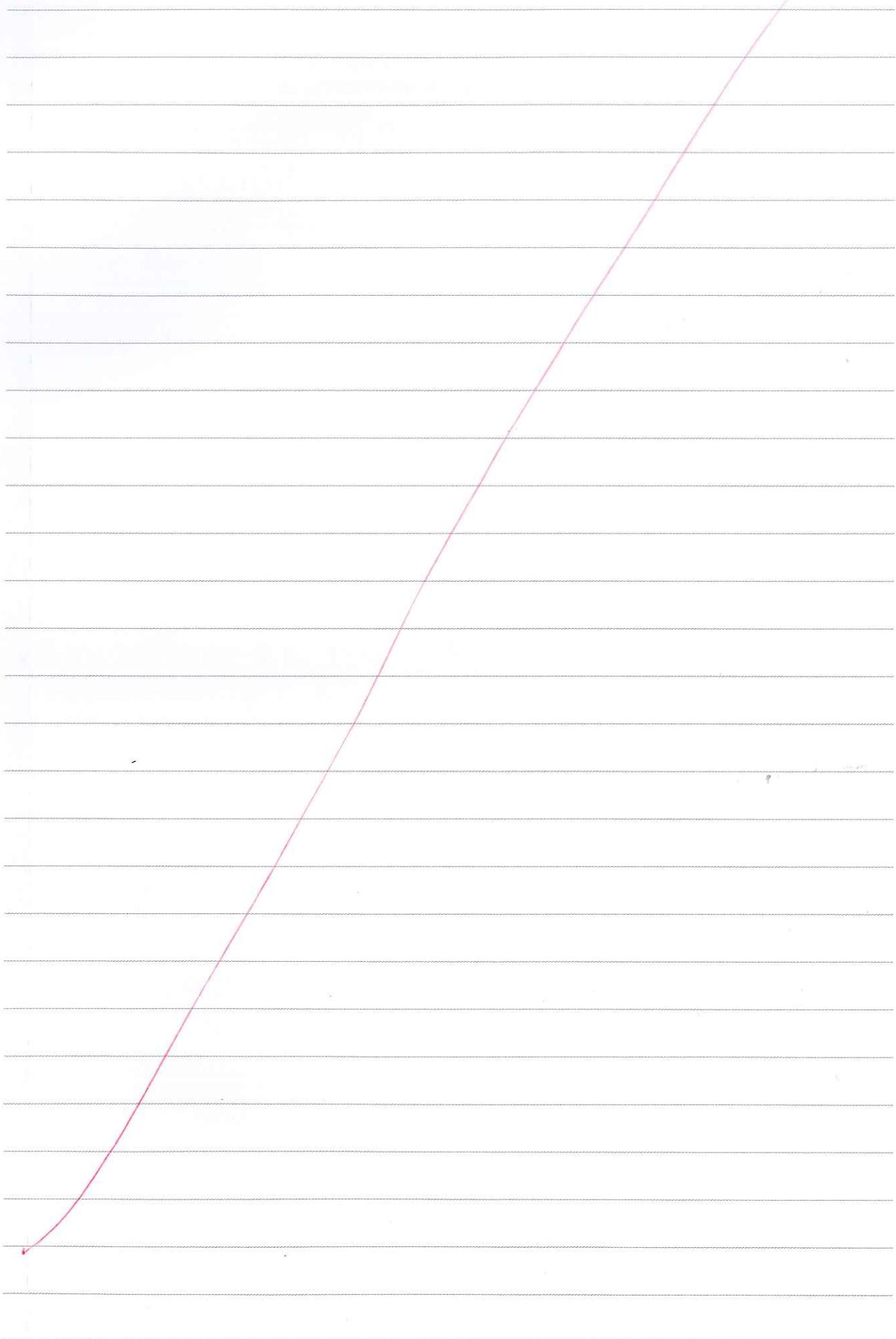
directed by Steve Tablonsky. Neither of these movies portray the military in a negative light or against it, and so easily received script approval. CSI: Miami and NCIS are TV shows which regularly receive assistance, again, because they cast the American police and military in a positive light, seen by the Pentagon as helpful in furthering their goals of public image and in turn, recruitment. Through this, the narrative freedom of the genres completely diminished.

In a society where the younger generations especially are becoming more critical of the fundamental tenets of war, the Pentagon sees necessity in involvement in pop culture through Hollywood in order to convince the public of the positivity of the American military.

Audiences do not see movies and TV shows, as pop culture, as teleological at all, and so their psychological guard against propaganda is turned off, making the conscious and subconscious messages presented through the Pentagon's influence so much more persuasive. The wider significance of decades of the influence of the Pentagon is that the entire world has seen a filtered and diluted version of the American military for pretty much all of the history of film. This has a profound effect particularly on the American psyche in regard to war. As Emilio Pucci, ~~as~~ director of Operation Hollywood (2004), said, 'Any film that is a good film will say that war is not the answer. Every film that the military assists says that war is the answer.' This most definitely has an effect on American

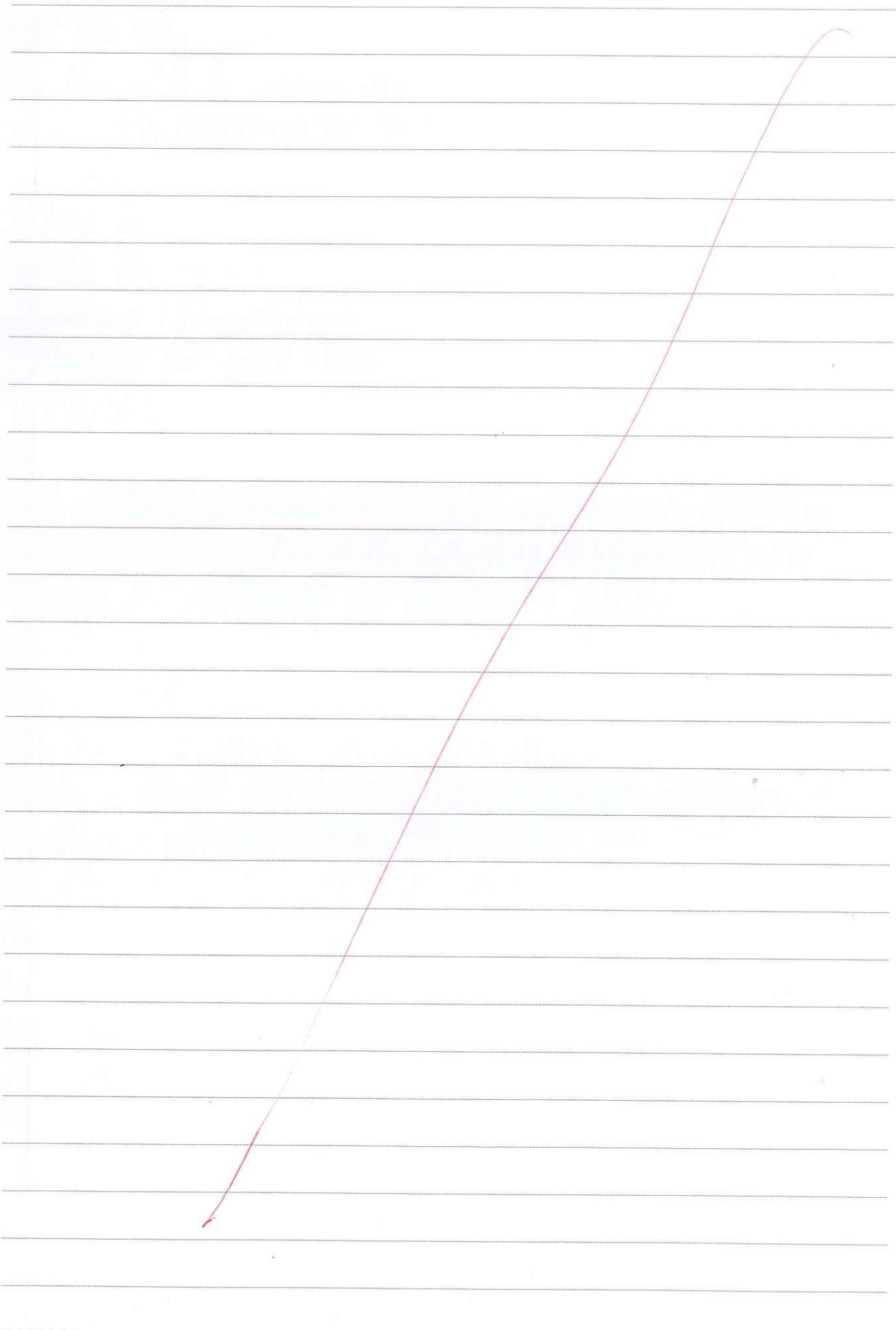
society and culture, effectively, turning it all towards war. The nature of the war genre makes this an indefinite problem, as even with the growing impact and involvement of CGI for movies, it is generally much cheaper to film on an actual site, especially if the Pentagon offers you a bargain deal in return for a little bit of product placement, and the party's thrown in too! Therefore until the relationship between Hollywood and the Pentagon is ended by the nature of the genre changing, the narrative freedom is indefinitely diminished.

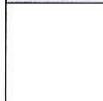
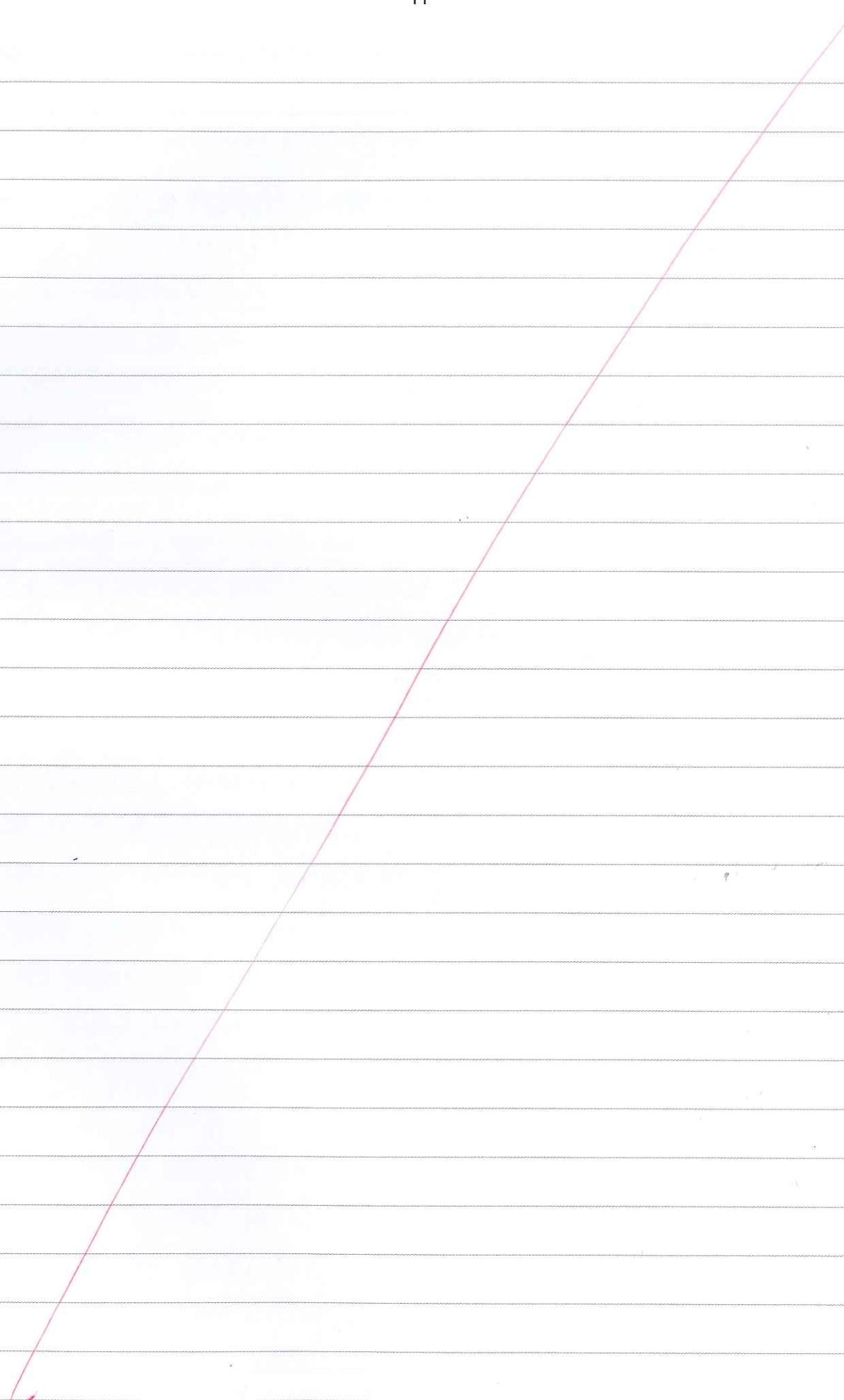
The military-entertainment complex unknowingly affects an entire culture's view of the American military and war through ~~the Pentagon's~~ the Pentagon's influence on film and TV shows. With the goal of recruitment in mind, it is considered paramount to make the public image of the military as positive as possible, and with the nature of the war genre being so reliant on cheap military equipment for filming, this is easy enough to achieve. Only when this relationship ends will filmmakers have narrative control of their genre, and only then will we, as an audience, be able to see the American military ~~in~~ without it being filtered through the American military itself.



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Write the number of the **second** question and the quotation/statement you have chosen to respond to in the box below. Begin your answer on page 13.

Question number:

1

Quotation/Statement:

(e) 'The media can be an instrument of change: it can maintain the status quo and reflect the views of society, or it can (hopefully) awaken people, and change minds.' - Katie Couric

PLANNING

Use this space to plan your second answer.

Intro

P1 - Blackfish

P2 - Kony 2012

P3 - Glendale: Life and Death

P4 - reciprocal relationship etc

C Conclusion

Begin your second answer here:

The medium of documentary is one intended to inform, expose and effect change in society. This is not a one-way street, as the reciprocal relationship between documentaries and society mean that the medium both responds to society and effects change and response within society. In this way, the media is most definitely an instrument of change, but whether it maintains the status quo and reflects the view of society or awakens people and changes minds is often dependant on the nature of the documentary - observational or expository? They are often not exclusive and can both reflect society and awaken people, as clear in the documentaries Blackfish (2013), I CONY 2012 (2012) and Gloriosaile: Life and Death (2015).

Blackfish (2013), directed by Gabriela Cowperthwaite, is possibly one of the best examples of how an expository documentary can awaken people and change minds. Highly successful, the documentary exposes SeaWorld of its treatment of orcas, arguing that in no way should orcas be kept in captivity and used as show animals because it is simply not safe for the orcas or the trainers around them. The reciprocal relationship is clear as the documentary responded to an event within society - the death of SeaWorld trainer Dawn Brancheau - and in turn brought awareness and awakening to many people of the documentary's agenda. The documentary makes use of several conventions of the genre to effectively push its agenda, for example expert voice. A neuroscientist, Lori Marino, talks about the orcas from an expert stand point while the mise en scene of the interview setup is also convincing to the viewer of Marino's

academia and legitimacy. The setup involves a library backdrop, a white lab coat and a computer, all of which make Lori Marino look like a legitimate neuroscientist which is more convincing to the audience. She says in the interview 'they have a part of the brain that humans don't have. The safest inference would be that these are animals that live highly elaborated emotional lives... We look at mass strandings, how they stand by each other... Everything about them is social.' Hearing this emotive testimony from an expert in the field is convincing to Wever's of the film's agenda, which is to convince audiences that Seaworld is not where orcas should be. Another convention used in the documentary is that of choice of interviewee to influence the viewer. Archival footage shows the capturing of orcas in the 1970s at Puget Sound, while John Crowle, who helped in these captures when he was younger, emotionally speaks about it, saying, 'It's just like kidnapping a little kid from their mother.' This choice of interviewee is convincing both in terms of legitimacy and emotionally, as Crowle was there and so is able to speak about it with surety, and he regrets his involvement and through this supports the film's agenda. Working in tandem with this medium of documentary films is the medium of social media, which was used in the Blackfish campaign to further push its message/agenda. Hashtags such as #Blackfish and #StopSeaworld were popular, allowing the message to grow exponentially. Seaworld added fuel to their own funeral pyre when they attempted to combat the campaign by opening up their Twitter to an #AskSeaworld campaign, which nearly exclusively

resulted in questions such as 'Why do you claim that the collapsed dorsal fin is common, when the world less than 1% of orcas have it?' This in turn only made Blackfish's agenda spread further and faster. Blackfish was so successful in convincing its audience of its agenda that it has had a huge effect both legally and culturally. Recently in October 2015 California made the breeding of orcas in captivity illegal, which has affected SeaWorld so much that they plan to phase orcas out of performance shows by 2017.

Mattel's Barbie line featured a marine trainer in SeaWorld uniform, but this was discontinued after Blackfish's release. The much anticipated sequel to 'Finding Nemo', 'Finding Dory', changed its ending once filmmakers saw Blackfish. It's not known exactly what these changes are, but it has been disclosed that the ending involves a marine park and the perception of it is now different, which cannot bode well for SeaWorld. Clearly the awakening in society and the resulting change is phenomenal, especially in regard to things such as 'Finding Dory', which will influence a whole younger generation to come. Whilst not maintaining the status quo necessarily, Mattel however reflected views in society in relation to the death of Dawn Brancheau, thus demonstrating the reciprocal relationship between the medium of documentaries and social media, and society.

(CONY 2012 (2012), directed by Jason Russell, is a short expository documentary that, whilst not as successful as Blackfish, definitely had an impact on the world and

instrumented change. The agenda of the film was to 'expose' Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), as the war criminal he is, make him 'famous', and through doing so get him arrested as this fame and public attention will allegedly keep international help in Uganda, trapping him down. The documentary made similar use of conventions to convince audiences of its agenda, such as expert voice, illustrated through the comments of politicians, both Ugandan and American. One Ugandan politician says 'Let the international community take justice to him there... to rescue our children and deliver the justice,' while another says 'We are determined to co-operate with any friend of Uganda to ensure that this mindless killing and slaughter are ended! An American politician says 'There is no worse crime than one which brings harm to children,' as Kony's crimes include kidnapping children and using them as child soldiers. Politicians are an appropriate use of expert voice in this regard as the debate surrounding Kony is one of political foreign policy, so to see politicians themselves agree that Kony's crimes do warrant international involvement is convincing to the audience. Similarly, choice of interviewee is used to emotionally manipulate the viewer into agreeing with the documentary's agenda. The documentary Jason Russell interviews his own son, Gavin, to influence viewers through his innocent and cute nature. Jason asks him 'What do I do for a job?' and Gavin responds 'You stop the bad guys from being mean.' His response is naive yet cute, and is exactly what the documentary needs to convince the viewer of - that Jason is the good guy and Kony is the bad guy.

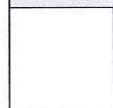
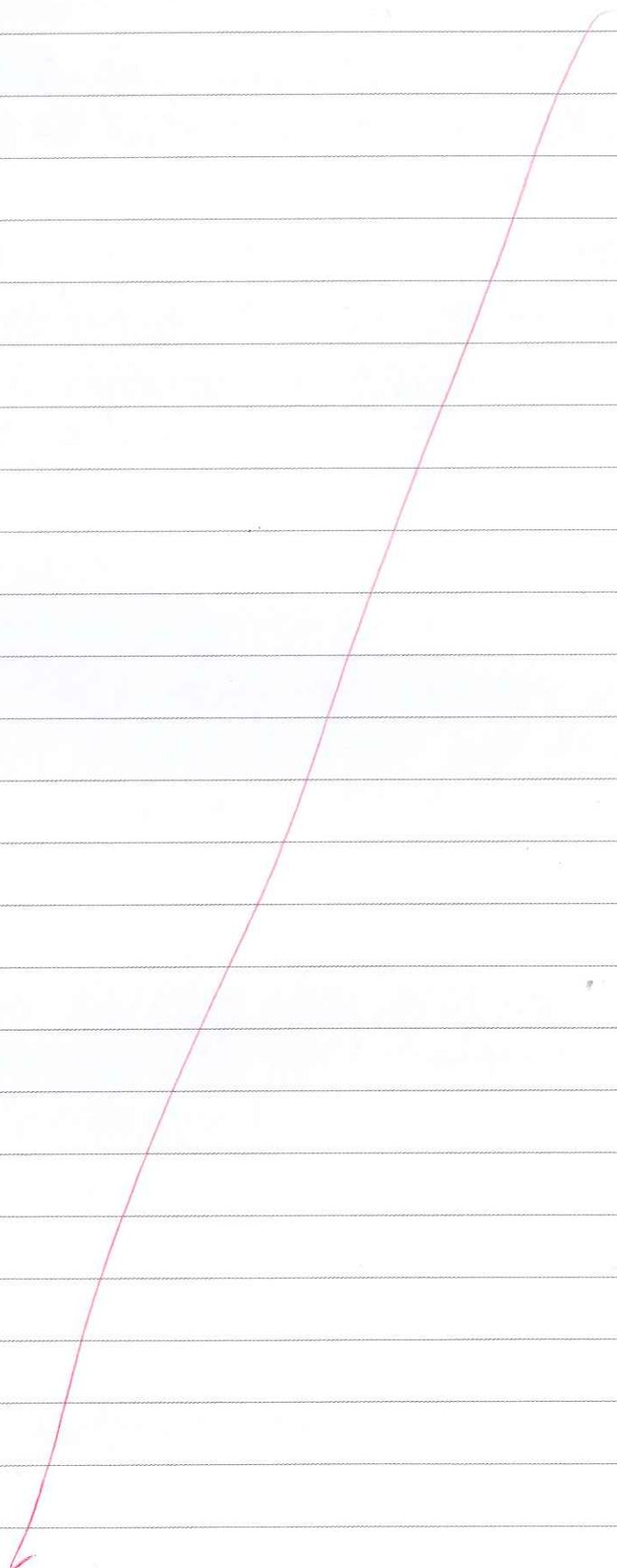
like Blackfish,ICONX2012 makes use of a social media campaign to further its goals. #StopKony was the main related hashtag, but viewers were also encouraged to donate money to receive STOPICONX posters and keep it simple and 'geotag' them to follow their progress in real time. The video itself was available exclusively on YouTube and Jason's foundation's website, and so was very much driven by a younger generation through their involvement with social media! ICONX2012 falls short of Blackfish because it demands change, but largely through donations, meaning when 'Cover the night' came along, a night to spread the Stop Kony message by putting up posters during the night, it was a no-show. ICONX2012醒 people and changed minds, raising awareness of a previously unknown now colonial, but past making a lot of money and going viral, had very little real life impact because of the nature of the documentary being so money-driven. The reciprocal relationship is again clear in how the film responded to events in society and generated huge response, despite this response not being very long lasting.

Glenavale: Life and Death (2015), directed by Amanda Evans, is completely different as it is observational, not expositional, and does not try and awaken people as reflect the news of society and draw more attention to the Glenavale community. The documentary responded to interest in society as people left Glenavale and went to news channels with allegations of sexual

abuse. Interest was sparked by the fact that before the news got involved, very few people were aware of the closed-off Christian community on the West Coast. The documentary gives an exclusive look inside the community and takes a fairly neutral stand point, but is still somewhat subjective, as its content caters to the so called 'interest it originally responded to. This is most clear in its choice of interviewees, which largely focuses on a young couple, Paul and Pearl. The interview's direct responses such as 'I believe the truth is here. When people leave, they're leaving the truth behind,' from Paul, and 'My ambition is to be a godly wife and mother,' from Pearl. These feed into society's interest in the harsh punishment for those who leave and the foreign nature of the strong Christianity. This drew attention to the community but did not change minds, as the documentary merely reflected and catered to the views of society, making clear, also, the reciprocal relationship. The most change possibly occurred within the community, as they now receive groups of visitors nearly daily, which has no doubt changed the dynamics within the community and possibly how they view the outside world.

If it is clear that the media can be an instrument of change. Blackfish and IONIX 2012 are two exposatory documentaries that had huge impact on the world by enlightening people and changing minds, and both show the reciprocal relationship of the mediums of documentary and social

media, and society itself. Gloravale: Life and Death also shows this relationship through responding to societal interest and contention, maintaining the status quo, and also drawing attention to the community even without the involvement of a huge social media campaign such as that surrounding both Blackfish and ICEX 2012. The medium of documentaries is a powerful instrument of change, but for better or worse is something that depends on society.



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