**ENTP 351: The Entrepreneurial Musician, Spring 2014**

**Assignment: Response Paper**

# Summary

Review four recent media pieces on the current state of the music profession in the United States listed below. Choose one to focus on, and write a paper that deconstructs the piece according to the principles discussed in class and in the handout, “Introduction to Media Literacy”. Summarize the material presented, deconstruct the media piece, and present your own parallel discussion addressing the piece’s text and subtext, arguments and limitations, and your own reflections on how this relates to your artistic life and professional future. Carefully and fully review the assignment guidelines and handout before beginning your work. Type your report and edit and proofread it thoroughly. Your paper should be between 750 and 1000 words in length, and be written in such a manner as to be suitable for publication: write clearly in an original and authentic voice, and present solid, well-supported arguments.

**Due Date and Grading**

Due by email by midnight on February 4. Name your file with your Lastname-Response-Paper.doc. Ex: Schopenhauer-Reflection-Paper.doc.

Papers will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Passing papers are those that show understanding and engagement with the subject matter, and thorough, well-developed responses. Failing papers will be returned with suggestions for improvement, and may be revised and re-submitted for re-grading.

# How to Write Your Response Paper

1. Read the PDF file, “Introduction to Media Literacy”.
2. Read or view each article, then choose one to focus on in your paper.
3. Watch, read or listen to your chosen piece again. Referring to the “Media Deconstruction Questions” at the end of this sheet, take notes to answer each question.
4. Summarize the piece. Describe its main points in your own words. Be careful to avoid plagiarism: cite all your sources.
5. Deconstruct the piece, answering each of the following questions**[[1]](#footnote--1)**:
   1. What is the **source** of this piece? Whose message is this? Who created or paid for it? Who has control over the content?
   2. What is the intended **audience** for this message? What is their age, ethnicity, class, profession, interests, etc.? How do you know? What words, images or sounds suggest this? (Hint: look at the ads.)
   3. What is the **text** of this message? (A text is not limited to the printed word. Look at photographs, moving images, environmental sounds, background music – anything that communicates a message.)
   4. What is the **subtext** of the message? What do you think is the hidden or unstated meaning? How do your own experiences, knowledge, opinions and values shape your interpretation of the subtext?
   5. What **techniques of persuasion** are used? Be specific.
   6. What **positive and negative messages** are being presented? What **vision of success (or failure)** is being presented?
   7. What groups of people does this message **empower**? What groups does it **disempower**? How might this serve the media maker’s interests?
   8. What part of the story is not being told? How and where could you get more information about the **untold stories**?
6. Present your response, addressing the following questions:
   1. Did you find the piece interesting or valid? Why or why not? Is there another approach that might be productive?
   2. How did you feel as you
   3. Where do you stand with respect to the topic, the arguments, and methods used to support them?
   4. Can you think of another perspective that might shed light on the processes under consideration? Can you propose an alternate analysis?
   5. How does this make you think about your own artistic life and professional future?
7. Edit your work. Be sure that your writing reflects your engagement with the subject in an authentic manner. Pare down your writing so that each sentence makes a single, useful point.

**Media Sources**

Video: “Performing Artists Compete, Move, Adapt in Tough Economy” PBS NewsHour, June 27, 2013.

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/business/jan-june13/artists_06-27.html>

Newspaper Article: Daniel J. Wakin, “Freelance Musicians Hear Mournful Coda as the Jobs Dry Up” *New York Times,* December 3 2010, and accompanying multimedia piece, ““Voices of Freelance Musicians” *New York Times,* 5 December 2010

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/05/arts/music/05musicians.html>

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/12/05/arts/music/20101205_Freelancer_Interactive.html>

Newspaper Article: Corinne Ramey, “Classical Music, Modern Problems: New York City's Three Major Conservatories Work to Prepare Its Students for the Competitive Realities of the Workplace” *Wall Street Journal,* August 30 2013.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324009304579043502809487502.html>

Radio: Kurt Anderson, interview with Scott Timberg, *Studio 360*, National Public Radio, 27 April 2013.

<http://www.studio360.org/2012/apr/27/recession-wanes-but-artists-still-starving/>

1. Adapted from “Introduction to Media Literacy” by the Media Literacy Project. Media Literacy Project. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License. [↑](#footnote-ref--1)