English 50

Reaction Paper #3: Satire and Dystopian Fiction

INTRODUCTION:

Thus far this semester we have been reading about our industrial food system and the ways that our lives are impacted by the constant production, advertisement, distribution and disposal of stuff. While the texts we have been reading have been scholarly and academic, these are not the only ways that such issues can be explored. Zsolt Cziganyik, in “Satire and Dystopia: Two Genres?” writes, “The term dystopia is often replaced by another one, negative utopia, which relates itself to the realm of utopian literature. The world of utopia is depicted as ideal, a negative utopia or dystopia offers a gloomy, often bitter vision of the future, providing a picture of the present that is cast in the future, often in a caricature-like fashion, painted in dark colours” (1). Cziganyik goes on to define dystopian fiction as a unique form of satire that, instead of focusing on one particular figure or phenomena, scrutinizes the workings of an entire society. This is usually achieved through highlighting a single particular aspect of society, and through its distortion in the fiction, it points out the distortion within society. In *Wall-E* and *Idiocracy,* we encountered two rather bleak visions of the future that could be if the problems outlined by Leonard, Pollan, Klein (and others) are not addressed.

ASSIGNMENT:

Write a minimum five paragraph essay that explores the concept of dystopian fiction as demonstrated in *Wall-E* and/or *Idiocracy*. Be sure to bring in direct evidence from the film(s). You may address one or both of the films in your paper. Questions to consider include: How do these films use Cziganyik’s theory of dystopian fiction to highlight the problems our society is facing? Are these films effective as examples of dystopian fiction (according to the definition laid out by Cziganyik)? Why or why not? What role do you think such works of fiction serve in society, if any? What problems in society are being exploded in “caricature-like fashion” by the film(s)?