**Spiritual conversations research: Popular culture - Initial exploration and summarization**

Student name:

Date:

This assignment’s research question: What can bookstores, movie and music outlets provide us with as snapshots of current American popular culture?

***Part I Popular Books (research in person in order to be out where people go)***

1. Pray asking for God’s guidance regarding what bookstore that you should visit and how your interaction(s) will unfold with whomever you meet there.
2. Visit a local bookstore (chain or small business, new or used - for example, Barnes and Noble, Half Price Books, local bookshop…).

Bookstore Name:

Physical Location Address:

Briefly answer “Why did you select this particular bookstore?”:

1. Walk through this bookstore and observe what books seem prominent. Look for what appears to be 20 examples of what is currently popular in this particular bookstore.
2. Then, as a double-check step, talk with a bookstore worker and ask the following question, “For a class project, I am to list 20 highlighted books at a local bookstore and make observations. Would you please help me understand what books are currently selling well at your bookstore?” (For your sake and the sake of the bookstore worker, please know that these “Top 20” do not have to reflect an exact top 20 best sellers, but instead should reflect representative examples.)
3. Write down a list of 20 books (both titles and authors, and including a theme related to each of your choices), and explain briefly how you developed the list.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Book Title | Author | Theme |
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| 20. |  |  |  |

How did you develop this list?

***Part II Popular Movies or Songs (research via the Internet in order to use widely available resources)***

1. Pray asking for God’s guidance to give you greater insight and understanding into our culture as you do this research.
2. Do a web search either of popular movies or popular songs (for example [for movies] enter “Netflix”, “imdb”, “amazon prime movies” or “top 20 movies”, and [for songs] enter “iTunes”, “amazon prime music”, or “top 20 songs”…).

Popular movie or songs web page address (or addresses):

Briefly answer: “Why did you select this particular web resource (or resources)?”:

1. Construct of list of 20 top current movies or 20 top current songs (including a theme related to each of your choices), and explain how you developed the list. (For the sake of this project, please know that these “Top 20” do not have to reflect an exact top 20 best sellers, but instead should reflect representative examples. However, an Internet listing may provide you will a literal “top 20” and that will fulfill the purposes of this assignment as long as you cite the web link and date.)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Movie or Song Title | Director or Singer | Theme |
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| 20. |  |  |  |

How did you develop this list?

***Part III Current Culture Summary, Comparison and Contrast***

1. In 300-500 words, summarize these two different experiences of gathering cultural snapshots by both comparing and contrasting the leading messages/themes that are being communicated through these books, movies, or songs that you observed.
2. In your summary, please include at least one example of a way that a book, movie, or song theme offers a cultural bridge for communicating biblical Christianity.