

# Assignment: Analysis of a TV show episode (GE)

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For this assignment, we'll be discussing how an art medium (in this case, an episode of a television show) can illustrate social issues and even influence them. Specifically, we'll be looking at several episodes of the television series ***The Twilight Zone*** and discussing how science-fiction/fantasy are especially good genres for highlighting social issues.

Students can access the videos through Amazon Instant Streaming.

**PART I:** For each episode viewed, identify at least one social/political issue being addressed/illustrated. Write this in the form of a THESIS statement for each episode.

**PART II:**

1. In "Eye of the Beholder", the narrator says that in this world "ugly is the norm and beauty is the deviation." What is the definition of beauty? Does it vary among cultures, time periods, etc? What does the phrase "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" mean?
2. In "Eye of the Beholder", the doctor says maybe the procedure worked and she'll look "normal...the way you'd like to look." Would she want to look differently if society accepted her as she is? In what ways do society's perceptions/definitions of beauty influence us?
3. Miss Tyler refers to being in **darkness** because of the bandages covering her face. Could she also be referring to another type of darkness that she lives in? Not just a physical darkness but an emotional/spiritual darkness? She can't *literally* see with the bandages on? Is there anything else she doesn't *figuratively* see because she's been blinded by society's standards?
4. Discuss the importance of conformity in both "Eye of the Beholder" and "Number 12 Looks Just Like You".
5. In "Number 12 Looks Just Like You", is the transformation that people undergo when they reach maturity just a *physical* transformation or is it *emotional* and *spiritual* as well? Cite specific examples that indicate the doctors alter more than just one's looks.
6. Discuss how in both "Eye of the Beholder" and "Number 12 Looks Just Like You" the people live within a totalitarian society.
7. In "Number 12 Looks Just Like You", the episode closes with the host noting Marilyn's narcissism after her transformation. He warns that this "an age of plastic surgery, body building, and an infinity of cosmetics" is our own possible future. Throughout the episode, how do we see other characters exhibit self-absorption? How have they abandoned substantial pursuits in favor of feeling *good* all the time?
8. According to Karp, in "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street" "we have the breakdown of society in the microcosm of small-town America, cautioning that we have more to fear from ourselves than any external forces." Give examples from both "The Monsters..." and "The Shelter" to support this statement. What do the people fear versus what *should* they fear? Who are the real monsters/enemies?
9. Discuss the terms *crowd (mob) psychology* and *mass hysteria*. How are they illustrated in "The Monsters are due on Maple Street" and "The Shelter"?
10. Discuss the idyllic settings of both "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street" and "The Shelter". What ugly truth about human nature do these pleasant settings hide just below the surface?

TTZ episodes include "Eye of the Beholder," "#12 Looks Just Like You," "The Shelter," and "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street."

["Eye of the Beholder" and "Number 12" NOTES.pdf](#) 

["Monsters on Maple Street" and "The Shelter" NOTES.pdf](#) 

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