

Student Name

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Genre Remediation Rhetorical Rationale

For my genre remediation project, I have chosen to remediate Janelle Monáe's 2018 song "[Americans](#)," which is the artifact I had chosen to analyze for my [rhetorical analysis project](#). The energetic, upbeat tone of "Americans" helps the text function as a protest anthem in response to the social and political climate of the time in which it was created, particularly due to the recent rise in right-wing nationalism as strengthened by then-President Donald Trump's popularity among conservative audiences. Monáe's message in her text is clear: ethnic nationalism and other exclusionary sentiments within conservative American patriotism should have no place in America; so many people believe being an American means partaking in bigotry and either advocating for or turning a blind eye to injustice, when it should instead mean being critical of bigotry and taking a stand against injustice. But it is the *way* in which Monáe conveys this message that reveals the text's true genre. She could have chosen to convey this message through a more formal text like a public service announcement or other informative genre, but instead, Monáe has chosen to do so through art as to be more informal and better connect with her audience. This genre also allows her to alternate between a more sarcastic tone when pointing out the hypocrisies inherent in American patriotic culture and a more determined, optimistic tone when inspiring her audience and calling them to action. The genre of Monáe's text thus functions as a tool for her to communicate with her two-sided audience (both those who already agree with her perspective and may benefit from an inspirational call to action such as this, as well as those

who *disagree* with Monáe's beliefs and whom Monáe hopes to persuade in favor of her argument) successfully address her exigence (the recent rise in conservatism and the idea of American patriotism being linked with exclusion and oppression of marginalized groups). However, this genre does pose several constraints that may prevent her argument from successfully responding to and changing the exigence. Most notably, due to its genre, Monáe's text is unlikely to reach the half of her audience who does not yet agree with her, and for those in her audience who do already agree with her, it is likely that many of them would benefit from a visual text instead. With these things in mind, it became apparent that there were at least two ways I could remediate Monáe's song into different genres, while still maintaining the original exigence and audiences, and remedy these constraints.

In order to remediate Monáe's original text, I first looked to what would be most helpful in expanding the scope of her song's influence. Because her ability to convince her audience had been hindered by several key constraints, I figured it would be of most use for me to choose two new genres that could eliminate those constraints. Ultimately, I decided that a political cartoon and a satirical recipe blog entry (inspired by satirical pieces such as [these](#), which point out the sometimes absurdly long preambles to recipe blog posts) would both satisfy these requirements.

As a song, "Americans" is by nature confined to being a purely auditory text, unless a listener were to seek out a written copy of the lyrics to read alongside the song. Thus, choosing two new visual genres as opposed to auditory ones seemed most appropriate. Further, I recognized that, since half of Monáe's audience most likely did not even have access to her message, I figured a political cartoon would be better able to expand the reach of her message, while still not losing sight of its core themes about the ironic realities of American patriotism and what it really means to be an American. In fact, if this cartoon were to be published in a

hypothetical newspaper or news website, this would allow Monáe's message to reach individuals who oppose her beliefs, therefore helping to address the exigence of her rhetorical situation.

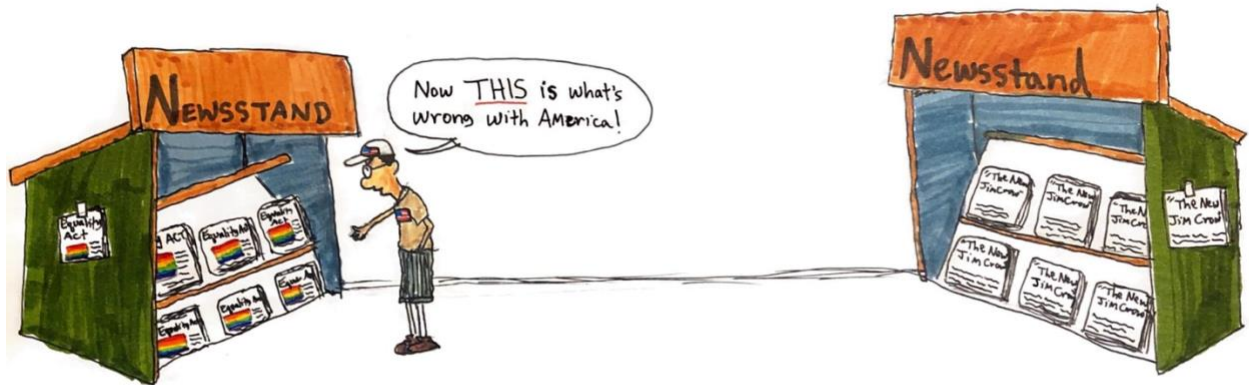
Since the exigence and audience of this remediated text are the same, only the constraints will change; the most primary constraint now lies in whether or not this medium is fully effective in actually *changing those opposing beliefs* once Monáe's argument reaches those audience members, and a few secondary constraints may lie in my own artistic abilities and whether or not I can successfully translate one moment from Monáe's song into an effective message about the hypocrisies of American patriotism. (Additionally, even this new genre itself comes with new constraints, like understanding what visuals are likely to catch a person's eye, how to convey deeper ideas through a mostly visual medium, what kind of caption would best compliment the thoughts expressed in the image, etc. The advantage of this genre, however, is that it can make for a particularly punchy statement that resonates with viewers without overcomplicating the subject too much.)

In the creation of my second genre remediation, I thought I should balance the audience of my first remediation by focusing more on the half of Monáe's audience who would otherwise agree with her, but may not be able to help change her exigence, either due to personal dislike of her chosen genre or the song's being less informative. Because "Americans" already incorporates an allusion to the idea of "American Pie" as a symbol of American culture, I chose to create a satirical recipe blog post for "American Pie," referencing the sentiments explicitly addressed by Monáe in her song. Although "Americans" makes numerous allusions to real life examples of bigotry or systemic oppression, the genre plays more to an emotional response than a logical one. I thought it might be interesting to similarly reference these instances but expand upon them through the form of informative statistics, all while staying in the same satirical tone

as Monáe had possessed in her song. I also modeled my introductory preamble to the recipe off of Monáe's use of perspective shift in her text. In order to point out hypocrisies and logical fallacies commonly found in pro-conservative, patriotic arguments, I thus narrated the satirical blog entry from the perspective of such modern-day proponents of American exceptionalism for comedic purposes, knowing my intended audience should already agree with me about the irrationality of these arguments. The most notable constraint to this new genre, however, would be my audience's access to it in the first place. Whereas a political cartoon could logically be placed either in a print or online news publication and gain a wider audience that way, there aren't any truly renowned places I could post a satirical recipe and generate a response in support of resisting oppression and conservative patriotism.

Although my new genre remediations are not without their own new sets of constraints, both in regards to successfully responding to their rhetorical situations and in regards to my own limitations as an author of each new text, I do think that these genres are able to preserve the essence of Monáe's original text and still portray that message in creative ways. The translation from a lyric of "Americans" into a political cartoon was admittedly much easier (and likely more successful) than the remediation to a satirical recipe post as a mirror of some of Monáe's own rhetorical strategies used in her song. While I do think my intent could be made clearer in both of my remediated texts, I am still proud of my ability to generate creative responses to Monáe's song and repurpose her work in different ways.

Remixed Text #1:



"Uncle Sam Kissed a man / Jim Crow Jesus rose again."

Remixed Text #2:

RECIPE

American Pie

Ready in **244 years**Serves **328.2 million people**

In the Land of the Free, Home of the Brave, we are humbly blessed with the God-given right to express ourselves and our beliefs the way we please, and in the traditional American spirit of patriotism and good eatin', what better way to celebrate our wonderful institutions than by whipping up a big ol' piece of American Pie?



Now, like all things American, this recipe was passed down to me from my parents and their parents before them. I know some people will try this recipe and won't like it. And to those people, I'll say, sure. There are certainly things I "could" change about this recipe (maybe it's a little heavy on the cinnamon, or maybe the crust is too dense), but this is the way it's always been—I learned these All American recipes from my mom and dad, and who am I to take the words their parents had taught them and just change them on a whim? So if you want to make substitutions for whatever fits your fancy, I certainly won't be one to deny you that. To each his own! But me? I'll be honoring the recipes as they've been written and keep on making the dishes the way they always have been, thank you very much.

But without further ado, let us begin!

Ingredients

- 1 in 13 Black Americans of voting age disenfranchised
- 2x more unemployed Black individuals than unemployed white individuals
- 40% transgender adults report having made a suicide attempt
- 1 in 5 hate crimes motivated by anti-LGBTQ bias
- Top 10% of wealthiest Americans make 9x more than bottom 90% of Americans
- Average of 2.3k immigrants detained at U.S.-Mexico border in 2019
- 79 cents earned by a woman for every 1 dollar earned by a man
- Approx. 750,000 Americans homeless each night (1/5 considered "chronically homeless")
- 21% children living in poverty
- 1 in 1,000 Black men and boys victims of (often fatal) police violence

After assembling the ingredients and baking these sentiments at 350 °F for 244 years, voila! Now this is one pie worth defending!