

SECOND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

Choose one or two comics (comic books or newspaper funnies) and analyze the images of the American family they contain. (If you are unfamiliar with this genre, also known as cartoons, see us.)

What can you conclude about the meaning of “family” from these images? You will base your conclusions on your description, analysis, and interpretation of the data contained in the material you collect.

Of course, some comics will provide more information than others. Dennis the Menace is more about family than The Far Side. It’s fine to use any kind of comics—you’ll just need more examples of some kinds of comics to get an adequate amount of data. You may use comics that appear in strips or ones that use only one frame.

A highly recommended approach is to examine the comics over time, as LaRossa et al. do. For example, *Blondie* comics from 1930, 1950, 1970 and 1990 will provide a structure for your paper and *greatly* facilitate your analysis.

These must be hard copy publications; no Web-based publications qualify. However, if you choose to examine comics over time you may use Web-based archives of newspapers.

International students: you can analyze images of the American family in comics, or obtain equivalent comics that contain images of families in newspaper and book-form from your own country. See us if you have questions about this.

Keep in mind that many comics are intended to be FUNNY (that’s why the newspaper section containing them is called “the funny papers”). Don’t analyze them without taking this into account.

In your analysis you may draw on your own intuitions and understanding of the American family to make sense of your data, but you must let the reader know when you’re doing this by saying something like “it is my impression...,” “it’s been my experience.”

Remember that you are an anthropologist, not a judge or policy-maker. Your job is to analyze and interpret, not praise or blame.

Remember: you are writing about *images*—about representations of the family, about the family as a symbol—rather than the actual American family. Do not make unsupported assertions about the family as it really is (in fact, do not make unsupported assertions about **anything!**).

Be **sure** you have enough data. All sources you use must be cited, *documented* in a bibliography. If you make photocopies, indicate the source.

7+ typewritten pages. An appendix with illustrations is fine, but this does not count in the 7+

pages.

See us if you have questions or problems *well before due date!*

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