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ENG 2440 – English

“Ready Player One” Primary Text Annotations (Novel + Movie)

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Annotated Bibliography

Throughout the contents of Ernest Cline’s “Ready Player One”, a specific factor I had discovered involves the narrative of the story involving the influence of 80s pop culture. It is tremendously varying through a multitude of media pieces including classic movies, fashion, TV shows, animated cartoons, video games and many other aspects. The attracting factor behind its narrative is notably addressed via the character designs of the OASIS users and its influence over the complex criteria behind James Halliday’s “Easter Egg Hunt”. So far, Halliday’s hunt utilized various aspects of 80s pop culture within each of his constructed trials to test the valor and intellect of its newcomers. I am captivated by this factor because it illustrates the aspects of a task that requires its challengers to break past their standard comfort zones and reach for newer heights.

In the introductory prologue chapter of the text, we are introduced to the grim dystopian future of the story’s setting. I was fully immersed into the setting akin to experiencing the events myself through the description of Earth’s citizens experiencing world-threatening events. The circumstances impacting varying from a world-wide energy crisis to widespread famine and disease. According to the following quotation, “After all, the people of Planet Earth had other

concerns. *The ongoing energy crisis. Catastrophic climate change. Widespread famine, poverty, and disease. Half a dozen wars.*” (pg. 1, Lines 12-14). This quotation illustrates the grim conditions that humanity is constantly combating daily, potentially acting as consequences for enforcing actions beyond their control and sparking society’s attachment toward James Halliday’s virtual reality: *The OASIS*.

Regarding the novel’s first chapter, the narrative demonstrates an in-depth analysis around the damaged environment that Earth’s societies live through. This analysis carefully details the grim conditions through the introduction and perspective of the novel’s main protagonist: Wade Watts. Through the events of the chapter, the narrative demonstrated by the author indicates that Wade’s livelihood and the livelihoods of many surrounding him are tremendously deplorable. The grim conditions of humanity’s poor livelihoods erupted into fruition ironically from their malpractice of fossil fuel-based energy, resulting in a global energy crisis that tremendously crippled civilization to becoming a dystopian society. According to the text, “Our global civilization came at a huge cost. We needed a whole bunch of energy to build it, and we got that energy by burning fossil fuels, which came from dead plants and animals... the Global Energy Crisis, and it’s been going on for a while now” (pg. 17, Lines 23-30). This quotation indicates the reasoning behind humanity’s desired immersion into the OASIS, wishing to escape the grim dystopian reality enforced by the ironically cursed conditions humanity brought upon itself. With the energy crisis and various other factors influencing humanity’s display of escapism, the narrative demonstrated supporting evidence toward mankind wishing for an ideal livelihood over the genuine counterpart.

Regarding the novel’s second chapter, the narrative provides an informative illustration around the multiple factions of the OASIS reality conflicting against another for their respective

hunt for the “Easter Egg” constructed by James Halliday: the individual responsible for the construction of the OASIS. Throughout the chapter, the author demonstrates the concept of foreshadowing conflict; illustrating the imminent threat specific factions searching for the “Easter Egg” will possess. For instance, one of the factions described by the chapter’s narrative that strongly captured my attention are the IOI (Innovative Online Industries). This faction is an Internet/communications conglomerate seeking to obtain total control of the OASIS alongside their main enforcers: The Sixers. According to the text, “IOI believed that Halliday never properly monetized his creation, and they wanted to remedy that. They would plaster advertisements on every visible surface. User anonymity and free speech would become things of the past. The moment... theme park for wealth elitists” (Pg. 33, Line 18-24). This quotation illustrates the author’s intention to properly mark the IOI organization and its enforcers in an antagonist light. Alongside the corrupt and malicious intentions of the organization, the author provides in-depth foreshadowing of the text’s characters respectively conflicting with the IOI.

Regarding the third chapter, the narrative of the chapter focuses on the in-depth interactions between the various users traversing throughout the OASIS; primarily occurring between Wade (known as Parzival during his ventures in the OASIS) and his fellow “gunter” acquaintance/friendly rival: Aech. Within the contents of the text, “gunters” are recognized as fellow OASIS users devoted to finding James Halliday’s hidden “Easter Egg” throughout the reaches of the virtual reality, obtaining the eccentric deceased creator’s hidden fortune and control over the entirety of OASIS. Despite both individuals’ bearing a potential foreshadowing of conflict involving their desire to win the “Hunt”, the author establishes an early illustration of their comradery. According to the text, “‘How many times have you seen that sapfest? I know you’ve made me sit through it at least twice.’ He was bating me now. He knew Ladyhawke was

one of my guilty... over two dozen times” (Pg. 40, Lines 24-26). This quotation illustrates the comradery visible between two competing “egg” hunters yet looking past the supposed conflict involving the prize of their “hunt” and communicate as civilized people.

Regarding the fourth chapter, its narrative provides insight over humanity’s desired immersion of the OASIS virtual reality to the point of society recognizing it as an ideal lifestyle; bearing preference toward the digital realm over the dystopian society that many users of the OASIS struggle through daily. Concerning the collective chapters so far, Cline appears to guide the narrative into portraying the existence of the OASIS akin to a lost paradise. A haven available to all of society to escape the suffocating clutches of the grim, dark world recognized as their reality. According to the text, “A lot of OASIS users didn’t care about their avatar’s power level or bother with the gaming aspects of the simulation at all. They only used the OASIS for entertainment, business, shopping, and hanging out with their friends” (Pg. 50, Lines 26-29). This quotation strongly illustrates humanity’s attachment toward the technology that enable their escape from the grueling conditions of their reality. To escape the shackles of poor livelihood cursing them consistently, man sought to use technology to immerse themselves into a virtual reality; slowly beginning to perceive it as their ideal.

Regarding the fifth chapter, the narrative illustrates a primary focus around the origins of James Halliday alongside attachments toward the existence of the virtual reality starting to form from the time of its release. The author provides an in-depth description around the OASIS’ inspiration to fruition being from the influence of Halliday’s “geek” affection of 80’s pop culture, notably due to the creator’s childhood occurring around that time. With the introduction of factors beyond the original aspects of a video game, many individuals began to recognize beyond its original status as a video game and slowly perceive it as a new way of life. According

to the text, “Before long, billions of people around the world were working and playing in the OASIS every day. Some of them met, fell in love, and got married without ever setting foot on the same continent. The lines of distinction between a person’s real identity and that of their avatar began to blur” (Pg. 60, Lines 6-10). This quote indicates the existence of the OASIS is recognized by the narrative as a haven for society, helping them to escape the harsh grip of reality and the conditions that follow suit.

Regarding the sixth chapter, the narrative of the chapter provides an illustration of the building parallel between OASIS creator James Halliday and the novel’s main protagonist: Wade Watts (known as Parzival in OASIS). Between their introverted personalities and their eccentric attachment toward 80s pop culture with Watts developing an obsession of the variant from his intensive research into Halliday’s material to better grasp an understanding behind his complex mentality. The factor notably shared between both individuals is their strong affection toward content recognized as material observed and consumed by “geeks”, varying through multiple forms of media such as video games, animated cartoons, movies, fashion designs and other aspects. According to the text, “I also watched every single film he referenced in the Almanac. If it was one of Halliday’s favorites, like WarGames, Ghostbusters, Real Genius, Better Off Dead, or Revenge of the Nerds, I re-watched it until I knew every scene by heart.” (Pg. 62, Lines 15-18.) This quotation illustrates the building parallel in the narrative existing between Wade and Halliday concerning their affection to “geek” media and culture, allowing the former to slowly understand the latter’s socially inept mind to discover clues corresponding with the “Hunt”.

Regarding the seventh chapter, the narrative provides an in-depth description behind the vast luminous landscapes included within the OASIS reality. Providing detail surrounding the

numerous areas contained within Halliday's virtual simulation, the author manages to capture the attention of the audience via the description of the chapter's setting: The "planet" classified as Ludus. The numerous "planets" located throughout OASIS symbolize as varying locations containing respective design and aspects, acting as a method of the author to immerse the audience into the novel akin to experiencing the events within the chapter. According to the text, "...Ludus had hundreds of large forests scattered all over its surface, in the vast sections of empty land that stood between the thousands of school campuses. Some of these forests were enormous, covering dozens of square miles. Most students never even set foot inside them, because there was nothing of interest to do or see there. Like its fields and rivers and lakes, Ludus's forests were just computer-generated landscaping, placed there to fill up the empty space." (Pg. 69-70, Lines 1-5). This quotation provides an in-depth analysis around the environment of Ludus described by the chapter's narrative, illustrating a form of world-building of the OASIS' various aspects to offer its users.

Regarding the eighth chapter of the novel, the narrative of the chapter promotes the text's efficient utilization of foreshadowing and construction of tension. Throughout Wade's exploration within the 'Tomb of Horrors', the illustration of tension is established through the in-depth description of the obstacles awaiting him as he traverses forward through the dungeon. The foreshadowing of conflict and illustration of tension is primarily displayed via the description of Wade's encounter with the demi-lich: Acererak; labeling this individual as a force not to be trifled with. According to the text, "The demi-lich Acererak was sitting on it, glaring down at me silently. A dust gold crown glinted on his withered head." (Pg. 78-79, Lines 28-30). This quotation indicates the author's efficient utilization of foreshadowing and establishing of tension through the introduction of a potentially dangerous threat. Establishing the demi-lich as

a roadblock that must be conquered by Wade, the author manages to immerse the audience into the flow of the chapter; capturing our focus with the lich and pondering the events that will happen next.

Regarding the ninth chapter, the narrative of the chapters provides a primary focus addressed between Wade (Parzival) and another fellow gunter undergoing their own search for the “Easter Egg”: Art3mis; notably around their contrasting views of the world. With the “Easter Egg” left behind as a memento by the late James Halliday consisting of complete awarded access to the entirety of the OASIS alongside the creator’s fortune, the author utilizes the opportunity to describe the personal goals of the duo in case one individual succeeds over the other. Whilst Art3mis appears to possess an extrovertive, positive view of life with the desire to heal Earth’s broken society Wade shares a contrasting perspective. He appears to possess a rather cynical and negative view of the world; preferring to isolate himself from the dystopian world he struggles to live in. According to the text, “...The reason so many people are starving is because we’ve wrecked the planet. The Earth is dying, you know? It’s time to leave.” (Pg. 98, Lines 14-16.) This quotation provides an additional factor concerning Wade’s character, notably his lacking faith in the Earth’s recovery from the consistent caused by humanity’s malpractice of its resources.

Regarding the tenth chapter of the text, the chapter’s narrative provides a primary focus around the building parallel existing between the creator of the OASIS James Halliday and the text’s main protagonist: Wade Watts. Via an exploration into Halliday’s grim and difficult childhood conditions, we discover a building connection between the two characters; notably through the complicated living conditions that they reside in. I believe this narrative provides an

in-depth understanding of the characters detailed and the notably similarities shared between them. According to the text, "Looking around, I wondered why Halliday, who always claimed to have a miserable childhood, had later become so nostalgic for it. I knew that if and when I finally escaped.... wouldn't create a detailed simulation of the place" (Pg. 103, Lines 25-28). This quotation indicates the powerful parallel existing between Watts and Halliday via their depicted personalities and upbringings into the grim conditions of their life.

Regarding the eleventh chapter of the novel, the chapter's narrative provides intense foreshadowing of conflict around the investigation for James Halliday's Easter Egg via Wade's astounding discovery of the Copper Key and Copper Gate. As Wade Watts achieves one of the pieces connected to the "Hunt", the author establishes the existence of numerous trials that would potentially await ahead of him with some being secretly hazardous in more ways than one, notably the Sixers. Through the utilization of a vision masked toward the audience as a dream, we are provided with foreshadowing toward the potential events that may occur after Wade succeeds in achieving the late James Halliday's "Easter Egg" and winning the long-term competition. According to the text, "In unison, the armies of my enemies let out a fierce battle cry and charged toward me. They converged on my position with bared teeth and blood in their eyes. They were coming to take the egg... felt myself being torn to shreds." (Pg. 115, Lines 2-6). This quotation establishes the foreshadowed dangers that will eventually appear in Wade's path and utilize whatever methods necessary to achieve the "Easter Egg" and win the competition.

Regarding the twelfth chapter of the novel, the narrative of the chapter establishes the theme of unity via the detailed interactions of Wade (Parzival) and his closest friend/fellow "gunter": Aech. With the stakes of obtaining the late Halliday's immense fortune and complete

control over the entirety of the OASIS, one would potentially assume the foreshadowing of the possible conflict that would occur between the gunter duo. Yet, instead of establishing the concept of their friendship being wedged in the face of their possible prize, the author details the powerful bond shared between them via their conversations, proven in the upcoming quotation. According to the text, "...I deciphered the Limerick on your own, otherwise you wouldn't even know about the Tomb of Horrors module, right?... won't forget it." (Pg. 124, 18-24.). This quotation illustrates the unity existing between the duo that is not faltered via the expansion of Halliday's game, pushing the audience to understand that Watts and Aech share a strong friendship with one another.

Regarding the thirteenth chapter of the text, the narrative of the chapter illustrates the imminent threats arriving toward Wade's path, further depicted via the introductory foreshadowing of the text's main antagonist: Nolan Sorrento, the CEO of the IOI and leader of the Sixers agents traversing through the reaches of the OASIS. With the previous establishment of the dystopian societal setting in the text, the narrative foreshadows the possibility of a corrupt social system overpowering the masses of the depicted reality. Based around Wade's perspective narration around Sorrento and the Sixers, the author manages to illustrate the corruption of the corporate-based faction via a miniature depiction of their influence and power via Sorrento's invitation into IOI toward Wade. According to the text, "The Sixers wanted to recruit me. Or they wanted to pay me to tell them how to find the Copper Key and clear the First Gate. And if I refused, they would go after Art3mis, then Aech.... and sell them the information they needed." (Pg. 132, Lines 26-32.). This quotation provides a small illustration of the corruptive nature of Sorrento and the faction of individuals that he holds authority over.

Regarding the fourteenth chapter of the text, the narrative of the chapter provides the audience an in-depth illustration of the corruption that plagues the dystopian reality that many OASIS users such as Wade Watt struggle through alongside the individuals that profit from their corruptive influence. A factor strongly indicated based around the underhanded and immensely immoral actions of Nolan Sorrento and his ruthless, inhumane actions against the society that he “rules” over. The author establishes the calculating, cold and ruthlessness of the Sixers leader via his underhanded threats and borderline sociopathic methods of murder to frighten Wade and his comrades, strengthening the concept of existing corruption within the setting of the text. According to the text, “That thought snapped me out of my daze. What was I thinking? The Sixers had just tried to kill me. They probably still had agents lurking here in the stacks.... in the open.” (Pg. 146, Lines 18-21). This quote illustrates the brutal and corruptive threat that Nolan Sorrento and his corporate faction of IOI possesses via their tactics to obtain control over the OASIS by any means necessary to succeed.

Regarding the fifteenth chapter of the text, the narrative illustrates the demand of unity in the foreshadowed conflict of an imminent threat in the form of Sorrento and his Sixer goons. With the influence of IOI slowly overwhelming the reaches of the OASIS, the author promotes the concepts of unity and teamwork via the interactions of Wade and the members of the “High Five” alongside the idea of combating the forces of IOI separately is severely incorrect and dangerous. Cline details how the incorporation of teamwork can properly ensure the success of any situation that cannot be combated alone. According to the text, “...And each of us is on our own. Well, except for your two... and outgunned, and that isn’t going to change anytime soon.” (Pg.156, Lines 34-37). This quotation illustrates Watts’ realization of the intense threat that the

Sixers possess, sparking the potential demand of the highest ranked “Easter Egg” gunters to work together and face off against the imminent threat ahead.

Regarding the sixteenth chapter of the text, the narrative provides the audience an in-depth understanding of the grim, damaged conditions that many individuals in the dystopian society struggle through consistently; a factor tremendously addressed in Wade’s newly depicted status as a fugitive hiding from IOI. Through his morally ambiguous act of rebellion against Sorrento and the corrupt corporate faction, Wade is currently under hiding to avoid potential capture/execution by the hands of Sorrento’s Sixer agents. The illustration of Wade developing an entirely new identity with the pressure of harsher conditions surrounding him further strengthen the flawed dystopia that has become distorted from its long term damage. According to the text, “I was now a fugitive, living under an assumed name. Powerful people were out looking for me. People who wanted me dead.” (Pg. 165, Lines 16-18). This quotation illustrates the grim, corrupt society that many individuals of the novel’s setting struggle through in reality, sparking a strong reason to immerse themselves into the palms of the OASIS.

Regarding the seventeenth chapter of the novel, the narrative provides the audience an illustration around Wade’s development as a character with his recent glory of unlocking the Copper Gate. Despite lacking the full prize that awaited the gunters at the end of their long, struggle-fueled search for Halliday’s “Easter Egg”, Wade become completely enamored in the veil of “success” under his OASIS persona of “Parzival” to the brink of becoming arrogant from his success and fame. The author details how the fame of “Parzival” swiftly changed Wade for the worse and potentially foreshadowed a wedge between himself and his comrades such as Art3mis. According to the text, “Luckily, the audience cut me a lot of slack, because I was the

famous gunter Parzival, and I was clearly having a blast.” (Pg. 179, Lines 12-14). This quotation provides a thorough depiction of fame slowly blinding Wade over his search for the “Easter Egg”, potentially deluding himself to the belief of having won.

Regarding the eighteenth chapter of the novel, the narrative provides an in-depth illustration of Wade being enamored by the illusionary influence of the OASIS for many years alongside his lacking understanding of human interaction. With the combined influence of his “fame” as Parzival and lacking knowledge of real-life social interaction, Wade had developed into an individual who is seduced by the influence of machine to where he cannot depict what is real or not such as the concept of love through his botched confession toward Art3mis.

According to the text, “.... You don’t live in the real world, Z. From what you’ve told me, I don’t think you ever have. You’re like me. You live inside this illusion.... possibly know what real love is.” (Pg. 186, Lines 23-26). This quotation demonstrates how the influence of technology can dull one’s understanding of human emotion and expression of emotions such as love.

Regarding the nineteenth chapter of the novel, the narrative continues to illustrate the development of Wade’s character; showing the level of potential harm that technology has done to him. With the enamoring influence of the OASIS guiding him for many years, the young protagonist had slowly spiraled into a loss of personal perception over what is one’s “reality”. This further expands to the brink of Watts even harboring potential self-loathing over his real self, detailing the psychological damage inflicted via the long-term usage of this technology. According to the text, “The hour or so after I woke up was my least favorite part of each day, because I spent it in the real world. This was when I dealt with the tedious business of cleaning and exercising my physical body. I hated this part of the day.... spent my days in was not, in fact,

the real one.” (Pg. 195, Lines 31-37.). This quotation illustrates technology’s status as a double-edged sword for all users, despite the manipulative seductions and promises of an improved lifestyle.

Regarding the twentieth chapter of the text, the narrative continues an analysis surrounding Wade’s character development and status as an individual damaged by the influence of technology. With the imminent possibility of isolation becoming true through the misguided and fame-blinded actions of Wade, he slowly returns to his original personality after his personal realization of the consequences occurring from his blinded actions. With the fame having blinded and lightly corrupted Wade, it eventually resulted in the bond existing between himself and Aech to strain to the possibility of never being fixed. According to the text, “I’d tried to reconnect with Aech after Art3mis had dumped me, but things weren’t the same. We’d grown apart, and I knew it was my fault. Our conversations were now stilted and reserved, as if we were both afraid of revealing some key.... find the Jade Key.” (Pg. 203, Lines 28-34). This quotation illustrates the development of Wade’s character as the consequences of his actions slowly begin to sink, sparking his potential ascension to fix his connection with his friends.

Regarding the twenty-first chapter of the text, the narrative provides an illustration around the development of Wade’s character reaching the end of its metaphorical journey. With the realization of the erupting consequences from his actions, he has become enamored with a new-found determination to blitz back his flawed, blinded self and push onward toward winning the “Hunt”. The development of his character from the blinded fame and lack of understanding human interaction is strongly summarized via his innermost self-monologue of reprimanding. According to the text, “‘You’ve got no one but yourself to blame, I told myself. You let success go

to your head. You slacked off on your research. What, did you think lightning would strike twice? That eventually you'd stumble across the clue you needed to find the Jade Key? Sitting in.... moron. Find that key." (Pg.211, Lines 3-12). This quotation serves as a depiction of Wade's growth as a character, moving past his self-delusion of success and charging through to winning the competition.

Regarding the twenty-second chapter of the novel, the narrative illustrates the potentially foreshadowing of the concept of unity being reformed around the friendship between Wade and Aech. With the former being blinded by his faulty success and "victory" alongside his out-of-line insult toward Aech's ability as a competitor in the "Easter Egg" hunt, one would assume the long-term bond between both individuals would be severed completely. Thankfully, in the retrospective of Wade, the author establishes the possibility of the introverted gunter repairing saving his friendship via the utilization of Aech repaying Watts with information related to the "Hunt" through an email." According to the text, "Dear Parzival, You and I are officially even now, got that? I consider my debt to you hereby paid... Good luck Aech." (Pg. 224, Lines 31-35). This quotation illustrates the narrative's display of foreshadowing around Wade being able to repair the damage he had inflicted upon his bond with Aech.

Regarding the twenty-third chapter of the novel, the narrative illustrates a primary focus around the foreshadowing of conflict occurring between the numerous users of the OASIS and the Sixers. With the stakes of Halliday's fortune and control over the OASIS on the line, the Sixers are incorporating various unethical methods to succeed; pushing the branch below them in the ladder to develop a spark of rebellion against them and fight back, A possibility of their foreshadowed conflict erupting into a full-out war is proven via the following quotation.

According to the text, “The newsfeeds were airing live coverage of the hundreds of large-scale battles breaking out on Frobozz, around nearly every instance of the... and casualties were already mounting on both sides.” (233, Lines 6-11). This indicates the building unity amongst the members of the OASIS against the Sixers to the brink of war being foreshadowed.

Regarding the twenty-fourth chapter of the text, the narrative illustrates the possibility of the antagonists achieving victory via the depiction of the main character’s despair. With the corporate faction of IOI nearing their goal of achieving the “Easter Egg”, the author establishes the depressive demeanor that Wade undergoes. With the despair overpowering his proper thinking, he considers the possibility of becoming suicidal to avoid watching the very item that gave his life meaning being controlled by a corrupt faction. According to the text, “I felt myself inching toward complete hopelessness. My efforts over the past five years had been for nothing.... every fiber of my being.” (Pg. 239, Lines 4-8). This quotation illustrates the negative emotions spiraling through Wade, allowing the audience to immerse themselves in the narrative and sympathize with his latent fears potentially reaching fruition.

Regarding the twenty-fifth chapter of the text, the narrative provides a significant depiction around society’s potential desire for an idealistic lifestyle. A factor notably detailed via various OASIS users such as Wade considering the virtual reality as the only “reality” that serves as a newfound way of life for many. The existence of the OASIS acts as a newfound form of paradise for the masses that provides many an escape from the sharp clutches of their harsh reality. According to the text, “...We liver here, in the OASIS. For us, this is the only reality that has any meaning.” (Pg. 243, Lines 14-15.) This quotation illustrates the message of humanity desiring an idealistic lifestyle that promotes their escape from the grueling chains of “Reality”.

Regarding the twenty-sixth chapter of the text, the narrative illustrates the immersive influence of 80s media throughout the contents of the novel. Throughout the entirety of James Halliday's "Easter Egg" hunt so far, there have been numerous depictions of nostalgic 80s media such as movies, video games, cartoons and many more; providing the audience of the text, with an improved understanding around the author's interest in the addressed form of pop culture. The previously addressed statement is further proven via the illustration of a classic 80s related film within James Halliday's "Hunt": Blade Runner. According to the text, "Blade Runner was referenced in the text of Anorak's Almanac no less than fourteen times. It had been one of Halliday's top ten all-time favorite... dialogue." (Pg. 250, Lines 22-27). This quotation promotes the immersive influence and impact of 80s pop culture through its consistent depiction throughout the entirety of the novel.

Regarding the twenty-seventh chapter of the text, the narrative provides an astounding form of foreshadowing connected to the concept of unity via Wade's preparations to unify the OASIS users against the Sixers. Throughout the entirety of the text so far, the author establishes the thesis of individuals being able to succeed and overcome the various challenges ahead via working in unison. The concept of unity is illustrated via Wade planning to work alongside the other members of the "High Five" to defeat the Sixers, IOI and Sorrento entirely. According to the text, "I began to formulate a plan. A bold, outrageous plan that would require epic amounts of luck to pull off... reach the Third Gate, or die trying." (Pg. 286, Lines 25.-33). This quotation illustrates the overwhelming foreshadowing of conflict between the users of the OASIS and the Sixers with practical control over the world at stake.

Regarding the twenty-eighth chapter of the text, the narrative provides an in-depth illustration around the intense corruption of reality; providing the audience an understanding behind why many seek to retreat into the OASIS and escape. Through Wade's perspective, we obtain a wide-eyed perspective surrounding the complete corruption and influence that IOI possesses over the reaches of real life alongside their brutality. The author provides the audience a hint of foreshadowing around the corruption of the dystopian society via the following quotation. According to the text, "Using my cuffed hand, I pushed the visor up onto my forehead. The dropcops didn't seem to care or pay me any notice at all. So I craned... see how it had changed." (Pg. 275, Lines 30-34). This quotation provides a powerful taste of the corruption fueling through the society that Wade and many others struggle through constantly.

Regarding the twenty-ninth chapter of the text, the narrative establishes toward the audience the cruel, dystopian conditions of reality. With numerous struggles such as homeless, an energy crisis and pollution, the audience develops an improved understanding of the grim landscape and corrupt world that surrounds the individuals illustrates within the content of the novel. The conditions that surround individuals such as Wade are further enhanced via the following quote. "In addition to the camera attached to the side of my head, there was a camera mounted above the door of my hab-suit. The company... they were being watched." (Pg. 281, Lines 14-17.) This quote provides an in-depth illustration of the cruel and merciless corruption that plagues the society of the novel consistently with no proper means of combating without worsening the way one resides.

Regarding the thirtieth chapter, the narrative continues to establish the calculating, corrupt nature of Nolan Sorrento and the society that plagues the individuals illustrated within

the contents of the novel. As previously established, the individuals aligned with Sorrento and IOI utilize various methods, regardless of how immoral they are, to obtain whatever they desire. This premise is firmly established via the shady execution of a fellow OASIS user and ex-member of the "High Five": Toshiro Yoshiaki (also known in the OASIS as "Daito"). According to the text, "It was handheld video camera footage showing three large men in black ski masks (one of whom was operating the camera) waiting silently in a hallway... plummeting to his death. Probably at Sorrento's request." (Pg. 293, Lines 12-20). This quote provides the audience a firm understanding around the merciless nature that Sorrento possesses, willing to stomp down any individual that stands in his way akin to insects.

Regarding the thirty-first chapter of the text, the narrative of the novel continues to illustrate the immense corruption of the detailed dystopian society. It addresses thoroughly how individuals ranked high in the social ladder such as Nolan Sorrento utilize their influence and corrupted power to manipulate and control anything/anyone they desire without a shred of remorse. This premise is established profusely via IOI's authorization of forced labor and manipulation of an individual's human rights, practically influencing the concept of slavery. According to the text, "...ensure that my human rights were being observed. Now that I'd removed the device, there would be no digital record of what happened to me from this moment forward. If IOI... could torture and kill me, and no one would ever know." (Pg.296, Lines 1-6). This quotation provides a powerful message around the corruption that plagues the world of "Ready Player One", further immersing the audience to support the protagonist's journey.

Regarding the thirty-second chapter of the text, the narrative of the novel addresses the message of unity amongst many individuals in the face of a common obstacle; a concept that has

been practiced thoroughly throughout the events of the text so far. In the face of adversity, success can be achieved tremendously and efficiently via the act of working alongside one another and provide support if necessary. The author provides an intense practice of this concept via Wade's act to unite the practical world against the Sixers and prevent their practical "world domination". According to the text, "...No one wants the Sixers to win the contest. And they definitely don't want... an epic, history-making battle?" (Pg. 311, Lines 25-28). This quotation provides a full-circle illustration of the conflict from the practical soul of the OASIS being on the line in an intense battle, sparking the audience to ponder what could happen next.

Regarding the thirty-third chapter of the text, the narrative provides an in-depth analysis around the development of Wade's character through the utilization of the concept of unity. Throughout the events of the text thus far, the introvert establishes a distance between himself and reality; preferring to sink into the manipulating grasp of the OASIS and into an oblivious nature. Via the repairing of his friendship with Aech and promotion against IOI and Sorrento, Wade illustrates toward the audience the full-circle development that he had undergone as a character. According to the text, "...Art3mis and Shoto get limos, and I have to ride to the airport with your ugly ass?... I can't wait'" (Pg. 316, Lines 7-15). This quotation illustrates the imminent threat ahead of Wade and the others being met with their intention to work alongside each other as one and defeat the enemy ahead.

Regarding the thirty-fourth chapter of the text, the narrative establishes the concept of tension toward the audience with the full-circle foreshadowing of the "final battle". Via the unity and teamwork of the OASIS users, Wade utilized his previous reputation and fame in a positive manner and enlighten the spirits of the many individuals who choose to stand beside him in the

upcoming conflict. The premise of Wade promoting the unity amongst the masses of the OASIS is established via the following quotation. According to the text, “A roar swept through the crowd as I flew in low over the shield and rocketed to a halt above the others. I rotated my orientation so that Leopardon.... Par-zi-val! Par-zi-val!” (Pg. 330, Lines 17-22). This quotation illustrates toward the audience Wade’s impressive action of uniting many under a common goal establishes the astounding development of his character throughout the text.

Regarding the thirty-fifth chapter of the text, the narrative depicts an intense illustration of tension and hype toward the audience via the description of the “High Five” against Sorrento and the Sixers. As the “world” promotes Wade to achieve victory, we obtain an intriguing and improved understanding behind the idea of unity. A concept that continues to be incorporated by the hands of the author via the following quotation. “A cheer went up from the thousands of avatars watching from the chaotic battlefield around us.” (Pg. 340, Lines 23-24). This quotation establishes the author astounding utilization of tension and unity within the addressed scene to immerse the audience into the “final battle” akin to being present there themselves.

Regarding the thirty-sixth chapter of the text, the narrative once again provides an in-depth illustration around the character of Wade Watts; taking primary and summarized focus toward his long and perilous journey. Via Wade’s decision to partake in the competition of achieving James Halliday’s “Easter Egg”, the author promotes the concept of the young protagonist having undergone a form of growth from an introverted pessimist to an unlikely but appreciated hero. The premise of the main protagonist’s “evolution” is detailed tremendously via the upcoming quotation. According to the text, “...everyone watching my channel (my ratings counter said I currently had more than two hundred million.... gutless Sixer-fellating punk.” (Pg.

349, Lines 19-28.). This quotation illustrates the evolution of Wade Watts through the entirety of the novel and growth via the concept of unity.

Regarding the thirty-seventh chapter of the text, the narrative establishes the concept of immense tension via Wade's near achievement of the "Easter Egg". Through the events of the late Halliday's "Hunt", the author promoted the complexity of the creator's mind through the utilization of various forms of media related to 80s pop culture, ensuring a form of understanding of their thought process. The addressed premise is promoted profusely via the following quotation. According to the text, "I'd reached the end. This was it. Halliday's Easter egg must be hidden somewhere in this room." (Pg. 359, Lines 13-14.). This quotation illustrates the demeanor of a perilous journey slowly reaching its astounding conclusion, promoting a form of tension toward the audience observing the "endgame".

Regarding the thirty-eighth chapter of the text, the narrative illustrates a powerful message relating to the existence of one's reality. The author incorporates the vastness and astounding factors of Halliday's OASIS as a form of detailing the audience their personal beliefs around the perception of one's own reality. The concept of accepting your reality, no matter the circumstances encompassed within it, is tremendously detailed via the following quotation. According to the text, "I created the OASIS because I never felt at home in the real world. I didn't know how to connect with the people there. I was afraid.... Because reality is real. Do you understand?" (Pg. 364, Lines 18-23.). This quotation establishes the intention of the author to spark his audience into accepting the lives that they reside in and push towards their personal desires; all the while, enjoying their life to the fullest.

Regarding the thirty-ninth and final chapter of the text, the concluding narrative establishes the significance of cherishing the memories one spends with the ones around them. With so many years available, human beings tend to push aside the individuals around them for objects of relief; potentially for various reasons such as fear. However, via the act of overcoming the innermost doubts of social interaction, a person shows their desire to live their life to the fullest and not possess any possible doubts. The previously addressed premise is illustrated via the concluding growth of Wade Watts who has evolved past his introvertive fear and choosing to live life. According to the text, "It occurred to me then that for the first time in as long as I could remember, I had absolutely no desire to log back into the OASIS." (Pg. 372, Lines 17-18.). This quotation provides the audience a powerful message of living in the reality that you reside in for as long as possible because one may never know when they could be the last time.

Regarding Steven Spielberg's 2018 film adaptation of the science fiction text "Ready Player One", the film promotes various concepts that run parallel with the existence of the original text. Via the intense establishment of themes originating from Ernest Cline's debut novel such as reality vs. illusion, escapism, unity and many more, Spielberg incorporated numerous ideas corresponding with the original novel that promote a greater understanding of the content detailed within not only the film but the original text as well. For instance, the most notable concept addressed profusely within Spielberg's film are none other than the contrast of reality and illusion. At times, individuals tend to experience events or undergo changes of their personal life that result in their questioning of what is ideal and what is real. The concept is established via the scene timestamped between 49:11 and 49:53 where Art3mis and Wade's relationship is wedged strongly via the latter's misconception of love. This scene illustrates Wade (Parzival)

lacking any understanding of proper human interaction due to being enamored by the seductive influence of the OASIS.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- *Coll, Kevin . "Cool Novel 'Ready Player One' Gets Publishing Rights and Movie Deal." **web.archive**. 21 June 2010. Web. Accessed 19 May 2021*

<https://web.archive.org/web/20101121204151/http://www.fusedfilm.com/2010/06/cool-novel-ready-player-one-gets-publishing-rights-and-movie-deal-with-warner-bros/>

This short article written by the website web.archive was one of the first secondary sources for this research project. While it is a short article that appears to lack much content compared to the other secondary sources. I considered it to be tremendously helpful because it provided information corresponding with the background information of the original text and film adaptation. The background of the original text and development of the film is addressed notably via the novel's author, Ernest Cline, establishing publication rights toward Warner Bros. through a bidding war. Thanks to this article, I was able to discover the origins of how the film began its development into the product it became in the modern day.

- *Jamie. "Ready Player One: Comparing the Book To The Movie." everything80podcast. 8 February 2019. Web. Accessed 19 May 2021.*

<https://www.everything80spodcast.com/ready-player-one-comparing-the-book-to-the-movie/>

This article written by the website everything80spodcast was a secondary source that proved to be tremendously helpful regarding the comparative analysis around the original 2011 text authored by Ernest Cline and the 2018 film adaptation directed by Steven Spielberg. Detailing the numerous comparisons and differences existing within both forms of media, the article enabled a further understanding around the factors that divide the novel and film from each other. Additionally, this secondary source provided detail onto the reasons behind the separate contrasts between the novel and the film. With a limited time-slot of around 2 hours, the film is expected to contain factors that shine away from the complexity of the original text. Overall, I perceive this source to be useful in discovering the factors between each source of media relating to the same plot.

- Maslin, Janet. "A Future Wrapped in 1980s Culture." *nytimes*. 14 August 2011. Web. Accessed 19 May 2021.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/15/books/ready-player-one-by-ernest-cline-review.html>

This article written by Janet Maslin for The New York Times provides an in-depth discussion around the plot events of the original 2011 novel authored by Ernest Cline. Originating from the same time around the novel publishing, I selected this source to provide the perspectives of potential individuals who had their attention captured by the existence of this text. It bears relevancy to my topic because it serves as a factor relating to the reception of the novel and its content. Through its usage, I believe I could promote an in-depth analysis what people thought of the text prior to the current day and age. Overall, this secondary source served as an efficient means of understanding the positive reception delivered to Ernest Cline's work debut novel.

- *Serle, Rebecca. "Ready Player One": An Interview with Author Ernest Cline". huffpost. 17 August 2011. Web. Accessed 19 May 2021.*

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/ready-player-one-ernest-cline-interview_b_929300

This article constructed by Rebecca Serle from the website huffpost details an interview with the author of “Ready Player One”: Ernest Cline. Apart from the other sources, this secondary source article centers primarily around factors corresponding with the author and the development of the article. Cline details toward the interviewer how he desired to promote the concept of the Internet being a positive factor within our current culture and stray past the stereotype of the Web being a negative influence. I chose to include this article because it provided a better understanding behind the reasons for Cline creating the original text in the first place.

- *Schager, Nick. "How is Steven Spielberg Going to Make a Great Movie Out of This God-Awful Book?" thedailybeast. 31 December 2017. Web. Accessed 19 May 2021.*

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-is-stein-spielberg-going-to-make-a-great-movie-out-of-this-god-awful-book>

This article constructed by Nick Schager from a website known as thedailybeast is a secondary source centered primarily around the scathing, negative reception that Ernest Cline's original text received from the public. While slightly detailing praise toward the film adaptation that would emerge a year after the release of this article, it details the potentially unknown faults that the novel possessed throughout the various years it has been released. The secondary source focuses around detailing the many flaws that the original text possessed, showing how even a potentially good text could receive negative reception as well. I selected this article as a secondary source because it promoted itself as a factor divided from the film adaptation that would come after its release. Overall, with its primary focus around the flaws of the text alongside its alignment with the text's reception from the public, I consider this secondary source to be an efficient one.

- Schaub Michael “ ‘Player One’: A Winning, Geeked-Out Page Turner” npr. 22 August 2011. Web. Accessed 19 May 2021
<https://www.npr.org/2011/08/22/139760489/player-one-a-winning-geeked-out-page-turner>

This article created by Michale Schaub from the website NPR bears a form of resemblance to the previously addressed secondary source. As a secondary source originating around the time of the novel’s original release, the writer detailed their entertainment via their experience of reading through the novel. Addressing the novel’s vast utilization of 80s pop culture media pieces such as movies and television shows, this article serves as a form of promotion toward any individual who possess interest in the concept of science fiction. I selected this secondary source because it acted as a form of positive reception toward the author and original novel; sparking any passerby individuals to consider the concept of reading the text. Overall, this secondary source is an efficient article that proved to be most helpful.