

Modern Popular Culture***Traditional/Folk and “classical” high culture***

Focuses on the New	Focuses on the timeless
Discourages reflection	Encourages reflection
Pursued casually to “kill time”	Pursued with deliberation
Gives us what we want, tells us what we already know	Offers us what we could not have imagined
Relies on instant accessibility; encourages impatience	Requires training; encourages patience
Emphasizes information and trivia	Emphasizes knowledge and wisdom
Encourages quantitative concerns	Encourages qualitative concerns
Celebrates fame	Celebrates ability
Appeals to sentimentality	Appeals to appropriate, proportioned emotions
Content and form governed by the market	Content and form governed by requirements of the created order
Formulas are the Substance	Formulas are the tools
Relies on Spectacle, tending to violence and prurience (including language)	Relies on formal dynamics and the power of symbols
Aesthetic power in reminding of something else	Aesthetic power in intrinsic attributes
Individualistic	Communal
Leaves us where it found us	Transforms Sensibilities
Incapable of deep or sustained attention	Capable of repeated, careful attention
Lacks ambiguity	Allusive, suggests the transcendent
No discontinuity between life and art	Relies on “Secondary World” conventions
Reflects the desires of the self	Encourages understanding of others
Tends toward relativism	Tends toward submission to standards
Used	Received

---Adapted from Kenneth Meyers, “All God’s Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christians and Popular Culture.” Cited by Marva Dawn, “Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down.”