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The Conventions of a Successful Teenage Romantic Comedy

When looking at a subgenre of a Teenage Romantic Comedy, 10 conventions really create the works. The main characters must have a somewhat romantic attraction towards each other. They usually consist of an attractive male and female who are still in high school. Both of the characters usually have different lives with different friends, that input a lot of comedic factors towards the work. There is a dilemma on why the couples should not get together, or if one person is pursuing the relationship more than the other. These two characters meet in a quirky and definitely memorable way for the audience. In these teenage Rom-Coms, there is usually a big event or turning point in the plot, consisting most likely of a school event. The couple usually is bound to have a fight, and there are reasons given that they should not end up together. Despite the obstacles, the two usually end up together, and although it is a comedy, the characters show romantic aspects throughout the plot and usually end up in the generic happily ever after. The 3 movie compositions that fit these subgenres very well are *To all the boys I've loved before*, *10 Things I Hate About You*, and *The Kissing Booth*.

In *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*, Lara Jean is a teenage girl who has 5 crushes all her lifetime, proclaiming her love for all of them. Suddenly, when she realizes these letters had gotten out, she starts to freak out. The boys who Lara wrote all these letters to all read the letters, and throughout all of this embarrassment, she might actually find a real relationship.

In *10 Things I Hate About You*, A reserved but smart girl named Kat faces a dilemma with her sister, Bianca. Their father will only let Bianca date, if Kat has a date too, knowing that Kat is not interested in dating. Bianca has her boyfriend set Kat up with a bad boy named Patrick, and even though both Patrick and Kat are crazy different, he eventually wins her over.

In *The Kissing Booth*, When a girl named Elle finds herself falling for her best friends' brother, she realizes that falling for this certain person is one of the main rules she can't break. None the less, she goes after him anyway, and she has to hide her relationship from her best friend, who she never hides things from. Her best friend ends up finding out, and she might have to choose her relationship or her friendship.

The movie *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*, is a visual mode and a digital media, being a Netflix Original Movie, which someone can stream through a subscription. The audience consists of younger teenage girls, mainly in high school, who can relate to the story. The style and design is composed of Lara Jean telling the story from her point of view. The movie is set in a school, which makes the teenage part of teenage romantic comedy true. The costumes consist of Lara Jean always dressing more professional, girly, and put together, whereas Peter's costume usually has a teenage boy vibe to it, and sometimes it is shown as him in his lacrosse uniform, giving him a jock feel. The dialogue of Lara Jean causes the style to be different than other works of film. She speaks at an elevated level and is very witty compared to the other ditzy high school girls. The rhetorical appeals in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* are ethos because it is coming directly from Lara Jean and she is a reliable and trustworthy speaker. There is also pathos because the viewers feel bad for Lara Jean once they know all of her personal letters got out, and that evicts emotion from the viewers. Peter and Lara both evict emotion from the viewers when their relationship, if that, becomes rocky, even though it started out as a fake. The

conventions of this movie are strong because there are two characters, and they definitely met in a quirky way, with Lara Jeans letters getting out, they are forced to sort of re-introduce themselves and start conversation. They had no intentions to date in the beginning but slowly they start to develop feelings for each other and go on the schools sponsored ski trip together. The two characters end up together, which is usually the case in all Teenage Romantic Comedies.

The second movie that embodies a Teenage Romantic Comedy is *10 Things I Hate About You*. The movie has a visual mode, and the media is digital, an online movie that is available for rent or to purchase online. The audience once again are teenage girls, aging from 13 years to 18 years. The style and design of this movie are important, because it shows how diverse all of the characters are in the movie. The costumes help a lot, where they have a '90s fashion to all of the looks. Bianca dresses more preppy and girly, with flowers and an obvious care about her look and presentation. This shows the differences in the two sisters because Bianca is the one who is pushing to be able to date for prom, so she cares more of what she looks like, wanting the attention of boys. Whereas her sister, Kat, dresses more of a bland costume choice, with neutral colors, showing that she is not one that screams for attention. Patrick, Kats wannabe love interest, definitely dresses more of the bad boy look. Always carrying a cigarette, he wears tighter clothes and pulls off long shaggy brown hair. The movie has dimmer lighting to it, showing that it was produced in the '90s. The dialogue is a major style in the movie too. There is a lot of snarky teenage commentary, which mainly shows the attitudes of Kat, and how she perceives things. She is expressed as much more serious and does not put up with as much as her sister. The Rhetorical Appeals in this movie are pathos, because throughout the story emotion is a big element between Bianca and whether she wants to let herself fall for this boy. She has

multiple different emotions, from the beginning of not wanting anything to do with boys, and then slowly transitioning into caring more, letting herself show more emotions in the end, which lets the viewers know she is starting to care for Patrick.

In the movie *The Kissing Booth*, the conventions of a Teenage Romantic Comedy are put to the test. The Mode of this movie is visual, with the Media being digital. *The Kissing Booth* is a Netflix original, which requires a subscription service with Netflix, to watch. The Audience is clearly for the female gender, with the age being mostly teenagers. The ages can range around 13-18, and while the movie is mainly for older teenagers, intriguing elements for younger girls are present. The Style and Design are key aspects in order to make this movie a true Teenage Romantic Comedy. One of the scenes in the movie is a bright, bubbly montage of the main love interests, Noah and Elle, going on dates and having fun and overall just showing them having a good time. That montage in the middle of the movie is a main key to show how well their relationship is going, and after that enjoyable moment for the viewers, the plot turns and there is some tension starting between the couple, which involves Noah's younger brother, and Elle's best friend, not approving their relationship. Whenever the movie consists of a happy or fun experience, the elements of the scene are altered. For example, there is a beach party scene where it has brighter lighting, like from the sunny day, and upbeat teenage music in the background. The costumes are also a key in the style of the movie. All of the characters are required to wear uniforms to school, but the subtle differences in each uniform tells us about the characters. Noah, the main jock, dressed as relaxed as possible giving him more of a bad boy look. He wears his uniform with an unbuttoned collar, and a loose tie. Elle usually perfects the look of a messy hairdo, and clothes not always fitting, which sort of shows her clumsy and awkward personality. Lee, the younger brother of Noah, has more of a nerdy costume always,

with a sweater instead of a tie and looking a little more put together than Noah. The style and design are important because they help set the tone for the movie, which shows the nerdy little brothers' friend and his more attractive older brother, and how it would be hard for them to get together. Pathos is a huge rhetorical appeal because emotion is all throughout this movie. There is emotion when Elle and Noah's relationship first starts blossoming, and then a lot of emotion when Noah's brother finds out, and Noah and Lee get into a physical altercation over Elle. Pathos is the main driver in *The Kissing Booth*, whether it is the good emotions of Elle and Noah having a relationship, or the scary and sad emotions of Noah and Elle having problems, or Noah leaving. Although in the conventions of most works in a teenage romantic comedy, the couple ends up together, but in *The Kissing Booth*, this statement is challenged. Elle and Noah do not end up together, college, which is a real-life problem since Noah is a year older, separates them as he leaves for University.

In the Teenage Romantic Comedies subgenre, the subgenre can still grow and introduce new fresh concepts and comedic elements. Not only can the comedy part change, but the romance can change too. An author has so many options if they're interested in spicing up a story. A lot of the times the audience always expects a perfect ending when watching or reading a romantic comedy, and to change it up or maybe not have the characters end up with each other is a good plot twist. Not every story has to have the two teenagers falling in love and ending up together, after all it is still high school.