Employ one mediating concept to articulate a relationship between poverty and the outsider in at least one of the films that we’ve watched during the semester.

As seen in the film City of God, the combination of poverty and power creates a vicious cycle that ultimately creates an outsider position. In an impoverished community, power is often the main goal of many of its members. If a member gains power, they gain control over their community as well as stability in their community. This allows that individual to gain wealth because of the control they have over the community. When power is the main goal in an impoverished community, violence rises in efforts to gain power. The individual creating the most violence is often the individual with the most power. The violence in the community causes hatred towards the one in power, creating him to be an outsider. The community then works to take out the individual in power, which forms a continuing cycle in the strive for power.

The film City of God is based on a true story about a small favela in Brazil. In the beginning of the film, Shaggy, Clipper, and Goose were known as the trio in power. They often committed robberies to help their families and friends with some extra money. When the trio left or died in the community, the position of power opened. As a child, Lil Dice was very power and money hungry and wanted to fit in. When he got older, he changed his name to Lil Z and started fighting for power. He began to kill in cold blood in gain what he wanted. He took out Carrot from his business so Lil Z could become one of the biggest drug lords in order to gain wealth. As he became more violent, he hoped to earn the respect of his community but instead he created a hostile environment, and everyone hated him. Lil Z became an outsider in his own community because of the violence he committed. Due to the community's poverty, they needed someone in power to enforce the laws. Lil Z used the community’s poverty to his advantage in order to gain the position of power. He became the “boss” of the city and when problems arose, people would go to him to solve them. When the runts would steal from bakeries, Lil Z would punish them in order to teach them a lesson.

In the scene when the runts stole from the bakery, they talk about how dealing drugs is where the money is at. They also discuss that in order to gain a position of dealing drugs, you must take out who is already in that position. This foreshadows that later in the film, the runts are the group to kill Lil Z. This restarts the cycle of power and soon the runts would also be seen as outsiders who did not truly fit in to their community.

Explicitly referencing formal elements in one of the films that we’ve watched, explain some ways in which a film participates in the genre Science Fiction or the Love Story.

The film Her participates in both genres of science fiction and the love story. The main character Theodore falls in love with an operating system named Samantha. This demonstrates the genre of science fiction and is an immanent problem of our future as our society moves further with technology. Samantha’s human-like qualities such as her voice and emotions serve as formal elements to allow the audience to understand the genre of the love story. Samantha’s voice does not sound like a typical computer voice such as Siri. Instead her voice sounds exactly like a normal human voice, which makes the audience feel as though she is human. Samantha is also able to feel emotions, unlike typical computers. Her ability to feel emotions allows the audience to better comprehend Samantha and Theodore’s relationship. Other formal elements such as sound and camera angle play a part in this film to further enforce the genre of the love story.

During the scene at the fair, the camera angle switches from a close shot to a wide shot. The close shot shows Samantha’s point of view looking at Theodore and the wide shot allows the audience to see Samantha and Theodore together. The close shot allows the audience to feel how Theodore feels and experience his feelings with Samantha in that moment. The wide shot reminds the audience that Samantha is not truly and physically here with him and that she is still just a piece of technology. In the scene when Samantha and Theodore get in a fight, Samantha “sighs” to signal disappointment and sadness. In that moment, the audience feels the way Samantha feels and can sense her pain. The audience is quickly shot back to reality and reminded that she is a device when Theodore gets angry at her and questions why she breathes when she doesn’t have to. This formal element of the sound of Samantha’s “breath” gives her another human-like property. By giving her this human-like property, the audience again feels as though Samantha is truly there with Theodore and the audience can understand the love story.

By giving Samantha human-like properties, the film also participates in the science fiction genre. Our society’s current technology does not operate the same way as Samantha in the film. Samantha has a human-like voice and can experience emotions which is what allows her to fall in love with Theodore. Our current technology is unable to experience emotion and sounds computer-like and not at all as humans sound. By creating this situation in the film, it allows us to think of the possibility of our future and what problems may come with those possibilities.