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### Critique of Final Project

*The 5C Manga Club* is a *yonkoma* (4-panel gag manga) about the shenanigans that take place in a newly founded manga club. The club consists of five members: CMC, Scripps, Mudd, Pitzer, and Pomona, who are anthropomorphized representations of the five Claremont Colleges as high school girls. CMC is the enthusiastic founder of the new manga club and she ropes her skeptical friends into participating in the first club meeting where they talk about their favorite manga genres. The gags in the story come from making references to the various stereotypes of each of the colleges and either correlating or juxtaposing those stereotypes with the visual and story tropes of the manga genres that each of the characters claim to love so much. The characters learn something new about each other through sharing their love for the different genres of manga, ranging from *shōnen* and *shōjo* to *seinen* and informational manga.

The central focuses of this manga are the “wacky” representations of the Claremont Colleges, and the author has attempted to have each of the characters embody the stereotypes associated with the college that they each represent. CMC comes across as pretentious and extroverted and embodies the class president trope seen in lots of manga in high school settings, and Pitzer is portrayed as a mellow pothead who is never without a joint and hemp hoodie. However, the other characters, Pomona, Scripps, and Mudd, have less cohesiveness in their embodiment of the colleges that they are named after. Pomona is an obvious tomboy athlete that

has no connection to Pomona College's reputation, and Mudd and Scripps lack definitive characteristics that connect them to their respective colleges. It is only by name that the reader can discern who is supposed to be which college, which somewhat undermines the point of representing the colleges as people to begin with.

The author employs a more generic manga style for most of the manga (large eyes, small mouths and noses, exaggerated expressions, etc.), and contrasts this neutral style with more stylized art to make jokes. When each character in the manga club says what genre of manga they like, they immediately change visually to embody the visual tropes of the specific genre. Scripps changes to a wide-eyed lovestruck character straight out of a *shōjo* manga surrounded by roses and sparkles, CMC becomes a *shōnen* protagonist resembling Naruto, and Pitzer becomes a Golgo-13 look-a-like to embody the grittiness of *seinen* manga. But, aside from these stylized panels, the rest of the manga devolves to a more simplistic "chibi" style that contradicts the more detailed artwork in the first strip of the manga. This is probably indicative of a lack of time that the author had to dedicate to the artwork following the first strip, but it also interrupts the flow and cohesiveness of the story. Furthermore, while the stylized panels do make effective reference to the prevalent visual tropes and styles of each of the prominent genres of manga, making such callbacks could hardly be considered jokes in-and-of themselves like the jokes one would find in other *yonkoma* like *Azumanga Daioh*.

Overall, *The 5C Manga Club* is a short manga that makes amusing references to the prevalent visual tropes across the variety of manga genres that are out there, and the character designs by themselves are diverse and appealing to the eye, but their connections to the colleges that they represent are muddled by loosely-defined stereotypes and a lack of character-building outside of the discussion of manga.