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Ch. 10 (Second Half) Reading Response

Halle Berry has constantly stayed in the limelight since the 1990s despite many other actors failing to do so. While talent is a big part of being an actor, I cannot help but point out that many times luck is a huge part of it as well. Halle Berry was fortunate enough to find the right projects to elevate her career. Two, in particular, helped: *Monster Ball* (2001) and *X-Men* (2000). *Monster Ball* established her in the film industry, with her winning the Oscar that year. Usually once an actor wins this award, they are more marketable and apart of the “club.” Then, *X-Men* was able to turn into a marketable franchise that spanned multiple decades (they are still making them!). Contrasting this with another marketable star from the 90s, Wesley Snipes, has fallen out of the limelight. Snipes’ *Blade* (1998) was a big hit, but it did not have nearly as much longevity as *X-Men*. Many factors outside of these actors’ hands led to the different career trajectories, thus the luck of the draw dictates one’s popularity.

Another big 90s star was Whitney Houston, who first began her film career in *The Bodyguard* (1992). I find music artists who transition into the film industry interesting. One thing that interest me is society’s insistence on putting these artists into a box. Even though Houston starred in many blockbusters, she is still characterized as a singer who tried out movies for a bit. This is the case with most any musician turned actor. David Bowie starred in many iconic films, yet he will always be known first as a musician. Most recently, Harry Styles has attempted to make this crossover (to a varying degree of success). I pose this question: why is it so hard for someone to be known as just an artist in general, and not box them into one type of art? Few artists have been able to defy this box, but someone who I think does it best is Donald Glover. Glover has been able to defy this box, I think, because he never stays in one box long enough for people to categorize him as belonging in this box. Glover is constantly jumping from starring in a TV show, to writing, to directing, to making an album, to recording a stand-up comedy routine, and, most recently, to writing a book. Maybe Houston would have been able to defy this box of “singer” if she had attempted an acting earlier in her career.