

# ZUR584 THEORY OF GENRE ANALYSIS

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## **Genre Studies in Mass Media: A Handbook** *Art Silverblatt*

### Chapter 5 – Cultural Context

# STRUCTURE



- In General
- Cultural Preoccupations
- Worldview
- International perspectives
- Inter-genre analysis
- Summary

# IN GENERAL



- Genres reflect cultural attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths.
- Popular programming reflects a level of acceptance and shared values among large numbers of people.
- Cultural context is the key to interpreting media messages.



# CULTURAL PREOCCUPATIONS



- defined as the relative importance that a culture places on a particular issue

- SEX
- APPEARANCE
- CELEPBRITIES
- CRIME



- » Genres do not merely reinforce culture but also shape attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths.

# WORLDVIEW



- Every genre presents its own distinct worldview (soap opera – Desperate Housewives)
- Special category – reality shows (Big Brother, Survivor)
- Associated with young audiences



# INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES



- Many popular genres are transcultural – genre export and conformation

*„Soap operas are the closest thing we have to a world religion.“*



# INTER-GENRE ANALYSIS



- Examines issues, characters, and themes that appear across genres and reflect areas of widespread interest.
- identification of trends - how widespread the attitudes are within a culture?

# SUMMARY



- Genres reflect cultural attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths.
- Genres can shape this.
- Every genre has its own worldview.
- Genres are transcultural – Big Brother, Sesame Street
- Inter-genre analysis can identify trends.



# Thank you for your attention

Sources:

SILVERBLATT, Art. *Genre studies in mass media: a handbook*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, c2007, 106 - 135. ISBN 9780765616692.