

GENRE STUDIES IN MASS MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

GENRE STUDIES

- Theoretical approaches
- They give students tools to research genres
 - the analysis must be **systematic**
 - concrete **examples** from media texts

GENRE

- According to Silverblatt (2007: 3), “a genre is a type, class, or category of presentation that shares **distinctive** and easily **identifiable** features.”
- E.g.:
 - reality shows, soap operas, documentaries (TV)
 - country, hip-hop, talk (radio)

GENRE

- A **portal** through which media messages are received
- Genres present a specific **worldview**
- Distinctive patterns: premise, plot, structure, style, conventions
- Genres **reflect, reinforce** and **shape** cultural attitudes/preoccupations

MEDIA LITERACY

- A **critical** thinking skill applied to the channels of mass communications
- It enhances enjoyment and appreciation of genre
- A framework for the systematic analysis of **MEDIA MESSAGES**
- Media message – the underlying **themes/ideas** contained in a media text

LEVELS OF MEDIA MESSAGES

From the reading or your experience, can you list and explain the difference between the specific levels of media messages?

LEVELS OF MEDIA MESSAGES

- **MANIFEST** messages – direct and clear
- **LATENT** messages – indirect and beneath the surface, tend to escape our attention
- **CUMULATIVE** messages – so frequent that they form new meanings

ANALYSIS

- What images, feelings, or other sensory perceptions do you associate with this music?

ANALYSIS

Analyze this excerpt from a media genre. What genre is it?

“Desserts are bleak, blues musicians are old, fish swim in water, winters are cold, girls are weak, beasts feel no love, roses are red, learning is tough, road-signs are boring, green factories will never come true, responsible people walk, and luxury is for an elitist few.”

ANALYSIS

Music and the spoken word...

- Can you guess now?

ANALYSIS

- Watch the following Hyundai commercial. In pairs, discuss what manifest and latent messages the commercial sends to the audience.
- What types of cumulative messages do automobile commercials deliver in general?

ANALYSIS

- MANIFEST message: owning this car is something which goes against stereotypes = it's "cool", clever, for everybody, for people with differing opinions from the majority...

ANALYSIS

- LATENT messages:
 - women are presented better than they are thought to be in the real world
 - no stereotypes about men are presented (e.g. cold business men)

ANALYSIS

- typical women are shown as having long hair, young, slim... (underrepresentation of women)
- representation of men as being more creative (male teacher, male sculptor), and being in control (male driver)
- normal/right/good is presented as different, new (only a surface deconstruction of the stereotypes)

ANALYSIS

- feminine characteristics are focused on with picture and spoken word (“girls are weak”, “blues musicians are old”), exceptions
- masculine characteristics – only picture (sculptor, teacher, driver), taken for granted
- Do you think the advert would send different messages if a woman was shown to always drive the car, to have done the sculptures, to be the creative teacher?

ANALYSIS

CUMULATIVE messages:

- femininity is bad (weakness, feelings, passivity)
- men are more creative than women
- men are more active than women
- the most important female characteristics is beauty, attractiveness, obedience