MEDIA PRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS

YEARS 11 AND 12 | ATAR AND General

Glossary

Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Glossary

This glossary is provided to enable a common understanding of the key terms in the Media Production and Analysis course syllabuses. It is also recommended that the Organisation of Content section of the syllabuses be read and used for building a common understanding of terms in these courses.

Agenda Setting
This suggests that the media, especially the news media, have the ability to identify, select, promote and order content in such a way that it affects the relative importance of a given issue and therefore how the public responds to it. Agenda Setting theory argues that the media does not tell us what to think but they do tell us what to think about.

Audience Profile
This is how a target audience/market is determined to assist companies and organisations develop production, marketing and promotional strategies. It can include information about people's age, gender, education, occupation, income, lifestyle and media interests.

Audience Reach
In media marketing and measurement, audience reach refers to the total number (or percentage) of different households, groups or individuals who view/access a particular medium or piece of content during a given period of time.

Auteur Figure
Traditionally in film, auteur refers to a director who has a distinctive and personal style that is reflected across a body of work (e.g. Alfred Hitchcock, the Coen Brothers, Quentin Tarantino). More recently, the term has been expanded to also include other members of a production team (e.g. cinematographers, editors, script writers) who exhibit a stylistic signature throughout their work.

Codes and Conventions
Codes are the tools we use to create meaning and to construct and analyse media work. Codes include Technical Codes (the ways we create meaning by how we record an image), Symbolic Codes (the ways we create meaning by what we see in an image), Audio Codes (the ways we create meaning through the use of sound) and Written Codes (the ways we construct meaning through the use of text).
Conventions are repeated ways of constructing media work, using codes that, over time, have become accepted by audiences (e.g. a fade to black indicates time has passed; a scene of a car chase will include dramatic music).
The meanings that are constructed by codes and conventions are culturally determined.

Commercial and Non-commercial Media
This refers to the industry context of media production.
Commercial media are privately owned organisations in which a financial profit motive is a major influence in the production process. (e.g. Channel 7, News Corp, Warner Brothers)
Non-commercial media are publicly owned and generally have a smaller scale of production where financial profit is not necessarily the priority (e.g. the ABC, SBS).

Connotation and Denotation

Denotation is the literal meaning of a symbol or object (e.g. an apple is a small piece of fruit grown on a tree; a love heart is a red symbol in the shape of a heart).

Connotation is the associated judgement or meaning we give to a symbol or object (e.g. an apple represents healthy living; a love heart represents love, affection and romance).

Context

Because media work is created in a particular time and place, its production and consumption are influenced by the social, cultural, political, historic and economic conditions of that time and location. The context will influence the content of media work and its interpretation by the audience (e.g. a 1950s sitcom may feature a stay-at-home mother while one made in the 2000s may feature a working mother).

The viewing, listening and interacting context may also have an influence on audience response.

Controls and Constraints

These are formal and/or informal elements that influence and limit what the producer of a media work can and cannot include in a production. These elements may include political, technical, legal (including classification, regulations, censorship), ethical, editorial, financial, genre, audience, community expectations and time considerations.

Editorial Control

This is the capacity by managers of media companies to influence media content (especially in news and current affairs) so that it complies with specific rules, models, expectations and/or guidelines. This may be influenced by media owners, professional associations (e.g. Australian Journalists' Association) and government regulation.

Entertainment

An event, performance or activity that is enjoyable and engaging, designed to please others.

Ethics

These are behavioural codes and standards which have been established by a society, an organisation or individual of what is acceptable and unacceptable, based on values. While an action may be legal, it may not be ethical (e.g. one of the Code of Ethics of the Australian Journalists' Association is that journalists 'shall respect grief and personal privacy and shall have the right to resist compulsion to intrude on them').

Genre

This is a term used to classify media work according to their use of repeated, recognisable and predictable sets of codes and conventions and narratives (e.g. film genres include horror, musicals, documentary and science fiction; TV genres include sport, news and reality shows; video game genres include first person shooter, real-time strategy).

Ideology

This is a system of values and beliefs of a group which influences the way a society is organised and functions and how a group makes sense of their world. It often refers to a set of political, cultural or religious beliefs and practices that characterise a particular society (e.g. democracy, communism).

Immediacy

To give the audience a sense of involvement, urgency, credibility and excitement, producers of media work will try to suggest their representations of reality have occurred very recently or involve minimal construction (e.g. the use of news images from people's mobile phones).

Mainstream Audience

This is a term used to describe large, commercially based, intended audiences who consume popular media work, such as Hollywood films and reality television programmes. They share a dominant value system when interpreting media work.

Marketing Strategies

These are the ways that media work is promoted to audiences (e.g. film trailers, print advertisements, star actors appearing on TV or radio chat shows, figurines given away at fast food outlets, merchandise).

Media Aesthetics

These are the ways codes and conventions have been artistically combined and/or manipulated to create an emotional or intellectual response by an audience to a media work.

Media Theories

These have been developed to help explain the interrelationship between audiences and media work (e.g. Reception Theory suggests that media work is encoded by the producer to reflect his/her values and messages. The text is then decoded by the audience and different people will decode the media work in different ways according to their context).

Media Trends

These are the directions particular media may be developing at any given point in time and which influence media production and audience expectations.

Narrative

Narrative is a chain of events in cause and effect relationship occurring in time and space. It is created through the interaction of the narrative elements of setting, character, conflict and resolution. The use of media codes and conventions contribute to the construction of the narrative.

Narrative Structure

This is the way the chain of events or cause and effect are manipulated to form a story (e.g. multiple plots, multiple viewpoints, chronological order).

Naturalisation

This refers to the process where, as a result of repetition in the media, a stereotype is accepted as an accurate representation.

Niche Audience

This is an audience with more specialised and focused interests than a mass audience (e.g. film goers who prefer festival films or foreign language films, readers of gaming magazines, people who listen to classical music radio stations).

Persuasive Techniques

These are a wide range of methods that producers of media work use to deliberately create an emotional impact or response from the audience and/or to establish a point of view. They are used in a variety of media forms and genres including documentaries, propaganda, advertising, newspaper opinion columns, feature films. Techniques can include manipulation of codes, repetition, rhetorical questions, celebrity endorsement, exaggeration and stereotyping.

Point of View

This is the intended meaning constructed by a media producer, using narrative elements, codes and conventions, to position the audience to interpret a media work in a particular way.
It may also refer to the point from which the narrative is presented or refer to the perspective of a character, the director or the audience.

Preferred Meaning

This is the producer's intended message. It is created through the selection and manipulation of images, words, sounds, codes and conventions to have the audience respond in a particular way (e.g. while watching a documentary, the viewer may be persuaded to agree that shark culling is the best way to prevent shark attacks).

Propaganda

Media content which is used to purposely persuade audiences towards a specific point of view, by influencing their emotions, opinions, attitudes and actions, reinforcing the position or control of the organisation behind its construction.

Realism

The manipulation of codes and conventions to re-present a constructed world in a believable way to the audience.

Representation

This is the process by which real-life ideas, people, events, places and objects are constructed and represented in media work. Some elements of reality are selected and emphasised over others in order to represent or stand for someone or something. Meaning is derived from shared values and context.

Selection Processes

These construct meaning, realism and points of view in media work by what is selected to be included (e.g. who to interview, what shots to use, where to film); what is omitted and therefore will not be part of a media work, which may impact on an audience's interpretation (e.g. in a current affairs programme, not including an interview with a victim or someone opposed to the subject; only showing the violent parts of a pro-refugee demonstration) and what is emphasised, to draw attention to a particular aspect to influence the audience's interpretation (e.g. including multiple long answers from a politician, but only a few, short responses from a member of the public).

Stereotypes

These are oversimplified and exaggerated representations that become naturalised through repetition. They are constructed through selection processes that emphasise and exaggerate a small range of attributes (e.g. dumb blondes, evil scientists).

Style
The organisation of media techniques by the producers of media work, to create a distinctive appearance, mood or tone, through the choice and manipulation of all elements of construction, including techniques, codes and conventions. Producers may create an individual style (auteurs) or a recognisable group style (e.g. film styles include film noir, German expressionism, classical Hollywood narrative).

Subculture
Subgroups of people within a dominant culture who share interests, beliefs and/or practices that may differ from the mainstream (e.g. surfers, cosplayers).

System of Communication
This is the process in which media producers work within a media form to create messages and how audiences interpret these messages (e.g. film, TV, radio).

Theme
An identifiable central message created by the media producer that regulates all production aspects (such as narrative, character development, conventions etc.) within a media work.
A media work may have more than one theme, though one theme is often more primary (e.g. the subject of a media work may be love, and its theme could be how love involves sacrifice or love can conquer incredible obstacles).

Values and Attitudes
Values and attitudes are embedded in media work.

Values are what individuals or groups think are important and hold to be of worth (e.g. justice, honesty, education).

Dominant Values are those values that are widely shared among a group, community or culture in a particular context.

Attitudes are the positions held or responses an individual or group make, as a result of their values. They are beliefs about specific individuals, groups or ideas (e.g. anyone who steals should be sent to prison). Generally, an individual's values will remain relatively constant during their life, their attitudes are likely to change as a result of maturity and experience.