

MEDIA STUDIES KEYWORDS GLOSSARY

- **Media platforms** are Broadcast, Print and E-media
- **Institutions** are the organisations that own and distribute media. For example, the BBC
- **Convergence** is the coming together of the media technologies
- **Genre** is a type, or classification, that groups together media texts of a particular type. For example, horror or comedy genres in film
- **Hybrid Genre** is when genres combine
- **Media Forms** are the distinguishing characteristics of a type of media product
- **Narrative** refers to the structure of the story constructed then understood by consumers-storyline
- **Denis McQuail Uses of Television Theory** refers to the four primary reasons we view television; To inform, To personally identify with, for integration and social interaction and for entertainment
- **Blumler and Katz's Uses and Gratifications Theory** covers the same areas
- **Genres** have elements typical to that particular genre. For example a Western will have a *narrative* that sees good triumph over bad, *iconography* such as cowboy hats, saloons, dusty, deserted roads, deserts, a sheriff with a gleaming badge, horses, cacti and wooden built buildings, *characters* that are tough, fair, mean, bad, heroic and vulnerable and the *setting* will be an isolated town where there is one main road running through the buildings of that town
- **Intertextuality** is when within a text references are made to another text. For example, in *Breaking Bad* there are many scenes where the characters effectively pay tribute to the films of Quentin Tarantino by basically re-enacting the odd scene direct from Tarantino's movies
- The **Watershed** refers to the times on television where consideration for younger audiences has to be taken into account. For example, between 5.30 am and 9.00pm programmes must be suitable for family audiences

- **Codes and Conventions** refers to the aspects of a particular media product that you would expect to be in place. For example, in a *Documentary* you would expect to see archive footage, hear a voiceover, have actual footage, see interviews, have experts commenting on matters, have witness testimonies, have reconstructions have vox pops (voices of ordinary people) and show graphical information. On a magazine front cover you'd expect to see a main image, a large title, sub headings about the articles inside, a small barcode and a date and price for that particular issue
- **News Agenda** refers to the planned content of a news programme
- **News Values** refers to the importance a particular institution may place on a particular story. For example, Sky tend to favour dramatic, emotionally upsetting stories for their main item on the news
- **Representation** refers to the way a particular subject may be presented to the audience. For example, the portrayal of women in a TV series like *Desperate Housewives* and a programme like *Coronation Street* is completely different. Both deal with life on a particular road but the women characters are a lot more realistic in the soap opera
- **Polysemic** analysis is when you can see more than one meaning with regard to representation in a given text
- **Semiotics** is the study of the meaning of signs and codes
- **Roland Barthes** introduced the idea of the *signifier* and the *signified*. The signifier does the communication and the signified is that which is communicated
- **Denotative** refers to the most obvious understanding we get from a media text
- **Connotative** refers to the second meaning we get from a media text
- **Media Language** simply refers to the way any media text communicates. This is not just visual, but also from an audio point of view and via the written word
- **Audience** refers to the people who consume media products

- **Deconstruction** refers to the way we break down a media text via denotation and connotation
- **Anchorage** refers to the way the text directs the reader to what the producer of the text wants the audience to understand from that text
- Media texts can be looked at and analysed by using McMahon and Quinn's 1988 theory on codes, looking at **technical** (how there are purposefully constructed), **symbolic** (what they are trying to put across) and **written** (the way the written word is presented to anchor the text)
- The **Protagonist** refers to the main character at the centre of any media text story
- **Enigma codes** are those signs in a given that set up an expectation in the viewer/consumer where they wonder what is going to happen
- **Action codes** are those signs in a given text that result in a narrative's action being developed and moved on. Action signifies another action will take place. For example, a gun being cocked in a film will always result in the gun being fired
- **Niche Audiences** are those audiences that favour a particular type of media text. They are small and unique to a particular genre and type of text
- **Representation Theory** can be broken down into three areas; *Reflective* looks at how something is represented to be as real or truthful as possible. For example, the news. *Intentional* looks at the purposeful manipulation of texts to get the consumer to believe what you want or buy a product. For example, an attractive person drinking Coke makes the consumer want to go and buy it. *Constructionist* looks at the fact that as individuals we are all different so we cannot be pigeon holed into any particular group. It sees a weakness in the first two areas
- **Todorov's Equilibrium Theory** looks at how texts start with a certain scenario, then at how actions can affect that particular scenario and then at a situation where the actions have changed the course of

events to create a new equilibrium that has changed form the start of that particular text