Changing Representations in the Media

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CHANGING REPRESENTATIONS IN THE MEDIA

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- MediaEdu/FilmEdu (Edusites Ltd) Editor
- Part Time Teacher (OCR/WJEC)
- Examiner – WJEC MS4 (A2)
- 11 Years as Media Curriculum Manager
REPRESENTATION AND MEDIA STUDIES

Core concept underpinning all specifications:

- OCR G322 Section A: Textual Analysis and Representation (TV Drama)
- OCR G325: Collective Media Identity (fundamentally linked with representation)
- WJEC MS1: Q3 – Representation
- WJEC MS4: Representation a key question option
- AQA MEST1: Section A - Media Representations question and occasional Section B Cross Media Study question
- AQA MEST3: Section B topic option – Representations in the Media
Why do Representations ‘change’?

- **Socio-political change – media response** (Gay Marriage legislation, female head of IMF, Paralympic success, fragmentation of collective identities....)

- Evolitional cultural response – *Brokeback Mountain, Shortlist Magazine, Arte from Glee*.....

- **Audience consumption** – expecting more (Woolwich murder), desensitisation (C4’s ‘Man with the 10 Stone Testicles’), wider access (media anywhere, different platforms)

- **Institutional change** – deregulation, ownership, Wikileaks facilitating more freedom of information....

- **Digital technology/New Media** – convergent media, online distribution, immediacy without understanding, 2.0, the prosumer, meme, constructing one’s own identity, citizen journalism....
How to build a billionaire

The eight secrets of the sickeningly rich. PIN number not included
Has Simon Pegg gone all Hollywood?
Do all the previously mentioned changes affect the way we teach representation?
No

Anything in any media form is codified into signs and symbols and can always be read by an audience.

HAVE THINGS CHANGED THAT MUCH, HAS DIGITAL MEDIA TECHNOLOGY BLOWN MEDIA STUDIES OUT OF THE WATER OR IS IT A “NEW WAVE IN THE SAME OCEAN”?
And

Yes

Changes need to be acknowledged
Teaching Representation

Institutional Factors – ownership, regulation, media form/platform

Same concepts apply – holistic teaching

Narrative – one way or two way

Genre – iconography, intertextuality, hybridisation...

Audiences – target audiences, positioning, responses and readings, theory

Form and style - Semiotics, deconstructing technical and symbolic codes
WHAT AREAS OF REPRESENTATION WOULD YOU TEACH FROM THIS TRAILER?

March 2013 BioShock Infinite trailer….

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9sm0vQlul4 (UK gameplay trailer)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLHW78X1xeE (US trailer)

Further arguments against the fragmentation of collective identity:

VERTIGO FILMS
VERTIGO FILMS (2009 AND 2012)
How has Digital Technology changed Representation? – colleague quotes

On demand, interactive access to content anytime – 2 way dialogue/communication challenges traditional notions of representation.

Textual analysis is no longer straightforward – what digital technology do we classify as a media form?

New media technology allows for democratic change (citizen journalism, ‘the truth’ is getting closer, post Leveson debate…..)

New media still means the same thing as old media – two way or one way representations are still constructed (Video Games - ‘old media’, new platforms)

Technology will obliterate representation linking with……..

The need for more immediacy & entertainment – less meaning/ideology through representation. “ONLY OLD PEOPLE WATCH TELEVISION”.
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From

To

Get route

Route planner classic

Traffic

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Postcode, town, or place of interest

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News and views on motoring, travel and much more.

Latest offers

Latest posts
DUKE NUKEM

Men want to be him
Women want to be with him
Are all areas of Representation study still relevant – see exam board?

Identify recent texts you would use to teach the following and why:

- National/Regional Identity (OCR *Doc Martin* – summer 2013 G322….)
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Gender
- Social Class/Status
- Sexuality (OCR – *Fingersmiths*)
- Ability/Disability (OCR – *Coming down the Mountain*)
- Event (WJEC)
- Issue (WJEC)
- Place (AQA)
- Technology (AQA)
- Celebrity (AQA)

• See sample texts
TEACHING REPRESENTATION – SAMPLE TEXTS

- BBC News Olympics Coverage
- Thatcher Death Coverage (ITV Doc same night, Newspapers, ‘Basildon’)
- TV News representations of poverty/the environment (representation of issues)
- Holby City/Eastenders
- Mad Men
- My Mad Fat Diary (E4 – 16, 16 stone, psychiatric problems, reconnecting)
- The Graham Norton Show/Jonathon Ross Show
- Outnumbered
- Sky Sports v BBC female sports presenters
- GTA IV/COD Black Ops/Halo/BioShock (ethnic stereotyping)
- Minecraft (intention to create a ‘genderless game although clearly male characters)
- World of Warcraft – nostalgia, cultural stereotyping)
- Glee (challenging ethnic stereotyping?)
- Embarrassing Bodies/The Undateables (issues e.g. body image)
- The SIMS 4
- Mighty Boosh (postmodern fragmentation)
- Waterloo Road/Skins
- Downton Abbey
- Game of Thrones/The Borgias
- Star Trek (2009 and 2013 Into Darkness)
- Mary and Max (2009 animation)
GENDER......
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Out January 25th

Play with Life

Play with the 70s, 80s & 90s Stuff

Out January 25th

Justin Bieber Flashes His Bum on Instagram

21 January

View comments

Nathan Sykes Responds to Joey Essex's We Love Pop

18 January

View all 4 comments

Two New Rihanna Single Artworks, (ft. Chris Brown)

17 January

View 1 comment

Latest News.

Justin Bieber Flashes His Bum on Instagram
DECONSTRUCT ISSUES OF REPRESENTATION, WITH EVIDENCE FROM THE FOLLOWING CLIP:

GAME OF THRONES: Fire and Blood (8.45 – 15.30)
GCSE REPRESENTATION TERMINOLOGY

Terminology

- Representation
- Realism – linking with genre
- Stereotyping – challenging/reinforcing (categorisation, identification, recognition)
- Mainstream/dominant or traditional representations
- Star Marketing
- Alternative or challenging
- Binary oppositions (high end)
- Male/Female gaze (high end)
Terminology

- Representation
- Realism – linking with genre
- Stereotyping – challenging and reinforcing
- Star marketing – secondary persona/generic typecasting
- Male/female gaze
- Myth and representation
- Mediation – selecting and construction, audience positioning
- Mainstream/dominant or traditional representations
- Alternative, challenging, liberal representations
- Marginalisation
- Binary oppositions and dominant v subordinate culture
- Ideology (high end)
A2 TERMINOLOGY (as per board)

Terminology

- Representation
- Degrees of realism e.g. social realism v hyper realism
- Stereotyping – challenging and reinforcing
- Star marketing – secondary persona/generic typecasting
- Male/female gaze
- Myth and constructed identity
- Ideology (representations revealing ideology e.g. patriarchy)
- Mediation
- Mainstream/dominant/traditional or hegemonic representations
- Marginalisation
- Binary oppositions
- Alternative, challenging, liberal or pluralistic representations
- Mediation
- Dominant, negotiated and oppositional readings
- Post feminism
- Collective Media Identity
- Fragmentation and postmodern world
- Cross cultural representations
WHAT REPRESENTATIONS THEORISTS DO I TEACH?

AS

- **Levi-Strauss** – binary oppositions (see following slide)
- **Vladimir Propp** – 8 character roles
- **Daniel Chandler** – representations are constructed, repeated, feel natural/unmediated
- **Steve Neale** – Genre repetition and difference linking to representation
- **Laura Mulvey** - male/female gaze
- **Richard Dyer** – stereotypes legitimise inequality
WHAT REPRESENTATIONS THEORISTS DO I TEACH?

- **Levi-Strauss** – binary oppositions
- **Vladimir Propp** – 8 character roles
- **Daniel Chandler** – representations are constructed, repeated, feel natural/unmediated
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- **Laura Mulvey** - male/female gaze
- **Richard Dyer** – stereotypes legitimise inequality
- **Stuart Hall** – dominant, negotiated or oppositional readings
- **David Buckingham** – fragmentation of identity, representations constantly change
- **David Gauntlett** – pluralism within a hegemonic framework
- **Angela McRobbie** – mapping post feminist icon theory
- **Baudrillard** – hyper real representations and simulcra e.g. TOWIE
**LEVI-STRAUSS: REPRESENTATION OF DOMINANT/SUBORDINATE GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Subordinate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Other ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle/upper class</td>
<td>Working class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle aged</td>
<td>The young/old <em>(Skins)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>Homosexual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Able-bodied</td>
<td>Disabled <em>(Mary and Max)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional identity</td>
<td>North/Midlands/Irish / <em>(Game of Thrones)</em></td>
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<td>(London/south east)</td>
<td>West/Scotland/Wales</td>
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</tbody>
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MARY AND MAX: 2009 (11.54 – 17.54)

- Australian clay-animated black comedy-drama

- 1976 – Mary Daisy Dinkle is a lonely little girl living in Mount Waverly, a suburb of Melbourne.

- Teased at school for having a birthmark on her head her father is never around and her mother is an kleptomaniac alcoholic.

- One day she decides to write to someone in New York by chance – Max Jerry Horowitz who is morbidly obese with various mental health problems including Asperger Syndrome and depression.

- The narrative offers a philosophical, pluralistic examination of notions of isolation, alienation, disability, friendship and love.
REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH

• YOUTH CULTURE USED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH OLD SCHOOL MORAL PANICS AND BORING TO TEACH – IT STILL IS BUT TO A LESSER EXTENT (Cohen, Moral Panics)

• POLITICALLY AND SOCIOECONOMICALLY HEGEMONIC ASSUMPTIONS MAINTAINED BINARY OPPOSITIONS (YOUTH AS DEVIANT OR VULNERABLE IN NEED OF PROTECTION)

• THESE REPRESENTATIONS WERE CONTINUALLY REINFORCED AND CIRCULATED AS ‘COMMON SENSE’ LEADING TO EMBEDDED IDEOLOGICAL BELIEFS THAT ONLY WITH AGE COMES WISDOM

• WATCH THE FOLLOWING SKINS CLIP YOURSELF: Series 4, Disc 1, Episode 1 (00 – 06.15) AND DISCUSS HOW YOUTH IS REPRESENTED.
REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH

• WEB 2.0 HAS CHANGED THE FACE OF TECHNOLOGY, EMPOWERING YOUTH, SUGGESTING A MORE CONFIDENT, ‘VALID’ IDENTITY (e.g. music and digitisation via YouTube, social networking – the Prosumer). YOUTUBE AS CULTUTAL PHENOMENON (Michael Wesch)

• GAUNTLETT DISCUSSES THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY E.G. THE DEVELOPING ‘PROSUMER’ SUGGESTING A MORE PLURALISTIC LANDSCAPE FOREGROUNDING THE INDIVIDUAL AGAINST THE COLLECTIVE GROUP – see MEMEs e.g. Justin Beiber

• BUCKINGHAM STATES THAT IDENTITY IS A UNIQUE MARKER OF A PERSON BUT HOW OTHER PEOPLE SEE US AND SUGGESTS A SIGNIFICANT FRAGMENTATION OF SOCIAL GROUPS (less obvious youth sub cultures facilitated by the internet and individualism)
REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH

HENRY JENKINS – YOUTH ONLINE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN MULTIPLE COMMUNICATION HOWEVER NEW MORAL PANICS INCLUDE CYBER BULLYING, PIRACY, HACKING……(see Uplink hacking simulation game)

MORE YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS BUT STEREOTYPES AND MORAL PANICS STILL REMAIN (computer games and obesity, young female drinkers, unemployment and social deviance (London Riots coverage, Kidulthood, Adulthood, Top Boy). Deviancy amplification – in any representation.

FACEBOOK AND YOUTH = ‘INTERPRETATIVE, INTERACTIVE COMMUNITIES’ BUT IMMEDIACY WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING (sharing short links, no full narrative comprehension).

HOWEVER – IMMEDIACY HAS MEANT ‘WE MEDIA’ AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT VIA CITIZEN JOURNALISM CHALLENGING TRADITIONAL NEWS MEDIA
REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH

AUDIENCES STILL EXPECT STEREOTYPES BUT IT IS WHOLLY DEPENDENT ON MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND DEMOGRAPHICS – TV SOAPS and DAILY MAIL v High School dropout David Karp Tumblr founder at 18/19 selling to Yahoo for $1.1 bn

MOVES TOWARDS SELF CONSTRUCTION – IDENTITY LESS REFLECTED BY MAINSTREAM MEDIA

COMMUNITIES FORMED FROM SHARED IDENTITY

FRAGMENTATION APPARENT BUT LESS SO IN TRADITIONAL MEDIA.
SO HAS ANYTHING REALLY CHANGED?

REPRESENTATION OF HEROES AND VILLAINS SEEMS THE SAME:

• Male criminals/abusers still litter news media – Philpott/Jimmy Savile/Operation Yewtree (*Big Brother* and C5 are even currently exploiting the fact that one of the housemates was an Operation Yewtree Detective Constable).

• Female victim narratives are still relevant – Sharon Watts, Cheryl Cole, Vicky Pryce (Chris Huhne speeding running story)

• Exploitation of disability for voyeuristic entertainment – yep

• Stereotypical representations of sexuality: absolutely – Gok Wan, Graham Norton, Alan Carr....

• Acceptable naughty boys – Jeremy Clarkson, Jimmy Carr, Charlie Sheen
After being sacked from his £1.2m per episode role in the Sit Com Two and a Half Men for being always late, always drunk and always abusive, Charlie Sheen celebrated by brandishing a machete and drinking tiger’s blood on top of a rooftop stating:

“The winds are howling tonight. The Gods are hungry. The beast is alive. I don’t give a f**k”.

He then landed a gig that paid him a similar wage in Anger Management
Thanks for your patience

Feel free to e mail me on
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