

QUIZ ONE REVIEW

WHAT APPROACHES HAVE WE COVERED?

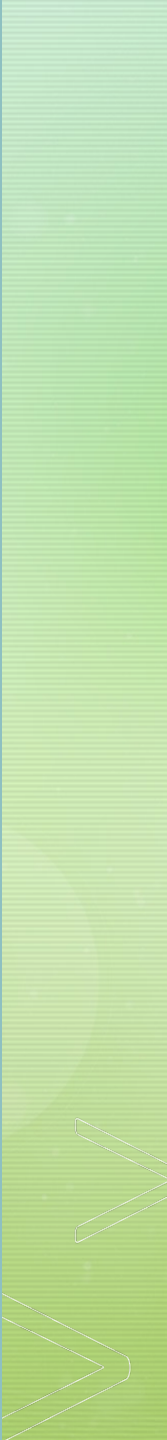
- The first section of the course introduced the “contextual constraints” in which we view media but focuses primarily on SEMIOTICS as an approach to media literacy.
 - The world we live in is constructed through language
 - Language is an attempt to name the world
 - Power is at work in the construction of stories
 - We look at how signs work: how we give and take meaning.

FROM A SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE WHAT DOES THE WORLD LOOK LIKE?

- THE WORLD IS CONSTRUCTED THROUGH SIGNIFYING SYSTEMS (OR SIGN SYSTEMS OR CODES).
- CODES CONSIST OF SIGNS
- SIGNS ALWAYS POINT TOWARD SOMETHING DIFFERENT FROM THEMSELVES
- THE SIGN IS MADE OF A SIGNIFIER (a sound/image) AND A SIGNIFIED (a concept)



CODES

- THESE CAN BE ANY SIGNIFYING SYSTEM CONSTRUCTED BY HUMAN BEINGS.
 - FASHION, GENRES OF FILM OR TELEVISION, POLITICS, GENDER, INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND PRACTICES.
 - CODES CONTEXTUALIZE THE MEANING WE GIVE TO SIGNS
- 

SIGNS

- SIGNS ALWAYS POINT TOWARD SOMETHING DIFFERENT FROM THEMSELVES
- GREEN POINTS TO A CONCEPT “STOP” AND NOT TO “GREEN”. THIS IS IMPORTANT: THE “MEANING” IS SOCIAL, NOT NATURAL.
- THE MEANING COULD HAVE BEEN (AND CAN BE) DIFFERENT

SIGNIFIERS AND SIGNIFIEDS

- THE SIGNIFIER IS A SOUND AND/OR IMAGE
- THE SIGNIFIED IS THE CONCEPT GENERATED IN OUR MINDS.
- THE CONCEPT MAY BE DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON THE "READER'S" PREVIOUS HISTORY, CLASS, GENDER, LIFE EXPERIENCE, POLITICAL VIEWS, ETC.

RELATION BETWEEN SIGNIFIER AND SIGNIFIED

- THIS IS NOT A NATURAL RELATIONSHIP
- THE SOUND/IMAGE AND THE CONCEPT DO NOT NATURALLY OCCURE
- THEIR RELATIONS ARE 'ARBITRARY' MEANING THEY COULD BE DIFFERENT.
- EG. RED DOES NOT NATURALLY MEAN "STOP"

DENOTATION AND CONNOTATION

- DENOTATION: THE OBVIOUS, TAKEN-FOR-GRANTED, COMMON SENSE MEANING THAT 'READERS' GIVE TO SIGNIFIERS
- CONNOTATION: THE HIDDEN OR IDEOLOGICAL OR CRITICAL MEANINGS THAT CAN BE DERRIVED FROM READING TEXTS FROM DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW

PARADIGMS AND SYNTAGMS

- PARADIGMS: EXAMINING THE OPPOSITIONS AND CHOICES THAT MAKE UP A TEXT (LIKE A MOVIE)
 - We can see rich/poor; strong weak; men/women; etc
- SYNTAGMS: THE 'FLOW' OF EVENTS ACROSS A TEXT (LIKE A MOVIE)
 - We can see development of characters, issues, objects or events across a media text from beginning to end.

BERGER'S MAIN CLAIM

- THE AUTHOR OF OUR BOOK ARGUES THAT IF THE MEDIA ARE POWERFUL STORYTELLERS WHO HELP TO SHAPE OUR PERCEPTIONS OF THE WORLD AND INFLUENCE HOW WE ACT TOWARD AND WITH IT: IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE BECOME “MEDIA LITERATE”
- MEDIA LITERACY IS AN ACT, A PRACTICE, A PERFORMANCE: WE HAVE TO ENGAGE WITH THE MEDIA CRITICALLY.



SEMIOTIC CONCEPTS AND MEANINGS

- WHEN WE LOOK AT TEXTS LINEARLY, WHAT KIND OF ANALYSIS ARE WE CONDUCTING?



SEMIOTIC CONCEPTS AND MEANINGS

- WHEN WE SEEK OUT THE HIDDEN OR DEEPER POSSIBLE MEANINGS OF TEXTS, WHAT KIND OF ANALYSIS ARE WE CONDUCTING



SEMIOTIC CONCEPTS AND MEANINGS

- WHEN WE HIGHLIGHT THE LEVEL OF MEANING THAT AUDIENCES MOST LIKELY COME AWAY WITH AFTER WATCHING A MOVIE OR LISTENING TO A SONG OR SEEING AN AD, WHAT KIND OF ANALYSIS ARE WE CONDUCTING?



SEMIOTIC CONCEPTS AND MEANINGS

- WHEN WE FOCUS ON THE OPPOSITIONS IN A TEXT – LIKE WHO IS POOR AND WHAT ROLES MEN AND WOMEN PLAY, WHAT KIND OF ANALYSIS ARE WE CONDUCTING?

THE MEDIA'S PRIMARY CUSTOMER

- WE SHOULD RECALL THAT THE COMMERCIAL MEDIA ARE AUDIENCE PRODUCERS: THEY PRODUCE AUDIENCES THAT ARE ATTRACTIVE TO THEIR POTENTIAL OR PRIMARY CUSTOMERS – THEIR CUSTOMERS ARE OTHER BUSINESSES THAT ADVERTISE IN THEIR NEWSPAPERS, ON THEIR TELEVISION STATIONS, IN MOVIES, OR ON SOCIAL MEDIA



QUIZ ONE WILL BE NEXT WEEK

- THE QUIZ WILL BEGIN AT 9:00
- BETWEEN 8:30 AND 9:00 YOU CAN ASK ANY QUESTIONS OR RAISE ANY CONCERNS.