

DOC 3 - Keywords

Popular culture - The objects and forms of expression and identity that are frequently encountered, commonly understood or approved, and characteristic of a particular society at a given time. Popular culture encompasses the most immediate and contemporary aspects of our lives. These aspects are often subject to rapid change, especially in a highly technological world.

"Sub-cultures" - Cultures with styles, identities, and interests specific to certain groups. Youth subcultures, for example, offer members cultural outlets often rejected by traditional institutions such as family, school, and even dominant popular culture, e.g. early rock and roll, early hip hop. Sub-cultures are sometimes described as counter-cultures. In a capitalist system, they are subject to market appropriation and a loss of counter-hegemonic potential.

Cultural representations - Constructed 'likenesses' that come in various forms: electronic media, films, television, music, photographs, art, advertisements, video and other forms of popular culture. Written materials — academic texts, novels and other literature, journalistic pieces — are also representations. Representations can never truly be real or objective. Instead, they are constructed images, images that need to be analyzed for their ideological content. The unpacking of ideological contradictions is an important part of that "textual" analysis.

Textual analysis - Every cultural representation must be analyzed not only in terms of who constructed it (the author) but also in terms of who is being represented, for what purpose, at which historical moment, for which location, and using which textual strategies.

Intentionality - The ideological codes that crisscross a representation may produce meanings never imagined by the author. Later generations who receive the representation may confer new and previously unimagined meanings because the context and ideological formations have changed. Even audiences contemporary with the author may construct different meanings according to their position in society.

Authority - The denial of cultural representation to specific groups has historically formed a corollary to the literal denial of economic, legal, and political rights to those groups. The struggle to 'speak for oneself' cannot be separated from a history of being spoken for and the struggle for equal opportunity to represent one's collective and individual experiences. The struggle for women's, Black, and Asian American studies in the late 1960s, for example, was an attempt by certain groups to "define" themselves and tell their (his)story from their point of view.

Intersectionality — Cultural products often reveal the intersection of ideological categories in a given society at a given time. The contradictions arising from those intersections can be perceived operating in specific scenes, characters, in the casting of a play or film, visual imagery, and other formal elements that make up the cultural product.