Representations

Portrayals

Interpretations

Connor (2001): "…representation is not just about the way the world is presented to us but also about how we engage with media texts...representation is, therefore, just as much about audience interpretation as it is about the portrayals that are offered to us by the media".

Chandler (2001): Representation refers to how the media constructs realities in terms of certain key markers of identity.

Identities

Major key markers of identity include class, age, gender, ethnicity and disability - **'CAGED'**.

This encapsulates the idea of the way social identities constructed through the media are used to lock people into identities such as "male" or "female".

Transgressive

In the real world these key categories aren't self-contained; a woman, for example, may be represented differently in the media depending on her class, age and sexuality.

Social

How social groups are represented focuses on the role of the media in terms of how representations of, for example, gender, contribute to the creation of social identities of masculinity and femininity. What we're interested in here, therefore, is how the media uses representations for a variety of intended and unintended purposes, to construct social identities.

Stereotypes

One-sided or partial representations of, for example, a social group (such as "white people"); they involve oversimplified expressions of group characteristics and usually accentuate some feature in a negative way (although sometimes groups can be positively stereotyped).

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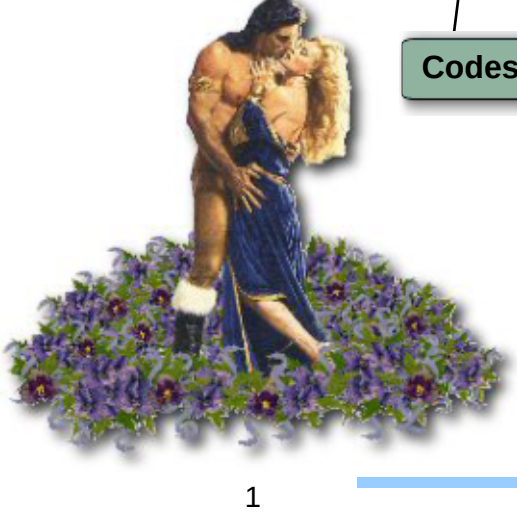

Codes

Media stereotypes are not necessarily used in a simple ideological or biased way (to demonise a particular social group, for example). Often - as in television advertising where a message has to be transmitted and understood in about 30 seconds - they're used to ensure a wide audience quickly understands the background to something. In this respect, stereotypes are often used as codes to familiarise an audience with particular situations.