

# Introduction

- Materiality and Popular Culture
- Network theory
- Culture as something we do
- Film cultures including audience spectatorship
- New technologies and cinema
- Learning outcome 1: Theoretical approaches to the study of popular culture
- Film cultures – may be useful in relation to your research (interviews, focus groups, questionnaire)

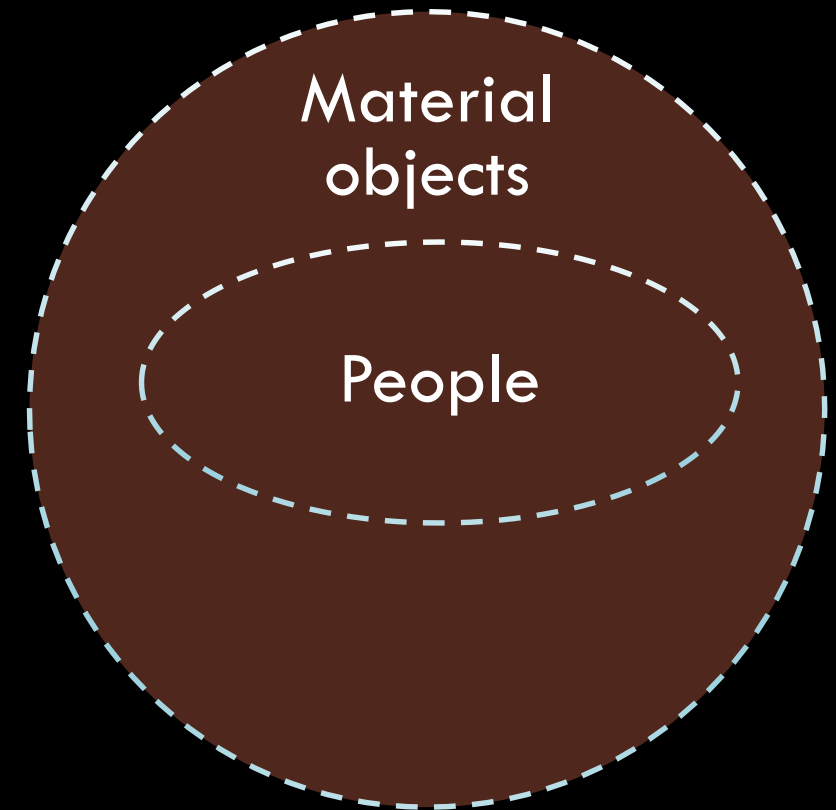
# Materiality

- Popular culture as material form
- E.g. clothes, phones, cards, toys, DVDs, games, iPod, iPad etc.
- We are enabled and constrained by the materiality around us



# Materiality as actor

- Actor network theory
- Action/Interaction between
- Networks are key to our understanding
- Material objects may become part of a temporary network
- E.g. photographic display at The Hive



# Intermediaries and mediators

- Material objects as intermediaries – information is unchanged
- Material objects as mediators – transformed, distorted, modified the meaning
- Network = string of actions – each is a mediator
- All actors act
- Popular culture is the meshing of meaning, materiality and social practice
- Objects in relation to significations

# Culture

- Culture is something we do
- Not something we have
- The material world is framed by culture
- The material objects already exist
- But how we understand them is the result of culture
- And things signified in relation to representations
- Power is associated with the significations

# Material objects in the global world

- Different things signified from the same material objects
- E.g. Coca-Cola (0.59 mins)
- E.g. Christmas (4.33 mins)



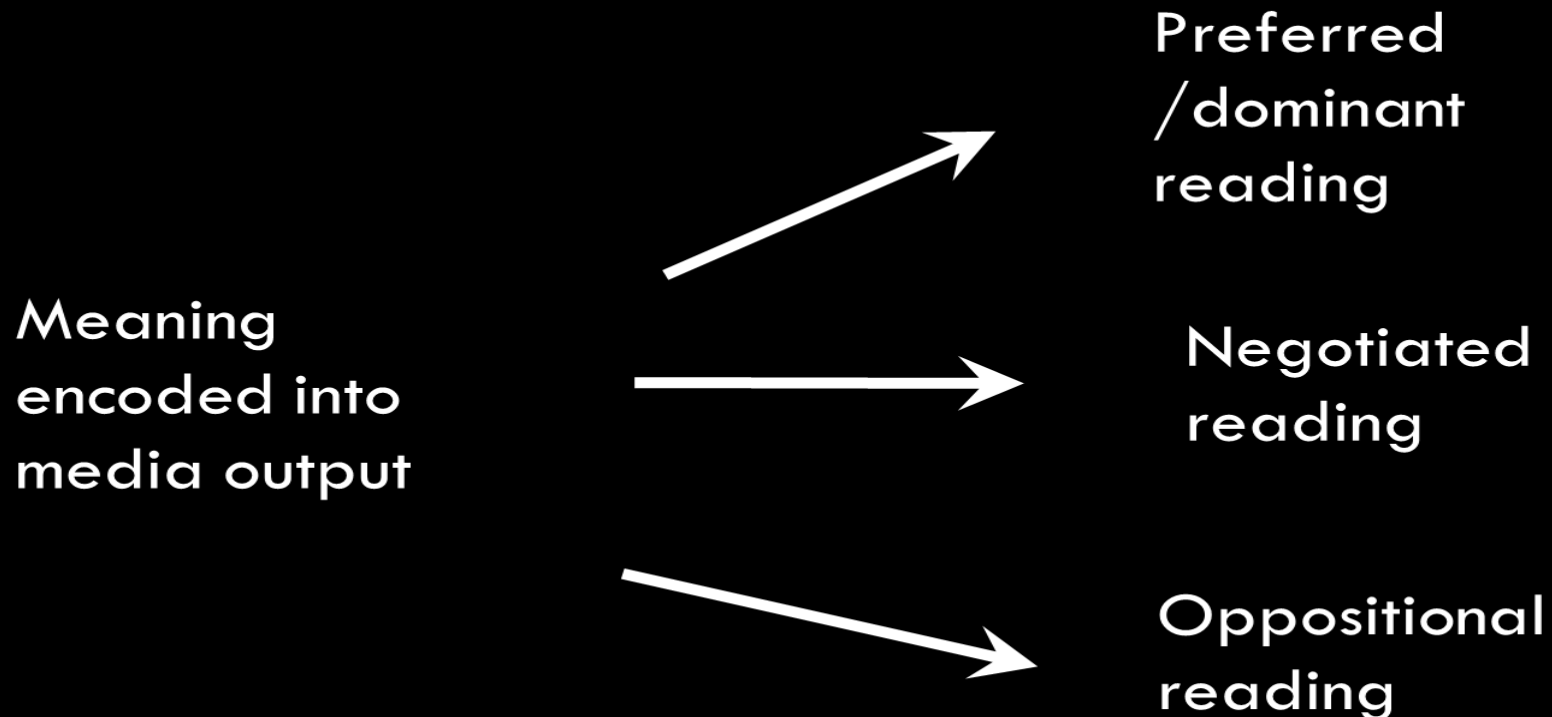
# Film Forms

- Elements that make a film
- Content = what film is about
- Form = how that is expressed
- Literary design = story, setting, action, characters, names, dialog, titles, deeper meanings, themes
- Mise en Scène – everything in the shot
- Visual design = choice of set, costumes, makeup, lighting etc.
- Cinematographic design = frames, lenses, camera angles etc.



# Stages of meaning

- Encoding = actual production of the text
- Auteur studies (author/director)
- Decoding – reception of the text
- Stuart Hall, domination, oppositional, negotiated readings





# Film experience

- Group activity/intense
- Blur boundaries between real and imaginary
- Similar to dreaming
- Freudian theory – power of the look
- Voyeur – one who makes an object of those caught in power of the gaze



# Identification

- Identify with or see ourselves in characters on screen
- Metz (1982) – camera becomes our eyes, our perception
- Or separation between audience and image
- Lacan – mirror stage relates to seeing oneself on screen



# Fantasy

- Extends the boundaries of conscious and unconscious
- Boundaries of biological sex or cultural gender or sexual preference are not fixed
- Enables viewer identification

# Post-cinematic age



- Influence of technologies e.g. gaming, multimedia
- Transformed our lives day to day, moment to moment
- Technology intervenes into, transforms and informs our environment (cultural landscape)
- Material objects changing how we interact with film
- Changing the meanings of film

# Summary

- Popular culture as material
- People act and interact with material objects, each other and material objects with material objects
- How things are constructed to have meanings
- Power is implicated
- Film meaning involves encoding and decoding
- Hall – dominant, negotiated and oppositional readings
- Audiences look and spectate
- Identify with the characters or see ourselves as the characters
- Genres of films may highlight identifications
- Technology transforming meanings

# References

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- Mayne, J. (2002) Paradoxes of Spectatorship. IN G. Turner (ed.) *The Film Cultures Reader.* London, Routledge.
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