

Materiality and popular culture

1. Much of popular culture takes **material form**.
2. Mobile phones, clothes, wedding rings, greeting cards, toys, bikes, DVDs, game consoles, computers, iPad, iPod, magazines, football grounds, nightclubs, pubs, dress codes,
3. Most of our lives are **filled with material** objects – things we can touch
4. We interact with these objects in many ways
5. We produce them, **consume them, talk about them**, admire them
6. Sometimes the **material capacities** of an object may **transform** what we do

Materiality as actor

1. According to **actor network theory**, popular culture is not just people **acting and interacting**
2. It is **people acting** and interacting with **material objects** and material objects interacting with each other
3. Actor network theory treats **objects** as part of **social interaction**
4. This is because it is assumed that these **objects make a difference to our actions**
5. Our experience of popular culture is constructed and mediated with the use of material objects
6. How something performs or is made to perform within a given network determines **how it is perceived**

Intermediaries and mediators

1. Material objects can be both **intermediaries and mediators**
2. **Intermediaries convey meaning unchanged** whereas mediators transform, distort and modify the meaning they are supposed to carry

Networks defined

1. **A network is a string of actions where each participant is treated as a full-blown mediator**
2. **All** the actors **act** in a network
3. There are connections in which **actors make other actors act**
4. In popular culture, when we recognise the interaction between the human and the popular culture

Meaning and materiality

1. There are **material objects** as part of our existence
2. We interact with them and use **them to interact** with others
3. They go with us through our narratives
4. And become the **material of our emotions** and thought
5. The objects we encounter though, **have meanings**
6. How they are made **to signify meanings**, informs how we **think** about them, **value** them and **use** them

Culture as doing

1. Culture, therefore, is not **something we have**, but **something we do**
2. The **social production and reproduction of meanings** realised in materiality and social practice

3. Meanings are not in the materiality of things - but how things are **constructed to be meaningful**
4. The material properties of an object are not culturally constructed
5. What is **constructed is its inscription** and **location** in culture

Meanings

1. The material object then is expanded to include **what it means in human culture**
2. The human acts of making things mean, transforms them into **cultural objects**
3. The material world is **framed by culture**
4. the **material objects already exist**,
5. but how they are understood is the **result of culture** and things that are **signified in relation** to representations

Power

1. The meanings that organise and regulate social practice
2. Come from those with **power** to make things mean in particular ways

Material objects in a global world

1. When **different cultures** share the same material objects
2. The cultural differences are the different meanings they have and how these meanings are **raised in social practice**
3. People from different societies use many of the same material objects
4. But **what they signify changes enormously**

Coca-Cola

1. **Coca-Cola** for example, is everywhere
2. The **iconic bottle and logo** are **globally recognised**
3. But to understand its status we have to move beyond that and think about it as an object of culture

Film Form

1. These are the **elements** that make a film
2. **Content** is what the film is about
3. **Form** is how that content is expressed
4. **Form and content are combined in film**

Literary design

1. These are the **elements of a film** that come from the script and story ideas
2. The design includes the **story, setting, action, characters, names**, dialog, titles and any **deeper themes or** meanings
3. Another broad aspect is the **mise en scène** which is everything that goes **into the individual shot** of the film
4. **The visual design** – choice of set, costumes, makeup, lighting, colour **actors performances**, arrangements of these before the camera
5. **Cinematographic design** – how the camera records the visual elements
6. Choice of frames, lenses, camera angle, movements – what is in focus and what is not

EDTING

1. The montage or **editing** is how the individual shots the camera records are put together to create the story
2. Most have **hundreds of shots and Audience identification** with characters can be **encouraged** or **discouraged** in this way

Sound design

1. The same type of choices are made with the sound track
2. The dialog of the characters is **easy to hear** whilst others is **inaudible**
3. **Music also works to influence our understanding of film**

Stages of meaning

1. There are two stages of making meaning within any given text
2. **Encoding and decoding**
3. Encoding is the actual **production of the text**
4. Often this is studied in **auteur (author)** studies –
5. By analysing a number of films made by the same auteur one can find common **stylistic choices and themes**
6. And then by implication for your interviews – maybe something that person identifies strongly with in those films

Decoding

1. This is the **reception** of a text
2. Those who use the texts- the audience – **decode the texts meanings** depending on a variety of things
3. This is where we can apply the notion from Stuart Hall about **dominant, oppositional and negotiated readings**
4. These work in complex ways in relation to identities – how we perceive ourselves

Film Cultures - spectatorship

Address and reception of films

1. Film cultures and theories look at how **texts construct viewers**
2. And how those texts **may be read in different** ways
3. Meanings are **created and assigned** in complicated ways

Film experience

1. The film experience has been **talked of as an event** - Often group activity but maybe different these days.
2. Intensity make us more susceptible to the **power of the message**
3. Blurring of boundaries between **imaginary and real** – at the heart of cinema experience
4. Watching a film is similar to **dreaming**

Film spectator

1. **Psychoanalytic** theory has emphasised **the gaze of the audience.**
2. Reflected in its references to the audience as spectator.
3. Freudian theory – **power of the look is important**

4. Audiences **look and spectate**
5. The **voyeuristic look** - the **voyeur is one who makes an object of those** who are **caught in the power of their gaze but actors know they are watched.**

Ourselves on screen

1. **Identify with or see ourselves** in characters on the screen
2. Screen heroes and heroines are held to offer a wish fulfilment
3. Two ways of watching:-
 - a. Camera **becomes our eyes, we see the film as our perception** rather than someone else's
 - b. Or there is a **separation between audience and image**

Lacan and the mirror stage

1. When a young child recognises itself in the mirror and realise they have a **separate identity from their mother**
2. Hence the child begins to **construct an identity**
3. Children see a **representation of themselves (as we do in cinema)**
4. Narcissistic – seeing **oneself reflected on the screen**
5. Could argue that in the cinema, **we see everything but ourselves**

Fantasies

1. **Fantasy** occupies a distinct place in psychoanalysis – It extends across the **boundaries of the conscious and unconscious** desires
2. The analysis of the cinema as a **form of fantasy**
3. In fantasy the **boundaries of biological sex or cultural gender or sexual** preference are not fixed and can be challenged when watching film

Post-Cinematic age

1. **Post-cinematic technologies** include everything associated with the rise of interactivity e.g. Gaming, multimedia, different internet platforms, new types of text such as music video
2. **There are new ways of consuming** these as well
3. Shaviri suggests this **has transformed our lives** in ways related to our day to day, moment to moment experience
4. The new technology **intervenes into, informs and transforms the cultural** landscape
5. **Gaming, music video and interactive and audio-visual** technology are **informed by cinematography**
6. Cinema itself **incorporates new technological advancements** within itself
7. Therefore the **material objects also transform the meaning** and highlight the importance of understanding the meshing of material objects with each other and humans.