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Reality TV, Genre Theory, and Shaping the Real

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Overview

> The whole world is passed through the filter of the culture industry. […] The more densely and completely its techniques duplicate empirical objects, the more easily it creates the illusion that the world outside is a seamless extension of the one which has been revealed in the cinema.
>
> - Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry,* 1944 (56)

The following lesson plans highlight reality TV's reliance upon the structures and conventions of popular narrative entertainment. Although much reality TV conveys information through documentary modes (interviews, handheld camerawork, on-location shooting), such programs also make "reality" conform to familiar narrative and genre codes. This unit emphasizes *how* and *why* reality TV reproduces Hollywood tropes by introducing reality TV's industrial, production, and post-production techniques. The lesson plan encourages students to recognize that the pleasure contemporary audiences glean from reality TV comes, in part, from the application of genre film's storytelling techniques and dominant ideologies to "real events." Under the guise of truth, reality TV gives viewers an even more powerful reason to cling to hegemonic beliefs regarding neoliberalism, race, gender, family, and citizenship. As Horkheimer and Adorno famously argued in 1944, popular media blurs the boundaries between truth and fiction. The phenomenon of reality TV bears out their claim in complex ways, reinforcing their Marxist critique of the culture industry for a new generation.

The following is intended for introductory students in a media studies survey course. I have used these techniques in a reality TV unit that directly followed a unit on Hollywood genres. I found that organizing the syllabus in this way gives students an opportunity to review what they have learned about the structure, form, and belief systems associated with genre film, and then encourages them to apply these theories to a new medium. Juxtaposing these units helps demonstrate that media forms are in constant dialogue with each other, and that formal and narrative conventions from one context are often given new significance in others. Genre theory alone may paint a single, and limited, picture of the ever-broadening field of media studies. Yet genre theory as a tool for analyzing reality TV can help clarify the relationship between truth and form, as well as the specific needs – for information, entertainment, comfort – that audiences rely upon media to fulfill. In an age of fake news and infotainment, such clarity is increasingly necessary.

The unit includes screenings of *The Bachelorette, What Would You Do,* and *The Real World,* and readings by both reality TV and film genre scholars. The unit culminates in a group project and

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presentation in which students are assigned a reality TV episode and required to reconceptualize it as a genre film.

The goals of this unit on reality TV are:

1. To make students more aware and critical of what is presented as "real" in contemporary media.
2. To introduce the formal techniques (editing and sequencing of footage, use of voice-over and music, and use of different documentary modes) that help transform reality into a recognizable narrative.
3. To review the characteristics of genre films and to give students an opportunity to practice identifying them in a different medium.
4. To help students understand how reality TV uses genre formulae to serve a social and ideological function for viewers.
5. To use reality TV as an example of how mass media blurs the lines between reality and fiction in order to maintain financial and social power over consumers.

General Timeline

This series of lesson plans takes five class periods to cover. Day 1 encourages a close reading of *The Bachelorette* in relation to ideology and highlights its similarity to popular narrative film. Day 2 serves as a general introduction to reality TV's production and post-production strategies for manipulating footage. Days 3 and 4 focus on *What Would You Do?* and *The Real World* and asks students to explore issues of narrative construction, characterization, and the kinds of reassurance or catharsis that these qualities offer viewers. Day 5 is devoted to group project presentations and a discussion about the stakes of blurring the lines between fiction and life.

Because not everyone will have five full classes to devote to discussing reality TV, the lesson plans can be adapted for shorter units (suggestions in the detailed lesson plan).

Rationale

Although "reality TV" encompasses a sprawling array of genres over a vast period of time, this lesson plan will focus on the millennial surge in programs that place non-actors in planned scenarios and then present their reactions. These "reality entertainment" (Ouellette 2014, 1) programs like *Survivor, The Bachelor,* and *Big Brother* constituted a collective turn toward reality TV in the early 2000s, and there are many reasons for this phenomenon. First, network restructuring, reduced advertising revenue, rising above-the-line costs, and strikes by actors' and writers' unions made unscripted non-professionals an appealing alternative to executives concerned with the bottom line (see Raphael 2004; Magder 2004; Jordan 2006). At the same time, increased segmentation of the television "mass" audience and competition from other forms of media pushed networks to look to different entertainment forms (Hill 2014, 117), and the rise of convergence culture piqued public interest in watching "ordinary people in ordinary and extraordinary situations" (Murray and Ouellette 2004, 3). But during a time riddled with anxiety and doubt – the uncertainty of Y2K, rising political rifts, and the horrors of 9/11 – American viewers also seemed to look to reality TV for comfort. Rather than engaging with reality TV as a call to action or a hard reflection of their time, audiences derived pleasure from

its offerings of spectacle, emotional release, and reassurance as enacted by "real people" (Andrejevic 2004, 13-132 and 195-205).

This lesson plan probes one of reality TV's central paradoxes: that the genre is valued for its authenticity, and yet the "realness" that it offers is only seductive because it gives us the comforts, joys, and closure that real life cannot. Fans often cite spontaneity and relatability as the primary draw of reality TV (see Andrejevic 2004, 9; Crew 2006, 67-70), and yet seem to derive most of their spectatorial pleasure from the conventions that mirror fictional storytelling. Surveys in 2000 and 2003 of nearly 10,000 respondents found that around 70% recognized that subjects in reality TV programs are performing for the camera (Hill 2014, 123). Interviews and focus groups demonstrate that viewers acknowledge the guiding hands of directors and producers in shaping reality to fit familiar character and storytelling structures (Andrejevic 2004, 130-138; Hill 2014, 129). As Mark Andrejevic notes, demand for reality programming actually increased after 9/11, surprising critics who believed that viewers would crave escape from the terrors and increased surveillance of everyday life (Andrejevic 2004, 4). The spike in reality TV viewership suggests that when audiences find their social and political context most perplexing, they turn to reality TV not for a wake up call, but for validation of what they already know and believe. As Andrejevic and Dean Colby argue, nothing so powerfully reinforces dominant beliefs about history, nation, and future as real people in real life situations playing them out (Andrejevic and Colby 2006, 208).

Film scholars have long argued that Hollywood genres serve the same purpose, acting as a modern-day myth that helps viewers to understand and work through the endless complexities of life (Schatz 2003). As Thomas Sobchack outlines in his essay "Genre Films: A Classical Experience," popular cinema fulfills this mythical function by simplifying social problems and creating clearly defined characters that invite either our immediate identification or repulsion. Heroes and villains emerge on either side of a neatly articulated conflict; evil is locatable within a single entity that can be quashed by a protagonist that is more capable than we are and whose world is devoid of the complexity or structural pressures that often prevent us from taking action in our own lives. Through these character and narrative conventions, genre films enable viewers to feel catharsis when conflicts are resolved (Sobchack 2003, 109-110).

The lesson plan pairs the show *What Would You Do?* with Sobchack's essay because of the program's heavy reliance upon these genre formulae. *WWYD* (2008-2013) applies *Candid Camera* tactics – staging scenarios and recording the reactions of passersby – to moral situations "ripped right from the headlines" (as explained in *WWYD*'s opening credit sequence). The show invites viewers to ask themselves: what would you do if you witnessed racist hostility toward a stranger? If you saw someone being sexually harassed? If you witnessed abuse? While not all subjects do the "right thing," the very premise of the show sets the stage for a valiant act, so that each segment ends with some unsuspecting person saving the day and thus restoring our faith in humanity. The careful, post-production shaping of footage articulates an unmistakable conflict, antagonist, victim, and hero. Like genre films, *WWYD* offers comfort to viewers by presenting fictionalized scenarios that are inspired by real systemic social problems, but personalizes and simplifies them so that they can be solved through a single person's good

intentions (see Nichols 2010, 271-272). Such a process remains a staple of many reality programs such as *The Real World, Survivor,* and *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy,* even though they appear to be less scripted than *WWYD.* As Jon Kraszewski argues in his analysis of *The Real World,* reality TV often establishes a microcosm in which systemic social problems such as racism or gendered violence can be played out by individual cast mates. Through rigorous pre- and post-production efforts, the show establishes the problem as an interpersonal conflict between two politically and ideologically opposed characters, and proposes a solution through their eventual friendship (Kraszewski 2004, 179-183; Andrejevic and Colby 2006, 196, 205-206). Like the catharsis offered by genre films, this unlikely friendship articulates reality TV's "therapeutic ethos," which "manages social conflict and contradiction by translating it into the realm of the individual psyche…" (Andrejevic and Colby 2006, 196).

Reality TV does not provide a hard look at contemporary crises in order to inspire long-term, radical change. Instead, it offers temporary relief through highly engineered scenarios, and therefore helps uphold, rather than challenge, the status quo. Like genre films, reality TV educates us on how to accept national values and beliefs regarding beauty, wealth, sexuality, and citizenship (Hess Wright 2003, 42). The lesson plan therefore begins with a screening of a recent episode of *The Bachelorette* because few reality TV programs so directly promote conservative gender and economic ideologies as *The Bachelor* franchise. As the unit progresses, students will be attuned to noticing the ways in which dominant beliefs are upheld even in shows that appear to promote diversity or progressive thought.

As students will find, a lot of reality TV is constructed to create the same kinds of scenarios, characters, plot resolutions, and cathartic release that we know from genre films (Horkheimer and Adorno 2012, 44; Ott and Mack 49-50). Ultimately, this series of discussions and class activities provides students with evidence that reality TV is "structured reality" – what Annette Hill defines as "a hybrid form that plays with dramatic construction and social interaction. Producers work with a cast of real people, structuring scenes and storylines to enhance drama and comedy" (Hill 2014, 116). A variety of hands-on activities push students to explore the space between reality and fiction, and to enact some of the labor that goes into producing reality TV as we know it today. Students will cut a YouTube video documenting an everyday activity (a day at the beach, a road trip) into a dramatic scene, and reconceptualize a reality TV episode into a full-length genre film. My hope is that by the end of the unit, students will be able to separate documentary form from the promise of objective fact, and will discover how reality TV is rewriting the visual codes of truth and fiction.

Lesson Plan

The following provides the assigned readings and screenings, in-class clips, discussion questions, and activities for a five-day unit on reality TV. Because class times and unit length vary greatly, I hope that the following can serve as a general guide and archive of resources for teaching this material. The content of Day 4 extends the ideas presented in Day 3, so if pressed for time, one might combine material from both days or eliminate Day 4.

Day 1

Learning Objectives

- Analyze hegemonic forms of representation in reality TV and recognize their links to conventions in genre films
- Discuss specific moments of stereotyping and othering in *The Bachelorette*
- Introduce the Frankfurt School and their central critiques of mass culture

Before Class

Students will read:

- Bill Nichols, *Engaging Cinema,* "Film Genres as a Total System," 258-264.
    - *Summary*: This is an excerpt from the genre chapter of an introductory textbook. This reading serves as a brief reminder that genre films deal with social and cultural issues in their own imaginative way. It also provides a definition of cultural ideals, which is important in discussing how reality TV advances hegemonic beliefs and values.
- Sandi Rankaduwa, "Bachelorette' Uses Racism as Entertainment – Which Means Nobody Wins," *Rolling Stone,* August 4, 2017, https://www.rollingstone.com/tv/tv-news/bachelorette-uses-racism-as-entertainment-which-means-nobody-wins-121056/
    - *Summary:* A commentary on Rachel Lindsay's (the first black bachelorette) season of *The Bachelorette* and the franchise's packaging of race and racial conflict. Rankaduwa's critique focuses on how the program represented the conflict between Lee Garrett (a white contestant who has posted racist, homophobic, and misogynist statements on social media) and Eric Bigger and Kenny King, two black contestants. She discusses how casting decisions, editing, and interviews reinforce racist assumptions about black men and make a pressing social problem into fodder for ratings.
- Brian Ott and Robert Mack, "Reduction of Diversity" from *Critical Media Studies,* 2nd Edition, p. 48-50.
    - *Summary:* offers a brief overview of The Frankfurt School and its Marxist critique of capitalist mass media.

Students will watch:

- *The Bachelorette,* any episode from any season other than Season 13 (Season 13 features Rachel Lindsay, the first black bachelorette, and excerpts from this season will be shown in class). The following lesson plan is based on Season 12, Episode 2.
    - I would recommend staying away from the first episode of every season, as first episodes introduce the new contestants and are outliers in the general form of the show.
    - The current season is always available for free streaming on abc.com; other seasons are accessible through Amazon Prime and DVD versions can be ordered.

During Class

***Discussion*.** In small groups, ask students to discuss the following questions. Then, have them report back to the full class. I find that the last two discussion questions work well after the full class has come back together and everyone has joined in a larger discussion.

The first set of questions asks students to note how this episode of *The Bachelorette* advances cultural ideals and stereotypes, particularly about gender, wealth, and individualism. These questions encourage students to gain some critical distance from the material so that they can begin to notice how cultural values and beliefs are aggressively promoted in reality TV. By the end of this opening discussion, students will begin to see similarities between the messages conveyed by reality TV and genre films.

To illustrate the goal of these questions, I include possible responses from students. All responses are based on Season 12, Episode 2.

Discussion Questions

If you were visiting from a different planet and watched this episode of *the Bachelorette*, what cultural values and beliefs do you think viewers of this show hold? What evidence from the episode leads you to believe this?

- Possible response: The primacy of heterosexual partnership.
  - Evidence: the premise of the show, which sets up a marriage proposal as the ultimate goal; the constant reminders through voice-overs and interviews that marriage and family are the "missing pieces" of a complete life.
- Possible response: The conflation of wealth and romance, or the idea that money can buy love and happiness.
  - Evidence: lavish dates provide the backdrop for the couple's romantic feelings toward each other. In addition, dates serve as product placement for sponsoring companies (note the establishing shots in this episode of Westlake Inn and Surf Air) and the network itself. For example, the SportsNation segment in this episode publicizes ESPN, which is an affiliate of ABC, the network that airs *The Bachelor* franchise (Ott and Mack 2014, 28-32).

- According to Bill Nichols, how are these messages similar to those expressed by Hollywood genre films?
  - Possible response: As Nichols outlines, genre films rely upon gendered stereotypes (259), and *The Bachelorette* demonstrates an adherence to conventions of masculinity and femininity.
  - *The Bachelorette,* like genre film, upholds cultural ideas, which Nichols defines as setting "standards and establish[ing] goals" and serving as "the visible face of ideologies: they are the concepts and images people have that link to a particular way of imagining one's relationships, rights, and responsibilities in the world" (259). Cultural ideals such as beauty standards, wealth, heterosexual marriage, and individualism are as common to *The Bachelorette* episode as they are to Hollywood genre films.
- What specific genre films might you relate to this episode?

- Possible response: Students will likely offer romantic comedies where competition for a character's affection features prominently: *This Means War* (dir. McG, 2012), *Pretty in Pink* (dir. Howard Deutsch, 1986), *27 Dresses* (dir. Anne Fletcher, 2008), *Made of Honor* (dir. Paul Weiland, 2008), *The Philadelphia Story* (dir. George Cukor, 1940), *Sweet Home Alabama* (dir. Andy Tennant, 2002); *My Best Friend's Wedding* (dir. PJ Hogan, 1997), and *Isn't it Romantic?* (dir. Todd Strauss-Schulson, 2019). For fans of the show who are familiar with the now-familiar trope of someone coming back from the bachelorette's past in order to vie for her affections, the latter four films are possibilities.

Provide the quote by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer from "The Culture Industry"

> The whole world is passed through the filter of the culture industry. […] The more densely and completely its techniques duplicate empirical objects, the more easily it creates the illusion that the world outside is a seamless extension of the one which has been revealed in the cinema (Horkheimer and Adorno 2012, 56).

The following questions are intended to make students think about what this quote means and how it relates to the philosophies of the Frankfurt School. Students are encouraged to grapple with how the culture industry invites us to imagine our real lives as something we have seen on TV or in the movies, and how the quote can be applied to different media forms.

Discussion Questions

- Think about the reading by Ott and Mack. Based on what you have read, what types of media do you think constitute the "culture industry"?
  - Possible response: Cinema, because it is mentioned in the quote. But also any kind of media that is intended to appeal to a mass public and to make a lot of money, such as popular music and television.
- If, as members of the Frankfurt School argue, the culture industry pacifies audiences and reduces viewers' critical and creative capacities (Ott and Mack 2014, 49), who does it benefit?
  - Possible response: The producers of the media, those who have an opportunity to make money off of repeating formulae that have proven to be crowd pleasers.
  - You can also mention the product placement and the ways in which *The Bachelor* franchise cross promotes shows from ABC affiliated stations (like ESPN). None of this benefits the consumer, but does make more money for the producers.
  - Remind students that this is the power dynamic that Marx critiqued (a small group of privileged people benefit from the disadvantaged masses).
- According to Adorno and Horkheimer, what is the consequence of the cinema's "duplic[ation] of empirical objects"?
  - Possible response: Students may point to the remainder of the quote by saying that our entire words become "filtered through the culture industry" and we begin to see our reality as "a seamless extension of the one which has been revealed in the cinema"

- Ask them to put this explanation in their own words: viewers are apt to confuse reality and the cultural standards established in the cinema.

Illustrate how popular media compels consumers to confuse reality and fiction (or to make their own lives mirror what they see in film and TV).

- Show clips from (or describe) films that are self-reflective about how Hollywood influences our understanding of romance. For instance, the flash mob scene from *Friends with Benefits* (dir. Will Gluck, 2010), where the characters reference the "grand romantic gestures" from romantic comedies; or the scene from *Sleepless in Seattle* in which characters discuss how the plan to meet at the top of the empire state building is inspired by the film *An Affair to Remember* (dir. Leo McCarey, 1957).
- I also show slides of websites that encourage people to model real life events (birthday parties, weddings) after what they have seen in films. Example: Lauren Pardee, "Real Weddings Inspired by the Best Movies of all Time," https://www.marthastewartweddings.com/384993/real-weddings-inspired-movies
- Evidence from assigned episode: 15:00, when a contestant describes watching the woman of his dreams walk off with another man as being "like something out of a movie," and the premise of the first group date that reflects Hollywood tropes of rescuing a "damsel in distress."

In the second part of the class, focus on how reality TV's adherence to Hollywood codes and industrial practices replicates genre film's exclusionary cultural ideals

Share with students the statistics on diversity in Hollywood, or remind students if you have already covered this data in a previous unit:

- Elizabeth Blair, "Hollywood Diversity Report Finds Progress, But Much Left to Gain," *All Things Considered,* February 21, 2019, https://www.npr.org/2019/02/21/696471501/hollywood-diversity-report-finds-progress-but-much-left-to-gain
    - *Summary*: 2019 Hollywood Diversity Report states that some progress has been made, but not enough. The takeaway numbers: people of color make up over 40% of the U.S. population, but only 12.6 of film writers and 7.8 of directors. Female directors almost doubled from 2016 to 2017, but still only make up 12.6% of all directors.

Share with students statistics on the visibility of persons of color on *The Bachelor* franchise:

- Molly Fitzpatrick, "A History of Black Contestants on 'The Bachelor' and 'The Bachelorette.'" *Splinter News,* February 2, 2016. https://splinternews.com/a-history-of-black-contestants-on-the-bachelor-and-the-1793854495
    - *Summary:* Most black contestants (59%) on *The Bachelor and Bachelorette* are eliminated within the first 2 weeks (typical seasons run for 10 weeks). Out of all seasons of both *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette,* there have been 36 African American contestants. To put this number in perspective: there have been 23

seasons of *The Bachelor* and 15 seasons of *The Bachelorette,* and each season features at least 20 new contestants.
    - The infographic found in this blog post may be helpful: Karen X. Chang, "Minorities on *The Bachelor:* When do they Get Eliminated?" April 27, 2016, http://www.karenx.com/blog/minorities-on-the-bachelor-when-do-they-get-eliminated/.

Share with students possible reasons for lack of diversity on *The Bachelor* and *Bachelorette.*

- Meredith Blake, "Why are 'The Bachelor' and 'The Bachelorette' So White?" *LA Times,* March 26, 2016, https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/tv/la-et-st-unreal-bachelor-20160326-story.html
    - *Summary: The article* offers an overview of racial homogeneity in *The Bachelor* franchise (including figures on the number of cast members of color, and a discussion of recent executive casting decisions that maintain the show's whiteness). The article explores possible reasons for the show's lack of diversity, and examines its broader social implications.

Ask students to focus on Rankaduwa's articles on reality TV and race.

Screen Clip: Season 13, Episode 4 of *The Bachelorette* (the final 5 minutes, which includes the preview/teaser for the next episode)

Discussion Question:

- Ask students to reflect on how Kenny King (a black man from Las Vegas) is represented, both by the formal elements of the scene, and the language used by Lee Garrett (a white man from Tennessee).
    - Possible responses: foreboding music, quick cuts, editing together footage of Kenny raising his voice, and mise-en-scene (including the fact that he is dressed in a black leather jacket and dark hoodie) all contribute to framing him as threatening and aggressive.
- Even though Rachel Lindsay's season was the most "diverse" to date (more cast members of color than any other season), why does it not fully improve racial representation on screen? Think about representation and othering in the history of Hollywood film.
    - Possible response: black men are vilified as being violent, aggressive, and hypersexual. This is common in Hollywood films through the "black brute" stereotype (Bogle 1990, 10) as well as in popular and news media, which continuously associates dark skin, dark clothing, and the hoodie with dangerous activity (Kinney 2016, 108-109).

Day 2

Learning Objectives

- Establish the formal structure of reality TV

- Link reality TV to documentary modes
- Foreground reality TV's production format and post-production manipulation

Before Class

Students will read:

- Jeremy Butler, "Chapter 4: Beyond and Beside Narrative Structure," in *Television: Critical Methods and Applications,* 4th edition, 97-110, 133-142.
    - *Summary:* This is an excerpt from a chapter on "non-narrative" television in Butler's textbook. The page numbers above designate the parts of the chapter that are most relevant to understanding post-2000 structured reality TV (other sections cover game shows, sports, and news media). The excerpts: define "reality" on TV as always being mediated and filtered through a particular subjective lens; define and provide examples of different modes of representation (expository, interactive, and observational, which are drawn from scholarship on documentary film); and make explicit the fact that editors and producers do a significant amount of work to shape raw footage into engrossing narrative arcs. The chapter provides a basic vocabulary for discussing the formal techniques of reality TV and how it is produced.

***Students will Watch*:**

- Season 13, Episode 5 of *The Bachelorette* (all) and Season 13, Episode 6 (first 10 minutes)

During Class

***Discuss*.** Use the following questions/prompts to guide students through their thinking.

- As Butler argues, reality TV represents historical reality rather than unmediated reality (100). What is the difference? What parts of reality do the producers decide *not* to show in the episodes of *The Bachelorette* that you have watched?
    - Historical reality is "processed, selected, ordered, interpreted, and incomplete" (100), gleaned from all of the events that happen over a period of time. Reality TV, due to time constraints and the need to draw viewers, can never show complete, unmediated reality.
    - Some parts of reality that are not shown: the contestants doing mundane things that have no relation to a narrative arc (brushing their teeth, getting into their pajamas, waking up in the morning); the housekeeping staff cleaning up after the evening's cocktail party; and the contestants doing nothing around the house, which is common since *Bachelor* contestants are required to be cut off from the media and stripped of most of their personal possessions (Pomarico 2016).
- Think about the various representational modes introduced by Butler in this chapter (observational, expository, and interactive). Which of these elements did you notice when you were viewing *The Bachelorette?*
    - Expository: the opening recaps, in which host Chris Harrison (in voice over) explains the pertinent points from the previous episode and offers brief clips to support his argument. These qualify as the expository mode because they offer what appear to be facts directly to the viewer at home. The points they make are

supported by visual and verbal evidence, and it is clear that the segment has selected and organized reality in a particular way to get the viewer to see events in a certain way (Butler 2012, 102).

- Examples: See the opening for Season 13, Episode 5 for an example (Harrison says: "Jealousy," and then offers clips that show provide evidence of the men's jealousy, and "ego," accompanied by clips that demonstrate how egotistical the contestants are acting). Another example is the opening for Season 12, Episode 2, at 43 seconds, in which a voice over states that "Chad is a Douchebag" and then offers a long series of clips in which Chad is behaving egotistically and selfishly.

- Interactive: Anytime the host appears and directs the action of a scene (such as when he appears with a "date card" or to officiate the "rose ceremony"), the interactive mode is present. During these moments, the historical world mixes with the realm of the filmmakers (Butler 2012, 104). Other examples include the interviews with the bachelorette and contestants. At times, one can hear the producer asking a question off-camera, but even when this is not the case, it is obvious that the interviewee is responding to specific off-camera questions and engaging in pseudomonologue (Butler 2012, 106).
  - For examples of the producer asking questions, see Season 13 Episode 4 (5:55), when a producer prods a contestant to say more about Lee's racism; and later in the episode (12:30), when Rachel argues that "you" (the producer she is speaking to) "have no idea what it's like to be in this position" as an African American woman, and the producer agrees, saying off-camera, "I don't. I don't at all."
- Observational: any footage of conversations between contestants or on dates where the social actors address each other rather than the viewer, the producers, or the host would be an example of the observational, or "fly on the wall" technique (Butler 2012, 108).
  - One example of many is the conversation between Kenny and Lee on Season 13, Episode 5 at 3:36; or the confrontation with Chad at the end of Season 12, Episode 2, at 1:13:46. The latter example is especially useful because of the formal qualities that seem to suggest candor and spontaneity (handheld camera, quick zooms, oblique angles, and dim lighting, as if the camera is clandestinely shooting the action).

- How do these modes contribute to our perception of the "truth" of the program?
  - Expository mode seems to be relaying objective fact because of its use of evidence and its sober manner of conveying information. Pseudomonologue allows viewers to forget that the social actors are responding to specific questions, and makes it appear as if they are revealing their inner thoughts without prompting. Observational mode, and many of the formal qualities associated with it (see previous question), implies that the camera is merely capturing what would naturally unfold in real life.
- Conversely, how do these modes help the producers shape reality?

- In the expository mode, a host of decisions regarding script, the topics addressed, and how to support the "facts" shape viewers' perception of reality. Similarly, in the interactive mode, producers choose to ask certain questions and decide what parts of the interview are included in the final cut. For observational mode, the very presence of a recording device and crew influences actors' behavior, even if they do not acknowledge the camera. And, "the moment a camera is pointed at a social actor and selects one view, and consequently neglects another, manipulation and argument begin" (Butler 2012, 108).

Introduce the term post-production and what it entails. Refer to Butler's discussion on p. 138 about how producers and editors shape content.

- Definition from *Looking at Movies:* "Postproduction consists of three phases: editing, preparing the final print, and bringing the film to the public (marketing and distribution)" (Barsam and Monahan, 2010, 470). We will focus on the editing portion, which the authors define as "assembling the visual images and sound recordings, adding the musical score and sound effects, adding the special effects, assembling the sound tracks, and doing any necessary dubbing" (ibid.).
- After all of the footage has been shot, hundreds of hours are condensed into minutes of air time and then sequenced and paired with voice over and sound in order to create a narrative arc (see Butler 2012, 138).

Screen Clip

- "Charlie Brooker's Screenswipe: Reality TV" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBwepkVurCI
- In this segment, comedian Charlie Brooker shows how reality TV edits footage to create dramatic effect. He offers a single scenario and then demonstrates how editing can make it seem like two completely different things happened. This will give students an opportunity to see the how the same footage can be manipulated in many different ways.

Screen Clip

- Teaser for Season 13, Episode 5 (at the very end of Episode 4)
  - This teaser implies that there is a violent confrontation between Lee and Kenny. The full episode provides students with evidence of how the preview/teaser uses post-production techniques to imply a particular message about two rivaling contestants. The violent confrontation between Lee and Kenny never happened (footage of Kenny with a bloody eye was edited in from a different scenario, unrelated to their argument).

Discuss

- Given what actually happened, in what ways did the teaser for the episode use sound and editing to play into racist ideologies?

- Inserting a close up of Kenny with a bloody eye into the footage of an argument implies that Kenny and Lee did have a physical altercation (when in reality none occurred; the image is from a later scene in which the contestants engage in Viking roleplay). Similarly, including footage of Kenny crying as the host's voice-over tells the audience that "you won't believe what happens…" implies that he has done something he regrets. Sound editing over Kenny pointing emphatically at Lee (Kenny standing up and Lee sitting down) makes it appear as though Kenny is violently and threateningly addressing Lee. In reality, as students will know from watching Episode 5, Kenny actually says generous things to Lee during this moment. Throughout the scene, dramatic music plays and the voice over baits the viewer by warning of "explosive" things to come. All of this contributes to positioning Kenny as a violent aggressor, which feeds into media stereotypes of black men.

Activity Close with an activity that requires students to work in pairs to edit a clip for dramatic effect. The final, edited scene should elicit sadness or anger from the viewer and should be at least 30 seconds in length. Students may use iMovie or any video editing software in order to complete this assignment. The purpose is to give students hands-on experience manipulating documentary footage in order to convey a specific message. You may decide to screen some of the strongest examples in the next class.

Possible videos to edit:

- "17 Hour Road Trip to Florida with my Best Friends" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9_lva7CGy8
- "Our day at the beach in Mundesley, Norfolk" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lma41IXtDe0

Day 3

Learning Objectives

- Link ideas in genre studies to examples of reality TV and myth
- Discuss political stakes of catharsis and the social function of reality TV

Before Class

Students will read

- Thomas Sobchack, "Genre Film: A Classical Experience," in *Film Genre Reader III,* 103-114.
    - *Summary:* Sobchack discusses the qualities (predictable ending, self-contained world, clearly defined conflicts and characters) that are common to all genre films, regardless of what particular genre they belong to. Although Sobchack uses Aristotle's *Poetics* and classical paradigms as his framework, what I think is most useful to students is his examination of genre films' primary characteristics, and *why* these formulae are so appealing to audiences. His explanation of

catharsis is especially useful in examining how reality TV establishes conflict and resolution, and why audiences remain so invested in the form.

- David Canfield, "The Next Big Brother Is Showing Exactly How Reality TV Hides its Most Political Material," https://slate.com/culture/2017/08/big-brother-19-edits-out-racism-sexism.html
    - *Summary:* Canfield examines the instances in which *Big Brother* has edited out problematic racial and gender dynamics in the house (this is evident because *Big Brother* hosts an unedited, 24/7 live feed of the house to which die-hard fans can subscribe).

In Class

The following are segments of *What Would You Do* that work well for this lesson. The discussion questions can be applied to any of the clips, and can be broken up among a number of clips. The possible responses that follow are based on the first clip, "Black Customer Racially Profiled in High-End Store."

***Screen Clips*:**

"Black Customer Racially Profiled in High-End Store," July 2016
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWIph_xlTbY

- *Summary:* Staff at a high-end clothing store (actors) trail, pat down, question, and harass a black patron (actor). They justify their behavior to other customers (non-actors) by saying that those who steal are usually black or usually "look like him." Non-actors offer a range of responses: some do not intervene, others express their shock to each other rather than directly to the staff, and at the end of the segment, a number of customers call out the employees' racism. Daymond John, star of the ABC network's other hit, *Shark Tank,* makes a guest appearance as the harassed customer in the store.

"Customers Discriminate Against Hispanic Waiter," July 10, 2017
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAuecX_971A

- *Summary:* A white couple (actors) in an Arizona restaurant insult their Latino waiter by mispronouncing his name, accusing him of taking jobs from "real" Americans, and saying that he is in the U.S. illegally. In every case, patrons come to his defense, even a Trump supporter, who tells the couple that it is unfair to assume that someone is "not American" by the color of their skin.

"A Waiter is Rude and Dismissive to a Deaf Man at a Restaurant," August 9, 2019
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wiuwkRtZVk

- *Summary:* A deaf patron is treated disrespectfully by a waiter (both men are actors), and fellow patrons (non-actors) respond in a variety of ways. Some complain to the manager, some offer to assist the man in placing his order, and one agrees with the waiter, saying that deaf individuals should come prepared with a pad and pencil in order to communicate with the able-bodied people around them. Host (John Quinones) and Nyle DiMarco (deaf advocate, model, and star of the network's other hit, *Dancing with*

the Stars) intervene and make an attempt to explain to the woman why her view is problematic.

"Transgender Man is Bullied by Former Classmates," October 23, 2018
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RHvCdb9Wa8

- *Summary:* A trans man is having dinner with his date (actors) at a restaurant, where he encounters two high school friends (actors) who begin to torment him about his identity (calling him a "freak" and "it" and bringing up his identity in high school). The scenario invites a variety of responses from passersby (non-actors), including complaining to the manager, confronting the two high school friends directly, and recording the scenario on their phones.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the ultimate message of this segment, and how is that message made clear?
    - Possible response: racism – specifically, the racial profiling of African American men as criminals – still exists in society. While some people do not call out such behavior, others do. Those people are models to us and the heroes of the story. When faced with the question "What Would You Do?" it is obvious that we are meant to identify with those who stand up against racist behavior.
- Think back to our previous class. What techniques are used in order to convey this message effectively?
    - Possible response: sequencing plays a large role, with the heroic acts placed at the end of the segment so that the viewer feels a sense of closure and peace that someone did the honorable thing. We also get to know the non-actors who do the right thing, as the host conducts more detailed interviews with them and they receive significantly more screen time (those who did not intervene are not interviewed at all and their faces are blurred out – this is likely because they did not grant ABC permission to reveal their identities, but it creates a greater sense of identification with those who behave honorably).
- In what ways does this clip resonate with Sobchack's statement (106-107): "There is always a definite sense of beginning, middle, and end, of closure, and of a frame. The film begins with 'Once upon a time,' and ends only after all the strings have been neatly tied, all major conflicts resolved. It is a closed world. There is little room in the genre film for ambiguity anywhere – in characters, plots, or iconography. But even when seeming ambiguities arise in the course of a film, they must be either deemphasized or taken care of by the end of the film."
    - Possible response: the very structure of every segment offers us a conflict and resolution. In this example, the conflict is resolved by a passerby intervening, calling out, and standing up for the victim, which offers viewers a sense of achievement and reassurance about the strength and goodness of human nature.
    - There is a clear villain who is unambiguously bad, there is a clear victim who is on the receiving end of his intolerance, and there is a clear hero at the end who

stands up for the victim. While some non-actors may not do the right thing, the segment brushes them aside and focuses instead on those who display the proper behavior.
    - While racism and racial profiling exists in real life, there are certain ways in which segments of *WWYD* are exaggerated to make it easier for a passersby to intervene (again eliminating ambiguity). For instance, in this segment, the actors engage in loud voices intended to attract other customers' attention, and the actors playing the salesmen describe their process of discrimination openly to other customers.
- How does this segment contribute to what Sobchack calls "catharsis?"
    - Possible response: Viewers are encouraged to identify with the hero so that by the end of the segment, they can experience what it is like to be active and honorable in a difficult situation. Unlike real life, which is rife with ambiguity, here the hero encounters a clearly delineated evil that invites intervention. Viewers' identification with the hero enables them to experience relief and closure that is unavailable in reality, and therefore to engage in cathartic relief.
- Although the segment ostensibly challenges hegemonic assumptions about race, are there ways in which it still upholds other damaging ideologies?
    - Possible response: In this clip, it is striking that men are almost always the first customers to intervene directly with the sales staff, reinforcing the heroic male protagonist from Hollywood, and the active/passive binary occupied by men and women in popular entertainment. In one prominent example, two women watch the profiling and harassment, but do not intervene on their own accord; when interviewed by Quinones, they continue to giggle nervously about the incident.

Introduce students to the concept of "myth" and provide the definition by Thomas Schatz (from his article, "The Structural Influence")

- Myths "transform… certain fundamental cultural contradictions and conflicts into a unique conceptual structure that is familiar and accessible to the mass audience" (Schatz 2003, 97).
- As anthropologist Bronislav Malinowski argues, myth fulfills "an indispensable function; it expresses, enhances, and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality, it vouches for the efficiency and contains practical rules for the guidance of man" (quoted in Schatz 2003, 96).

Discuss:

- How is Sobchack's idea of "catharsis" and its activation in *WWYD* related to these definitions of myth?
    - Possible response: In order for catharsis to be achieved, the complexities of real life must be simplified so that the protagonists with whom we identify can solve problems more quickly and effectively than we ever could in real life. The cathartic experience therefore depends on mythical structure, which makes "cultural contradictions and conflicts into a unique conceptual structure that is familiar and accessible to the mass audience" (Schatz 2003, 97).

- Catharsis – feeling a sense of release and relief – is also what helps convince us that thorny social conflicts are explicable, resolvable, and complementary to cultural beliefs, thereby *transforming* reality into that which "expresses, enhances, and codifies belief" (Malinowski quoted in Schatz 2003, 96).
- In the specific case of *WWYD,* the catharsis that we feel enables the show to serve its mythical function as a moral compass and guide for how to behave in order to make sense of a complex life.

Discuss Canfield's Article:

- Based on Canfield's article, why do you think programs like *Big Brother* edit out "political material," given *What Would You Do*'s commercial success?
  - Possible response: Real life cannot be as easily controlled as *WWYD*, and in many situations (such as the instances of racist micro- and macro-aggressions within the *Big Brother* house) no amount of post-production techniques can mold the situation into one that has a neatly resolved ending or a clear protagonist. If *Big Brother* decided to engage with the controversial, political material that is revealed in its 24 hour feed, it would risk not being able to reinforce the values that viewers like to believe they have: of fairness, colorblindness, basic decency towards all kinds of people, and the ability to change for the better. If no one in the house stands up against racism and homophobia, if there can be no "lesson" learned and no catharsis, the show fails at embodying its mythic potential. And in doing so, it would fail to give viewers what they want: discomfort and complexity with some sense of resolution.
  - There are economic reasons for hiding contestants' hate and intolerance. *WWYD* offers vignettes with actors and passersby that we never see again and with whom we do not develop a long-term relationship; actors who are assigned to behave badly are especially one-dimensional and nothing is lost by their characters' vilification. *Big Brother* relies on viewers' connection to the different personalities in the house, and so revealing that fan favorites are in fact harboring prejudices – especially if their hateful remarks cannot be turned into a moralizing, cathartic teaching moment – can hurt ratings.

Closing Discussion: Return to the Frankfurt School

- What might Adorno and Horkheimer say about reality TV and its relationship to Hollywood genre films? (You might show the full quote that you introduced on the first day of the unit.)
  - Possible response: Based on the quote, Adorno and Horkheimer would be critical of the fact that reality is molded to mirror fictional media. Reality TV's reliance upon Hollywood tropes and formulae is the perfect embodiment of their assertion that "the whole world is passed through the filter of the culture industry."
- Who benefits most from reality TV's reliance upon genre formulae, myth, and catharsis in reality TV? Who loses out?

- Possible response: If we think back to the reading by Ott and Mack, the executives and studios that produce reality TV benefit financially by offering entertainment, comfort, and catharsis to millions of viewers. Viewers, however, suffer because studios rely on what they know will sell rather than on producing diverse, creative work (Ott and Mack 2012, 49).
- Also, if audiences feel catharsis while watching genre films and shows such as *WWYD,* they may feel less compelled to pursue long-term changes in society. For instance, if the program can simulate a feeling of relief and closure after one person does the "right thing," it perpetuates the false idea that racism is a problem that is solved through individual good deeds rather than a historical, institutional wrong that needs radical shifts in policy and ideology. The perils of this type of thinking will become more obvious in the next day's lesson plan.
- The financial interests of the network are noticeable in the guest appearances by stars from other ABC shows. Clearly, encouraging people to do the right thing coexists with cross-promotional efforts.

Day 4
Learning Objectives

- Contextualize issue of displacement in reality TV
- Introduce group assignment

Before Class
Students will read:

- Bill Nichols, *Engaging Cinema,* "Displacement," 271-280.
  - *Summary:* Nichols defines displacement as when, "in their treatment of volatile social issues, [they] frequently shift attention from their most troubling to less troubling manifestations" (Nichols, 2010, 271). He suggests that making collective problems into individual problems is one form of displacement in genre films.
- Mark Andrejevic and Dean Colby, "Racism and Reality TV: The Case of MTV's *Road Rules,"* in *How Real is Reality TV?,* 195-211.
  - *Summary:* Andrejevic and Colby analyze season 1 of *Road Rules* and its portrayal of Gladys (the only Black cast member) as an aggressive and violent girl from "the projects of Cambridge" (200). The authors argue that the show reifies racist assumptions in the service of its liberal message (that when a diverse group of people are extracted from the prejudices of the broader world, they can learn to live together and appreciate each other's common humanity). Ultimately, the authors claim that stereotype helps reality TV fulfill its "therapeutic" purpose by foregrounding racial, class, and gender difference in a manner that allows interpersonal conflict and resolution to stand in for broader social issues. Andrejevic and Colby reflect on the reality TV formula: making cast members fit stereotypes of their social identities, fostering disagreements between them,

and eventually "induc[ing] a familiar catharsis and resolution" by emphasizing their eventual friendship or mutual tolerance (200).

- John Kraszewski, "Country Hicks and Urban Cliques: Mediating Race, Reality, and Liberalism in MTV's *The Real World,*" 179-196, especially 179-189.
    - *Summary:* This article makes a similar argument as Andrejevic and Colby's, but using a broader set of examples from *The Real World.* Kraszewski claims that the producers (the same producers as *Road Rule*s) position racial conflict as the battle between rural white and urban black cast mates, advancing the misconception that racism is an individual fault of ignorant, rural conservatives rather than a systemic, institutionalized problem. The article offers a close reading of scenes that use narrative strategy, editing, mise-en-scene, and music to reaffirm racial stereotypes of African Americans, even though the show presents itself as having an anti-racist mission (179-189). These close readings make it a good follow up to the Butler excerpts and the concepts discussed in Day 2. Kraszewski argues that by locating racism in the rural white conservative cast member (a recurring figure in most seasons of *The Real World*) who is later educated by an urban black castmate on the error of their ways, the show masks its own racist portrayal of black characters.

Students will watch:

- *The Real World: New Orleans* (2010)*,* Season 24, Episode 7
    - *Summary*: Preston, an openly gay cast member, clashes with Knight, a white straight man who openly displays his homophobia and misogyny. Eventually, he and Knight make amends. Knight verbally abuses Jemmye (a fellow cast member that he is seeing romantically), who is encouraged by the rest of the house to stand up to him. Jemmye, a survivor of domestic abuse, eventually does confront him and the episode ends with her volunteering at a women's shelter. The entire house (except for Ryan) volunteer with Habitat for Humanity after learning about Hurricane Katrina.

During Class

Discussion Questions

- What is the relationship between displacement and Sobchack's understanding of catharsis? How are both essential to the mythmaking function of reality TV?
    - Possible response: Displacement transfers a big problem from their "most troubling" form to "their less troubling manifestations" (Nichols 2010, 271), which often means that complex, systemic social problems are envisioned as interpersonal issues. For example, the problem of domestic violence is not about ingrained ideologies about masculinity and patriarchy, but rather about bad individuals whose reform or punishment represents the solution (Nichols 2010, 273). Similarly, the problem of racism is not about a historical legacy of inequality or institutional complicity, but rather the fault of a few racist individuals. Like the process that Sobchack outlined in his article, displacement strips away complexity and ambiguity by making big social problems seem like

something much more manageable. The process of displacement simplifies the problem so that it can be easily located and swiftly solved. By doing so it makes catharsis, and the mythical work of genre, possible.

- Think about the episode of *The Real World* that you screened. How is Knight and Preston's relationship an example of "displacement" in this episode? How does Jemmye's story arc serve as a form of displacement in this episode? In each case, what are the broader social problems that are being represented and resolved?
    - Possible response: Knight is a straight white man who represents society's homophobia and rigid expectations of masculine behavior. He often bullies Preston, a queer man of color. They are eventually able to find common ground in a bar, and bond over their shared anxieties about working with Habitat for Humanity (building and working with power tools are outside of both men's comfort zones). Their animosity and eventual friendship represents the resolution to the broader social problem of intolerance around gender expression and identity. At 25:35, the camerawork makes this displacement obvious: Preston says in voice over, "one of the things I'm finding by being here is that I'm dealing with society's expectation of being a man" as the camera quickly pans to Knight.
    - Jemmye's relationship with Knight represents the broader social problem of domestic and intimate partner violence. Her eventual ability to use her experience to help others and to express to Knight the inappropriateness of his behavior (eventually eliciting an apology and a vow to change) serves as a symbolic resolution to this broader problem. Through displacement, domestic violence becomes an interpersonal problem that is resolved through making the perpetrator understand his wrongdoing.
- Explain Kraszewski's statement that "In fact, dwelling on the racisms of the rural conservatives deflects the show's own racism" (220). Did you find evidence of this statement in the episode that you watched for today?
    - Possible response: *The Real World* makes the rural conservative character a symbol of the problem of racism in America, but this distracts from how the show reinforces racist stereotypes through its representation of black housemates. Formal and narrative decisions on how to frame the stories of African American housemates perpetuate racist views – such as the violence of black men – in spite of the show's apparently liberal mission (Kraszewski 2004, 217-219). Focusing on the racism of the white conservative character also draws attention away from the show's unwillingness to address serious questions about racism as an institutional and historically ingrained problem. The few housemates who try to raise these points are often silenced by white, supposedly anti-racist liberals in the house whose views are given more screen time (Kraszewski 2004, 219-220).
    - Season 24 Episode 7 of *The Real World* (screened for today's class) ostensibly highlights female empowerment and brings to light the problem of domestic abuse. However, it tends to uphold the rationales of a patriarchal society that have allowed violence against women to persist. The constant advice of the

people in the house that Jemmye is at fault for not sticking up for herself and that she "shouldn't let" Knight talk to her "like that" places blame and responsibility on the person enduring the abuse rather than the abuser. The way that everyone in the house excuses Knight's behavior by saying that they know he is a good guy deep down and that he really doesn't mean it also makes excuses for abusive behavior and undercuts the seemingly progressive message of the show.

- Think about Andrejevic and Colby's and Kraszewski's articles. Both examine how racial stereotyping is a staple of reality TV. Why does reality TV rely so heavily on "typing"? How does stereotyping affect displacement and catharsis in reality TV?
    - Possible response: Stereotyping makes the problems symbolized by individual housemates easily legible to viewers who are tuning in for entertainment value rather than for a view into systemic social problems. Stereotypes allow token individuals to stand in for entire communities of people, which aids in the mythical process of displacing broad social issues onto individual, interpersonal relationships.

Screen Clip*: More than a Makeover,* Season 1, Episode 3, "Dega Don't"

- 22:03-25:48: Car conversation in which Straight Guy Cory, a Trump supporter and police officer, and Karamo, the culture guru, are able to talk out their political differences.

Discussion Questions

- Although this scene advances an ostensibly positive message, how (based on the reading by Kraszewski, and Andrejevic and Colby) might we still critique its execution?
    - Possible response: Clearly Corey and Karamo represent opposite perspectives. Their conversation is a classic form of displacement, in which the cluster of tensions surrounding the current political divide (particularly around Black Lives Matter) are streamlined and assigned to two different people with opposing viewpoints. Their mutual understanding and agreement to listen more carefully and compassionately to those they do not understand (sealed with a handshake) is intended to have a cathartic effect upon viewers.
- What are some of the problems with this genre film approach to reality TV?
    - Possible responses: there is no way that the political divide can be mended by this 2-minute conversation. Similarly, the scene gives a false impression that simply listening to each other can dismantle the serious inequalities that continue to endanger black Americans (this may be a start, but the issues must be addressed at the legislative and cultural level).

Introduce project prompt:

Students will work in groups of 3 and will be assigned an episode of a reality TV program (I would recommend selecting from *Survivor, Big Brother, The Amazing Race, The Real Housewives, Queer Eye for the Straight Guy,* and *90 Day Fiancé*). After screening the program,

they will conceptualize the episode as a feature-length genre film, writing a 100-word summary (suitable for the back of a DVD cover) that answers the following questions:

- What genre does this film belong to?
- Who are the protagonists and antagonist(s)?
- What is the major conflict?
- What problem or conflict is this film trying to tackle? How will it provide catharsis for its viewers?

Each group will also prepare a movie poster (any program would be fine, even something in Photoshop or a free online program such as postermywall or easymovieposter (posters produced through free online programs will often have a watermark, which is fine – the poster is intended to be a visual aid for the presentation).

Each group will prepare to give a 5-minute presentation during the next class, sharing their summary and poster.

Free online poster making websites:
https://www.postermywall.com/index.php/g/theatre-posters#
https://www.easymovieposter.com/Design/index.php

Day 5
In Class
Students present their genre films.

Revisit the Adorno and Horkheimer quote:

> The whole world is passed through the filter of the culture industry. […] The more densely and completely its techniques duplicate empirical objects, the more easily it creates the illusion that the world outside is a seamless extension of the one which has been revealed in the cinema.
>
> - Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry*

Discussion Questions
These questions are intended to help students reflect on the group project and its relationship to the major themes of this lesson plan.

- In what specific ways did your assigned episode resonate with the conventions of genre films? Were there instances of displacement and catharsis? What broader social conundrums were represented in your episode?
- How did the process of reconceptualizing your assigned episode as a genre film affect your understanding of Adorno and Horkheimer's critique?

Author Biography

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