

1b)

Genre is the placement of media texts into categories for identification based on conventions, style, and their general form. Genres can be fairly fixed and stable, for example, 'Action' or can become blurred and undergo postmodern bricolage to end up a new sub-genre for example 'Action-comedy'. Genre is important when producing a media text in order to be able to direct a text at an audience, and for this audience to be able to identify the text's form.

As part of my Foundation Portfolio I produced 4 pages of an Indie Music magazine. Genre was particularly crucial for this production.

I chose to challenge the traditional convention of 'specialising' to sub-genres with my genre of magazine: constructing it around the Indie genre in general rather than the sub-genre of Indie-Rock or similar which can be identified in similar real media texts such as 'Kerrang!'. This generalised adaption of a broad and solid genre allowed for a wider target audience, and increased opportunity to creatively experiment with codes and conventions from the construction of genre.

Codes and conventions are elements of a media text that we as an audience expect to see in a particular genre; those we use to identify it. Whether the view is taken that an audience have broadly similar expectations or John Fiske's view than "there is no audience, only individuals with varying tastes" is adapted; codes and conventions are crucial for consumers to identify genre.

On the front page I conformed to the convention of having a large image of the featured artist. Although her clothing represents her as fairly understood (arguably a challenge of convention for this genre) they still in terms of colour and form have semiotic connotations of the Indie sub-culture; allowing consumers an easy link by which to identify genre.

Research showed me that real media texts such as NME in this genre tend to write in a linear narrative, with restrictive language in an informal style. This is a key convention of the genre, and is one I chose to develop during the construction of my Foundation Portfolio by writing in an informal, almost 'chatty style'. This, despite being appealing to my target audience, further represents my production as being of the Indie music magazine genre. Crucially, it creates a representation of the Indie genre as youthful, reinforcing the dominant myth that Indie is somehow the 'genre of the younger generation'. The connotations of the genre can be effective, giving the sub-culture a sense of identity which they may feel they need – as Richard Jenkins said in 1966, "Without it [identity], social life is unimaginable." I have therefore used genre here to construct identity, allowing a sub-culture comprising mainly of my target audience to relate to the product more as a direct result of its genre. On close analysis I feel that I have used genre effectively. My use of codes and conventions allowed me to effectively construct and incorporate genre into my magazine so it can easily be identified as a result of genre categorisation. I could however have experimented with postmodern bricolage and pastiche in order to blur traditional genre boundaries and create a more innovative final product as a result. However mainly, I feel my construction of genre is effective, and that my consideration of escapism as a form of consumption (Uses and Gratifications) that led to the consideration in turn of identity being represented by genre allowed me to use the concept of genre to a great degree to create a solid, effective and appealing final product for the Foundation Portfolio.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Assessment Objective	Max Mark	Mark Awarded
EEA	10	
EG	10	
T	5	