

Reception analysis takes a closer media essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction

Reception Analysis takes a closer look at what is actually going on when an audience encounters a media text. It provides an analysis of how audiences perceive a certain media message, what meanings do they derive, how do they associate to it, what events of their and other's life do they relate to it, how do the message fulfill their needs and satisfaction and what effect does that message or text have on their psychological, personal and social make up. Reception analysis sees media as passive and weak and audience as active and strong. The media 'injects' the information to the audience and they automatically accept it, the public cannot escape from media's influence. Texts are decoded in ways that reflect audiences' personal biographies and histories. Audiences react to the same message differently and their behavior and attitude towards the message is different too. People in contemporary society are characterized by great psychological diversity and social categories based on such factors as age, gender, religion, class and race (Stuart Hall, 1980). A group of people who share the same ideas and interests may interpret a piece of media in the same way. The same media message has many aspects in it. Some people may concentrate on the positive side of the message and some may perceive its negative side more inspiring. The way people perceive the message and how it affects personal, social and cultural life of an individual (Eagleton, 1989: 433-434) is what the reception theory is about. I am going to discuss the approaches of classic audience studies towards the violent and negative perception of the media message by the mass audience taking the Batman films "The Dark Knight and its sequel as the media artifact. I am going to argue that aspect

of violence, terror and destruction promotes the element of hostility in the audience and its result on them and the social life around them.

Reception Analysis of Violent Movie Content in Relation to the Media Artifact

The mass media injects particular meanings into consumers and they take it as it comes. This is known as Hypodermic Needle Theory where audience just passively absorbs the mass media message and they perceive and try to adopt it in their socio cultural aspect on the basis of different gender, age, and ethnicity. However the message is not perceived by everyone in the same manner.

The Batman Films Franchise based on DC comics have elements of both the evil and satanic sides and as well as an element of the good and protection of the people. Some people may consider it as call to become civilized and know what evils prevail in the society and how it can create chaos and terror among people and society whereas as others may perceive the same side as inspiring and glorious especially the younger children who take the effect of what they watch instantly.

The Dark Knight and the sequel depict scenes of death and terror in the ultra-violent perspective. The way massive explosions, neck breakings, kidnapping, shooting and hand to hand combat scenes are shot with strong background music that may have deep impact on the audience with glamourized villain, the “joker” in the Dark Knight may be considered as adventurous and attractive by many viewers and may affect their psyche and thinking patterns. Exposure to prolonged violence in films can promote

hostile and instigative behavior in men and women and the effect is not short lived (James B. Weaver III, head of the Department of Communication at Virginia Tech).

Cultivation analysis is a theoretical concept of reception and audience analysis that predicts and explains how long term perceptions are formed and changed into beliefs about various aspects of the world due to long exposure to media message especially television (Turner 407). It can be seen in the form of adoption of violent scenes and negative characters of the movies which are now an integral part of television broadcasting as well. It can relate to the violent scenes of destruction and dialogues depicting chaos in the Dark knight as well where joker's psychopathic dialogues; " I am an agent of chaos" and who wants to see the " world burn." Terrorizing scenes like the one that shows an attack on the football stadium and the stock market, mob violence and mass murders of the children in the hospital.

Moreover, the first half of The Dark Knight Returns does not involve any heroic acts by the hero, in fact when come to the rescue, public and the authorities misunderstand them. Exposure of such content on the audience especially children can cultivate negative effects on their mind and I may make them believe that satanic power is the ultimate tool to rule the world and they may start assuming the realization of these harsh and chaotic activities as enjoyable and satisfying in the end (Sally Harris, 1999). This may result in ending them in criminal activities of terror and killing as depicted in the movie to experience the same power as depicted by the villain in the movie. Many criminal incidents in the real life can be associated with this wrong perception of the movie's violent content.

<https://assignbuster.com/reception-analysis-takes-a-closer-media-essay/>

One was in Belgium where in 2008 Kim de Gelder attacked Belgian day care centre, killed two babies, an adult and injured 10 more babies. Dressed in the costume of the movie's character joker when got arrested, laughed at the police while quoting the joker's lines (R. E. A. L Organization, July 2012) that shows the intensity of effect that glamourized villain and his dialogues had on his psychology and assumptions, which proves that prolonged exposure to television and movies which today mostly caters thrilling, horror, adventurous and violence themed shows and storylines contribute to audience's conceptions about social reality (Harindranath 1998: 285).

In February 2012, a teenager T. J. Lane reportedly a victim of bullying and something of a social outcast — walked into a Cleveland high school and opened fire in the cafeteria, killing two students and wounding three others. Most recently in July 2012 at Aurora Colorado's movie theatre at the opening of *The Dark Knight Returns*, a murderer went into the theatre and shot at audience randomly and threw gas canisters at the audience, mostly children. This incident took 12 lives and injured 59. The murderer told the police that he was the "joker", had dyed his hair red, and wore a protective mask and protective gear. Both incidents seemed inspired by the violent and shooting scenes of the movie. This is not the first time that murderers have been inspired by these ultra violent movies and television content. Many incidents in the past have been recorded for example the person who attempted to assassinate Ronald Reagan seemed fixated by "Taxi Driver" (Anthony Lane, 2012).

Conclusion

People use media as a source of information and entertainment to gratify their specific needs as we have learned that in the Gratification theory of the media analysis. Though the media does not use the people, people use the media but the content on movies and various mass media can be harmful and aggressive when it comes to audience's personal and social lives. The power of mass media cannot be denied that has made the world a global village, however its negative aspects can be controlled to some extent when it comes to violence and societal disintegration. In my opinion cultivation analysis requires extensive media research because it can help reduce the wrong and violent perceptions that audiences gain from movies' content. The content should at least be filtered like TV programmes, movie trailers, songs and TV movie premieres depicting violence and destruction.