



Media Audiences

You will need to consider:

- How media producers target, attract, reach, address and potentially construct audiences through media language and representations
- How media industries target audiences through the content and appeal of media products and through the ways in which they are marketed, distributed and circulated. This will be through a combination of marketing and media language.
- How audiences interpret the media, including how they may interpret the same media text in different ways
- Reception theory (including Hall) Encoding & decoding, preferred, negotiated and oppositional readings
- Fandom (including Jenkins)



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Task: How does 'Life on Mars' target audiences?

- Who is the audience for Life on Mars? Justify your response
- How does the text itself target audiences? Consider genre, narrative, star and character, representations, intertextuality
- How does the marketing target audiences?



Who are the different audiences and how are they targeted?

Audience (age, gender, class, lifestyle, taste)	How are they targeted? (through text, through marketing)



How do audiences respond to Life on Mars?



Awards: Audience response factsheet & article

- Imdb – 25,136 ratings with average of 8.3 overall
- 9 wins, 30 nominations for international awards
- International Emmy for Best Drama series
- Nominated for a BAFTA 2007 for Best Drama and Best Actor and won the audience –voted Pioneer Award
- Series 2 nominated for National TV Award for Most Popular Drama
- Nominated for SFX Awards 2007
- Audience responses – newsbbc.co.uk 12/4/2007 – <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/6540481.stm>
- This has an audience vote on the conclusion of “Life on Mars” with 58.66 % finding the conclusion satisfactory



Audience interaction/fan responses

- Fanpop.com
- Life on Mars at Fanlore.org [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Life_on_Mars_\(UK\)](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Life_on_Mars_(UK))
- Lifein1973.livejournal.com <http://lifein1973.livejournal.com/>
- @The Railway Arms (was a website, now on Twitter)
- Life-on-marswikia.com http://life-on-mars.wikia.com/wiki/Life_on_Mars_Wiki
- <http://lostintime.atspace.com/eps.htm>

Henry Jenkins argues that fans form part of a 'participatory culture' in which audiences are active and creative participants in a text.

Look at some of the fan sites for "Life on Mars". How do fans "participate" actively and "creatively"? Are there examples of "textual poaching"?

"Active" & "Creative Audiences", Henry Jenkins

- overviews and videos
- fan fiction
- fan art
- podfiction
- ratings expressed in Ford Cortinas
- social interaction
- fans build and contribute to sites
- competitions – e.g. The Weekly Drabble
- audio mashups



Audience Task: What pleasures might audiences gain from 'Life on Mars'?

Task: Create a word cloud of the pleasures we might gain from the text. Develop three of these points with examples from the text itself. Check against the list of potential pleasures.



Audience Positioning:

How does the text position audiences? Discuss in groups and feed back to the class.





Readings – Stuart hall

Extended writing task:

Write a paragraph on each of the following questions

1. What is the preferred meaning of 'Life on Mars'?
 2. How is this encoded?
 3. What other readings might this text generate?
- Different readings – Remember to refer IN DETAIL to the text to support your ideas on readings – e.g. what do Hunt/Tyler/Annie do/say etc?
 - An oppositional reading may struggle to find Hunt a sympathetic character. Audiences may view his attitudes and values as extremist and unacceptable for a modern audience, even in a historical setting. They may deplore the fact that Hunt clearly has elements of the flawed hero (Achilles) archetype
 - A feminist audience may oppose the representation of Annie as subservient to the males and feel that there is no place for “reinforcement” of these dated ideas in a modern text.
 - A very conservative audience - traditionalists/resigneds may admire Hunt’s “old-fashioned values” without seeing him (through Tyler’s eyes) as flawed. They may see his hardline policing style as valid and accept his racist and sexist ideas. The same audience is likely to dismiss Tyler as a “wimp” and admire the “rugged” masculinity of Hunt.

Feminist approaches

How might a

- Liberal
- Socialist
- Radical

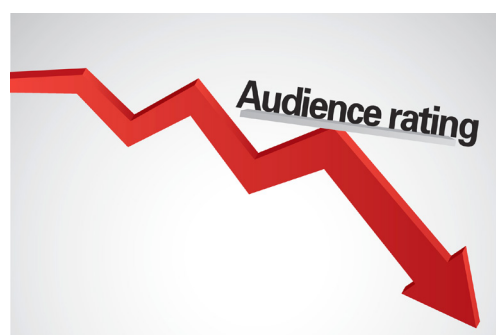
feminist respond to 'Life on Mars'?

Divide into groups to discuss the potential responses and feed back to whole class. Use the digital resource 'Feminist approaches to Life on Mars' to compare ideas. (Follows on from representation section).



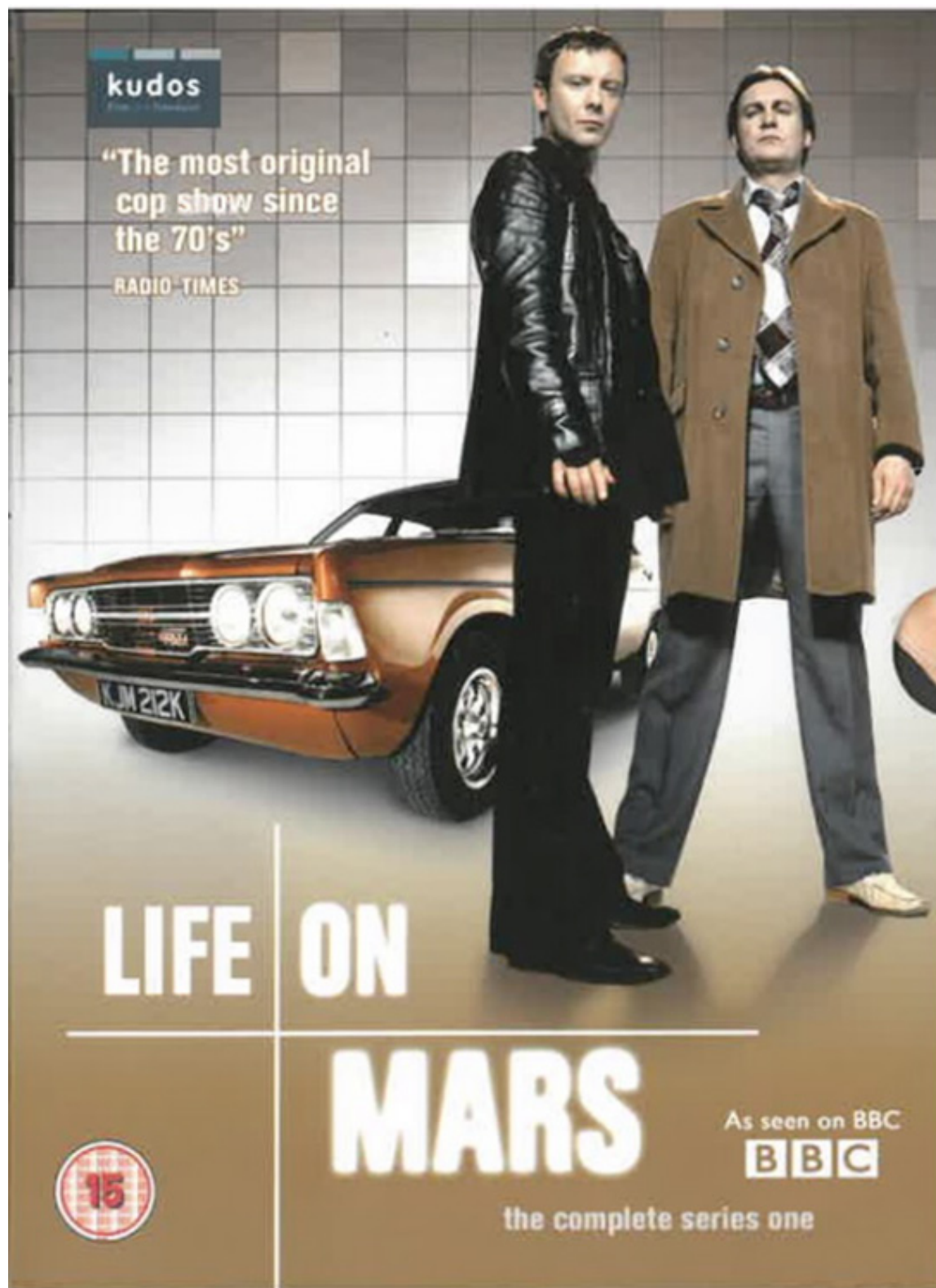
Oppositional reading for debate

- “Mars drama ‘could spark bullying’”. BBC Online. 12 April 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/6549163.stm>
- Two days after the final episode’s transmission, ‘Life on Mars’ was attacked in the British press by the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, who claimed that Gene Hunt’s use of homophobic insults in the programme could encourage copycat bullying in schools. The BBC stated that Life on Mars was targeted at an adult audience, and argued that Hunt’s characterisation was “extreme and tongue-in-cheek”.





Task: Analyse the DVD cover (consider media language, genre, narrative, audience, industry)





Television consumption – Independent activity

- Think about how you watch television programmes. Keep a viewing diary, thought shower as a class activity or create a word cloud. How has this changed?