



# Television in the Global Age

## Teachers' Notes

The resources are intended to support teachers delivering on the new AS and A level specifications. They have been created based on the assumption that many teachers will already have some experience of teaching Media Studies and therefore have been pitched at a level which takes this into consideration. Other resources are readily available which outline e.g. technical and visual codes and how to apply these.

There is overlap between the different areas of the theoretical framework and the various contexts, and a “text-out” teaching structure may offer opportunities for a more holistic approach.

Slides are adaptable to use with your students. Explanatory notes for teachers/suggestions for teaching are in the Teachers' Notes.

The resources are intended to offer guidance only and are by no means exhaustive. It is expected that teachers will subsequently research and use their own materials and teaching strategies within their delivery.

Television as an industry has changed dramatically since its inception.

Digital technologies and other external factors have led to changes in production, distribution, the increasingly global nature of television and the ways in which audiences consume texts.

It is expected that students will require teacher-led delivery which outlines these changes, but the focus of delivery will differ dependent on texts chosen.

## THE JINX: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst

### Episode Suggestions

Episode 1 'The Body in the Bay' is the 'set' text but you may also want to look at others, particularly Episode 6 with its “shocking” conclusion. Episode 2 is useful for the narrative backstory and the narrative of Durst's marriage to Kathie (therefore interesting for representations).

## Television in the Global Age: An Introduction

This section is introductory but obviously forms the basis of the Media Industries section of the theoretical framework

Television has changed considerably since the advent of digital technology in terms of its production, distribution and consumption. It has become a global, rather than a national industry and has



become increasingly commercial, with public service broadcasting forced to adapt its structure, role and function. International co-production is growing and broadcasters such as HBO have achieved global success.

Broadcasters are now “narrowcasters”, with multiple channels targeting different (sometimes more niche) audiences.

Audiences consume television texts in a variety of ways as the industry has increased portability via new platforms (tablet, mobile phone) and patterns of consumption have changed alongside this (the box-set & binge-watching, on-demand and catch-up, Netflix, Amazon etc.).

Interactive social media channels such as You Tube have increased accessibility for the ‘prosumer’ audience, and social media and viral promotion have become a crucial part of marketing television texts.

### Page 1:

Students must consider television and your texts in terms of:

- Media Language
- Representations
- Media Industries
- Audience

This should be linked where relevant to

- social,
- cultural,
- economic,
- political and
- historical contexts.

### Page 2: The Life and Death of Robert Durst

- ‘The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst’
- Series 1, Episode 1 (2015)
- Original Broadcaster : HBO February 8 – March 15, 2015  
6 episodes
- Blumhouse Productions and HBO Documentary Films
- HBO documentary mini-series





- Written by Andrew Jarecki, Marc Smerling, and Zachary Stuart-Pontie
- Directed by Andrew Jarecki (*Capturing the Friedmans*, *All Good Things* – about Durst)

Page 2:

Television History: screen and questions

*Imagine UK - Season 7 Episode 9 - And Then There Was Television Dec 19, 2006*

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLD511F39E7FF8C5BC>

Watch the documentary and answer the following questions:

1. Why are Lord Reith and John Logie Baird so important in terms of the development of TV?
2. How did television develop during the 1930's?
3. What was the impact of WW2 on TV, especially Post War?
4. What television genre developed during the late 1940's and into the 1950's?

Page 3:

The following 2 pages are informative. You may want to keep abreast of developments in terms of Time Warner and AT & T merger, which was agreed but had not been formalised at time of going to press

Founded in 1972

Subsidiary of Time Warner

The world's most successful pay TV service providing 2 television services – HBO and Cinemax – to approximately 127 million subscribers worldwide

HBO services are available in more than 50 countries and reach over 35 million subscribers. Currently HBO International has interests in HBO Services in Asia, South Asia, Central Europe and Latin America.

HBO Now – streaming service

HBO Go – portable streaming - computer and select mobile devices, tablets, streaming players, game consoles and connected TVs.

HBO began developing original programming in the 1990s, e.g. *The Larry Sanders Show*, *Sex & the City* 1998 and received acclaim for *The Sopranos* in 1999.





Other successes include:

*The Wire* (2002)

*True Blood* (2008)

*Game of Thrones* (2011)

*True Detective* (2014)

On October 22, 2016, AT&T reached a deal to buy Time Warner for over \$80 billion. If approved by federal regulators, the merger would bring Time Warner's properties, including HBO, under the same umbrella as AT&T's telecommunication holdings, including satellite provider DirecTV.

### Page 4:

Task: Look at the HBO website. What other programmes are you familiar with?

What makes a HBO product – does it have a house style/brand?

Use the interactive resource HBO to share the suggested points with students.

Suggested points may include:

- High budget and production values (give examples, e.g. cinematography, credits, cast, costume/make-up/FX)
- 'Quality' writing
- Genre-based with a "new" twist
- Cinematic qualities
- Mainstream but very specific target audience
- Often serial with stand-alone episodes
- Designed for box-set/ binge viewing
- Accessed through subscription/download
- High profile marketing campaign – reliant on TV spots and print to generate buzz
- Water-cooler TV



### Media Language

#### Page 1:

In terms of the theoretical framework students will need to consider:

- How the different modes and languages associated with different media forms communicate multiple meanings
- How the combination of elements of media language influence meaning. In terms of television, they will need to look at technical and visual codes (e.g. camera, lighting, mise-en-scène, framing, audio, editing) and narrative structures here
- The codes and conventions of media forms and products, including processes through which media language develops as a genre
- The dynamic and historically relative nature of genre. Link to Neale here – repetition and difference
- The processes through which meanings are created through intertextuality
- How audiences respond to and interpret the above aspects of media language. This could easily be linked to the “Audience” section of the theoretical framework
- Narratology (including Todorov)
- Genre (including Neale)
- Structuralism (including Lévi Strauss) at A level
- Postmodernism (including Baudrillard) at A level

#### Page 2:

#### Analytical toolkit for television

You will need to analyse television texts in terms of media language

This will include:

- Technical Codes (camera: angles, shots, movement, focus; lighting: position, key, contrast; audio codes; editing; FX)
- Visual Codes (costume, setting, colour palette, framing & proxemics - (mise-en-scène); performance and NVC)
- Genre (what type of programme it is, setting, characters, repeated situations)



- Narrative (the story, flashbacks, narration)

Depending on delivery patterns, students who have done Component 1 or GCSE will obviously have more terminology, but keeping this more general and introductory should enable all students to put forward ideas

Page 2:

Use the interactive resource Technical codes recap task



Genre :

Page 3:

You may prefer to use some of your own clips or the suggested historical extracts rather than look purely at schedules here. There is a chart to complete on Page 3

Michael Renov suggests that the functions of documentary are:

- to record, reveal, or preserve
- to persuade or promote
- to analyze or interrogate
- to express
- (*Toward a Poetics of Documentary* in [\*Theorizing Documentary\*](#) AFI Film Readers 1993 p21)

Look at a week's TV schedules. Identify documentaries which fulfil each of these functions and complete the chart on page 3.



Page 3:

Function	Documentary Example
to record, reveal, or preserve	
to persuade or promote	
to analyse or interrogate	
to express	

Page 4:

The definitions are intended to form the focus of teacher-led class discussions and the article explores some of these points in more depth.

### The documentary

Is documentary a genre? A style? A form? A movement? There have been a number of attempts to define it :

*"Kino-Pravda"* – cinema as truth – Dziga Vertov

*"The creative treatment of actuality"* – John Grierson

*"Representing reality"* – Bill Nichols

Obviously, then, there are many different definitions and types of documentary.

Directed Study Task: Henrik Juel: Defining Documentary Film makes some interesting points about defining documentary. Read the article and highlight the key points made.

[http://pov.imv.au.dk/Issue\\_22/section\\_1/artc1A.html](http://pov.imv.au.dk/Issue_22/section_1/artc1A.html)

### Page 4: Modes of documentary

There should be some teacher input here with clips, perhaps. Use the interactive resource to match up the Modes of Documentary.

Bill Nichols also categorises documentary by mode

- Observational: documentary as truth – the filmmaker simply observes the action. Use of fly-



on-the-wall camera, long takes, lack of editing and audience manipulation. Direct cinema.

- Expository: there is a narrative (usually through an omniscient voice-over) reinforced by visual footage, and the documentary seeks to inform and persuade the audience through rhetoric, usually about social issues
- Reflexive: considers and reveals the process of documentary- making itself known so that audiences may understand and question it
- Poetic: focus on aesthetics, mood and tone, rather than following traditional narrative - often regarded as avant-garde
- Participatory: the filmmaker is part of the text – the relationship between filmmaker and subject is focal and the filmmaker is seen/heard
- Performative: the filmmaker actually becomes a performer within the documentary, with their own subjective message, script and agenda – e.g. Michael Moore

### Page 5:

This is intended for use with students' original documentary choices on page 3 but other clips may well be useful here. Students may also have their own examples.

Documentary	Documentary Mode

### Pages 5 - 6: Documentary History

These are suggestions (and only suggestions) for some of the key documentaries through the ages which demonstrate different modes, style and techniques.

1895 *Lumiere brothers – Arrival of a train at La Ciotat station - actuality (0'40")* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dgLEDdFddk>





- 1922 Robert Flaherty – *Nanook of the North* – romanticism (5') [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEajMPZy\\_0Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEajMPZy_0Q)
- 1928 *Man With a Movie Camera* - Dziga Vertov – ‘kino-pravda’ and the city symphony BFI trailer (1'04") <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtTlgxtoqhg>
- 1929 *Drifters* – John Grierson - creative actuality (5') [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZpd4oV4ucU&list=PLPuEJuyAtM3vuF-mVCHm\\_VpKATPKrAaDI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZpd4oV4ucU&list=PLPuEJuyAtM3vuF-mVCHm_VpKATPKrAaDI)
- 1933 *Housing Problems* - Elton & Anstey- social impact (14') <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tphbEpVfv24>
- 1940 *London Can Take It* – Jennings & Watt – propaganda. GPO Film Unit (8'55") <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Shst3xVmJrQ>
- 1953 *Free Cinema* – Lindsay Anderson O *Dreamland* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLIKR1x1oWY>
- 1966 *Titicut Follies* trailer– Frederick Wiseman – cinéma vérité (0'55") <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuAGuf-QhAQ>
- 1966 *Versus: The Life and Films of Ken Loach* - Cathy Come Home clip (2'24") <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xky8ZqhNALo>
- 1975 *Grey Gardens* 2015 trailer - direct cinema - Alfred & David Maysles (2'05") <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZI1IJLTMXM>
- 1998 *Kurt & Courtney* trailer Nick Broomfield – self-reflexive (2'02") <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvjffMViRzg>
- 2002 *Bowling for Columbine* Michael Moores- performative/participatory/Les Nouvelles Egotistes (2'03") [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hH0mSAjp\\_Jw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hH0mSAjp_Jw)
- 2006 Nick Broomfield – *Ghosts* - direct cinema (2'47") <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSbqcrVnjNw>

### Page 7: Renov and the “fictive”

Non-fiction also contains “fictive” elements – i.e. documentary uses many of the methods of the non-fiction text, particularly mainstream cinema, in the way in which it constructs meaning.

Students will use the interactive resource *Renov and the “fictive”* to read the extract from Michael Renov’s Introduction and identify what he thinks are the “fictive” elements of documentary

Michael Renov *Introduction : The Truth about Non-Fiction* pp5-6 in

Theorizing Documentary AFI Film Readers 1993



Suggested answers:

- Narrativity – to “narrativise the real”
- Performance for the camera
- Construction of character
- Poetic language, narration or musical accompaniment to heighten emotional impact
- The creation of suspense via the agency of embedded narratives ( e.g. tales told by interview subjects) or various dramatic arcs
- Use of high/low camera angles, close-ups, lenses
- Editing and manipulation of time and space

### Page 7: Romanticism and documentary

In order for stories to be told “romantically” and “authentically”, the truth actually had to be constructed. For example, Robert Flaherty’s 1922 film *Nanook of The North* features scenes in which the Inuit family hunt and catch a walrus with harpoons. Flaherty had them re-enact this although they had not used this method for many years, preferring guns. A special igloo also had to be built with a wall removed so that interiors could be shot. In the same way, the cabins on herring boats had to be re-designed to accommodate the equipment in John Grierson’s “Drifters”

### Page 8: The Kuleshov effect

Use the interactive resource The Kuleshov effect so students can watch the films and then have a go at creating their own documentary.

Lev Kuleshov attempted to illustrate the power of editing in the creation of meaning through an experiment in which he intercut an actor’s blank face with several other images. Audiences believed the actor was expressing a different emotion dependent on what he was looking at – although the shot was identical.

Alfred Hitchcock explains this in his own way here: (7’)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NG0V7EVFZt4>

Students at the University of North Carolina tried to re-create this experiment in 2009

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQNpHELKjn0>

### Page 8:

Students could look at clips and identify the codes and conventions of documentary, through thought shower or creating a word cloud. These might be:



- Actuality
- Cinema vérité
- Drama documentary/docudrama
- Doorstep challenge
- Hidden camera
- Scrambled voices/faces
- Interviews – think about mise-en-scène, rule of thirds and construction
- Talking heads
- Noddy shots
- The “expert”
- Graphics
- Eye witness accounts
- “Evidence” – the ‘money shot’
- Vox pops
- Archive footage
- VO – “voice of god”
- Reconstruction
- B-roll
- Insert still images and newspaper pages – denotation, connotation and anchorage
- Fly-on-the-wall
- Hand-held camera
- Cutaways
- Sound bridges
- Verisimilitude
- Social realism
- OS shots
- Montage

### Page 9: Task: Hybridity - applying conventions

Watch the opening of “The Jinx” Episode 1 (00:00-03:50) and identify the generic signifiers of both documentary and crime drama in the episode.

You may wish to watch the whole episode for the purposes of genre and narrative, then go back to sequences for close analysis of media language and representations or you may prefer to focus on short sequences and adopt a more holistic approach to analysis through these.

Does it have elements of other genres? Is it a typical TV documentary? What makes it “different”? Discuss in groups.

Students should also now be able to identify the documentary mode(s) in ‘The Jinx’, comment on how editing/juxtaposition of shots/montages are used to create particular effects, and note the elements of the “fictive” in the episode (e.g. use of music for emotional effect, creation of suspense via the agency of embedded narratives, manipulation of time and space), which have been covered in previous tasks. This will be very useful when students consider representations.

Use the interactive resource ‘Documentary or Crime Drama’ to allow students to consider the features and decide which genre they belong to.



### Documentary

- “True” story
- Actuality footage
- Voice over
- Interviews
- Eye witness
- Talking heads
- Still images
- Non-linear narrative
- Archive material
- Hand-held camera
- Voice of interviewer
- Graphics
- Captions
- Accelerated motion
- Establishing shot

### Crime Drama

- Call-out - radio
- Night time
- Scene of crime
- Sirens, flashing lights, cop car
- Uniform
- Discovery of a body
- Evidence, markers and bags
- Chiaroscuro lighting
- Forensic gloves
- Graphic images e.g. leg
- District Attorney
- Urban setting
- Archive photos and news headlines
- Music track – “Fresh Blood”

Page 9: Genre task – the development & context of documentary (Neale)

Use the interactive resource Context of documentary for students to type their answers and print their work, using the pointers for support, or have them answer the questions in their student pack.

Use the definition as a starting point for discussion, then answer the questions. Answers are in green

BFI's Screen Online - DOCUMENTARY

‘Not so much a single genre as an umbrella of related programme types, each seeking to represent versions of reality. Documentary forms have evolved from the beginnings of cinema to contemporary so-called docu-soaps, which some people might not see as being ‘documentary’ at all. They are characterised by relatively “high modality”

<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/education/glossary.html>



Steve Neale suggests that genres exist within particular contexts and develop through borrowing from other texts. What evidence is there for this?

Current trend for “true crime” and popularity and profitability of documentary; cinematic styling and techniques – link to Jarecki’s film “All Good Things”; crime drama conventions; HBO brand and house style; ‘Crimewatch’ (or ‘60 Minutes’) style re-enactment; director’s previous work and style – e.g. “Capturing the Friedmans”

How does “The Jinx” reflect contemporary ideologies and concerns? Give examples. The notion of justice; “trial by television”; the power of the media; Obama’s America - socio-political debates about class and the power of the rich; moral questions about the ethics of documentary-making in this way; ultimate restoration of order and truth – hegemonic value.

### Page 10: MODALITY (Screen Online)

Students can use the digital resource Modality to type their answers and then compare them to the suggested answer

<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/education/glossary.html>

‘A term coined to unpack the notion of ‘realism’. Modality refers to how close to reality the producer intends a particular text to be. For example, the makers of Tom and Jerry obviously intended their animation to be some distance from realistic - to have ‘low modality’. Some documentary makers, on the other hand, especially observational documentaries - would like to persuade us that they are capturing a version of reality i.e. ‘high modality’. Each text will include clues as to how high or low the modality is. ‘Modality markers’ might include whether there is music on a soundtrack, whether the editing is stylised, or shots are long and static’

Students should read the article at <http://www.digitalvision.tv/the-jinx/> and also think about their own understanding of “The Jinx”. What is constructed in “The Jinx”?

Suggested answers

- Editing
- Re-enactments
- Soundtrack
- VO – rhetoric
- Colour filters
- Rendering of footage
- Manipulation of timeline
- Shooting of interviews etc.



- <http://www.digitalvision.tv/the-jinx/> Sean R. Smith - Three-Month Post-Production
- Diverse array of sources – crime-scene photos, news, different footage on different cameras. “We used different conversion methods for each format and frame rate to achieve optimal results. The Jinx’s final look was refined through a series of grading sessions in Digital Vision’s Nucoda. Smith notes that the aim was to achieve consistency among material shot over a long period of time with different cameras and to establish a mood. Andrew didn’t want it to look like a typical crime show”
- Colour filters – “we devised looks to reflect the climates. Texas is bright and hot. New York is darker, more gray. Los Angeles is colorful, almost playful. Northern California is cooler. More blue.”
- Crime scene reenactments were given their own look. “It was important that the audience never confuse reenactments with reality,” explains Smerling. “We shot them in a cinematic fashion that Sean helped to perfect in the color correct. The reenactments are a special place for the storytelling, a place of insight and elegance.”
- Smith used Autodesk Flame to apply image enhancements and other fine-tuning effects. In all, he spent nearly three months preparing finished masters of the six 1-hour episodes.”

### Page 10: Post-modernism

Baudrillard argues that the media create hyperrealities based on a continuous process of mediation. What is encoded as ‘real’ (and what we decode through media products) is not ‘real’ but instead a ‘simulacrum’ which offers us a hyperreality (“A real without origin or reality” – *Jean Baudrillard*) that we accept as real because we are so consistently exposed to it.

Thus media images have come to seem more “real” than the reality they supposedly represent

‘Our mental pictures of the perfect body, house, meal and sexual relationship have been created through exposure to constantly recycled media depictions that have no basis in fact – but it is these images that create our expectations’ (*Em Griffen (2012) A First Look at Communication Theory, p319*)

Lévi-Strauss suggested that media texts are now made up of “debris” that we recognise from other texts and these are combined – “bricolage”. This may be heard in e.g. a musical “mash-up” or remix.

### Page 11: Post Modernism

Students will fill in the table or use the printable cards to consider “The Jinx” in terms of the following features.

Some features of a postmodern text:

- Intertextuality – acknowledgement of existing media texts
- References to popular culture



- Bricolage
- Self-reflexive
- Parody/Pastiche (“pasted”)/Homage
- Irony
- Ambiguity
- Narrative fragmentation or temporal distortion
- Anti-realist

Students should complete worksheets and/or cards with bullet points – groups should be given cards and should write examples from the text for each – enables differentiation

### Page 12: How far is ‘The Jinx’ a post-modern text?

Students can use the digital resource to type their answers and compare with the suggested answer or they can write their answers into the student work pack.

- Elements of bricolage and “borrowing” from other texts (docudrama, “true crime”, other HBO shows – high production values).
- Relies on the audience’s understanding of conventions to decode it. Give examples.
- Narrative is contradictory, ambiguous and fragmented with temporal distortion - flashbacks and montages.
- Highly self-reflexive – the documentary-maker’s role, Durst’s fixed stare at the cameras, Durst’s request to Jarecki.
- Uses intertextuality (crime drama, docudrama, news reporting, cinematic style and techniques) and cultural codes to create audience appeal. Give examples.
- Post-modern themes such as the relationship between the individual and the constructed “persona”.
- Social, cultural and historical context: the current trend for “real crime” – “Making a Murderer”, “Serial”; Obama’s US and perceptions of class divide.

How could we apply the concept of “simulacra” to ‘The Jinx’? Is what we are seeing hyperreal?

- Durst himself may be seen as simulacra – a fabricated persona constructed by the media (and by himself?)
- Durst’s world is a hyperreality – it is re-presented from a mediated perspective. Consider how this is constructed.
- It may be argued that the series itself is a comment on the fascination of audiences for the



hyperreal over the real – e.g. the archive and home movie footage, the newspaper and photo stills, the reenactments. Jarecki's own response to Durst reflects this.

### Page 12: Extended writing task

'The Jinx has earned critical praise for its innovative storytelling and sophistication. "This series has redefined documentaries," concludes Smerling. "Its use of narrative editing techniques and exciting visual storytelling has brought new interest to the genre. Words like 'groundbreaking' have been used to describe it. We tried to make a series to compete with Homeland and House of Cards."

*Writer/producer/director of photography Marc Smerling* <http://www.digitalvision.tv/the-jinx/>

Essay title: How far can "The Jinx" be defined as post-modern? Give reasons for your answer and refer to detailed examples from the text.

### Page 13

#### TASK : Narrative – Tzvetan Todorov

Can you identify the various stages of the narrative in Episode 1 of 'The Jinx'?

Use the interactive Narrative resource to share the answers with the students

EQUILIBRIUM: The given state or balance of affairs before the.....

DISRUPTION: Disruption of the equilibrium (may stem from a catalyst)

RECOGNITION: That there has been a disruption

RESOLUTION: The attempts to restore the equilibrium

EQUILIBRIUM: Restoration of a similar or changed state of affairs after the disruption has been resolved

Are all these stages realised in Episode 1? Why?

The Todorovian narrative model is linear. Is this the case here?

There should be cause/effect links throughout the narrative. Can you identify these?

#### TODOROVIAN STRUCTURE

- EQUILIBRIUM – Before Detective Gary Jones' call-out? Before Andrew Jarecki made the film "All Good Things" and received the call from Durst? Before the death of Durst's mother?
- DISRUPTION – The original murders? Or does the disruption occur further back in Durst's childhood?
- RECOGNITION – The discovery of the body in the bay





- RESOLUTION – No – although the quest for the truth about Durst and the hunt for the murderer may be seen as an attempt to resolve the disruption.
- EQUILIBRIUM – Not yet – narrative is episodic. Is it even now fully resolved?
- Would we expect full closure in an episodic drama? No
- Are there non-linear elements within the episode? Yes – flashbacks, reconstructions, fragmented narrative
- Are there obvious cause/effect links set up through e.g. Barthesian action or enigma codes? Yes – through title sequence – newspaper headlines and home movie footage; clues within the investigation (e.g. address on newspaper, optician's receipt). The gradually revealed backstory and codes which suggest Durst's relationship with his family, particularly in the title sequence and interviews with Douglas Durst. Enigma codes throughout – whose body? Who is Dorothy Ciner? Why did Durst jump bail/ steal the hoagie? Did Durst kill them? "Still a bunch of question marks", "This guy was an enigma".

### Page 13: Fill in the Blanks

Use the self-marking interactive resource or the students can complete the exercise in the student pack

Read the paragraph and insert the appropriate word

It is more difficult to apply Todorov to this narrative as it is highly fragmented and operates through different narrative strands, for example, the story of Durst and the murders is juxtaposed with the making of the documentary about Durst. Episode 1 acts as the "set-up" or exposition stage, establishing binary oppositions and narrative arcs.

The narrative uses the conventions of a fictionalised thriller – investigative, enigma-based – but as this is Episode 1 there is no dénouement.

The narrative is a flexi-narrative in that it relies significantly on the manipulation of time and space (foreshadowed by the complexity of the credit sequence), shifting narrative positioning, story arcs and editing.

We might argue, then, that the text conforms partly to Todorov's theory of narratology – but not fully.

### Page 14: Binary opposites (Levi-Strauss)

Students will answer in their student pack and then check the answers using the interactive Binary Opposites resource.

Binary Opposition (defined by Levi-Strauss) – many oppositions are set up to drive the narrative and we watch to discover which side "triumphs" in the end.



Can you identify what is in “opposition” to the first word within the text?

- Rich v poor
- Male v female
- Individual v system
- Criminal v law enforcement
- Truth v lies
- Robert Durst v Douglas Durst
- Past v present
- Documentary maker v subject
- The success of the programme v the duty of truth
- Reality v verisimilitude or mediated truth
- Kathie v Durst
- Prosecution v defence

Students need to consider what is ideologically important about the resolution of these oppositions.

There are many more which your students will be able to identify as they study the text.

### Page 15: Story arcs/character arcs

Students will answer in their student pack and then check the answers using the interactive Story arcs resource

There are several story arcs and narrative strands – can you identify them?

- Durst’s own story, including his childhood, family and marriages
- The police officers investigating the murders
- The DAs and their quest for justice
- Andrew Jarecki and the making of the documentary

The time frames may be broadly split into the following periods which are juxtaposed through ‘flashbacks’ archive/reconstruction/montage

- Durst’s childhood and family relationships
- Durst’s marriage to Kathie > 1982 and her disappearance
- 2001 – the body in the bay and trial for the disposal of the body of Morris Black



- “Ten Years Later” to present

### Page 15: Narrative – ‘The Jinx’

Key Questions for Class Discussion:

- Is the narrative entirely linear? If not, why not? Give examples
- Does the episode have a flexi-narrative?
- Are there story arcs which run across the series?
- Are there obvious codes (Barthes) around which the narrative is structured? Give examples
- Is it realist?
- How are time and space manipulated within the narrative?

These are on printable cards for differentiated group discussion

### Pages 15 - 16:

Points that might be made

- Part of larger narrative - only the beginning
- As a documentary it is more likely to contain montages etc.
- Linear/non-linear - is it? Manipulation of time and space
- Anti-realist elements at times? Flashbacks and montages
- Investigative narrative/Intellectual puzzles for an active audience. Not “easy” viewing
- Punctuated by clues which become narrative markers- enigmas/hermeneutics throughout
- Narrative - is it a flexi-narrative? Characters are complex, storylines interweave, we question what is real and what isn’t, it challenges the audience through enigma and confusion
- Complex cross - cutting between past/present and different lines of action
- Journey/quest structure – to find the truth- link to Campbell/Vogler. Does the documentary maker also have a narrative quest?



## REPRESENTATION

### Page 1: Theoretical Framework

Students will need to consider:

- The way events, issues, individuals (including self-representation) and social groups (including social identity) are represented through processes of selection and combination
- The effect of social and cultural context on representations
- How and why stereotypes can be used positively and negatively
- How and why particular social groups, in a national and global context, may be under-represented or misrepresented
- How media representations convey values, attitudes and beliefs about the world and how these may be systematically reinforced across a wide range of media representations
- How audiences respond to and interpret media representations
- Theories of representation (including Hall) Representations are constructed through codes, stereotypes exist as a consequence of inequality of power, maps of reality & deviance - "otherness"
- Feminist theories (including bell hooks and Van Zoonen) at A Level
- Theories of gender performativity (including Butler) at A Level

### Page 2:

#### How are representations constructed/encoded?

Students are asked to thought shower their ideas. Some suggestions might be:

- Narrative : e.g. audiences identify/empathise with characters through narrative positioning
- Dialogue and voice-over
- Technical codes (language) – camera, editing, audio.
- Lighting
- Framing
- Mise-en-scène (costuming, setting)
- Performance
- Barthes - cultural codes



### Pages 3 - 5: Constructing

Use the interactive Characters resource to share the answers with the students

Jarecki mentions his fascination with “monster stories” later in the episode. How is Durst constructed as a “monster” in the pre-credit sequence (00:00-03:40) before he even appears on screen?

- ‘The monster’ is created through the hyperbolic language and mode of address in the opening sequences as the dismembered body is described.
- We are positioned by the 1st person VO and then the POV shots in the car with Det. Gary Jones and share his horrified reaction
- VO – “young kid” found a “torso” – emotive
- The generic signifiers of the crime drama or police procedural (evidence markers, plastic gloves, sirens and cop cars etc.) and the audio track with police radio create verisimilitude
- The crime is constructed as particularly grisly – “had to get my fingers through its throat”- graphic and chilling. “I recall seeing a toe” – victim as disposable/paralleled with the paper carton. “A leg” with the graphics outlining its position. Stills of limbs have severance marks at the edges of the frames.
- The stills shots are accompanied by bass notes which are filled with foreboding

### Elements of construction

How does the construction of Durst reinforce/challenge this representation in the rest of the episode?

- Credits (03:40-04:54): The Eels soundtrack – “Fresh Blood” – Durst as almost vampiric (emphasised later by his pallor and the downlighting which highlights his skull)
- Profile shots connoting duality reinforce his representation as enigmatic.
- The boy – the home movie footage (football, beach) implies innocence and happiness. The graphic match from boy to man suggests he has been formed by his childhood – a ‘poor little rich boy’
- Shot of watching his mother on the roof is grainy, disturbing and seems sadistic. Accompanied by eerie audio track of a musical saw
- Chiaroscuro lighting suggests hidden secrets. The attack on the woman is cinematic, slow-motion and parallel framed through the door. Red curtains connote danger. The sequence seems stylized and therefore unreal
- The silhouette in the penthouse against the window, and isolated figure seated alone and centre frame, suggest his loneliness



- Low angle shot of him in prison orange walking towards the camera/us
- The superimposition of cutting hair/shaving head has intertextual resonance (Travis Bickle, the outsider vigilante in Scorsese's "Taxi Driver" )
- Throughout, he is constructed as an enigma - different viewpoints from different people
- The still at Pennsylvania Prison – the tiny, frail old man between 2 tall, muscular prisoners
- His dry wit – he is amusing and bizarrely engaging "Cause he's a pussy"
- The closed and parallel frames and motif of prison bars suggest he is trapped with no escape
- Vocal – his voice is deep, gravelly and almost hypnotic
- He is fragile– spectacles, physical size, thin skin, his tics and twitches
- High angled shots emphasise his weakness
- Air of candid honesty juxtaposed with sense of him as a performer – "rehearsing" his responses, staring at the cameras
- In court – "Did they say not?"

TASK: Look at the characters.

The HBO 'The Jinx' website has a "Who's Who".

How has their representation been constructed within Episode 1? Use the worksheet.

There is a word document called Character representations that should be printable/downloadable

Need to link to Stuart Hall throughout.

Page 6: bell hooks

Use the interactive bell hooks resource to share the answers with the students.

Argues that feminism is a struggle to end patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination, and that the position of the underrepresented is by class and race as well as gender.

"Women in lower class and poor groups, particularly those who are non-white, would not have defined women's liberation as women gaining social equality with men since they are continually reminded in their everyday lives that all women do not share a common social status."

Task: How is "patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination" evident in "The Jinx"?

Students should write 3 paragraphs which express their ideas. They could use the suggestions below to help

- Women as victims of patriarchal society



- Durst's mother – constructed as unstable, victim
- Kathie – less wealthy, victim
- Susan Berman – defined as gangster's daughter, victim
- BUT
- Debrah Lee Charatan – independent, feisty
- Jeanine Pirro – DA and Judge. Constructed through costuming and mise-en-scene – make-up, power suits in e.g. pink, leather library chairs, opulent mise-en-scène. Note that she is a TV presenter for Fox News Channel (Justice with Judge Jeanine) and makes additional media appearances. Does this affect the way we see her as “constructed”?

### Page 7: Liesbet Van Zoonen

Use the interactive Liesbet Van Zoonen resource to share the answers with the students

'[There is] a depressing stability in the articulation of women's politics and communication . . . The underlying frame of reference is that women belong to the family and domestic life and men to the social world of politics and work; that femininity is about care, nurturance and compassion, and that masculinity is about efficiency, rationality and individuality.' – Van Zoonen

Give examples from 'The Jinx' that illustrate this concept

Women

Marginalised (or absent)

Domestic

Sexualised

Nurturer

Men

Efficient

Rational

Individual

### Page 7: Van Zoonen

Use the interactive Van Zoonen resource to share the answers with the students

Read the paragraphs from Van Zoonen's essay "Feminist Perspectives on the Media".

Pages 33 -37, Feminist Perspectives on the Media in Mass Media and Society (Curran and Gurevitch) Arnold (1996)

This is in pdf attached



What does she suggest are the key differences between a:

Liberal feminist's perspective?

Radical feminist's perspective?

Socialist feminist's perspective?

### Page 8: Apply the different feminist approaches to 'The Jinx'

Use the interactive Feminist approaches resource to share the answers with the students

**Socialist feminism:** Wealth is focused on the male characters in the text – Durst and his family. Belief that wealth means that normal rules do not apply. Kathie (as a woman from a lower class background) is less important and more disposable than the wealthy Dursts.

There are errors made within the male-dominated institution of the police force and legal system.

Durst is able to get bail and perhaps “buy” his freedom.

**Radical feminism:** Women are mostly subservient to males and are victims of patriarchy.

Patriarchal values are evident within the text through lawyers etc.

Kathie defined by physical appearance and relationships to males – headlines “beautiful wife”.

**Liberal feminism:** The “superwoman” figure may be identified in Jeanine Pirro who holds a position of authority in a male-dominated world.

Women are not marginalised but are central to the narrative e.g. DA, Judge.

### Page 8: Social and political context: Do police officers routinely lie?

Thirty-one percent of Americans believe they do, and that number rises to 45 percent among African-Americans, 41 percent among young people and 39 percent among Democrats. Republicans reject that charge three to one (60 to 20 percent). Those numbers come from a national poll of Americans just conducted by Reuters and the Ipsos polling organization.

15/1/15

### Page 9: The Police and Van Zoonen

Use the interactive Police and Van Zoonen resource to share the answers with the students.

However, Van Zoonen argues that gender is constructed and that its meaning varies dependent on cultural and historical context.

She suggests that masculinity as well as femininity is constructed – and that the codes used to construct men ‘as a spectacle’ are different.





Is this applicable?

- Males constructed through movement (active)
- Silence and impassivity
- Strength, muscularity and aggression
- Competition – males as gladiators or combatants – ‘the spectacle’
- Constructed more through the intradiegetic gaze – the way they are looked at by other characters (e.g. with respect/fear)
- Allows narcissistic identification without erotic gaze

Page 10:

Watch the video clip of Judith Butler and read the notes and article (3')

<http://bigthink.com/videos/your-behavior-creates-your-gender>

Butler argues that gender is constructed and learned, and has been for many years. “The act that one does, the act that one performs is, in a sense, an act that’s been going on before one arrived on the scene” (*Gender Trouble* 1990). Gender performativity involves repeating, copying or “performing” the dominant characteristics of gender (behaviours, appearance, discourse) to create a “constructed identity” which then becomes accepted by the performer and audience.

“Gender is an impersonation . . . becoming gendered involves impersonating an ideal that nobody actually inhabits” (interview with Liz Kotz in *Artforum*).

The way that gender is constructed is designed to support hegemonic social conventions and ideologies and maintain the status quo.

<http://faculty.ucr.edu/~ewkotz/texts/Kotz-1992-Artforum-ButlerInt.pdf>

Page 10: Essay Task: How might Judith Butler’s theory of “gender performativity” be applied to “The Jinx”?

Consider:

Durst’s own constructed persona; his impersonation of a woman

The personas of the women in the text: Kathie, Durst’s mother, Susan Berman, Jeanine Pirro (mise-en-scène of family photos, wood, pinks)

The constructed masculinity of the male characters – look at the police officers, particularly Texas DA Dick Deguerin in terms of mise-en-scène (check shirt, cowboy hat, gun)



### MEDIA INDUSTRIES

#### Page 1

Students will need to consider:

- Processes of production, distribution and circulation by organisations, groups and individuals in a global context. This could begin with the overview/introduction to television industries – commercial and PSB
- The specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and circulation
- The significance of patterns of ownership and control including conglomerate ownership, vertical integration and diversification HBO – conglomerate ownership – Time Warner and global penetration
- The significance of economic factors, including commercial and not-for-profit public funding, to media industries and their products. Focus here on HBO as commercial cable & satellite network, Pay TV in the USA
- How media organisations maintain, including through marketing, varieties of audiences nationally and globally. Marketing and global reach of “The Jinx”. 130M subscribers worldwide
- The regulatory framework of contemporary media in the UK Certification
- Regulation (including Livingstone and Lund) at A level
- Cultural industries (including Hesmondhalgh) at A Level

#### Page 2: “The Jinx” Key Facts

- ‘The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst’
- Series 1, Episode 1 (2015)
- Original Broadcaster : HBO February 8 – March 15, 2015 6 episodes
- Blumhouse Productions and HBO Documentary Films
- HBO documentary mini-series
- Written by Andrew Jarecki, Marc Smerling, and Zachary Stuart-Pontie
- Directed by Andrew Jarecki (*Capturing the Friedmans*, *All Good Things* – about Durst)

Pages 2 - 3: HBO information repeated from introductory section in Television in the Global Age



Page 3:

**Home Box Office**  
**The World's Most Successful Premium Television Company**

With its HBO and Cinemax services, Home Box Office, Inc. is at the vanguard of creating and delivering groundbreaking original programming and hit Hollywood films to consumers worldwide across a wide range of platforms and offerings.

**Highlights**

Whether measured by awards, critical acclaim, subscribers, profitability or viewers, Home Box Office, Inc., the premium television programming subsidiary of Time Warner Inc., is the world's most successful pay TV service, providing the two television services – HBO® and Cinemax® – to approximately 134 million subscribers worldwide. The services offer the popular subscription video-on-demand products HBO On Demand® and Cinemax On Demand®, as well as HBO GO® and MAX GO®, HD feeds and multiplex channels. HBO NOW®, the network's internet-only premium streaming service, provides audiences with

**Core Stats**

**Approx. 134 MM**  
 Approximately 134 million HBO and Cinemax premium pay and basic cable subscribers worldwide (includes unconsolidated joint ventures) (2017)

**1**  
 87th Annual Academy Awards (2016)

**6**  
 75th Annual George Foster Peabody Awards (2016)

**1**  
 73rd Annual Golden Globe Awards (2016)

**5**

Page 4:

Use the HBO interactive resource to share the suggested answers with students

Look at the HBO website. What other programmes are you familiar with? What makes a HBO product – does it have a house style/brand?

High budget and production values (give examples, e.g. cinematography, credits, cast, costume/ make-up/FX)

'Quality' writing

Genre-based with a "new" twist

Cinematic qualities

Mainstream but very specific target audience

Often serial with stand-alone episodes

Designed for box-set/ binge viewing

Accessed through subscription/download

High profile marketing campaign – reliant on TV spots and print to generate buzz

Water-cooler TV

Page 5:



Task: Look at the TimeWarner website and undertake independent research into its company structure. Create an Umbrella diagram (next page) showing the main elements of this. You may expand/amend this as you require.

<http://www.timewarner.com/>

- The world's third largest entertainment company in terms of revenue, Time Warner is a vertically and horizontally integrated media conglomerate and is part of the global media oligopoly.
- Time Warner operates across platforms and owns assets such as CNN, Cartoon Network (through Turner Broadcasting Systems), HBO, Warner Bros e.g. New Line Cinema. It owns DC comics and Mobile Apps such as Lego: The Lord of the Rings and Batman: Arkham City Lockdown games; Warner Bros. Digital sites that include DCComics.com, DCNation.com, TMZ.com and their corresponding mobile Apps; home video distribution through various formats such as VOD and EST; and Flixster.
- Convergence - AT&T (the world's biggest telecoms company in terms of revenue) are currently involved in a deal to buy TimeWarner, increasing multi-platform synergy.
- Read the article by Klint Finley 10.22.16 'AT&T is buying TimeWarner because the future is Google' at <https://www.wired.com/2016/10/att-buying-time-warner-future-google/>

This task should be used as a prompt to discuss the globalisation/conglomeration/convergence/vertical and horizontal integration of the media industries. Students could also research the implications of this.

### Page 7: The Jarecki brand

- Jarecki founded Moviefone and recently pioneered KnowMe, a simple video editing app - a new iOS app that allows users to create and instantly share bite-sized movies, using stored images and audio files on their phone.
- 2003 Capturing the Friedmans
- 2010 All Good Things
- 2010 Catfish
- 2013 Catfish the TV Show
- 2015 The Jinx

### Pages 7 - 14: Marketing Task

Use the interactive Marketing resource to allow the students the opportunity to consider the suggested answers



Task: look at the trailers, clips, articles and materials on pages 7 - 11 Summarise the marketing tactics which were used to promote the text on the chart in page 12

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZabDYB7ijM>

Official HBO trailer

<http://www.hbo.com/the-jinx-the-life-and-deaths-of-robert-durst>

Website

Technique	Detail
Trailer(s)	
Posters/print ads	
Publicity	
Social Media	
Website(s)	

Page 13: How is 'The Jinx' marketed to target audiences?

- Sold on genre with a twist – focus on trailer
- Sold on narrative enigma and “what ifs?”- trailers and posters are driven by hermeneutics
- Sold on contemporary relevance – “true crime”
- Robert Durst- single image – appeals voyeuristically to audience –is this a murderer? Concept of spectacle
- Sold as a quality programme from HBO– mark of trust
- Sold worldwide (global reach)
- Coverage in newspapers and television - front pages.
- Final episode “event”
- Social media “buzz”
- Some merchandising (the calendar)



- Created series “brand” - becomes iconic
- These elements target different audiences

### Page 13: Hesmondhalgh: The Cultural Industries “The Jinx”

- Hesmondhalgh argues that whilst the traditional arts industries (e.g. theatre, ballet, opera) have been subsidised because they are “legitimized” cultures, media industries are equally high risk but have no subsidy “cushion”.

Some of the risks are:

- No guarantee of profitability
- Expensive production costs
- Cheap reproduction
- Big hits are disproportionately profitable
- Digitised content enables piracy
- Media producers must therefore attempt to minimize risks to maximise profit
- Vertical and horizontal integration
- Cross-media conglomeration and convergence
- Developing a repertoire of tried and tested stars, genres, adaptations, franchises – “formatting” their own cultural products
- Controlling release schedule/copyrights to create artificial scarcity
- Control of circulation through distribution/marketing, including the internet

Extended Writing Task: Looking at everything you have done in this section, explain the ways in which “The Jinx” illustrates Hesmondhalgh’s points and develop your answer with examples.

### Page 14: Hesmondhalgh: The Cultural Industries “The Jinx”

- HBO production minimizes financial risk and guarantees US market
- Produced by major global media institution/vertically integrated company (TimeWarner) with cross-media interests e.g. film/TV
- Tried and tested genre (documentary) with a “true crime” and current twist (Steve Neale’s “difference” which maintains audiences)
- Adaptation of an existing case with existing audience interest
- Promotion of director - separate fan base



- Elements of franchise (Janecki's *All Good Things* film) – companies format their own cultural products through heavily branded marketing
- Controlled release and circulation/Scheduled through HBO with HBO Now and HBO Go
- High-profile, marketing campaign including integrated use of internet and social media
- Use of testimonial – “quality” mark of HBO

## MEDIA AUDIENCES

### Page 1: Media Audiences

Students 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) at A Level

### Page 2: Task: How does 'The Jinx' target audiences?

Who is the audience for “The Jinx”? Think about gender, age, psychographics (e.g. VALS), socio-economic group, interest. Is there more than one audience?

Justify your response

How does the text itself target audiences? Consider genre, narrative, representations, intertextuality

How does the marketing target audiences? See Marketing notes

Task with worksheet

### Audiences and 'The Jinx'

*Who are the different audiences and how are they targeted?*



Audience	How are they targeted?	
	Through the text	Through the marketing

Page 3: Identifying the Audience: Who is the target audience for 'The Jinx'? Justify your response

Use the interactive Target Audience resource to share the suggested answers with the students

- Primary Target Audience – fans of true crime (mainly female) - and HBO - mainstream audience. 15+ (8pm TV slot).
- Cross-gender and age appeal through hybrid generic elements in the text (true crime, thriller, reality TV)
- Secondary audience - fans of Kirsten Dunst/Ryan Gosling who might have seen "All Good Things" and been hooked by the story
- The documentary viewer – those who like the notion of finding out the truth
- Experiencers may enjoy the vicarious tension of Durst's guilt or innocence





- Tertiary audience – the box-set viewer- attracted by the marketing and publicity to a genre they may not normally watch
- Inherited fan bases – from Jarecki e.g. 'Capturing the Friedmans'; from HBO "The Walking Dead", "Breaking Bad"

### Page 4: How do Audiences respond to 'The Jinx'?

The audience models are on printable cards – group discussion which can be differentiated

They are also available as an interactive resource

- Identification – Uses & Gratifications Model. Link to context - Modern audiences may identify with the people featured e.g. Cody Cazalas as the world is similar to our own, mirroring our own fears and concerns. Universal themes (love, loss, betrayal) are explored and strike a chord with a range of audiences.
- Diversion – Uses & Gratifications Model – Audiences use the text as escapism to divert us from our own mundane existences. The non-linear narrative also helps with this. There is diversionary appeal in the development of the relationship between filmmaker and subject, and the different lines of action, with clues revealed episode by episode, allowing audiences to play detective in a real-life crime.
- Surveillance – Uses & Gratifications Model. The story is current and updates the audience on what has happened before.
- Social responses – watercooler effect. Social media buzz created by impact of series and Durst's arrest.
- Enigma codes and narrative devices. In Episode 1, audiences are drawn by the hermeneutics surrounding Durst's past, and questions are raised throughout – Why did he steal the hoagie when he had money? Was he Ciner? What happened to his mother? Did he kill them? Will he be caught?
- Two-step Flow. Testimonial – on posters– "groundbreaking" From the director of "Capturing the Friedmans". On the DVD cover from Entertainment Weekly.

### Page 4: Audience Response Factsheet

- Imdb –23,275 with overall rating of 8.8
- Rotten Tomatoes rated it 94% fresh, with a 97% audience score
- Viewing figures – Episode 1 752,000. Then dropped before rising to 802,000 for Episode 6.
- The miniseries premiered in Australia on May 7, 2015, on Showcase. 'The Jinx' premiered in India on June 9, 2015, on HBO.



- 'The Jinx' was nominated for six and won two Primetime Creative Arts Emmy Awards in 2015 including Outstanding Documentary

### Pages 5 - 8: Audience interaction/ Fan responses

- Use the interactive 'Active' and 'Creative' Audiences resource to share the suggested answers with the students.
- Henry Jenkins argues that fans form part of a 'participatory culture' in which audiences are active and creative participants in a text.
- Read both articles by Linda Holmes and Jamie Loftus on page 6 (separate word document), Laura Minor's on page 9 and look at pages 7 - 8.
- How do fans participate "actively" and "creatively"? Are there examples of "textual poaching"?

### "Active" & "Creative" Audiences : Henry Jenkins

- ratings and reviews
- questioning the documentary makers
- trying to "investigate" the case themselves
- attending the trial
- buying the calendar
- fan art
- memes
- social interaction and social media

### Page 9: Audience Task: what pleasures might audiences gain from 'The Jinx'?

Task: Read the article from The Guardian. Stuart Jeffries article in The Guardian

'We're all car-crash snoopers now': the truth about the TV true-crime wave

<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2017/mar/04/serial-jinx-making-murderer-rillington-place>

Students will create a word cloud of the pleasures we might gain from the text. They should develop three of these points with examples from the text itself. Check against the list of potential pleasures.

Responses students might give:

- Audience expectations of genre – pleasure in seeing expectations fulfilled (Neale)



- Pleasure of intellectual puzzle – enigma codes
- Curiosity and active participation - “armchair detectives meeting other armchair detectives. But those armchair detectives aren’t just spectators, they can affect ongoing cases.”
- Reality – creates audience empathy and identification (U & G)
- Escapism – diversion
- Star/character identification
- Moral messages –plays on contemporary fears & scepticism e.g. about police competence/ miscarriage of justice
- Vicarious sense of danger/thrill –constructed through crime codes/conventions - “The euphoric effect of true crime on human emotions is similar to that of roller coasters”
- Catharsis - “directing viewers, like motorists who have slowed for a crash, away from gawping”
- Narrative pleasure
- Voyeurism, scopophilia – the ‘gaze’ - “We are all car-crash snoopers when we watch true crime,”
- Social – “on social media..... That’s where we can create a cultural moment and where the film-makers’ work becomes part of the conversation and the zeitgeist.”

### Page 10: Readings – Stuart Hall

#### Extended writing task:

- Read the extracts on pages 10 - 14
- Write a “perfect paragraph” on each of the following questions
- What is the preferred meaning of ‘The Jinx’?
- How is this encoded?
- What other readings might this text generate?

There will obviously be many potential readings of the text – these are merely examples.

#### Page 10: Preferred Reading:

- The filmmakers are on a quest for justice – for the purest of reasons.
- They are revealing the “truth” to the audience.
- Their work has been crucial in the re-arrest of Robert Durst – they have made a difference.
- The Jinx received critical acclaim and created a media buzz, particularly for the final episode.



- An oppositional reading may struggle with the ethics of the documentary and may see it as “vigilante television” (see e.g. Jenna Stauber’s article on page 11).
- A negotiated reading may accept the documentary’s purpose as valid but question the media “exploitation” of a man who is potentially mentally ill.
- Audiences may be critical of e.g. the stylized reconstructions, positioning of Durst, slow motion sequences which dwell on the murders, restructure of timelines and emotional manipulation of the audience (e.g. page 13).

### Television resources

- *For a historical overview of TV*
- *Imagine UK - Season 7 Episode 9 - And Then There Was Television Dec 19, 2006* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007cjkz>
- *The Media Student’s Book Fifth Edition (Gill Branston & Roy Stafford, 2010. Routledge) has print-based and online resources including ‘The Future of Television’*
- <http://www.mediastudentsbook.com/content/chapter-9-future-television>
- *The BBC’s own homepage has a wealth of information, timelines, factsheets and clips including “The Digital Revolution”, information about PSB, funding and the Licence Fee on its “Inside the BBC” section*
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/historyofthebbc>
- *A potted history of UK commercial TV - Campaign*
- [www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/509198/potted-history-uk-commercial-tv](http://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/509198/potted-history-uk-commercial-tv)

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- *Ellison, A. (2015, Jan). Retrieved from The Telegraph: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/>*



[science/11374598/Why-watching-TV-crime-dramas-is-good-for-your-brain.html](https://www.education.gov.uk/science/11374598/Why-watching-TV-crime-dramas-is-good-for-your-brain.html)

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