

Mediation: Media and Time

Reading: Scannell, P. "Dailiness" from *Radio, Television and Modern Life* pgs. 144-178.

Hartley, J. "The frequencies of Public Writing: Tomb, Tone and Time." pp. 247-269.

Mediation

- Mediation: media in the middle – ‘active space of social negotiation’
- The experience of time is fundamental to how broadcasting has traditionally become sutured into the fabric of everyday life

Temporality

Different notions of time

Objective time

- linear, universal, abstract
- institutional; scientific and industrial

Subjective time

- Experiential, lived, personal - “my time”
- Temporality (phenomenological experience of time)

- The most commonly discussed concept of time is objective time, this is the linear and universal notion of the ticking clock, a set of defined rules which routinely divide the day minute-by-minute and synchronise society in the same activities e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Interestingly, Scannell investigates the experience of phenomenological time, which instead is the human perception of time itself, making up the temporality of our lives.

Dailiness

- Scannell uses dailiness to describe recurring events, which fill each day as a continuous flow, creating routines. The media is an outlet for this uninterrupted flow of events, and thus media contribute to the shaping of the sense of our days, and their ‘dailiness’.

Broadcasting

- Television constructs dailiness through the program format and the serial narrative structure. It provides viewers with a constant stream of communicative information; morning shows, to childrens shows, to noon news, to night news and television series.

Temporality of everyday life

- In the ever-changing technological world we live in, media is inherently woven into the ‘fabric of our lives’ (Scannell). Thus, our experience of time is heavily influenced by the media around us. The rhythms of everyday life are punctuated by media outlets such as news, with broadcasts of events, which confirm a sense of time passing.
- News confirms a sense both of time passing, as stories unfold and new ones emerge, and of the concrete experience of the ‘nowness’ of each day and time of day. (Hartley)

Contemporary Example

- We are guided by the media to celebrate significant events which mark our beliefs about time in history. For example, Christmas, traditionally one day which commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ is characterised in the media by months of advertising the 'perfect' gifts, the proliferation of chart-topping Christmas Jingles, the screening of popular Christmas movies and the best 'must have' Christmas home decorations. Hence, the temporality of our lives is shaped by the presentation of events in the media, and thus our experience of time is heavily institutionalized.

Flow

- The media contributes to the flow of our day. Alongside the constant stream of broadcasting, media punctuates our daily activities. For example, someone may eat breakfast every morning with a show like Sunrise to wake them up and connect them with current events, or finish work from home at the end of the day with an episode of The Simpsons for relaxation.

Cultural Citizenship (impact of the media in time)

- Due to the constancy of the news, and the multiple outlets of media available to us, society is transforming and re-personalising itself. With the plethora of information available, people are able to pick and choose what media they consume based on their interests (Scannells main thesis). Thus, a new type of public is evolving where we now identify with others through "virtual' communities based on coexistence in time, not co-extension in space". This refers to a blurring of the connections between our immediate, local public and a synchronising of experience with those in the international community who have similar care structures to us.
- Scannell is arguing that media contributes to our sense of time and synchronises us in time, however we are synchronizing with people who identify with us and connect with our personalities.

Contemporary Example

- This can be seen particularly through fandom's for particular television shows. For example, The Walking Dead, a popular weekly television show has viewers connecting worldwide as each episode is released, through Twitter. 'Live tweeting' has enabled Walking Dead followers to update their views/opinions/reactions to the show as it is released. Viewers globally are able to discuss and comment on the events of the show, as it is happening, through a live forum, connected by the hashtag #TheWalkingDead. Additionally, Youtube users upload live reactions to the show which can be watched in conjunction with the series itself, enabling viewers to virtually watch the program alongside other fans of the show.

Key Concepts

Phenomenological time

The human perception of time itself

Time-shifting

We are living in a multi-channel environment where there is a plethora of information outlets available to us.

Television Futures

The television of the future is predicted to be multi-temporal, which refers to a shift from narrative to meta-narrative. A television, which is immersive, tactile and emotional.

Frequencies of public writing

Hartlet developed the frequencies of public writing.

There are high frequencies and low frequencies of public writing. The high frequencies are fast paced, such as online journalism. This is information communicated constantly on social media. Low frequency public writing is inscribed on mediums such as stone, predominantly historical artefacts which communicate messages for generations to see.

Dasein

Dasein is about bringing things within grasp, close, within range. Media transforms spatiality and brings things within the reach of concern.