Rachel Moore
Soci 4306.253
Dr. Dietrich

Assignment 3

In today's society, the mass media is everywhere. You have electronics galore, where you have instant access to almost any format you desire, delivered to your hands, in a matter of seconds. People who once had to wait for days on end, to communicate with loved ones, now are able to touch a button, and connect within seconds. Mass media by definition is any form technology that allows communication to happen, to a large audience. Televisions, newspaper, the internet, movies and even app's, are forms of it. Together, they make up the mediated culture of America, which is when the mass media is so significant, that it helps shape the society.

It's all around us, and we may not even pay attention to the signs that the media is feeding us, but they shape the world around us. Society is surrounded by messages which promote products, attitudes, moods, stereotypes, and perpetuate a blur in reality. The film industry, whether it be movies or television, has contributed to our ideals of gender roles, gender norms and gender expectations, when they became able to broadcast to the masses. Before the film industry was able to reach large audiences, people were forced to create the ideals, and norms in the small towns or metropolitans they lived in. At the time, without mass media, religion and traditions heavily influenced the area's gender norms.

In the feminist theories we learned about, they discuss the idea of hegemonic masculinity, and how each society has dominant masculinity. They point out that there are many different types of masculinity in cultures, but only the dominant which becomes the standard of masculinity. In the film industry, leading men in movies, have become our societies standard. The men in movies and film display the traits that are stereotyped, as our dominant masculinity. You will be hard to find men in film, who do not have attributes of being strong, assertive, goal

oriented, confident or one who isn't a risk taker. Why? Because these are the ideals set of men,

by the mass media. Women, on the other hand, have the traits of being depicted as nurturing,

nice, emotional and sensitive. It creates a message, that this is the standard for our society. It also

creates the message, that society to reward those who fit into those standards. The top paid actors

are usually the men who represent this hegemonic man. They are rewarded materialistically with

the higher salaries, and they are rewarded symbolically by given prestige or honor by creating

lists that rank them, for the masses to know they are regarded highly. Since the mass media

creates messages of ideals, society tends to develop the same ideals, as its easier to go with social

norms, than go against.

Gender roles are also shaped by the mass media. Up until this decade, it was rare to see

openly gay couples in movies and television. Now almost every show has a gay couple or person

in it. In the 50's, women and men were shown as perfect husband and wives, with perfect

children. This standard of norms created in the mass media, allowed society to shape even more

patriarchy views, when the media was more limited in reaching audiences. When tv's became

easier to purchase, and more stations began programming, people started to move away from the

media's created culture norm of gender roles, into other directed societies. Cultures, beliefs and

ideas, began to once again shift, but the media still clung to the hegemonic masculinity ideal.

In Boudrillard writings, he ponders the relationships between reality, society and

symbols. He decides that we have moved away from reality, and have started to blur the lines

between reality and the hyperreal. The mass media to Boudrillard, is when societies became the

Postmodern Era. He claims that the mass media helps us live in a world where we would rather

experience the production of something, instead of seeing it with our own eyes. The film

Rachel Moore
Soci 4306.253
Dr. Dietrich

industry is one of the main medias that allows us to create our perceived reality. Movies and television create stories, scenes, and situations, that every day people may not have a chance to encounter. From this, society tends to start to believe, what they are being shown.

War films are some of the best examples of the hyperreal and 3rd order simulacra, to use. Since I have been to war, and was a medic in the world, I was exposed to many elements that other people were not. Often, I get questions from people I know, where they are comparing a movie scene to something I may have encountered when deployed. When I tell my experience, they often do not believe my version, because it doesn't seem like anything they saw in a movie. They begin to doubt reality over the unreal.

Reality TV is also another example of the hyperreal. We are made to believe as a society, that shows labeled as reality TV, are authentic and not acted out. However, there have been many accounts from reality tv stars, where they admit that the majority of the show are set up by the production team, to include storylines. The reality actors may get to choose their own words in the situation, but in truth, they are still following guidelines to generate viewer interests. Beuty standards in the film industry have also becomes forms of the hyperreal. When you watch the Kardashians wake up with a full face of flattering makeup, and hair curled just right, viewers start to form the reality, that they wake up that perfect. When in reality, they sat in hair and makeup for 3 hours, and then climbed back into bed to shoot the wakeup scene. Until recently, even I became a victim of the hyperreal, when a news article came out about the Kardashian mansion being for sell, and they had mentioned it was a dupe. I have believed for the entire show, that the mansion they showed in opening credits, really belonged to them.

Rachel Moore
Soci 4306.253
Dr. Dietrich

Even shows about cooking which are shown in real time increments, are usually many takes and pieced together for the final edit. The food is often cold and prepped for the camera with special preservatives, or even makeup, to make the food more alluring. The magic of film is that they can create any reality that they have the technology for. With every technology that is created, America believes the hyperreal more easily.