

G325

1b Analyse one of your coursework productions in relation to the concept of narrative.

1 (b) In this essay I am going to discuss the key elements and the concept of narrative for my A2 media production. I will achieve this by using genuine evidence and valid reasoning. I will use examples and quotes from theorists to support my points.

Starting with 'Todorov' who is well known for his theory of chain events in the narrative – in my music production I found his theory to contain a similar character and linked them together. His theory follows these chain of events, 'equilibrium, disruption, possible solutions, climax, resolution.' In my music production the music starts quite mysterious and silent, before signifying the main narrative feature. At this point, the artist is trying to establish his love for the girl he wants. However the song is disrupted as he finds she does not like him back. This is more linear narrative, as it follows chronologically. I also used inspiration from 'Roland Barthes' – his codes theory, in particular 'enigma code.' Indie music is hugely renowned for its puzzling nature in which I thought my music video could also play. My video features a lot of fast paced visual effects that are hard to concentrate on and some structural meanings are harder to interpret, making it more intriguing as it is suspicious. I am fond of the enigma style, as it's less limiting and allows individuals to make their own judgement on what they believe the message is promoting. Roland Barthes aimed for two areas, one in which there was to be an unconventional question, and second, to give the audience a chance to anticipate the resolution. My production used similar concepts to these theorists as they fit most suitably to my music production. The narrative storyline is hard to underline but is conventional for indie music.

These ideas in play worked very well, e.g. – the strobe lighting effect signified the mood of the production which was upbeat and lively. This was also determined by the use of colours. The flashing strobe technology helped give the character the personality of the musician – also a convention of indie music. More examples consisted of close ups to the star image, trying to promote aspects of the 'male gaze', a form of voyeurism, the audience can connect with him and start to understand the value and message of the narrative structure. I also considered elements from 'Levi-Strauss' who had the theory the structure of meaning depends on binary opposition. The majority of the elements in the video are dominant and emotive, to support sympathy in response to the star icon. Levi-Strauss used conventions such as good -> evil, strong -> weak. I thought this was an interesting technique and considered adapting this to my production e.g. an example of youth could be determined through camera movement, as it's constantly moving it has connotations of young vibe. This is also supported by the fact the members are young. The music gives a fresh feel and contains many elements supporting Levi-Strauss's theory. The binary opposition strategy is useful for a band such as Indie; as the messages are always envisaged in a way, that the ideology is twisted and turned against the consumer. With other videos your

ideology is maintained safely, but 'indie' is unique in assuring that is hard for you to follow.

In conclusion, narrative is a factor that is hard to achieve in indie productions as it's not entirely defined. It is always trying to put the consumer off their original thoughts. It's conventional to use this approach but it's a clever marketing feat to pull the consumer in. I enjoyed building the narrative to this production as it was challenging, however it brought new opportunities to try new ideas as I had taken into account these theorist's approaches. It was hard to define what fits to my narrative beat, but I was able to counter act this concept. Narrative is one of the key motivations in the music video and it was essential that we interpreted this to the audience in an accurate manner.

This response attempts to apply the concept of narrative through reference to Todorov, Levi-Strauss and Barthes. It offers some contrast in theoretical positions and makes an effort to show the relevance of each to the production, but does not offer enough specific textual evidence to justify level 4. There is some good understanding shown, but not quite enough application.

Overall a good level 3

Q12 WeMedia and Democracy: To what extent are the media more democratic now than in the past?

'We media' is user generated content e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. Dan Gilmore's definition of 'We media' is 'all the media that is homegrown, local, organic and potentially counter-cultural.' Democracy is everyone and anyone is a community in which has the right to participate and contribute to making a difference. I will discuss how 'we media' is becoming more democratic now than in the past, and explain in detail using valid studies. I will end using a justifying conclusion of my own opinion on the topic.

One reason to suggest that the media is now more democratic than in the past would be the case study of Burma VJ (2008). The film is directed by Andrew Ostergard and it brings us closer to the video journalists who deliver the material. They risk torture and jail to retrieve these images. The material has been smuggled out of the country and then is broadcast back into Burma via satellite. It mainly focuses on government issues as there isn't free democracy for the citizens of Burma. These videos fight against the political government to fight for democracy. One of the most successful moments in the videos would be the Buddhist monk march in 2007. The march turned into a huge protest, and eventually proved successful. Recently US President Barack Obama has been the first US president to visit the strategic nation – Time Magazine November 12 2012. This quick overview gives the effect media can have on fighting for democracy. Through simple media of video journalism and uploading/broadcasting, the effects can be hugely effective. Referring back to Gilmore's definition, video journalism has reached the ladder of homegrown and it has become more recognisable, global or counter-cultural.

It is impressive to see the effects of how one individual can set out to achieve a maximum step in supporting democracy. The situation with the government was overthrown, and Burma had democracy reinstated. In this case I do support that media is more democratic now, as this proves, it is easy to use media to manipulate the terror they live in, without democracy.

Moving on I have another case study on Wikileaks. Julian Assange was an Australian editor, publisher and journalist. He was the chief founder of Wikileaks (2006) which publishes secret information from anonymous news sources and whistle blower websites. He was arrested and is entrenched in the Ecuadorian embassy. He has been equated to a 'high tech terrorist'. In my opinion Wikileaks have generated more freedom and opportunities in democracy. We wouldn't be able to know about certain events and the truth behind them. On the same topic as Wikileaks, there is an engaging case with Bradley Edward Manning, born 17 December 1987, and was a US Army soldier who was arrested in May 2010, having passed classified material to whistleblower website Wikileaks. The material contains video evidence from the 'July 12th 2007' Baghdad airstrike and the 2009 airstrike in Afghanistan. Amongst this Bradley Manning also managed to upload 250,000 US diplomatic cables and 500,000 army reports/war logs. He awaits his trial this upcoming month. From these Wikileaks cases, it does show there is more democracy now than before, as media allows us to use it. It gives everyone

the opportunity to be heard and have their say. 'The war you don't see' an ITV documentary on a similar topic to democracy, and was concerned about how much of the media we don't see. The programme is about investigation into the role media has in war, tracing the history of embedding, reporting from the coverage of WW1 to the destruction of Hiroshima. A quote from that film from David Lloyd George – 'if people really know the truth, the war would be stopped tomorrow. They don't know. They can't know.' It is frustrating knowing that the news delivers always one side, as we are cut from the reality of the actual effects. I think these cases are proving that there is more democracy today than before. This would be due to the more democracy growing from media technologies today than before and what people have access to. In conclusion I also feel that the media are becoming more democratic than before, these case studies provide evidence that there are events that happen and we do not know anything about them. It is frustrating for people like 'Bradley Manning', standing up for something that was wrong, and the news instantly closed off all ties to these videos, evidence sources, as if nothing happened. I do believe that it is a good thing that democracy is more common as we can challenge our higher authorities if there are things we feel are not right. It's the opportunity to be heard and gain freedom. It's still a topic that is continuing to progress and develop in the way we live. These studies are good examples of how democracy can be created and manipulated, but they give me confidence knowing that the media are becoming more democratic, as I am in the position of being able to have my say. Democracy is a difficult concept, as it accounts for everyone to have equal say, but it's a large scale concept that fits to everyone's needs in a fair way. Referring back to 'Dan Gilmore' I also agree that all the media that homegrown, local, organic and potentially counter cultural. It's a valid theory for the topic being discussed, and for each study how the media information builds up the scale to reach its potential output.

Good introduction, setting out terms of reference for the essay. The example of the film about Burma is an unusual one and to some extent it is mobilised effectively here. Wikileaks is a more commonly cited example and though there is an account of the case here, it is largely descriptive, with some odd emphases, such as Manning's date of birth! Overall, the response shows some knowledge and some passion about the topic, but lacks a clear sense of systematic argument supported by detail in the examples.

All three elements again are solid level 3, giving an overall score of 37