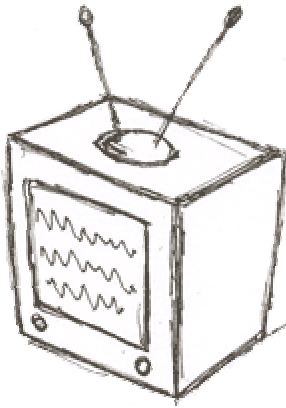


Short Paper 1.4: A Claim for Video

engl 131 / sec. A4 / winter quarter 2005-06 / chang



By the time you sit down to this assignment, you will have been introduced to the basics of cultural studies and to the analysis of many different kinds of texts and cultural productions. You will have read Lippi-Green and Lowe and interfaced with their essays several times. You will have done close reading, thought about rhetoric, argument, and claim, and you will have generated your own claims and ideas. It's time for more practice.

Writer John Berger says, "The relationship between what we see and what we know is never settled" (431). That relationship can be extended to what we experience and what we encounter in the world around us. Part of Lippi-Green's project is to make the connection between language and stereotyping, between language and discrimination; she argues for and demonstrates the processes that link "language varieties with specific national origins, ethnicities, and races with social norms and characteristics in non-factual and sometimes overtly discriminatory ways" (425). She further says, "Even when stereotyping is not overtly negative, it is confining and misleading" (426). In a similar vein, Lowe critiques the liberal myth of multiculturalism, which she says ultimately flattens difference and erases diversity, saying that "it may be through contradiction that we begin to address the systemic inequalities built into cultural institutions, economies, and geographies and through conflict that we call attention to the process through which these inequalities are obscured by pluralist multiculturalism" (491). Lowe would argue that pluralist multiculturalism serves only to stereotype, to encourage assumption rather than "provide the grounds to imagine subject, community, and practice in new ways" (491).

In class, you will be shown a short film or video. Using Lippi-Green and Lowe as jumping off points and the video as supporting evidence, develop a single clear and precise claim about one of the following:

- 1) How does the video serve to preserve a stereotype? What assumptions does it make and how does it shore up the stereotype? How would Lippi-Green or Lowe critique the stereotype shown?
- 2) How does the video work to critique or deconstruct a stereotype? What assumptions does it try to challenge and how does it work to undo the stereotype? How would Lippi-Green or Lowe support the video's critical project?
- 3) How does the video engage diversity or multiculturalism? Is it successful? How does it define, address, or radicalize diversity or multiculturalism? Would Lippi-Green or Lowe support the video's project?

Limit your Response Paper to 2 to 3 pages and to one specific facet or flaw in Lister & Wells. Limit also your impulse to just summarize or close read the video. The examples you pull from the essay and from the video should be brief and support your claim.

Targeted outcomes: 1, 2, 3

Turn in: 2 to 3 pages, typed, no title page, double-spaced, stapled

Due: Tuesday, January 24