Critical Approaches to Creative Media Products

By Michael Gomersall

# Task 1 – Constructing Media Products for Specific Audiences

The two pieces I am going to look at are the Wolf of Wall Street and All this Mayhem

These two pieces of media are created for different audiences. The Wolf of Wall Street is a highly grossing multi-million pound block buster movie. It has had a huge audience grossing nearly $400,000,000 at the box offices. All this Mayhem is an Australian low budget, subjective documentary that was released at the Sydney Film Festival. It would have a small, cult audience.

The Wolf of Wall Street had lots of money behind it, costing roughly $100,000,000 to make using famous names (starringLeonardo di Caprio and directed by Martin Scorsese) and high production values. Its genre is biography, comedy and crime.

 It follows charismatic, despicable and offensive protagonist Jordan Belfort on his journey of high pressured sales, drugs and debauchery and manipulation. As the audience watch they know that Jordan will get his comeuppance.

The Wolf of Wall Street would have a large audience profile. It came out in 2013, five years after the big crash of 2008 which affected so many people worldwide. Because of this the general public were very familiar with the idea of greed and corruption in the money making world of finance making it of interest right across the demographic profiles. Higher management might be interested as they might be familiar with that world and other classes might be interested to get an insight into that world or to aspire to it. It would have a worldwide audience as so many people round the world were affected by the crash of 2008. Different age groups would like it particularly 18-45 which is reflected in the higher number of user raters in Imdb. These ratings also show that nearly 5 times as many men than women rated the film. These ratings probably reflect that more men can relate to the character or are more familiar with the motivations of the character than women. The age statistics would be because the audience could relate to the working and selling practices having experienced them either as a customer or as a worker. In terms of psychographics the main audience profile for this movie would be;

Mainstreamers : In the cultivation theory audiences watch media and develop certain world views. Audiences gain knowledge of the world from the media but it may not be accurate. Mainstreamers watching this movie might have their views confirmed (that there is so much excess) or that they need to be more aware of how the world of selling works

Aspirers: They might want to be like Jordan and have the lifestyle and freedom that he had. This effects model would be the copycat theory where young people might want to be like this.

Succeeders: Succeeders might fit into the users and gratifications model where they compare what happens in the movie with characters and situations they know or they may compare themselves with some of the characters either relating to them, enjoying it as an entertaining movie or to make comparisons about their own lives.

Explorers: Explorers may be interested in watching the film to see more about a world they don’t know much about.

Parents mightn’t want their children to watch this film as there is sex scenes, drug taking scenes and violent scenes. There is a desensitisation theory where if the audience is exposed to too much violence or sex it will lead to real life behaviours. This theory has been difficult to prove as audiences are not passive (like the hypodermic model suggests) but more active and have seen a lot of media so are more aware.

All this Mayhem is a very different piece of media. It is a documentary with homemade and professional footage of the real life story of Australian brothers Tas and Ben Pappas. There are only 9 user reviews on Imdb in comparison to nearly 800.000 for the Wolf of WQall Street. However the reviews give high praise and share how they have been moved by the movie which shows it may develop a cult status. It was filmed on a low budget.



This is the DVD cover for the movie. The font is like spray can which is like graffiti and skateboarding. The image shows photos of the two brothers as childrenrothers on their skateboards with one of the boards broken so that some of the face is lost. The photos are crumpled looking and the boys are untidy and scruffy like the boys weren’t cared for . At the bottom it advertises that the film was made by an award winmning producer so that would invite audiences to think it might be worth a watch and it says that it is ‘The rise and fall of skateboarding’s most notorious brothers’ so that the audience will know that it will tell a story with ups and downs.

The audience demographic would probably be more male as the skateboarding world is quite male dominated. It might attract strugglers as it tells the story of the 2 brothers who would be seen as strugglers, alienated from society, heavy consumers of alcohol and drugs and wanting impact and sensations. It would also be the age demographic of teenager who might relate to the brothers or adults up to 40 as they might remember the scene. Skateboarders, Australians and Americans might also be interested. The film was also released in Estonia and Russia. Other audience demographics might be explorers who would be interested in the narrative, the challenges and becoming broadening their experience.

With audience theories again the cultivation theory may fit as audiences become aware of the world of skateboarding. Most famous skateboarder Tony Hawks was shown as not too likeable so what the audience takes in may or may not be accurate. Parents may be appalled at the risk taking behaviour of the 2 brothers and worry about desensitisation and copycat behaviour. Some people may identify with the characters or the skateboarding environment comparing it to their own experiences. Some people might relate to risk taking behaviours in their own youth.

## References

I used my previous coursework as well as notes from tutors for this piece

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0993846/reviews?ref_=tt_ov_rt>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0993846/ratings>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2938416/>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2938416/reviews?ref_=tt_ql_3>