

Q. Explain how music videos reflect the contexts in which they are made. Refer to Duran Duran *Rio* (1982) to support your response.

For this question you may wish to explore some of the following:

Historical Context

- how the product reflects the time in which it was made through its use of media language, genre conventions, representations, themes, values, messages and viewpoints
- how the product reflects the time in which it was made through aspects of its production, distribution, marketing, regulation, circulation and audience consumption

Social and Cultural Context

- how the product reflects the society and culture in which it was made through its representations, themes, values, messages and viewpoints
- how the product is shaped or informed by particular cultural influences, such as genres, styles, technologies and the work of other media producers
- how the product reflects the society and culture in which it was made through aspects of its production, distribution, marketing, regulation, circulation and audience consumption
- how audience responses to and interpretations of media products may change over time

As we work through the video, make notes in the spaces below to form your revision notes and essay plan.

Genre Conventions

1. What conventions of music video can you spot in this video that we don't really see today?

- use of jump cuts throughout video which became a common convention of music videos, which we still see today.
- use of new technologies such as overlays, chromakey (green screen), and split screens. By today's standards these appear quite amateurish, however would have been seen as exciting, novel, and of high quality.
- For example, the close up shot of one band member shows the use of green screen on his sunglasses with a beach image overlaid, which looks poorly cut out and edited by today's standards.

2. How might the video reflect the technologies of the time?

- Use of advanced technology for the time to create something new and exciting for the young audience.
- Helped to make the band seem 'hip' and fresh, directly appealing to young audience.

3. What intertextual references can you spot?

- lots of references to James Bond movies e.g. the roulette wheel and the woman emerging from the sea.

- lots of references to other 'New Romantic' bands of the time, although Duran were one of the leaders in this genre. Shared references include brightly coloured suits, coiffed hair, make-up, music videos with bright colour palettes reflecting the pop genre, exotic locations, visuals of excess including champagne and cocktails.
- High production values of the music video, similar to other bands in this sub-genre, filming on location and at sea suggesting a lot of money was spent on this promotional video. Similar to other mainstream pop videos such as Wham 'Club Tropicana' and Spandau Ballet 'Gold'.
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Representation of gender and ethnicity (values and messages)

1. How have representations of women been constructed in this video?

- A lot of camera focus on their bodies e.g. close ups of their legs, tilt shots up their bodies.
- Women appear in the video without a clear role in the narrative.
- Objectified – all women wearing skimpy swimsuits throughout the video.
- Apply the Male Gaze theory Laura Mulvey
- Lots of examples of voyeurism e.g. a band member watching the women through binoculars. (link to conventions – voyeurism became a key convention of music videos in the 80s with women on display to be looked at by men).
- only white women seen

2. How have representations of men been constructed in this video?

- men represented as dominant
- white males only represented
- seen as rich and powerful through location, yacht, pouring champagne over women's bodies, shown as excessive and hedonistic

3. What does this tell you about attitudes at the time?

- women seen as subordinate
- women are trophies – not important to the narrative
- men seen as having higher status in society

4. How has ethnicity been represented in this video?

- only see white bodies in this music video
- typical of the pop and 'new romantic' genre in the 80s
- although the video was filmed in Sri Lanka, representations of people of colour are absent. Video represents Sri Lanka as a luxurious paradise, a place for rich people to play, however this is a false representation.

5. What theory can we apply to these ideas?

- Paul Gilroy theory on post-colonialism. White people are represented as powerful, and POC are absent from the narrative, even though filmed in South Asia. Sri Lanka was a British colony, meaning that it was controlled by Britain in the past – Gilroy says representations following colonisation show white people are dominant.

Media Studies GCSE

Component 2B

Duran Duran Rio (1982)

- MTV launched in the 1980s – first music video featuring a black person not until end of 1982 (MJ)

Production, distribution, and marketing

1. How would audiences at the time have accessed this video?

- MTV launched in 1980.
- The video would have been shown on MTV, there were few other ways for audiences to view the video.
- MTV made it important for artists to have music videos to promote their songs and albums.

2. What was the importance of music videos at the time?

- MTV was the only TV station that solely showed music videos – there was no Youtube in the 1980s!
- Music videos were a novelty in the 1980s and were a different and new way to promote a band or artist.