

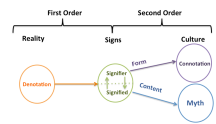
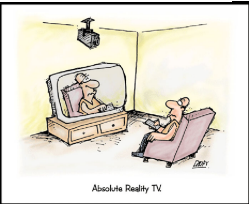

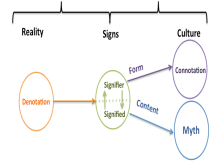




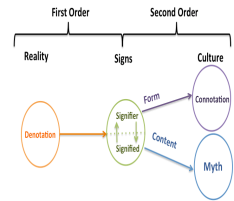






1	<b>MYTH: THE SECOND ORDER OF SIGNIFICATION (Semiology Part II) ED386 Dr. Shutkin</b>	
2		In the first lecture I gave on semiotics, emphasis was on the photographic image. There was little if any discussion or emphasis on <b>HOW THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE AUDIENCE WORK TO UNDERSTAND THE PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE.</b>
3		<p>Through the work of <b>ROLAND BARTHES</b>, however, the emphasis shifts to how <b>THE SIGNS OF THE PHOTOGRAPH INTERACT WITH THE CULTURAL AND LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE AUDIENCE.</b></p> <p>Another way to put this is to consider the interaction between the conventions of photography and the lived experiences of the photographer and her audience</p> <p>(Note: in this context, it's not significant to distinguish between the photographer and his/her audience as both are equally engaged in processes of meaning making or signification).</p>
4		Towards this level of analysis, Barthes proposed a theory of <b>THE ORDERS OF SIGNIFICATION.</b>
5		<b>THE FIRST ORDER OF SIGNIFICATION IS REFERRED TO AS THE DENOTATIVE.</b> As we've already discussed, the denotative concerns relationships between the signifier and the signified within the sign and how the sign, in turn, refers to external reality or the referent. Meaning making, at the level of denotation is mostly commonsense and obvious.
6		<p>Consider two photographs of the same subject; the denotative meanings of each photograph, at this first level, would be the same.</p> <p>The difference would be in their <b>CONNOTATION</b>, in <b>THE SECOND ORDER OF SIGNIFICATION.</b></p>
7		<p>Connotation is a term used by Barthes to describe the formal, technical or aesthetic ways that signs work in this second order of signification.</p> <p>For Barthes, the critical factor in connotation is the signifier in the first order. <b>THE FIRST ORDER SIGNIFIER IS THE SIGN OF THE CONNOTATION.</b></p>

8		If denotation is the technical / photographic reproduction of <b>THE OBJECT IN THE WORLD</b>
9		<p>Then connotation is the human part of the process. While concerned with the form of the photograph, connotation is <b>THE SELECTION BY THE PHOTOGRAPHER OF WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE FRAME</b>, the angle of the camera, and the application of elements and principles of photographic design, etc....</p> <p>This is where the form of the photograph carries aesthetic meaning and can be described as subjective.</p>
10		But as the human part of the process, <b>CONNOTATION IS ALSO HOW THE AUDIENCE MAKES SENSE OF THE PHOTO</b> . So while connotation is largely the subjective applications of elements and principles of photographic design, the audience needs cultural knowledge to know how to interpret and appreciate the images.
11		In this way, it is too easy to read connotative values as denotative facts. The importance, then, of semiotic analysis, is to prepare us with analytical techniques and strategies and understandings of <b>THE PROCESSES OF PHOTOGRAPHIC SIGNIFICATION</b> .
12		<p>Another level in which signs work in this second order of signification, Barthes instructs, is through <b>MYTH</b>.</p> <p>If connotation is the second order meaning of the signifier, the <b>MYTH IS THE SECOND ORDER MEANING OF THE SIGNIFIED</b>.</p>
13		Barthes describes <b>THE SEMIOTIC MYTH</b> as a story by which a culture explains or understands some aspect of reality. <b>SEMIOTIC MYTHS</b> can be about gender, class, or race; about how a culture understands community, family, or religion; or how it makes sense of liberty and justice, terror and security, privacy and surveillance, science, technology, progress, the environment or education.
14		<b>SEMIOTIC MYTHS</b> are common in all cultures and exist before the photograph. But it is the work of the photograph to activate or encourage or trigger the <b>CHAINS OF CONCEPTS THAT CONSTITUTE THE MYTH</b> .

15		More technically or semiotically, myth describes the interaction that occurs when the signified of a photographic image engages THE SUBJECTIVE, CULTURAL, POLITICAL, AND/OR IDEOLOGICAL, BELIEFS OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER/AUDIENCE.
16		YET MYTHS ARE REPRODUCED OR CHALLENGED IN THE SPACES OR FISSURES WHERE MEANINGS ARE CONSTRUCTED OR CONTESTED -- somewhere between the photographic image and the meanings an audience produces.
17	END	<b>END</b>

Note:

Rose cogently contributes that the choice of image for semiotic analysis is not through a feigned process of random selection. Instead, it is intentional and based first on the cultural beliefs and political interests of the researcher. The unique form of the image at the connotative level and the particular content at the level of myth are essential.