



1.2 Media Language

How the advert communicates with the audience

Genre Conventions

- The advert reinforces charity advert conventions by including key information about the concern, a **personalised narrative** to which this information is relevant, and a direct appeal to the audience for money.
- However, it subverts charity adverts conventions by not using a non-diegetic voiceover, melancholic audio codes and black and white visual codes, which could all be seen as being unconventional of this advertising sub-genre

Visual Codes

- The opening mid shot with a **pull focus** between the digital radio and the rain against the window establish a stereotypically, modern British setting (audio codes & DAB radio prop)
- It is connoted that the scenes that follow (in an unnamed African country) are happening at the same time juxtaposing the two norms and reminding the audience of the stark differences
- The visual and audio codes work together to construct a narrative of 'sunshine' (in Africa) 'on a rainy day' (in Britain)
- Enigma is created through the enigmatic use of the slow motion, medium close up, low-angle tracking shot of Claudia's feet and the swinging bucket
- After the enigma is broken, the on-screen graphic appears, which anchors the meanings created with the **brand identity** of WaterAid

Audio codes

- The juxtaposition of rain on a window and chirping crickets helps transport the audience from one setting to the other
- The meaning in the narrative is emphasised by the crescendo of the song at the water pump scene
- Semantic codes can be applied to the lyrics "make me feel like I belong...don't leave me", connoting that the audience won't leave her there/in that situation if they donate to WaterAid

1.3 Representations

- The dress codes of the advert's main female character include a stereotypical knee-length skirt and pink colour palette in her top and shoes
- Her age is similar to the other young women she walks past and those that join her at the water pump. This connotes that she/they had to grow up 'too quickly' because of the tough environment in which they live
- Claudia's independence is connoted by the wide angle shot in which she is denoted on her own on a long and empty, dusty road
- Close-ups using handheld cameras, her open, confident gesture codes represent her as the protagonist and a 'character' the audience can positively associate with

1.4 Theoretical Approaches

- Hall's** theory of representation - The use of a stereotypically dry, dust Arican village environment in which people struggle to survive
- The more positive audio codes then challenge these, creating enigmas as to why Claudia is so positive
- Gauntlett - Claudia acts as a role model for the type of lifestyle changes that the audience could be responsible for creating
- van Zoonen - by assuming the stereotypical male protagonist's role of the provider (collector of water), Claudia is possibly contributing to societal change, although this is a traditional task for young people of both genders
- Gilroy - the idea that media texts reinforce colonial power could be applied here because it is encouraging British audiences to 'help' those in 'less developed' countries
- Levi Strauss - there are lots of binary oppositions creating meanings, such as the beige colour palette of the dry, arid images changing to vibrant colours around the water pump. The on-screen graphic ('650 million people still don't have access to clean drinking water') creates a **conceptual binary opposition** between Claudia's positive story and that of other, less fortunate people. It is this opposition that the audience is encouraged to be the solution of by giving '£3 today'.

1.5 Audience

- Audience Profile is Female, 30+ of ABC1 demographic
- The demographic is constructed through the use of Claudia, through the personal identity of being parents and empathising with the 'better life' that WaterAid's clean water provides
- Target Audience is likely to have some disposable income in order to donate, with potential donors in the A-C2 bracket (lower end made willing through the possibility to 'give £3')
- The audience is likely to be older and possibly female to reflect their sympathetic tendencies towards children in need.
- WaterAid acts as an **opinion leader** for the target audience who would assume the "650 million people..." statistic is true and reliable
- The unconventionally positive visual codes, audio codes and representations would, the producers hope, give their advert unique selling points (USPs) compared to other charity appeals, and therefore avoids **compassion fatigue** and makes the audience more likely to donate.

1.1 WaterAid (2016)

Production context:

The charity *WaterAid* was established in 1981 as a response to a UN campaign for clean water, sanitation and water hygiene education.

The advert was created by *Atomic London* and titled *Rain for Good* to show how communities benefit from clean water.

Atomic London pride themselves on finding new ways of advertising, which they term *odvertising*. This advert subverts genre conventions in a number of ways.

Social and Cultural Context:

Since the Band Aid single of 1984, Live Aid in 1985 (which raised over £1bn for charitable causes across Africa and in the UK) and subsequent campaigns for famine relief, contemporary audiences have become familiar with the **codes** and **conventions** of AV adverts as well as those for charity organisations.

1.6 Key Terminology

Personalised narrative: A narrative that will appeal in a personal way to individual members of an audience

Brand identity: The ethos and values a brand promotes itself as having.

Conceptual binary opposition: An opposition of ideas that do not need to be present, to be understood

Opinion leader: Within two-step-flow theory, many others take ideas from opinion leaders

Compassion fatigue: When audiences become desensitised to suffering and 'switch off' rather than donate