

Candidate 4 evidence

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| 1a) | Internal and external institutional factors often influence media content, in this case I will be discussing the television show ^{series} 'Breaking Bad', talking about the first three episodes of the second season. | |
| | An institutional factor that had a large influence and impact on 'Breaking Bad' (BB) was budget and expenditure. It has been hard to find exact figures for the second season, but episodes in the fifth season were making around \$3 million each. | |
| | There were lots of ways that the cost was attempted to be kept down, from ^{including} sets, to actors, and ^{and} props. | |
| | The show uses a lot of real houses instead of studio sets, | |

~~This is a cheaper~~ for example Walt and Skylar's house, or Hank and Marie's, these are cheaper alternatives to studios. The influence this has is that it makes the houses seem more realistic on the contrary as they look like real places. A lot of the sets are used frequently in the show so that keeps cost down by not having to find lots of new locations and also pay to use them. The impact this has on 'BB' was that it put a strong emphasis on the family homes in the series, like Walt's. This is in turn a constant reminder to the audience of what is important to Walt.

~~Another way~~ The show features

was originally meant to be set in California, but was moved to be set in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

This was to take advantage of the tax rebate, which meant filming there was a lot cheaper than in California. This had an influence over a lot of the locations of outdoor scenes.

For example when Walt and Jesse are in the desert.

An important factor in keeping a low budget was that 'BB' is a one-camera drama. The use of only one camera, and so a small filming crew, kept the costs low. The big influence that this had over the content was a lot of the shots were very

creative and interesting, to compensate for the single camera. These creative shots have become expected from 'BB' and have been nicknamed 'Breaking Bad shots'. 'BB' has won awards for being a one camera drama.

Another institutional factor that has influenced the media content is personnel. The majority of the cast were not particularly well known before 'BB'. Bryan Cranston, Walter White, was well known for his role as the dad in 'Malcolm in the Middle'. This works in favour of the content as it backs up the idea that Walt is a father, a family man.

Aaron Paul who plays Jesse on the show had his big break with 'BB'. That he had only had small roles before has the influence on the contents that an audience only see him as Jesse. This is a positive for the show, as since this is what he is most known for ~~an~~ ~~an~~ audience may recognise him in the future and come back to watch 'BB'. Since the ~~car~~

RS Mitte, who is Walt Jr. has cerebral palsy in real life which adds to the realism of the show. Mitte's case is actually much milder than Walt Jr.'s so he had to learn to walk with crutches. In interviews he said that he would lower his medication and sleep less in order to be more

realistic.

The actor who plays Hank was, again, not very well-known, but he had had lots of roles playing cops on TV before, which makes it easier for an audience to see him as a DEA agent.

That most of these actors weren't very well known influences the content by making it seem much more realistic. The audience accept them as the character they are portraying, rather than trying to figure out what else they have seen in and what they recognize the actors from.

^{pto.}
The show was originally broadcast on AMC, ~~was~~ after being rejected from multiple other

~~1.1~~ channels. Since AMC is a network channel ~~it~~* each episode had to be 4 ~~or~~ 7 minutes long, keeping space for 3 ad breaks. * it had the influence on the content that

1.1) Narrative structures, ^{conventions,} and codes were heavily influenced by the distribution of the show. That it was to be shown weekly with ad breaks meant that the show had a job of keeping people interested. This was done through the use of ~~narrative~~ enigmas and different narrative structures.

~~One narrative structure used was~~

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The institutional factor of distribution applied to 'BB'.

The series makes use of series narratives. These are things that last for a whole series and keep an audience wanting to find out more and what happens in the end.

Examples of ~~the~~ are Walt's cancer, ~~what~~ if Skylar will find out about Walt cooking meth, Skylar and Marie's relationship, and if Hank will find out about Walt & Jesse.

Another influence that being a TV show has is that 'BB' features episode narratives. Episode narratives are stories that only take place in one episode. These are included in episodes so new viewers can watch a single episode and still have some things make sense and take some things

away from it, and also because ~~it keeps the action present~~, regular viewers enjoy seeing smaller stories, as well as ^{the} overarching plots in the series. *

~~Another~~ An influence of being distributed on a network channel is that there are ad-breaks.

A show needs to ~~cope with~~ deal with this by having 'ad-break enigmas'.

These encourage viewers to not switch off or change channels ~~at~~ the adverts but to keep watching. Examples of ad break enigmas are Jesse buying a gun, ~~Walt~~ seeing Tucco's car outside his house and then driving away, and Hank sending Walt pictures of the dead bodies of No Doze

and Gonzo. These are all followed by a fade-to-black.

* ~~Some~~ Some examples of episode narratives are the drug deal in the parking lot, Toco being shot, cooking cranberry beans, ~~Walt~~ Walt being in hospital, and Jesse being interviewed by the DEA.

1.c) Languages and representations have been influenced by institutional factors, primarily budget and expenditure. The representations of place were influenced by the move to Albuquerque and the use of ~~homes~~ houses instead of sets. A look of a stereotypical, slightly rundown family home was achieved

by using the houses. ~~The house~~
~~of locations also~~ The representations
of characters through ~~their costume~~
the cultural codes of their costumes
was also influenced by budget. The
costumes were all basic
and not flamboyant in order
to not detract from what
was actually happening. Hank
is shown as a stereotypical
police officer, highlighted by his
yellow and orange wardrobe.
His wife Marie had an almost
entirely purple wardrobe. This
representation has connotations
of mental health - a lot of
charities use purple - which
~~to~~ links into Marie's
kleptomania.

Language codes have been influenced by institutional factors too.

The use of the one camera made the creators a lot more creative with their shots and framing than they ~~to~~ otherwise might have been.

For example, in the first episode, the scene in the scrap yard. Tucco is beating up one of his own men and we have ^{the technical code of} a shot ~~with~~ framed by Tucco's legs, looking up towards Walt and Jesse as Tucco punches No Dope. This shot takes power away from Walt and Jesse as it shows Tucco in the foreground much closer up, and also that he is punching them. The cultural code of

Walt and Jesse's body language being turned in toward one another makes them look more vulnerable, again taking power away from them and giving it to Toco.

Another example of creative camera language is another shot in this scene. The technical code of a long shot shows all the characters in the scene and their status. Walt and Toco are towards the middle, facing each other, clearly as protagonist and antagonist. Jesse is at an edge, behind Walt, showing he's on his side, and one of Toco's henchmen stands between Toco and Walt, ~~the mob~~ acting as the muscle.