

Richard Dyer Star Theory

Richard Dyer is a British media theorist, who discussed a star's special place in the audiences' lives. He (similarly to Hall) suggests that a star has a **meta-narrative** constructed through an array of media texts beyond their own creative products, this includes: music videos, digi-packs, interviews, appearances, publicity photos... He argued that the **star image is manufactured and artificial** and that individual stars have their own unique selling point (**brand values**) in order to grab and hold our attention.

The Paradox of the Star

Dyer's central idea was that the star image contains **paradoxes**. 'What on earth is a paradox,' you may ask – well, it's a **statement or idea that seems to contradict itself**. Dyer suggested that a star image simultaneously has two contradictory representations. He said...

'...a star is both ordinary & extraordinary.'

- Dyer suggested that a star is represented simultaneously as, **just like us**, but at the same time possess something we do not have and something that makes them **special, different, extraordinary**. This might mean they are more represented as being highly talented, gifted, confident, passionate, artistic, sensitive, carefree, sexy...and perhaps even rebellious, anarchic, criminal or angry. They are represented as extreme version of humanity, which we idolise.

Furthermore he suggested that...

'...a star is both present & absent.'

- Dyer also thought that the audience struggles with another paradox; and that is that the star is simultaneously **present** in their lives, be this in our social group's chat, our personal style, our identity, and our consumption habits. However they are also **absent**, something that we perceive as out of reach and not actually there.
- Dyer argued that as an audience we strive to **complete the star image** through consuming their products, shows, merchandise etc. We strive to complete the image **by engaging with the stars meta-narrative** and, if possible, seek the ultimate satisfaction, seeing them live! The problem of course is that the meta-narrative shifts and changes and we are constantly striving **to complete the image** and constantly frustrated in our attempts to do so.



