

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's **meta-narrative** impacts on the consumption by the audience. 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 – for example – Justin Bieber's hair, JLS' colour codes...

The Paradox of the Star

Dyer's central idea was that the star image could be discussed using two key **paradoxes**. 'What on earth is a paradox,' you may ask – well, it's a statement that contradicts 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 must be represented simultaneously as, **just like us** (the audience/regular people), but also at the same time possess something we do not have and something that makes them **special, different, extraordinary...** This might mean they are more talented, gifted, confident, passionate, artistic, sensitive, carefree or sexy, but also they are allowed to be rebellious, anti-social, or angry maybe. They are idealised version of humanity...idols.

'...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 our lives, be this in our social groups chat, our style, our identity, and our consumption habits.. However they are also **absent**, something that we perceive as out of reach, on a pedestal, and not actually there.
 - *Note: This links in really nicely with a postmodern theory called **hyper-reality** that we will look at next term.*

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 star's 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.



