



Representation

You will need to consider:

- The way events, issues, individuals (including self-representation) and social groups (including social identity) are represented through processes of **selection and combination**.
- The effect of **social and cultural context** on representations.
- How and why **stereotypes** can be used positively and negatively.
- How and why particular **social groups**, in a national and global context, may be **under-represented or misrepresented**.
- How media representations convey **values, attitudes and beliefs** about the world and how these may be systematically reinforced across a wide range of media representations.
- How **audiences respond to and interpret** media representations.
- Theories of representation (including Hall).
- Feminist theories (including bell hooks and Van Zoonen) at A Level

How are Representations Constructed / Encoded?

- Narrative: e.g. audiences identify/empathise with the women through the restricted nature of the narrative and our positioning
- Dialogue and voice-over
- Technical codes (language) – camera, editing, audio
- Lighting
- Framing
- Mise-en-scène (costuming, setting)
- Performance
- Barthes - cultural codes





Task: Analyse How the Characters are Represented and how this Representation has Been Constructed

How is the Representation of Afghanistan Constructed?

Does it conform to or challenge stereotypes? Look at the characters, settings, weather, dialogue (e.g. the primitive lifestyle, the patriarchal structure, the lack of “civilised” law).

Are the stereotypes ‘positive’, ‘negative’ or more complex than this? Is it suggested that society is at fault?

Why are representations constructed in this way? Consider dominant ideologies and hegemonic models.





bell hooks

- Argues that feminism is a struggle to end patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination, and that the position of the underrepresented is by class and race as well as gender.
- “Women in lower class and poor groups, particularly those who are non-white, would not have defined women’s liberation as women gaining social equality with men since they are continually reminded in their everyday lives that all women do not share a common social status.”
- Is “patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination” evident in *No Burqas Behind Bars*? Or does it challenge this concept in any way?
- Write 3 paragraphs which express your ideas.

Use the digital resource for pointers

Liesbet Van Zoonen

‘[There is] a depressing stability in the articulation of women’s politics and communication . . . The underlying frame of reference is that women belong to the family and domestic life and men to the social world of politics and work; that femininity is about care, nurturance and compassion, and that masculinity is about efficiency, rationality and individuality.’ – Van Zoonen

Give examples from *No Burqas Behind Bars* that illustrate or challenge this concept.

Women	Men
Marginalised (or absent)	Efficient
Domestic	Rational
Sexualised	Individual
Emotional	Intellectual

Van Zoonen Argues That There is a “Variety of Feminist Discourse” and Identifies 3 Distinct Perspectives

Read the paragraphs from Van Zoonen’s essay:

Pages 33 -37, *Feminist Perspectives on the Media in Mass Media and Society* (Curran and Gurevitch) Arnold (1996)



What does she suggest are the key differences between a:

- Liberal feminist perspective?
- Radical feminist perspective?
- Socialist feminist perspective?

Applying Van Zoonen

Apply the different Feminist approaches to *No Burqas Behind Bars*.

- Socialist feminism
- Radical feminism
- Liberal feminism

Use the digital resource to compare your ideas



Liesbet Van Zoonen

Van Zoonen argues that gender is constructed and that its meaning varies dependent on cultural and historical context.

She suggests that masculinity as well as femininity is constructed – and that the codes used to construct men ‘as a spectacle’ are different. But are they here?

Look at the representation of the Director and of Shamsudin, Javid and Shamsollah.

Think about:

- Males constructed through movement (active)
- Silence and impassivity
- Strength, muscularity and aggression
- Competition – males as gladiators or combatants – ‘the spectacle’
- Constructed more through the intradiegetic gaze – the way they are looked at by other characters (e.g. with respect/fear)
- Allows narcissistic identification without erotic gaze