

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: No Labels: Music Videos as a Platform for Advocating Social

Awareness and Change

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To explore the role that music videos play in empowering traditionally marginalized members of our culture, I produced my own music video with the main goal to continue already relevant social discussions, prompt new discussions and provide both education and information via the entertainment-based platform of music videos. With my music video, *No Labels*, I expressed my own personal views on discrimination, prejudice and the need for accurate racial and gender representation.

Music videos are a natural format for deep symbolism and semiotics is a valuable tool to explore these messages. The theory of semiotics is widely applied in my music video. As defined further on in the paper, the use of semiotics, as a vehicle to challenge preconceived ideas, will be discussed in detail. I drew on symbolism that stems from my own cultural heritage as a Chinese American woman in a way that will be both familiar and relatable to viewers. This will help to create a connection of “us-ness” between myself and the viewer. Symbolism was utilized in nearly every aspect of my video, from color choices to camera angles, filming style, character design, set location and set dressing.

My primary goal or objective with this music video project was to give a voice and platform to issues that I have personally experienced but to which I believe a large number of others have also fallen victim. These issues consist of but are not limited to racial stereotyping, gender limiting ideas and beliefs, and of strength and weakness. I believe, we as a society need to stop limiting a person's abilities by accepting stereotypical beliefs. When we limit members of our society, we limit society itself.

My technical goals for this project were to expand and enhance my camera, lighting, editing and special effects skills. I wanted to concentrate on producing an all-around professional quality project. Each of my previous projects have allowed me to grow creatively. I wanted to take everything I had learned about digital storytelling and use it to produce a music video. This video not only speaks to my desire for social change, but also presents that need for change in a way that people find interesting, entertaining, compelling and thought provoking. My narrative goal was to speak my personal truths through the video's song lyrics and with the use of visual images that reflect those truths.