

### Terms

LOM - Life on Mars

PSB - Public Service Broadcaster

### Promotional art



Featuring (from left to right) Gene Hunt (Phillip Glenister), Sam Tyler (John Simm), Annie Cartwright (Liz White)

### Key Facts

- First release: 9th January 2006, 9pm (Watershed)
  - Dual time zone narrative - storyline takes place both in 2009 and 1973.
  - Total of 2 seasons, 16 episodes overall.
  - Produced by Kudos Film for BBC Wales
  - Genre: Crime drama (Sci-fi, hybrid)
  - Themes: Violence, comedy, action, mystery, aggression
  - Settings: Police department, interrogation room, briefing room, infirmary, the streets, crime scene, police car.
- This product is one of the options studied for Section A: Television option at AS and alongside an episode of The Bridge at A Level. The set product is the first episode of Series 1 broadcast on BBC One at 9pm on 9th January 2006
- Life on Mars is a police procedural crime drama set in Manchester in a dual time zone – 2006 and

### Key Facts (cont)

1973.

The programme has an interesting an original plotline whereby, after an accident, young detective Sam Tyler wakes up in 1973. The consequent episodes are a 21st century account of 1970s life through his bewildered eyes. Jane Featherstone, executive producer of the programme said at the time of broadcast: "Life on Mars is a fantastic idea which takes the cop show genre and gives it a unique, humorous and irresistible twist. By taking a character of our time and throwing him headfirst into our recent past, it gives us a chance to explore what makes us who we are today.". It was produced by Kudos Film/TV for BBC Wales having originally been turned down by Channel 4.

Several global versions have been produced.

### Social Differences

- More discrimination against minorities in 1970s.
- More racism, homophobia and sexism.
- Financial discrimination against women
- Women having bank accounts was seen as a high-risk investment by banks.
- Gay marriage wasn't legal
- Sam Tyler "goes back in time" with the values of the modern world (treats women equally, as we see with Annie)
- Social differences of 1970s and 2000s presents juxtaposition with the audience.

### Conventions

- Filmed in urban areas
- Hyper-masculine characters
- Violence > words
- Sci-fi - unbelievable
- Classic "men drinking" storyline - flawed protagonist
- "Gut instinct" main character trope.
- "Everything clicks in place" moments
- Often displays reckless behaviour
- Dramatic chase scenes
- Themes of violence, comedy, action, mystery, aggression
- Individuals are represented as rowdy, and the possible detectives might be given permission to take whatever action they need to.
- Binary opp in detectives (good-cop, bad-cop trope)
- Over-the-top explosions and chase scenes
- Closed narrative - issue is resolved within same ep
- Crime procedural - crime is committed and solved by end of episode.
- Women are clearly sexualised.
- Dominant and heteronormative men - emotion is shunned.
- Enigma 1: Who is the killer?
- Enigma 2: how did Sam "go back in time"?
- Enigma 3: are the crimes connected (1973/2006)?



By churger

[cheatography.com/churger/](https://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.

Last updated 5th June, 2023.

Page 1 of 12.

Sponsored by [CrosswordCheats.com](https://crosswordcheats.com)

Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!

<http://crosswordcheats.com>

### Techniques

- Tracking shots
- POV Shots
- Two-shots
- Close-ups
- Extreme close-ups
- Camera tilts
- Panning
- Long-shots
- Over-the-shoulder
- Shallow focus
- Deep focus
- Zoom-out
- Zoom-in
- Slow motion
- Shot from below
- Birdseye view

### Media Industries

Processes of production, distribution and circulation by organisations, groups and individuals in a global context.

The BBC has a public service remit the essence of which echoes Lord Reith, the founder of the BBC, who first said that the role of a public service broadcaster was to **inform, educate and entertain**.

The aim of the BBC is to be impartial and independent and to produce high quality programmes for a diverse range of audiences.

Every ten years the vision for the BBC is set out in The Royal Charter, the last one being in 2016. The Charter sets out the BBC's five public purposes:

### Media Industries (cont)

- *To provide impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them.*
- *To support learning for people of all ages.*
- *To show the most creative, highest quality and distinctive output and services.*
- *To reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all of the United Kingdom's nations and regions and, in doing so, support the create economy across the United Kingdom.*
- *To reflect the United Kingdom, its culture and values to the world.*

LOM is a **mainstream programme from a popular genre**. It was produced by **Kudos Film and Television, an independent British production company, broadcast by the BBC and distributed by BBC Worldwide**. The programme was **nominated for a range of awards including the 2008 BAFTAS for Best Drama Series, Best Production Design and Best Sound (Fiction/Entertainment)**. In 2006 it won an **International Emmy for Best UK Drama Series**.

The success of LOM over two series is an example of how the BBC as a mainstream broadcaster, whilst engaging in risk and producing new, innovative programmes, also relies on the repetition of successful formats to secure audiences in an increasingly competitive media landscape. The production of the continuation series "Ashes to Ashes" built on the successful formula of LOM as a recognisable brand, whilst introducing a new narrative.

### Media Industries (cont)

**A third and final series** of the programme set in Manchester and London the 70s, 80s and the present was **rumoured in April 2021, further illustrating the continued appeal of the programme**.

The programme has **high production values for a television series**, evident in the choice of **locations, the cinematography and the actors including John Simm, Philip Glenister and Liz White**.

LOM had a **wide global distribution** and an **adaptation of the programme was produced by ABC in America and other countries including Spain and Russia**.

-- Significance of economic factors, including commercial and not-for-profit public funding to media industries and their products --

Television companies operate either a publicly funded or commercial broadcasting model. **The BBC is a public service broadcaster, funded by the license fee, with a remit to inform, educate and entertain, and this influences what is produced**.

The **funding arrangement allows the BBC some aspect of freedom as they are less driven by ratings and profit**. The BBC's relative autonomy enables it to offer a **diverse range of programming content and crime dramas are an important element of its content and schedule**.

The BBC does also have **commercial operations which supplement the licence fee enabling new programming**. These include **BBC Studios, a global production company and distributor**.



By **churger**  
[cheatography.com/churger/](https://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.  
Last updated 5th June, 2023.  
Page 2 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**  
Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!  
<http://crosswordcheats.com>

### Media Industries (cont)

The BBC does have an element of **governmental control and there is an ongoing discussion centred around the continuation of the licence fee, which is set by the government, with some members unhappy about the BBC's funding model.** However, there is considerable **support from the public, the arts and entertainment industry and sections of the government for what is seen as the essential role played by the public service broadcaster.**

-- Significance of patterns of ownership and control, including conglomerate ownership, vertical integration and diversification --

The **BBC is a vertically integrated organisation**, it has an in-house production company BBC Studios which has seven production bases in the UK and other global bases in partnership with other countries. BBC Studios is:

"Home to the very best of British creativity. Combining the strengths of the UK's most-awarded production company and a world-class distributor, we are an unrivalled creator of- and investor in- UK programmes reaching audiences around the world." BBC Studios and BBC Worldwide merged in 2017 integrating production, sales and distribution.

Previously, BBC Worldwide had been responsible for financing and distributing BBC content and BBC Studios was responsible for production.

Under the one name, **BBC Studios now covers all aspects including developing, financing, producing and marketing content as well as distributing it across a range of global platforms.**

### Media Industries (cont)

-- How media organisations maintain, through marketing, varieties of audience nationally and globally --  
LOM, as a completely new programme, had to target and appeal to a range of audiences. However, as part of the marketing campaign, **the typical codes and conventions of crime dramas were used to establish the programme within a genre recognisable to audiences.**

The marketing campaign was created by *Amanda & Paul from Red Bee Media* and consisted of:

- **Establishing a brand for the programme** throughout the marketing material **based on intertextual references to the 1970s so introducing the enigma of the dual time setting.** This includes *obvious similarities with the 1970s police programmes, for example The Sweeney and The Professionals.*

- **Trailers featuring the 1970s BBC ident of the globe accompanied by the traditional BBC font and the test card.** One trailer featured *Gene Hunt speaking from an old television set. Another used Sam Tyler's voiceover to introduce the narrative twist to appeal the audience.*

- **A teaser trailer used an intertextual link by portraying Sam Tyler as a character from Camberwick Green, a 1970s children's television programme.**

- **A poster featured Gene Hunt and Sam Tyler in front of a 1970s Ford Cortina with the tagline "Back in the Nick of Time".** The iconography of the poster including the **retro font style and the character's clothing established an enigma for the audience.**

### Media Industries (cont)

-- The regulatory framework of contemporary media in the UK. The role of regulation in global production, distribution, and circulation. --

- Television companies and specific channels **operate self-regulation through scheduling decisions, the watershed, and announcements at the beginning of programmes giving information about possible areas of offence.** LOM was scheduled at 9pm, **this post watershed slot indicates to viewers that the programme may contain content that is unsuitable for children,** "unsuitable material can include everything from sexual content to violence, graphic or distressing imagery and swearing".

The **BBC Board is responsible for enduring that the BBC fulfils its mission** as detailed in the Royal Charter which sets out the BBC's object, mission and public purposes. It is reviewed and renewed regularly, the current charter began in January 2017 and ends in December 2027.

The BBC is **externally regulated by Ofcom which is accountable to Parliament and publishes standards which must be adhered to by broadcasters.** One of the duties of Ofcom is **to examine specific complaints made by listeners about programmes broadcast on channels that it has licenced.** Where\*\* versions of the programme are broadcast in different countries, there may be issues around different regulatory systems.



By churger

[cheatography.com/churger/](http://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.

Last updated 5th June, 2023.

Page 3 of 12.

Sponsored by [CrosswordCheats.com](http://CrosswordCheats.com)

Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!

<http://crosswordcheats.com>

### Media Industries (cont)

Attitudes of different countries to offensive material including sexual content and swearing may differ and amendments may have to be made of the programme.\*\* For example, in the case of LOM, the BBC does not carry advertising, but other countries broadcasting the programme may sell advertising. Consequently, **the programme may have to be edited to incorporate advertising breaks.** -- APPLYING THEORY

--

Regulation - Livingstone & Lunt

The BBC as a public service broadcaster **operates both a consumer-based regulatory model offering choice for audiences through the BBC remit** which details the range of content that must be produced by the channel including news and current affairs, and also a **citizen-based model playing a role in shaping society and taking responsibility for media content through self-regulation, ensuring a diverse range of programming.** For example, **decisions made about the scheduling of LOM ensured that citizens were protected from potentially offensive material.** The fact that **television companies now operate in a global market has introduced challenges with regard to regulation of content.** In addition, **the ways in which television content is distributed to audiences across a range of digital platforms means that regulation is more complex.**

Cultural Industries - Hesmondhalgh

### Media Industries (cont)

Whilst the **BBC as a PSB is not under the same pressure as commercial broadcasters in terms of ratings and competition, it still uses a range of strategies to minimise risk and maximise audiences.** One of these as indicated by Hesmondhalgh, **is vertical integration.** LOM was produced by Kudos, broadcast by the BBC, and distributed globally by BBC Worldwide. Another **key strategy used by the BBC is formatting their cultural products.** Where audiences can **anticipate what to expect from new products through, for example familiarity with genre conventions, then the risk is minimised.** LOM, whilst containing an enigmatic narrative twist, also **\*\*contains typical codes and conventions of a crime drama. The marketing of the programme also used** recognisable stars and once the programme was established, the characters of Sam Tyler and Gene Hunt\*\*. *This facilitated the launch of Series 2 and the spinoff Ashes to Ashes.*

### Narratology - Tzveton Todorov

Theory recap: (1) the idea that all narratives share a basic structure that involves a movement from one state of equilibrium to another. (2) the idea that these two states of equilibrium are separated by a period of imbalance or disequilibrium. (3) the idea that the way in which narratives are resolved can have particular ideological significance.

- Linear narrative structure
- Often unfold in a chronological order
- Work on a basis of cause and effect.

### Narratology - Tzveton Todorov (cont)

In support of this theory:

- Equilibrium - Sam is at work like normal (2006)
- Disruption - Sam's car crash, Maya goes missing
- Recognition - New reality/fantasy (1973)
- Resolution - Sam works to solve the crime case in his new reality
- New equilibrium - Accepts to not jump, and to work in the 1970s.
- Initial disruption starts the story.
- Elements of enigmas used to unfold the narrative.
- Against this theory:
  - Flexinarrative suggests non-linear narrative.
  - Repeated disruptions to the narrative.
  - Disruptions and flashbacks create elements of a non-linear narrative, and audience questions what's real.
  - Lack of resolution, cliff-hanger ending.
- Narrative has elements of series and serial format.
  - Crime is resolved within the episode.
  - Able to solve the 2006 crime at the same time he's solving 1973 crime.
  - Sam rescued Dora.
  - Enigma of Sam's state (is he dead, in a concussion?)
  - Enigma of where Maya is (2006)
  - How/why is he in 1973?
  - Love story arc (Annie)
  - How will he get back?
- Restricted and unrestricted narrative.
- Audience is in privileged position (knowledge of 2006 storyline, Sam is alone in his experience).



### Structuralism theory - Claude Levi-Strauss

Theory recap: (1) the idea that texts can be best understood through an examination of their underlying structure. (2) the idea that meaning is dependent upon (and produced through) pairs of oppositions. (3) the idea that the way in which these binary oppositions are resolved can have particular ideological significance.

#### Binary oppositions present:

Reality vs fantasy

Past vs present

Illusion vs reality

(Internal diegetic sound of defibrillator charging and the doctor talking to Sam from 2006 - shallow focus, slow motion, body language of Sam covering his ears. Defib used ambiguity to create multifaceted readings.)

New man vs unemotional

Corrupt vs clean/honest

Crime drama vs reality tv

Life vs death

Bigotry vs diversity

New policing vs old-school

Forensics vs instinct

Order vs disorder

Psychology vs evidence

Gene Hunt vs Sam

Annie vs male police dep

In support of this theory, the conflict between the binary oppositions drive the narrative, it explores hierarchies and shows the ideological implications of meaning-making and power dynamics.

### Structuralism theory - Claude Levi-Strauss (cont)

However, this method of driving the narrative is too simplistic and repetitive, and can become reductive (no leeway). Other methods may be used to create meaning, such as semiotics, intertextuality, etc.

### Genre theory - Steve Neale

Theory recap: (1) the idea that genres may be dominated by repetition, but also marked by difference, variation and change. (2) the idea that genres change, develop and vary as they borrow from and overlap with one another. (3) the idea that genres exist within specific economic, institutional and industrial contexts.

### Media Language

The codes and conventions of media forms and products, including the processes through which media language develops as a genre.

- **Crime dramas have a recognisable repertoire of elements, these may be specific to a sub-genre, for example a psychological crime drama.** These conventions have **evolved over time and developed to reflect social and cultural change and the needs and expectations of audiences.**

However, they all share similarities which place them in the genre including:

> **Narrative:** this is usually based on a crime that needs to be investigated and solved.

### Media Language (cont)

-> **Structure.** Crime dramas may use a range of different narrative structures. They may conform to Todorov's theory where the structure is linear from the initial disruption through to a resolution, or non-linear where time and space is manipulated.

Inverted narratives show the crime and the perpetrator at the start and then may have a non-linear structure including flashbacks.

Other examples of the genre create a restricted narrative in which information is withheld from the audience and they are involved in solving of the crime alongside the police.

In Life on Mars there are elements of a flexi-narrative.

The characters are complex, storylines interweave, the audience is encouraged to question what is real and what is not and is challenged through enigma and confusion.

-> **Narrative disruptions occur that change the course of the story, these can be events that happen or revelations that are made by characters.** *Sometimes the audience are in a privileged spectator position whereby they know more than the characters within the story world.*

-> **Binary oppositions function as a narrative element** including good vs evil, police vs criminal.

-> **Plot situations are included that are typical of the crime genre.** For example, *a car chase, an arrest, an interview with a suspect or the denouement where the perpetrator of the crime is revealed by the detective.*



By **churger**

[cheatography.com/churger/](https://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.

Last updated 5th June, 2023.

Page 5 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**

Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!

<http://crosswordcheats.com>

### Media Language (cont)

-> **Story arcs and narrative strands occur in episodes and across the series of a crime drama.** In Life on Mars there is a narrative strand of the crime that seems to cross from the present back to 1973 and creates an enigma.

> **Stock Characters including a hierarchy with a boss, a detective and sidekick and other characters, for example a victim, a range of suspects, the perpetrator of the crime and experts/witnesses who help in solving of the crime.** Often the pairing of characters are binary opposites, and their relationships contributes to tensions within the narrative, this is the case with Sam Tyler and Gene Hunt in Life on Mars, compounded by the fact that they are culturally opposite due to the time shift.

> **Setting and locations.** These will become synonymous with the programme and the brand and will relate to characterise and the sub-genre. **Some settings will be typical of the genre, for example the police station, the post-mortem lab and urban crime settings.** The settings in Life on Mars clearly establish in which time frame the action is taking place.

-- APPLYING THEORY --

#### Narratology - Todorov

All narratives share a basic structure involving movement from one state of equilibrium to another, separated by a disequilibrium. The opening of Life on Mars establishes a typical crime drama narrative involving an attempted arrest, a chase and a police interview, this is the equilibrium.

### Media Language (cont)

The most significant disruption to this equilibrium occurs when Sam Tyler is involved in an accident and is transported back in time to 1973. An enigma code is then established as a key element of the narrative and Sam attempts to repair the equilibrium by trying to work out how he can return to the present, enlisting the help of Annie Cartwright.

As this is an example of an **episodic drama there would not be a resolution at the end of the first episode, instead there is a cliff-hanger.**

#### Genre - Neale

Neale asserts that genres may be dominated by repetition, but they are also marked by difference, variation and change.

**Crime dramas have a recognisable repertoire of elements that place them in the genre,** but in order to appeal to audiences they need to display something different to set them apart from other examples. **Life on Mars uses the time travel narrative and intertextual references to the 1970s that may resonate with audiences.**

Life on Mars demonstrates that genres change, develop, and vary as they borrow and overlap from one another. **Some contemporary crime dramas are less easy to categorise as they are hybrid genres.** This *variation enhances audience appeal*; Life on Mars combines the conventions of **crime drama with those of fantasy/science fiction** with the introduction of time travel and alternative realities.

### Media Language (cont)

Genres exist within specific economic, institutional and industrial contexts. **The recognisable codes and conventions of crime dramas make them easy to market to audiences.** However, subverting and challenging these conventions **by introducing more novel elements as in Life on Mars can also ensure commercial success.**

-- HOW GENRE CONVENTIONS ARE SOCIALLY AND HISTORICALLY RELATIVE, DYNAMIC AND CAN BE USED IN A HYBRID WAY --

Some programmes, for example LOM (Life on Mars) challenge and subvert genre conventions, in this case through the narrative and through reference to other genres.

Crime dramas are dynamic in that they change and develop to reflect changes in society and to policing methods.

LOM has **intertextual links to historically relevant dramas,** for example The Sweeney. Making these links **allows the programme to be socially relative and to explore issues around representation and how policing and attitudes to certain social groups have changed over time.**

LOM is different from other crime dramas in that it **highlights social change through Sam's role in observing and commenting on 1970s policing from a contemporary perspective.**

-- HOW THE COMBINATION OF ELEMENTS OF MEDIA LANGUAGE INFLUENCE MEANING --

>Visual codes

-> Codes of clothing: the connotations of character's clothing and appearance create meanings.



By churger

[cheatography.com/churger/](http://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.

Last updated 5th June, 2023.

Page 6 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**

Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!

<http://crosswordcheats.com>

### Media Language (cont)

**Clothing is a rapid way of communicating messages in LOM.** At the start of the episode the clothing conventions are typical of a crime drama whereby **costume denotes rank and hierarchy**. As the episode progresses and **\*\*the disequilibrium occurs**, the audience are shown this through Sam's change of clothing to typical 1970's attire with big shirt collars, flares and stacked heels. This adds to the enigma. The clothing of the other characters in 1973 reinforces the time frame.\*\*. -> Gesture and expression: non-verbal communicators are quick ways of constructing meaning. **Sam's range of troubled expressions, evident from the beginning, rapidly convey elements of his character.** His facial expressions and physical gestures convey aspects of his personality and this **contributes to tension within the narrative**. His crying and hitting of the steering wheel before he is hit by the car emphasises **his frustration and suppressed emotions in the wake of Maya's abduction..** Throughout the episode **his expression of bewilderment allows the audience to empathise with his surreal situation**. This is echoed in the equally **confused expressions of the police team in 1973 as they attempt to understand his time travel story**. -> Iconography and setting: the **props, backgrounds and settings work in binary opposition to construct the narrative**.

### Media Language (cont)

For example, the modern office in the police station is introduced early in the episode so that **audiences can see the contrast to the 1973 office with its lack of technology, dingy smoke-filled atmosphere and piles of paperwork**. The modern road network contrasts with the demolished site ready for development in 1973. Other props effectively establish the historic time frame and contribute further to Sam's confusion including for example, **\*\*the old cars, the police panda cars and the walkie talkies. \*\***. >Technical codes  
Camera shots, movement and angles work together to communicate messages and 'show' the narrative. **LOM has high production values and a cinematic style which is used to convey information without the use of dialogue**. -> **Close-ups advance the relationships between characters and establish tension and a dynamic**. This is evident in the **conversation between Maya and Sam where he takes her off the case and in the interview with Raimes**. Close-ups on Sam throughout the episode **reinforce his confusion and disorientation**. -> **Framing** is also important in the establishment of characters and relationships, for example in the **first meeting between Sam and Gene Hunt**. **Here, the combination of framing, gesture and expression foreshadows the relationship clash between these two characters**.

### Media Language (cont)

-> **Camera movement contributes to the surreal elements of the narrative**; for example, the **360-degree tracking shot when Sam stands up in 1973 disorients the audience, introduces the changed setting and reinforces Sam's confusion**. -> The editing of the shots is also important; for example, **the low angle shot of Sam viewing Maya's blood-stained shirt on the swing is powerful when followed by the bird's eye view of the urban setting constructing a sense of foreboding around what has happened to her**. > Audio codes  
Sound and music are effective in communicating meaning in this programme. -> **Music: the David Bowie track "Life on Mars?" is played at key moments in the episode and specific lyrics relate to the narrative**. It is playing in the car before Sam's accident and the focus of the lyrics, *"A friend is nowhere to be seen"* emphasises his isolation. *"As she walks through a sunken dream"* foreshadows the dream-like narrative that is about to unfold. -> The **strength of Sam's emotions is emphasised by the audio codes, the diegetic sound disappears as he is crying and we only hear the music soundtrack**. It is as if he is already in a dream or nightmare and the fact that he cannot be heard reinforces his inability to voice emotion as identified in the previous scene with Maya before her abduction.



By **churger**  
[cheatography.com/churger/](https://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.  
Last updated 5th June, 2023.  
Page 7 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**  
Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!  
<http://crosswordcheats.com>

### Media Language (cont)

-> The **use of silence is also very emotive**. After Sam is hit by the car there is silence which further reinforces the audience shock at the incident they did not anticipate and then a series of audio codes reinforce confusion and disorientation. These include sirens, music, non-diegetic medical dialogue "stand clear", a dream like whisper and the beeping of a heart monitor.

-> The **soundtrack of the 1970s world is underlaid by music from that period making intertextual references to the time and creating nostalgia for the audience**.

-> **Dialogue**: at the start of the episode the dialogue is conventional of a crime drama, for example when the team go to arrest Raimes, "we have a warrant", and in the interview room. **Gene Hunt's turn of phrase and vocabulary constructs his representation and places him in the 1970s time frame where what was acceptable contrasts with modern policing**. \*Some of his phrases became iconic and part of the programme's branding, after Sam asks who he is: "Gene Hunt. Your DCI. And it's 1973. Nearly dinner time. I'm 'aving 'oops " and his *inappropriate sexist references*, "they reckon you've got concussion- I couldn't give a tart's furry cup if half your brains are falling out. Don't ever waltz into my kingdom acting king of the jungle". \*.

### Media Language (cont)

-> When Sam "comes to" in 1973, his disorientation is emphasised in his conversation with the police officer, highlighting that terminology and vocabulary is socially relevant. Sam says his car is a Jeep, the policeman assumes this is a "military vehicle" and fails to understand the reference to the mobile phone, just as the team in the office misunderstand his request for a PC.

-- APPLYING THEORY --

**Postmodernism - Baudrillard**

Baudrillard argues that the media create hyper-realities based on a continuous process of mediation. What is encoded as "real", and what audiences then decode as actual, is not "real" but instead "simulacrum": signs which reference other signs, which then creates a hyper-reality. Audiences accept this constructed reality as real because they are consistently exposed to a world of images which no longer refer to reality.

Media images have come to seem more "real" than the reality they supposedly represent.

Postmodern elements in Life on Mars:

-> Programme is **postmodern in its narrative and the manipulation of time and space**. The narrative is paradoxical and fragmented and audiences are required to suspend their disbelief.

### Media Language (cont)

-> Elements of **bricolage, intertextuality and cultural codes to create audience appeal through nostalgia**. Meaning is shaped through reference to the 1970s, its culture, music and crime dramas of the time, for example The Sweeney. The programme relies on audience understanding of crime drama to decode meaning which is then accepted as the reality of the time.

-> The programme also has a **social, cultural and historical context: its construction requires the audience to view 1970s Manchester with 21st century eyes and judge it accordingly**.

Applying the concept of "simulacra" to Life on Mars:

-> The 1970s world of Gene Hunt is a hyper-reality created by a range of recognisable signs; it is the 1970s re-presented from a mediated perspective.

-> It could also be said that Sam Tyler's 21st Century world is also hyper-real in that it is based on the audience's cultural perception of the police force that is itself constructed and mediated, rather than experienced first-hand.

The audience understanding of this institution is based on what has been seen in other constructed media products.

### Industry Context

- Process of production, distribution and circulation.
- Specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and circulation.



By **churger**  
[cheatography.com/churger/](http://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.  
Last updated 5th June, 2023.  
Page 8 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**  
Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!  
<http://crosswordcheats.com>



## Industry Context (cont)

- Relationship of recent technologies changing and how it affects production, distribution and circulation.
- 16mm (aesthetic "retro")
- Modern film (unusual)
- Practically postmodern simulacrum of The Sweeney
- Globalisation
- Significance of patterns of ownership and control.
- Conglomerate ownership - vertical integration and diversification (BBC-owned).
- Significant economic factors - commercial and not-for-profit public funding
- International co-production; high cost of quality drama.
- TV programmes and formats are distributed worldwide.
- BBC Worldwide (commercial arm) sells BBC programmes and formats.
- Netflix and Amazon Prime provide global audience.
- Life on Mars made by public service broadcasters - would've needed European / co-production money.
- Co-production gives a show a much larger audience (also seen in The Bridge).

## Representation

**All representations are constructed, and are not "windows on the world". Media products are constructed through a process of mediation using:**

- **Technical codes.** Camera shots, angles, movements and editing combine to construct representations. Consider the first time.

## Representation (cont)

In your exam, you could talk about the first time characters are shown in LOM and how the camera constructs the representation. This is used to position the audience in relation to the characters and this may change through the program. For example, in **the opening scenes in present day Sam Tyler is shown to be in control, giving orders and managing the situation. In the 1970s world the use of close ups and 360 panning shots creates a representation of his confusion, disorientation and lack of control over the situation.**

- **Audio codes.** Diegetic and non-diegetic sound including a soundtrack, mood music and dialogue to contribute to the construction of representations. For example, **the 1970s dialogue and vocabulary used by the police officers and Gene Hunt establish the cultural differences between then and now and create negative representations of the police. The music soundtrack also represents the 1970s.**
- **Iconography.** *Clothing, particularly in relation to the historical context, contributes to the construction of representation* and will have been a key consideration of the producers in creating the characters and their roles.

Representations may invoke discourses and ideologies and position audiences due to their ideological significance and reflect the time in which the product was made. In the case of LOM, **it re-presents 1970s life through a 21st century lens. They portray idea and values relevant at the time which may now be challenged by a contemporary audience.**

## Representation (cont)

The **time frame of the programme invokes a discourse around representations of the time**, particularly in terms of **patriarchal and feminist discourses**, in contrast to more contemporary representations. **Audiences are positioned to consider how representations have changed over time.**

-- The effect of social, cultural and historical context on representations. --

**Gender: men/masculinity**

LOM, with its **dual time frame, highlights what it means to be a man in a particular historical and cultural setting.** The cultural significance of male representation is reinforced by the **binary oppositions between Sam's world and that of the 1970s milieu of Gene Hunt and his team.** The representation of **masculinity constructed in 1973 through the police team is one showing hypermasculine traits of dominance and power, particularly as shown in the character of Gene Hunt.** He is **\*\*defined by his language and physical response to situations. His immediate reaction when challenged by Sam Tyler is to hit him. Sam later refers to him as "an overweight, over-the-hill nicotine-stained borderline alcoholic homophobic with a superiority complex and an unhealthy obsession with male bonding".** He is reminiscent of other characters in crime dramas of the time, reflecting the dominant role of men in society.\*\*.



### Representation (cont)

**Gene Hunt's hypermasculinity** is constructed through iconography, for example his office has a **dartboard**, a **typical male pursuit**, and a **film poster of Gary Cooper in the Western "High Noon"**, contributing to the **surface realism of the 1970s masculine world**. He refers to the office as **"my kingdom"**.

Sam Tyler both subverts and conforms to typical representations of masculinity. In 1973 he is in stark **contrast to the police of the time**, particularly in the way in which he treats the female characters. He confronts the macho behaviour of Gene Hunt and is sympathetic to the plight of Dora. In the 2006 world he demonstrates masculine traits of control over Maya's role and the crime investigation.

Early in episode 1, after his first confrontation with Hunt, the framing constructs a representation of Sam as vulnerable with closed body language while the rest of the office functions around him.

It is **Annie** he trusts and turns to for help and he is happy to confide in her emotionally.

However, the 2006 Sam is less comfortable when dealing with emotion in relation to Maya. When the audience are shown him crying, it is silent emphasising his **emotional isolation**.

**Gender: women/femininity**

Just as with Sam Tyler and Gene Hunt, Annie Cartwright and Maya Roy function as **binary oppositions**, highlighting the cultural and social **differences between the two worlds in relation to the role of women**.

### Representation (cont)

Women are **under-represented in the 1970s world of LOM**; for example, **Annie is referred to in derogatory terms by the male police officers as a "nice little plonk"**, *despite the fact that she has a degree in psychology*. She explains she is part of The Women's Department: **women in the police at the time had a restricted range of duties and were viewed as inferior to their male counterparts**.

In episode 1 we see her in her role as **administering first aid rather than engaging in active police duties**. Sam invites her to give her ideas about the case, but she is ridiculed **"I look at your lips all the time Cartwright, do you think I should turn myself in?"** and despite her insightful contribution into the mind of the killer, is **effectively marginalised and instructed to "trot along sweetheart" by Hunt**.

Dora also serves to **highlight the tension between Tyler and Hunt, their dealing with her reflects the cultural differences in attitudes to women**. *Sam's interviewing technique is softer and more respectful, whereas Hunt's is aggressive and confrontational*.

In contrast, **Maya Roy is in a more senior, active rather than passive role in the police and is able to act on her initiative and challenge Sam**. However, she is also portrayed as the victim as she is abducted and items of her clothing are left behind, reinforcing her vulnerability.

**Ethnicity**

### Representation (cont)

The representations in LOM compare historical and contemporary cultures and attitudes with regard to representations of ethnicity, reflecting how these have changed to reflect societal developments. In the construction of the **1970s world of LOM there is an under-representation of minority ethnic groups within the police force, representing the situation at the time**. **Nelson's construction is stereotypical, focusing on the accentuated Jamaican accent, bright clothing and jewellery**. He is constructed as **"other" and "exotic" and does not have a central part in the narrative**. His role as a barman reinforces the **cultural power relations which assume his inferiority**.

Maya's representation as an **Asian women who has risen through the ranks of the police is more positive, reflecting a more equal contemporary society**.

-- APPLYING THEORY --

Feminist theory -- Bell Hooks

Bell Hooks' assertion that feminism is a struggle to end sexist/patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination can be explored in relation to LOM:

- The **dual time frame raises awareness of how attitudes towards men and women have changed**, and the fact that **Sam views the attitudes of 1973 through a contemporary lens helps to challenge sexist thinking and the ideology of male domination**.



By **churger**  
[cheatography.com/churger/](http://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.  
Last updated 5th June, 2023.  
Page 10 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**  
Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!  
<http://crosswordcheats.com>

### Representation (cont)

- In the **1970s time frame** audiences are forced to consider the assumed dominance of men and the oppression of women. Gene Hunt's "Kingdom" and has no room for women, or men like Sam who are responsive to the situations involving Annie and Dora.

- The environments in the **1973 world** are largely masculine, the pub and the office are inhabited by men and intimidating to women.

- The language used to refer to women at this time is reductive and derogatory, for example "tart", "bird" and "skirt".

- Annie's character highlights how women were prevented from achieving their potential through a patriarchal, oppressive world. She is well educated, but is not given the same opportunities in the police force as her male counterparts. When she is in conversation with Sam about the motive and psychological profile of the killer she is his equal and this is shown by the camera shots. However, the others marginalise her, making sexist comments and treating her as inferior.

Gene Hunt's response to dismiss her and define her by her sexuality, "I think you'd better trot along now sweetheart before I have to hose with lot down". This is in sharp contrast to the role of Maya in the modern force.

Feminist theory -- Van Zoonen

Van Zoonen's assertion that gender is constructed through discourse and that its meaning varies according to cultural and historical context can be applied to LOM by comparing the two different time frames in which the narrative is set.

### Representation (cont)

- By **directly contrasting the worlds of 1973 and 2006**, the programme illustrates that the dominant understandings of gender have changed over time to reflect changes in society in terms of the roles of men and women.

- In the **1973 world** Gene Hunt's representation is constructed as one of hyper-masculinity and Annie's role is domestic and nurturing.

- Maya's opportunities are very different to those of Annie due to changes in society to address gender equality, for example the *Equal Pay Act of 1970 and passing of the EU directive on equal pay in 1975*.

### Audiences

-- How media industries target audiences through the content and appeal of media products and through the ways in which they are marketed, distributed and circulated --

- The primary target audience is a **wide, mainstream audience who are fans of crime drama**. The programme has cross-gender appeal with the narrative and characters attractive to both genders.

- A **secondary audience is fans of fantasy/science-fiction** who would be attracted by the **hybrid generic elements** in the programme which may appeal to a more **alternative/niche audience**.

- A **tertiary audience may be fans of the 1970s period who would experience pleasure through nostalgia and the intertextual references**.

-- How the programme appeals to these audiences --

### Audiences (cont)

- The appeal of the genre. The crime drama genre is a popular and successful genre as it offers a range of audience pleasures.

**Audiences have expectations of the genre and gain pleasure in seeing expectations fulfilled (Neale)**. The genre offers escapism where the audience can be involved in the intellectual puzzle of solving the crime and pursuing the clues alongside the police.

The **fantasy/science fiction** element of LOM offers an additional layer of escapism in the suspension of disbelief. The audience may feel a personal identification with the themes in the drama, or with one of the characters. Sam Tyler positions the audience to empathise with him and his situation. Audiences also gain information

**on the workings of the police, in LOM audiences may be shocked by the methods used in the 1973 world**. Popular dramas like LOM create a buzz and encourage social interaction (Uses & Gratifications)..

**Narrative appeal**. The narrative effectively highlights Neale's theory of how repetition and difference ensure the dynamic nature of genres. LOM incorporates the typical codes and convention of the crime genre for example, the crime, enigmas, narrative strands and typical characters and settings whilst offering something different in terms of the enigma of the dual time frame. This would appeal to fans of crime dramas as well as an **alternative audience** who may be attracted to the **non-linear, surreal narrative structure and lack of closure**..



By churger

[cheatography.com/churger/](http://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.

Last updated 5th June, 2023.

Page 11 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**

Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!

<http://crosswordcheats.com>

## Audiences (cont)

**Characters.** LOM introduced characters that would appeal to the audience. Gene Hunt's character became iconic, and his catch phrases were absorbed into the culture of the time. Audiences were positioned to sympathise with Sam Tyler, the restricted narrative meaning that the audience solve the mystery alongside him, and they are positioned to see Hunt's methods through his eyes and judge them accordingly.

**Intertextual references.** The music of the period including David Bowie gives audiences pleasure through recognition. Nostalgia through visual codes and iconography, for example the Crombie, kipper ties, velvet jackets and Ford Cortina, flicked hair, etc.

**Inherited fan bases.** Audiences like crime dramas and there will be an expectation that a BBC production will be high quality. The programme will also appeal to fans of stars including John Simms who may attract a younger target audience who associate him with Doctor Who and 24 Hour Party People.

**Marketing.** The marketing campaign used much of the above to target the audience, including the 1970s soundtrack, the nostalgic references to 1970s culture and the enigmatic narrative. The characters were also an important part of the marketing, Sam Tyler's voiceover was used in the trailer "My name is Sam Tyler..."

Audiences were encouraged to empathise with him from the start through the trailer "Where else could I go", "Help me".

-- APPLYING THEORY --

Reception theory - Stuart Hall

## Audiences (cont)

There are **three hypothetical positions from which messages and meanings may be decoded.**

An audience may understand and accept the producers' intended meaning, to construct a programme that appeals to audiences by including some typical conventions of crime drama whilst offering something different in the dual time narrative. Audiences will be entertained by the programme and enjoy the intertextual reference to 1970s culture and society.

Some audiences may assume a negotiated position, judging the 1970s references from a 21st century perspective. They may enjoy the elements of nostalgia and the soundtrack but feel uncomfortable with the sexism and the dominant male perspective.

Some audience may adopt an oppositional position that may feel that the representation that are constructed, particularly in that of Gene Hunt, legitimise racism, sexism and the use of violence. Audiences may view his attitudes and values as extremist and unacceptable for a modern audience, even in a historical setting. A feminist audience may oppose the representation of Annie as subservient to the males and feel that there is no place for the seeming reinforcement of dated ideas and patriarchal values in a modern television drama..

## Media Contexts

Social and cultural contexts.

The dual time frame encourages audiences to consider the effect of social and cultural contexts on representations of gender and ethnicity and how these reflect the change in society.

## Media Contexts (cont)

LOM shows the 1970s society in terms of social hierarchy, power, gender roles and how authority was regarded. The programme reflected the inequality between men and women in society, the majority of the police officers seen are men, and the women in the programme are under-represented and marginalised.

The narrative and representations in LOM creates a discourse around policing in the past and today.

Historical context

LOM demonstrates that genre conventions are historically relative and dynamic

The representations constructed in the programme are affected by the historical context, they reflect the society of the time. Audience interpretations of LOM may reflect historical circumstances, for example those audiences who can recognise the intertextual references to historical products The Sweeney and Starsky and Hutch may respond differently to a younger audience.



By **churger**

[cheatography.com/churger/](https://cheatography.com/churger/)

Published 30th May, 2023.

Last updated 5th June, 2023.

Page 12 of 12.

Sponsored by **CrosswordCheats.com**

Learn to solve cryptic crosswords!

<http://crosswordcheats.com>