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# Does the language of postmodern publicity have anything in common with that of oil painting?



Edexcel Fine Art



Candidate Number:

Postmodernism is associated with an awareness of societal and cultural transitions after World War II and the rise of mass-mediated consumerist popular culture in the 1960s-1970s (*Tate.org*). However there is no cooperative postmodern theory or understandable set of opinions, and this is why it is so hard to explain and understand what it is. There is a wide range of definitions, debates and assumptions of theory from different professors and philosophers; some people say that postmodernism is the reaction against the ideals of modernisms, others say that it is the continuation and completion of various neglected strains within modernism. But one thing is clear, you can't have postmodernism without modernism, as the post-structuralist philosopher, best known for his highly influential formulation of postmodernism in *The Postmodern Condition*, Jean-Francois Lyotard says:

“A work can become modern only if it is first postmodern. Postmodernism thus understood is not modernism at its end but in the nascent state, and this state is constant.”

Other ways to define postmodernism are: ‘Incredulity toward metanarratives’, ‘Crisis of cultural authority’ and ‘Shift from production to reproduction’

In terms of art, postmodernism was specifically a reaction against modernism and the traditional technique, which had dominated art theory and practice since the beginning of the twentieth century.

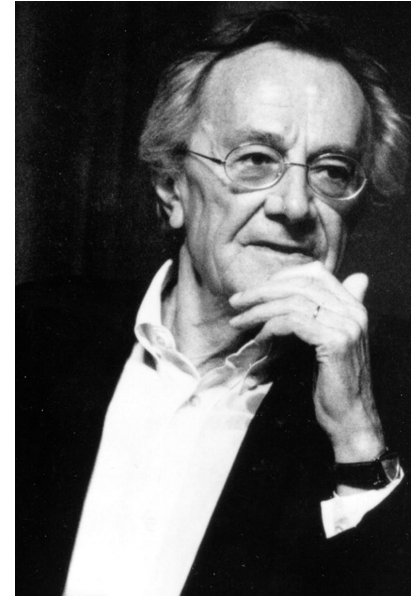


Figure 1. Picture of Jean-François Lyotard

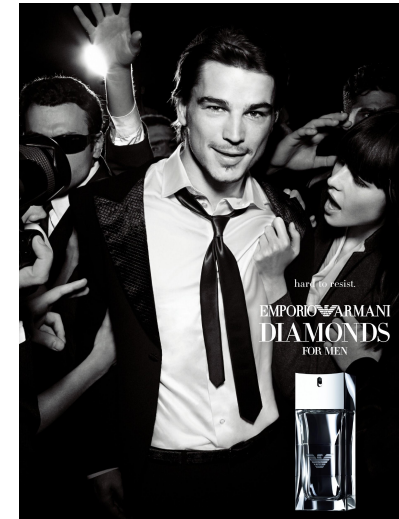
In the world that we live now, one of the things if not the thing that confronts us most frequently is publicity. Publicity is part of and affects our day to day lives like no other form of society in history.

It consists of visual messages that stimulates the consumer-producer offering it an image of itself made glamorous by the product or service its advertising. It proposes to each of us that we can transform ourselves, or our lives, by buying something more. This more it proposes will make us in a way richer, even though we will be poorer as we would have spent our money on the product/service. This is why publicity benefits the public and the most efficient manufactures, and thus, the national economy.

Publicity persuades us of this transformation by showing us people who have apparently been transformed and are, as a result, enviable. The state of being envied is what establishes glamour. And so, publicity is the process of manufacturing glamour. It is about social relations, and not objects. Publicity doesn't promise the consumer-producer pleasure, but it offers it happiness, the happiness of being envied, which provides the consumer a form of reassurance as it constitutes to its glamour, which then will transform him or her into an object of envy by others which will justify his or her love for him or herself. In other words, 'The publicity image steals his or her love of him or herself as he or she is, and it offers it back for the price of the product'



<http://sueunerman.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/times-square.jpg>



Emporio Armani Diamonds For Him



GUCCI GUILTY  
POUR HOMME

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR HIM



Photograph by Glenn Ezon

## Eleven O'Clock Again

*Elegance rules for the formal dance*

**S**HIMMERING party is the proper note for the formal dance and this gown of silver hand adds the grace of long solid lines to its soft sheen—a grace for which it alone is responsible. Long both back and front there is nevertheless a decided back dip, the result of a low-placed circular founce. Silver ball slippers and long jeweled earrings are the only essential accessories. The costume is from Mary Walls.

**T**HE day when the dinner jacket would get by at all the really formal occasions is no more, so it behooves the careful man to see to his full evening dress. Here Taylor-Spore, Incorporated, Fifth Avenue, has conceived a subtle suggestion of the real world's early nineteenth-century origin in the smartly individualized cut, and presented the last word in American as against English style. Note anti-facing and covered bottom.

