



Roland Barthes' Mythologies

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High Tech High Media Arts

In 1957, an extraordinary work of literature was published detailing concepts far ahead of its time. Roland Barthes wrote *Mythologies*, a game-changing look at the way humans built the lore around them, and turned the world they knew into a place of fictional characters. A look at stereotypes before stereotypes were a widespread notion, 12th graders contemporized Barthes' ideas into a live multimedia showcase. This one hour, theatrical event was packed with monologues, skits, music and performance art.

Learning goals for this project included researching visual meaning and cultural signs through the semiotic lenses of Roland Barthes. Using this knowledge, students exposed a contemporary problem perpetuated by society and the media that is personally significant. Students then coded a computer program that was visually or sonically experiential and that reinforced their research concept. Finally, students performed a two-minute, rehearsed stage piece that engaged an authentic audience using their research and audio/visual program.

Teacher Reflection

This project was highly experimental and challenging to manage because of the deep interdependence students needed to sustain in order to produce a unified performance in concept and form. In the end, I am proud to say that these 48 students engaged their audience deeply and provoked thinking about what is important to the teen experience and beyond.

Student Reflection

Being introduced to coding was challenging enough but combining it with research, performance and personal perspectives of the real world pushed us to think more creatively. In the end, the exhibition was a lot fun.

—Angela Marie

To view the student work visit: <http://margaretnoble.net/educator/mythologies>