

**13th International Association for Sport Information World
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11-13 March, 2009 - Canberra, Australia**

Live sports coverage – an attempt to define a media genre.

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*Building and sustaining sport information communities -
through connectivity, collaboration and sharing*



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Live sports coverage an attempt to define a media genre



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The question of sports communication

Plurality of interpretations

Reduce communication to the usage of tools

linked to the commercial strategies

The role of the media ↔ The economic dimensions of sport

The economic prism

commercial approach

a universal referent

an indispensable source of finance,

the media professionals are producers of meaning,

Communicational processes ↔ Economic dimension

The analysis of sport : scientific diversity and wealth.

The political prism : sport and politics,
the political use of sport;
instrument of propaganda,
to reinforce or to create national prestige,
political instrument : diplomatic recognition.

The history of the Olympic movement: "the conflict of memories"
of the 20th century. (Vallet 1984).

The games are also one of the elements of state diplomacy
and in this way become a war without weapons (Milza 1984).

The **prism social**: numerous studies
scientific convergences between the analyses
of the practices,
of the actors,
of the show,
of the media and communication processes.

The **anthropological prism** :
ritualized event, theatricalizes the essence
of its social and symbolic resources (Bromberger 1987).

live sports \longleftrightarrow to the object "sport"
and the coverage
or show which prolongs it?

No instrumental approach to communication
and a event-type approach

sport at the centre of a system of **inter-relations**,
conveying meaning and representations,
in an "**effects**" perspective.

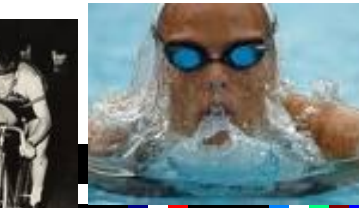
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Live sports coverage : heterogeneity

What are the elements which define its unity?

Sports programs in the media raise the question of its unity but also of its specifics concerning media productions.

In this case would it be fair to say that there is a specific media genre in relation to sport?

Can live sports coverage be called a genre?

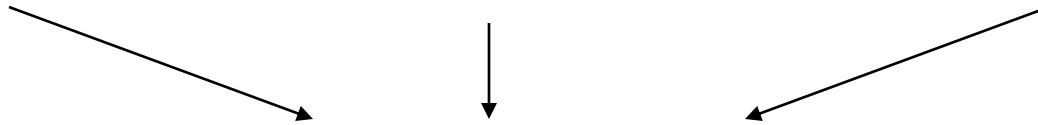
In media analysis, to the type of media concerned;
the journalistic, the televisual and the radiophonic genres.

*"One must be able to identify similarities and differences
in matter to configure the meaning which results in the creation
of categories".*

Charaudeau (1999)

Televised sports coverage : multi-form reality
the practice of sports
and the shows which prolong
the mediatisation which consecrates it.

Three traditional social functions of the television
inform, educate or provide culture, entertain.



Mixing of genres

2008 Olympic Games in Beijing: political problematics
 Illegal-drug: problems of health and cheating
 Excessive behaviour of supporters: question of security
 Booing during the national anthem: political or social dimension.

Sports coverage: not be reduced to the sporting acts.
 It offers a variety of meanings and operative elements
 which give it a status of "actor" in the public space.



Pleasure and emotion : pre-established categories

"Either we oppose two groups, the people who want entertainment and those who want culture, or we go beyond this division and provide programs of a general type for everybody".

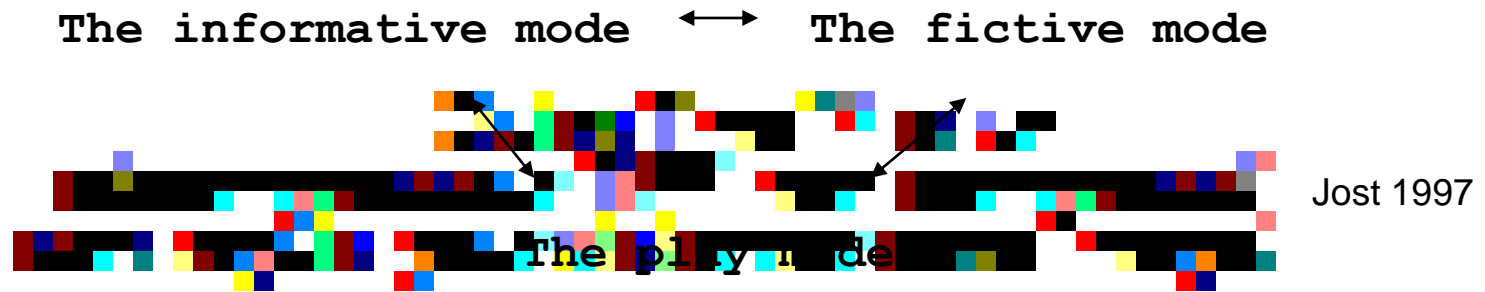
Jost (1997)

Live sports coverage : entertainment field ?
Emotions, the uncertainty & media hedonism
+ information and the spectacle & multiple expectations.
+ generate suffering, the rankings, the differences..

The television viewer watching the 'Tour de France'
discover the different country
history of the different regions
the various local produce.

An athlete wrapped in their country's flag,
The podiums and athletes'tears & their national anthem

Sport as a hybrid form and a mixing of genres



live sports coverage
 → Characterized by the mixing of and the hybridizing of genres

Bourdieu (1996)

“live sports coverage”

informational dimensions, on the difference, the results, the conditions of performance, the expertise given...

A fictional dimension, through the technical means mobilized and the production procedures used.

The essence of sport is a universe of entertainment.

Mixture of modes of speech.

Diversification in the views produced,
multiplication of the number of people involved,
the diversification of locations,
(cabin, motorbike, ground, stands)
the statuses, (journalist, consultant)
the roles, (commentary, covering, providing expertise).

Produces a form of speech associating the following types;
argumentative, descriptive, narrative

An attempt to define the live sports coverage genre

“while the literary world has been debating the question of genres for almost two thousand five hundred years without producing any unanimous results, paradoxically, those in the world of television, who archive it or observe it do not spend a great deal of time discussing the genre but daily produce schedules, a calendar or a program based on generic typologies”

François Jost (1995)

“live sports coverage” is not sufficient

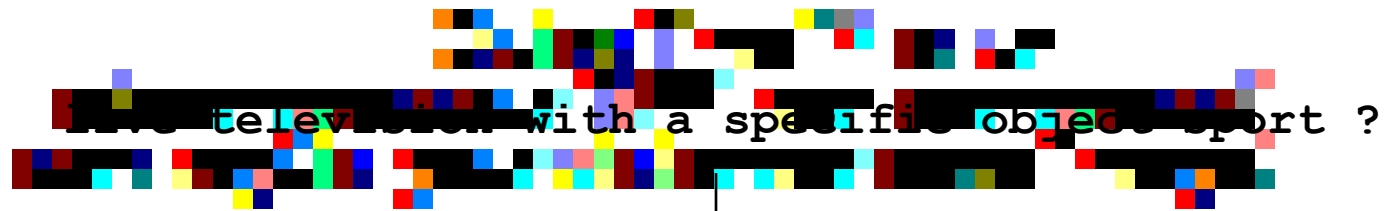
/ positioning in the media space

Watching sport on television ?

sport = a polymorphic medium → polysemic messages

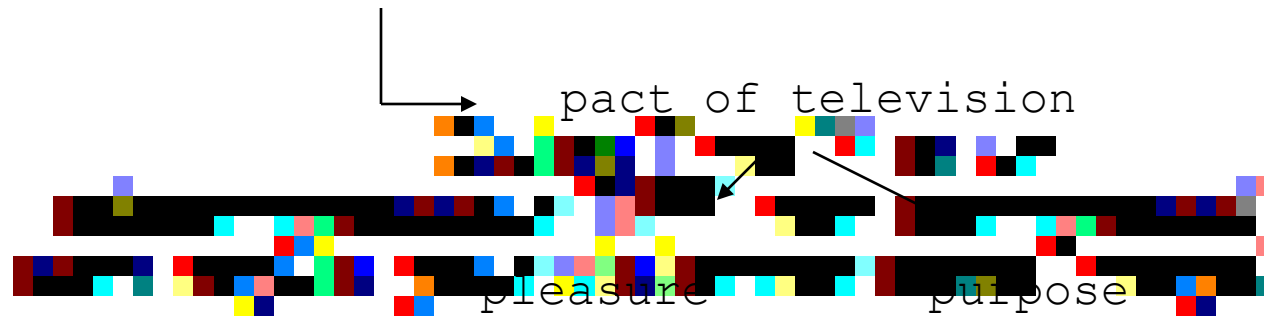
Multiple consonances

live coverage, sport, sports entertainment
links between "in visu" ↔ "in situ."



The constraints and the stakes
The nature of the show produced.

Plurality, diversity, heterogeneity
of televised sports entertainment



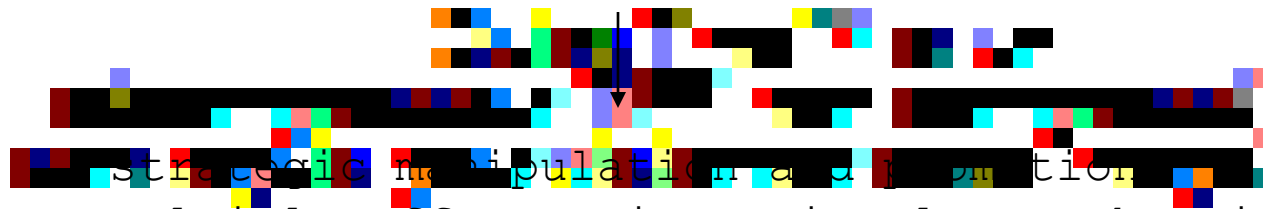
Charaudeau, 1991

contradictory feelings / the uncertainty
factual / fictional

"Process creating illusions, that is to say a group of strategies in trickery which affect neither the event nor its transformation into a narrative, but its transformation into a representation, to mime an enunciation of experienced reality which has fled."

(Jost 1995)

Media uses promotional ruses and forms of enhancement:
 a form of enunciatively lying,
 processes of appropriation reconstruction,
 The concomitance live coverage \neq the truth of the
 enunciation be based on a lie.



strategic manipulation and competition.
 Multiple effects, intentional or otherwise.
 Nature of stakes and multiple promises

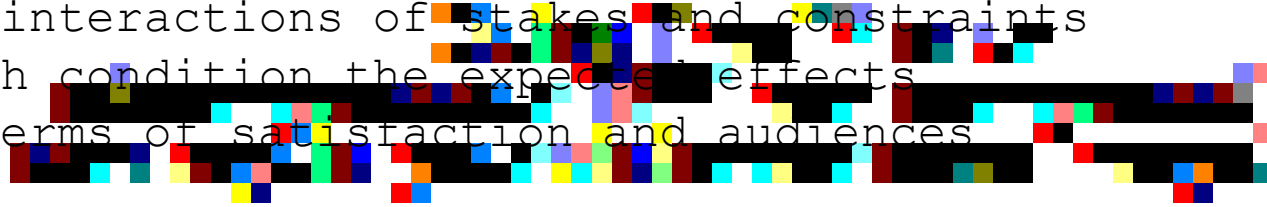
The promise of skilful play,
 of uncertainty,
 of the emotion of the awaited victory.
 maintain interest,
 define stakes (false or exaggerated).
 Seduction,
 sporting facts + other fictional dimensions, sporting imaginary.

The technical means,
the creation of images,
the modes of enunciation.



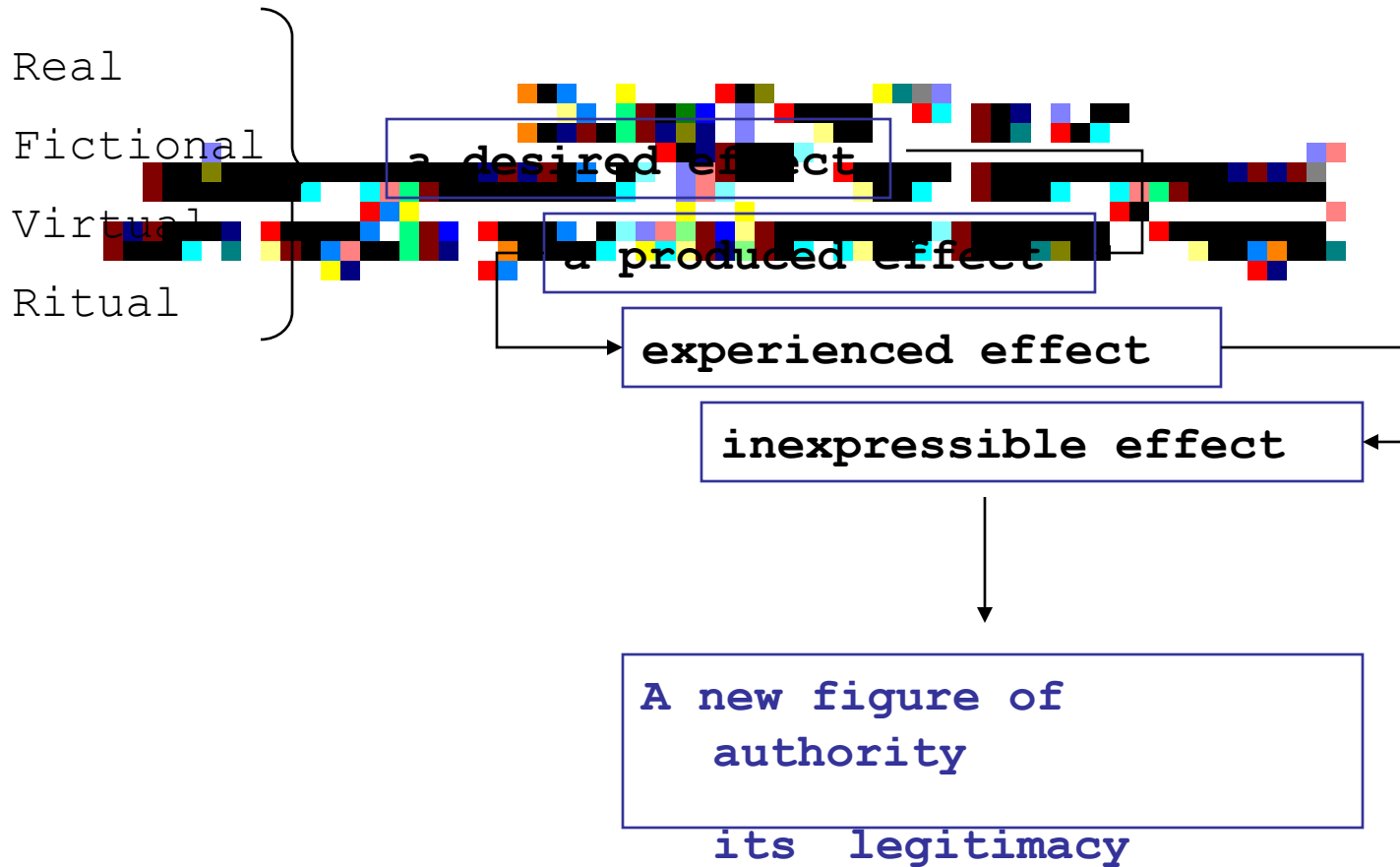
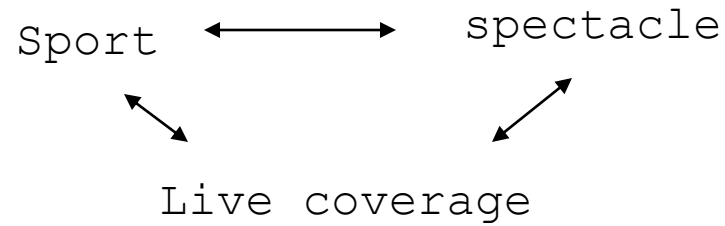
Production of polymorphic meaning.

The interactions of stakes and constraints
which condition the expected effects
in terms of satisfaction and audiences



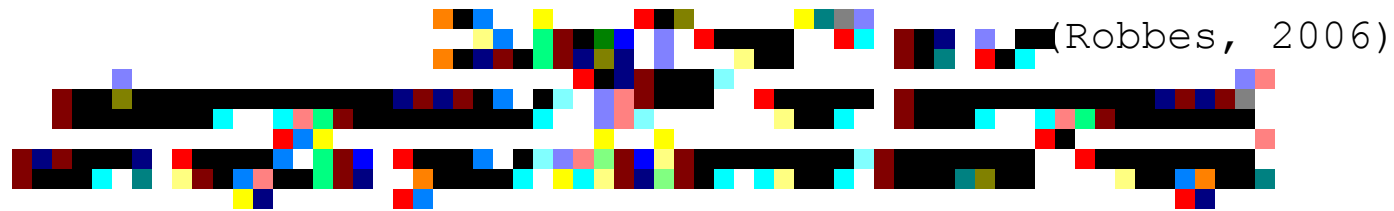
The question of the place of the real?
a social mirror,
the "mise en scène" of the supporters,
Scenes of violence.
The legitimization of power
Arena for claims of identity.

Combines game and spectacle
ceremonial processes.





“Since the second half of the twentieth century we have been witnessing the increasing rise of an individual demand or claim to the detriment of social links, obliging us to rethink the latter”.



Sports entertainment : the resurgence, in the renewing and in the reconstruction of these spaces and times,
Auxiliary to social, political and spiritual discourse, like so many construction elements of its communicational essence.



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