

Task One: Life on Mars (2006) - Representation (PowerPoint)

How are representations constructed/encoded?

- Need to link to Stuart Hall throughout.
- Narrative : e.g. audiences identify/empathise with Sam through the restricted nature of our narrative positioning
- Humour - dialogue
- Technical codes (language) – camera, editing, audio
- Lighting - 70s
- Framing
- Mise-en-scene (costuming, setting)
- Performance
- Barthes - cultural codes



Narrative:

- Audiences do identify/emphasise with Sam through the restricted nature of our narrative positioning. The narrative is seen solely through Sam's perspective, meaning we understand his worries and concerns. This would have been entirely different if the narrative was told through say the police officers perspective, as in that instance, Sam would be represented as someone suffering a severe head injury
- Taking Sam from the 2000's and placing him in an earlier decade highlights the massive difference in Sam's attitude and treatment towards women, and the officer men (largely due to social and political changes that would have taken place). This juxtaposition then emphasises the representation of Sam as a likeable character with good morals.

Humour:

- One way that humour is used is to show this juxtaposition of attitude towards women between people from different decades. The men from the 70's tend to joke in a degrading way about women, which is something that our protagonist Sam never takes part in, and outwardly disagrees with (as seen by his performance e.g. facial expression)

Technical Codes and Performance:

- Using 'Life on Mars?' was a way of reinforcing the idea that Sam wasn't crazy, and that this plot twist had some sort of logic to it. As this song was released in the early 70's, it's a way of reinforcing the idea that this is all in Sam's head, and that he woke up in the 70's because he was listening to a 70's song when the crash happened.
- In the 70's part of the episode, the police room has a calendar with pictures of women dressed and posing in a suggestive and provocative way (mise-en-scene). This again links in with representing the attitudes towards women at the time. This links in with Hall's theory, as it's representation of women like this (in an objectified and sexualised way) that is an example of stereotyping a group of people (women) into one category, in this case, sexy.
- This representation of attitudes towards women in the 70's continues with the performance. The men talk degradingly about the female police officer, and she uncomfortably stands and accepts it, as during that time it was normal.

Lighting/Other Cinematography:

- More of a prop, but the blue police light that Sam places on his car represents his career, and therefore his role in society also. Plus, it could be seen as iconography for a crime genre.
- I could be remembering wrong, but I believe at one point there was use of colour grading (greyer, dreary), due to its negative connotations. I think it was used during a scene related to the murders?

Framing:

- The camera is basically always focused on Sam. This reinforces the idea and fact that he is our protagonist, and keeps the focus on him. This reinforces the representation of him being important, both to the show but also to his situation and his involvement in solving the crimes.

Mise-en-Scene:

- The sets and the costumes are used to represent the fact and idea that Sam is now in the 70's. E.g. the uniforms, the wallpaper, the cars
- The bridge is used as a narrative device to reinforce the fact that Sam is now in a different decade. He goes from driving on it/beside it (?) to it being on a billboard advertising how it will be built soon.

Barthes:

- Semiotics are used to connote/denote certain view points, ideologies, and feelings. Such as, colour grading is used to create certain emotions in the audience, and mise en scene is used to denote characters attitudes towards women.

Take a Look at the Characters:

	There's this idea that "He sees Sam as both his prodigy but also his nemesis", which supports the stereotype and theory that men are more likely to turn to conflict (rather than compromise) (Deborah Tannen). The idea that he's a smart guy," they realise that I was right", but also that he isn't a nice guy, and dangerous, "There is a very fine line between the criminal and the copper and I think he sometimes gets very close to crossing that line but he does always ensure he stays on the side of the law".
	When in the 2000's, "he isn't particularly likeable; he's quite pedantic and anal, and he doesn't seem to have much of a sense of humour". However, once he's in the 70's he becomes the nice guy by being a decent human being – specifically in terms of his treatment and attitude towards women. Being from the future, it makes him intelligent in the 70's, but the other characters think he's mad.
	She's smart and dealing with the sexism of the time, "She's keeping sides and playing a game, more than she's given credit for by Gene or any of the other fellas." And "She's a very bright girl who studied a degree in psychology and after being a barmaid she felt frustrated and wanted to challenge herself."
	He's a sexist 70's man that trusts his own judgments and opinions. "Ray is an <u>old style</u> copper, works on instinct; works on knowing the ins and outs of the city he's working in and the people that are in it. He doesn't always look at the evidence in front of him; he just goes with his gut instinct." and "That's the way that he has been brought through the ranks and he's been channelled <u>in to</u> that way of thinking. Basically, Ray is a bull in a china shop. He wades in before thinking." and "He is a man of his time and is the most un-pc PC. If he was married, his wife would be doing all of the <u>house work</u> whilst he went to the pub with the lads!"
	He's the slightly idiotic one. "Like Gene and Ray, Chris enjoys going out drinking and having a good time. If there's an excuse to get out of <u>work</u> then he'll find it; he's not very thorough for a copper which is quite strange!" He's the comic relief character of the bunch, "Yes, he's a bit clumsy and a bit dozy, he always ends up slipping over in a chase or he's always the one that falls over or drops stuff."

Other Stereotypes:

What other stereotypes are evident in 'Life on Mars'?

- Are the stereotypes 'positive', 'negative' or more complex than this?
- Why are representations constructed in this way?

You might look at, for example:

- Mrs. Raimes
- Maya
- Dora Keens
- Nelson (and his own "self-construction")
- The North
- 70s society/ideology as a whole compared to present day

- 1) I think that the stereotypes are more complex than this. Often the negative stereotypes are used to highlight the badness of them, rather than to be used negatively. This obviously links to the 70s society/ideology as a whole compared to the present day.
- 2) Maybe to highlight political and social changes, to show the protagonist in a good light, to give the audience someone to root for and someone to not like
- 3) The police woman is shown positively, for example, as intelligent. But from episode one, there doesn't seem to be more to her than "she's nice, a possible love interest, and she's treated unfairly". It's incredibly important to explore and vocalise the mistreatment of women and inequality, I just feel her representation would be better if she had more of a goal/motivation, rather than seemingly being there as a narrative device.

bell hooks

- Argues that feminism is a struggle to end patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination, and that the position of the underrepresented is by class and race as well as gender.
- "Women in lower class and poor groups, particularly those who are non-white, would not have defined women's liberation as women gaining social equality with men since they are continually reminded in their everyday lives that all women do not share a common social status."
- How is "patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination" evident in "Life on Mars"?
- Write 3 paragraphs which express your ideas.

You may wish to include some of the following:

- Historical and political context - role of women in police force in 1970s - contrast with Maya in 2007. Equal Pay Act 1970 and in 1975 the EU directive on Equal Pay was passed based on article 119.
- Absence/marginalisation of women - e.g. Annie Cartwright - "trot along now, sweetheart"
- Masculine environments - office, Railway Arms pub - in which women are either "other" or sexualised/objectified
- The attitudes of the male policemen, especially Ray and Chris (comment particularly on language used, e.g. "bird", "skirt") to women and other men
- Hunt's dominance - "Guv"- quote from the text here and comment on his construction as "hypermasculine"
- Other women and their complicit attitudes (e.g. Mrs. Raimes on "lady policemen" - "No life for 'em, is it?")
- Does Annie support bell hook's argument?

How is "patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination" evident in "Life on Mars"?

Annie's character is key to the show exploring the changes in attitudes towards women, including a focus on women in the police force, a male dominated field. Hall's gender theory suggests that the stereotyping of a certain group of people, in this case women, reduces them to a stereotypical category. This is evident in "Life on Mars?", as the dialogue and mise-en-scene of the 70's aspect of the show, highlights the sexist attitudes towards women and reduces them to being sexually objectified, or seen as not capable. Such as, Hunt's dominance and sense of "hypermasculinity" is paired with his distasteful attitude and treatment of women, such as calling Annie by the nouns "skirt" and "bird" which is belittling and objectifying. What is interesting about this show, is that they are using this sexism to highlight the difference in the times between the 70's and the 2000's. One way this is shown, is again through dialogue. Annie is called a "lady

policeman”, the need of a pre-modifier to assign her gender to the role is a sign of the sexist times.

To contrast, Maya from 2007 is a detective/policeman during a less sexist, but still sexist, time. This is partially due to the equal pay act from 1970 and 1975, but also other changes in political and social attitudes, and waves of feminism. She works in the same field as Annie, but is given more respect, the field is still male dominated, but not as much so. You can tell this by the pragmatics of the scenes with her in, as she is involved with everyone else while working on the case. However, her ideas are shut down still, by Sam. I’m unsure as to whether or not this is related to gender or not, it’s unlikely though, as Sam proves that he believes women should be equal in the workplace during the 70’s part of the show. However, linking in with Bell Hook’s theory, you could apply the idea of intersectional feminism. Maya, as a non-white woman would have faced harder challenges than white women to get to the job role that she is in. You could argue that comparing her to Annie on some level is difficult as they were not on equal footing to begin with due to levels of marginalization and discrimination. Having a non-white woman working in a police force, as well as being very good at her job, links in with Gauntlett’s theory, as it’s these attributes like cleverness and power that people may wish to “pick and mix” from and add to their own identity. It is interesting however that Maya is the “damsel in distress” still. Despite having a good job and clearly being intelligent, she is the one that the protagonist needs to save, and as a character largely labeled as Sam’s girlfriend. This representation is more negative in comparison to some of the personality traits that they gave to Maya.

It’s interesting to compare the personalities of the two women that are represented. Annie, is shown as kind, caring and submissive. Her submissiveness is mainly shown during scenes where male co-workers are cruel to her, and belittle her. Therefore, you could interpret that her quietness and submissiveness is actually due to the time period (70’s) in her response to the sexism representative. In an interview with the actress, she states her way of dealing with such comments and treatment was a way of keeping power and a way of playing her own game. She is however a university graduate, with a degree in psychology, and has a job in a male dominated field that she is very good at. This links in with Gauntlett’s theory, as these are positive traits that women might “pick and mix” to form their own identities. The same can be said for the positive attributes of Maya, like her cleverness, and assertiveness, and how she too has a job that she is very good at in a male dominated field. What’s interesting about both these women’s situation, is that the men’s dismissiveness and dominance harms them; this could be a way of critiquing the attitude and treatment of women, and possibly a way of saying that although better, the 2000s is still a hard place for women. Such as, how Annie is forced into submission and quietness, and the feeling that she is inferior in her field, and how Maya being ignored by the men, leads her to follow a lead alone where she gets taken.

Liesbet Van Zoonen

'[There is] a depressing stability in the articulation of women's politics and communication . . . The underlying frame of reference is that women belong to the family and domestic life and men to the social world of politics and work; that femininity is about care, nurturance and compassion, and that masculinity is about efficiency, rationality and individuality.' – Van Zoonen

Give examples from 'Life on Mars' that illustrate this concept

Use the following table.

Van zoonen table

Women	Men
Annie is a police officer in the 70's, but is treated with sexist disrespect and her voice is not held with importance by the men (bar the protagonist).	Police work is shown as a male dominated workplace in both the 70's and 2000's, especially in the 70's. This makes men the ones with the money and the power.
The female detective from the 2000's is also not treated with respect, as the protagonist ignores her opinion and ideas about the case. However, she is not talked about in degrading ways.	Annie's boyfriend messes with Sam in regards to his "head injury", and the police men assume he is just mental, or drunk. This juxtaposes Annie's caring nature.
Annie is always trying to help Sam, trying to reassure him and get him help for his "head injury". This shows her caring nature (but she is also being rational, and shutting down his "I'm from the future" sketch).	

Liesbet Van Zoonen

- However Van Zoonen argues that gender is constructed and that its meaning varies dependent on cultural and historical context.
- She suggests that masculinity as well as femininity is constructed – and that the codes used to construct men ‘as a spectacle’ are different
- How might we apply this viewpoint to ‘Life on Mars’?

Representations and identity (Gauntlett)






- How might audiences interact with the representations?
- Which characters might different individuals identify with and why?
- How might an audience ‘pick and mix’ ideas from this text and its representations?



- 1) Annie is represented as caring, and a victim of sexism. The men are represented as sexist due to the time it is set, and the ones in control. Both genders are being constructed due to contextual factors of time period, and social and political contexts. This is done largely through mise-en-scene and performance.
- 2) I assume most individuals ‘pick and mix’ their identity from Sam, as he is shown in a positive light in comparison to the other men’s sexist attitudes. The basis of who audience members decide to identify with is largely ideological, and circumstantial. For example, as women are still not equal today it’s assumable that at least some women will identify with Annie.

Life on Mars - Narrative, Industry, Audience (PowerPoint):

Todorov's narrative theory applied to Life on Mars

EQUILIBRIUM		Sam Tyler in present day. DCI. Girlfriend Maya – relationship problems. Busy, normal, rat race.
DISRUPTION		Maya's abduction, the accident; awakens in 1972.
RECOGNITION		What year is this?
RESOLUTION		Attempts to resolve the disequilibrium – murder, investigation, meeting with Neil and rooftop.
EQUILIBRIUM		Is there closure? Revelation and arrest of killer at end.

Answer the following questions and justify your response.

Then compare to the suggested answers.

- Who is the audience for *Life on Mars*? Justify your response
- How does the text itself target audiences? Consider genre, narrative, star and character, representations, intertextuality
- How does the marketing target audiences?

There are several audience. People who love the crime genre, as it fits in with the narrative devices and plots of them, and the iconography but also has a subversive twist to keep it original. People who are nostalgic about the 70's, as they get to see lot of 70's related mise-en-scene like the clothes, sets and cars. It's also heavily influenced by 'The Sweeney', and people who loved that show may be interested to watch it because of this.

Suggestions:

- Primary Target Audience – fans of crime texts = mainstream audience. 15+ (TV slot).
- Cross-gender appeal– male audiences may identify with either Tyler or Hunt (role models) - aspiration. Female audiences may identify with Annie and/or find Tyler/Hunt attractive.
- Experiencers may enjoy the vicarious thrill of crime/sci-fi.

- Audience for nostalgic crime' e.g. 'Grantchester', is traditionally ABC1 but this crosses over into C2DE because of its violence and intertextual links with 70s crime shows e.g. 'The Sweeney'.
- Secondary audience - fans of science -fiction - hybrid generic elements in the text - more alternative/niche audience - young males. Alternative audience because of non-linear, surreal narrative structure and lack of closure.
- Tertiary audience - Fans of period - 70s (>80s with 'Ashes to Ashes'). Over 30s. Pleasure through nostalgia - music of period (Bowie etc. - intertextuality). Bowie more alternative than mainstream - "hipper". Nostalgia through visual codes and iconography - Crombie, kipper ties, velvet jackets, Ford Cortina, flicked hair etc.
- Inherited fan bases - from e.g. 'The Sweeney', 'The Professionals'. Fans of stars - John Simm (younger TA - intertextuality with 'Doctor Who'/'24 Hour Party People'; older TA - 'The Lakes'/'Clocking Off'). Fans of Gene Hunt - fictional character captured public affection - spin-off merchandise - T-shirts - "It's 1973. Nearly dinner time. I'm having hoops." Books - 'A Guide to Modern Policing' etc.

Stuart Hall's Reception theory:

- What is the preferred meaning of 'Life on Mars'?

The preferred reading, in terms of representation, is that 'Life on Mars' has good representation. This was encoded through use of mise-en-scene. Such as, the calendar that objectified and sexualised women in the 70's police officer unit was used to criticise their sexist attitudes, not support it. However, the oppositional reading is that the representation of women is not all good, as although someone like Annie is smart (she has a degree, and is good at her job), her personality is pure kindness and caringness, which links in with Van Zoonen's theory, and suggests a slightly stereotypical female representation.

- How is this encoded?

This stereotype is encoded through the dialogue of Annie. Her motivations (as shown through her dialogue) tend to revolve around wanting to help Sam, or find him help due to his "head injury". She also has a submissive role in the face of sexism, however, the preferred reading is that this was just a sign of the times, and a way for her to maintain power, and play her own game, which the men didn't know about.

- What other readings might this text generate?

The text also links into the idea of intersectional feminism, as we are presented with Annie, a white police officer, and Maya, a non-white police officer. The

representations of these women are different, both of personality levels and career levels. Despite being in the 2000s, Maya is still not listened to at work by Sam, which could be suggestive that not all women have it equal, and that a non-white woman will face more challenges than a white woman, especially in the police force which is a male dominated field anyway. This however is the oppositional reading, as I doubt they created a protagonist with bad morals.

Oppositional reading of Life on Mars:

news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/6549163.stm

- "Mars drama 'could spark bullying'". BBC Online. 12 April 2007.
- Two days after the final episode's transmission, 'Life on Mars' was attacked in the British press by the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, who claimed that Gene Hunt's use of homophobic insults in the programme could encourage copycat bullying in schools. The BBC stated that Life on Mars was targeted at an adult audience, and argued that Hunt's characterisation was "extreme and tongue-in-cheek".
- "In Tuesday's final episode the character DCI Gene Hunt used a series of insults including "fairy boy"."
- "'Life On Mars is a post-watershed production, aimed at an adult audience. However, as with many dramatisations, we do not condone the actions of many of our fictional characters," she added."
- "Ms Keates, however, thinks if the bullying and name calling gets out of hand there could be dire consequences."
- "'Our evidence is showing that one of the factors which causes young people to consider suicide is the fact that in schools they are subject to homophobic bullying," she said."
- "'More than seven million people tuned in to see the finale of the time-travelling detective series on Tuesday."

How does the text position audiences?

- Positioned with Sam Tyler & the restricted narrative means that we only know what he knows. We therefore seek answers to narrative enigma codes (as defined by Barthes)
- We solve the mystery alongside him and become part of the team with Annie, Chris & Ray. This fulfils the audience's need for belonging or social needs within Blumler & Katz' Uses & Gratifications model.
- Positioned with Sam Tyler – liberal, 21st Century, metrosexual, 'new man' to see Hunt's ways as dated, shocking and unacceptable.
- Positioned with the forces of law & order to see certain criminal behaviours as deviant.

How does the marketing of Life on Mars targets audiences?

- Sold on star (John Simm- intertextuality with Doctor Who)
- Sold on character (Gene Hunt became iconic)
- Sold on intertextuality (old BBC idents, 70s cop shows etc)
- Sold on sense of place – nostalgia for the 70s
- Sold on genre with a twist – focus on trailer
- Sold on enigma – social media buzz, particularly for “Ashes to Ashes” ending
- Sold as a BBC quality drama – mark of trust
- Sold worldwide (US DVD has different testimonials)
- Coverage in magazines – “event” of second series made front pages of TV listings guides
- Some merchandising (e.g. calendar, spin-off books)
- Created series “brand”
- These elements target different audiences

Task 2:

Television - Regulation and marketing (1 hour):

Using textbook p.153-154 to aid you, answer these questions:

1. What does OFCOM stand for?
The Office of Communications
2. What are the key functions of OFCOM (set by parliament)?
 - Ensure that TV services are provided by a range of different organisations
 - Ensure that a wide range of high-quality programmes are provided, which appeal to a range of tastes and interests
 - Protect viewers from offensive or harmful content
 - Protect people from unfair treatment and ensure that their privacy is not invaded
3. What regulations television companies have to comply with?
 - Abide by the Broadcasting Code
 - Section One of the code is to do with protecting people under the age of 18 from unsuitable content. In order to do this, TV broadcasters are required to observe the watershed. This means that materials that’s deemed unsuitable for children can’t be broadcasted before 9pm or after 5:30 am.
 - Other aspect of the code deal with issues such a violence and dangerous behaviour, the use of discriminatory language and the portrayal of crime

- The code also stipulates that factual programmes must not materially mislead the audience as to cause harm and offence. Furthermore, there are rules designed to ensure that individuals and organisations are not treated unfairly. E.g. individuals who are invited to make a contribution to a programme should be informed beforehand about the areas of questioning. Also, surreptitious recording should only be used if it is in the public interest.

4. Define the term 'watershed' in relation to broadcasting.

- The time when it becomes permissible to show programmes that are unsuitable for younger audiences. In the UK, the watershed starts at 9pm.

5. Do the BBC have to comply with OFCOM? If so, what do they need to do to comply

Responsibility for regulating the BBC switched to Ofcom from the BBC trust in April 2017. Prior to this, the BBC had been bound by some aspects of Ofcom's Broadcasting Code but not others. Under the terms of the new BBC Charter, Ofcom is required to check the accuracy and impartiality of the BBC's news and current affairs programming. It also has to ensure that the BBC does not use the license fee to gain an unfair competitive advantage over other broadcasters.

6. In what ways are TV shows marketed? Summarise the bullet points on p.153 and p.154.

- Trailers: short promotional films that feature clips from the programme. Teaser trailers tend to be shorter in length as their main purpose is to arouse audience interest by providing small pieces of information about the programme without giving too much away. As well as appearing in the gaps between programmes that are generally made available on social media.
- Poster/billboard campaigns: this can be a useful way of building public awareness as they are generally seen by large numbers of people
- Viral Marketing Campaigns: this typically involves the use of social media platforms. Messages or clips are posted on relevant accounts and are then shared more widely by users. This marketing message therefore spreads like a virus.
- Marketing Stunts: e.g., part of the marketing campaign for Humans involved creating fake advertisements for androids or "synths". A fake storefront for a company selling synths was also created.
- Websites: these are often used to develop or extend the brand identity of a programme. They can include a range of different features including clips, interviews, articles and behind-the-scenes footage
- Preview Screenings and Q&A sessions: appearances at festivals or conventions such as New York Comic Con and industry events help to create buzz and publicity
- Press and Publicity: this can include appearances on talk shows, interviews with newspapers and magazines as well as press events such

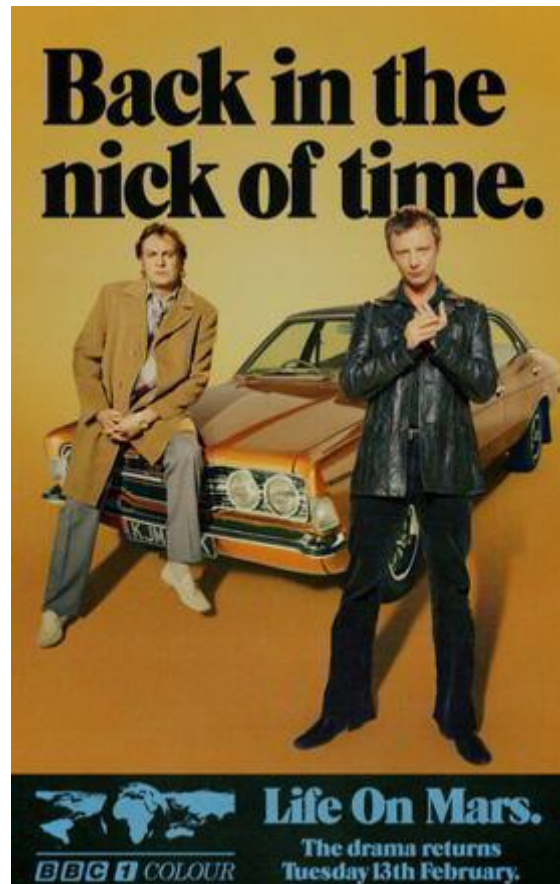
as the TCA Press Tour in America where the networks promote their new shows.

Task 3:

1. "The watershed is less relevant now than in the past" - How far do you agree with this statement?

On the one hand, I disagree with the idea that the watershed is less relevant now than in the past. One reason, is because Ofcom have a broadcasting code which involves protecting people under the age of 18 from unsuitable content, hence the watershed, and this protection is still important today. Why can be linked in with Gauntlett's representation theory, if people can "pick and mix" traits from TV characters for their own identity, then the watershed is still important in making sure that impressionable people don't get influenced by bad people, and don't pick up bad morals/personality traits.

However, the watershed is less relevant now than in the past to some extent, as most content is now streamed from services like Netflix, and Amazon Prime, which although can have age restrictions if desired, there is no watershed element because that's not plausible for a streaming service. Therefore, as most content is being viewed outside of television, which would be monitored by Ofcom, to some extent the watershed is less relevant now than it used to be.



2. How does media language communicate meaning in this promotional poster?

The main image is of the two main characters Sam and Hunt. The performance and direction of these two actors is important when connoting the sense of who they are as characters (linking in with semiotic theory). Such as, Hunt sitting on the car with his hands in his lap and a stern face, and Sam holding his hands the way he is, is suggestive of power and control, which makes sense given their jobs.

The tag line 'Back in the nick of time' is the biggest writing on the poster, in big and bold font in black so that it's easy to read. They want this tagline to be read by as many people as possible, hence the easy readability, as it's using a play on words to play with the idea of "time". They've used a known saying using the abstract noun "time", but it's comical due to the context of the show being about a man who magically time travels to the past. Hence, why they want so many people to read it, as a funny tagline suggests a funny programme, which will attract more people and denote what type of programme it is.

The title, 'Life on Mars', is easy to read in blue font against the black, and is bold, but smaller than the tagline and main image. Maybe this is because this is advertising the second season, not the first ('the drama returns'), and so the public can recognise from the characters in the main image what show it is already.