

Rhetorics, Innovation and New Media

Indrek Ibrus

Department of Media and Communications

London School of Economics and Political Science

Abstract

Innovation, when it is discussed in the social sciences is often given definitions consistent with economics or technology oriented approaches. This paper offers a culturally substantiated approach. It looks at how innovations in new media forms can be understood from a semiotic analytical perspective. A new media form, for instance, a multimedia videogame, is considered as an infinitely heterogeneous and multimodal entity, a 'text', that inherits many of its constituting elements or structural principles from earlier forms of media. The analysis suggests how a particular new form of such a constellation may come together. It shows how new media forms are often 'translated' piece by piece from the 'reservoirs of culture'. This paper takes Nike's 2002 Soccer World Cup global inter-media campaign as an example to show how it might be useful to develop an analytical toolset derived from the semiotic tradition for analyzing these processes.