

Worksheet A - Media Deconstruction Key

This deconstruction model is geared towards building an awareness of systems by asking "how" rather than "what." Use questions with "*" for shorter sessions or when working with younger students. Take a media sample and answer the following questions in order:

- **How do the values you bring to the process affect your understanding?** Your knowledge, life experience and bias are important to note before you start the process. These are both assets and hindrances, but self-awareness is crucial. Start with your intuitive response, becoming aware of the shapes, colors, symbols, contrast, sounds, etc. What is your gut reaction? There is no right or wrong answer. Refer to "Worksheet B" for activities to generate an intuitive, aesthetic response.
- **How does the context influence the media example?** What outlet/venue does the media example come from? What kind of magazine or what channel did the sample appear in? Refer to "Worksheet D" for an explanation on the importance of medium.
- **How is the media example paid for?*** Who paid for it, and who profits from the business relationship (if any)?
- **Why is the storyteller presenting this message?*** What messages and values are being expressed?
- **Who is being targeted?*** Who is the story being told to? Who are the consumers of the message? Who are the readers of the media?
- **How is the lifestyle presented reinforcing the message?*** What makes it attractive?
- **How is the story constructed?*** What techniques does the storyteller use? What technological tools or attention hooks are used? Refer to "Worksheet C."
- **How does the story's text differ from what it means?*** What is the surface text of the message? Is there a subtext?
- **How is the story framing the information? What is missing from outside the frame?*** What information or counter messages are deliberately ignored?