

# *Psychological Research in Film and Television Appreciation*

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**Abstract:** The psychological study of film and television appreciation, as a fine branch of film and television psychology, can be said to be an interdisciplinary subject of film and television psychology and audience science. In recent years, there is a relative lack of topics about its research, and the psychology of audience has been indifferent to the film and television industry. Only by deeply understanding the audience's psychological preferences, reasonably grasping the audience's psychological rhythm, precisely conforming to the audience's psychological expectations, and stimulating the audience's thoughts, psychological and emotional thinking and resonance, can we create high-quality and well-received film and television works.

## **1. Psychological factors affecting audience appreciation**

According to domestic and foreign research, audiences receive various types of information through various media platforms and selectively absorb and reject them according to their needs [1]. The psychology that influences the audience's appreciation mainly includes the psychology of seeking knowledge and beauty, the psychology of entertainment and communication, the psychology of voyeurism, the psychology of truth-seeking, the psychology of self-affirmation, the psychology of rebellion, and the psychology of sexual compensation. In addition to being influenced by the mental activities of the connoisseur, the audience's appreciation level is also rendered by many external factors, such as ethnicity, era, geographical location, age, literacy, occupation, etc. From these, three main groups of psychological factors will be selected for discussion in this paper.

### **1.1 Collective subconscious**

The collective unconscious theory, also known as the collective unconscious theory, is unconscious to us, at the bottom of the subconscious, and universally possessed by human beings [2]. Human beings accumulate rich life experiences based on what they see and hear in their daily life, and then accumulate them deep inside. This accumulation will change more and more as we grow up, influencing people's way of thinking and values in a subtle way and having a certain collective universality. It is because of the commonality hidden in the heart of human beings that people of different regions, races, countries and education levels can watch the same film. In the process of appreciation, the audience will unconsciously follow their own preferences in their minds to process

the content of the film. The collective subconscious is an important psychological factor that affects audience appreciation, and the works created by filmmakers should be built on the common platform of human nature so that they can be recognized by the majority of people. Take the hierarchy of needs as an example, Maslow's five levels of needs theory believes that human needs are arranged from low to high, which are physiological, security, social, respect, self-actualization, human life and death has always been the ultimate hot topic of concern, with the most primitive, eternal and extensive commonality. No matter what kind of person is in any place or time, survival is always the inescapable proposition. It is because the physiological need for survival is the most basic, and the audience groups are many, people in the film and television appreciation, will consciously or unconsciously to select and empathize with the film and television clips of the theme of life and survival with their own relatives. Since the release of "Wandering Earth", the film has received a lot of attention and has become very popular. The survival of people has become a big issue as the human living environment is about to be destroyed, and the movie is not only because of its cool images, but also because of its theme. The audience, influenced by the collective subconscious, will instinctively prefer survival films, and the spirit of tenacity and perseverance shown by people in the film in order to survive is deeply shocking and inspiring to the public.

## 1.2 Dream subconscious

Dreams are the satisfaction of desires, a path to the subconscious mind, and the psychological manifestation of the subconscious mind [2]. There is a gap between the ideal and reality, and due to the limitations of objective conditions and subjective factors, audiences cannot realize their ambitions through real life, so the nerve cells in the subconscious mind are active at night, forming dreams, through which people's good wishes can be perfectly presented. The inseparable relationship between dreams and films has been predestined since the beginning of cinema, and it is through various technical means that the director creates dreams for the audience. The audience imagines itself as the main character in the film, enters the plot, follows the development of events, enjoys the style never seen in daily work, and achieves aesthetic expectation and thus spiritual pleasure. The director knows how to create dreams, and the audience is influenced by the dream subconscious preference to enter the dream woven by the director. The Korean science fiction film "Victory" uses the Unreal Engine to create a vast space environment for the connoisseur through brilliant special effects, which fulfills the dream of space in the minds of countless people and activates the original imagery of space and spaceships in people's minds and combines them with the image created by the film. The surreal, absurd and dramatic characteristics of many mythological films give the audience great space for imagination and expression. The magnificent, colorful, unpredictable and extraordinary cosmic world in the picture satisfies the curiosity and aesthetic desire of the connoisseurs. People fantasize that they have infinite ability to save the earth, fantasize that they have supernormal capabilities to get rid of violence, and fantasize that they have the world's greatest power to do justice to heaven. Films provide audiences with opportunities, and such opportunities are largely influenced by the subconscious of the connoisseur's dreams.

## 1.3 Inertia subconscious

The audience can see themselves, discover themselves and realize themselves in films and videos, and gain spiritual satisfaction in the images and aesthetic accumulation in their hearts. For example, people who have experienced and felt related livelihoods will see their own lives in the film, so that in their future film choices and appreciation, they will actively favor films that are in agreement with their own innermost feelings. In the film "Alive", the audience saw the tragic treatment and difficult fate of Fu Gui and his family and felt sympathy and compassion, while those who had similar

experiences found themselves in the film and were shocked in their hearts and fell into the association and imagination of real life.

## **2. The psychological characteristics of film and television appreciation**

### **2.1 Active creativity and constraint**

According to German aesthetician Yao Si, the historical life of a film or television work would have unimaginable consequences without the active participation of the audience [3]. The activity of reception is a combination of individual and collective vision. People do not just passively accept what is being appreciated, but give play to their subjective initiative and creativity, mobilizing the cultural concepts in their existing knowledge reserves to interpret, digest and absorb the relevant things. The audience will choose what to accept and how to accept it, either by absorbing and understanding the corresponding concepts according to the creative intent of the film director, or by exploring the unknown world of film and television through their own experience. Ethel has said that while the work allows the audience to be active and creative, it also encourages the audience to be conditioned so that they do not deviate from the film's intention and make arbitrary interpretations of the plot [3]. The audience's psychological appreciation is influenced by the director's creative intent, and the specific content of the film allows the viewer to immerse himself or herself in the scene and develop his or her imagination to the maximum extent possible, without speculating on the plot in a haphazard manner.

### **2.2 Commonality and individuality**

China is a multi-ethnic country, and the world is a world with many countries. Different cultural traditions and aesthetic appreciation psychology are produced in different latitudes and times. Influenced by different educational concepts, regional characteristics and appreciation habits, people's appreciation psychology is also very different and highly individualized. In "Men and Women in Food" directed by Ang Lee, there is a great difference in thinking between China and the West because of the difference in agricultural structure and historical background between countries. The Chinese traditional concept of "equal status for nobility and inferiority" and the family model are very different from those in the West, so many foreign audiences cannot understand the Chinese folk concept contained in the film, and therefore cannot recognize and accept it psychologically. Chinese audiences, on the other hand, after a long period of cultural integration and integration, have a certain commonality of appreciation due to the influence of the collective subconscious, and are able to appreciate the food culture in the film. The Chinese people's appreciation psychology has become commonplace in different times and places. Although there is a big gap between the psychology of Chinese and Western appreciation, each individual has its own uniqueness, but the appreciation of heroism, the desire for justice, the pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty, the discovery of the glory of human nature, etc., the connoisseurs have a strong psychological commonality. This is also an important reason why films such as Forrest Gump, The Shawshank Redemption and Life is Beautiful have become famous in China and abroad, as film and television creators have grasped the audience's psychological characteristics of appreciation.

### **2.3 Sensibility and rationality**

Simply put, because of the different ways of thinking, viewers' psychology of film appreciation is also divided into rational and emotional. Intuitive and emotional viewers focus on perceptual psychology, in which the audience will appreciate a film or TV work with real emotions or even analyze it by substituting subjective emotions, favoring emotional experiences. Gu Changwei's "Spring" describes a story about several young people who want to realize their dreams and struggle

with reality. Rational appreciators will use rational methods to deeply interpret the background of the time when the film took place, analyze the form, style and connotation of the story through logical thinking, and build their own database in their minds. Perceptual connoisseurs, on the other hand, will react to the classic images portrayed in the film without thinking, such as lamenting Hu Jinquan who commits a crime to prove his sexual orientation is normal, and feeling sorry for Wang Cailing who persists in her dream despite being cheated repeatedly, but not thinking about the reasons for this phenomenon. Appreciation of psychology is also the unity of sensibility and rationality, and audiences often need to realize the transition from sensual to rational psychology, so that they can really analyze a film or TV work thoroughly.

## **2.4 Stages and continuity**

The development of the audience's psychological appreciation is a process of continuous accumulation of quantity and thus qualitative change, with the emergence of new quality, showing the stages, in different stages of development, the audience's psychological appreciation is from low to high in a certain order, each stage has its own typicality, and the adjacent stages cross each other, not abruptly. This is why there are some films that we cannot deeply understand the meaning of the content of the clip or ponder over a certain problem when we first watch them, but when we have enriched our knowledge and accumulated experience in a certain field, we will have a sense of enlightenment when we return to watch them again. This is not only because of the gestation effect, but also because the psychology of human appreciation is stage-specific, and the psychology will complete successive stages of maturation as the recipient grows. For example, when a viewer appreciates a film or TV clip and gets an aesthetic experience, his appreciation psychology is stable and progressive, continuous, not broken and separated, and his appreciation psychology experience is also accumulated gradually.

## **3. Film and television creation and film appreciation psychology**

### **3.1 Meet the audience's psychological preferences and open up new and strange story topics**

With the improvement of people's living standards, the audience's aesthetic expectations will also be improved, and the real life will be presented in an artistic way. The inflexible plot design, stylized and homogenized character Settings, and the absurd content arrangement are obviously not suitable for the psychological preferences of the audience, many realistic films such as "Small Times" and "Gentlemen of East 8" deviate from the normal life of most audiences, and the city of lights, paper and gold, and extravagance have contributed to the prevalence of money-worship, which is completely out of line with the actual life of the Chinese people. The business warfare and the rivalry in the field of right and wrong make the audience feel far away from their own lives and have a strong sense of disconnection. What audiences really love deep in their hearts are humane, grounded and heartfelt works. The creators of films and TV should be in tune with their own national conditions, try to avoid duplication of materials, strictly prohibit crude production, cater to the psychological preferences of connoisseurs, properly shape each small character in the script, express profound ideas, adhere to the spirit of humanity and content quality, target most audiences, vigorously promote universal values, positive energy and the spirit of truth, goodness and beauty, and renew the core charm of film and television.

### **3.2 Master the rhythm of the audience's psychology and adopt a delicate and unique form of expression**

Mental rhythm, also known as inner rhythm, refers to the regular strength and length of the alternating changes in the audience's thoughts and emotions, and refers to the tension and relaxation

of the human spirit. Film and television creators should be familiar with the inner rhythm of the public, reasonably arrange the development of the plot, reasonably design the time of each part according to the structure of the beginning, development, climax and ending of the story, attract the audience's attention, put them into the situation, create conflict, unfold conflict, intensify conflict and resolve conflict. Take a two-hour movie as an example, at the thirty-minute mark, there should be a heart-stopping plot point to mobilize the audience's emotions. A plot rhythm that is too drawn out will sap the audience's enthusiasm for appreciation, and a plot rhythm that is too aggressive will make the audience constrained inside. The montage rhythm, narrative rhythm, and music rhythm of the film and television should respect the psychological rules of the audience, and should be relaxed and undulating. The setting of suspense in a film or television story can move the audience's nerves, but the director should also know that, how to analyze the public's psychological rhythm, not to let the suspense continue, the temporary shelving of suspense can let the audience's nervous nerves temporarily relaxed, but if too relaxed, the audience's attention will shift, so the film and television creators should follow the suspense - ease. Therefore, the film and television creators should follow the narrative rhythm of suspense-relaxation, until the suspense is suspended. In this way, the audience's eyes will always be focused on the film and television work.

### 3.3 Fulfill the psychological expectations of the audience and create excellent works for the enjoyment of the common people

Before accepting a film or television work, the audience will have a psychological expectation value for it, which is mainly reflected in the text of the aesthetic object, the thematic ideas, and the audiovisual language. Therefore, the creators' planning ideas should also keep pace with the times and make appropriate adjustments to meet the soaring expectations of the audience [3]. Due to the impact of commercialization, a large number of superficial and poor quality films catering to the market are flooding people's eyes. This phenomenon is thought-provoking, and the writer-director should produce stories that are both downbeat and virile. It should not be too vulgar and violate professional ethics and conscience, nor should it be too obscure and run counter to the expectations of the majority of the audience. The work should meet the audience's psychological expectations, and at the same time, the small plot design can let the audience harvest unexpected surprises, so as to be unexpected and reasonable. Such a story can be enduring and endlessly evocative.

## 4. Conclusion

As a mass art, film and television is not only a commodity, but also a spiritual commodity of people. Film and television planners need to know the audience's appreciation mentality, not only rely on the market, but also adjust their thinking according to their psychological characteristics, break their cognition, and comprehensively analyze the feedback information of public appreciation, so as to form their own unique style of film and television. The use of artistic language, editing techniques, sound and picture relations to meet people's aesthetic needs, convey the work's outlook on life and values, cause a good response from the society, thought-provoking.

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