A Dictionary of Communication and Media Studies

Protest song Popular vehicle of dissent with a long tradition. In the 20th c. the term has been widely used to describe the songs prominent in the US and Western European radical movements of the 1960s and early 1970s. These movements were concerned with three main issues: Civil Rights for Negroes in the US, an end to US and Western European involvement in the Vietnam war and an extension of democratic rights generally. There was also at this time a revival of folk music and with it the revival of many traditional protest songs. Jazz, particularly the 'Blues' tradition, likewise contains many songs which express the US negroes' protest at their oppression in US society. See Pop music.

Proxemics The study of the way people approach others or keep their distance from others; the analysis of what we do with space as a dimension of non-verbal communication (See Communication, non-verbal). There appear to be definite features that mark the distance people observe between each other in communication situations. Within three feet is intimate; up to about eight feet is personal; over that distance is semi-public or social. The proximity between communicators differs, obviously, according to the nature of the message and varies between cultures, classes and nations. The personal but not intimate distance of Arabs, for example, can be as little as 18 inches - intimidating for an English listener. Middle-class distances tend, it has been found, to be slightly greater than those maintained between working-class communicators. Proxemics extends to the way we allocate space to those extensions of ourselves - rooms, houses, towns, cities - and the manner in which we occupy those extensions. See Defensible space, Para-proxemics.


PR: Public relations In Advertising as Communication (UK: Methuen, 1982), Gillian Dyer cites the aim of PR as being 'to promote positive and favourable images of people or firms in public life, without actually appearing to do so'. Most companies have PR departments dedicated to creating and sustaining a good image with the general public. PR has also grown big in the service of politicians and political parties. As Dyer says, 'The "publicity boys" rehearse politicians before they go in front of the camera ... they stage-manage walkabouts ... kissing babies, all for the benefit of the mass media. Politicians and campaigns are marketed like soap.' In winning the 1979 and 1983 general elections in the UK, Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative Party owed not a little to the PR work of Saatchi & Saatchi. Even the Labour Party in 1983 used an