

Deconstruction:

Watch Natalie Imbruglia video “Torn”

The premise for the video is a familiar one—two young people trying to figure out what happened to their once passionate relationship. Familiar, too, are the sunken eyes, flat bellies (heroin chic), khaki pants, and a melodic lament. But something is very different about this particular video.

As the singer proceeds with her song, construction workers arrive and begin to disassemble the set, taking it apart, *deconstructing* the “apartment” piece by piece, revealing it to be nothing more than a bare sound stage. The pretense of the assumptions on which the video was filmed, is revealed. Similarly, the singer and the actor playing her boyfriend step out of their respective roles, revealing themselves to be two disconnected and unrelated people pretending to care about each other for the purposes of selling a CD. In a remarkably self-reflexive move, the video dissembles and the layers of pretense and the artifice of the music business are stripped away.

The willing suspension of disbelief that readers and viewers willingly engage in as we enter a constructed world of a text—whether a poem, a short story, a novel, a magazine article, a film, or a music video—is revealed, interrogated by the structure of the video itself. This re-examination of the constructs of the music video can serve as an interesting starting point for adolescents and deconstruction. After all, deconstruction invites us to “unravel” the constructs that surround us and to re-examine the relationships between appearance and reality. (Appleman 99-100)