Film Trailer Evolution

Crafting Intrigue:
Comparing the 1980s & 2020s

AHS Film & Video Production

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE & SPOILERS

- **1980s:**
  - Straightforward, chronological presentation of the film's premise
  - Sometimes with a voiceover narrating the story and introducing characters
  - Generate excitement without revealing too much of the plot
- **Now:**
  - Often use a non-linear structure
    - Jumping between scenes and timelines to create a sense of excitement and intrigue.
  - Greater tendency to show key plot points, action sequences, and even major reveals
    - Leads to criticism about excessive spoilers

MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN

- **1980s:**
  - Excerpts from the film's score or popular contemporary music
  - Sometimes playing throughout the entire trailer
  - Voiceovers were a prominent feature
    - Dramatic and enthusiastic tones
- **Now:**
  - Rely on dramatic and impactful music
    - Epic orchestral / digitized scores
  - Booming sound effects (like the "Inception BRAAAAM")
  - Eerie, slowed-down covers of popular songs
  - Voiceovers from dialogue
    - 3rd party voices less common

- **1980s:**
  - Slower and more deliberate
    - allowing scenes to play out for longer
  - Title cards and text overlays to convey information
- **Now:**
  - Rapid-fire editing
    - Quick cuts and montages designed to capture attention spans accustomed to fast-paced media.
  - Text is used more sparingly
    - Integrated visually into the scenes
    - Showcases big names, fewer themes

FOCUS & TONE

- **1980s:**
  - Establish the basic premise
  - Introduce the main characters
  - Convey the overall genre and tone
- **Now:**
  - Seek to create a strong emotional impact
    - Excitement
    - Suspense
    - Humor
    - Sadness
  - Focus on specific themes or selling points designed to resonate with target audiences