

1 Worksheet on Video-Based Listening Comprehension (Sitcoms)

“The Ingratitude of Sitcom Actors”, from Düwel/Grün, *The Media*, Viewfinder Topics (München: Langenscheidt, 2011), pp. 35 ff.

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION: SEX AND THE CITY

“Sex and the City” is an American television comedy-drama series created by Darren Star and produced by HBO.

Set and filmed in New York City, the show follows the lives of a group of four women – three in their mid-thirties and one in her forties – who, throughout their different natures and ever-changing sex lives, remain inseparable and confide in each other.

Played by Sarah Jessica Parker, **Carrie Bradshaw** is the narrator of each episode. Each episode is structured around her train of thought while writing her weekly column, "Sex and the City", for the fictitious newspaper *New York Star*. The oldest and most sexually confident of the foursome, **Samantha Jones** (Kim Cattrall), is an independent businesswoman with a career in public relations. Working in an art gallery, **Charlotte York Goldenblatt** (Kristin Davis) has had a conventional Connecticut upbringing. She is the most optimistic of the group and the one who places the most emphasis on emotional love as opposed to lust. A career-minded lawyer with sometimes cynical views on relationships and men, **Miranda Hobbes** (Cynthia Nixon) is a Harvard Law School graduate from Philadelphia with two siblings. Miranda is often seen as the practical voice of reason in the group. (Source: Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_and_the_City . - Please copy and paste this hyperlink into your browser.)

SEASON 6: EPISODE 14

The video which will be used in the exercise below is episode 14, when Samantha is diagnosed with breast cancer.

B VIDEO-BASED LISTENING – SAMANTHA HAS BREAST CANCER

In order to be able to answer the following questions, you have to watch three scenes:

- a) Choosing a wedding gift (7:35 – 9:28)
- b) In the cab (20:29 – 22:13)
- c) At the wedding (24:45 – 26:10)

You can find the episode here:

<http://www.novamov.com/video/b0caa52e103b6>

(Please copy and paste this hyperlink into your browser.)

ON “CHOOSING A WEDDING GIFT”

1. Carrie thinks that it’s really difficult

- to find a gift for a wedding when you hate weddings
- to find a spot for a wedding gift
- to find a present for a woman who doesn’t like weddings
- to find a guestbook for a friend’s wedding.

2. Looking at the magazine pictures, Samantha says:

- “I should have brought my loupe.”
- “I should have brought a hula-hoop.”
- “I should have bought my loop.”
- “I should have bought my loup.”

3. Why do you think that there are photographs of Samantha in “In Touch”?

- She’s probably Smith Jarred’s manager.
- Perhaps she’s Smith Jarred’s girlfriend.
- Because she followed Smith Jarred all over town for a week.
- Because she’s the number one to watch.

4. Why is the guestbook probably not a good idea?

5. Explain the joke about Planet Hollywood.

ON "IN THE CAB"

1. What does Samantha say? Fill in the blanks.

Well I had it _____ on Wednesday and I found out yesterday. I'm going to give you all the information and I don't want you to _____ or _____ and the only reason I'm telling you now and not later is I didn't want to _____ blurt out 'I have cancer' in the middle of _____ wedding. - Could you please take 5th? Broadway's a _____.

2. Complete the short summary.

A _____ on Wednesday showed that Samantha has _____ . She tells Carrie about it and asks her _____ . Samantha had a mammography and so she knows that _____ which is good.

ON "AT THE WEDDING"

1. What is a "Stepford bride"?

2. Explain Miranda's sentence: "You are my people."

IN GENERAL

Judging from these three scenes, why was "Sex and The City" so popular? (Give proof from the scenes.)

(Daniela Pröls)