**YEAR 13 MEDIA: THEORY BOOKLET 2**

FOR A GOOD A-LEVEL GRADE YOU NEED **COMMENT NOT DESCRIPTION** - ***DON’T JUST TELL THE STORY***

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| 1. **HEGEMONY & NEWS VALUES**   **Media news agendas are determined by hegemonic, commercial interests. Media news is not just about what happens. Mediation is always motivated by the need to communicate a message. (Mediation = filtering, manipulation) Representation= construction.** | |
| A) Traditional news values- **Galtung & Ruge** 1960s:  News is a product, a commodity. It is shaped by values such as  scale, proximity, personalisation, negativity, originality, elites, expectedness and unexpectedness  B) Chomsky & Herman **‘Manufacturing Consent’ 1988.**  Noam Chomsky’s **5 news filters;** also called the **Propaganda Model**: interests of advertisers, Interests of owners, anti-communism,  (usually privileged) sources of information, awareness of critics (‘flak’)  C) These Marxist and neo Marxist theories are known as the **Political Economy model** = the view that everything is shaped by the financial interests of those in charge.  D) Marx was convinced that the economic power of the ruling classes influenced every aspect of society, including shaping our dominant ideas, values & beliefs **“*In every age, the ideas of the ruling classes are the dominant ideas.”*** Not to be aware of an inferior exploited status was to live in a state of ‘**false consciousness’**.  **E) Gatekeeping:** in ‘old’ media, editors and proprietors decide on what is published. In new media, the situation is more pluralist. Digital media is more **democratized**.  **F) Two Step Flow (Lazersfeld & Katz)**  old media model: Popular media influences **opinion leaders** who then influence public opinion. However, public opinion also drives popular media (through commercial pressure to sell & gain advertising).  Many of the above aspects emphasize the principle of HEGEMONY – the influence of a ruling elite over the ordinary majority.  **G) Pluralism**  In digital media, (Liberal) **pluralism** (not hegemony) is arguably more dominant. Ordinary users have more power and their views can be easily spread. Arguably, **‘we media’** **(web 2.0)** is more democratic as it gives more power to ordinary people rather than elites. Hegemonic power is weakened.  **G) Leveson enquiry**: Millie Dowler murder case revealed collusion between police and journalists. Media intrusion into privacy (paparazzi etc) led to calls for greater privacy and restrictions on media reporting.  Conflict between public interest (the public’s ‘right to know’) and protection of individual’s rights (Jimmy Savile vs Cliff Richard)  Revelations of dubious and illegal journalistic practice led to closing of Murdoch’s News of the World in 2011.  Now there is controversy and confusion about the role of new **press regulators**: **IPSO and the PCC.** | SPACE FOR NOTES, EXAMPLES, REVISION DIAGRAMS |

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| **2 MORAL PANICS**  **The view that the popular (populist) media deliberately stir up fear by painting a negative picture of society’s moral decline. Minority groups are blamed, leading to scapegoating and racism. This then leads to demands for tougher laws and increased control by the authorities. Moral panics tend to work in favour of elites (government, corporate bosses, rich landlords) by strengthening their position and protecting the status quo.** | |
| **Stanley Cohen ‘Folk Devils and Moral Panics’ 1972**  Popular media (e.g. **tabloids**) stir up fear about state of society.  Minority and vulnerable groups are targeted.& **demonized.**  Encourages **scapegoating** and divides society.  Leads to a reassertion of ‘conservative’ values of strong govmnt firm policing, tougher laws.  Protects the rich and perpetuates privilege.  **Status quo** is protected. Nothing changes.  Media targets include: foreigners, benefit claimants, teenagers, immigrants, refugees, ethnic minorities, women |  |

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| **3 GRAMSCI & CULTURAL HEGEMONY**  **Neo Marxist view that hegemony is obtained by gaining the consent of the masses, not by force, violence, oppression or financial exploitation. In media terms, ordinary people are subdued (sedated/ desensitized) and turned into mindless audience-consumers by the manipulation of mass entertainment. Gratification = sedation. Be careful: Gramsci did not really talk about mass media but his ideas are important for understanding the corporate dominance of traditional mass media.** | |
| Links to many other aspects of media theory:  Frankfurt school, Chomsky’s Propaganda Model, Gatekeeping & Flow Theory, Moral Panics.  **Media effects theories**: e.g. Hypodermic Needle Model.  **Audience Reception theories**– e.g. Hall: hegemonic readings; **encoding/decoding** models  Media representations, semiotics (the use of signs, signifiers, branding, iconography to shape messages & influence audiences)  Fashion, celebrity & popular culture.  For Gramsci, cultural sedation (the soft indoctrination of culture, would help to perpetuate **‘false consciousness’** (see 1D above) |  |

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| **4 THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL –mass entertainment generates conformity and corporate profit** | |
| **Theodor Adorno,** Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer  Neo Marxist, Jewish sociologists, refugees from Nazis.  Saw links between US entertainment industries & manipulation of public opinion by Nazi propaganda. Strong links to behavioural psychology and the **Hypodermic Needle Model of mass, passive audience response.** Their ideas are especially relevant to **advertising.**  Mass entertainment is an industry. Industrialization of culture leads to  -mass conformism and a crushing of individuality  - consumerism and corporate profit  They exploit people’s **unfulfilled aspirations**, generate **false hopes & needs** which fuel a **capitalist economy.** |  |

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| **5 DYER’S UTOPIAN SOLUTIONS / UTOPIAN PLEASURES MODEL**  **Media gratification provides escape and distraction from the dull routine of ordinary lives.** | |
| The reality of **dullness** is replaced by the utopian solution of **excitement**  **Scarcity** is replaced by **abundance. (Richard Dyer)**  **Fragmentation** is replaced by **community.**  **Dreariness** by is replaced by **intensity.**  **Manipulation** is replaced by **transparency.**  You can see links here with the **Uses & Gratifications Theory (**Blumler & Katz) and **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.**  *Note the popularity of* ***fantasy and escapism*** *in today’s media.* |  |

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| **6 GEORGE GERBNER Cultivation Theory & Mean World Syndrome (desensitization)** | |
| Prolonged exposure to TV violence, over a period of time, develops or **‘cultivates’** a **desensitizing** (numbing) effect. This can make audiences more resistant to representations of horror, violence and pornography.  The more TV people consume, the more negative their view of the world. Implies that audiences are passive and media content is largely negative. |  |

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| **7 FEMINISM Mulvey, Berger, The Bechdel Test, Patriarchy, Queer theory** | |
| 1. Laura Mulvey – Gaze Theory. Media representations of women tend to show women **reflecting a male gaze back to the audience**. Women become **objectified**, **depersonalized** carriers of male fantasies. Gaze implies power. The object of the gaze is generally in a **submissive** position. *This view can nowadays be applied to media images of males*. Media focus on looking, voyeurism & surveillance 2. John Berger (Ways of Seeing 1972) asserts that women in art are traditionally **passive**. “**A woman must continually watch herself. She is almost continually accompanied by her own image of herself**.” (In art..) “…. **men act, women appear**…. **Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at.”** 3. The Bechdel Test. Has become a measure for assessing the feminist character of a film. Named after a graphic artist **Alison Bechdel**. To pass the Bechdel test, a film must have   **at least 2 named female** protagonists  who talk to each other about something other than a male  and without the presence of a male.  *Slightly overrated and simplistic. According to these criteria, important films such as ‘Thelma & Louise could not be considered feminist.*   1. **Patriarchy** = male dominance in society. **Patriarchal values** could be considered to be reflected in traditional, male-dominated media. Patriarchy is a form of **hegemony**. 2. **Judith Butler – ‘Gender Trouble’ 1990 :** gender is a result of social conditioning. Gender is a performance. This can also apply to identity & sexuality (Queer theory). E-media has helped to make identity and gender more fluid concepts. This is also the idea behind sexuality   F) **Crisis of masculinity** –the view that traditional male roles & identities are no longer relevant in a modern technological society. masculinity is, in a sense, redundant. |  |

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| TEST  SECTION 1   1. Define hegemony. 2. What is mediation? 3. Who were the two theorists who studied news values in the 1960s? 4. Give three traditional news values. 5. Give the title of Herman and Chomsky’s 1988 book which talked about how news is shaped by the need to protect certain interest-groups in a capitalist society. 6. Give three of Chomsky’s news filters. 7. What do we call the view that everything is influenced by financial greed and the drive for profit? 8. Define ‘false consciousness’ 9. What do we call the process where traditional media owners and editors decide what can and cannot be published? 10. According to Two Step Flow theory, who are the prominent people in society who are influenced by media? 11. Digital media is generally less hegemonic than traditional media. It can be considered to be more …….. 12. What is the name of the inquiry that led to greater restrictions on press intrusion into the private lives of individuals? 13. Which newspaper closed in 2011? Who owned it?   SECTION 2   1. Who originated the idea of Moral Panics? 2. What is the term for finding someone to blame? Give the term used in the ‘Moral Panics’ book title. 3. What is the status quo? Who does it benefit the most?   SECTION 3   1. For Gramsci, hegemony is achieved not by force but by gaining the ……….. of the masses. 2. Give an example of how Gramsci’s views could apply to popular media. 3. The flaw with the Hypodermic Needle and Cultivation Theories is that they imply that audiences ….   SECTION 4   1. The Frankfurt school viewed mass media as an industry that affected audiences in what ways?   SECTION 5   1. Give the name of the theory outlined by Richard Dyer. 2. Give 3 examples of Dyer’s theory, following the pattern: “x is replaced by y”   SECTION 6   1. According to George Gerbner, what is the long term effect of TV? How does this translate into the contemporary digital media landscape? 2. The problem with Gerbner’s theory is that he considers media content to be predominantly ….   25) In fact, most media content is entertainment. This does not necessarily mean humour and comedy. Media gratification can also take the form of …?  \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*  SECTION 7   1. What effect does the Male Gaze have on representations of women? 2. Who originated Male Gaze Theory? Why do some people argue that it is slightly outdated? 3. Complete the John Berger quotations: (In art, )’men act, women …… ; men look at women and women watch themselves………. 4. What is missing from this summary of the Bechdel test: **A film must have at least 2 named female protagonists who talk to each other without the presence of a male.** 5. Define patriarchy 6. Who wrote ‘Gender Trouble’ (1990) 7. According to the above, what is gender? 8. What has happened to gender and identity partly as a result of digital media (but it’s also a socio-cultural trend)? 9. What do we call the idea that male values and roles are no longer as important as in the past?   *ACTIVITIES*  *A) Answer the questions using the notes*  *B) Answer the questions without the notes*  *C) Make up ten different questions, based on sections 1-6*   1. Why is sexism a form of hegemony? |