

# Seminar Questions and Guidelines

## The Study of Media Audiences

*Choose one of the following questions/ statements:*

### **Seminar 2: Early Audience Research – The Effects Tradition**

*Presentation 1:* What are the main characteristics of early approaches to the study of media audiences?

*Presentation 2:* “A lot of media audience research is motivated by fear.” Discuss and critically analyse this statement.

### **Seminar 3: The scary world of television: Cultivation theory**

*Presentation:* What are the strong and weak points of cultivation theory?

### **Seminar 4: From Screen Violence to Real Violence?**

*Presentation:* What are the main theoretical and methodological problems present in the study of the effects of violent media content on children – and how might these problems be solved?

### **Seminar 5: Cultural Studies and the Audience**

*Presentation 1:* What does the concept of *ideology* mean within the field of Cultural Studies, and how does this concept contribute to our understanding of media audiences?

*Presentation 2:* Using Stuart Hall’s encoding/decoding model, describe and analyze the communication processes involved in the production, broadcasting and reception of a reality TV programme series.

### **Seminar 6: The Audience at Home: Audience, Domesticity and Gender**

*Presentation 1:* What are the most important aspects of media use in the home environment? Discuss with relevant examples.

*Presentation 2:* ‘Media use and media consumption in the home environment are essentially no different from media use and consumption in other contexts’. Discuss.

## **Seminar 7 Measuring Audiences: The Role of the Media Industry**

*Presentation 1:* Why do media organisations measure and track their audiences and what problems are involved in doing this?

*Presentation 2:* “Media audiences are essentially created by the media industry”. Agree or disagree, develop and explain your arguments.

## **Seminar 8: Race, Identity and Media Consumption**

*Presentation:* How can media affect the way audiences perceive ethnicity and race?

## **Seminar 9: Audiences, Fans and Fandom**

*Presentation 1:* Why do people become fans of some types of media texts? Discuss and compare different explanations of fandom and the media consumption of fans.

*Presentation 2:* “Fans can be considered among the most active groups within the media audience.” Agree or disagree, develop and explain your arguments.

## **Seminar 10: New Media Audiences: Interactivity and Fragmentation**

*Presentation:* What is ‘new’ about new media audiences? Discuss with relevant examples.

## *Seminar Guidelines*

### **Criteria used for Assessing Presentations**

The assessment of presentations takes into account such things as the structure of the presentation and whether or not the student shows an understanding of the subject matter. Marks are also awarded for such things as clarity, the use of material for illustrations, fluency, and for generating interest in the presentation, particularly in raising issues for discussion, responding to questions and generally handling queries which arise from the presentation.

In general, half the marks for presentations are awarded in respect of **content** and **comprehension** of the topic in question; the other half are awarded in respect of **presentation** and **interaction**.

### **Presentation Guidance for Students**

All students will be asked to give an in-class presentation on a specified topic. The topic will be agreed, in advance, with the tutor or teaching assistant for each particular module.

Presentations should last between 10 and 15 minutes each, depending on the level of study. In addition, students will need to raise questions or issues arising from their research for a short discussion following their presentation. As well as being a form of assessment, presentations should be viewed as an opportunity for all students to share their work with other members of their seminar group.

Presentations and essay questions – these can be on the same topic, but **NOT** using the same material. We recommend a different topic, which will help when preparing for exams.

### **Presentation Advice to Students**

- Ensure that presentations are well organised and structured. Include an introduction, a ‘middle’ and a conclusion.
- Content, style and approach are up to individual students but ensure that presentations are interesting and informative.
- Demonstrate your knowledge and the quality of your work around clear aims and objectives.
- Keep within the guidelines for timing and make sure that you consider the needs of your audience/colleagues.
- Remember that visual and oral skills are important in a presentation.
- Remember that the presentation should not simply be a reading of a paper but should utilise presentation skills to present key points or findings.
- If it is relevant, you can show video extracts or use other media material but do not take up too much time with this.
- When students are not giving presentations, they are still expected to take part in the discussions of the topics. Attendance and participation both as a presenter and as an audience are therefore important aspects of assessing any student’s contribution to presentations.