

2009

Subject BSc COMMUNICATIONS, MEDIA & SOCIETY
Title of Paper THE STUDY OF MEDIA AUDIENCES
Time Allowed Two Hours

Instructions to candidates

Please answer **two** questions only

All questions carry the same marks

Substantially the same content must **not** be used in more than one answer

1. 'It is really impossible to study media effects scientifically?' Agree or disagree?
2. To what extent does cultivation analysis provide an alternative to ideas about simple short term effects in our understanding of audience behaviour?
3. What limitations are involved in the research of media violence? Discuss with reference to research.
4. 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?
5. 'The main function of the media industry is to deliver media audiences to advertisers.' Discuss and critically analyse this statement.
6. 'Media use and media consumption in the home environment are essentially no different from media use and consumption in other contexts.' Discuss.
7. What is the role of ethnicity and race in the way audiences interpret media messages?
8. Do the practices of media fans 'empower' them? Discuss with reference to relevant research.
9. In what ways are new media audiences different from mass media audiences? Discuss with reference to research.

2008

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Time Allowed Two Hours

Instructions to candidates

Please answer **two** questions only; one question from the first 4 and one question from the last 5 questions

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For both questions I want you to structure your answer as much as possible; underline the key words / parts and use bullet points and little headers if you want.

Choose one question from the 4 questions below:

1. Critically discuss the Behavioural Paradigm to study media audiences. Explain what this paradigm is about, and what criticisms are.
2. Critically discuss the Incorporation / Resistance Paradigm to study media audiences. Explain what this paradigm is about, and what criticisms are.
3. Critically discuss the Spectacle / Performance Paradigm to study media audiences. Explain what this paradigm is about, and what criticisms are.
4. Critically discuss the Human Nature Paradigm to study media audiences. Explain what this paradigm is about, and what criticisms are.

Choose one question from the 5 questions below:

For each of these questions I ask you to choose 2 paradigms and outline how they approach this topic. Explain if (and how) the paradigms complement each, and/or if (and how) they contradict each other. To answer this question, you can use the paradigm you explained in detail in your previous answer, and you do not need to repeat this information. For the additional paradigm(s) you wish to apply in this question, you do not need to give the detailed content of what this paradigm is about; a brief summary (2-3 lines) will do.

5. Critically compare two different approaches (paradigms) to study gender and media audiences
6. Critically compare two different approaches (paradigms) to study race, ethnicity and media audiences
7. Critically compare two different approaches (paradigms) to study violence and media audiences
8. Critically compare two different approaches (paradigms) to study celebrity culture and media audiences
9. Critically compare two different approaches (paradigms) to study video games and the virtual media audiences

2007

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1. Critically examine the similarities and differences between the 'effects research' approach to audience research and the 'uses and gratifications' approach.
2. Within the early perspectives on mass culture, critically discuss the differences between the 'Mass Theory' approach to audience research and the 'Pluralist' approach.
3. Discuss the methodologies and results used to investigate whether screen violence has an impact on children and youth.
4. Explain and critically discuss the "Mean World Syndrome".
5. Discuss the Subjectivist, Structuralist, and Post-Structuralist approach to celebrity. Draw on at least two authors in your answer.
6. Discuss the three hypothetical positions, as identified by S. Hall, from which decodings of a televisual discourse may be constructed.
7. Discuss the different feminist perspectives on the influence of gender on viewing. Draw on at least two authors in your answer.
8. Explain the term "Textual Poachers", and in which paradigm would you situate this? Draw on published research in your answer.
9. What is "Cultural Convergence". Explain the term using an example from a recent media product. Draw on at least one author in your answer.

2006

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1. Critically examine the differences between the 'hypodermic syringe' approach to audience research and the 'two step flow' approach.
2. How have media scholars challenged the view that the media is bad for children? Draw on at least two theorists in your answer.
3. Critically discuss the view that heavy viewers of television are more fearful of crime than other members of society.
4. Discuss the conditions that give rise to celebrity and examine the cultural significance of celebrity. You should draw on examples from celebrity or star figures to illustrate your point.
5. Has Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model of audience reception led to 'cultural populism'?
6. Are there distinct female viewing positions? Draw on published research in your answer.
7. How has the conception of the 'audience as commodity' challenged the view that media caters for all tastes?
8. How has Bourdieu been utilised to theorise fan culture? Draw on published research in your answer.
9. In what ways has the development of the Internet challenged traditional views of the audience as a 'mass'?

2005

Subject BSc COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIETY
Title of Paper THE STUDY OF MASS MEDIA AUDIENCES
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Instructions to candidates

Please answer **two** questions only
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1. How can the *long-term* effects and influences on media audiences be best studied? Discuss with reference to research.
2. What significance do new information and communication technologies have for fans and fan audiences?
3. "Violence in the media has a direct impact on the levels of violence in society." Discuss with reference to published research.
4. Identify the main strengths and weaknesses of Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model.
5. What are the most important aspects of media use in the home environment?
6. "The main function of the media industry is to deliver media audiences to advertisers." Discuss and critically assess this statement.
7. What are the key differences and similarities (if any) between mass society theory and the two-step flow theory of media effects?
8. What challenges does the development of new, network-based communications media pose to the study of media audiences? Analyse and give examples with reference to research.
9. Examine the theoretical foundations and empirical findings of the field of cultural indicators and cultivation research. Which are the main strengths and weaknesses of the field? Use examples, criticise and analyse with reference to research.