Mass Media Revision
Key topics

- What are the mass media?
- Technological developments
- Uses of internet
- Effects of the media
- Media and socialisation
- Ownership and control of the media
- Representations of ethnic groups
- Representations of gender
- Internet and democracy
- Deviance amplification
- Media and violence
a. What are the mass media?

Mass media = methods of large scale communication

• Old media = newspapers/TV/Radio/cinema
• New media = internet/mobile phones/dvd/digital TV

Newspapers
• Broadsheets = quality press
• Tabloids = mass ‘red tops’

Broadcast media
• Television/radio
• Public owned = BBC = taxes
• Private owned = ITV/Sky = advertising and profit

Electronic media
• Internet/social networking/downloading
b. Technological developments in last 30 years + impact

**TV**
- 3 terrestrial channels – now hundreds of **digital** channels
- Top boxes/cables/satellite dishes since 1980s
- **Digital = interactivity**
- **Convergence** of media = tv/internet/mobile phones

**Internet**
- Streaming video
- i-player = greater choice
- Recording programmes on hard drives

• BUT....not everyone can afford this technology
c. Use of the internet

Now widespread use of internet

But not everyone has access to it:
• Area – no signal
• Elderly struggle with technology
• Poverty – not everyone can afford it

How do people use the internet?
• Information
• Entertainment
• Social networking
• Email
• Shopping
• downloading
d. Effects of the media

Hypodermic syringe model

• Socialisation
• Like a drug - injection
• Shapes people - persuasion
• No choice

Uses and gratifications

• choice
• Different uses of the media
  (4 needs - information/identity/relationships/entertainment)
DIFFERENT NEEDS MET BY THE MEDIA

Information – what is happening in the world

Personal Identity – help us understand ourselves

Personal Relationships – soaps give us a substitute for real life relationships/also give us something to talk to others about

Entertainment & Diversion – help us escape from our problems and help us relax
Decoding

• Media can be READ IN DIFFERENT WAYS

• A person’s culture/background/characteristics (gender/age and social class) affects how they read the media
Discuss how far sociologists would agree that the mass media have a direct and immediate effect on audiences.

Tips:
- Need to add evidence and arguments for and against the statement given
- Discuss the hypodermic syringe approach (direct and immediate)
- To assess, compare to ‘uses and gratifications’ and ‘decoding’ explanations
## Comparing approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decoding approach</th>
<th>Hypodermic syringe approach</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View of the audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View on how powerful the media are</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>View of media messages – one message or many messages?</td>
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</table>
(a) From Item C, identify which girls were most likely to be bullied. (1 mark)

(b) From Item D, what percentage of households had access to the internet in 2007? (1 mark)

(c) Identify two ways in which audiences use the mass media. (2 marks)

(d) Explain what sociologists mean by the mass media. (4 marks)

(e) Describe one way in which the mass media might influence the outcome of a general election and explain why this might be a problem in a democracy. (5 marks)

(f) Describe one way in which the internet could be used by interest groups in a democracy and explain why it might empower those who are able to use it. (5 marks)

(g) EITHER

   (i) Discuss how far sociologists would agree that the image of women presented by the mass media tends to be stereotypical rather than realistic. (12 marks)

   OR

   (ii) Discuss how far sociologists would agree that the mass media is a more powerful agent of socialisation than the education system. (12 marks)
e. The media and socialisation

- Socialisation process
  - Mass media and socialisation
  - Political socialisation

- Socialisation and identity
  - Learning culture, norms, and values
  - Media provides information about the world
  - Media can affect our views on political issues
  - News is the main source of information on political matters
  - Newspaper bias/editorials
  - Mass media and socialisation
  - Political socialisation
  - Sociological concerns
  - Others defend the press

- Socialisation and identity
  - Used to be social class and gender that guided our identities but now replaced by media
  - Identity is now fluid and changes with the media
  - Stereotypes
  - Mums go to Iceland
  - Gender role socialisation
  - Advice on relationships, etc.
  - Advertisements = subtle messages
  - Media develops our identities
  - Clothing/fashion
  - Hairstyle
  - Tattoos
  - Affects our choices
  - Music
  - Leisure activities
f. Ownership & Control

Small number of people own most of the media – eg) Murdoch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pluralist</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>no single group dominates</strong>&lt;br&gt;There is a wide range of publications available; something for everyone....all opinions have a voice.&lt;br&gt;‘no link between ownership of the press and its content. Newspapers only give people what they want to read.....If readers do not like it....they can buy something else to read&lt;br&gt;The press is free from control and interference by owners.&lt;br&gt;<em>Freedom of the press exists because:</em>&lt;br&gt;✔ the public have choice&lt;br&gt;✔ Owners cannot dictate content.&lt;br&gt;✔ There is freedom to set up new newspapers&lt;br&gt;✔ views on an issue via the letters page&lt;br&gt;✔ Editors/journalists have freedom</td>
<td><strong>Mass media help an elite group (powerful minority) to control the way people think and act</strong>&lt;br&gt;Owners of media promote certain ideas to help businesses and control working class&lt;br&gt;<em>Money from advertising = business has control over content, ie</em>)Carphone Warehouse and Big Brother&lt;br&gt;Increasing concentration of press ownership in the hands of few/less alternative companies/News corporations have merged over time..controlling press, TV, music, films, books, websites, etc/GLOBAL&lt;br&gt;*Censorship/propaganda/promote political beliefs&lt;br&gt;• Control journalists/editors</td>
</tr>
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</table>
g. Representation of ethnicity

- under-represented
- absent
- criminals
- musicians
- negative stereotypes
- sports
- race issues - negative stories
- images of famine/poverty and war around the world
- eg) mugging scare
- rioting - criminalised black people in UK news stories
- news stories
- representations over time
- representation of black people in media
- changes for the better
- more black actors/presenters
- black actors playing ordinary characters
- eg) Cosby Show/Fresh Prince
- black characters in high status positions
- less stereotyping in characters
- 1950s-1970s
- 1990s
- Asian characters = stereotypical
- selective
- focus on 'gangs of youths'
- Bradford Riots 2001 - biased reporting
- ignored National Front
- 9/11 - promoting Islamophobia
- minority views on issues/lifestyle still ignored
- media representations
- stereotypical images
- bias - prejudice
- racist
- are these realistic?
h. Representation of gender

- Stereotyping = sexist
- Female characters in children’s books/TV programmes/films
  - Eg) TV adverts = mum’s gone to Iceland
- Gender role socialisation = gentle/passive/domestic

- Images of women in men’s magazines – sexual/physical etc

- More recently = different roles for women/less sexism in media/more positive role models in childrens’ books
## i. Internet and democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes it does</th>
<th>No it doesn’t /problems</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest groups can use the internet to get their message across and rally support.</td>
<td>Use of the media for politics is not big – mainly used for shopping and entertainment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens can use the internet to get more involved in politics:</td>
<td>Mainly something the middle-class get involved in as working class citizens have other interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• provide info on topics quickly and cheaply</td>
<td>The internet only involves individuals/groups who have the resources to use it regularly. This is because ‘e-democracy’ requires technology and funding to start up and keep going.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enable people to respond to newspaper reports</td>
<td>Is a ‘facebook page’ petition really that powerful?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Interactive environment – so people can create content and share views/blogs/social networking</td>
<td>The digital divide – some have the new media technology and some do not</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Helps people organise demonstrations and mobilise campaigns</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Internet helps people to TAKE PART (participate more) ..to communicate, circulate and share information more. Internet is an open space for discussion between people around the world</td>
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The digital divide

There are several digital divisions:

- **Wealth** – richer people have more equipment (and time) than others

- **Education** – more educated a person is – the more they will use the internet

- **Age** – Younger people tend to use internet more often than older people

- **Geography** – only 3.5% of Africa is online
j. Deviance Amplification

- Mass media = creates a moral panic
- Moral panics = exaggerates a social problem
- Folk devils = groups who are scapegoats = threat to society
- Recent folk devils – asylum seekers, single parents, hoodies
- Cohen – mods and rockers – violence at seaside

The news story led to:
- Public fear
- More young people involved
- More police suspicious/arresting young people

The media ‘amplified’ the level of violence and caused more crime
### k. Contemporary Media Issues: Media causing violence

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Media can cause violence</th>
<th>Media doesn’t cause violence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypodermic syringe model</strong></td>
<td><strong>Uses and gratifications approach</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Video nasties - horrors, ie Child’s play – Jamie Bulger</td>
<td>- People have choice and are not just moulded by media (NOT PASSIVE)</td>
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<td>- Role models in music industry (guns etc and rap music)</td>
<td>- People have different uses/needs from media – personal identity/escapism / information</td>
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<td>- Computer games ‘shoot em ups’ eg GTA</td>
<td>- Media violence – people can tell difference between violence in news and that in fiction, ie) games/films</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Violence in films – glorifying violence, ie Pulp Fiction, Kill Bill</td>
<td><strong>Decoding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Copycat behaviour = imitation</td>
<td>- People interpret media differently.</td>
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<td>- Not everyone react the same.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Social characteristics affect how they interpret media.</td>
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