

# 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)

**Information** – what is happening in the world

**Personal Identity** – help us understand ourselves

DIFFERENT NEEDS MET BY THE MEDIA  
(McQuail, 2003)

**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 persons culture/background/characteristics (gender/age and social class) affects how they read the media



# Practice question..

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

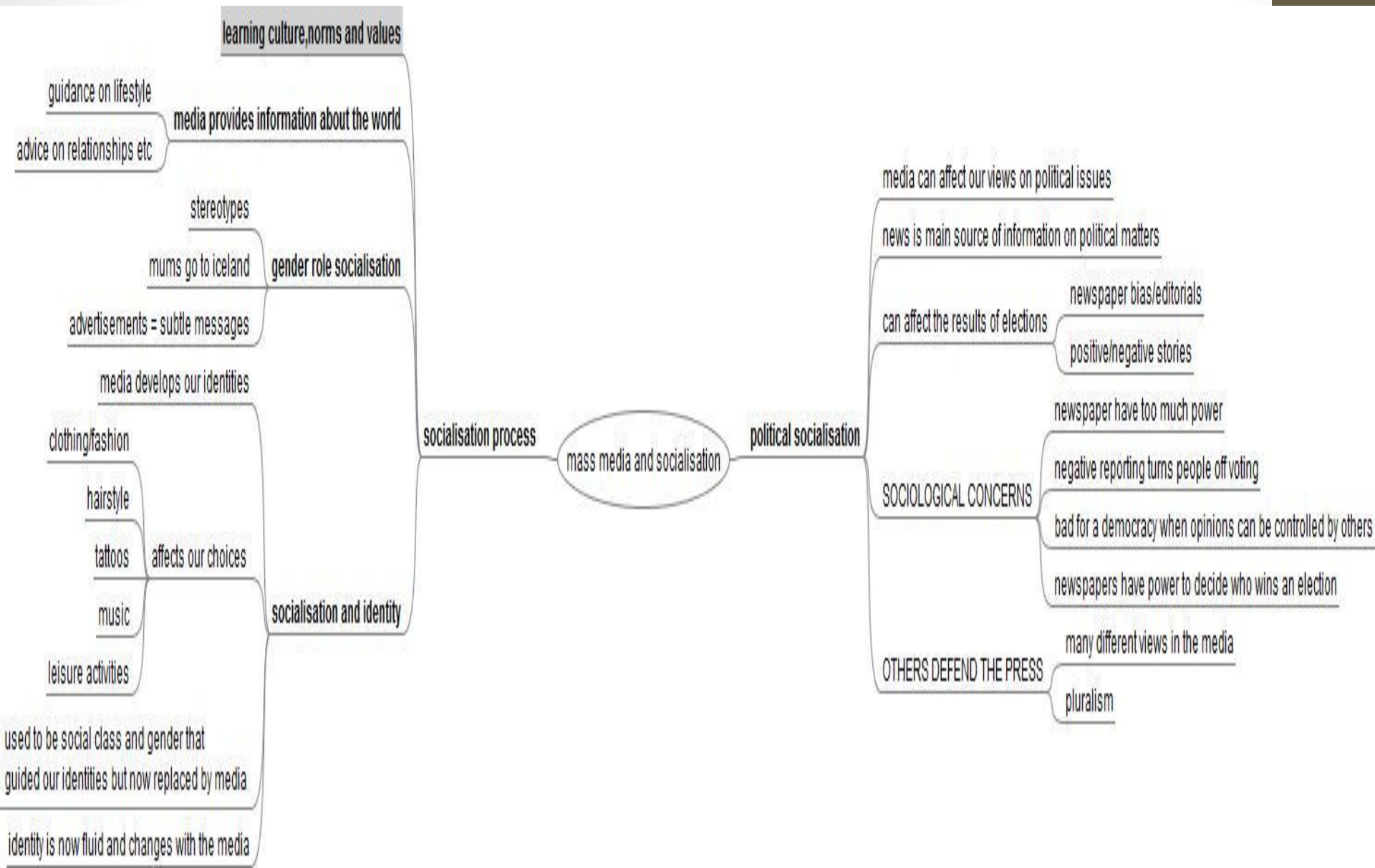
	Decoding approach	Hypodermic syringe approach
View of the audience		
View on how powerful the media are		
View of media messages - one message or many messages?		

- (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



# f. Ownership & Control

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

## Pluralist

### **no single group dominates**

There is a wide range of publications available; something for everyone....all opinions have a voice.

*'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*

The press is free from control and interference by owners.

*Freedom of the press exists because:*

- ✓ *the public have choice*
- ✓ *Owners cannot dictate content.*
- ✓ *There is freedom to set up new newspapers*
- ✓ *views on an issue via the letters page*
- ✓ *Editors/journalists have freedom*

## Conflict

*Mass media help an elite group (powerful minority) to control the way people think and act*

Owners of media promote certain ideas to help businesses and control working class

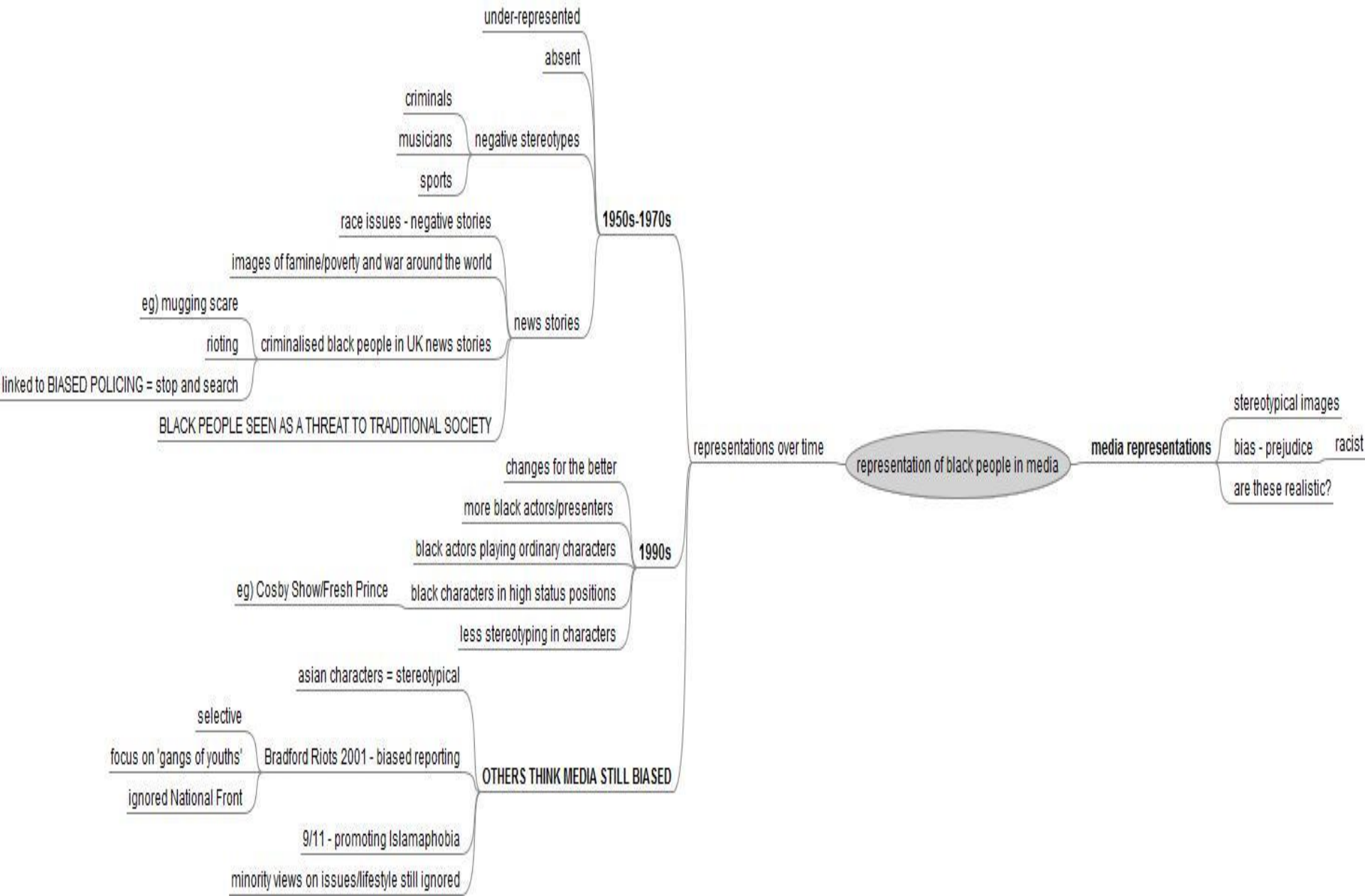
*Money from advertising = business has control over content, ie)Carphone Warehouse and Big Brother*

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

*Censorship/propaganda/promote political beliefs*

- *Control journalists/editors*

# g. Representation of ethnicity



# 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

Yes it does	No it doesn't /problems
<p data-bbox="19 299 850 399">Interest groups can use the internet to get their message across and rally support.</p> <p data-bbox="19 471 811 571">Citizens can use the internet to get more involved in politics:</p> <ul data-bbox="19 585 927 1413" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="19 585 927 628">• provide info on topics quickly and cheaply</li><li data-bbox="19 671 927 771">• Enable people to respond to newspaper reports</li><li data-bbox="19 813 927 971">• Interactive environment – so people can create content and share views/blogs/social networking</li><li data-bbox="19 1013 927 1113">• Helps people organise demonstrations and mobilise campaigns</li><li data-bbox="19 1156 927 1413">• 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</li></ul>	<p data-bbox="985 299 1893 399">Use of the media for politics is not big – mainly used for shopping and entertainment.</p> <p data-bbox="985 442 1893 585">Mainly something the middle-class get involved in as working class citizens have other interests.</p> <p data-bbox="985 628 1893 842">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.</p> <p data-bbox="985 885 1893 985">Is a 'facebook page' petition really that powerful?</p> <p data-bbox="985 1056 1893 1156">The digital divide – some have the new media technology and some do not</p>



# 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

## Media can cause violence

### Hypodermic syringe model

- Video nasties - horrors ,  
ie) Child's play – Jamie Bulger
- Role models in music industry (guns etc  
and rap music)
- Computer games 'shoot em ups'  
eg) GTA
- Violence in films – glorifying violence,  
ie) Pulp Fiction, Kill Bill
- Copycat behaviour = imitation

## Media doesn't cause violence

### Uses and gratifications approach

- People have choice and are not just  
moulded by media (NOT PASSIVE)
- People have different uses/needs from  
media – personal identity/escapism /  
information
- Media violence – people can tell  
difference between violence in news  
and that in fiction, ie) games/films

### Decoding

- People interpret media differently.
- Not everyone react the same.
- Social characteristics affect how they  
interpret media.