

## Chapter 6

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### Media in Everyday Life

#### The Media, Singular and Plural:

Media – plural of medium, a term used to describe the means or technology used for storing and communicating information and other configurations of data and text

- this term was used since the 16th century
- Often used as a singular noun although it is in plural form

#### Types of media:

- News
- Radio
- Film
- Television
- Internet
- Mobile Phones / Smart phones
- Playable media (video games)

These types of media do not share the same platform and are not consistent between each other.

#### New media:

- Packaged and produced similar to video games in a variety of forms
- Evolves as new forms of distribution become more popular
- Example: Radio evolving to radio podcasts the listener experience has changed to a more individual experience

Media today involves exchanges between producers of media and consumers

#### Marshall McLuhan:

- Canadian media theorist
- Believed that “a medium is a technological form that extends the self” \*
- foreshadowed medias evolution in modern day during the 1960s
- Said media includes forms other than radio, TV, cinema and the press. To him a medium is a technology or technological form that extends the south

\* McLuhan added to the list of media above including cars, trains, lightbulbs, and speech (vocal, gestured/signed).

\*McLuhan stated media are forms through which we amplify, accelerate and extend prosthetically our bodies for information, communication and cultural transmission.

\*McLuhan believed that mediums are not neutral technology in that medium has a major impact on the message/meaning it conveys.

### Convergence:

- Used to describe the combining of previously separate media forms and industries through computing and digital technology.
- Example: Film evolving from standard celluloid (analog) Seen in theaters to digital, now seen often at home.

Moments such as the evolution of film are an example of convergence that occurs throughout history

- Other examples: Cartoons introduced after films in theaters during 1960–1970 to normalize TV.

### 20th century “new media types converging”

- Along with the dawn of media listed on page 1 “the cloud” was soon developed  
The cloud: vast energy consuming physical servers spanning multiple geographical sites

As a result of the cloud, a new method of consumption is developed

- Example instead of seeing movies in person, now people can stream the movies at home.

As media industries converge mediation and consumption become intertwined. This in turn creates or supports entirely new media platforms, i.e. Netflix, Hulu etc.

“Media is a big, changeable, and messy concept.”

Smart phones offer countless functions, books, music, navigation, socialization, documentation yet all in one digital format.

The example of the smart phone perfectly exemplifies mass media in mass culture influx.

### Everyday Life:

#### John Caughey

- Media theorist

- Classifies everyday life as not as it seems, an unnatural phenomenon that requires exploration and explanation
- Some think of everyday life in considering media stating life is increasingly mediated
- Media informs everyday practice
- Practices of looking and experiencing things that are made to be looked at

Media: A wide ranging set of forms, technologies and practices through which we experience in everyday life

“The City” as discussed by De Certeau

- Structure of a city is determined by architects and private corporations, a plan is set, and boundaries defined. Then it is held together by policy and negotiated by humans walking an existing within it.
- In this way a city can either be negotiated in the way it was intended or the opposite and every way in between.

Mediation:

- The practices through which we use/do things.
- Example, walking is a practice of social mediation.
- McLuhan calls “extensions”: shoes, a cane, a wheelchair, a bus, a bike, a car, a map, a GPS system, a human guide—all of these are forms of media through which we negotiate social space.

### **Mass Culture and Mass Media:**

“the masses”:

- Created the 19th century.
- To describe the growing population of people who labored in factories during the rise of capitalism
- This is comparable to the antiquated term of proletariat and bourgeoisie.

Bourgeoisie:

- controlled the means of production while the proletariat made up the working class and sold their time in exchange for money to buy goods.
- The people who owned property

Proletariat:

- “The people”
- To describe the propertyless industrial wage earners which became a class distinct from both the peasant class and bourgeoisie class (the inbetween)
- AKA working class

Thus the proletariat in America during early times spent free time seeking distraction and cheap amusements with the meager leisure time they were allotted.

Their tradition of media from the past rose to meet the needs of the proletariat (film, television, radio, cinema).

Thus from this comes a mass culture, where millions of households of working class Americans have access to and shared interests in and entertainment of media. The knowledge they all belong as they are, to everyone in their category, and thus the ongoing discrepancy of proletariats is solidified for the bourgeoisie continues for future bourgeoisie.

Theory: could it be the expanding concentration of workers seen and adaptations as the radio 1920s, TV 1940s, is still seen in modern day, i.e. 3-D film, video games, smartphones to VR, now AI?

Question: is this still occurring?

A key example of media's role in promoting a mass ideology to a culture is found in "Triumph Of The Will", the film by Leni Riefenstahl and was Nazi propaganda before World War II. This in turn changed the ideology of the country in support of a fascist dictator.

Some can see this media was used to brainwash and maintain. This sort of control through the media was quite apparent and has always been apparent in America, especially during the mid 20th century. "The American century" dubbed by media mogul Henry Luce consisted of the initiation of a monopoly in control of media from a global birthplace, established in the US, which went through mergers, production outsourcing then eventually trade globalization. Overall the message broadcast globally was the US as a superpower.

Prior to the digital age after World War II, there was an intensified intellectual and political repression in the US. Noted that during the time the American capitalistic economy was at its height.

Practices used to silence opposing views were used as subliminal enforcement of entrenched views and the accusation of communist ties to those who proposed progressive ideas in the US during the 1950s.

Noticeable outright aggression towards views opposing the "approved agenda" this extended to media directors and actors producers that all had to match the required content.

### “Every day life in media“

- During the 1950s celebratory and patriotic views/approaches were the only allowed views in depiction of the United States on media.

### Real life examples of earlier mentioned media moguls:

- Disney
- Global presence, some occupation in some capacity in every country across the globe.
- Films, TV, theme parks, cruise ships
- \$52 billion in revenue reported in 2015
- Expansion of an industry or corporation in size revenue, Global presence, and varying media outlets serves to further the expansion of a corporation's beliefs, mission and scope/range.

### Change in media control:

- Occurred in the last 10 years and example of this is Twitter being used as a platform to discuss events such as the news.
- “Public culture was no longer an urban phenomenon,... One could watch mass broadcast TV “along with“, others in the nation from one’s own living room.”
- An example of the viewers or consumers having more of a say or impact on the content is Twitter. For Twitter people have the ability to comment on News and post it on their own account. This in turn leads to increasingly limited sources from which people surround themselves to perceive information depending on who they decide to follow.

### Three main sources competing for dominance in global film media:

- Hollywood
- Hong Kong
- Bollywood

For instance, often they are not afraid to join forces though.

### **Critiques of mass culture:**

One came from the Frankfurt school theorist, who used Marxist theory to study postwar years.

### Frankfurt school theorists:

- Max Horkheimer
- Theodor Adorno
- Herbert Marcuse

1944- Adorno plus Horkheimer introduced “mass culture” plus “the culture industry”. Essentially proposed the entertainment industry has declined the working class.

### Adorno and Horkheimer:

- They regarded the masses as passive subjects and saw the industry (Media producers) as the purveyors of mass media texts that shaped mass culture,
- “mass media obscured the realities of life in class society at best made conformity tolerable.”
- Claimed the industrial workplace produced culture, not just goods.
- That film/media production held the same agenda as the owners of the means of production.
- Films such as “The Best Years Of Our Lives” by William Wyler and “King” romanticized an honorable iconic life as a factory worker.
- All the while films such as King of the Hill (1946) portrayed the venture capitalists of the time as being of questionable morals and shady endeavors.

#### Materialism:

- The desire for material possessions owned, talked about, and advertised by TV, film, or film stars.
- Example: with the advent of color film, makeup used by film stars in the late 1940s. Popularized in advertising through watching the film but also by the manufacture of the makeup and in advertisements in magazines. The advertisements were in conjunction with the film makeup artist’s comments. This added a loaded statement assuming and establishing makeup as a rule for women to appear as with or in association with freedom outside of the house. Thus by distribution the entire country’s accessibility to this advertisement, the acceptance of these facts, were reinforced by both the film and the advertisement.
- By the 1960s, what skin tones have been balanced with what technology offered were high tonal ranges. The unspoken prejudice is that film neglected to become multi-racial and its consideration for construction of tech up until the 1970s. Yet they obviously still lack representation in front of the lens.

#### New theory - Birmingham University:

- Founded by Richard Hogart, this theory challenged the dichotomy of low mass culture and elite literature in 1964.

A scholar from Birmingham University, Stuart Hall, and co-author Paddy Whannel looked at mass media as a unified combination of all platforms discussed earlier.

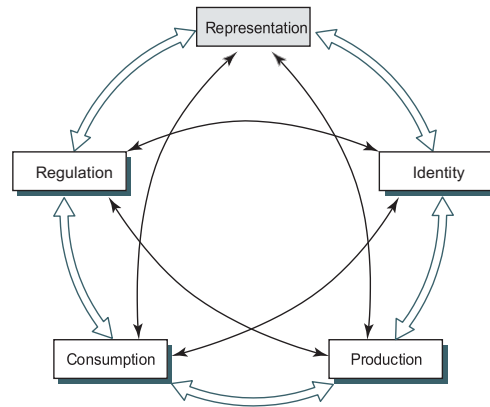
#### Stuart Hall + Paddy Whannel

- Propose that the struggle of content of media is not about the media but the content whether it’s good or bad.
- Believed it should not be a post from, i.e. like Adorno and Horkheimer, speaking of mass media as propaganda used to further a specific agenda.
- Overall belief that understanding in studying the media will lead to more realizations compared to the amount of studying equivalent to that of literature. In this way, not taking the scenes depicted as real life.

- Refuse to “write off” mass media that was popular, rather to insist on forms of practice, not directly against the established media, but as an expression of smaller subcultures attributed to communities – example; punk rock

### The circuit of culture:

(Image of Circuit)



Every aspect of meaning is shown circulating through varying intersecting modes approved by Hall and others.

This theory still adopted not only Adorno and Horkheimer but Fiske, “and this recognition of the participant’s agency in viewing and discerning meaning from popular mass media” was most important and should be focused on beyond Adorno and Horkheimer. It was hinted that the meaning varied dependent on the viewer and their agency, while recognizing other parts that determine a piece of popular media’s meaning beyond the sole consumer decision.

### John Fiske:

- American media scholar
- In reading and watching mainstream media products, everyday people express interpretive agency, defining the social order embedded in the text’s dominant meanings.
- Essentially that popular culture and popular mass media’s meaning is dependent not solely on the industry producers but also on the readers and consumers.

This is the start of a change in the accepted theory, that Adorno and Horkheimer had emphasized while still recognizing the structure as defined by them to be true. Fiske touched on two components of the circuit of culture (Meaning), discussed above. After this theory, more theorists acknowledged the circle of culture as a clear representation of the meaning of mass media.

### Late 1960s page 231:

- Cultural theorists stated our experiences with media are too complex, too varied to be adequately characterized in sweeping categories, i.e. mass consciousness or mass culture.

#### Moving to contemporary time:

- Digital media furthers this, since fragmentation of audiences and platforms illuminates one, mass audience. Populace is fragmented among a range of cultures and communities.
- The culture industry no longer makes a unified set of products, rather a diverse range of popular culture and media designed to appeal to niche audiences, essentially the cultural producers are adapting to these new platforms and distributing more specifically.

#### Global popular culture:

- Through repetition of formats, genres, narratives, ideologies, formulas, and conventions demonstrates a standardization of culture.

Models for thinking about the influence of media in popular culture on social behavior have also come from philosophy and art.

#### Lettrism Art Movement:

- 1940s, French

#### Guy Debord:

- Prominent artist from this movement.
- Interested in psychogeography.
- Made counter-maps challenging the centralized institutional logic. Example; Paul Henri Chombat de Laume and his map of students commuting to school.

#### Psychogeography:

- Emphasizes the impact of geography on human feelings and actions.

1957: Debord and others founded the Situationists movement.

#### Situationists:

- Artists, intellectuals, and political theorists who studied the experience of life within media intensive, mid-century capitalism.
- Called for constant transformation by performing staged and spontaneous actions.
- Interested in the word *spectacle* as a metaphor for society itself. The definition of spectacle: instrument of unification and a world vision that forgoes social relationships.
- Seen as a symbol of resistance to society of the spectacle.
- They also accepted the definition of spectacle which is technology through which we look and which alter our vision.

#### Yes men:

- Influenced by situationists



- Known for political performance art ensemble impersonating political/corporate leaders and creating false online impersonations of corporations websites.
- Members are Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonanno.
- The main strategy of Yesmen is culture jamming.

The Situationists also inspired many other critiques of mass culture.

In the 1990s south Asian postcolonial theorist and scholar Néstor Garcia Canclini wrote “Hybrid Cultures”. It emphasizes how people of the Latin American culture can interpret, receive western culture and produce their own media unique to them but also inspired by the source.

Arjun Appadurai, of Argentina is another theorist influenced by the Situationists around the same time emphasized the hybrid nature of Western cultural imperialism. Wrote “Modernity At Large “, where he states “media are the opium of the masses,” reminding readers that the consumption of media throughout the world often provoked anger and resistance.

### **Media infrastructure's:**

- Situationist interventions show the flow and patterns of human usage can disrupt official networks in systems in the built environment.

#### Television:

- Post war era was seen as a broadcast medium, offering local programming for some countries.
- Seen as OTA or over the air television was first developed in the 1920s
- CATV or community antenna television was developed in 1938 at first in England and then 1948 in the US. Consisted of cable distributed from mountaintop antenna.
- By 1955, 80% of Britain had television.
- In the late 1960s satellite transmission television was introduced.

#### List of conglomerates that own these 3 formats and access globally:

- Viacom
- Comcast
- Sony
- 21st Century Fox
- Disney
- British Sky Broadcasting
- Time Warner

Stations have grown mainly since the 1960s. These are made to accommodate more and more languages. By the 1970s countries like Australia, East Asia, Europe, South America, and the Middle East were developed.

### Critique of industry:

- John McMurria: clarified how this did not diversify options for people of different areas in the world, but rather perpetuated the existing television industry problems such as lack of diversity in management plus hiring and the proliferation of exemplified stereotypes.

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### Neo liberalism:

- A term describing the resurgence, since the 1960s, of laissez-faire economic liberalism, industry privatization, and diminishment of government regulation – a result of “individual choice”
- Incentivizes of free trade, private sector investment, and eliminates barriers of global competition, Neoliberal policies have led to most media companies being owned by a few massive global corporate conglomerates, listed earlier.

### Beginnings of Internet:

- Developed 1960s -1970s
- during the first stages of development the Internet was seen as a form of text communication.
- Expansion of web and home computer market. The development occurred in the late 1990s Which brought the Internet into the home.
- The 2000s introduction of social media continues to reflect the Neoliberal model of “choice” that had been used to justify deregulation and privatization in media and healthcare markets.

### Modern primary media systems:

- Broadcast television
- Internet
- Cable television
- Mobile phones

These are all a combination of wireless systems, satellite communication systems, and cables mostly under the sea.

A lot of the wireless existence we experience in the modern day through things like WiFi are actually represented by large masses of wires buried and hidden.

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### Satellites:

- Large form of communication for the past 50 years, ability to cross sovereign borders and translate information. Satellite interface with television in the US began with HBO in 1975.
- A lot of satellites role has or is not always recognized, even phone calls to people nearby go through a satellite in space before returning to your town.
- Represent other things than television and communication including surveillance and security and conflict.
- An example of this is an artist and cultural photographer Trevor Paglen: challenges the surveillant gaze in his series "The Other Night Sky" where he tracked and photographed classified satellites.
- Lisa Parks: highlights this, writing about hidden satellite towers made to look like trees, towers in church steeples, etc.
- The secrecy and hidden conformity of our natural environment is the goal, as "by distinct disguising infrastructure as part of the natural environment, concealment strategies keep citizens naïve and uninformed about the network technologies they subsidized and use every day."
- Designed not to be seen.

#### The cloud:

- Continuation of concealment, emphasis on the consumer having a wireless experience, while in reality there were "farms" of storage.
- Storage farms: High energy consumers/wasters often disguised in unmarked buildings.
- The cloud has exceeded its technological platform and become a potential metaphor for the way contemporary society organizes and understands itself. "This disconnect between media infrastructure metaphors and the material realities reveals a fundamental myth of the tech industries as immaterial in the relationship to the environment". Which isn't true.
- Because of lack of government regulation large conglomerates such as Google (owns YouTube), have a large influence over media messages and structures through which they are shaped.

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#### **Media as a nation and Public sphere:**

- Because of its capacity for instant transmission, it's public presence, and its situation within the domestic sphere, television played a primary role, (as radio did before) in fostering a sense of national identity and a collective public sphere.
- Electro capitalism: seen in television it occurs by airing an issue or event internationally, broadcasters signal global importance and offer a means of connecting affected communities across vast distances.
- In Japan, television viewing took place in large outdoor viewing areas before the 1950s before it made its way into the home. (Also seen in Britain)

- Later restaurants capitalized on it by installing TVs in the restaurant.

#### "Cinema Tharir" -Arab Spring

- In Tahrir square (Cairo, Egypt) artists installed large screens which showed films to crowds of protesters.
- Collective public viewing, in modern day can give people an experience of actually having taken part in the event.

#### Public:

- Media contributes to several "publics". For example, national Public, global Public, and networked Public. The difference between public and private or just public definition is constantly debated.
- Social space constituted through the "reflexive circulation discourse" that is the circulation and exchange of ideas, that is distributed on scheduled intervals.
- Public sphere: A space for citizens of a place to join to discuss issues that relate to the public interest.

#### Jürgen Habermas:

- German theorist.
- Later critiqued as being bourgeoisie, elitist, and an inaccessible platform. Oskar Negt, and Alexander Kluge Argue the public sphere needs to be reconceived for the working class. (proletariat)
- Habermas: public spheres were also used for fascist manifestos as it was in Germany 1930.
- Believed the public sphere is a group of private persons who can assemble to discuss matters of common "public" interest in ways to mediate state power. Coffee shops, boutiques in malls, all offer a place for this to exist. Yet is always compromised by other forces. Example; consumer culture, mass media and intervention of state in the private sphere of the home.
- Difficulty during the time of these philosophies as women were assigned to work and exist in the private sphere where work was not as credited.

*"Nancy Fraser has pointed out that historically women were relegated to the private domestic sphere of the home and elided from the public spaces and discourses of middle- and upper-class European and white men. She defines a women's or a feminist countersphere, among other counterspheres of public discourse and agency. A counterpublic understands itself to be subordinate in some way to the dominant public sphere but is still a site from which people can speak up in society." p.241*

Public and private Spheres: The Internet presents within one website, the ability for millions of users to create their own unique public and private spheres.

#### Democracy in citizen journalism:

- Can the media serve social justice in political movements?

- Communication technologies may be used as empowering tools that promote an open flow of information to exchange ideas i.e. Internet. seen dominating mainstream media and social media.
- Negative's to this is a growing invalidity of information, more use of commissioned freelance journalism, emphasis on turnaround and no structure behind claims.
- Positives: more access to information, more ease of distribution and citizen journalism is one of the primary ways that the Democratic potential of media can be seen today globally and in real time.

#### Marshall McLuhan:

*Many of McLuhan's ideas are now being recycled in the digital media age. In fact, he is the "patron saint" of Wired Magazine, which was established in 1993 to cover computer technologies and web culture. Wired embodies techno-utopianism, and McLuhan's catchy aphorisms, such as his concept of the media creating a "global village," have resonated powerfully with the idea that digital technologies and the Internet have created new forms of community. p243*

#### Jay Rosen:

- Journalism scholar, wrote citizen journalism is when the people formerly known as the audience deployed the press tools they have in their possession to inform one another.

#### Black Lives Matter:

- Key example of social media's use in power is when used to protest and engage in change.
- An example of the case of Walter Scott killed by Officer Micheal Slager, a photo distributed shows him running from the officer, which contradicted the report.
- Another example of this is in August 2014, during protests ensuing the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MI. The image is produced and circulated during these riots/protests extended to signs and phrases such as "hands up, don't shoot". The symbolism behind this is Brown's actions before getting shot; he had his hands up and still was killed by an officer. This phrase and pose becomes iconic of the movement.
- Visual culture practices, in tandem with social media and digital technology are transforming politics and public culture. This is defined by the citizens.

#### Global media events:

- Based on the concept that television is a unifying force.
- An example of this is television coverage across the US and the world during the turn of the millennium from 1999 to 2000.
- Global media events emerged in the late 20th century to early 21st century.
- Another example would be the Olympics or the World Cup.
- Another example is the 9/11 terror tax. One thing that is thought to be considered by the attacker/hijackers of plans that hit New York (Twin Towers) is timing, mainly, that one plane drew attention and focus to the towers after hitting, while another came 15 minutes after, while cameras and viewers we're already fixed and focused on the tower.

- In regard to 9-11, the definition of spectacle would be an event or symbolic image that overshadows the violence/reality behind it. In this case, explosion representing the attack and not the people incinerated in that attack.
- Control of the media coverage after this day in America solidified it as an important memorable point in the century.
- The images, TV coverage and distribution are tied to the meaning of that event in the eyes of the world, each person learns and interprets it differently.
- Live news broadcasts begin with the first crash, audio capture the viewers' real actions in response to the second in real time.

#### 911 in Paris terror attacks (November 2015)

- A comparison of the response in the media surrounding these attacks is different and that is relevant to many things but mainly technology, as social media was used during this time in a significant way.
- This marked the beginning of news sources directly going to social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook for content. Additionally, became a tool to update family on the status of loved ones within Paris if they were safe etc. during the event.
- From here, citizen journalism gained more authority and authenticity.

#### The controversy of graphic imagery:

- When graphic imagery is distributed on such a renowned platform and distributed so profusely through the news, it is concerning and begs the question, should this be censored? This is because Isis used news/media footage and videos distributed on the Internet to call Muslims of Europe to join their terrorist organization.
- Public culture engagement with media is not always in the service of political unity or solidarity around the cost
- Chaize Hebdo: political cartoonist and editors of Charlie Hebdo, a French periodical that featured cartoons of Mohammed and a distorted depiction of Muslims. Controversial discussion and protest for the cartoons resulted in gunmen killing 11 members of their staff in an office one day. People who protest the cartoons came out in support after the killings yet the question is, why were the gunmen driven to do that and how do people not see the connection?

#### Summary:

- Beginning the chapter, Certeau is mentioned and the "walk around the city" is discussed, touching on individual's agency in a preplanned grid. Social media mediation was seen as walking or partaking in participating in the space, situationists and geographic psychology ensued, showing differentiated unique paths will be taken, later in black lives matter and Occupy Wall Street agency is shown through the use of social media and how with NewTek, there is a complex interaction of individual agency. Among broadcasts of mass media through individual input on social media agencies is achieved.