

Sociology Paper 4 - Ilyezaa Nusrat Khan (20260404)

Paper 4

A2 SOCIOLOGY – MEDIA (Paper 4)

9.1

9.1 TRADITIONAL MEDIA vs NEW MEDIA

FOR TRADITIONAL MEDIA IMPORTANCE

McQuail

WHAT he said:

Media responds to audience demand.

WHY he said this:

- Media companies want profit
- They produce content people want to consume

👉 Therefore: media reflects society.

🧠 Audience choice matters

Curran

WHAT he said:

Traditional media still supports democracy.

WHY he said this:

- Investigative journalism
- Holds governments accountable

👉 Therefore: traditional media still matters.

🧠 News protects democracy

Habermas

WHAT he said:

Media creates a public sphere.

WHY he said this:

- Newspapers allow debate
- Citizens discuss public issues

👉 Therefore: media supports participation.

🧠 Media = public debate

Herman & Chomsky

WHAT they said:

Traditional media supports elites.

WHY they said this:

- Owned by wealthy corporations
- Filters information to protect power

👉 Therefore: media is not neutral.

🧠 Elite control

Galtung & Ruge

WHAT they said:

News is socially constructed.

WHY they said this:

- Editors select dramatic, negative stories
- Gatekeeping shapes reality

👉 Therefore: news is biased.

🧠 Gatekeepers decide

AGAINST TRADITIONAL / FOR NEW MEDIA

Castells

WHAT he said:

New media empowers individuals.

WHY he said this:

- Anyone can share opinions
- No central authority

👉 Therefore: power shifts to users.

🧠 Network society

Gauntlett

WHAT he said:

Audiences are active.

WHY he said this:

- People use media to build identity
- Media doesn't force behaviour

👉 Therefore: audience has control.

🧠 Media as a tool

Jenkins

WHAT he said:

Media convergence dominates.

WHY he said this:

- Traditional media moves online
- Platforms merge

👉 Therefore: old vs new divide weakens.

🧠 Everything online

Shirky

WHAT he said:

New media enables participation.

WHY he said this:

- No cost barriers
- Easy organisation

👉 Therefore: collective action increases.

🧠 Participation culture

Livingstone

WHAT she said:

Youth dominate new media.

WHY she said this:

- Digital natives adapt faster
- New media shapes youth culture

👉 Therefore: generational divide grows.

🧠 Youth + technology

9.2

9.2 MEDIA THEORIES & MEDIA CONTENT

MEDIA AS POWERFUL / CONTROLLING

Karl Marx

WHAT he said:

Media promotes ruling-class ideology.

WHY he said this:

- Owners control content
- Capitalism must appear normal

👉 Therefore: inequality is justified.

 Media supports capitalism

Miliband

WHAT he said:

Media owned by elites.

WHY he said this:

- Wealth = control
- Media reflects elite interests

👉 Therefore: power stays at the top.

 Ownership = influence

Gramsci

WHAT he said:

Media creates hegemony.

WHY he said this:

- Control through consent
- Ideas feel natural

👉 Therefore: domination is subtle.

 Consent, not force

Herman & Chomsky

WHAT they said:

Media filters information.

WHY they said this:

- Advertising
- Ownership
- Political pressure

👉 Therefore: truth is shaped.

 Propaganda model

Althusser

WHAT he said:

Media is an ideological state apparatus.

WHY he said this:

- Reinforces norms
- Controls thinking

👉 Therefore: social order is maintained.

🧠 Media shapes beliefs

AGAINST (ACTIVE AUDIENCES)

Stuart Hall

WHAT he said:

Audiences interpret media differently.

WHY he said this:

- Social background shapes meaning

👉 Therefore: media messages aren't fixed.

🧠 Encoding/decoding

David Morley

WHAT he said:

Different classes read media differently.

WHY he said this:

- Experience shapes interpretation

👉 Therefore: audience is active.

🧠 Class matters

McQuail

WHAT he said:

Media is diverse.

WHY he said this:

- Competition creates choice

👉 Therefore: control is limited.

🧠 Pluralism

Baudrillard

WHAT he said:

Media creates hyperreality.

WHY he said this:

- Images replace reality

👉 Therefore: media dominates perception.

🧠 Real vs fake blurred

Postmodernists

WHAT they said:

Truth is fragmented.

WHY they said this:

- No single dominant narrative

👉 Therefore: media influence is unstable.

🧠 No absolute truth

9.3

9.3 IMPACT OF NEW MEDIA

POSITIVE IMPACTS OF NEW MEDIA

Manuel Castells

WHAT he says:

New media increases political participation and democracy.

WHY he says this:

- Social media allows people to:
- Share political views
- Organise protests
- Challenge governments
- Information spreads quickly without state control

👉 Therefore: power shifts from governments to ordinary people.

🧠 Memory hook: New media = digital activism

David Gauntlett

WHAT he says:

New media helps people construct identity.

WHY he says this:

- People actively choose what to post and consume
- Online spaces allow expression of:
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Lifestyle

👉 Therefore: audiences are active, not passive.

🧠 Media is a tool, not a controller

Henry Jenkins

WHAT he says:

New media creates a participatory culture.

WHY he says this:

- Users don't just consume media
- They create, remix, and share content
- Fans become producers

👉 Therefore: media power is shared between producers and users.

🧠 From audience → creator

Clay Shirky

WHAT he says:

New media enables collective action.

WHY he says this:

- No cost barriers to communication
- Easy coordination through platforms
- Large groups can organise quickly

👉 Therefore: social movements grow faster.

🧠 Organisation without leaders

Sonia Livingstone

WHAT she says:

New media has educational benefits.

WHY she says this:

- Access to information and learning resources
- Encourages digital skills
- Interactive learning

👉 Therefore: new media can support development.

🧠 Learning online

NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF NEW MEDIA

Michel Foucault

WHAT he says:

New media increases surveillance.

WHY he says this:

- Online activity is tracked and stored
- Governments and corporations monitor behaviour

👉 Therefore: people self-regulate their actions.

🧠 Digital panopticon

James Curran

WHAT he says:

New media damages journalism.

WHY he says this:

- Algorithms promote:
- Clickbait
- Sensationalism
- Profit matters more than accuracy

👉 Therefore: public knowledge declines.

🧠 Profit over truth

Stanley Cohen

WHAT he says:

New media intensifies moral panics.

WHY he says this:

- News spreads faster online
- Stories are exaggerated
- Public fear increases quickly

👉 Therefore: groups are labelled as threats.

🧠 Fear spreads fast

Marxists

WHAT they say:

New media still serves capitalist interests.

WHY they say this:

- Major platforms owned by corporations
- Advertising and profit dominate content

👉 Therefore: inequality continues in digital form.

🧠 Same power, new platform

Pippa Norris

WHAT she says:

New media creates a digital divide.

WHY she says this:

- Not everyone has:
- Internet access
- Digital skills
- Class, age, and global inequality affect use

👉 Therefore: benefits of new media are unequal.

🧠 Access is unequal

FINAL CONFIDENCE CHECK

- ✓ *WHAT + WHY covered*
- ✓ *Easy recall logic*
- ✓ *35-marker ready*
- ✓ *Safe even without prior study*

If you want essay-ready paragraphs, last-hour cram sheets, or predicted questions, say the word — we'll finish strong 💪📚

10.1

10.1 MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF CLASS, GENDER, ETHNICITY & AGE

CLASS REPRESENTATIONS

Media Misrepresents Class

Stuart Hall

WHAT: Media stereotypes the working class

WHY: Hall argued that media often portray working-class individuals as criminals, lazy, or dependent on welfare. This occurs because media institutions are controlled by powerful groups who want to maintain inequality. By portraying the working class negatively, the media reinforces the idea that social inequality is natural and deserved. This discourages people from questioning social class differences and maintains power for the upper classes.

 Memory: Working class = negative stereotype

Tunstall

WHAT: Working class underrepresented

WHY: Tunstall found that the media tends to focus more on middle-class lifestyles and values. This happens because journalists and media producers are usually middle class themselves, so they represent what they are familiar with. As a result, working-class experiences are ignored or portrayed negatively, reinforcing inequality and making middle-class life seem normal and desirable.

 Memory: Middle class dominate

Curran & Seaton

WHAT: Media controlled by powerful elites

WHY: Curran and Seaton argued that media ownership is concentrated among wealthy individuals and corporations. These owners influence content to protect their interests. As a result, the media portrays upper-class lifestyles positively and working-class lifestyles negatively. This reinforces inequality and ensures that dominant groups maintain power.

 Memory: Owners control media

Gerbner

WHAT: Media exaggerates class differences

WHY: Gerbner found that television often shows wealthy lifestyles and high-status occupations. Working-class people are underrepresented or shown in limited roles. This creates unrealistic expectations about society and makes inequality appear normal and acceptable.

 Memory: TV = Rich world

Gans

WHAT: Working class portrayed as deviants

WHY: Gans argued that the media often focuses on crime, poverty, and social problems associated with working-class communities. This reinforces negative stereotypes and creates the impression that working-class individuals are problematic. These portrayals help justify inequality and maintain social divisions.

 Memory: Working class = deviant

Media Reflects Class Diversity

David Morley

WHAT: Audience interprets differently

WHY: Morley argued that audiences interpret media content differently depending on their social class. Working-class audiences may reject negative portrayals, while middle-class audiences may accept them. This shows media representations do not fully control people's views.

 Memory: Class shapes interpretation

Stuart Hall (Reception Theory)

WHAT: Active audiences

WHY: Hall argued audiences decode media messages in different ways — dominant, negotiated, or oppositional readings. This means audiences are not passive and may challenge class stereotypes instead of accepting them.

 Memory: Accept / reject / negotiate

John Fiske

WHAT: Audience resistance

WHY: Fiske argued audiences actively create meaning from media content. Working-class audiences may resist negative stereotypes and interpret media in ways that reflect their own experiences. This reduces media influence.

 Memory: Audience resists

Gauntlett

WHAT: Media offers diverse identities

WHY: Gauntlett argued modern media provides multiple representations of social class. People can choose which representations to identify with, allowing more flexibility and diversity.

 Memory: Identity choice

Postmodernists

WHAT: Increased diversity

WHY: New media platforms such as social media allow working-class voices to be heard. This reduces traditional stereotypes and increases representation.

 Memory: More voices

GENDER REPRESENTATIONS

Media Reinforces Gender Stereotypes

Gaye Tuchman

WHAT: Symbolic annihilation

WHY: Tuchman argued women are underrepresented or shown in limited roles such as housewives or caregivers. This suggests women are less important in society. By reinforcing traditional roles, media maintains gender inequality and male dominance.

 Memory: Women invisible

Angela McRobbie

WHAT: Women portrayed in traditional roles

WHY: McRobbie found women's magazines often focus on beauty, relationships, and domestic life. This encourages women to prioritize appearance and family rather than careers. These portrayals reinforce traditional gender expectations.

 Memory: Women domestic

Laura Mulvey

WHAT: Male gaze

WHY: Mulvey argued media portrays women as sexual objects designed for male pleasure. This objectification reinforces male dominance and reduces women to their physical appearance.

 Memory: Women sexualised

Van Zoonen

WHAT: Media is patriarchal

WHY: Van Zoonen argued that media industries are male dominated. Male producers influence portrayals of women, reinforcing stereotypes and gender inequality.

 Memory: Male control

Kilbourne

WHAT: Women objectified in advertising

WHY: Kilbourne argued advertising often portrays women as passive and sexualized. This shapes public attitudes and reinforces gender inequality.

 Memory: Women object

Gender Representation Improving

Gauntlett

WHAT: Diverse gender identities

WHY: Gauntlett argued modern media offers more varied portrayals of women such as strong, independent characters. This allows individuals to form their own identities.

 Memory: Strong women

McRobbie (Later)

WHAT: New female roles

WHY: McRobbie later argued media now portrays women as independent and successful.

This reflects changing gender roles in society.

 Memory: Independent women

Gill

WHAT: Post-feminist media

WHY: Gill argued modern media portrays women as empowered and confident. Women are shown as having choices and independence.

 Memory: Empowered women

Butler

WHAT: Gender fluidity

WHY: Butler argued media now represents diverse gender identities. This challenges traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

 Memory: Gender flexible

Postmodernists

WHAT: Diverse representations

WHY: Media diversity allows multiple portrayals of gender roles. This reduces stereotypes and increases equality.

 Memory: Diversity

ETHNICITY REPRESENTATIONS

Media Misrepresents Ethnic Minorities

Stuart Hall

WHAT: Ethnic minorities stereotyped negatively

WHY: Hall argued that media often portrays ethnic minorities as criminals, immigrants, or social problems. This happens because media organisations reflect dominant white perspectives. These negative portrayals reinforce racial stereotypes and create fear among

audiences. This also justifies discrimination and maintains inequality between ethnic groups.

 Memory: Minorities = crime stereotype

Van Dijk

WHAT: Media promotes racial stereotypes

WHY: Van Dijk found that news media often emphasises negative stories involving ethnic minorities, such as crime or conflict. Positive contributions of minorities are ignored. This creates biased public perceptions and reinforces racial inequality.

 Memory: News = minority negative

Hartmann & Husband

WHAT: Moral panic about ethnic minorities

WHY: They argued media exaggerates threats from ethnic minorities. This creates fear and hostility. The media frames minorities as dangerous, encouraging discrimination and reinforcing social divisions.

 Memory: Minority panic

Gilroy

WHAT: Ethnic minorities misrepresented

WHY: Gilroy argued media stereotypes minorities as deviant or problematic. This reinforces racism and shapes public attitudes. Media representations create the idea that minorities are outsiders.

 Memory: Minority outsider

Barker

WHAT: New racism

WHY: Barker argued media promotes cultural racism instead of biological racism. Minorities are portrayed as culturally different or incompatible, reinforcing prejudice.

 Memory: Cultural racism

Ethnic Representation Improving

Cottle

WHAT: Increasing diversity

WHY: Cottle argued modern media includes more ethnic minority representation. This reflects multicultural societies and reduces stereotypes.

 Memory: Diversity growing

Gauntlett

WHAT: Media allows identity choice

WHY: Modern media offers diverse ethnic representation. Individuals can choose identities that reflect their experiences.

 Memory: Identity choice

Stuart Hall (Later View)

WHAT: Representation improving

WHY: Hall later argued media now shows more positive minority representation, reflecting social change.

 Memory: Changing representation

Gilroy (Later)

WHAT: Multicultural media

WHY: Increasing diversity allows minorities to represent themselves, reducing stereotypes.

 Memory: Multicultural media

Postmodernists

WHAT: Media diversity

WHY: Social media platforms allow minorities to create their own content, improving representation.

 Memory: Minority voice

AGE REPRESENTATIONS

Negative Age Representation

Stanley Cohen

WHAT: Youth moral panic

WHY: Cohen studied how the media exaggerated the behaviour of young people, particularly in his study of the Mods and Rockers in the UK. He argued that media sensationalism made youth appear more dangerous than they actually were. The media labelled young people as deviant, which increased public fear and led to harsher policing and social control. This shows media representations can create negative stereotypes about youth and influence society's perception of young people.

 Memory: Youth exaggerated

Griffiths

WHAT: Youth portrayed as problematic

WHY: Griffiths argued that media frequently portrays young people as involved in crime, violence, drugs, and anti-social behaviour. This happens because negative stories attract more attention and increase media profits. As a result, audiences begin to associate youth with deviance, reinforcing stereotypes and creating fear about younger generations.

 Memory: Youth = deviant

Gerbner

WHAT: Elderly underrepresented in media

WHY: Gerbner argued that television tends to focus on younger people because they are seen as more attractive and commercially valuable. Older people appear less frequently, and when they do appear, they are often shown in limited roles. This creates the impression that older people are less important in society and reinforces age inequality.

 Memory: Elderly invisible

Robinson

WHAT: Elderly portrayed negatively

WHY: Robinson found that older people are often portrayed as weak, dependent, lonely, or physically and mentally incapable. These portrayals reinforce negative stereotypes and encourage society to see older individuals as burdens rather than active contributors. This also affects how elderly people see themselves.

 Memory: Weak elderly

Blaikie

WHAT: Elderly represented as dependent

WHY: Blaikie argued that media often portrays older people as dependent on family, healthcare, or welfare systems. These portrayals reinforce the idea that ageing is associated with decline and dependency. This leads to age discrimination and negative attitudes toward older individuals.

 Memory: Dependent elderly

Positive Age Representation

Featherstone & Hepworth

WHAT: Youthful ageing

WHY: Featherstone and Hepworth argued that modern media increasingly portrays older people as active, healthy, and independent. Advertisements often show elderly individuals travelling, exercising, and enjoying life. This reflects changing lifestyles and challenges traditional stereotypes of ageing.

 Memory: Active elderly

David Gauntlett

WHAT: Diverse age identities

WHY: Gauntlett argued that modern media provides a wide range of age representations. Older people are now shown in professional roles, leadership positions, and active lifestyles. This allows individuals to shape their own identities rather than being limited by stereotypes.

 Memory: Age diversity

Vincent

WHAT: Positive ageing

WHY: Vincent argued that media increasingly portrays ageing as a positive experience. Older individuals are shown as successful, independent, and socially active. This challenges the traditional negative portrayals of ageing and promotes more positive attitudes.

 Memory: Positive ageing

Carrigan

WHAT: Active elderly representation

WHY: Carrigan argued that media increasingly portrays older individuals as active members of society. Older people are shown working, travelling, and engaging in hobbies. This reflects social changes such as longer life expectancy and improved health.

 Memory: Active elderly

Postmodernists

WHAT: Age boundaries blurred

WHY: Postmodernists argue that modern media blurs traditional age boundaries. Older people may adopt youthful lifestyles, while young people may take on adult roles earlier. Media representations now reflect flexible age identities rather than fixed stages of life.

 Memory: Age flexible

10.2

10.2 DIFFERENT MODELS OF MEDIA EFFECTS

Media Has Strong Effects (Direct Effects Model)

The Hypodermic Syringe Model

WHAT: Media directly influences audiences

WHY: This model suggests media messages are “injected” into passive audiences who

accept them without questioning. Early media researchers believed audiences lacked critical thinking skills, so they were easily influenced by violent or biased media content. This model assumes audiences behave according to what they see in the media. For example, exposure to violence in films or games may encourage aggressive behaviour.

 Memory: Media injects ideas

Albert Bandura

WHAT: Social learning theory

WHY: Bandura argued that people learn behaviour through observation and imitation. In his Bobo Doll experiment, children watched adults behave aggressively toward a doll and later copied this behaviour. This suggests media violence can influence audiences, especially children, to imitate aggressive behaviour. Media provides role models and audiences learn through rewards and punishments shown in media.

 Memory: Copy behaviour

Gerbner

WHAT: Cultivation theory

WHY: Gerbner argued that long-term exposure to media gradually shapes people's perceptions of reality. Heavy TV viewers may believe the world is more dangerous than it actually is. This is known as the Mean World Syndrome. Over time, repeated exposure influences attitudes and beliefs.

 Memory: TV shapes reality

Cohen

WHAT: Moral panic

WHY: Cohen argued media exaggerates social problems and creates public fear. His study of Mods and Rockers showed how media labelled youth as deviant, leading to increased police control. Media can influence public opinion and government policy.

 Memory: Media creates panic

Gerbner & Gross

WHAT: Mean world syndrome

WHY: They found heavy television viewers believe crime rates are higher than they actually

are. Media exposure influences perceptions of danger and risk.

 Memory: World seems dangerous

AGAINST: Media Effects Are Limited

Joseph Klapper

WHAT: Limited Effects Model

WHY: Klapper argued that media does not directly influence audiences because people are influenced more by social factors such as family, friends, education, religion, and personal beliefs. He believed individuals do not passively accept media messages; instead, they interpret them based on their existing values. Media therefore tends to reinforce existing attitudes rather than change behaviour. For example, someone already aggressive may be influenced by violent media, but media alone does not create aggression.

 Memory: Media reinforces beliefs

Katz & Lazarsfeld

WHAT: Two-step flow model

WHY: Katz and Lazarsfeld argued that media messages do not directly affect audiences. Instead, media influences opinion leaders, who then interpret messages and pass them on to others. Opinion leaders may include teachers, parents, celebrities, or community leaders. This means audiences are influenced more by personal relationships than by media itself, limiting media effects.

 Memory: Opinion leaders filter media

Carl Hovland

WHAT: Media effects depend on audience characteristics

WHY: Hovland conducted research on media propaganda and found that media influence varies depending on factors such as age, education, intelligence, and social background. For example, more educated audiences are less likely to be influenced by media messages. This suggests audiences are not passive and media effects are limited.

 Memory: Depends on audience

Stuart Hall

WHAT: Reception theory (active audiences)

WHY: Hall argued that audiences actively interpret media messages. He identified three readings:

- Dominant reading (accept message)
- Negotiated reading (partly accept)
- Oppositional reading (reject message)

This shows audiences are not passive and media effects are not direct. People interpret media based on personal experiences, culture, and beliefs.

 Memory: Accept / reject / negotiate

David Gauntlett

WHAT: Media effects are complex

WHY: Gauntlett criticised earlier theories for assuming audiences are passive. He argued people actively choose media and interpret it differently. Media effects vary depending on context, personality, and environment. This makes media influence indirect and unpredictable.

 Memory: Effects complex

McQuail

WHAT: Media effects indirect

WHY: McQuail argued media influence is indirect and depends on social context, interpersonal relationships, and personal interpretation. He believed media rarely causes direct behavioural change and instead works alongside other social influences.

 Memory: Indirect influence

10.3

10.3 IMPACT OF MEDIA ON BEHAVIOUR

FOR: Media Influences Behaviour

Albert Bandura

WHAT: Social Learning Theory (Imitation of behaviour)

WHY: Bandura argued that people learn behaviour by observing others, including media characters. In his Bobo Doll experiment, children watched adults acting aggressively toward a doll. When later given the same doll, children copied the aggressive behaviour. This suggests that media provides role models, and audiences — especially children — imitate behaviours they see. If violent behaviour is rewarded in media, audiences may believe it is acceptable and copy it.

 Memory: Copy behaviour

George Gerbner

WHAT: Cultivation Theory

WHY: Gerbner argued that long-term exposure to media shapes people's perception of reality. Heavy television viewers may believe the world is more dangerous than it actually is. This is called Mean World Syndrome. Over time, repeated exposure influences attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour, making audiences fearful and more supportive of law and order policies.

 Memory: TV shapes reality

Stanley Cohen

WHAT: Moral Panic

WHY: Cohen argued that media exaggerates deviant behaviour and creates fear in society. His study of Mods and Rockers showed how media exaggerated youth violence, leading to increased public concern and stricter policing. Media can influence behaviour by creating fear and encouraging social control.

 Memory: Media creates panic

Anderson & Bushman

WHAT: Media violence increases aggression

WHY: Anderson and Bushman conducted research on violent video games and found exposure increased aggressive thoughts and behaviour. They argued repeated exposure desensitises individuals to violence, making aggressive behaviour more likely.

 Memory: Violent games = aggression

Postman

WHAT: Media harms childhood behaviour

WHY: Postman argued television exposes children to adult themes such as violence, crime, and sexuality. This removes childhood innocence and encourages adult-like behaviour at a younger age. Children become influenced by media rather than family or school.

 Memory: Childhood disappears

Gerbner & Gross

WHAT: Mean World Syndrome

WHY: They found heavy TV viewers were more likely to believe crime rates were high and felt unsafe. This influences behaviour such as avoiding certain areas and supporting stricter laws.

 Memory: World seems dangerous

Newson

WHAT: Media influences children's behaviour

WHY: Newson argued children who watch large amounts of television are more likely to become passive, less creative, and more influenced by media behaviour. This can shape attitudes and behaviour over time.

 Memory: Media shapes children

AGAINST: Media Has Limited Impact on Behaviour

Joseph Klapper

WHAT: Media reinforces behaviour rather than creates it

WHY: Klapper argued that media does not directly change behaviour. Instead, individuals interpret media through existing beliefs shaped by family, education, and social environment. Media strengthens existing attitudes rather than creating new ones. For example, someone already aggressive may be influenced by violent media, but media alone does not cause aggression.

 Memory: Reinforce behaviour

Katz & Lazarsfeld

WHAT: Opinion leaders influence behaviour

WHY: They argued that people are influenced more by opinion leaders than by media directly. Opinion leaders interpret media messages and pass them on. This reduces direct media influence on behaviour.

 Memory: Opinion leaders matter

Stuart Hall

WHAT: Active audience

WHY: Hall argued audiences interpret media messages differently based on social background and personal experiences. This means media does not directly influence behaviour because audiences may reject media messages.

 Memory: Audience active

David Gauntlett

WHAT: Media influence is complex

WHY: Gauntlett argued that behaviour is influenced by many factors such as family, friends, education, and environment. Media is only one influence among many. Therefore, media does not directly cause behaviour.

 Memory: Many influences

McQuail

WHAT: Media effects indirect

WHY: McQuail argued media effects depend on social context. People interpret media differently, limiting media influence on behaviour.

 Memory: Indirect behaviour

Buckingham

WHAT: Children actively interpret media

WHY: Buckingham argued children are not passive audiences. They understand media is fictional and interpret it critically. Therefore, media does not directly influence behaviour.

 Memory: Children active

Sonia Livingstone

WHAT: Media effects depend on context

WHY: Livingstone argued that media effects vary depending on family background, education, and environment. Media alone does not determine behaviour.

🧠 Memory: Context matters

Uses & Gratifications Theory (Blumler & Katz)

WHAT: Audience chooses media

WHY: This theory argues audiences actively choose media to satisfy needs such as entertainment, information, or identity. This suggests audiences are active and not influenced directly by media.

🧠 Memory: Audience chooses

Durkheim (Alternative sociological view)

WHAT: Behaviour shaped by society

WHY: Durkheim argued behaviour is shaped by social norms and values rather than media. This suggests media influence is limited compared to socialization.

🧠 Memory: Society shapes behaviour

A2 SOCIOLOGY – RELIGION (Paper 4)

11.1

11.1 Religion and Society

Religion Benefits Society (FOR)

Émile Durkheim — Religion creates social solidarity

What he said: Religion strengthens social unity and shared values. Religious rituals bring people together and create collective conscience.

Why he said it (expanded): Durkheim studied Aboriginal tribes in Australia and found that religious ceremonies made people feel part of something bigger than themselves. When

people worship together, they reinforce shared beliefs and moral values. This helps maintain social order and stability.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Unity + Shared values

Talcott Parsons — Religion gives meaning to life

What he said: Religion helps people deal with uncertainty and suffering.

Why he said it (expanded): Life has unpredictable events like death, illness, and disasters.

Religion explains why bad things happen and gives comfort. This reduces anxiety and helps people accept difficult situations.

Example: Religion explains death as “God’s will” or “afterlife”

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Comfort in hard times

Malinowski — Religion reduces anxiety

What he said: Religion helps people cope with stressful situations.

Why he said it (expanded): Malinowski studied fishermen in the Trobriand Islands.

- When fishing in safe lagoons, no religion used
- When fishing in dangerous ocean, rituals performed

This shows religion appears when people feel uncertain.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Reduces fear

Robert Bellah — Civil Religion

What he said: Religion strengthens national unity.

Why he said it (expanded): Bellah argued that countries like USA have “civil religion” — shared national beliefs like:

- God bless America
- National ceremonies
- Patriotic rituals

These create unity even among different religions.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = National unity

Peter Berger — Religion gives meaning

What he said: Religion creates a sacred canopy — shared beliefs that give life meaning.

Why he said it (expanded): Without religion, life may seem chaotic. Religion provides answers about:

- Life
- Death
- Purpose

This helps society remain stable.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Meaning and stability

Religion Harms Society (AGAINST)

Karl Marx — Religion is oppression

What he said: Religion is the “opium of the people”

Why he said it (expanded): Marx believed religion distracts poor people from inequality.

Religion teaches:

- Accept suffering
- Reward in afterlife

This prevents people from challenging inequality.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Control poor people

Lenin — Religion supports ruling class

What he said: Religion keeps working class obedient.

Why he said it (expanded): Religion teaches:

- Obey authority
- Accept social hierarchy

This benefits wealthy elites.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Keeps poor obedient

Feminists (Simone de Beauvoir) — Religion oppresses women

What she said: Religion supports patriarchy.

Why she said it (expanded):

Many religions:

- Male leaders
- Women submissive roles
- Gender inequality

Example: women can't be priests in some religions.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Patriarchy

Richard Dawkins — Religion causes conflict

What he said: Religion creates violence and division.

Why he said it (expanded): Different religions have conflicting beliefs. This leads to:

- Wars
- Terrorism
- Conflict

Example:

- Religious wars
- Extremism

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Conflict

Max Weber (Critical view) — Religion can divide society

What he said: Different religions create different lifestyles.

Why he said it (expanded): Religious beliefs shape behaviour differently. This creates division instead of unity.

Example:

- Different moral rules
- Cultural conflict

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Division

A. Difficulties in Measuring Religious Belief

FOR: Religious belief CAN be measured

Glock & Stark

WHAT: Religion has 5 dimensions – belief, practice, experience, knowledge, consequences

WHY: Measuring only belief or attendance is too simple; multiple indicators give validity

EXAMPLE: Someone may not attend church but still pray and believe

KEY IDEA: Multi-dimensional measurement

 Memory: More dimensions = better measurement

Grace Davie

WHAT: Believing without belonging

WHY: People still believe but reject organised religion; belief has become private, not absent

EXAMPLE: Belief shown through surveys and interviews, not attendance

 Memory: Faith goes private, not extinct

Steve Bruce

WHAT: Attendance and membership data are useful

WHY: Religion's power lies in institutions, not private belief

EXAMPLE: Churches no longer shape law or morals

 Memory: Weak institutions = weak religion

Émile Durkheim

WHAT: Religion is a social fact expressed through rituals

WHY: Collective rituals are observable and measurable

EXAMPLE: Religious ceremonies creating social solidarity

 Memory: Rituals show belief

Max Weber

WHAT: Religious beliefs shape behaviour

WHY: Belief influences real-world action

EXAMPLE: Protestant Ethic encouraged hard work and capitalism

 Memory: Belief → behaviour

AGAINST: Religious belief is difficult to measure

Meredith McGuire

WHAT: Religion is subjective

WHY: Same answers can mean different beliefs

EXAMPLE: Two believers interpret God differently

 Memory: Same answer ≠ same belief

Danièle Hervieu-Léger

WHAT: Religion is fragmented and individualised

WHY: Beliefs are no longer inherited or shared

EXAMPLE: Personal belief systems with no tradition

 Memory: No shared religion

Steve Bruce (critical view)

WHAT: Official statistics exaggerate belief

WHY: People identify religiously for cultural reasons

EXAMPLE: “Christian” by name only

 Memory: Label ≠ belief

Grace Davie (critical view)

WHAT: Practice does not equal belief

WHY: Attendance may be due to tradition or pressure

 Memory: Actions mislead

Postmodernists

WHAT: Religion is pick-and-mix

WHY: No fixed beliefs to measure

 Memory: Mixed beliefs

B. Religion and Other Belief Systems

Religion replaced by other belief systems

Durkheim

WHAT: Religion creates social cohesion

WHY: Shared beliefs unite society

EXAMPLE: National rituals replacing religion

 Memory: Cohesion function

Bellah

WHAT: Civil religion

WHY: Nation becomes sacred

EXAMPLE: Flags, anthems, national ceremonies

 Memory: Nation as religion

Marx

WHAT: Religion is false consciousness

WHY: It controls the working class

EXAMPLE: Promise of heaven to justify suffering

 Memory: Opium of the people

Heelas

WHAT: Spirituality replaces religion

WHY: Focus on self, not God

 Memory: Self-spirituality

Parsons

WHAT: Shared values replace religion

WHY: Society still needs moral integration

 Memory: Functional alternative

11.2

11.2 Religion and Social Order

This topic asks:

Does religion maintain social order or create conflict?

Religion Maintains Social Order (FOR)

Émile Durkheim — Religion creates social cohesion

What he said: Religion creates shared values and norms that keep society stable.

Why he said it (Expanded): Durkheim believed society needs value consensus to function properly. Religion creates this by teaching people what is right and wrong. Religious rituals also bring people together, strengthening unity. When people share beliefs, they are more likely to cooperate and maintain order.

Example: Religious ceremonies like weddings and funerals bring communities together.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Unity and stability

Talcott Parsons — Religion reinforces social values

What he said: Religion supports society's core values and moral beliefs.

Why he said it (Expanded): Parsons believed religion helps maintain value consensus.

Religion teaches values like honesty, respect, and responsibility. These values encourage people to follow rules and behave properly, which helps maintain social order.

Example: Religious teachings like “do not steal” promote law-abiding behaviour.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Moral control

Peter Berger — Sacred canopy maintains order

What he said: Religion provides a shared meaning system that stabilizes society.

Why he said it (Expanded): Berger argued that religion creates a sacred canopy — shared beliefs that give meaning to life. Without this, people may feel confused or uncertain. Religion helps people understand their place in society, reducing conflict and maintaining stability.

Example: Religion explains suffering as “God’s plan”, helping people accept hardship.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Meaning + Stability

Bronisław Malinowski — Religion promotes social control

What he said: Religion encourages people to behave morally.

Why he said it (Expanded): Malinowski believed religion promotes social order because people fear supernatural punishment. This encourages them to follow moral rules. Religion also provides guidance during stressful events, preventing chaos.

Example: Belief in heaven and hell influences behaviour.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Behaviour control

Robert Bellah — Civil religion creates unity

What he said: Civil religion strengthens national identity and order.

Why he said it (Expanded): Bellah argued that countries develop civil religion through shared symbols, rituals, and beliefs. This helps unite people and reduce conflict, even if they follow different religions.

Example:

National holidays and patriotic ceremonies

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = National unity

Religion Creates Conflict (AGAINST)

Karl Marx — Religion supports inequality

What he said: Religion maintains class inequality.

Why he said it (Expanded): Marx believed religion teaches people to accept their position in society. The ruling class benefits because religion discourages rebellion. This creates conflict between social classes.

Example: Religion promises reward in afterlife instead of improving current life.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Class conflict

Max Weber — Religion creates division

What he said: Different religions create different lifestyles.

Why he said it (Expanded): Weber believed religious beliefs influence behaviour. Different religious groups develop different values, which can lead to conflict and social division.

Example:

Different religious views on lifestyle and morality

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Division

Feminists — Religion reinforces patriarchy

What they said: Religion supports male dominance.

Why they said it (Expanded): Many religions place men in leadership roles. Women are often expected to be submissive. This creates gender inequality and conflict.

Example:

Male priests and religious leaders

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Gender inequality

Richard Dawkins — Religion causes violence

What he said: Religion leads to conflict and extremism.

Why he said it (Expanded): Different religious beliefs often clash. This can lead to wars, discrimination, and terrorism. Dawkins argues religion divides society rather than uniting it.

Example:

Religious conflicts worldwide

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Conflict

Steve Bruce — Religion creates divisions

What he said: Religion divides society into groups.

Why he said it (Expanded): Bruce argues that different religious groups compete and disagree. This weakens social unity and increases conflict.

Example:

Sectarian conflict

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Social division

11.3

11.3 Religion as a Source of Social Change

This topic asks:

Does religion cause social change or prevent it?

Religion Causes Social Change (FOR)

Max Weber — Protestant Ethic and Capitalism

What he said:

Religion helped develop capitalism.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Weber argued that Protestant beliefs encouraged:

- Hard work
- Saving money
- Discipline

These values helped capitalism grow. Protestants believed success was a sign of being chosen by God.

Example:

Protestant countries developed capitalism faster

Easy memory:

👉 Religion → Capitalism

Bruce — Civil Rights Movement

What he said:

Religion helped social movements.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Bruce studied the American Civil Rights Movement. Churches provided leadership, resources, and motivation. Religion gave people courage to fight inequality.

Example:

Martin Luther King Jr.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Protest

Liberation Theology — Gutierrez

What he said:

Religion helped poor people fight inequality.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Liberation theology developed in Latin America. Priests supported poor communities against elites. Religion became a tool for social justice.

Example:

Catholic priests supporting protests

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Social justice

Millenarian Movements

What they are:

Religious movements expecting dramatic change.

Why they cause change (Expanded):

People believe God will transform society. This motivates them to challenge inequality and demand change.

Example:

Revolutionary religious groups

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Revolution

Calvinism — Weber

What he said:

Calvinism encouraged economic success.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Calvinists believed in predestination. People worked hard to prove they were chosen by God.

This helped capitalism grow.

Easy memory:

👉 Calvinism = Capitalism

Religion Prevents Social Change (AGAINST)

Karl Marx — Religion prevents revolution

What he said:

Religion keeps people passive.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Religion promises happiness in the afterlife. This makes people accept suffering instead of fighting inequality.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = No change

Antonio Gramsci — Religion supports hegemony

What he said:

Religion spreads ruling class ideas.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Religion encourages acceptance of authority. This supports existing power structures and prevents change.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Control

Kautsky — Religion conservative

What he said:

Religion promotes tradition.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Religion supports traditional values and discourages radical change.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Tradition

Steve Bruce — Religion often conservative

What he said:

Religion usually supports status quo.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Religious institutions often support governments and authority.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Stability

Maduro — Religion focuses on personal change

What he said:

Religion rarely causes social change.

Why he said it (Expanded):

Religion focuses on individual spirituality rather than changing society.

Easy memory:

👉 Religion = Personal focus

12.1

12.1 THE SECULARIZATION DEBATE

FOR: Religion is declining

Bryan Wilson

WHAT: Religion has lost social significance

WHY: Science, rational thinking, and bureaucracy replace traditional religious authority;
religion no longer shapes society as it once did

🧠 Memory: Religion replaced

Max Weber

WHAT: Disenchantment of the world

WHY: Rationalization and scientific explanations remove mystery and supernatural meaning from life; religion becomes less central

🧠 Memory: Science kills magic

Steve Bruce

WHAT: Pluralism weakens belief

WHY: Multiple religions compete, no single religion has authority, so faith and commitment decline.

🧠 Memory: Too many choices

Peter Berger (early)

WHAT: Pluralism → relativism

WHY: Exposure to many religions makes beliefs appear uncertain; people question absolute truth

🧠 Memory: No single truth

Talcott Parsons

WHAT: Structural differentiation

WHY: Modern society divides institutions (education, government, health), so religion loses control and influence

🧠 Memory: Religion sidelined

AGAINST: Religion is changing, not declining

Grace Davie

WHAT: Believing without belonging

WHY: People may maintain private faith and belief even if they no longer attend religious services.

🧠 Memory: Private faith

Stark & Bainbridge

WHAT: Religious market theory

WHY: Human demand for religion never disappears; supply and competition shape participation

🧠 Memory: Demand constant

José Casanova

WHAT: Religion still public globally

WHY: In many countries, religion retains influence in politics, law, and society

🧠 Memory: Global religion alive

Norris & Inglehart

WHAT: Existential security theory

WHY: People turn to religion when life is insecure; wealth and security reduce religious participation 🧠 Memory: Insecurity = religion

Peter Berger (later)

WHAT: Desecularisation

WHY: Later in life, Berger acknowledged religion remains significant worldwide

🧠 Memory: Berger changed his mind

12.2

12.2 GENDER, FEMINISM & RELIGION

Religion is patriarchal

Simone de Beauvoir

WHAT: Religion supports patriarchy

WHY: Religious institutions and teachings maintain male dominance

🧠 Memory: Men control religion

Nawal El Saadawi

WHAT: Religion controls women's sexuality

WHY: Rules and practices regulate women's bodies and behavior

 Memory: Control bodies

Shulamith Firestone

WHAT: Inequality justified as divine

WHY: Religious texts or beliefs present male dominance as God-given. Also she said that it's presumed by men that biological factors of a woman make her weak compared to men (period, pregnancy, breastfeeding)

 Memory: God justifies oppression

Linda Woodhead

WHAT: Male God = male power

WHY: Religious symbols reflect male authority and reinforce social hierarchy

 Memory: Symbolic patriarchy

Karen Armstrong

WHAT: Women excluded from leadership

WHY: Institutional religion limits female authority and decision-making

 Memory: No authority roles

Religion can empower women

Linda Woodhead

WHAT: NAMs (New Age Movements) empower women

WHY: Women can pursue spiritual freedom outside patriarchal institutions

 Memory: Spiritual freedom

Steve Bruce

WHAT: Conservative religion offers certainty

WHY: Some women value structure, guidance, and moral clarity

 Memory: Order & stability

Grace Davie

WHAT: Women sustain religion

WHY: Women are often the main participants, keeping religious practices alive

 Memory: Women keep faith alive

Andrew Greeley

WHAT: Emotional support

WHY: Religion provides comfort and support, especially for women

 Memory: Comfort

NRM theorists

WHAT: New roles for women

WHY: New Religious Movements offer women leadership, autonomy, and alternative power

 Memory: Alternative power

12.3

12.3 RELIGION & POSTMODERNITY

Postmodern views

Hervieu-Léger

WHAT: Spiritual marketplace

WHY: People “shop” for religious beliefs and practices to suit personal needs

 Memory: Religious shopping

Paul Heelas

WHAT: Self-spirituality

WHY: Religion becomes about personal growth and self-fulfillment, not institutional authority

 Memory: Me-centred faith

Anthony Giddens

WHAT: Fundamentalism vs choice

WHY: People either retreat to strict beliefs for certainty or pick and mix beliefs for personal meaning

🧠 Memory: Two reactions

David Lyon

WHAT: Consumer/mediated religion

WHY: Religion is shaped by media, consumption, and personal choice

🧠 Memory: Branded religion

Zygmunt Bauman

WHAT: Liquid religion

WHY: Beliefs are flexible, individual, and constantly changing

🧠 Memory: Nothing fixed

Against Postmodernism

Steve Bruce

WHAT: Choice weakens religious commitment

WHY: Too much freedom in belief and practice leads to superficial or selective faith; people may not stick deeply to one religion

🧠 Memory: Weak faith

Bryan Wilson

WHAT: Institutions still declining

WHY: Churches, mosques, and other religious organizations are losing influence and authority despite claims of personalized religion

🧠 Memory: Empty churches

Marxists

WHAT: Religion still ideology

WHY: Religion continues to serve the ruling class, giving false hope to the oppressed and maintaining inequality

 Memory: False hope

Functionalists

WHAT: Weak shared values

WHY: Postmodern, individualized religion reduces common norms and collective moral guidance, weakening social cohesion

 Memory: No unity

Secularists

WHAT: Authority diluted

WHY: Pluralism and postmodern diversity prevent any single religion from guiding society or enforcing moral rules

 Memory: Loss of control