

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION  
EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER: 2007/2008

TITLE OF PAPER:            MASS COMMUNICATION THEORY  
COURSE CODE:             JMC 213  
TIME ALLOWED:            THREE (3) HOURS  
INSTRUCTIONS:            1. Answer **four (4)** questions.  
                                  2. Number 1 is **compulsory**.  
                                  3. Write **legibly**, that is, **boldly** and **clearly**.  
                                  4. Evince the principles of **composition** and **grammar**.

THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN  
GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

## JMC 213: MASS COMMUNICATION THEORY

1. **Answer A or B. (30 marks)**
- A: Mass communication theories may be examined according to certain parameters and evaluated according to certain criteria.
- (i) **Identify and explain** five parameters for examining mass communication theories. **(10 marks)**
  - (ii) **Identify and explain** five criteria for evaluating mass communication theories. **(10 marks)**
  - (iii) **Analyse** any one of the following theories of mass communication in terms of the five parameters you have explained. **(10 marks)**
    - a) Authoritarian theory
    - b) Diffusion theory
    - c) Two-step flow theory
- B. When the ordinary person talks about *theory*, he is operating in a world different from that of the scientist. And when the ordinary person says, for example, "I have a theory about why people don't disclose everything about themselves to others," he/she may not be able to explain herself/himself with any particular theory as a communication expert would do. The point, of course, is that the word *theory* could be used in many senses, not only by lay people, but also by scientists.
- (i) In *Communication Theory*, Ernest G. Bormann (1980) articulates **four senses** in which the term *theory* has been used. **State TWO** of these senses in which the word is used, according to Bormann. **(5 marks)**
  - (ii) **Explain** the *goals* of theory. **(10 marks)**
  - (iii) Answer A or b. **(15 marks)**
    - A **Explain** Dance and Larson's *functional theory*.
    - B. A communication expert would use a particular theory of interpersonal communication to explain what the layman is referring to, when he says: "I have a theory about why people don't disclose everything about themselves to others." **Identify and explain** this
2. Assumptions are one of the components of theories. **State and explain** four popular assumptions of communication, generally speaking. **(10 marks)**
3. **Identify** the components of the Coordinated Management of Meaning theory OR the Narrative theory, and **relate** it to a personal experience of yours. **(10 marks)**
4. **Discuss** the categories of mass communication theories articulated by Denis McQuail, and **comment** on the usefulness of his classification. **(10 marks)**
- 5 **Write** brief notes on three of the following: **(10 marks)**
- (i) Dependency theory
  - (ii) Mass society theory
  - (iii) Cultivation theory
  - (iv) Critical cultural theory
  - (v) Media Feminist theory
  - (vi) Uses and gratifications theory
6. **State** the major divisions of *language*; then, briefly **discuss** the division that deals with *meaning*.