

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION
2016/2017 EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER: MAIN

TITLE OF PAPER: MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY

COURSE CODE: JMC 344/246

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. ANSWER ANY FOUR QUESTIONS

Question One

Explain the socio-political and economic backgrounds against which conservative theories of the Mass Society emerged, showing how they influenced the proponents of these perspectives. [25]

Question Two

Discuss the liberal-pluralist views of the media in society. [25]

Question Three

"The means of mass transportation and communication [...] entertainment and information industry carry with them prescribed attitudes and habits, certain intellectual and emotional reactions which bind the consumers more or less pleasantly to the producers and, through the latter, to the whole. The products indoctrinate and manipulate; they promote a false consciousness which is immune against its falsehood." (Marcuse 1968, 26-7). With reference to the above assertion, discuss the Frankfurt School of Thought's understanding of the relationship between the media and society.

[25]

Question Four

"The communicative network of a public made up of rationally debating private citizens has collapsed, the public opinion once emergent from it has partly decomposed into the informal opinions of private citizens without a public and partly become concentrated into formal opinions of publicistically effective institutions. Caught in the vortex of publicity that is staged for show or manipulation the public of nonorganized private people is laid claim to not by public communication but by the communication of publicly manifested opinions" (Habermas 1991, 248). Using the above statement, critique the idea of the media as a public sphere and 'fourth estate' in society. [25]

Question Five

Discuss the merits and demerits of the media and cultural imperialism theses. [25]

Question Six

"User data is in the surveillance-industrial complex first externalised and made public or semi-public on the Internet in order to enable users' communication processes, then privatised as private property by Internet platforms in order to accumulate capital, and finally particularised by secret services who bring massive amounts of data under their control that is made accessible and analysed worldwide with the help of profit-making security companies" (Fuchs 2014, 20). With reference to the above assertion, discuss how social media has not become the 'anticipated fifth estate' but rather an instrument in service of the dominant elite in society.

[25]