

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION  
2017/2018 EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER: SUPPLEMENTARY

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TITLE OF PAPER: MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY

COURSE CODE: JMC 246

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Answer any three questions
2. Each question carries 20 marks
3. Students are requested, in their own interests, to write legibly

### **Question One**

What are the central ideas of the conservative theories of the Mass society? Critically discuss the strengths and weaknesses of these conservative ideas.

### **Question Two**

"At the point of sale, the commodity exhausts its role in the distribution economy, but begins its work in the cultural. Detached from the strategies of capitalism, its work for the bosses completed, it becomes a resource for the culture of everyday life" (Fiske 1998: 39). Using the above argument, discuss the Culturalists' understanding of the relationship between the media, the media text and the audiences. How does their conceptualisation tie the loose ends left by the Frankfurt scholars?

### **Question Three**

Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the political economy theory of the media.

### **Question Four**

How relevant are the theories of Gramsci and Althusser in analysing the Swaziland news media environment?

### **Question Five**

Goebbels:

*a carefully built up erection of statements, which whether true or false can be made to undermine quite rigidly held ideas and to construct new ones that will take their place. It would not be impossible to prove with sufficient repetition and psychological understanding of the people concerned that a square is in fact a circle. What after all are a square and a circle? They are mere words and words can be moulded until they clothe ideas in disguise. (cited in Thomson, 1977, p. 111)*

Foucault (1980, p.131):

*Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse that it accepts and makes function as true.*

The emergence of regimes of 'fake news', 'alternative facts' and the 'post-truth' has reignited the old debates about whether truth is fixed or constructed. Drawing from the quotes above and post-structuralism debates on truth and post-truth, write an essay that discusses how the new media of communications can be categorised as weapons of propaganda and domination of the masses by the dominant elite. Use relevant examples to illustrate your arguments.