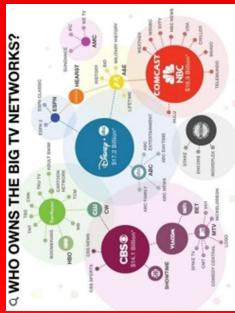


Industry Theories

Curran and Seaton: Ownership effects



1

*the media is **controlled by a small number of companies** that make products to create profit*

- Globalisation has concentrated media ownership into the **hands of a few companies**.
- Media conglomerates are **horizontally and vertically integrated** to maximise profit.
- Large-scale media producers rely on **advertising to generate income**.
- Advertising drives media companies to produce products that have **mass audience appeal**.

2

media concentration adversely affects media content

- The **business function** of the media industry takes precedence over its creative/public service capacities.
- **Profit-driven media is softened to create mass audience appeal**.
- Minority interest content is pushed to the margins of broadcast schedules.
- **Free market competition produces format-driven products**.

3

diverse ownership creates diverse products

- Curran and Seaton highlight the damage that free market ideologies have had on the media landscape.
- Public service broadcasting provides impartial news, serves minority audience and champions national unity by offering inclusive rather than exclusive content.

?

Three theorists who might challenge Curran and Seaton's thinking:

Clay Shirky: argues that the media industry is increasingly driven by audience feedback systems rather than the top-down control of proprietors.

Henry Jenkins: would acknowledge that Web 2.0 enables big business to exploit the web for commercial reasons, but would also argue that the internet retains the capacity to work as a social good and that online communities created via 'participatory culture' have the power to change the world for the better.

Steve Neale: would critique the idea that media proliferation has resulted in a narrowing of product types or the dominance of formula-driven media. He would argue that audiences prompt producers to continuously adapt the finese genre-driven material.

Livingstone and Lunt: Regulation



1

citizen and consumer based models of media regulation

- Citizen-oriented regulation is concerned with content-based issues.
- **Citizen-based regulation is a positive form of regulation that directs media content so that it can improve the lives of citizens and contribute to the well-being of wider society.**
- Citizen-based regulation promotes forms of media that are able to hold powerful groups to account.
- **Consumer-based regulation seeks to ensure that the media landscape contains a variety of different producers** so that audiences have choice.
- Consumer-based regulation seeks to ensure that the technological infrastructure that provides media to the public is fit for purpose.
- Consumer-based regulation creates an environment in which **audiences themselves make judgements about the kinds of media that are appropriate for their consumption.**
- A consumer-orientated approach has dominated the media landscape as a result of the Communications Act 2003 and the creation of Ofcom.

2

the challenge of regulation in the age of globalised media.

- Globalisation has reduced the power of national governments to control the media – global companies operate beyond the scope and boundaries of any one country.

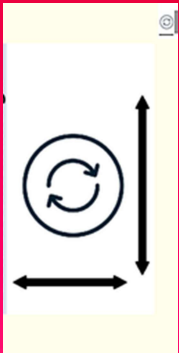
?

Two theorists who might challenge Livingstone and Lunt:

Henry Jenkins: would emphasise the benefits that the global digital media landscape offers. He would argue that digital media allows audience to freely construct their own products and to make connection with like-minded individuals across the world. This process has also enabled some groups to affect deep-seated social change.

David Gauntlett: again, would emphasise the benefit of globalisation. Globalisation, he might argue, has brought audiences into contact with a wide range of identities that they did not previously have access to. This has helped audience to perceive their identities as fluid and not fixed.

Hesmondhalgh The Culture Industry



1

maximising profits and minimising risks

- The media industry is **prone to risk** as a result of shifting audience tastes.
- The media industry **tries to reduce risk through overproduction.**
- Overproduction strategies, generally speaking can only be engaged by large media conglomerates.
- **Media conglomerates have expanded to enable them to cope with risk.**
- Media products are carefully formatted using a number of industry specific strategies to reduce risk.

2

the effects of the internet revolution are difficult to diagnose

- **The democratising effects of the digital revolution have been over-exaggerated by some academics.**
- Digital media is used by audience in radically different way, while only a few users have the necessary skills to engage in participatory culture.
- **The internet is dominated by a handful of very powerful companies.**
- The commercialisation of the web has further reduced its democratising capacity.

?

Two theorists who might challenge Hesmondhalgh's thinking:

Henry Jenkins: emphasises the positive effect of the digital revolution – suggesting that digital media cultivates online communities and allows audiences to express themselves in positive and creative ways through fan engagement.

Clay Shirky: might argue that large-scale media providers will be replaced by products that are created by everyday users, or that mass media content will be significantly controlled by audience feedback mechanisms.