



B.A. (Hons) Mass Communication- I Year

Subject : Mass Media & Culture Studies

Syllabus

Unit-I	Understanding Culture, Mass Culture, Popular Culture. Different Folk Cultures of India, Relation between Media and Culture
Unit-II	Critical Theories- Frankfurt School, Media as Cultural Industries, Political Economy, Ideology and Hegemony. Theories and its implementation in Indian Culture, Media theories and Indian culture.
Unit-III	Representation, Media as Texts, Signs and Codes in Media, Discourse Analysis, Genres, Representation of nation, class, caste and gender issues in Media
Unit-IV	Audiences Uses and Gratification Approach, Active Audiences, Reception Studies, Women as Audiences, Sub Cultures; Music and the popular Fandom, Indian audience and study on media platform.
Unit -V	Folk Media as a form of Mass Culture, live performance; Audience in live Performance, Media technologies; Medium is the Message; Technological Determinism: New Media & Cultural forms



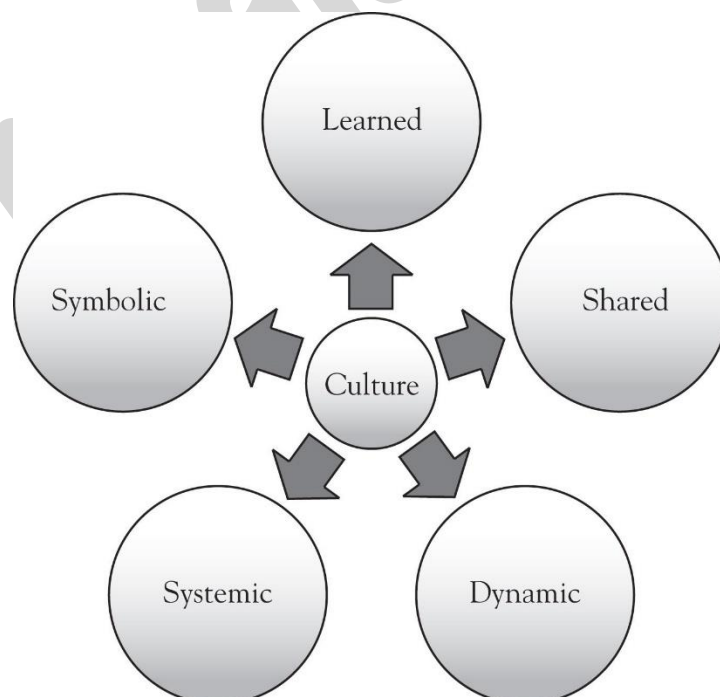
Unit - 1

Mass Media & Cultural studies

Culture consists of the shared beliefs, values, and assumptions of a group of people who learn from one another and teach to others that their behaviors, attitudes, and perspectives are the correct ways to think, act, and feel.

It is helpful if you can think about culture in the following five ways:

- Culture is learned.
- Culture is shared.
- Culture is dynamic.
- Culture is systemic.
- Culture is symbolic.
- *Elements of Culture*





Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music and is different all over the world.

Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition(opens in new tab) goes a step further, defining culture as shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding that are learned by socialization. Thus, culture can be seen as the growth of a group identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group.

"Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music,

Mass culture :

Mass culture has been defined in many ways, by many different theorists in sociology, since **Theodor Adorno** and **Max Horkheimer** created the term.

According to Adorno and Horkheimer, who were both members of the **Frankfurt School** of sociology, mass culture was the widespread American 'low' culture that had developed during industrialisation. It is often said to have replaced agricultural, pre-industrial **folk culture**.

Some sociologists claim that mass culture was replaced by popular culture in postmodern society. Others argue that today 'mass culture' is used as an umbrella term for all folk, popular, avant-garde and postmodern cultures.

Features of mass culture

The Frankfurt School defined the following main characteristics of mass culture.



- Developed in **capitalist** societies, in industrialised cities
- Developed to fill the void left by the disappearing folk culture
- Encouraged **passive** consumer behaviour
- **Mass-produced**
- Accessible and understandable
- Created for the people, but not by the people. Mass culture was created and spread by **production companies** and wealthy businessmen
- The goal is to maximise **profit**
- **The lowest common denominator:** safe, predictable, and intellectually undemanding

There are many examples of mass culture, such as:

- Mass media, including films, radio, television shows, popular books and music, and tabloid magazines
- Fast food
- Advertising
- Fast fashion

popular culture :

Popular culture is the set of practices, beliefs, and objects that embody the most broadly shared meanings of a social system. It includes media objects, entertainment and leisure, fashion and trends, and linguistic conventions, among other things. Popular culture is usually associated with either mass culture or folk culture, and differentiated from high culture and various institutional cultures (political culture, educational culture, legal culture, etc.). The association of popular culture with mass culture leads to a focus on the position of popular



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culture within a capitalist mode of economic production. Through this economic lens, popular culture is seen as a set of commodities produced through capitalistic processes driven by a profit motive and sold to consumers. In contrast, the association of popular culture with folk culture leads to a focus on subcultures such as youth cultures or ethnic cultures. Through this subculture lens, popular culture is seen as a set of practices by artists or other kinds of culture makers that result in performances and objects that are received and interpreted by audiences, both within and beyond the subcultural group. Holistic approaches examine the ways that popular culture begins as the collective creation of a subculture and is then appropriated by the market system. Key issues in the sociological analysis of popular culture include the representation of specific groups and themes in the content of cultural objects or practices, the role of cultural production as a form of social reproduction, and the extent to which audiences exercise agency in determining the meanings of the culture that they consume.



Unit - 2

Media Ideologies are a set of ideas or beliefs that people have regarding different kinds of technologies. People use their media ideologies to form opinions on media and technology and how it is used. Media ideologies also reflect how one perceives messages via text or messaging. According to Gershon, people's media ideology influence their understanding of what different forms of media, including phone, text, instant messaging, email, mean. They associate these mediums with what the message actually means. Misunderstandings can occur when people have different media ideologies. How one views and interprets media ideologies depend on their past experiences with media and technology. The study of media ideologies is not new, but it is becoming more prevalent with the advancement in technology. Since people have the option of what kind of medium they want to use, they are more likely to form media ideologies which may or may not contradict with other people's media ideologies.

Media hegemony is a perceived process by which certain values and ways of thought promulgated through the mass media become dominant in society. It is seen in particular as reinforcing the capitalist system. Media hegemony has been presented as influencing the way in which reporters in the media – themselves subject to prevailing values and norms – select news stories and put them across. The concept of hegemony, first put forward by Antonio Gramsci, refers to the moral, philosophical, and political leadership of a social group, which is not gained by force but by an active consent of other social groups obtained by taking control of culture and ideology. During this process, the leading social group exerts its impact and gains its legitimacy mainly through social mechanisms such as education, religion, family and the mass media. Based on the definition of hegemony, media hegemony means the



dominance of certain aspects of life and thought by the penetration of a dominant culture and its values into social life. In other words, media hegemony serves as a crucial shaper of culture, values and ideology of society (Altheide, 1984).

For example, television news departments are considered as extensions of a capitalistic economic order (Hall, 1979). The products of the media contain messages that convey the nature of society, the nature of relation of production within the media and the domain of institutions and social process (Golding, 1979). Thus it is crucial to decode media to figure out the latent capitalist ideology within the products of the media, and more importantly to realize the role of the media as tools to produce merchandise in a late capitalist economic order.

Altheide (1984) has cautioned against the "uncritical" application of the media hegemony paradigm to television news coverage.

