

# 100MC: Week 1 (5<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

## What is 'the Media'?

### Session Questions:

- What is 'the media'?
- Why is it important to study it
- How do we study it?
- How do we talk about it?

### The *Cabinet of Curiosities* and the Media Diary

1. Over the summer, you have all been asked to keep a *Cabinet of Curiosities*, a repository of media objects that have had some emotional impact on *you*.

In your small groups (1A, 4D etc.), meet up to look at each others' cabinets. In addition to just discovering the kinds of things that people have decided to include, see if you can start answering the following questions. You should make notes for each of the questions below:

- What kinds of things tend to appear in everybody's cabinets? Are there things that appear time and time again? Why might this be?
- Is there anything in any of the cabinets that you have never come across before? What is this (a mainstream film, a piece of art, a magazine article etc.). Why do you think you have never come across it before? What was your emotional response to it: delight, repulsion, interest etc and why?

The feedback session representatives should post the findings of your group discussions onto the module blog and bring them to the feedback session on Thursday. Post your findings at:

<http://mcopenmediacoventry.org/keyconcepts>

by replying to the post in Week One labelled 'This Week's Work'. Make sure that you include the name of your group.

2. Over the next three days, you will be keeping an individual media diary, the results of which you will be posting on your own blog. It is important that you take some time to do this as it will inform much of what you need for your essay at the end of the module. The more you do now, the less you will have to do over the rest of the module!

- Look at the media diary on pages 14-15 in Long and Wall (2009)
- Complete your own diary for the following three days. Carefully and actively think about what you have seen, heard and read. Put more detail than the diary in Long and Wall: for example, in the Thursday

entry “Watched television (90 minutes)” extend it by saying what time of day you did this at, what the programmes were, what channels they were on. Use a grid similar to the one below if you wish.

Day	Time	Medium	What	Where
Mon	7.30	Radio	Today programme: 10 mins.	Home
Mon	8.15	Radio	Today programme in car: 10 mins.	Car
Mon	8.30	E-mail	Checked e-mails: 45 mins	Office
Mon	12.00	i-Pod	Listened to music at lunch (classical): 30 mins	In park

- What reflections can you make about your own use of the media over these three days? Does it look fairly representative of what you normally do/see/hear/experience? Is there anything that surprises you?
- What do you think your diary could say about you to someone who doesn't know you: for example, that you are cultured, that you are shallow, that you are a mixture of both? Would that be accurate?
- Write a short (500 word) piece outlining what you have found out and what it tells you about the way(s) that the media work today.

***Although you may have done similar exercises at GCSE or A Level/BTEC, it is important that you carry this out and that you carry it out rigorously as you will be exposed to different media now that you are a degree student. That is part of the point of this activity at this stage of the course.***

Please bring your diary to the lecture session on Thursday and make sure that you give it to your group representatives as the individual diaries will form the basis of what we talk about in the first feedback sessions.

***Reading:***

The Introduction and Chapter 1 of:

Long, P. and Wall, T. (2009) *Media Studies: Texts, Production and Context*. Harlow, Pearson.