Gerbner: worksheet

Key concept one: fear cultivation

1. Which institutions were largely reponsible for shaping the attitudes of society prior to the invention of television?

2. Why does Gerbner suggest that television is more powerful than those institutions identified in question one?

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3. Gerbner suggested that television has a profound effect on social attitudes. Complete the following table to help you understand the factors that make television such a powerful social force.

Factor	Notes and explanation of this factor
Television is easily decodable	
Television access is largely cost free	
Television production is centralised	
Television consumption is concentrated	
Television products are encoded using realism	

Above: The fear inducing Dart from Stranger Things season 2.

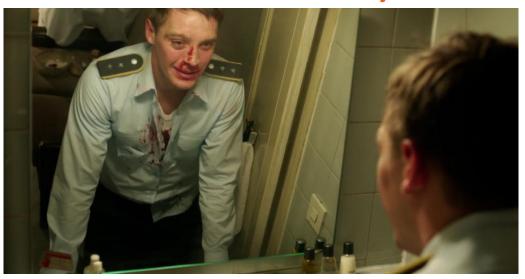learn it: page 177

media audiences

Gerbner: worksheet

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16.1 Discuss it: how does television shape our view of the world?

- How much time do you spend watching television?
- How much time do your parents or guardians spend watching TV?
- How much of your understanding of the real world is constructed through television?
- What effects does television watching have on society?
- Do you think Gerbner's arguments regarding the impact of television on social attitudes is just as valid in today's digital world? Why or why not?

Your thoughts:

Above: Deutschland '83. Gerbner argues that violence is a staple ingredient in television drama because of its capacity to capture audience attention

5. What were the key findings of Gerbner's 1975 television Violence Index study?

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6. Why does Gerbner suggest that violent depictions in factual programming are just as dangerous as those found in TV drama?

media **audiences**

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7. What is **mean world syndrome**?

8. Using your own research define what is meant by the term **media amplification**.

16.3 Discuss it: how violent do you think the real world is?

- What effects does news reportage have on the public's perception of crime? Can you evidence media content that has potentially cultivated public fear?
- Do any of your friends or family members have an over exaggerated fear of crime as a result of media consumption?
- Is the fear of a particular crime exaggerated by news reporting? Knife crime? Burglary?
- In what ways does the public's perception of crime affect the way we treat criminals?

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Your thoughts:

10. Which of the following statements best describes Gerbner's concept of **resonance**?

a. Where audiences have **some** experience of violence in the real world and where their real-world fears of violence are subsequently **amplified** as a result of watching violent media content.

b. Where audiences have **no** experience of real-world violence but subsequently develop a fear of violence as a result of watching the media.

c. Where audiences **love** watching violence on television in **any** form.

d. Where an audience's perception of real-world crime is **reduced** as a result of watching lots of television.

11. Which of the following statements best describes Gerbner's concept of '**mainstreaming**'?

a. Where audiences actively choose to **avoid** programming that contains violence.

b. Where audiences are **induced** to commit crimes after consuming violent media content.

c. Where audiences have **some** experience of violence in the real world and that fear of is subsequently **amplified** as a result of their media viewing.

d. Where audiences have **no** experience of real-world violence but subsequently develop a fear of violence as a result of watching the media.

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