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Chapter 2: MEDIA LITERACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Jamal critically analyzes media content by considering its particular presentation, its underlying political or social messages, and its media ownership or regulation. Jamal demonstrates _____.
    a. multimodality
    b. media literacy*
    c. cognitive complexity
    d. media hegemony

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: What Is Media Literacy?

2. _____ relies on the notion that we classify, organize, and interpret things into certain schema to simplify the complex.
    a. Media framing*
    b. Media grammar
    c. Echo effects
    d. Branding

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: What Makes Mediated Communication Different?

3. A leading theorist in contemporary semiotics and the father of linguistics, _____ identified the dual nature of signs.
    a. René Magritte
    b. Gertrude Stein
    c. Ferdinand de Saussure*
    d. James Potter

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: What Makes Mediated Communication Different?

4. _____ combine certain elements of books and newspapers in their media grammar.
    a. Films
    b. Advertorials
    c. TV shows
    d. Magazines*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Understanding

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A-head: Media Grammar

5. The main concern in the early days of film in the 1920s was the medium's depiction of _____.
    a. sex, violence, and lawlessness*
    b. adultery
    c. smoking and drinking
    d. politics

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Early Concerns of Media Effects

6. Radio and recorded music have their own grammar, one that is based solely on _____.
    a. listeners
    b. rhythms
    c. sound*
    d. multiple audio tracks

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Media Grammar

7. The underlying media grammar of specific categories or genres makes it easier to _____.
    a. market and promote artists*
    b. listen to the radio in the car
    c. sing along to popular songs
    d. allow private radio stations to stay on the air

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Media Grammar

8. _____ is generally either underlined or otherwise set apart typographically or graphically from nonlinked text.
    a. Coding
    b. Window wrap
    c. Hypertext*
    d. An actuality

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Media Grammar

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9. If much of the media we consume comes from a handful of large conglomerates, it raises questions about the role of media _____, how information may be skewed toward a particular viewpoint that influences our views of politics, society, or culture.
    a. grammar
    b. overload
    c. literacy
    d. bias*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Media Bias

10. What has research revealed about media bias and media effects?
    a. Audiences can be quite active in interpreting and using media.*
    b. The public is largely passive and accepts unquestioningly the media it consumes.
    c. News coverage is fair and balanced.
    d. Media bias occurs only in news stories.

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Media Bias/Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

11. _____ is/are one of the few traditional mass-communication formats to include frequent interaction between media producers or hosts and the audience.
    a. Reality TV
    b. Talk Radio*
    c. Magazines
    d. TV sitcoms

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Media Grammar

12. New efficiencies of creating and delivering content in a digital, networked environment are emerging throughout the world. Long-held, highly profitable business models based on _____ are less viable nowadays.
    a. multimedia platforms
    b. analog technology*
    c. media convergence
    d. media interactivity

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

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13. What does Magritte's famous "This is not a pipe" painting tell us?
    a. A painting of an object is more important than the object itself.
    b. Surrealism determines reality.
    c. A semiotic sign is a physical reality.
    d. A representation of a thing is not the thing itself.*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: What Is Media Literacy?

14. One of the conventions of interviewing in both the field and the studio is that the reporter instructs the interview partner to _____.
    a. stay quiet and listen
    b. promote his/her own point-of-view
    c. never look directly into the camera*
    d. avoid stating personal views

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Media Bias

15. _____ has several advantages over the Internet in many developing countries, providing an easy and relatively cheap way to communicate.
    a. Radio
    b. Mobile telephony*
    c. Landline telephony
    d. Cable

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

16. Edited audio clips from interviews with people are known as _____.
    a. actualities*
    b. laugh tracks
    c. voice-overs
    d. framing

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Media Grammar

17. Each medium of mass communication presents its messages uniquely according to a set of underlying rules that can also be described as _____.
    a. codes and conventions

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b. the signifier and the signified
c. media grammar*
d. critical thinking

Answer: C
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Media Grammar

18. The shift from point-and-click interactions with a mouse to touchscreen swipes and "pinches" that help manipulate content makes us aware that _____.
    a. there is nothing "natural" about how we use media today*
    b. information today can be accessed at record speed, compared to fifty years ago
    c. Google glasses will soon replace manual manipulation of the screen
    d. voice activation could accelerate the user interface even more

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Media Grammar

19. Which of the following devices is associated with TV sitcoms?
    a. Actualities
    b. Laugh tracks*
    c. Voice-overs
    d. Echo effects

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Media Grammar

20. Four audio techniques that impact the media grammar of radio and recorded music are _____.
    a. audio sweetening, sound dissolves, capturing, and control
    b. song manipulation, multiple recording, tracking, and rhythm access
    c. volume changes, multiple audio tracks, sound effects, and voice-overs*
    d. mood manipulation, capturing, conforming, and interaction

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Media Grammar

21. Media scholar _____ has written several books that show how corporate media have adversely affected the quality of communications content we receive and how media companies have lobbied the government to further their own corporate interests.
    a. Todd Gitlin

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b. Robert McChesney*
c. George Lakoff
d. Stuart Hall

Answer: B
Bloom's: Remembering
A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

22. Media businesses have been among the most profitable of any industry, with profit margins typically around _____ on an annual basis.
    a. 5 percent
    b. 10 percent
    c. 15 percent
    d. 20 percent*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

23. A particular health condition runs in Gina's family. In an effort to educate herself on this issue, she consults multiple research and news sites on the Internet in addition to soliciting advice on social media, research that leaves her feeling overwhelmed and confused. Gina is dealing with _____.

    a. cognitive fatigue
    b. posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
    c. media paralysis
    d. information overload*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Analyzing
    A-head: Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

24. Media critics have argued that media monopolies and conglomerates contribute to which problem?
    a. Suppression of mainstream views
    b. Unethical reporting
    c. Less diversity of media voices*
    d. Fewer media jobs for members of minority groups

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

25. Despite living in a relatively large American city, Garrett can purchase only one daily newspaper published in his location, and the cable channels he watches belong to a

monopoly. Similarly, his favorite commercial radio stations are part of national ownership groups. This marketplace, in which media ownership and diversity is severely limited, is known as a(n) _____.

a. media oligopoly*
b. corporate convergence
c. economic empire
d. business oligarchy

Answer: A
Bloom's: Analyzing
A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

26. Nine diversified global media giants dominate the media worldwide. These corporations are international _____.

a. media management moguls
b. studio giants
c. conglomerates*
d. media manipulators

Answer: C
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

27. The media oligopoly of the leading nine media giants is not the only threat to the diversity of opinion and information. An additional threat is about fifty _____ that operate on a national or international level and generate more than $1 billion of business each year.

a. local media distributors
b. block booking systems
c. telecommunications subsidiaries
d. second-tier media companies*

Answer: D
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

28. The concentration of media ownership and consolidation of media companies in the United States and globally has serious repercussions for our _____.

a. politics, society, and culture*
b. telecommunications subscription rates
c. mobile phone use
d. reliance on telecommunications infrastructure

Answer: A
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

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29. Daytime talk shows may actually help diversify opinions and make controversial topics more acceptable. Transgender youth and domestic violence are among the formerly taboo items discussed on talk shows, increasing the visibility of such topics in _____.
    a. transnational societies
    b. the critical convergence of media
    c. our popular culture landscape*
    d. our telecommunications fabric

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Media Bias

30. Terri's friends on social media all share her views on politics and religion. Even when these opinions are in the minority, Terri is convinced her position reflects the opinion of the majority because of _____.
    a. echo effects*
    b. media grammar
    c. media bias
    d. information overload

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Analyzing
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

31. Deciding whether a news story is a descriptive article or an evaluative piece that provides editorial opinion is related to which guideline for developing media literacy?
    a. Consider the source of the media
    b. Determine the purpose of the media content*
    c. Question the media ecosystem
    d. Examine framing of media content

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Analyzing
    A-head: Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

32. Advertising's major role in _____ has drawn criticism from advocacy groups around the country, who have turned to social media as a platform to voice dissent.
    a. advocating for social rights
    b. stimulating the economy
    c. propagating certain stereotypes*
    d. mimicking the shopping behavior of the 1 percent

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Understanding

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A-head: Media Bias

33. For a term paper, Kelly is analyzing how word choice and selection of interview sources influenced local news in the 2016 election. Kelly is studying _____.
    a. media framing*
    b. echo effects
    c. media grammar
    d. cultural stereotyping

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Analyzing
    A-head: Media Bias

34. Media enterprises can reduce costs and increase profit by becoming larger and reaching a larger market with their content due to _____, the decrease in unit manufacturing cost that results from mass production.
    a. behavioral targeting
    b. economy of scale*
    c. branding
    d. correlation

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

35. _____ is the study of signs and symbols.
    a. Media literacy
    b. Hypertext
    c. Media grammar
    d. Semiotics*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: What Makes Mediated Communication Different?

36. Much like signs and symbols, _____ appear natural and go largely unquestioned.
    a. genres
    b. voice-overs
    c. frames*
    d. actualities

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: What Makes Mediated Communication Different?

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37. Which country declared that reports of torture of political opponents were fake news?
    a. China*
    b. Iraq
    c. Somalia
    d. Syria

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Introduction

38. Asking yourself how you would feel if the group with whom you identify was portrayed in a particular way allows you to _____.
    a. consider the source of the media
    b. identify the purpose of the media content
    c. challenge media stereotypes*
    d. make the media

    Answer: C
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

39. Which of the following countries has been a leader in media-literacy education?
    a. Italy
    b. United States
    c. Russia
    d. Canada*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Education and Media

40. The physical dimensions of a book, the artwork on its jacket, and the size and style of the typeface are all part of its media _____.
    a. grammar*
    b. literacy
    c. interactivity
    d. ecology

    Answer: A
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Media Grammar

41. Camera angles, lighting, distance between the subject and interviewer, sound, and intercut scenes all contribute to our perception of the news as _____.
    a. subjective
    b. objective*

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c. descriptive
d. evaluative

Answer: B
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Media Bias

42. Alarm about the effects of media on children dates back to _____.
a. ancient Greece*
b. the Middle Ages
c. the eighteenth century
d. the nineteenth century

Answer: A
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Early Concerns of Media Effects

43. Media businesses are businesses just like any other. If they fail to make a profit, they are also doing a disservice to _____.
a. their clients
b. the top 1 percent
c. the government that collects their taxes
d. their private owners or shareholders*

Answer: D
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

44. Which of the following assertions about fake news is accurate?
a. It always intends to deceive.
b. It circulates slowly.
c. It has been around since at least the nineteenth century, when William Jennings Bryan complained bitterly about it.*
d. It is usually well written.

Answer: C
Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: Introduction/Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

45. In semiotic theory, the signified is _____.
a. the form
b. what the form represents*
c. the sign
d. the interpretant

Answer: B

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Bloom's: Understanding
A-head: What Makes Mediated Communication Different?

46. In many developing countries, technology is not easily accessible because of _____.
    a. rural telecommunications decay
    b. a widespread lack of media literacy skills
    c. autocratic government control
    d. inadequate phone lines, inconsistent electric power, and irregular Internet service*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

47. Telecommunications mergers and acquisitions in the billions of dollars have built a _____ in the United States, a group of independent businesses that collaborate to regulate the production, pricing, and marketing of goods.
    a. media empire
    b. communications cartel*
    c. partisan press
    d. media coercion company

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

48. Professional journalism has a strong culture of what used to be called "objectivity" but is now referred to as _____.
    a. checks and balances
    b. fairness and balance*
    c. truth-building
    d. subjectivity

    Answer: B
    Bloom's: Understanding
    A-head: Media Bias

49. An unseen announcer or narrator talking while other activity takes place, either on radio or during a television scene, is known as a(n) _____.
    a. sound effect
    b. echo effect
    c. voice-over*
    d. media frame

    Answer: C

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Bloom's: Remembering
A-head: Media Grammar

50. Which scholar coined the phrase "the medium is the message"?
    a. Umberto Eco
    b. Ben Bagdikian
    c. Robert McChesney
    d. Marshall McLuhan*

    Answer: D
    Bloom's: Remembering
    A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

SHORT ANSWER

1. Explain why media literacy is a critical skill in today's society, and give one example of an activity that can increase your media literacy.

   Answer: The importance of media in contemporary society makes it imperative that audience members think critically about media content to better control their actions and not be controlled by media messages. Learning new skills in creating media, such as taking courses on graphic design or video production, can help further your media literacy.

   A-head: What Is Media Literacy?

2. Identify two ways in which frames are similar to signs and symbols in semiotics.

   Answer: Once accepted, frames, like signs, appear natural and go largely unquestioned. And like signs, they also shape our perceptions of people, places, issues, and events.

   A-head: What Makes Mediated Communication Different?

3. Describe a significant change over the years in the media grammar of newspapers, and explain why this is the case.

   Answer: The number of color photos and the amount of graphics used in newspapers today has increased over the last few decades. Today, content has to be more visually appealing to compete with television and other visual media for audience attention, and newspapers must present news in formats that accommodate readers' busy lifestyles.

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A-head: Media Grammar

4. What does the media-literacy guideline "make the media" entail?

   Answer: Learning media production skills beyond writing is invaluable for media literacy as well as for the job market, especially for communications professions. Reconstructing a commercial, a music video, or even a news program from an alternative perspective is an excellent way to challenge your assumptions about the presentation of media and their messages. Making media is an innovative activity that may also present entrepreneurial potential.

   A-head: Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

5. Why do critics of the American corporate media system argue that media companies are not like other companies, and what do they propose as a solution?

   Answer: Critics argue that corporate media "products"—the signs and symbols that shape our culture and views of the world through the news and entertainment we consume—influence our thinking and behavior considerably more than other types of products. Therefore, media companies should be publicly funded so that they are not as beholden to the marketplace and the influence of market logic on media content.

   A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

ESSAYS

1. Commercial forces shape the content of media every day at the local, national, and international levels. What are the implications of commercial media?

   Main point: Media companies are for-profit businesses, but their products (or productions) affect and change our culture every day.

   A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

   Answers will vary but **must** mention the following:
   a. Media companies often manipulate the government to further their own corporate interests at the expense of the public interest.
   b. Economic factors and corporate decisions influence what is or is not covered by the media.
   c. Poor news coverage may not challenge the status quo, especially when it comes to media companies' own business investments.
   d. Consumers today have fewer media choices thanks to the concentration of media ownership.

   Answers will vary and **may** mention the following:
   a. The need to increase profits can encourage the development of better media products.

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b. The desire for profit often also forces companies to look only at the short term.
c. Incessant advertising may imply that happiness is found through consumerism.

2. Explain how media literacy helps enhance cultural understanding in society.

   Main point: Media literacy helps audiences understand the cultural values communicated by different media outlets and how these values shape our identities and perceptions of reality. This skill also allows audiences to question seemingly authoritative truths. Therefore, media literacy helps consumers critique mediated communication.

   A-head: Education and Media; What Is Media Literacy? What Makes Mediated Communication Different?

   Answers will vary but **must** mention the following:
   a. Context plays a major role in the audience's understanding of reality and what it signifies.
   b. Media education allows consumers to understand everyday life in the context of larger knowledge structures such as social, political, and economic forces.
   c. The access to new technologies allows citizens to participate in the dialog surrounding everyday life and contribute to the representation of reality on various social media platforms.

   Answers will vary and **may** mention the following:
   a. Framing occurs in all forms of mass communication. Media literacy allows consumers to develop the skills needed to understand the media framing and grammar of each platform.
   b. Print media and electronic media use different languages to communicate reality. Media literacy skills allow audiences to understand the intricacies of communication patterns.
   c. Radio, recorded music, film, and television all use specific audio techniques in addition to visuals to build compelling and persuasive stories. Understanding the building blocks of storytelling enhances media literacy.

3. Media critics and journalists have complained that news in the print media is "packaged." What do they mean when they talk about the packaging of information for the consumer?

   Main point: Today, news and entertainment are often reduced to sound bites and greatly reduced information clusters easy for audiences to understand without having to think in depth about larger socioeconomic contexts.

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A-head: Media Grammar

Answers will vary but **must** mention the following:

a. Packaged news relies on easy-to-read units that allow fast consumption.
b. Splashy pictures and graphics lure readers into paying attention to content.
c. Packaged reporting often lacks depth that helps readers understand the complexity of news in our global society.

Answers will vary and **may** mention the following:

a. Newspapers have adjusted their presentation of news to compete with television and other visual media.
b. Modern newspapers break their content into sections such as sports, business, and local news so readers can quickly find stories that interest them.
c. Advertisers, who want to target specific audiences, support this segmentation of the news.

4. Explain media critic Ben H. Bagdikian's theories about concentrated media ownership and what research in his book *New Media Monopoly* reveals.

Main point: Bagdikian presents evidence that the largest corporations in North America held more public communications power in the 1990s than ever before in the nation's history. He describes the system as a media oligopoly.

A-head: Implications of Commercial Media

Answers will vary but **must** mention the following:

a. A small number of U.S. media corporations control the majority of the media landscape.
b. In 1983, a $340 million deal involving the Gannett Company and the Combined Communications Corporation became the biggest media merger to that date.
c. Many of the deals regarding media acquisitions since 1983 have been in the billions of dollars.
d. These large companies have built a communications cartel within the United States that collaborates to regulate production, pricing, and marketing of goods. But also at stake are the symbols—the words and images—that define and shape the culture and political agenda of the country.

Answers will vary and **may** mention the following:

a. In 2001, AOL acquired Time Warner in a deal that dwarfed all previous media deals.
b. The 2001 merger between AOL and Time Warner was sealed in a $160 billion deal.

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c. The Gannett newspaper chain includes billboards, newspapers, and broadcast stations.

5. What are some problems with online information, and what can be done to address these concerns?

   Main point: Information on the Internet is unreliable. It is necessary to check out the background of any source and determine whether it is legitimate. Don't trust information unless you verify it.

   A-head: Developing Critical Media Literacy Skills

   Answers will vary but **must** mention the following:
   a. Hoaxes, pranks, scams, and cons flood the Internet with false information and lures.
   b. Websites can be hacked and manipulated in cyber attacks.
   c. Fake news stories can also circulate rapidly with little or no vetting for truthfulness.
   d. Find out about the sponsors of a website, what they stand for, and which sites they link to.
   e. Compare and contrast information with that found on other websites to ensure that it is trustworthy.

   Answers will vary and **may** mention the following:
   a. Question the name of the organization that owns the website.
   b. Do not immediately trust information that lacks a date somewhere on the page.
   c. Be cautious when reading discussion groups, chat rooms, tweets, and blogs, because not everybody who posts information or ideas is an expert.

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