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Name:_____ Class:_____ Date:_____

Chapter 1 Media, Culture, and Communication: A Critical Approach

1. According to the textbook, the mass media are industries that produce and distribute cultural products to a large number of people.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

2. According to the textbook, as cultural forms, the media products we consume help us make sense of our daily life and articulate our values.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

3. The written era was the first period in communication history.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: b

4. The manuscript, or written, culture that existed between 1000 BCE and the mid-fifteenth century primarily served rich and powerful institutions.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

5. No media existed prior to the coming of the electronic era in the nineteenth century.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: b

6. Gutenberg played an active role in the transition from oral to written culture.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: b

7. Modern printing emerged with wood-carved blocks developed in China around 1045.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: b

8. Gutenberg's invention of movable type allowed the book to become one of the first mass-marketed communication products in history.
   a. True
   b. False

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ANSWER: a

9. The printing press fostered the rise of modern nationalism.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

10. One consequence of the printing press was that people came to rely less on their local community and religious, political, and business leaders for information and guidance.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

11. The computer was the first electronic medium.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: b

12. The telegraph and newspapers transformed information into a commodity.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

13. According to the textbook, the term "convergence" has been used in two interconnected ways.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

14. The media technologies we use and the media products we consume now sort us into narrow niches or subcultures.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: a

15. The three roles each of us play in relationship to media are consumer, producer, and critic.
   a. True
   b. False

ANSWER: b

16. The three roles we play in relationship to media always complement one another.
   a. True
   b. False

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ANSWER: b

17. In the linear model of mass communication, gatekeepers are the authors, producers, and organizations that create the message.
    a. True
    b. False
ANSWER: b

18. In the linear model of mass communication, the senders of messages often have little control over how their messages will be received.
    a. True
    b. False
ANSWER: a

19. The meaning of a message can be affected by a recipient's gender, age, educational level, ethnicity, and occupation.
    a. True
    b. False
ANSWER: a

20. Media portrayals of people, communities, events, and institutions reflect but do not shape existing attitudes.
    a. True
    b. False
ANSWER: b

21. Media representations of people and institutions have political consequences.
    a. True
    b. False
ANSWER: a

22. Expertise and progress are both values of the modern period.
    a. True
    b. False
ANSWER: a

23. High culture is the same as popular culture.
    a. True
    b. False
ANSWER: b

24. Rationalism is a postmodern cultural value.
    a. True

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b. False

ANSWER: b

25. Populism is characterized by an unquestioning faith in science and deference to experts.
    a. True
    b. False

ANSWER: b

26. Postmodern media creators have blurred the distinctions between high and low culture.
    a. True
    b. False

ANSWER: a

27. In the postmodern era, hierarchies no longer tell us which media products we should and shouldn't consume.
    a. True
    b. False

ANSWER: b

28. Which statement BEST describes media literacy?
    a. a common but sometimes simplistic way of thinking that sees technology as an independent force that appears out of nowhere and changes everything
    b. the features or capabilities of a technology that help establish how we use it
    c. the process of becoming critical consumers of media products and reflective users of media technologies by understanding how media construct meaning
    d. the creation and use of symbol systems that convey information and meaning

ANSWER: c

29. What are the industries that produce and distribute cultural products to large numbers of people called?
    a. modern technologies
    b. oral traditions
    c. illuminated manuscripts
    d. mass media

ANSWER: d

30. What is the name for the process of designing cultural messages and stories and delivering them to increasingly large and diverse audiences through mass media channels?
    a. convergence
    b. digital communication
    c. mass communication
    d. masspersonal communication

ANSWER: c

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31. According to the textbook, the mass media have passed through which five eras of communication history?
    a. oral, pen, press, telegraph, computer
    b. speech, manuscript, book, electronic, information
    c. face-to-face, local, regional, national, global
    d. oral, written, print, electronic, digital

ANSWER: d

32. Which statement BEST characterizes the transitions between the print, electronic, and digital eras?
    a. The exact lines between each era are clear.
    b. As new technology was invented, the older forms of technology were rapidly discarded.
    c. Each wave of newer technology came at the same time as an increasing number of people moved from urban areas to rural areas.
    d. In practice, the eras overlapped as newer technologies disrupted and modified older technologies.

ANSWER: d

33. During which era did elders, poets, teachers, and storytellers play an important cultural role?
    a. oral
    b. written
    c. print
    d. electronic

ANSWER: a

34. Some ancient philosophers thought that
    a. written communication was superior to oral communication.
    b. oral communication was superior to written communication.
    c. there was no difference between oral and written communication.
    d. written communication would lead to a postmodern culture.

ANSWER: b

35. Hand transcription of documents is most closely identified with which era in communication history?
    a. written
    b. print
    c. electronic
    d. digital

ANSWER: a

36. A vast educational gulf between ordinary people and elites is most closely identified with which period in communication history?
    a. written
    b. print
    c. electronic

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d. digital

ANSWER: a

37. What does the textbook identify as a result of the printing press?
    a. control over the production and distribution of manuscripts by the Catholic Church
    b. a separation of communication from transportation
    c. increased resistance to religious authority
    d. coordinated commercial and military operations

ANSWER: c

38. Which is NOT considered a consequence of the printing press?
    a. the rise of the middle class
    b. an increased sense of community
    c. resistance to civic authority
    d. an increase in literacy rates

ANSWER: b

39. The modern ideal of individualism began in which historical era of communication?
    a. written
    b. print
    c. electronic
    d. digital

ANSWER: b

40. The rise of factories is most closely associated with which historical communication era?
    a. oral
    b. written
    c. print
    d. electronic

ANSWER: d

41. The transformation from an industrial, print-based society to one grounded in the Information Age began with the development of
    a. sound recording.
    b. the printing press.
    c. the telegraph.
    d. magazines.

ANSWER: c

42. The telegraph was the first media development to break the connection between communication and
    a. media.

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b. culture.
c. narratives.
d. transportation.

ANSWER: d

43. Which option is a contribution of the telegraph?
a. the transformation of information into a commodity
b. the concept of nationalism
c. the rise of the middle class
d. the development of newspapers

ANSWER: a

44. Which invention led to the development of future electronic-based technologies?
a. radio
b. the Internet
c. movable type
d. the telegraph

ANSWER: d

45. When used in conjunction with mass marketing strategies, electronic-era media like radio, film, and television helped establish which concept?
a. fragmentation
b. masspersonal communication
c. the mass nation
d. the niche nation

ANSWER: c

46. What helped establish a mainstream American culture and identity for much of the twentieth century?
a. digital communication
b. masspersonal communication
c. consensus narratives
d. convergence

ANSWER: c

47. Which term describes stories that reflect certain values and assumptions about what the world is and should be like?
a. politics
b. mass media
c. affordances
d. consensus narratives

ANSWER: d

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48. What converts media content into a combination of ones and zeros (binary code) that are then reassembled, or *decoded*, when you play a video game on your console, view a picture on Instagram, or download a textbook to your laptop?
    a. digital communication
    b. fragmentation
    c. mass media
    d. niche nation

ANSWER: a

49. What recent product of the digital revolution refers to computer systems that use machine learning to solve problems and simulate human communication.?
    a. artificial intelligence
    b. binary code
    c. broadcasting
    d. convergence

ANSWER: a

50. Information was encoded in different and incompatible delivery formats up until which era?
    a. written
    b. print
    c. electronic
    d. digital

ANSWER: d

51. Which definition reflects one way in which the term *convergence* is used?
    a. the technological merging of once distinct and incompatible formats into a single format, which can then be accessed through one device
    b. the appropriation of American products by foreign advertisers
    c. the diversification of various media holdings into separate companies
    d. the proliferation of news outlets leading to media overload

ANSWER: a

52. Which definition reflects one way in which the term *convergence* is used?
    a. the trend of media companies merging together in order to better position themselves for a world in which all media can be digital
    b. the use of consensus narratives to create homogeneous political identities
    c. the gathering of multiple press figures at a media event, such as a press conference
    d. a concentrated and organized stream of Internet traffic to one site for the purpose of crashing it

ANSWER: a

53. Which term refers to a society in which people navigate a more varied and complex media landscape?

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a. niche nation
b. mass nation
c. participatory culture
d. media environment

ANSWER: a

54. In the pre-digital era of the 1970s, most people watched the evening news or a popular TV show like *Happy Days* at a scheduled time, which contributed to a
a. niche nation.
b. mass nation.
c. participatory culture.
d. high culture.

ANSWER: b

55. Which term refers to a culture in which it is relatively easy for people to create and share their own content?
a. mass
b. niche
c. participatory
d. affordances

ANSWER: c

56. A singer uploads a video of themselves playing an original song to TikTok. This is an example of
a. the niche nation.
b. participatory culture.
c. the mass nation.
d. fragmentation.

ANSWER: b

57. Which is the BEST example of fragmentation?
a. Millions of people tune in to watch a presidential inauguration on TV.
b. Netflix subscribers look for programming in categories like "Faith & Spirituality Movies" and "Emotional LGBTQ+ TV Shows."
c. A TikTok user makes a funny video featuring a famous song, and hundreds of other TikTok users make their own videos based on the original one.
d. A soft drink company turns to social media to ask users to vote on their next soda's flavor.

ANSWER: b

58. In comparison to the mass nation, the niche nation has
a. more media experiences that integrate us into a mainstream culture.
b. fewer media experiences that integrate us into a mainstream culture.
c. fewer media experiences that separate us into specialized subcultures.

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d. more sorting into one of two mainstream cultures.

ANSWER: b

59. According to the textbook, what is one concern of some critics of our contemporary media environment?
    a. new kinds of interactions with both people and media
    b. the broadness of the term *media*
    c. access to media products that suit narrow tastes
    d. media multitasking

ANSWER: d

60. When you scroll through the latest memes on Reddit, you are acting as a media
    a. consumer.
    b. producer.
    c. citizen.
    d. critic.

ANSWER: a

61. A criticism of the linear communication model is that it
    a. assumes that culture is hierarchical.
    b. asserts that audiences create their own meanings from messages sent.
    c. assumes that communication moves smoothly from sender to receiver.
    d. is flexible enough to describe the way consumers use the Internet.

ANSWER: c

62. Which term do scholars use to refer to anything that conveys meaning or communicates information?
    a. technological determinism
    b. culture
    c. text
    d. affordance

ANSWER: c

63. Which statement about the cultural approach is correct?
    a. The cultural approach complicates technological determinism.
    b. The cultural approach assumes that media messages move smoothly from point A to point Z.
    c. The cultural approach explains that senders have complete control over their messages.
    d. The cultural approach divides media into high and low culture.

ANSWER: a

64. Which element of the cultural approach refers to the organizations that play a role in creating and spreading information through media?
    a. texts

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b. users
c. industries
d. technologies

ANSWER: c

65. According to the cultural approach to media and communication,
a. gatekeepers do not actually exist.
b. communication consists of messages moving from point A to point B.
c. the linear model of communication is wrong.
d. media users' interpretations of messages can vary.

ANSWER: d

66. According to the textbook, our media institutions
a. play no role in the politics of culture.
b. avoid well-established narrative themes.
c. are unstructured.
d. tell stories.

ANSWER: d

67. What can BEST be described as the common denominator between our entertainment and information cultures?
a. narrative
b. politics
c. populism
d. modernism

ANSWER: a

68. Which statement about the modern era is true?
a. The efficiencies of industrial production made an array of consumer products affordable.
b. A strong belief in divine order was a common characteristic of the modern era.
c. The modern era was characterized by skepticism of experts and cynicism about the future.
d. The modern era ended before the rise of mass communication industries began.

ANSWER: a

69. What is NOT considered an "inferior" quality of low culture?
a. formulaic and derivative
b. sensationalistic and mindless
c. panders to base instincts
d. free from commercialism

ANSWER: d

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70. Which is NOT a value the textbook associates with postmodern culture?
    a. a tendency toward anti-elitism
    b. reduced faith in progress
    c. increased faith in expertise
    d. increased spread of unvetted media messages

ANSWER: c

71. The anti-vaccination and Amazon warehouse unionization movements are both examples of
    a. modernism.
    b. populism.
    c. high culture.
    d. consensus narratives.

ANSWER: b

72. Postmodern values include
    a. rationalism.
    b. working efficiently.
    c. blurring high and low culture.
    d. valuing logic and science.

ANSWER: c

73. Which characteristic is an aspect of postmodern culture?
    a. the idea that populist themes devalue the notion of "art"
    b. reduced concern for the opinions of cultural experts
    c. a strong belief in divine order
    d. believing that rational thought is the answer to every social problem

ANSWER: b

74. Which example does the textbook associate with postmodern culture?
    a. Disney's *The Lion King*
    b. the *New York Times*
    c. the Gutenberg Bible
    d. Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

ANSWER: a

75. Which does the textbook NOT suggest as an effective way to approach media literacy and media criticism?
    a. Learn as much as you can so you can sit on the sidelines and criticize effectively.
    b. Understand the various types of media so you can participate in the process of helping them live up to their democratic potential.
    c. Examine mass media through a careful critical process.
    d. Replace complacency and cynical perception of the media with genuine criticism.

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ANSWER: a

76. According to the textbook, following a five-step critical process allows one to develop
    a. technological determinism.
    b. affordances.
    c. media literacy.
    d. consensus narratives.

ANSWER: c

77. Which stage in developing a critical perspective BEST corresponds to identifying central characters, conflicts, topics, and themes?
    a. description
    b. analysis
    c. interpretation
    d. evaluation

ANSWER: a

78. Which stage in developing a critical perspective BEST corresponds to making an informed judgment?
    a. analysis
    b. interpretation
    c. evaluation
    d. engagement

ANSWER: c

79. Which stage in developing a critical perspective BEST corresponds to answering the "So what?" question?
    a. description
    b. analysis
    c. interpretation
    d. evaluation

ANSWER: c

80. In the interpretation stage of the critical process, an answer must be found to which question?
    a. When?
    b. How many?
    c. Who?
    d. What does that mean?

ANSWER: d

81. The second step in the critical process involves discovering significant patterns that emerge from the description stage. What is it called?
    a. analysis

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b. interpretation
c. evaluation
d. engagement

ANSWER: a

82. The final step in the critical process occurs only when citizens actively work to create a media world that helps serve democracy. What is it called?

a. analysis
b. interpretation
c. evaluation
d. engagement

ANSWER: d

83. Define *culture*, and use examples to illustrate one way it is influenced by media.

ANSWER: Answers will vary but should provide a definition of culture and provide examples that show how media influences culture. Culture is made up of the products that a society creates as well as the processes that forge those products and the values and identities embedded in them. Thus, *culture* may be defined as the forms and systems of expression that individuals, groups, and societies use to make sense of daily life, communicate with other people, and articulate their identities and values. The links between our culture and our identities and values mean that culture can be a highly charged and contested process. Ideas about what is normal and moral, for example, are established, reinforced, and challenged through culture. It is also a complicated process, since, in most societies, numerous cultures with different traditions and values can exist at the same time. Sometimes those distinct cultures coexist smoothly, but in many cases they struggle against each other, with some groups expecting their culture and its values to be dominant and to define a society's "mainstream" even if it means pushing other cultures to the margins.
In this way, the media products we use and consume link us to our society by providing shared and contested values. For example, we might ponder how the American ideal of "rugged individualism," in which a heroic character overcomes villains or corruption, is reinforced or challenged through films like *Guardians of the Galaxy, Volume 3*, television shows like *The Last of Us*, and first-person shooter video games like *Call of Duty*.

84. Explain how the printing press helped books become one of the first mass mediums.

ANSWER: Answers may vary but should discuss the impact of the printing press on books. While forms of printing using wood-carved blocks developed in China around 1045, what we recognize as modern printing did not emerge until the middle of the fifteenth century, when Johannes Gutenberg, a German goldsmith, invented a printing press that used movable metal type. His invention ushered in the print era. Printing presses and print publications spread rapidly across Europe by the early sixteenth century. Eventually, books became one of the first mass-marketed products due to the combined benefits of the printing press. First, machine duplication replaced the tedious system in which scribes hand-copied texts. Second, duplication could occur rapidly, so large quantities of the same book could be reproduced easily. Finally, the faster production of multiple copies brought down the cost of each unit, making books more affordable to less-affluent people.

85. What is the importance of the telegraph in media history?

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ANSWER: Answers may vary but should discuss the importance of the telegraph and its contributions. The gradual transformation from a print-based society to the electronic-based Information Age began with the development of the telegraph in the 1840s. The first technology to manipulate electricity as a means of communication over long distances, the telegraph worked by sending electrical signals over a network of wires. The telegraph made four key contributions to communication. First, unencumbered by stagecoaches, ships, or the pony express, the telegraph separated messages from transportation, making communication almost instantaneous. Second, in combination with the rise of mass-marketed newspapers, it commodified information. By the time of the Civil War, news had become a valuable product. Third, the telegraph made it easier for military, business, and political leaders to coordinate commercial and military operations on a national and—after the installation of the transatlantic cable in the 1860s—a global scale Finally, it led to future electronic-based technologies, such as radio broadcasting (originally called wireless telegraphy), the fax machine, and the cell phone.

86. Explain the two meanings of the term *convergence*.

ANSWER: Answers may vary but should correctly define *convergence*. Today, because digital communication easily converts all kinds of information into the same format—binary code—people can do many different things on their laptop or smartphone. Furthermore, computer programs and the accessibility of the Internet make it possible to manipulate and circulate that digital content more easily and in ways people couldn't in the past. Thus, digital communication brought about an information revolution. By the early 2000s, media critics and analysts used the term *convergence* to describe the changes brought by the digital transition. The term has been used in two interconnected ways. First, as just described, it refers to the technological merging of once distinct and incompatible formats into a single format, which can then be accessed through one device. Second, it refers to the trend of media companies merging together in order to better position themselves for a world in which all media can be digital.

87. Use examples to illustrate and explain the three roles people play in their relationship to media.

ANSWER: Answers will vary but should use examples to discuss the three roles we play in relationship to media. Our most familiar role is that of *media consumer*. Every time we watch a TV show, play a video game, visit a website, scroll through Instagram, or use Google Maps, we consume media. We often have to turn over something in exchange—our money, our attention, or perhaps our data. We can also play the role of *media producer*. When we post a picture to Snapchat, create a video on TikTok, or stream live on Twitch, we're producing media and often sharing it with large audiences. By pursuing a career in media—as a journalist, for example, or a screenwriter, videographer, game designer, publicist, or PR practitioner—we can also play the role of media producer. Finally, we are always *media citizens*, meaning we are members of societies that are saturated with media. As citizens, we have specific rights and responsibilities. In democratic societies, for example, citizenship comes with expectations of being informed, participating in civic life, and caring about the common good. To be a citizen is to act in the ways you think are right and just, and to participate in conversations with your fellow citizens about what society's values should be and how those values should shape our political and legal systems, as well as our culture.

88. Define the term *formal features* as it relates to media texts. Use at least a few examples to illustrate your definition.

ANSWER: Answers will vary but should define the term *formal features* and provide examples of formal

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features from a media text. Formal features are the various elements that play a role in shaping how we experience and interpret a media text. Different kinds of texts have different formal elements; for a film, we'd pay attention to narrative (story structure, characters, themes) and genre as well as production design, lighting, sound, editing, camera angles, and framing. The text uses *Black Panther* as an example in its analysis of the cultural approach. For *Black Panther*, we'd consider the fact that the movie is an action film based on the Marvel superhero Black Panther, the king and defender of Wakanda, a resource-rich and technologically superior African country that has isolated itself to keep colonizers at bay. The narrative pits the Black Panther against the villainous Killmonger (who tries to steal Wakanda's advanced weapons to foment a global war against a white world order) and explores a central theme: What responsibility do we have to challenge injustice, and how should we go about doing that? The director, the writer, and a majority of the film's cast are Black—a first for big-budget Hollywood films. The film features fast-paced editing sequences and the elaborate special effects common in today's superhero action films. Although Wakanda is fictional, the sets, costumes, music, and visual effects were created with care to reflect a multiplicity of African cultural styles.

89. The textbook asserts that narratives are the dominant way we make sense and meaning of our experiences. Use examples to illustrate how popular narratives can be varied and have political implications.

ANSWER: Answers will vary but should provide examples of narratives. As an example of the power of narratives, when the coronavirus emerged in late 2019 and early 2020, journalists reported statistics about confirmed cases and deaths, but they also told stories to help the public comprehend the magnitude and tragedy of the crisis—stories about the heroism of health-care workers, the fate of victims, the race to develop a vaccine, and battles over governments' responses. Meanwhile, President Trump used Twitter to establish his administration's actions as a success story, and people around the world went online to post stories and videos about life in isolation. Told through a variety of media outlets, such diverse stories shaped the public's understanding and experience of the pandemic. As a result, it is important to not take media stories for granted but to examine them with a careful and critical eye.

90. Name the ways in which both "high" culture and "low" culture are identified.

ANSWER: Answers may vary but should identify the distinction between "high" and "low" culture. Throughout much of the twentieth century, critics and audiences generally perceived culture as a hierarchy, with supposedly superior products at the top and inferior ones at the bottom. In this way of thinking, high culture is represented by things such as ballet, art museums, and classic literature. Low culture is often considered to be things like reality television, teen pop music, and violent video games. High culture—identified with "good taste" and higher education and supported by wealthy patrons—is associated with fine art, which is available primarily in museums, theaters, and concert halls. In contrast, low or popular culture is aligned with the "questionable" tastes of the masses, who enjoy the commercial "junk" circulated by the mass media. This hierarchy was based on—and helped to reinforce—certain assumptions about what makes media products better or worse.

91. Describe the five-step critical process for developing media literacy.

ANSWER: Correct answers should provide a description of the critical process for developing media literacy. Developing a media-literate critical perspective involves mastering five overlapping stages that build on one another. Description is paying close attention, taking notes, and researching the subject under study. Analysis is discovering and focusing on significant patterns that emerge from the

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description stage. Interpretation is asking and answering "What does that mean?" and "So what?" questions about one's findings. Evaluation is arriving at a judgment about whether something is good, bad, or mediocre, which involves subordinating one's personal taste to the critical "bigger picture" resulting from the first three stages. Engagement is taking some action that connects our critical perspective with our role as citizens and watchdogs to question our media institutions, adding our voice to the process of shaping the cultural environment.

92. Discuss the benefits of being able to adopt a critical perspective of the media, as that concept is explained in the textbook.

ANSWER: Answers will vary but should discuss the benefits of adopting a critical perspective of the media. Possible answers may state that adopting a critical perspective enables people to be prepared for the responsibility involved in building our culture and safeguarding our democracy. Developing an informed critical perspective empowers people to help build our culture more thoughtfully and keep our democracy healthy. It can, for example, help people explore key tensions that emerge in our media culture between democracy and commercial interests. On the one hand, the media can be a catalyst for democracy and social change. Consider the role of smartphone video in documenting police brutality, of websites like FactCheck.org in debunking false information, or of television in shifting attitudes about LGBTQ+ rights. On the other hand, the media can advance powerful commercial interests that sometimes operate in opposition to democratic values. Large parts of the media environment are controlled by relatively few multinational corporations that can greatly limit the ideas that circulate; in addition, much of our media environment is subsidized by advertising, which addresses people as consumers with unequal spending power rather than as citizens with equal rights under the law.

A healthy democracy requires the active involvement of everyone. Part of this involvement means understanding the nature and consequences of the complex media environment we experience each and every day, which we can do by adopting a critical perspective.

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