

Bokmål: Gjør rede for fire av de fem begrepene/teoriene nedenfor.

English: Give a short explanation of four of the five concepts/theories.

Sosiale og demokratiske funksjoner av media/social and democratic functions of the media

This question is about the general importance of the media in democratic societies. The students are expected to write that modern democratic societies strongly depend on the media because they cannot function without them. Moreover, the students should describe some functions in greater detail, for example information, criticism and control (fourth estate), articulation, integration, socialization, mobilization, recreation. Ideally, the answer should include some critical reflections on these functions – for example that it is normatively expected that the media fulfill certain functions, but that does not necessarily mean that all media always really fulfill these functions.

Det norske mediasystem/The Norwegian media system

The students should describe that the Norwegian media system belongs to the democratic corporatist countries according to Hallin and Mancini (2004) and describe the main characteristics of this type of media systems (high newspaper circulation, early development of mass-circulation press; traditionally high political pluralism, high importance of public service broadcasting, strong journalistic professionalization, strong state interventionism on the media market, but with high protection of press freedom). They should describe the different media sectors – newspaper market (external pluralism), broadcasting (TV, radio; strong role of NRK), media concentration, self-regulation). Good answers also include critical reflections on the most recent developments (e.g. the impact of the internet on the Norwegian media market, newspaper crisis, paying for online news).

Castells fire kulturer/Castell's four cultures

Manuel Castells beskriver Internettets utvikling som drevet frem av "fire kulturer": En tekno-merittokratisk kultur, en hacker-kultur, en virtuell fellesskaps-kultur og en entreprenør-kultur. Studentene bør kunne redegjøre for hovedtrekk ved disse fire kulturene, samt hvordan de – på tross av klare ulikheter seg i mellom – delte et felles ideal og mål om å utvikle Internett som et åpent, desentralisert nettverk. Gode besvarelser bør også kunne reflektere over hvordan utviklingen av Internett i den formen det fikk, ikke var en selvfølge, samt hvordan idealet om et åpent, desentralisert nettverk har blitt utsatt for et vedvarende press og gjenstand for dramatisk uthuling de senere tiårene.

Offentlig mening/Public opinion

The students should mention that public opinion is an important topic of media effects research and describe different understandings of the term: Public Opinion as rational discourse (normative: how public opinion is supposed to be to contribute to a well-functioning democracy and a well-integrated commonwealth), Public Opinion as distribution of opinion (the distribution of individual opinions in a society as measured by the methods of public opinion polling count as public opinion), Public Opinion as control/correlate of power (power and government rest on perceived legitimacy among the public. Government will change if out of line with public opinion; attempts to shape public opinion to stay in government.), Public Opinion as social control (Public opinions are those opinions that can be expressed without facing threats of isolation from society ("liquid public opinion") or

those opinions that have to be expressed to prevent threats of isolation from society (“solid public opinion”). The answer should include reflections on the meaning of the term “public”. It’s positive if the answer in addition includes a description of Noelle-Neumann’s concept of the spiral of silence and/or empirical methods that are used in public opinion research (surveys, experiments, ethnography, focus groups, content analysis).

Algoritmer og store data/Algorithms and Big Data

The students are expected to define algorithms as the mathematical procedures that underly all computation and that they have become very important in our current and complex society, particularly online. They should give 2-3 examples of “smart algorithms” (e.g. search engines, social media, chatbots, social bots, spam bots, recommender systems) and describe what they do. Moreover, they should describe that the data that are used by algorithms are called Big Data. It should be mentioned that Big Data is a buzzword without a consensual scientific definition, but a popular definition are the “3 V’s”: Volume (enormous quantities of data), variety (data can be structured (e.g., numbers, dates) or unstructured (e.g., photos, videos, e-mail messages), and velocity (data are generated in real-time). In addition, they could mention the big linkage potentials and big flexibility of Big Data. Good answers will include a discussion on possible societal risks of algorithms and big data (e.g. echo chambers/filter bubbles, fragmentation, polarization, dangers for online privacy) and/or particular problems for research in media sociology associated with them.

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Mediesosiologi/Media sociology

It should be mentioned that there are no canonical definitions of "media sociology", but it can be defined as the subfield of sociology that addresses the role of the media in society in various ways. Media sociology deals with the societal role of the media – that is, the role that the media play in relationships between people, groups, and organizations that make up society. Nearly all societal phenomena on the macro-level (media systems), meso-level (organizations) and micro-level (individuals) related to mediated communication are relevant for media sociology. There should be a description of the historical development of media sociology (four phases: omnipotent media – limited effects – rediscovery of strong media effects – "negotiated"/"transactional" effects). In addition, good answers also discuss the (ongoing) societal relevance of media sociology itself, particularly in the digital age.

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Medienes rolle i demokratiet/The media’s democratic role

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Kjønn i media/Media and gender

It is expected that the students explain that the portrayal of men and women in the media shapes our gender role perceptions. Thus, gender portrayals in the media are very powerful and can foster social inequalities between men and women. This is discussed in critical theories, particularly feminist media theories some of which should be mentioned and very shortly described. The term “gender stereotypes” should be mentioned, and some indicators which enable us to investigate gender stereotypes should be mentioned (e.g., symbolic annihilation of women, marginalization, contextualization, trivialization, gender specific attribution of characteristics, visual subordination of women). Good answers also discuss the inequalities between men and women in media production.

Kvantitative innholdsanalyse/Quantitative content analysis

The term should be defined (“Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”; Berelson 1952). It should be described that this is an empirical method used in social sciences to analyze diverse kinds of texts. The differences between quantitative and qualitative content analysis should be discussed and the standards (reliability and validity) should be mentioned. The answer should also give some examples of topics/research questions that are investigated by use of quantitative content analysis as well as some examples of typical categories/variables used in quantitative content analysis. A rough overview over the research process in quantitative content analyses as well as the importance of the codebook should be given. Good answers also discuss methodological challenges of quantitative content analysis.

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