Welcome to **EDUQAS A Level Media Studies**! Put simply, Media Studies is the study of the world of the Media, from analysing camera shots in a TV or music video sequence, to evaluating how media moguls -like News Corporation- are owned and regulated. Our exam is worth 70% and involves the analytical study of advertising, newspapers, music videos, video games and television dramas. Our course work is worth 30% and so we are looking for a practical and creative person who can apply the knowledge they've learnt in lessons. **Please complete our transition task by your first lesson back in September**.

Should you require any help or if you have any questions then please contact the Head of Media: hfrazer@cardinalnewmanschool.net

COMPULSORY TRANSITION TASKS

Written-based – Task 1

Write a 500 word essay entitled: **How is ethnicity and gender constructed in the 'Black Panther' film poster? [30 marks]**

Success criteria:

- Aim to write 4-5 PEE paragraphs: point-evidence-explain
- In your point, explicitly explain what you learn about ethnicity
- Refer to specific evidence from the poster (see the list below for ideas)
- Develop and explain your views by exploring the connotations and meaning of the evidence you have chosen
- Make links to the context of the poster- what is it implying about ethnicity/ gender and our views towards ethnicity/gender in society today? How have these changed?

Some ideas you could explore:

- The visual codes in the poster e.g. outline of Africa, tribal dress code, use of props, colour scheme, location
- The language used e.g. in the tagline, name of the film
- The camera angles used- look up what a low angle is

Want to challenge yourself? Use the following theory by bell hooks to add depth to your response: hooks is a feminist and argues that race, sex and class determine the extent to which one is discriminated against and oppressed in and by society. Are these characters oppressed? Or does this poster challenge this theory?

Practical-based - Task 2

In your course work you will be asked to design a product that clearly represents a group (e.g. ethnicity or gender) in an insightful and complex way. Choose <u>one</u> of tasks below and be ready to share in your first lesson back.

A. Create a lifestyle magazine front cover- take your own image and write your own cover lines- that represents a group is a specific way. You could use word or publisher (or any other online app).
B. Write the script for a radio show in which you interview the director and a cast member about an upcoming film (that you have made up) in which representation of a group is complex (like Black Panther). If you would prefer to record the interview and submit the mp3, please do.
C. Choose a song that does not currently have a music video, create a 15 frame storyboard using your own photographic images to go with the song. Represent a group in a complex way. If you would prefer to record the music video or create a 'reel' style extract and submit the mp4, please do.

Wider Reading and Preparation for A-Level - Task A

A look into feminist texts and their relevance to society

What is Feminism?

- o Research online what feminism is; really think about whether it is centred on the empowerment of women or about equality for everyone.
- o There are different types of feminism- socialist, radical and liberal. What are these? What are their slightly different views?

💡 **Are you a feminist? What type of feminism would you say you most associate with?**

Mad Max: Fury Road

Synopsis: An apocalyptic story set in the furthest reaches of our planet, in a stark desert landscape where humanity is broken, and almost everyone is crazed fighting for the necessities of life. Within this world exist two rebels on the run who just might be able to restore order. There's Max, a man of action and a man of few words, who seeks peace of mind following the loss of his wife and child in the aftermath of the chaos. And Furiosa, a woman of action and a woman who believes her path to survival may be achieved if she can make it across the desert back to her childhood homeland. Fury Road is a 're-boot' of a film from 30 years before featuring Mel Gibson; it's not necessarily a sequel, but a 're-visit' to the same world years later.

Look at the poster to the right:

- o How is Furiosa (Charlize Theron) represented in this image? Refer to the media language- framing, type of shot, costume, props, colour scheme, body language, mise en scene.
- o With reference to feminist theory, would you say that the image supports or challenges a feminist perspective?

💡 **The film is called 'Mad Max', Max is the character in the background of the image with a cage on his face- how is this ironic?**

Watch the trailer:

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1392190/?ref_=tt_pg

Read the article

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/27/sexists-are-scared-of-mad-max-because-it-is-a-call-to-dismantle-patriarchies

Do you think the film is about **the rise of feminism and strength of women** OR about the **'horror of sexism' and 'necessity of freedom from patriarchy'**? Are these the same thing? How are they different?

💡 **How relevant do you think this film is to our current society? Do we need freedom from patriarchy? Is there still sexism around today?**

Wider Reading and Preparation for A-Level - Task B

Film regulation and the impact on audiences

What is regulation and why is it important?

- o   Watch and make notes: https://bbfc.co.uk/about-classification/classification-guidelines

💡 **How does what audiences watch influence them? Do you think some audiences are more influenced than others? How do *you* think *you* are influenced by films?**

How is regulation enforced?

- o   You can find film certifications on the BBFC website, BBFC stands for British Board of Film Classification and they regulate films in the UK.
- o   Listen to the podcast about 18- regulated films and how this certification has developed over time: BBFC Podcast Episode 99 - 18 | BBFC

  "The 18 replaced the X in 1982, which in turn absorbed the H which stood for 'horrific' in 1951"

What were 'Video Nasties'?

- o   In the early 1980s videos became very popular and with that there was an abundance of films released that had never previously been classified or which contained material previously cut.
- o   The market was unregulated and many titles 'of the horror variety' included hyperbolic packaging accompanying by graphic imagery which may not have featured in the film itself.
- o   Following a series of violent crimes which the media and government believed were because of these horror films, the term 'video nasty' was coined.
- o   A list of around sixty potentially obscene titles (i.e. works with a "tendency to deprave and corrupt, or make morally bad, a significant proportion of the likely audience", which in this case included children who might view the work in the home), were repeatedly seized and prosecuted, a factor which reinforced the media and public perception of them as to blame for the violent crimes occurring at the time.

💡 **Do you think that films can 'corrupt or make morally bad' audiences? If we watch a horror film do you think we are more likely to commit an awful crime afterwards?**

Child's Play Case Study- link to Jamie Bulger's death?

In 1993, two boys aged 10 were jailed for the kidnap and murder of Jamie Bulger aged 2. The solicitor for Neil Venables, father of Jon Venables, denied the boy had watched an 18- certificate film his father had rented a month before. Child's Play 3 contains scenes in which an obsessed doll, Chucky, dies after being splattered with paint and having its face pulped; James Bulger was splashed with paint and battered to death.

Read more: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/video-link-to-bulger-murder-disputed-1506766.html

💡 **Do you think that the film influenced these 10-year olds? What psychological impact might horror films have on children? What does this case study tell you about the importance of regulation?**

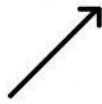**Read more: http://www.mediaknowall.com/as_alevel/mediaviolence/violence.php?pageID=effects**

Wider Reading and Preparation for A-Level Task 3

PREMODERN   MODERN   POSTMODERN

What on Earth is postmodernism? And how is Flea Bag a postmodern text?

"Because God put it there and that's the way it's always been."

"Onwards and upwards with inevitable progress!"

"Bllpppggghljsdlkfjowejfalsk djflksdjflksjdldjl;aldflkj;;;;df"

What is Postmodernism?

o Postmodernism was coined around the 1970s and was a reaction to modernism, which was based on idealism and a utopian vision of human life and society; a belief in progress. Postmodernism is the rejection of everything: truth, reality, rules, regulations, technique, art. Instead it focused on individual experience and embracing the complexity of life, which can often be contradictory. Postmodernist said 'there is no art', 'nothing is real', 'everything is a simulation'.

In postmodern texts you may find:

- Repetition
- Pastiche or a combination of lots of different media, art forms, genres
- Intertextuality
- Other layers of reality or the exposure of the constructs of reality
- Fragmented or illogical narratives/ meanings
- Satire, humour, irony

> This says 'This is not a pipe', which it isn't. It is an image of a pipe on paper. Postmodernism exposes what we believe to be real.

💡 **How are these images postmodern?**

Ceci n'est pas une pipe.

How is Flea Bag postmodernist? Watch Flea Bag on Netflix now!

Read: https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/fleabag-tv-review-929720

💡 **In Flea Bag, the protagonist talks directly to the camera. This is called breaking the fourth wall. What is this and why would this be seen as postmodern? What does the TV series gain from this convention?**

💡 **Look at the images below. Can you spot the other examples of postmodern films/ TV series? How are they postmodern (some fulfil different conventions)? What does this element add to the text?**

Wider Reading and Preparation for A-Level Task 4

How New Media Technologies are changing the fabric of society

What is New Media Technology?

Read: https://www.webopedia.com/TERM/N/new_media.html

💡 **How do you think NMT (new media technology) is changing different industries? Consider the following points:**

- In the 1960s around 80% of America's population read at least one newspaper, today less than 10% of the population reads a newspaper. **How do people consume the news and magazines in today's world?**
- Worldwide the film industry loses around $20 billion each year from illegally downloaded film and TV series. **What impact are pirate streaming services having on the profit and integrity of the film industry? What are the benefits of online streaming?**
- Twitter was created in 2006, it now has 330 million users worldwide. **What role does twitter play in society? What is it used for?**

Fake News

- As well as from television, people are increasingly getting their news information from social media, with disastrous consequences. Whilst newspapers offer a degree of fact checking and veracity due to government oversight, it is a free-for-all on social media.
- If we focus on Twitter, there were more than 6.6 million tweets that included fake news or conspiracies in the month leading up to the US election. This is demonstrated by the fact that the most shared piece of news in the US election was the purported endorsement of Trump by Pope Francis. This is obviously false, and yet had received 960,000 Facebook engagements by November 8.
- Overall, an eye watering 126 million Americans saw fake news through the medium of Facebook.

💡 **What impact does fake news have on audiences? Do you think fake news targets specific audiences? Is all fake news bad? Why is fake news not regulated and removed straight away?**

Fake or Real? (You'll have to find out the answers yourself online)

- Robot becomes Headteacher in Wales
- Australia is moving further North, which means Sat Navs may struggle to find significant landmarks
- Women gives birth to 4 stone baby
- World's first underwater golf course opens
- Penguin breaks into family home

Citizenship Journalism

- Citizen journalism is conducted by people/ the public who are not professional journalists but who disseminate information using Web sites, blogs, and social media.

Read: https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/jun/11/rise-of-citizen-journalism

💡 **What impact does citizenship journalism have on audiences? What does it give them that was never possible before with print newspapers or magazines? Have you ever been a citizen journalist? What did it feel like? What are the dangers of citizenship journalism?**

Want to find out more about the role of social media in politics and fake news?

Check out 'The Great Hack' on Netflix.

Wider Reading and Preparation for A-Level Task 5

Music videos that say something about our world

Childish Gambino- 'This is America'

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYOjWnS4cMY&list=RDVYOjWnS4cMY&start_radio=1

Consider the following questions:

- What is Childish Gambino saying about black people's experiences in America?
- Why do you think Childish Gambino wears very simple grey trousers and that's it in the video?
- The happy choral music juxtaposes some of the scenes in the video, what impact does this juxtaposition have?
- At the end, Childish Gambino is running looking terrified, what do you think he is running away from? What lasting message does it leave with the audience?

Satire

- A satire is when a text uses irony, shock or humour to make a political point.
- 'This is America' is a metaphor for the violence that underpins black experiences in America; this violence is often normalised like with the school children still dancing, or hidden like the gun that is taken away and covered up at the start after Childish Gambino shoots the guitarist.
- The gunning down of the choir is an **intertextual link** (see meaning below) to the 2015 Charleston shooting in which white supremacist Dylann Roof killed nine black people in a church basement

Do you think musicians should use their art to make political statements? What impact might this music video have on black communities in America?

Read more: **https://time.com/5267890/childish-gambino-this-is-america-meaning/**

Lady Gaga and Beyonce- 'Telephone'

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVBsypHzF3U

Consider the following questions:

- The video uses hyperbolic stereotypes and stock characters- prisons, women, men, American diners and criminals- what point is the video making about stereotypes and assumptions?
- How do you think women are represented through the characters of Lady Gaga and Beyoncé? Consider how their changing costumes serve to both objectify and empower them.
- The music video is called 'telephone' and the lyrics 'stop calling' are repeated often in the chorus; what point could the video be trying to make about communication in today's world?

Intertextuality

- Intertextuality is when one text refers to another, often this is to make a deeper point. Intertextuality is a convention often associated with post-modern texts.
- 'Telephone' has intertextual links to both Thelma and Louise and Kill Bill 1 (see images below). Research these two texts and then consider the relevance of the intertextual link in 'Telephone'.

Do you have a favourite music video that you think really says something about our world? Have a go at analysing it using the key terms above.

Wider Reading and Preparation for A-Level Task 6

Innovative publicity strategies that transformed viral marketing

💡 **What do you think makes an innovative marketed strategy?**

The Dark Knight

- The Dark Knight is known for having hatched one of the most interactive movie campaigns known in Hollywood; it even won awards for its immersive campaigns.

Read: https://cargocollective.com/GaryRosen/The-Dark-Knight-Known-as-the-best-viral-movie-marketing-campaign-in

Guerrilla Marketing

- Guerrilla marketing is an advertisement strategy in which a company uses surprise and/or unconventional interactions in order to promote a product or service. It is a type of publicity.
- The Dark Knight used Guerrilla marketing by making the world of Gotham City as though something real that exists in *our* world; phones hidden in cakes, websites for Dent's election, newly printed dollar bills and published newspapers.
- Campaigns like this immerse the audience in the experience, making them active participants of the media that they consume, rather than passive.

There are many different types of Guerrilla marketing, read here: https://www.dontpaniclondon.com/what-is-guerrilla-advertising/

💡 **Not all production and distribution companies can market their films like The Dark Knight? Why not? What does the creation of this extensive marketing campaign rely on?**

Game of Thrones

- With a production budget of around $10 million per episode, and a loyal audience of around 25 million, it was obvious that GOT needed a big campaign to market its big brand.
- From having White Walkers stroll through Kings Cross station and a giant dragon skull 'washing up' on a beach in Dorset, to building statues of King Joffrey in NZ which audiences had to re-tweet in order to have it dragged down in a dramatic anti-Lannister protest.

Read for more: **https://www.thedrum.com/news/2019/04/10/game-thrones-final-season-hbo-brand-partners-get-creative**

Straight Outta Compton

- The marketing campaign of SOC focused on allowing audiences to feel represented, included and also relate to the experiences of the people in the film.
- Distributors launched a promotional site that included an image generator that could then be shared on twitter and facebook: Straight Outta Somewhere / #StraightOutta | Know Your Meme

Synergy

- Many films or TV series with high production values are able to synergise with other companies to raise the status, profile and target audience of their product; **synergy** is when brands or companies work together for a shared benefit and **high production** value texts are those that typically have a high budget.

💡 **Which of the texts explored above do you think had the most innovative and impactful marketing campaign? All three texts used synergy, what examples can you find online?**