

**ASSIGNMENT No. 2**

**Q.1 Regarding the objectification of women in advertising, Jean Kilbourne states that “turning a human being into a thing is almost always the first step toward justifying violence against that person.” Do you agree or disagree with her? Support your answer with reasons.**

The silencing of women is portrayed in many ways. Often women are depicted with their hands over their mouths, or their mouths covered in some way. Frequently they are infantilized with the clothing the models wear or the silly positions they are photographed in, whereas men are mostly photographed in positions of strength and solemnity. There is no emphasis on intimacy or relationships in advertising, and it has gotten graphic to the point of being pornographic. And, Kilbourne points out, “at the same time that we allow our children to be sexualized, we refuse to educate them about sex.”

As young girls are exposed to these ads, Killing Us Softly 4 explains, they are taught that they will be rewarded for sexualizing themselves, and viewing themselves as objects.

Killing Us Softly 4 highlights a particularly important example in clothing sizes in recent years. The invention of the size 0 and 00 gives the impression that a woman must aspire to become nothing if she is to be acceptable. These excruciatingly small sizes are then sent to be modeled, though most women cannot fit into the clothes. The “perfect” body type pedaled by advertising is one that less than 5% of the American population has, and one that cannot be attained without surgery or genetic predisposition. This obsession with thinness can lead to low self-esteem, depression, and eating disorders, harming today’s women with the message that they must be thin to the point of becoming unhealthy in attempting to achieve it.

**Dehumanization leads to cosmetic surgery and violence**

This is not the extent of the negative effects of such advertising techniques. Women are dehumanized in advertising, which leads to widespread violence. Kilbourne is emphatic in her statement that advertising is not the sole cause of violence against women, but she also notes that it adds to the environment in which such things occur.

A way in which women are dehumanized is in image splicing. Only a specific part of the woman will be portrayed in the ad, effectively making her seem less than a complete human. Often, women are portrayed as objects such as a keg of beer, or a car. In Killing Us Softly 4, Jean explains that, “turning a human being into a thing is almost always the first step to justifying violence against that person. We see this with racism, we see it with homophobia, we see it with terrorism. It’s always the same process. The person is dehumanized and violence then becomes inevitable.”

The effect of hacking apart women’s bodies in advertising is manifold. In recent years, the number of cosmetic surgeries, 91% of which were performed on women, has increased by 457% to almost 12 million a year. Often this is done in pursuit of the implausible perfection, and includes things such as breast implants. Many women who have breast implants lose sensation in their breasts, thus becoming an object of pleasure, rather than the recipient.

It has also affected men's perceptions of women. Studies have shown that "when men are shown photographs of supermodels in studies they then judge real women much more harshly," says Kilbourne. And, as argued above, objectifying creates a path to violence. One third of the women killed in the United States are killed by their male partners or their husbands.

**Portrayal of women in advertising affects everyone**

But this violence is not only caused by the portrayal of women in advertising. Advertising directed at men focuses on the importance of masculinity. Talking and communication, often considered feminine traits are devalued, forcing men to the conclusion that they must not have any femininity in them if they are to meet the male standard of perfection. Indirectly, men are shown that feminine characteristics are synonymous with weakness, even in women themselves.

Killing Us Softly 4 ends on a moral note. What can be done to change this dehumanization and absurd ideal of women in advertising? Kilbourne thinks that the first step is to become aware of what is happening, and to promote citizen activism. This would include education, discussion, and media literacy.

"We need to disrupt the stories that advertising tells us about ourselves and our relationships," Kilbourne says.

"The changes have to be profound and global and they'll depend upon an aware, active and educated public – a public that thinks of itself primarily as citizens rather than primarily as consumers." In order to change the image of women as subordinate, silent, and weak, the concepts produced by advertising need to transform so that women are not taught that their sole value resides in their appearance.

**Q.2 Discuss the professional obstacles faced by women journalists. Give a biographical account of an international or a Pakistani female journalist.**

As Pakistan gears up for its general election on July 25, there are renewed fears of an increased crackdown on freedom of the press, with rising reports of censorship of newspapers, TV channels, and social media.

But for female journalists, the challenges don't stop here.

Threats of gender-based violence, harassment, negative societal attitudes, stifled career progress, and a significant gender pay gap are only some of the added challenges that test the resilience of Pakistan's small but thriving community of female journalists.

Less than 5 percent of journalists in Pakistan are women, which raises serious questions about how the media can reflect and inform public opinion when the sector is so unrepresentative of the society it serves.

The organization I work for, International Alert, recently spoke to female journalists in the provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), to understand the challenges they face and hear their stories. The research, we hope, will help toward finding solutions to create a more inclusive media environment in Pakistan. What these journalists told us sheds an interesting light on some of the key issues facing women in the media in Pakistan. Sexual harassment is one such issue. A 2017 survey highlighted that almost one in two female journalists in Pakistan have experienced gender-based violence in the course of their work and only 24 percent have not reported facing any form of harassment.

The journalists we worked with said that harassment often comes from within their own media outlets and is most likely to be perpetrated by their immediate line managers. Many women said a refusal to accede to grossly inappropriate advances from those in positions of power often leads to detrimental impacts on their career. In the wake of the global #MeToo movement, this issue does at least appear to be getting some public attention in the country.

Social pressure was another key issue highlighted almost universally among the journalists we spoke to. Many felt stigmatized as “bad women” because of their career choices. Some had had their character explicitly questioned, while others felt their families were unhappy with them for entering a traditionally male-dominated world.

Interestingly, all the women we spoke to said that they were only able to successfully work as journalists because they had the support of the men in their family. Without this, they said, they might have had to give up on their dreams of becoming a journalist. Many women said they felt an expectation to adopt traditionally masculine traits to compete in the sector, a sentiment reflected in the global experiences of female journalists.

Alert’s research also revealed an almost complete absence of support from the women’s employers. Many complained about a gender pay gap, even when women felt they were more qualified and experienced than their male counterparts. Between a lack of any equality policy, prejudice of male counterparts, and a refusal to offer women the opportunity to report the beats they prefer, female journalists paint a picture of antiquated, male-dominated institutions where women’s presence in the newsroom is seen as a novelty at best and a threat to existing powers at worst.

An overwhelming majority of female journalists in Punjab and KPK said their employers fail to provide them with transport to get to the locations where they need to report from, particularly when they need to work late.

The journalists complained about inadequate maternity leave, with some saying they only received a month’s leave. Others had it even worse, with one interviewee saying her employer offers only one month’s unpaid maternity leave. Online media was seen as slightly more supportive than print, but even then maternity leave was seen a special favor rather than rooted in a specific policy.

Despite the challenges, increasing numbers of female journalists are working in Pakistani media, acting as role models and supporting networks of those that follow. Efforts are also underway to respond to the above issues and create a more inclusive environment for journalists, with the Coalition for Women in Journalism launching its Pakistan chapter earlier this year.

International Alert too continues to work with journalists in Pakistan to promote diversity and representation of marginalized voices in the media. Through “Inclusive Media Forums,” Alert has successfully brought together groups of media professionals who report on complex issues without creating tensions between or within communities.

Our interviews were with journalists from Punjab and KPK provinces, and we cannot claim that they are representative of a national scale. But many of the issues raised here fit in with established wider narratives regarding the experience of women working in Pakistani media.

**Q.3 What are the challenges that women experience in the cyberspace? Discuss the measures suggested to make cyberspace safe for women.**

**An unfortunate number of women** are becoming victims of cyber crimes. According to **a recent study** more women are known to use the Internet to enrich their relationships compared to men. Young women, those 18-24, experience certain severe types of harassment at disproportionately high levels: 26% of these young women have been **stalked online, and 25% were the target of online sexual harassment**. The growing reach of the Internet and the rapid spread of information through mobile devices has presented new opportunities that could put some women at risk, so it's important to be mindful of the dangers.

As we celebrate International Women's Day, let us keep a few cyber safety points in mind.

1. Don't share passwords.

It may sound silly. Who in their right mind shares their password, right?

Wrong. You may have shared your password with a trusted friend or partner. According to the **Norton CyberCrime Report** two in three people believe it's riskier to share their email password with a friend than lend them their car. The fear is reasonable. While friends may not intentionally cause you harm, they may accidentally reveal your password to someone. Sometimes relationships change before your password does. Use your discretion and keep those passwords private and complicated.

2. Don't leave your webcam connected.

There are too many apps capable of turning on your camera and slyly recording your movements without your knowledge. As a precaution disable camera permission and keep the lens of your camera closed or covered when not in use.

3. Don't share more than necessary.

Relationships have only two shades in a spectrum – very good or very bad. Even the best of people can swing from one end of the spectrum to the other. That is why use caution when you share intimate messages, pictures, information or anything that has the potential to come back and embarrass you.

4. Don't meet online acquaintances alone.

Always let your friends and family know where you are going and who you are meeting. Make sure you meet the person in a crowded coffee shop or mall.

5. Reveal only as much as needed.

There are too many sinister characters browsing social media sites to initiate friendship with unsuspecting women. Be careful about posting details about your whereabouts and lifestyle. Stalkers can find ways to reach you with a simple photograph or status update. Disable geotagging in your camera. Enable it only when

required. Any device with an enabled 'location service' poses the risk of exposing your exact location at any given time.

6. Update all operating systems on you devices.

They can be nuisance. But they are very important to keep you safe. Security updates and patches keep the latest threats away. Always install them no matter how busy you are.

7. Secure your devices with anti-virus software

Having a mobile phone or a tablet without a security system in place is like sitting in a house with the doors unlocked. Both android and mac devices are at risk from malicious software invading and taking over your life. Always install a reliable security system like Norton Security in all your devices.

8. Read the fine print

Know and understand the privacy policy and terms of service of any service you use. Some websites can own, sell, rent or resell your information to anyone they want. This can come back as a bigger problem and the law may not be able protect you since you agreed to the terms and conditions.

9. There is no such thing as 'freebies'

Freebies come as games, offers, deals, etc. They may be riddled with viruses, spyware and malicious software. These can get into your device and mine all your data.

10. Block people you don't want to interact with

Never feel weird declining friend requests from people you barely know. Trust your instinct and ignore, unfriend or block them. You get to choose who stays on your friend list.

When it comes to safety, both online and offline, common sense is the first line of defense. Your instincts play a critical role in your protection. If something feels 'off', go with your instincts. You don't have to explain your reasoning to anyone.

#### **Q.4 Define media censorship. How does the media censorship impact the society?**

"Supervision and control of the information and ideas that are circulated among the people within a society. In modern times, censorship refers to the examination of books, periodicals, plays, films, television and radio programs, news reports, and other communication media for the purpose of altering or suppressing parts thought to be objectionable or offensive."

Funk & Wagnalls New World Encyclopedia

- What's missing from this definition? Censorship by whom?
- Is censorship by private groups and individuals included in this definition? Do they "supervise and control"?

"Official prohibition or restriction of any type of expression believed to threaten the political, social, or moral order. It may be imposed by governmental authority, local or national, by a religious body, or occasionally by a powerful private group. The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. 2001.

- Would parental control over children be considered censorship?

## Course: Women and Media (874)

### Semester: Spring, 2022

- Would economic boycotts be considered censorship?
- Does this includes suppression of information?

"The term censorship, however, as commonly understood, connotes any examination of thought or expression in order to prevent publication of 'objectionable' material."

-- U.S. Supreme Court, *Farmers Educational & Coop. Union v. WDAY, Inc.*, 360 U.S. 525, 527 (1959)

- Does censorship include punishment for thought or expression after the fact?

"In its broadest sense [censorship] refers to suppression of information, ideas, or artistic expression by anyone, whether government officials, church authorities, private pressure groups, or speakers, writers, and artists themselves. . . . In its narrower, more legalistic sense, censorship means only the prevention by official government action of the circulation of messages already produced. Thus writers who 'censor' themselves before putting words on paper, for fear of failing to sell their work, are not engaging in censorship in this narrower sense, nor are those who boycott sponsors of disliked television shows. Yet all of these restraints have the effect of limiting the diversity that would otherwise be available in the marketplace of ideas and so may be considered censorship in its broadest sense."

Academic American Encyclopedia

- Is censorship limited to violations of the First Amendment by government?

"The cyclical suppression, banning, expurgation, or editing by an individual, institution, group or government that enforces or influences its decision against members of the public of any written or pictorial materials which that individual, institution, group or government deems obscene and 'utterly without redeeming social value' as determined by 'contemporary community standards.'"

professor Chuck Stone, UNC-Chapel Hill

#### • FORMS of CENSORSHIP

- Preventive (exercised before the expression is made public)
  - Prior restraint by government
  - Licensing
  - Self-censorship
- Punitive (exercised after the expression is made public)
- Censorship vs. Taboos

"In primitive societies, censorship is ordinarily the work of taboo, traditional prohibitions upon certain acts and attitudes; and those taboos are so thoroughly imprinted upon the minds of the young by the tribal elders that they become almost a part of the nature of all members of the group, without much latter necessity for enforcing conformity to these commandments."

Collier's Encyclopedia



"Censorship is a conscious policy; it may be enforced without the assent of the greater part of society. A tabu enters intimately into the scheme of feelings of those who entertain it. The tabu is particularly effective in self-control; when it is applied by group action to those who do not entertain it, such action is generally spontaneous and unreflective."

Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences

Taboo becomes censorship when it is applied to outside members who do not hold that belief.

- Censors talk about "VIRTUE" -- really means "conform to the opinions, beliefs and values that they and theirs hold and which they would like to see enforced throughout the land."  
-- White, p. vii
- Censorship REALLY "serves to protect the predominant ideology from which those benefit most who have attained power, wealth, status, and control within society." Censors seek to protect the prevailing ideology not because society would collapse, "but because it serves to legitimize their eminence and the various social, political and economic arrangements they oversee."  
-- White, xv
- "More often than not, state action is not in defense of itself but in the form of a service to some influential members of the polity, in ridding the society of certain ideas that are considered offensive by these influential members."  
-- International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.
- **WHY ARE CENSORS WRONG?**
  - Cannot define with clarity what is "blasphemous, obscene, or seditious expression. Clear definitions and standards are rarely publicized prior to the arrest, prosecution and conviction of those accused of illicit expression."  
-- White, p. xiv
  - Cannot demonstrate that the material "actually poses a danger to society."
    - Censors have to "forcibly suppress" because they cannot "convincingly demonstrate" that the material is false or harmful.
    - "Censorship arises when and precisely because someone cannot convincingly demonstrate to others that the opinions which offend him or her are indeed truly false or dangerous. If they could, there would after all be little or no need for censorship."

#### **Q.5 Write notes on the following:**

##### **a) Media literacy**

**Media literacy** is an expanded conceptualization of literacy that includes the ability to access and analyze media messages as well as create, reflect and take action, using the power of information and communication to make a difference in the world. Media literacy is not restricted to one medium and is understood as a set of

## **Course: Women and Media (874)**

### **Semester: Spring, 2022**

competencies that are essential for work, life, and citizenship. Media literacy education is the process used to advance media literacy competencies, and it is intended to promote awareness of media influence and create an active stance towards both consuming and creating media. Media literacy education is part of the curriculum in the United States and some European Union countries, and an interdisciplinary global community of media scholars and educators engages in knowledge sharing through scholarly and professional journals and national membership associations. Education for media literacy often uses an inquiry-based pedagogic model that encourages people to ask questions about what they watch, hear, and read. Media literacy moves beyond the traditional no print text and moves to examining more contemporary sources. Some examples of media literacy include, but are not limited to television, video games, photographs, and audio messages. Media literacy education provides tools to help people develop receptive media capability to critically analyze messages, offers opportunities for learners to broaden their experience of media, and helps them develop generative media capability to increase creative skills in making their own media messages. Critical analyses can include identifying author, purpose and point of view, examining construction techniques and genres, examining patterns of media representation, and detecting propaganda, censorship, and bias in news and public affairs programming (and the reasons for these). Media literacy education may explore how structural features—such as media ownership, or its funding model—affect the information presented.

As defined by The Core Principles of Media Literacy Education, "the purpose of media literacy education is to help individuals of all ages develop the habits of inquiry and skills of expression that they need to be critical thinkers, effective communicators and active citizens in today's world." Education about media literacy can begin in early childhood by developing a pedagogy around more critical thinking and deeper analysis and questioning of concepts and texts. As students age and enter adulthood, the use of learning media literacy will be impactful in identifying ethical and technical standards in media as well as understanding how media ties to their cognitive, social, and emotional needs.

In North America and Europe, media literacy includes both empowerment and protectionist perspectives. Media literate people can skillfully create and produce media messages, both to show understanding of the specific qualities of each medium, as well as to create media and participate as active citizens. Media literacy can be seen as contributing to an expanded conceptualization of literacy, treating mass media, popular culture and digital media as new types of 'texts' that require analysis and evaluation. By transforming the process of media consumption into an active and critical process, people gain greater awareness of the potential for misrepresentation and manipulation, and understand the role of mass media and participatory media in constructing views of reality.

Media literacy education is sometimes conceptualized as a way to address the negative dimensions of media, including media manipulation, misinformation, gender and racial stereotypes, the sexualization of children, and concerns about loss of privacy, cyberbullying and Internet predators. By building knowledge and competencies



in using media and technology, media literacy education may provide a type of protection to children and young people by helping them make good choices in their media consumption habits, and patterns of usage.

Some scholars see media literacy as a dialogical process for social and environmental justice that incorporates Paulo Freire's (1970) notion of praxis, "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p. 36). This pedagogical project questions representations of class, gender, race, sexuality and other forms of identity and challenges media messages that reproduce oppression and discrimination. Proponents of media literacy education argue that the inclusion of media literacy into school curricula promotes civic engagement, increases awareness of the power structures inherent in popular media and aids students in gaining necessary critical and inquiry skills. Media can have a positive or negative impact on society, but media literacy education enables the students to discern inescapable risks of manipulation, propaganda and media bias.<sup>[16]</sup> A growing body of research has begun focusing on the impact of media literacy on youth. In an important meta-analysis of more than 50 studies, published in the *Journal of Communication*, media literacy interventions were found to have positive effects on knowledge, criticism, perceived realism, influence, behavioral beliefs, attitudes, self-efficacy, and behavior. Media literacy also encourages critical thinking and self-expression, enabling citizens to decisively exercise their democratic rights. Media literacy enables the populace to understand and contribute to public discourse, and, eventually, make sound decisions when electing their leaders. People who are media literate can adopt a critical stance when decoding media messages, no matter their views regarding a position. Likewise, the use of mobile devices by children and adolescents is increasing significantly; therefore, it is relevant to investigate the level of advertising literacy of parents who interact as mediators between children and mobile advertising.

Media literacy education is actively focused on the instructional methods and pedagogy of media literacy, integrating theoretical and critical frameworks rising from constructivist learning theory, media studies, and cultural studies scholarship. This work has arisen from a legacy of media and technology use in education throughout the 20th century and the emergence of cross-disciplinary work at the intersections of media studies and education. The oldest organization studying Media Literacy is the National Telemedia Council, based in Madison Wisconsin and led by Marieli Rowe for over 50 years. The Voices of Media Literacy, a project through the Center for Media Literacy, sponsored by Tessa Jolls, included first-person interviews with 20 media literacy pioneers active prior to the 1990s in English-speaking countries. The project provided historical context for the rise of media literacy from individuals who helped influenced the field.

UNESCO has investigated which countries were incorporating media studies into different schools' curricula as a means to develop new initiatives in the field of media education. Relying on 72 experts on media education in 52 countries around the world, the study identified that (1) media literacy occurs inside the context of formal education; (2) it generally relies of partnerships with media industries and media regulators; and (3) there is a robust research community who have examined the needs of educators and obstacles to future development.

Although progress around the world is uneven, all respondents realized the importance of media education, as well as the need for formal recognition from their government and policymakers.

In recent years, a wide variety of media literacy education initiatives have increased collaboration in Europe and North America. Many cultural, social, and political factors shape how media literacy education initiatives are believed to be significant. Mind Over Media is an example of an international collaboration in media literacy education: it is a digital learning platform that relies on crowdsourced examples of contemporary propaganda shared by educators and learners from around the world. For educators who are developing media literacy programs, the study of propaganda has become increasingly important, especially with the rise of fake news and disinformation.

Media literacy programs may emphasize these components:

Critical thinking: understanding how the media industry works and how media messages are constructed; questioning the motivations of content producers in order to make informed choices about content selection and use; recognizing different types of media content and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability and value; recognizing and managing online security and safety risks;

Creativity: advancing competencies through activities that involve creating, building and generating media content, often through collaboration;

Intercultural dialogue: practices of human communication, empathy and social interaction, including those that challenge radicalization, violent extremism and hate speech;

Media skills: the ability to search, find and navigate and use media content and services;

Participation and civic engagement: active participation in the economic, social, creative, cultural aspects of society using media in ways that advance democratic participation and fundamental human rights

#### **b) Gender sensitive code of ethics for Pakistani Print media**

In an effort to contribute to gender equality in media houses, Unesco Pakistan, in collaboration with Uks, organised a consultation meeting, titled 'Gender Sensitive Guidelines for Women in Media in South Asia', on Saturday.

The objective of the consultation was to refine and validate the guidelines for women in the media developed earlier this year and to propose a plan of action for the steps to be taken, said Unesco representative to Pakistan Vibeke Jensen

She emphasised the important role of the media in promoting gender equality in society and said the media in Pakistan needs a better balance of men and women in key decision-making positions and in investigative journalism. The consultation brought together senior and mid-level media professionals from print, electronic and online media.

Inspired by the development guidelines, the consultation addressed six issues that need to be focused on by Pakistani media institutions. The first group discussed the importance of gender balance in media institutions; at decision-making level, in work and working conditions, such as ethical codes for gender-sensitive policies.

## **Course: Women and Media (874)**

### **Semester: Spring, 2022**

Sadia Mehmood, assistant professor of mass communication at Karachi University, said that gender-sensitisation courses should be conducted at all levels. According to her, analysis and revision of existing curriculum and content should be done across the board. She said a concerted effort at levels to introduce and have gender inclusive content through deliberations must be made.

Journalist Fariha Aziz said laws and policies already exist to counter gender-based violence, safety and harassment at workplace. She said that lack of implementation of the law is due to lack of awareness, lack of will within the organisations, top management and confusing procedures. She suggested that mandatory training of employees and employers on gender and sexual harassment law and discussions on the definition of sexual harassment must be implemented in all workplaces.