

Analyzing mass media and popular culture media essay



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Although many can dismiss celebrity blogs such as [www. perezhilton. com](http://www.perezhilton.com) and www. wwtdd. com as frivolous and mean, the popularity and prevalence of these websites have a considerable social impact on our world today. For this Data Workshop, you will be analyzing entries in a celebrity blog, using one of the three major social paradigms.

Step 1: Collecting Data

Choose a celebrity blog and pick five entries. Scrutinize the pictures, read the headlines and text carefully, and review the reader comments.

Step 2: Thinking about and Analyzing the Data

For the five entries that you have selected, answer the following questions from each of sociology's three major theoretical perspectives. Later, use your data-collection form to write a one page essay summarizing the differences in the theories and their value as a sociological analyst. Compare what you observed to what the textbook says in Ch 1.

DATA-COLLECTION FORM FOR “ THEORIES OF CELEBRITY GOSSIP”

Data Workshop 1

1. Structural Functionalist Theory:

What is the function (or functions) of celebrity gossip blogs for society? What purpose(s) do they serve, and how do they help society maintain stability and order? Do celebrity gossip blogs have manifest and latent functions? Are any dysfunctions built into such publications?

2. Social Conflict Theory:

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What forms of inequality are revealed in celebrity gossip blogs? In particular, what do celebrity gossip blogs have to say about gender, race, and class inequalities? Who suffers and who benefits from the publication of celebrity gossip blogs?

3. Symbolic Interactionist Theory:

What do celebrity gossip blogs mean to society as a whole? What do they mean to individual members of society?

Can they have different meanings for different individuals or groups of individuals? How do those meanings get constructed in interaction? And how do celebrity gossip blogs shape and influence our everyday lives?

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Kim Kardashian is good at twitter

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Kim Kardashian doesn't really do anything of course, but before this our famous celebrities who didn't really do anything were fug whores like Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie. Remember that? What the hell was that all about? So at least Kim is hot, and goes on her twitter and posts pics of her kick ass rack. The only way to get even more intimate pictures of Kim is to be black.

Comments:

Talked ab poop. Said she isn't preggo, hated on blk ppl

-----2-----

Rihanna got a new haircut

Rihanna

By all accounts Rihanna (seen here last night at a Clippers game in LA) is a perfectly nice woman and everyone seems to like and she's a good singer, but very obviously her new bang haircut sucks. If this were American Idol, these pictures would be turned into a montage with that "So You Had a Bad Day" song playing over it.

Comments: talk ab it being fake, a wig

-----3-----

Gwyneth Paltrow has advice for “other” working moms

56852284

I know some people who have worked with Gwyneth Paltrow and they say she's delightful but that seems impossible to believe. Because she's a complete cunt, delusional and arrogant beyond all comprehension.

The latest proof: on her website GOOP, Paltrow, who is worth 90 million dollars and got married in a castle, has advice for “other extremely busy working mothers.” Yes that said “other”. Because that's what she considers herself. And just like all working moms, after she drops her kids at school...

Did dance aerobics for 45 minutes then all of the butt lifts and the like.

Rushed upstairs to have a shower, doing my post workout stretch while the conditioner was doing its magic on my hair to combine activities/save time.

Dressed quickly and rushed downstairs.

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Her day is essentially filled with stuff like that. The stuff that real working moms do when not at work or being a mom. The stuff they have to squeeze into one hour on the weekend is Paltrows entire life, but she's here to tell them how to do it. Because they don't know. They need tips from Gwyneth Paltrow.

I'm honestly shocked that she isn't punched in the face at least once every time she leaves the house.

-----4-----

Kate Beckinsale is in a bikini

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Kate Beckinsale is down in Mexico this weekend, and unlike the hags at the Golden Globes she looked fantastic in this bikini, and I think that's the same place where Jennifer Aniston is always going. I can see why she likes it. It's basically a rock and there's lots of empty space. Just like her womb.

-----5-----

Eva Longoria at the Golden Globes

Eva Longoria

Eva Longoria at least tried to look sexy for last nights Golden Globe awards, but her depressing tits are useless and so it didn't work.

This is one of the most boring and unsexy periods I can ever think of in Hollywood. No one ever wears anything good, and most of the big stars are

either not pretty or not pretty anymore. About the most positive thing I can say is that there's room for improvement everywhere. You could find hotter girls putting ads on craigslist asking for you to come rape them.

1. What is the function (or functions) of celebrity gossip blogs for society? To make fun of people, to show off the latest/ or not so latest trends, to spread gossip/info

What purpose(s) do they serve, and how do they help society maintain stability and order? They serve as entertainment purpose/news/ way to spread info- help society maintain order by letting ppl know what is in/not in – what to do/not do-

Do celebrity gossip blogs have manifest and latent functions? Find something from book—Pos effect on society-possibly could help spread trends/ show who is/isn't role models

Are any dysfunctions built into such publications? Bad-neg affect, more so than manifest & latent, gossip is bad- demeaning to persons self confidence- shows bad role models- more mature content

2. What forms of inequality are revealed in celebrity gossip blogs? First one talks ab her obsession with blk ppl, (only blk can see more pics)-what celebrities have that most common ppl can not do/ or afford to have

In particular, what do celebrity gossip blogs have to say about gender, race, and class inequalities? Blk ppl thing- class the mother issue, females- sexy hot whores

Who suffers and who benefits from the publication of celebrity gossip blogs?

everyone suffers from these blogs, the ppl who are wrote ab suffer bc it degrades self image, children suffer from bad role models

Benefit- writer bc so many read them, if decent blog then the readers & celebrities could benefit

3. What do celebrity gossip blogs mean to society as a whole? Past time- way to spread info- teach what is not cool/cool

What do they mean to individual members of society? Back to the benefit/suffer part

Kids are hurt by this, adults are humored by this, celebrity can be degraded by this

Can they have different meanings for different individuals or groups of individuals? Yes they do

How do those meanings get constructed in interaction?

And how do celebrity gossip blogs shape and influence our everyday lives?
back to #1

Info from book

Pg 11- theoretical approach: roadmaps that connect basic image of society with research

Structural functional approach- repeat behavior that affects the viewers pg 12

Pg 12- this approach was to keep ppl unified

Pg 12- social dysfunction: social pattern that disturbs

Pg 13- social conflict: inequality building up over time

Theoretical Perspectives in Blogs

From analyzing celebrity blogs we can learn a lot more than the latest gossip. The celebrity blogs provide great insight in the differences between sociology's three major theoretical perspectives. The celebrity blog that I reviewed had great examples of the structural functionalist theory, social conflict theory, and the symbolic interactionist theory that compared nicely to the book's definition of each, but still had some different points.

First I examined how the structural functionalist theory appeared in the blog. As known by the definition given by the text book the structural functionalist theory is a theory that "sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability" (page 11). One of the major differences I noticed between how the blog portrayed this theory from how the book described this theory is the stability. I did not notice any of the different blog entries or any of the celebrities that appeared in the blog entries to work together to provide stability in today's society, if anything I

noticed the celebrities all behaving in different manners that disturbed the stability of the blog. While the book describes social structure as “.. gives our lives shape in families, the work place, or the college classroom,” (page 12). A similarity I noticed was how the book explained how manifest and latent functions are a part of the structural-functional approach, and you could see each function within the blog. Manifest functions could be recognized from the comments to each of the blogs, the readers adjusted their thoughts and actions based on the blogs that they read.

Secondly, the social conflict theory appeared inside the blog and the book. By definition the social conflict approach is “... sees society as an arena of inequality that generates conflict and change.” (page 13) Overall throughout each blog I examined I saw issues of race, sex, and social classes. The blog that discussed Kim Kardashian was full of issues of race and sex from the main picture to the response. Her risqué picture provided conflict for the other women viewers who saw it, but the males tended to enjoy it more. Also an issue of race was brought up when the writer of the blog mentioned that you have to be black to get more pictures of Kim. A quote like this could create an issue between all races who read the comment.

Thirdly, the symbolic interaction theory that is defined as “ society as the product of the everyday interactions of individuals.” (page 15) appears inside the blog’s entries. The blog gives viewers the opportunity to express their feelings and allow them to interact with others. Also the blog purpose of a blog is to collect data and distribute it to followers, this data can be gossip, news, latest trends, or basically anything. Some of the information can play a positive or negative affect based on the type of reader. The book mentions <https://assignbuster.com/analyzing-mass-media-and-popular-culture-media-essay/>

two different levels of symbolic-interaction, macro-level and micro-level, while the blog provides a great example of each. From the macro-level observing from a helicopter level, you can see the broad focus of the blog is celebrities' different styles. The micro, or street level focus, you can see how their different styles affect the followers.

Each of the three theories, structural-functionalist, social-conflict, and symbolic interaction have the same goal in mind of analyzing how a particular item affects a society, while each theory has its own specific areas. I believe that each theory builds on each other to provide a in-depth analysis, starting from how things work together, to conflicts that arise, even down to how everyday interactions.

(The blog I used was from [www. wwtdd. com](http://www.wwtdd.com). The five blogs I chose were “ Kate Beckinsale is in a bikini” Jan. 17, “ Eva Longoria at the Golden Globes” Jan. 17, “ Kim Kardashian is good at twitter” Jan. 14, “ Rhianna got a new haircut” Jan. 13 and “ Gwyneth Paltrow has advices for other working moms” Jan. 13.