

# [The diversity in society there is diversity](https://assignbuster.com/the-diversity-in-society-there-is-diversity/)

Since mankind first transmitted news, views and opinions there have been debates as to the reasons behind people doing this. These debates formed the basis for sociology in mass media and are the subject of this essay. The theories people deduced to use in this great debate have since developed from their humble beginnings and are now examined throughout the world. The two most widely used theories are ironically the two most conflicting, Pluralism and Marxism. We’ll start with Pluralism as it’s focal point is the quote that began this essay. Pluralist theory views the media as being an institution that offers society with a wide selection of views to be used by the various groups of society.

All society has some diversity within it and as such the media presents people with the information they wish to hear. British society is particularly diverse and is made up of different groups of race, religion and class to name but a few of the factions. Pluralists believe that the presence of media in society has no other use but to give people the range of views and information that will best cater for their needs. The quote I started with is one of the main fundamentals of pluralism.

It recognizes that society is diverse and as such you would expect the media it incorporates to be as well. Pluralists often make the point that if people didn’t want all of these different perspectives shown to us in the media we wouldn’t pay for it. If this were the case, media that shows views and ideas that are unwanted by society would cause the businesses that produce to cease to exist. Pluralist sociologists also would aim to prove their theory by mentioning the fact many countries do not allow vast cross ownership in the media. This prevents one business owning a large amount of media in an area and therefore prevents a singular view being transmitted to the masses. Pluralism recognizes that people are themselves but, even if they are a product of society that media exposure is just one the things that make us who we are.

Also a pluralist would argue that owners of the media never have direct control over what their media transmits, as this is down to the journalists and editors. The views and opinions of the journalists or how they interpret something may be vastly different to those of the owner. As I mentioned earlier, there are many supporters of pluralism and some of the key sociologists who study it are: Katz and Lazarsfeld. They published a book which, although was some time ago it is still relevant today. The book “ Personal Influence” was published in 1955 and was based on data collected in 1945. Their main argument against all other theories was concerned with how unpredictable the media’s effect can be.

This is due to several variables. These variables are: varied exposure (personal, political, practical and technological factors will limited the extent to which an individual or group are affected; the type of media used to convey a message (pictures can often say a lot more than words, as is true with charity adverts such as the NSPCC); the way the media is presented (the language and form used to show information can shape the way the audience analyse it). Supporters of Marxism often make several criticisms of Pluralism. They point out that media corporations themselves fund much of the research done to evaluate the content and messages of the media. This will, in most cases lead to a bias and much results distorted to reduce concern about the problem. Another criticism that is made is related to the relationship between journalists and politicians.

Blumer and Gurevitch are just to whom heavily support that fact the journalists need to gain the acceptance of many politicians to allow them to interviews and news coverage. Politicians also need journalists to share their view as otherwise their political party and its actions would receive very little good publicity to help their campaign. The main difference between Pluralism and Marxism is that the Pluralist model of the media assumes rather than demonstrate that media content is diverse. Marxist theories share almost nothing in common with the pluralist theories. They conflict on almost ever view they have. Marxists believe that the media is simply there benefit those who control it.

Marxism is split into groups; Traditional and Hegemonic Marxism. Traditional Marxism is resolute that the media is used to show and support the views of the ‘ ruling class’. They see this to be highly apparent in advertising as products are shown to bring emotions like happiness, love and even life fulfilment. They also notice ‘ agenda setting’ in society through the media.

This is when the ‘ ruling class’ limit the views and ideas that are discussed in society. How often have you heard people talking about the events of Albert Square rather than the problem of poverty and famine in Africa? Hegemonic Marxists would add that the views of the ‘ ruling class’ have become ‘ common sense’ and as such are not questioned. Hegemonic Marxists also notice that journalists often try to promote idea that will gain readers, as they are in the business of making money. This means they will support capitalist ideas even if they do not believe then. Anyone who does not support the ‘ common sense’ views or the capitalist system is seen as an extremist, and their views although sometimes represented are usually ridiculed. Marxist sociologists include the Glasgow University Media Group (GUMG) and Stuart Hall.

The GUMG aim to analyse the content in the media to prove that capitalist views are then only views represented. They are often reluctant to give their findings for free and usually demand I reasonably high price for the information they present. Although widely supported, Marxist theories are often criticised with the following arguments. Marxists often tend to underestimate the regulation and legalisation that is placed on media owners.

They set the limits of media ownership and as such the content. As I mentioned earlier, if people do not want the information then the lack of demand for it would cause the firm’s demise. “ The media reflects society; just as there is diversity in society, there is diversity in the media. ” When asked to what extent I accept this view, my answer would be far from simple. I would agree with in the sense that I believe the aspect of pluralism it refers to. However, there are indeed many issues that must be taken into account, the first of which being, myself.

If I entirely agree with this view then ideology has worked. The ‘ ruling class’ have succeeded in creating hegemony within my thoughts and actions. I appear perfectly happy with the so-called exploitation of the masses. I would much rather have conversations with my friends about when Alan Partridge buys his slippers or Homer Simpson’s family antics. This might be because I enjoy it, or maybe because I merely simply think I enjoy it.

Therefore, I do accept the statement quite to a degree but I also feel that my view may change as I develop more sociological knowledge and can base my decision on more evidence.