

Outlining your media interests media essay



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I am specialising in Television Production. I've always been fascinated with the television industry which has an undeviating power over general public. The part of television that I am particularly interested in is television drama series. Television has been the most important of all the media distribution conduits. The easy accessibility of TV has made it a household necessity. Television is a medium that we take for granted as part of everyday life.

People watch television because it is a convenient and effortless means of entertainment which they can enjoy at the comfort of their homes. There is a wide variety of TV programs and the array of television channels that offers different genre of entertainment programs for viewer. Every time I watch a drama series I always marvel how they produce or direct it. How many cameras they use for a single shot? Shot angles? How do they shoot the action sequences that retain our attention? How do they come up with the storylines? Are the stories inspired by real life events? What the audience takes away from the storylines they see on television drama series? And how do they perceive the television medium? Does the violence on TV contribute to violence in society? I would like to further inspect the television production of crime dramas and have a scholarly approach to it rather than a "common sense" approach. The main purpose of doing a thorough investigation of my media interest is to examine the relationship between media consumption and public attitudes towards crime and justice.

As the popularity of TV grew, a large number of drama series were produced featuring detectives, investigators, special agents, lawyers, and, the police. I have always been intrigued by the crime drama series on television like Murder She Wrote, Cold Case, Law and Order, Criminal Minds, Forensic Files

and specially CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, which has garnered a cult following. In order for me to think like a media scholar I would need to further investigate how the crime genre has swayed the minds of the audiences. The real life mind-set and discernment of people concerning crime have impinged on by the stereotype and technical devices used in television crime dramas.

One of the reasons I wanted to do television production was how some of these programs struck a chord with me. The audience is so emotionally invested in these programs that they sometimes overlook the differences between the constructed reality of crime dramas and the handling of crime in real life.

Television is the hub of information which is available worldwide and affects countless people in many different ways. In my case, it plays a very positive role. I get most of my information from the television and that has really pulled my attention towards television. In order for me to further explore my media interest of crime dramas, I would need to investigate the perception of criminal programming and criminal activities portrayed in crime shows and audiences attitude towards it.

WEEK-2: IDENTIFYING PRIMARY SOURCES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Since I am doing specialization in Television Production, I opted to further investigate the genre of crime drama series. To carry out an extensive research in relation to my chosen media field I would have to take a scholarly approach.

The study of the primary sources is extremely significant to the media scholars to accomplish any solemn research. To do a research on the subject of the past media scholars need to study the original materials from the time period in question which have not been altered by a third party. Some examples are newspapers, interviews, magazines, autobiographies, Personal memoirs, Letters, photographs, videos & books.

Primary sources are extremely vital to media scholars. Media scholars have to utilize the substantial data to carry out an original research. A media scholar's work is driven by primary sources. To become a media scholar an individual should be familiar with the difference between " a common sense approach" and " a scholarly approach". A common sense approach would be media's power over people, whereas, a media scholar would analyse what do people do with the media using his intellect.

It is exceedingly fundamental to develop research questions before conducting your research using primary sources. It is an essential constituent of an excellent research. It could also pave the way for the theoretical structure of the study and specify the research. There are three phases of a media text's life span which outline the research questions.

Television production of crime dramas was my initial media interest which I want to further investigate, particularly, audience's perception on the constructed reality of crime dramas and the handling of crime in real life. Television crime dramas have a propensity to blur the line between reality and fiction. I have selected the crime drama series CSI: Crime Scene Investigation as my primary source. CSI is a very controversial and

successful crime drama series which is popular worldwide. It has been greatly criticize for imprecise portrayal of how police solve crimes and violence. CSI edifies people to take safety measures not considered before. On the other hand, it may teach criminals how to cover up evidence. The phenomenon termed ‘ The CSI Effect’ has been a centre of the media’s focus in recent times that garnered my interest. A pop culture television show like CSI has remarkably changed the way many trials are presented today. It will be interesting to examine in detail how the prosecutors are pressured to deliver more forensic evidence in court due to CSI effect.

I will need to devise appropriate research questions to perform an apt investigation underpinning my research. My research questions are based on the three phases of media text’s life span categorized accordingly. A well-thought-out and focused research questions will map out my research strategy. The research questions I have formulated are as follows:

Production:

Is accuracy of the real-life forensic science considered in production?

Distribution:

Raising awareness by advertising through other means comic books, video games, novels etc?

Why do shows expand and make franchises/spin offs of an already successful show?

How do they strategize to distribute a show like CSI worldwide?

Consumption:

Do the viewers get wrong impression of forensic scientists and the work they do?

WEEK-3: EXPLORING SECONDARY & ACADEMIC SOURCES:

A media scholar's research work is based on two important sources which are primary and secondary sources. A media scholar would implement academic approach towards his research and ensue in a scholarly manner. In case of a scholarly research a media scholar has to make sure the sources used are academic.

An academic source is something written by someone with credentials which include primary sources, books and professional journal articles. They contain an in-depth analysis of topics and are generally written by specialists in the field, and contain footnotes and other documentation of sources.

Durham, Meenakshi Gigi and Kellner, Douglas M. (2006) Media and Cultural Studies: Keyword. Oxford: Blackwell

The first academic source book I picked is called " Media and Cultural Studies : Keywords" by Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner. Meenakshi Gigi Durham (Ph. D) is an Assistant Professor of Journalism & Mass Communication at the University of Iowa. Douglas M. Kellner is George Kneller Chair in the Philosophy of Education at UCLA and has done Ph. D in Philosophy, from Columbia University in 1973. Their current position in the field of academic ascertains the book is an appropriate academic source for media studies scholars. Both the authors are affiliated with well-known universities which provide academic credibility.

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Blackwell Publishers is one of the world's leading academic and professional publishers and the largest society publisher. Blackwell publishes in a diverse range of academic and professional fields. The book contains reference lists and complete bibliographic information for all cited references which makes it adequate to utilize for scholarly and pedagogical research.

Firth, Simon (2004) Does British Music Still Matter, European Journal Of Cultural Studies, Vol 7, No. 1

The selected academic journal article is “ Does British Music Still Matter?” by Simon Frith. It reflects on the Changing Status of British Popular Music in the Global Music Market. The author of the article, Simon Frith, is currently the Head of Music/Tovey Professor of film and media at the University of Stirling, Scotland. He has an affluent scholastic background. He initially taught in the Sociology Department at the University of Warwick, before moving to Strathclyde University to become Director of the John Logie Baird Centre for Research in Film and Television and Professor of English Studies. He has done Masters and PhD in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley.

The article is written with an academic level vocabulary which is the specialized language of the discipline. It starts with an abstract (summary) of the subject matter. It illustrates proper tables & percentages and does not contain any ads. It also comprises of footnotes and references. The article was published by Sage Publications which is a leading international publisher of journals, books, and electronic media for academic, educational, and professional markets.

By locating the characteristics of academic sources we can differentiate between the academic and non-academic sources. Academic sources are peer-reviewed, published & written by university or scholarly society. The publications contain a bibliography, footnotes, abstract and reference other works.

The non-academic sources can be identified through articles which are very short and does not have bibliography. Some examples of non-academic sources are newspapers, newsletters, magazines and trade journals etc.

WEEK-4: SECONDARY SOURCES: SURVEYING THE FIELD

C: HumairaBCU Education1_Media Studies Texts, Production & Contextbook2. jpg C: HumairaBCU Education1_Media Studies Texts, Production & Contextbook1. jpg C: HumairaBCU Education1_Media Studies Texts, Production & Contextbook3. jpg

For my further research into my media interest and primary source I located a few secondary sources that could facilitate my scholarly research. In order for me to reference and quote secondary sources I need to make sure the sources are academic and aid in conducting my research.

Fiske, John and Hartley, John (1978) Reading Television, pp. 17, London: Routledge

I think the first source I chose would certainly assist me further in my media interest. It provides informative exploration not only of the programmes themselves, but how the productions of these programmes take place inspired by the culture. To conduct a rigorous study of the conduit, the book

provides me with the theoretical tools which are necessary for my research as a media scholar.

The role of television is very significant in our lives. This conduit of infotainment has been impacting our culture since its development. Whether it stimulates us in a positive or negative manner that is to be analysed. How the programmes are produced and its messages conveyed? What do the audience find so satisfying in these programmes? How the facts are measured in producing these programmes? The book gives comprehensive answers to all these questions. Reading Television explains how the television is shaped and rheostat by human beings. Fiske and Hartley (1978, p. 17) write that the “ Television is a human construct, and the job that it does is the result of human choice, cultural decisions and social pressures. The medium responds to the conditions within which it exists”.

Sparks, Richards (2008) Television and the Drama of Crime: Moral Tales and the Place of Crime in Public Eye. England: Open University Press

This book is concerned with the crime programming. In my research I have learned that criminal programs have always been popular in pop culture. In theoretical and political debates, extent and intensity of public fear and alarm about crime has frequently been the center point in criminology and criminal justice. Crime series are prime time viewing. These programs are key elements in unveiling the characteristic of crime and law enforcement in our society. This book will be predominantly vital for my research in order to find out how the crime programs are presented on television and how the public responds to this kind of programming.

Television conduit has relentlessly been preoccupied with anecdotes of crime and policing and law and order. The representation of crime and law enforcement has often been ardently controversial which appeals to the audience. The book provides me with valuable information about the analyses of the television imagery and their appeal to the audience which is tremendously relevant to my media interest. Richard Sparks (2008) relates it to the wider social and political agenda and combines pragmatic research findings with the latest theoretical developments.

Nightingale, Virginia (1996) Studying The Media: The Shock Of The Real. London: Routledge

This book is noteworthy read for my research as it is an in-depth study of audience's reaction to the television programming. Since I am specializing in TV production, knowing how the viewer responds to certain programs is very useful information. The failure and cancellation of TV shows that were not successful due to low ratings has also amplified the importance of television audience research. In order to further explore my media interest I must look at how the audience research has changed over the years and why the audience is fragmented in the search for ratings and how it is going to be evolved.

The source consists of a critical overview of two decades of audience research into the television audience and includes assessment of five projects which facilitated the shape of television audience research field. It also confers the knowledge of early research efforts to document the basis of consumers and their reaction theories which could be relevant to my

research on how the audience react to CSI: Crime Scene Investigation violence & forensics.

Cole, Simon A., Dioso-Villa, Rachel (2009) Investigating the CSI Effect: Media And Litigation Crisis In Criminal Law , Stanford Law Review, Vol 61, No 6, pp. 1335

My 1st journal article source looks into the term ' The CSI Effect'. The phenomenon termed ' The CSI Effect' has been a centre of the media's focus in recent times that garnered my interest. In relevance to my primary source, the article investigates the remarkable impact that pop culture television show like CSI is having on criminal justice, jury deliberations and outcomes.

I can draw facts from this academic article and gain knowledge and apply scholarly approach to my research. The article converses about the relationship between the science and the law. Seeing that science is associated with the positive value as truth and progress the law expects that science would provide effective evidence to solve vague disputes with clarity. Science is considered to be a truth-producer and makes the law apprehensive. (Cole and Villa 2009, p. 40).

Cavender, Gray and Deutsch, Sarah K. (2007) CSI and moral authority: The police and science, Crime, Media, Culture, Vol 3, No. 1

The second journal article that I decided to look into is about CSI and its ethical responsibility concerning the police and the science. It is a very in-depth analysis of CSI presented in three sections. It addresses representation of police as a moral authority, rehabilitation of science and how CSI conveys

cultural meanings through realistic police themes. The detailed analyses and observation of this very popular forensic crime drama, particularly in terms of police and science will be tremendously useful for my scholarly research as a media scholar. One of the upshots of CSI that I need to explore more is how it has brought forensic science into the popular discussions (Cavender & Deutsch 2007).

WEEK-5: CONCLUSION REFLECTING ON PRIMARY & SECONDARY SOURCES; RESEARCH INSIGHTS AND DIRECTIONS:

During my scholarly research I have developed skills of how to differentiate between a media consumer, media commentator and a media scholar. Now I am able to think like a media scholar and divest my common-sense approach towards the media. I gained knowledge about the primary sources which are document or physical object written or created during the time under study and secondary sources which interprets and analyzes primary sources.

Through my scholarly research I became skilled at how to draw upon the primary sources and secondary sources. One of the most important skills I learnt during the course of my developing research was locating academic sources. I have applied my knowledge and understanding of academic sources and learnt developing my own research work based on the work of others without breaking the rules of plagiarism.

I had developed a keen interest in television as I think it is the most powerful tool of communication. Consequently I was interested in Television Production. The analysis of any medium is very important to a media scholar especially when people rely heavily on it. In my research I have found out

that media facilitates in transforming our culture even if it doesn't change our culture. I located a primary source to further investigate my media interest. My newly acquired basic skills of conducting an academic research helped me ascertain my primary source. CSI was my primary source and the key element in my scholarly research which had the potential of being studied carefully and methodically.

To further investigate my primary source I picked five secondary sources by means of academic conventions. These secondary sources provided me with a greater understanding of my primary source. After completing my scholarly analysis into secondary sources by the support of academic methods I have determined that crime drama series have made an impression on people's mind-sets and perceptions about crime. CSI presents melodrama, cutting-edge images, laboratory techniques and realism that draw the viewers. These attributes of television programming give vague notion to the fact and fiction. In my careful inspection as a media scholar I articulate now that the viewers deem that they could be forensic detectives because they have an understanding of forensic science through these crime programs.

My academic research has given me insight into how people perceive CSI and other crime drama series. Police Departments and Justice System are concern about the glamorised representation of the careers in CSI and its vast contrast of reality. CSI's laboratory equipments and forensic procedures have caused the jurors to stipulate the use of forensics as evidence, and criminals have allegedly erudite tricks from the program. Furthermore, it depends on how the audience perceives it and how they employ the medium. I have discovered in my academic research that science has no

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boundaries as it educates everyone, however, the use of that information depends on the individuals.

CSI has brought forensic science to the forefront. During my academic research on my primary source CSI I have become aware of the positive outcomes of the program as well as negative outcomes. There has been a mounting interest in forensic science after the show's popularity especially among young people who want to learn more about forensic science.

I believe this was just a preliminary academic research on my primary source. I would be able to further develop my work as a piece of academic research by exploring more secondary sources. CSI has allegedly been affecting the criminal justice system and popular culture in many ways e. g. juries, victims, criminal behaviour and careers. There is a wide collection of academic work done on CSI that still needs to be studied for further progress of my academic research as a media scholar.

REFERENCES:

Fiske, John and Hartley, John (1978) Reading Television, pp. 17, London: Routledge

Sparks, Richards (2008) Television and the Drama of Crime: Moral Tales and the Place of Crime in Public Eye. England: Open University Press

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Cavender, Gray and Deutsch, Sarah K. (2007) CSI and moral authority: The police and science, *Crime, Media, Culture*, Vol 3, No. 1