

# Public relations assignment

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It is also of paramount importance to delineate film in the context of cultural imperialism by looking at films such as *lit*, *Sardinian*, *Inertia*, *The Gods must be crazy*, *Slumlord Millionaire*, *Titanic* among others. We then need to look at the most important concept in the study of cultural imperialism, the advent of globalization as an economic and political reality. And finally we likewise need to define and examine the influence and limits of western media to discern its relative power within the broader pattern of westernizes which has been discernible across the globe.

Herbert Schaller defined the cultural imperialism hometown as the way in which major multinational corporations, including the media, of developed countries dominate developing countries. This imbalanced, one-way flow of the cultural trade has fuelled celebrations in virtually every corner of the globe. In other words cultural imperialism is more of pressure put on one society to adapt the culture, values, and lifestyles of another.

As aptly put by another author, Peters, it is the systematic penetration and domination of the cultural life of the popular classes by the ruling classes of the West in order to reorder the values and behavior, institutions and identity of the oppressed people to conform to the interest of the imperial classes. Within this scheme the mass media have become an integral part of the US system of global political and social control. Meanwhile, film encompasses individual motion pictures, the field of film as an art form, and the motion picture industry.

Films are produced by recording images from the world with cameras, or by creating images using animation techniques or special effects. Having

defined cultural imperialism and film, it is critical now to look at the association of the two. Films are cultural artifacts rated by specific cultures, which reflect those cultures, and, in turn, affect them. Film is considered to be an important art form, a source of popular entertainment and a powerful method for educating or indoctrinating citizens. The visual elements of film give motion pictures a universal power of communication.

Cultural imperialism is a key feature Of Mar's critique Of media theory, which he viewed as dominated by the ruling classes. Via this domination, he argued, the ruling classes would best be suited to perpetuate their stranglehold on power. Quoting, K. Marx & F. Engel's, Selected Works, up. 4-65; Lawrence & Wishart; London, 1 968, " The ideas of the ruling classes are in every age, the ruling ideas: that is the class, which is the dominant material force in society, is at the same time its dominant intellectual force.

The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production... In so far as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of each epoch, they do this in its whole range, hence, among other things, they regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age; thus their ideas are the lulling ideas of the epoch. " It follows naturally that the ideology of the ruling classes of the dominant International power would enjoy the same position of pre-eminence that Marx describes.

Of greater importance is the fact that the media is used in the dissemination of information by dominant international powers though devices such as films. The film, The Gods must be crazy, proffers different messages for

every audience and incites unique responses from every individual. Directed by John Boorman, the film *The Gods Must Be Crazy* narrates the story of what happens when a pilot flying across the Kalahari Desert of Botswana drops a Coca-Cola bottle into the midst of a tribal group. The community of aboriginals explain the object as a gift from the gods.

It becomes useful for most of their chores, but the bottle challenges and destroys the traditions and social mores of their world. To defy the object's destructive influence, they send out one of its members to toss the evil thing over the edge of the earth, a distance the clan believes is some twenty days' walk away. *The Gods Must Be Crazy* offered a conspicuous sample of American consumer imperialism and its visualization of the Third World. It depicts Africans as lacking civilization and being too backward.

It is of paramount importance to note that, films help in changing the social standing of a community. Cultural imperialism is an intangible form of colonization that was practiced by the western empires that took over the world and exploited the sinister and biological link between conquerors and conquered. It is thus a vague concept that is hollow out of the specific context of its territorial and political evolution and we must therefore take a look at the ways in which western culture attempted to dominate foreign societies before the advent of the mass media and westernizes.

Before the colonization of Zanzibar by Britain, the Semisembari had certain lifestyle unique in its form. They had a culture that was not synonymous with the imperialist. Culture can be defined as the sum total of a way of life a society can offer in terms of material implements and

possession; in terms of intellectual and educational level of development; in terms of standards of living and ways of life; in terms of values and value systems, and in terms of social relations between members of the society, in terms of arts and crafts ND in terms of religion.

A people without a culture are a people without identity. A people's culture gives them the reason to live as it guides them to make correct and beneficial choices in life. However, the coming in of Europeans changed the status of their livelihoods. It is an immensely important point because to understand the importance of western media upon non-western societies we must first comprehend the level of influence of historical cultural ties, how the west has penetrated societies for centuries, opening up the indigenous psyches to the fundamentals of western civilization.

It explains why our own head of state the President, would go to parliament in a Roll and Royce instead of the traditional way. It is as a result of colonization that ushered in new ways of doing things. According to an unknown author quoted on the website, Centuries of undermining local heritages and cultures have resulted in a modern world which is already at faith with the fundamental characteristics of western civilization even before the arrival of the digital media age, which clearly makes the role of the western media one of re-enforcement, not instillation.

It also brings to the core the fundamental issue of globalization. Stuart Hall argues that the global mass culture is actually predominantly American culture. Hall looks at the global cultural sphere as being “ dominated by the visual and graphic arts .. Dominated by television and by film, and by the

image, imagery, and styles of mass advertising. ” Edward Said writes that Europe has constructed its identity by “ relegating and confining the Non-European to a secondary racial, cultural, ontological status. According to Herbert Schaller, globalization is a process whereby all global cultures are inexorably drawn into the sphere of influence of one single ‘ capitalist culture’. Schaller also connects the capitalist culture argument with the “ Americanization” thesis – the diffusion of “ homogeneity North Atlantic cultural slop. ” Although few studies have been able to demonstrate the influence of film on the formation of social roles and interaction in Third World communities and even less attention has been paid to the use of film in endorsing or changing existing power structures within nations or between ethnic groups or political factions.

The United States of America has remained dominant player in the global cultural trade, especially in the audio-visual sector. Of the films shown worldwide, 85% are produced in Hollywood, according to UNESCO. Even in Europe, U. S. Films dominate the list of imported movies, which account for a large percent of films shown in cinemas throughout the world. This is despite the fact that, statistically speaking, the top film producing countries are India, China and Hong Kong, and the Philippines. The U. S. comes in fourth, yet its films are the most widely distributed and viewed.

Schaller points out that “ society is brought into the modern world system when it’s dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced and sometimes bribed into shaping its social institutions to correspond, or even promote, the values and structures of the dominating centre of the system. Media plays a central role in creating and transmitting the dominant culture to

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developing society. Proponents of the dependency theory assert that transnational's organizations determine the ways in which people interpret information viticulture, an idea that serves as a guiding assumption for cultural imperialist thinking.

This implies that the developed power actively plays a role in dominating anthropology, while also implying the dominated country acts as simply a passive audience. The single most important contemporary factor behind the ascension of western culture, even in the far reaches of the globe that the European powers failed to penetrate in the nineteenth century, is the economy and, specifically, the economic reality of the concept of globalization. Globalization means the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every corner in the Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, p. 9; Farad, Straus & Group; New York, 1999. Due to films that show protagonist or main actors smoking people in various localities have been influenced to do the same to acquire the 'hero' status. It has also led to people using foreign pseudo names in their artistic roles, this is evident in football where some players calls themselves Ronald due to the resemblance of skills.

Younger generations are growing up with McDonald's, Arnold Schwarzenegger and other American and European icons that are shaping their value systems at their critical stage of development. This is as a result of films that they are exposed to. It is therefore clear that the films being watched have an impact on the passive masses. A film such as Titanic tells of a story of true love and shows episodes of sexual encounters between he main actor and her boyfriend. This is contrary to ancient dramas that were not captured by cameras in third world countries or Zanzibar to be precise.

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Dramas were meant to educate or promote certain social developments and these were done with respect for the other and no scenery of obscenity was ever allowed- in fact it was taboo to touch a girl her breast or exposes her under garment. However, today's films are synonymous with western culture where you see actors holding each other. In the film, Yellow Card acted by Copal, and directed by John and Louise Rifer, which focuses on ale sexuality and responsibility with a football player as the lead role, he fondles the schoolgirl he is in love with and is shown in a sexual act, something that was contemptuous in ancient dramas. N essence films in developing states plagiarism Western formats; even filmmakers with the best intentions absorb a Western aesthetic through study abroad or exposure to the plethora of Western films at home. Slumlord Millionaire, a British film is an example of the many faces of imperialism. It is a film that has generated super profits by not only sensationalistic the contradictions of capitalism in India, but also directly exploiting those who suffer from such contradictions according to Crystal Kim on the website [http://www. Slews. Org/ liberationists/news/09-06-05-slumlord-millionaire-exploitation. HTML](http://www.Slews.Org/liberationists/news/09-06-05-slumlord-millionaire-exploitation.HTML). The film is a microcosmic example of how imperialism does not stop at political and economic conquest, but seeps deep into the cultural fabric of society by shaping the way that the world understands the experiences of oppressed peoples in other parts of the world. The film tells the story of Kamala Mali, a “ slumlord” from lambi, who defeats all odds to win RSI 20, 000, 000 approximately \$425, 000) on a television game show.

He also earns the heart of his one and only true love, thereby escaping a life of poverty and misery in one fell (and lucky) swoop. The dilapidated shanty



houses and trash-filled streets of the Lambi slums provide the setting and backdrop for much of the film. Kim went further to say that, while making millions of dollars for British and U. S. Film companies through an exotic and sensational portrayal of poverty in Lambi, “ Slumlord Millionaire” conveniently overlooks centuries of colonization and the on-going neo-colonial plundering as a primary cause of poverty in India.

The film encourages viewers with little or no knowledge of modern Indian history to believe that religious infighting and local mobs are the source of the problems in the slums of Lambi. The film Sardinian, shot in South Africa shows the ruthlessness of the Whiteman towards black South African, despite the nature of their callous and insensitivity nature, the Director proffers to bring the same culprits as salvation to the problem.

In the film Inertia, directed by Godwin Manure, and based on a story by Twits Damageable, the issue of women’s rights against patriarchal custom is extensively addressed. Observers from other countries would view the Customs and cultures of Seminarians as myopic devoid of reasoning, though the truth is that the custom of inheritance was done against a backdrop of family hood to protect the interest of the family and safeguard the wealth of the family.

The custom looks at a wife as not belonging to the family if she does not choose to be inherited by a family member and that if she marries someone else then the wealth or possessions of the late husband will unjustly be used by another man. The film exposes the Zimmermann culture as Arabic and cruel yet does not take cognizant of important or fundamental factors that

inhibit family growth. Another film, *Flame*, directed by Ingrain Sinclair, was the first Zimmermann film set in the liberation struggle.

The main characters are two female friends, who are active fighters, fighting both the war, the dissolution of their dreams, and sexual abuse. The film also exposes black men as people who demean women. It is a fact that most films in Zanzibar are remotely controlled or funded and touches on sensitive matters on women and children. It is therefore inevitable that locals are heaped by what they see and hear particularly through such films.