Media Consciousness

TASKS

1a   Read the text *"Media Consciousness"* on the next page (by Jonny Sun) and visualize the relationship between (traditional and new) media forms and their audiences by producing a **sketchnote.** Start your sketchnote with the keyword **MEDIA** (almost) at the top centre (ca 5 cm from the top) of an empty sheet of paper.

For an introduction to sketchnoting, watch a video on youtube (https://youtu.be/4ltcHag3agE)
Or visit this website to get inspired:
http://ptgmedia.pearsoncmg.com/images/9780321857897/samplepages/0321857895.pdf.
For some basic tips on sketching/drawing, you may also check out the short clips produced by Annelies von Meisterbar. You´ll find the links when accessing the (longer) video mentioned above.

1b   With a partner, compare your sketchnotes and make additions or changes if necessary.

2a   Prepare a short presentation about your ideas. Use some of the phrases from the word box below.
2b   Present your sketch note in class.

WORD BOX

Beginning	Playing for time / fillers	Referring to evidence
Let me begin with ... I will begin by ...ing First of all, ...	Actually, … In other words, … What I am trying to say, ...	According to …, As claimed by …, As suggested by …, As pointed out by …,
Reason / result	**Adding / listing**	**Adding / listing (continued)**
Thus, … Therefore, … Consequently, … Accordingly, … As a result, ...	I´d like to add that … Furthermore, … Additionally, … Moreover, …. Similarly, ...	Likewise, … Let´s move on to … Last but not least, … Finally, ...

3   *"I´m worried about the traditional media, but I think the new media is a plus for democracy."* (Bob Brown)

Comment on Brown`s statement by referring to the insight you have gained in class.

TEXT

I often spend time wondering how I have come to my understanding of the world, and where I have gotten all my views, ideas, and biases from. Some of this is a combination of of my own experiences and the experiences of others as they are directly passed on to me. These are things that shape me directly: through personal relationships, shared in one-on-one conversations, or from within small groups. But media is something else, and does something else.

Media is created and then transmitted, distributed, or shared in one direction, along a platform for mass communication, from a source to an audience. Media is fundamentally different than a one-on-one experience between you and someone else: a friend, a family member. Media is a piece of information broadcast from one to many. The methods of mass communication, the ways of spreading media these days, are vast and diverse. There is what is now "traditional" media: TV, film, radio, newspapers. There is what we call "new" media – the internet, and all it encompasses, lately: YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine (RIP). Increasingly, we spend more and more time on social media, and therefore get more and more of our media from these online platforms.

By being shared on all platforms of mass viewership, media is essentially what we all – as "the general public" - believe, too. This is, or should be, a little troubling. Media dictates our norms, our culture. It dictates what we as a collective society should think is important and where to focus our attention on. It decides what, to an extent, is "real" in our world, what values are "true", what biases are "fact". This is especially troubling when we understand that media is not created *by* its mass viewers; rather, it is created *for* a mass viewership. Because it´s everywhere, and so ubiquitous in our lives, media has an enormous amount of control over the way we think and the way we see the world.

Social media may be a space where we as viewers have more agency. Whereas "traditional" media (TV, film, and the like) runs on a hierarchical system, with plenty of gatekeepers and Old Rich People in power and control, perhaps social media can be different. Perhaps here, on social media, on the internet, we don`t have to rely on the gatekeepers of traditional media to determine what should be represented and how it should be represented. Work created on social media is a step toward a greater range of voices all over, and I believe that all of us, not as creators but as viewers and consumers, have power in this equation. Social media is far from perfect, but it´s perhaps a more direct form of media (and it´s dangerous for this same reason, too). It´s also powerful in the sense that it is for so many of us our default place, where we spend our time, where we see things, where we get our news and entertainment from.

Social media is different from traditional media, too, in the sense that we, as viewers, as followers, as users, play a more active role in the ability for media to get distributed. We play this role by actively sharing, retweeting, liking, reblogging. Each of those becomes a "vote" that this is what we believe is important to be shared; that this is the viewpoint, the opinion, the art, that we stand for. And each share literally spreads the media one more link down the chain. The fact that we are able to actively share media through retweeting means we have a more active role in helping good things get seen.

Media is not inherently good or bad – it is the product of those who create it and how we see it. But it is inherently active. The better we are at understanding that all media is a conscious act of creation, and understanding that we as viewers and *sharers* play an active role in spreading certain viewpoints and voices, the better we can get understanding media´s role, and our role, in shaping our views on the world.