

## CRITICAL READINGS IN ANGLOPHONE MEDIA EXAM

### INSTRUCTIONS:

These are 3 essay questions that touch upon some of the main subjects we went through during this semester. **Choose ONE topic.** Write an essay discussing the topic, led by the instructions presented in the corresponding prompt.

Remember the following guidelines.

- Respect the classical essay structure which is:
  - o a) **introduction** (*background and main argument or thesis*),
  - o b) **body** (*typically 3 or more paragraphs each supporting an argument and one or more examples as evidence*)
  - o c) and **conclusion** (*summary and final thought to retain*).
- Leave your **emotions out of this**. Your job is to convince my mind, not make me sympathize with your cause.

### TOPICS:

1. EPISTEMIC POPULISM IS THE IDEA THAT EVERYDAY PEOPLE'S "COMMON SENSE" IS MORE TRUSTWORTHY THAN EXPERT KNOWLEDGE FROM SCIENTISTS, ACADEMICS, OR OFFICIALS. IT TREATS TRUTH AS WHAT MOST PEOPLE AGREE ON, RATHER THAN WHAT EVIDENCE PROVES. WHY IS THE "ICE WALL" OR A "SECRET WORLD GOVERNMENT" NARRATIVE MORE APPEALING TO SOME PEOPLE THAN THE "MESSY REALITY" OF GLOBAL POLITICS? DISCUSS THE ROLE OF "TRUTH DECAY" IN MAKING PERSONAL OPINION FEEL MORE VALID THAN OBJECTIVE FACT.
  
2. USING THE CML CONCEPT OF PRODUCTION, DISCUSS HOW A TIKTOK OR INSTAGRAM "FOR YOU" PAGE IS "CONSTRUCTED." WHO OWNS THE PLATFORM, AND HOW DOES THEIR GOAL OF "MAXIMUM ENGAGEMENT" CHANGE THE WAY YOU PERCEIVE SOCIAL REALITY COMPARED TO A TRADITIONAL NEWS BROADCAST?
  
3. MANY MODERN WAR MOVIES OR SOCIAL DRAMAS USE "NEUTRAL" AND "DESATURATED" COLORS (GRAYS, BROWNS). WHY IS THE ABSENCE OF VIBRANT COLOR USED TO SIGNAL "TRUTH" OR "SERIOUSNESS" TO THE AUDIENCE? HOW DOES THIS MANIPULATE YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE?

## **CRITICAL READINGS IN ANGLOPHONE MEDIA EXAM GRADING SCALE**

### **GENERAL RULE (APPLIES TO ALL QUESTIONS)**

- **TOTAL PER QUESTION: 20 POINTS**
- **LANGUAGE (CLARITY, GRAMMAR, ACADEMIC TONE): 2 POINTS**
- **CONTENT + ANALYSIS: 18 POINTS**
- **ESSAYS MUST FOLLOW CLASSICAL STRUCTURE (INTRO - BODY - CONCLUSION), AS REQUIRED IN THE EXAM INSTRUCTIONS**

### **QUESTION 1:**

EPISTEMIC POPULISM IS THE IDEA THAT EVERYDAY PEOPLE'S "COMMON SENSE" IS MORE TRUSTWORTHY THAN EXPERT KNOWLEDGE FROM SCIENTISTS, ACADEMICS, OR OFFICIALS. IT TREATS TRUTH AS WHAT MOST PEOPLE AGREE ON, RATHER THAN WHAT EVIDENCE PROVES. WHY IS THE "ICE WALL" OR A "SECRET WORLD GOVERNMENT" NARRATIVE MORE APPEALING TO SOME PEOPLE THAN THE "MESSY REALITY" OF GLOBAL POLITICS? DISCUSS THE ROLE OF "TRUTH DECAY" IN MAKING PERSONAL OPINION FEEL MORE VALID THAN OBJECTIVE FACT.

### **GRADING SCALE:**

- 1. CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING (6 POINTS):**  
**THE STUDENT'S ABILITY TO ACCURATELY EXPLAIN *EPISTEMIC POPULISM* AND *TRUTH DECAY*.**
- 2. ANALYTICAL EXPLANATION OF APPEAL (6 POINTS):** **WHY CONSPIRATORIAL NARRATIVES FEEL *MORE APPEALING* THAN GEOPOLITICAL COMPLEXITY.**
- 3. ROLE OF DIGITAL MEDIA SYSTEMS (4 POINTS):**  
**UNDERSTANDING OF HOW PLATFORMS AMPLIFY EPISTEMIC POPULISM.**
- 4. STRUCTURE & ARGUMENTATION (2 POINTS)**
- 5. LANGUAGE (2 POINTS)**

## QUESTION 2:

USING THE CML CONCEPT OF PRODUCTION, DISCUSS HOW A TIKTOK OR INSTAGRAM “FOR YOU” PAGE IS “CONSTRUCTED.” WHO OWNS THE PLATFORM, AND HOW DOES THEIR GOAL OF “MAXIMUM ENGAGEMENT” CHANGE THE WAY YOU PERCEIVE SOCIAL REALITY COMPARED TO A TRADITIONAL NEWS BROADCAST?

### GRADING SCALE:

#### 1. USE OF CML “PRODUCTION” CONCEPT (6 POINTS):

CORRECT AND MEANINGFUL APPLICATION OF THE *PRODUCTION* CONCEPT.

#### 2. EXPLANATION OF ALGORITHMIC CONSTRUCTION (6 POINTS):

UNDERSTANDING THAT THE FEED IS *ENGINEERED*, NOT NEUTRAL.

#### 3. COMPARISON WITH TRADITIONAL NEWS (4 POINTS):

ABILITY TO CONTRAST ALGORITHMIC FEEDS WITH EDITORIAL LOGIC.

#### 4. STRUCTURE & ARGUMENTATION (2 POINTS)

#### 5. LANGUAGE (2 POINTS)

## QUESTION 3:

MANY MODERN WAR MOVIES OR SOCIAL DRAMAS USE "NEUTRAL" AND "DESATURATED" COLORS (GRAYS, BROWNS). WHY IS THE ABSENCE OF VIBRANT COLOR USED TO SIGNAL "TRUTH" OR "SERIOUSNESS" TO THE AUDIENCE? HOW DOES THIS MANIPULATE YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE?

### GRADING SCALE:

#### 1. KNOWLEDGE OF COLOR PSYCHOLOGY (6 POINTS):

UNDERSTANDING OF NEUTRAL/DESATURATED COLOR SYMBOLISM.

#### 2. SEMIOTIC INTERPRETATION (6 POINTS):

HOW ABSENCE OF COLOR *SIGNALS TRUTH*.

#### 3. EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION ANALYSIS (4 POINTS):

RECOGNITION OF EMOTIONAL STEERING.

#### 4. STRUCTURE & ARGUMENTATION (2 POINTS)

#### 5. LANGUAGE (2 POINTS)

