



**Higher Media**  
SQA Higher  
The Role of the Media

Question 2

# The Role of the Media

**Abstract & Summation:** Handouts and worksheets to support question 2 of the SQA Higher Media exam. Derived from the superb work done by Rick Instrell of ??????????????

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## The Role of the **Media**

We are exposed to the media in a multitude of forms in almost every aspect of our waking life. From the radio or music that wakes us, to the Kindle we read as we lie in bed at night, we are *passive* and *active* participants in the media.

However, how often do we stop to consider the nature of this relationship we have with content? For whose benefit is the media we experience produced? And more fundamentally, **why** has it been produced?

This unit is designed to introduce some of the concepts and issues that arise from the media and in particular, by looking closely at news media, invites you to consider a fundamental question that affects our reading of the news, namely, do the media reflect or create society?



There are a number of tasks scattered through these handouts. Each suggests a minimum requirement to allow you to grasp the basics



# Issues Arising From Media Use

## The Starting Point

**Media Use** by state, corporations, organisations, groups & individuals leads to a number of **ISSUES** that we must consider and evaluate.

ISSUES			
Content	Conduct	User Concerns	Media Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Effects'</li> <li>• Offensive or inflammatory content</li> <li>• Commercialisation</li> <li>• 'Dumbing down'</li> <li>• Accuracy/bias</li> <li>• Spin/propaganda</li> <li>• Secrecy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invasion of privacy</li> <li>• Misuse of information</li> <li>• Source-reporter relationships</li> <li>• Journalistic ethics</li> <li>• Concentration of media in a few hands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal access</li> <li>• Overload</li> <li>• Online conduct</li> <li>• Online privacy</li> <li>• Online safety</li> <li>• Content quality</li> <li>• Diversity of content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copyright</li> <li>• Monetisation of content</li> <li>• Decline of traditional media</li> <li>• Regulatory/legal compliance</li> <li>• State/corporate interference</li> </ul>

Issues arise with regards the **content** of the media, how the media institutions **conduct** themselves (their ethics), the **concerns users** have about the media, and importantly, the **media themselves have concerns** centred (primarily) on the constraints under which they conduct their business.

## TASK 1

Choose **at least** one bullet point from each column and write a brief explanation of what you take it to mean.

*(Keep your answer safe as you will be returning to it at the end of this unit)*



# Three perspectives on **media**

## **Traditionalist**

- Media should uphold traditional values
- Media should uphold law and order
- Media should uphold of 'family values'
- Media should reflect traditional views of identity (e.g. gender, ethnicity, sexuality, cultural)
- Media can have a harmful effect on society
- Media need to be censored in respect of sex and violence
- Media are responsible for 'dumbing down' society
- This viewpoint is supported by older people and some Conservative politicians.

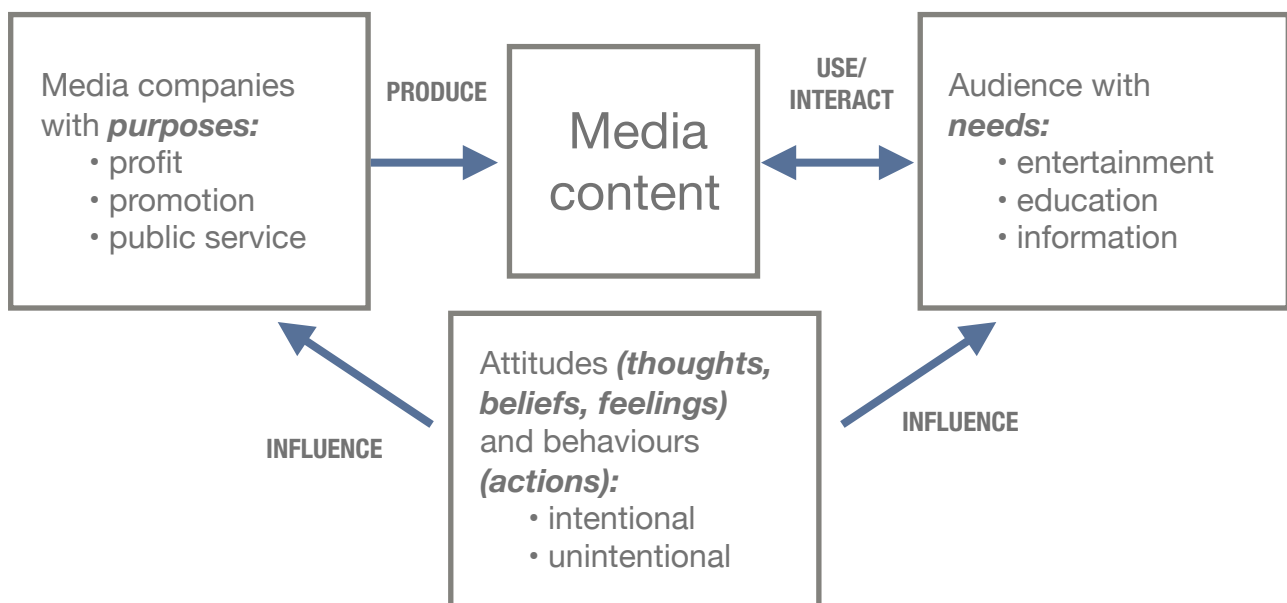
## **Capitalist**

- Media have responsibility to owners and shareholders
- Media can use free market to deliver global wealth, democracy and diversity to consumers
- Public service media should be privatised (e.g. universal BBC license should be replaced by subscription) Media should be deregulated
- There should be no barriers to concentrated media ownership
- This viewpoint is supported by neo-liberals and some Conservative politicians.

## **Public Service**

- Media have a democratic responsibility towards society
- Media must fulfil social functions of transmission of information, equal access and creation of a public forum for different viewpoints
- Media collectively should represent diverse social groups and reflect diversity through a range of viewpoints
- Media should allow access to diverse social groups
- Media should be independent from interference from business and government
- Media should apply self-regulation with regard to content and conduct
- Media markets should be regulated to prevent domination by a single or a few large corporations
- Media should set and meet standards with regards to conduct and the truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance of their reporting
- Media should avoid publicising content that can offend or lead to disorder
- Society entitled to high standards and intervention justifiable if the media fail to meet these standards
- This viewpoint is supported by those with left/liberal views as well as progressive Conservatives.

# Perspectives on the role of the media



## TASK 2

Write a definition/explanation of the following key terms.

- 1) Media company **purposes**
- 2) Audience **needs**
- 3) Attitudes as expressed in **thoughts, beliefs** and **feelings**, and behaviours as seen in **actions**



# Types of influence

- Influence on knowledge, attitude, behaviour
- Social or individual
- Intentional or unintentional
- Content-relative or content-irrelevant
- Short-term or long-term
- Reinforcing or changing knowledge, attitude, behaviour

## Sidebar: *Can the media influence the politics of the UK?*



Since 2010, **UKIP** appearances on the **BBC Question Time** programme have risen from 1 appearance every 8 shows (on average), to 1 in every 3. This was despite UKIP not having **any** MPs at the time.

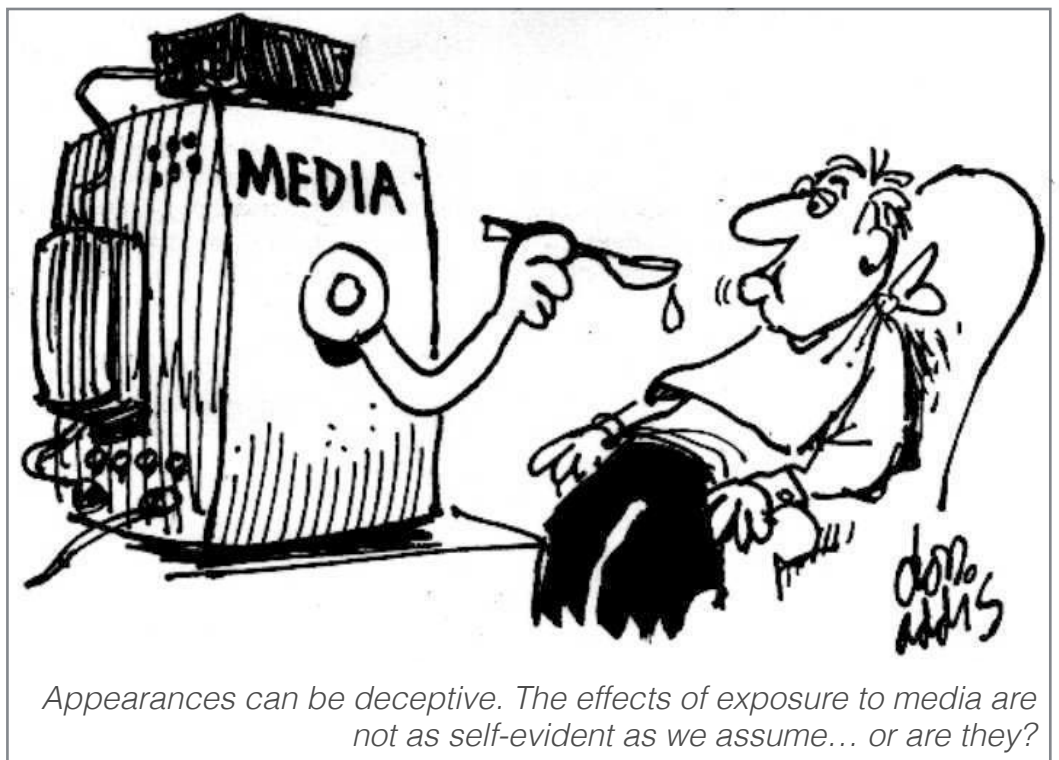
Do you think this has **helped** or **hindered** the increase in support for UKIP, or do you think it has made **no difference**?

You can find more information and graphs on this at:  
[bitly.com/soylentdave](http://bitly.com/soylentdave)

# Media effects

- ✓ Research studies **seem to show** that media have **small** or **moderate** effects
- ✓ Research studies which show no effect are **not likely to be published**
- ✓ **Strongest effects seen in laboratory settings** which are unlike the everyday settings in which we use media
- ✓ Other variables such as the **social context may be more important**

It is easy to believe there is an obvious link between what we are exposed to in the media and (for example) behaviour, but there is little evidence to support the belief. Why do you think this might be?



# Intentional effects of **media**

- ☑ Of ads on purchase
- ☑ Of political campaign on voting
- ☑ Of public service ads on attitudes and behaviour
- ☑ Of propaganda on ideology
- ☑ Of media rituals on social cohesion
- ☑ Socialization to social norms
- ☑ Knowledge gain throughout society
- ☑ Adaptation to social, institutional, technological change





# Unintentional effects of **media**

- ☑ Of media content (e.g. violence, sex, drugs) on attitudes and behaviour
- ☑ Of media images on the social construction of reality
- ☑ Of media images on self-image
- ☑ Of media use on learning ability, health and wellbeing
- ☑ Of media content and use on our culture



## TASK 3

This publicity shot from Season 2 of **Geordie Shore** (MTV UK) is designed to convey the essence of the show. What are some of the **unintentional connotations** of the image.

Is it possible to reconcile the notion that the media has a limited impact (**Media Effects**, above) with the unintentional effects you have identified?



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Perspective 1

# Media as **Public Service**



# Media freedom in a democracy

- ✓ Genuine democracy consists of the sovereignty of the people and thus government by, for, and of, the people.
- ✓ A democratic social order requires:
  - ▶ a **separation of powers** so that no one institution or social force dominates the society and polity
  - ▶ an **informed electorate** that can participate in public debate, elections, and political activity
  - ▶ **freedom of the press/broadcast media** to ensure they would be free from domination by any political force so that it could criticize the government and promote vigorous debate on issues of public concern
- ✓ Broadcasting is seen as a **public utility** subject to regulation to ensure that broadcasting serves democracy
- ✓ These ideals are expressed in the NUJ code of conduct, TV News regulation and the aims of some commercial media companies e.g. *The Guardian*

ed Stein 68  
Rocky Mtn.  
NEWS-NEA



## TASK 4

What point do you think the cartoonist is trying to make here?



The **National Union of Journalists** has a code of ethics which expresses this idea of media freedom.

# NUJ Code of Conduct

*A journalist:*

1. At all times upholds and defends the principle of media freedom, the right of freedom of expression and the right of the public to be informed.
  2. Strives to ensure that information disseminated is honestly conveyed, accurate and fair.
  3. Does her/his utmost to correct harmful inaccuracies.
  4. Differentiates between fact and opinion.
  5. Obtains material by honest, straightforward and open means, with the exception of investigations that are both overwhelmingly in the public interest and which involve evidence that cannot be obtained by straightforward means.
  6. Does nothing to intrude into anybody's private life, grief or distress unless justified by overriding consideration of the public interest.
  7. Protects the identity of sources who supply information in confidence and material gathered in the course of her/his work.
  8. Resists threats or any other inducements to influence, distort or suppress information, and takes no unfair personal advantage of information gained in the course of her/his duties before the information is public knowledge.
  9. Produces no material likely to lead to hatred or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, gender, race, colour, creed, legal status, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.
  10. Does not by way of statement, voice or appearance endorse by advertisement any commercial product or service save for the promotion of her/his own work or of the medium by which she/he is employed.
  11. Shall normally seek the consent of an appropriate adult when interviewing or photographing a child for a story about her/his welfare.
  12. Avoids plagiarism.
-



BBC Trust



# Regulation of UK broadcast news

- ✓ **BBC News** is regulated by the **BBC Trust** to ensure that “controversial subjects are treated with due accuracy and impartiality” (*editorial guidelines*)
- ✓ Broadcast news is regulated by **Ofcom** (*broadcasting codes*). Regulation covers commercial media (*ITV, C4, Five, Sky* and commercial radio)
- ✓ **Ofcom** requires that news, in whatever form, is reported “with due accuracy and presented with due impartiality”
- ✓ TV news journalists:
  1. should ensure that fact and opinion are distinguished
  2. should not editorialize i.e. offer own opinion

## TASK 5

Go to the BBC Trust and Ofcom websites and find out who their members are.

**How effective do you think they will be in fulfilling their remit?**

**Links:**

**BBC Trust**

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/who\\_we\\_are/trustees/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/who_we_are/trustees/)

**Ofcom**

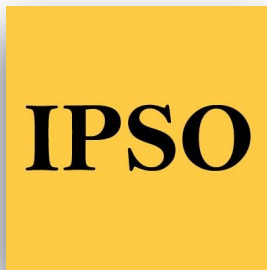
<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/about/how-ofcom-is-run/ofcom-board/members/>

and/or

<http://media.ofcom.org.uk/images/>



# Regulation of UK press



- ✓ From 1995-2014 press and magazines were regulated by the **Press Complaints Commission (PCC)**
- ✓ **Self-regulation** by the industry
- ✓ **Leveson inquiry** heavily critical of **PCC**
- ✓ Government has not yet intervened to impose more independent regulation
- ✓ Since September 2014 **PCC** replaced by **Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO)**
- ✓ **IPSO** is **PCC** with same code of practice except that it has a few retired judges and civil servants on the board to give an *impression* of greater independence

## Leveson findings on **PCC**



culture, practices and ethics of the press

The **Leveson Inquiry** is a judicial public inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the British press following the **News International** phone hacking scandal, chaired by Lord Justice Leveson, who was appointed in July 2011. A series of public hearings were held throughout 2011 and 2012. The Inquiry published the **Leveson Report** in *November 2012*, which reviewed the general culture and ethics of the British media, and made recommendations for a new, independent, body to replace the existing **Press Complaints Commission**.



Lord Justice Leveson

# Key Leveson findings on the PCC

## The PCC:

- ✓ Is a self-regulatory system run for the **benefit of the press** not of the public
- ✓ Is aligned with the interests of the press and has a profound **lack of independence** from the industry
- ✓ Its appointment process appears to be **neither transparent nor impartial**
- ✓ Is restricted by the **limited resources** which the industry supplied
- ✓ Is in reality a complaints handling body and **not actually a regulator** at all
- ✓ Is at the mercy of what it is newspaper editors tell them in response to a complaint
- ✓ Has **not properly monitored press compliance** with the Code
- ✓ Code Committee which sets the rules is wholly made up of serving editors **allowing them to protect each others' interests**
- ✓ Treats **privacy cases as complaints**, thereby preventing them from going before the courts.
- ✓ Has sought to mediate far too many complaints rather than reach simple findings, so allowing newspapers to wear down members of the public through **'complaint fatigue'**

Some of the victims of the **News of the World** hacking scandal who spoke at *The Leveson Inquiry* (clockwise from top left): Steve Coogan, Sienna Miller, JK Rowling, Hugh Grant, Bob and Sally Dowler (parents of Milly Dowler), Gerry and Kate McCann (parents of Madeline McCann).

Pic: BBC



The IPSO logo consists of the letters 'IPSO' in a bold, black, serif font, centered on a bright yellow square background.

# IPSO

## Code of Practice

The code of practice covers:

Accuracy	Children in sex cases*	Financial journalism
Opportunity to reply	Hospitals*	Confidential sources
Privacy	Reporting of crime*	Witness payments
Harassment*	Hidden devices/subterfuge	Payment to criminals*
Intrusion into grief/shock	Victims of sexual assault	<b>There may be exceptions to the clauses marked * where they can be demonstrated to be in the public interest</b>
Children*	Discrimination	

Exceptions may occur when in the **public interest** e.g.

- Detecting or exposing crime or serious impropriety
- Protecting public health and safety
- Preventing the public from being misled by an action or statement of an individual or organisation
- Public interest in freedom of expression itself

 "IPSO is PCC with same code of practice except that it has a few retired judges and civil servants on the board to give an impression of greater independence"



# Public Interest

- ✓ Difficult term to **define**
- ✓ Obviously related to some **sense** of whether news coverage serves the public good
- ✓ But often newspapers will **deliberately confuse** such a sense with public interest as ‘what interests the public’ in order **to justify** stories which intrude into the private life of individuals in the news and sell newspapers through *sensationalism* and *titillation*



How satirical magazine **Private Eye** reported the birth of Prince George

## TASK 6

Consider how the press might cover the following news stories:

1. **A politician accepting a ‘bribe’** (eg: *cash for access*)
2. **The disappearance of a child** (eg: *Madeline McCann*)
3. **The death of a pop singer** (eg: *Amy Winehouse*)

To what extent does coverage of stories like these serve the **good** of the public as opposed to simply pandering to ‘what **interests** the public’?

# the guardian

Not all media is the same. **The Guardian** newspaper has a remarkable degree of freedom in what and how it prints as long as it conforms to the newspaper's core values.

- The Guardian is owned by the **Guardian Media Group** a trust which exists to secure the financial and editorial independence of The Guardian in perpetuity
- Journalists are free to present truth as they see it without interference by shareholders, a proprietor or a political party
- It promotes left/liberal values and questions all forms of authority
- Collaborated with WikiLeaks on **US National Security Agency surveillance programmes story**
- Broke the **phone hacking story**



## News of the World hacked Milly Dowler's phone during police hunt

**Exclusive** Paper deleted missing schoolgirl's voicemails, giving family false hope

Vick Davies and Amelia Hill

The News of the World finally stopped its missing schoolgirl Milly Dowler and her family in March 2002, interfering with police inquiries into her disappearance, an investigation by The Guardian has established.

Scotland Yard is investigating the episode, which is likely to put new pressure on the News editor of the paper, Rebekah Brooks, now Rupert Murdoch's chief executive in the UK, and the paper's deputy editor, Andy Coulson, who stepped in to run the paper in the interim.

The Dowler family lawyers, Mark Lewis, issued a statement yesterday accusing the News of the World of acting in an "outrageous" and "disgraceful" way, and the Dowler family was now pursuing a damages claim against the News of the World.

Milly Dowler disappeared at the age of 11 on her way home from school in Bolton, Lancashire, on 18 March 2002.

Directives from Scotland Yard's own inquiry into the phone hacking, Operation Motorman, are believed to have found evidence of the hacking of the Dowler's mobile phone.

In the last four weeks the Met officers have approached former police and taken several statements from some of those involved in the original inquiry, who were concerned about how News of the World normalised the hacking and deleted the personal messages of Milly Dowler.

The messages were deleted by journalists in the first few days after Milly's disappearance in order to free up space for other messages. As a result friends and relatives of Milly concluded through the investigation that she was still alive. Police found evidence that the messages were deleted.

The Guardian investigation has shown how, within a very short time of Milly's disappearance, News of the World journalists acted to ensure that their newspapers they had no information to get their story across.

Their first step was simple, albeit illegal. Reporters were by the Guardian website that they paid a Hampshire police



It is distress heaped on tragedy to learn that the News of the World had no humanity at such a terrible time

Mark Lewis, Dowler family lawyer

investigator, Steve Whittamore, to obtain home addresses and, where necessary, directory phone numbers for any families called Dowler in the Bolton area. The three addresses Whittamore found could be obtained lawfully on the electoral register. The three directory numbers, however, were "slipped" (legally from British Telecom's confidential records) by one of Whittamore's associates, John Gannon, who worked for a business in Bolton. One of the re-directory numbers was attributed to Whittamore to Milly's family home.

Then, with the help of its own full-time private investigator, Glenn Mulcaire, the News of the World started illegally intercepting mobile phone messages. Scotland Yard is now investigating evidence that the paper hacked directly into the voicemail of the missing girl's own phone. As her friends and parents called and left messages, Milly began to talk to her. The News of the World was listening and recording their every private word.

But the journalists at the News of the World became confused a problem. Milly's responses were filled up and would accept no more messages. Apparently thirty or more messages from News of the World, the paper intervened - and deleted the messages that had been left in the first few days after her disappearance. Accord-

Rebekah Brooks

CEO of News International was editor of the News of the World when Milly Dowler's phone was hacked

Andy Coulson

Former head of communications at No 10 was Brooks's deputy in 2002 and became News of the World editor in 2003

Glenn Mulcaire

Investigator hacked into Milly Dowler's phone for News of the World, allowing paper to listen to friends' messages

ing to one source, this had a devastating effect: when her friends and family called again and discovered that her voicemail had been cleared, they concluded that this must have been done by Milly herself and, therefore, that she must still be alive. But she was not. This interference created false hope and extra agony for those who were searching for her.

The Dowler family then granted an exclusive interview to the News of the World in which they called for an end to their hope, quite unaware that it had been likely kindled by the News of the World.

Continued on page 3 >>

## British soldier dies as Cameron flies in to Afghanistan

Melissa Stratton, Camp Bastion, UK

The UK's army withdrew from Afghanistan in order to help victory last night.

base in Helmand province, south of the British base at Kandahar.

The episode coincided with a secret trip to Afghanistan by David Cameron, who was forced to cancel plans to visit the British base at Kandahar.

aboard of the handover of the area to Afghan security forces last night.

There now he is expected to announce that another batch of British soldiers will withdraw from Helmand - this time in three years, and 200 more are likely to

According to sources, the soldier had and finished his shift on safety duty at a vehicle checkpoint and was expected to return inside the base.

Colleague reported seeing him walking out of the checkpoint area and down a road, before

The easy way to buy a new sofa.





Marketing says "Yes",  
Legal says "No",  
and Murdoch says  
"What's in it for me?"



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Perspective 2

# Media as **Free Market**

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# Neoliberalism

**Neoliberalism** is the resurgence of ideas associated with *laissez-faire* economic liberalism beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, whose advocates support **extensive economic liberalization, free trade,** and **reductions in government spending** in order **to enhance the role of the private sector in the economy.**

- ☑ Media have responsibility to owners and shareholders
- ☑ Media can use free market to deliver global wealth, democracy and diversity to consumers
- ☑ Public service media should be privatised so that they are subject to same market pressures as commercial media (e.g. universal BBC license should be replaced by subscription)
- ☑ Media should be deregulated
- ☑ There should be no barriers to concentrated media ownership



Neoliberalism is an extremely contentious political philosophy as it appears to favour the wealthy at the expense of the poor.

## Media Conglomerates

- ✓ Concentration of media companies in fewer and fewer hands
- ✓ Vertical integration: owning the means of production and distribution in a sector e.g. 21st Century Fox producing films which are shown in Fox cinemas and on its own tv channels
- ✓ Horizontal integration: where a single corporation has interests across media e.g. film, tv, books, press, internet; this allows synergies across companies within the corporation as well as cross-promotion of products
- ✓ Leads to oligopolies where a few companies dominated the market and control prices
- ✓ Murdoch creates/buys 'media triangles' in the countries in which he operates. These triangles are a popular newspaper, a quality paper and a TV network; in the UK this means **The Sun**, **The Times** and major interest in **BSkyB**. Each of these triangles is a source of great wealth and power.

## Cross Promotion

- ✓ Horizontal integration means that Murdoch companies can promote each other *i.e.* **Sky** channels can advertise other **Sky** channels and **The Sun** can advertise **Sky TV**
- ✓ For example: **The Sun** usually carries at least 2-3 pages of advertising for **Sky TV**, **The Sun** and **The Sun on Sunday** and carries listings for more Sky channels than any other newspaper (typically around **50** channels)

# News Corporation

(as per 2012)



## INDIA



Tata Sky (stake)



Star



Harper Collins

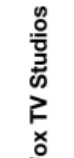
## USA



Fox Sports



Fox Business Network



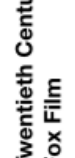
Fox TV Studios



Fox Broadcasting Company



Fox News



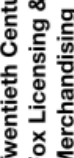
Twentieth Century Fox Film



Twentieth Century Fox TV



Fox Cable Networks



Twentieth Century Fox Licensing & Merchandising



Fox TV stations



Fox International Channels



News America Marketing



MyNetworkTV



FSN



New York Post



Twentieth Television



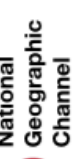
FX Networks



Dow Jones



Fox Interactive Media



National Geographic Channel



Harper Collins

## CHINA/ASIA



Star



ESPN Star (stake)



Phoenix Satellite TV Holdings



National Geographic Channel Asia

## UK



BSkyB (stake)



Harper Collins



News International



NDS Group (stake)

## ITALY



Sky Italia

## GERMANY



Sky Deutschland (stake)

## AUSTRALIA



Foxtel (stake)



Fox Sports Australia



Fox Studios Australia



News Limited



Harper Collins

News Corp