

## **Society, Culture, and the Media.**

Media is one of the greatest influences that has made the world what it is today. It changes and creates culture just as culture governs it. Mass media manipulates personalities and controls people's actions and thoughts. It enables global communication and commands our daily lives. In short, the media shapes society itself.

Thanks to mass media, different cultures from all over the world can communicate with one another with minimum effort, and many traditions and ideas are being shared on a worldwide basis. Pandemics, natural disasters, and other global catastrophes can be dealt with more effectively than ever. Warnings, messages, and news can be sent around the world in seconds, preparing the earth's residents for whatever is coming. The latest updates and discoveries such as cures for diseases, weather forecasts can spread around the world without anyone having to travel anywhere.

In December 2019, an unknown disease emerged, spreading so rapidly that within weeks it led to one of the largest global health crises seen to date. The virus, Covid-19, had devastating effects, leading to deaths in unbelievable numbers and a global pandemic. However, the results could have been far worse, perhaps even wiping out the majority of humanity. Without the media, millions of us might not be here today. The media played a significant role in controlling and reducing the spread of Covid-19. It enabled different countries and communities to announce that Covid was in their midst, and to warn one another of the virus. Personally, I found it astounding to

see the influence of mass media and the positive benefits that came with it. I am ever so grateful for the resilient journalists, doctors, politicians and all the people who helped prevent the virus from spreading, who cured and comforted those who fell ill, and worked with the media to spread the message, the news, and the vaccine Worldwide.

As the virus spread, country after country was forced into lockdown, social distancing was required and physical contact limited, yet with social media websites such as Zoom and WhatsApp, people could still stay in touch with relatives and friends. As a global community we are stronger, more resilient, and more intelligent than ever before. The media has given us many benefits since it was released, that is until recently.

There is nothing in the cosmos that offers only positive effects for us, our planet and our universe, and as is the law of reality, even the media has its downside. The media can manipulate, persuade, change, and even create human opinion and behaviour, and so it has been used for criminal activity and cyber bullying as well. Identity theft would be far rarer without the media, and negative messages much harder to spread. Besides criminal activity and terrorism, the media, and in particular social media, has profound effects on the everyday lives of the average person.

As social media grows and gains popularity, more people begin to get addicted to and dependent upon it. It was used for pointless and unnecessary reasons such as posting nonsense, false information or publicizing personal daily life, generally showing off to the world. On websites such as Facebook and Twitter, scientific

studies show that getting a 'like' has some satisfaction to it, like eating a piece of chocolate, doing some exercise, or succeeding in a skill. This prompts people to continue posting information and spending even more time on social media.

However, when a post receives no or few 'likes', it can drive a person into a state of devastation and despair. The problem seems to be that people take social media too personally and tend to set their emotions around the opinions of others. Social media can have a negative effect on the mental health of users. Youths, still impressionable, tend to compare their lives to what others post on social media. These posts may or may not be the highlights in people's lives.

Social media isn't as much about connecting humanity, than tearing it apart. It was never designed to destroy us, it was designed to benefit us, and parts of it still are beneficial. However, overall, it has developed into quite the opposite. Social media manipulates the global community and changes one as a person. We are not the consumers of social media; we are the product. The goal of all social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Tick Tock, Reddit are to change, to control, to spy, to predict, to hook in, keep people on websites, and all for advertising purposes. All of this is for what is both humanity's rise and downfall: money.

In the modern digital era, each avenue branching from the media highway is swarming with conspiracy theories. It is constantly becoming more difficult to distinguish truth from lies. In the future with the increasing numbers of media platforms, it will be harder yet to figure out which can be trusted. Evolutionary movements are being carried out. Things that couldn't possibly be true are chanted by millions of people while storming buildings, damaging property, and starting fires. Rallies are moving throughout the world, protesting about conspiracies like the earth

being flat, and 5G radiation. Not to mention theories about climate change and Covid-19 being cover up stories for something else. Above all, people believe these things. This is not stupidity; it is the structure on which media platforms are built. Conspiracy theorists and articles written by them tend to tell audiences to do their own research. When people look up stories on Google, Google offers answers written by those who support these theories. This confirmation bias reinforces beliefs. Furthermore, media such as Facebook enhance this belief, showing the user even more bizarre conspiracy theories. Facebook's algorithm is programmed to give the user suggestions based on what they previously looked at.

Media is a vast and complex world of connection and communication that shapes, manipulates, and creates culture and society throughout the global community. Mass media is one of the greatest influences; for better or for worse, Making the world what it is today. Despite causing problems and injustices, the media simultaneously makes us more connected. For every benefit the media creates, there is a negative that might not be as welcome, however that is just the nature of the universe. Nevertheless, the solution is not to get rid of the benefits. We should take the benefits the media has offered us and use them to find a solution to the problems it has created. Though new problems may come, we will face them, we will fight them, and defend our position in the evolution of humanity.