

# ZUR 393k:

## Effects of Mass Media

Priming, Cultivation, and Cultural Studies: Shifting the Focus  
from Empiricism to Cultural Studies

### Outline:

1. Priming: definition & conclusion
2. Cultivation Analysis: definition & conclusion;  
underlying assumptions, research methods
3. Cultural Studies: introducing a new model of  
communication; key terms: ideology & hegemony

I.

priming effect as “agenda setting”  
on an individual (psychological) level

# Leonard Berkowitz

Leonard Berkowitz is an American social psychologist best known for his research on human aggression.

[Wikipedia](#)

**Born:** 1926

**Education:** [University of Michigan](#)

**Books:** [Causes and consequences of feelings](#), [More](#)



## Causes and Consequences of Feelings

Leonard Berkowitz

## ROOTS OF AGRESSION

Berkowitz, Leonard

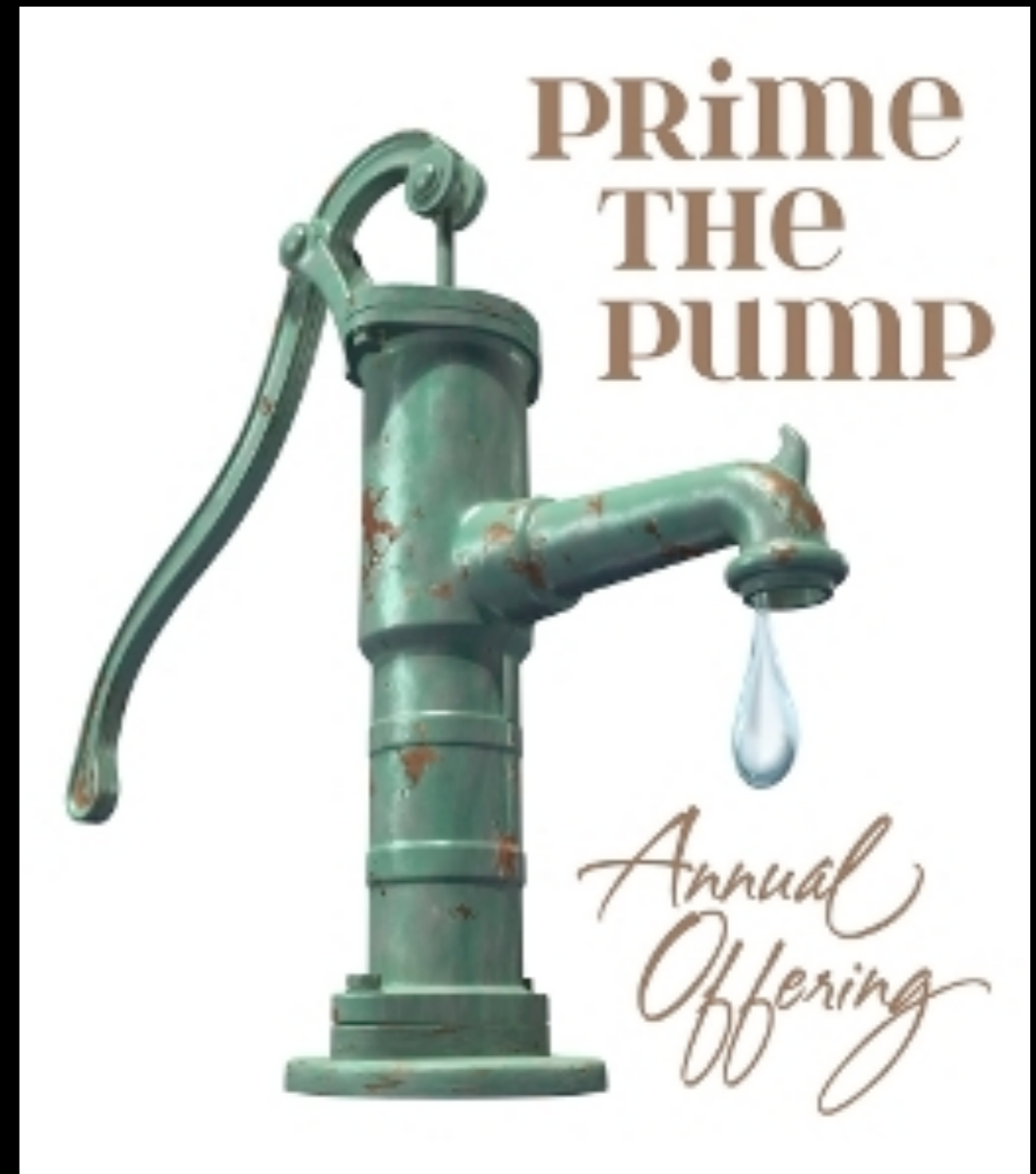
Note: This is not the actual book cover

## AGGRESSION Its Causes, Consequences, and Control

Leonard Berkowitz

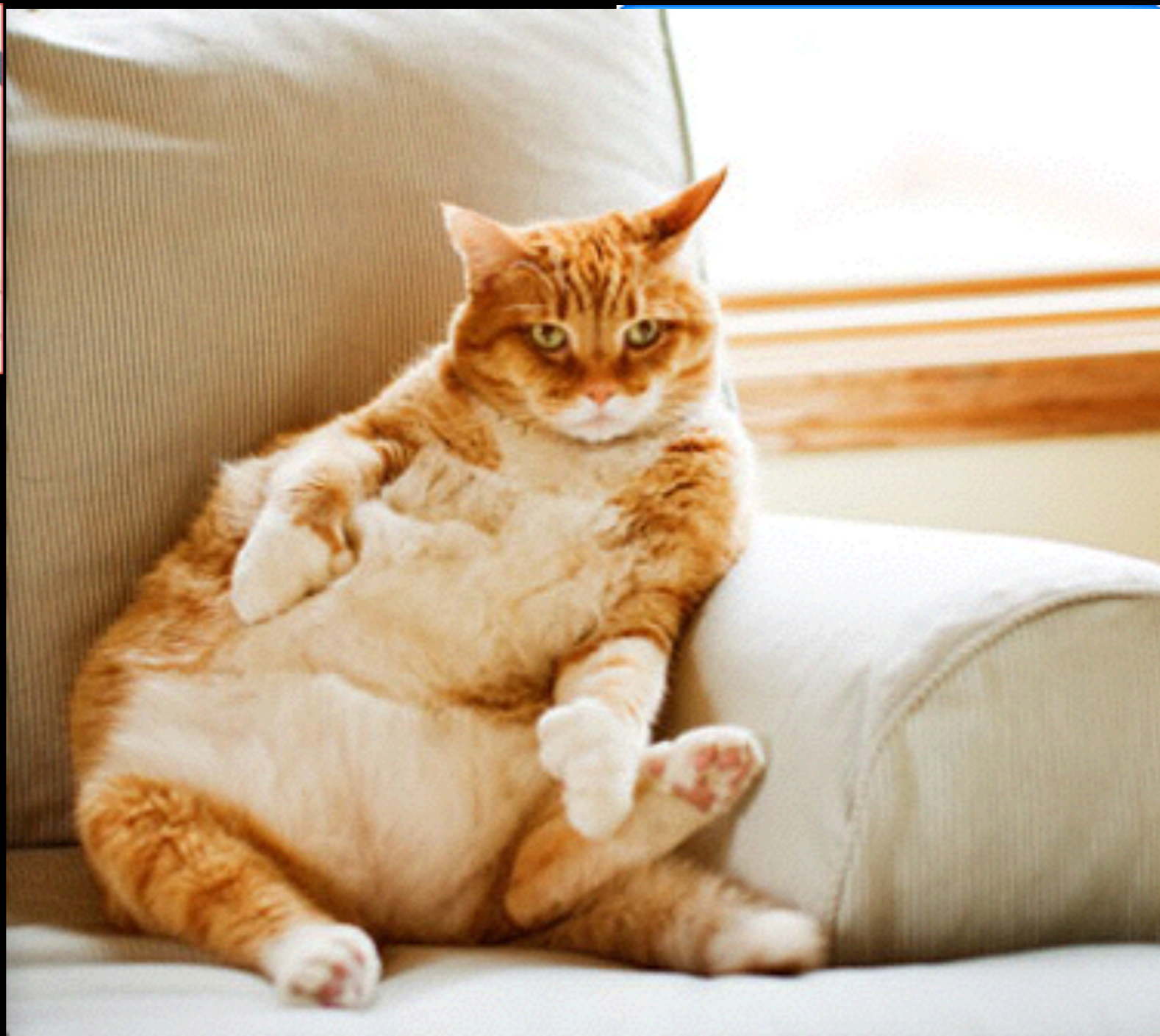
# The “priming” effect:

The presentation of a certain stimulus with a particular meaning “primes” (or stimulates) related concepts or thoughts--and, in certain cases, related actions.



“cookie”





# BERKOWITZ'S CONCLUSION

After viewing depictions of violence in the media, under certain circumstances and for a short period of time, there is an increased chance that viewers will:

1. have hostile thoughts that will color their interpretations of others
2. believe other forms of aggression are justified and/or will bring benefits
3. be aggressively inclined



“There is no longer a question as to whether the portrayal of violence in the mass media can increase the chances that some people in the audience will act aggressively themselves. Such an effect can occur and often does.”

(Berkowitz, 1994, p. 44)





2.

## Cultivation Analysis

# Cultivation Analysis

- research initiated in 1967
- prompted by concern about violence in the media
- research funded by the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence



MAY 1997

## THE MAN WHO COUNTS THE KILLINGS

*George Gerbner, who thirty years ago founded the Cultural Indicators project, which is best known for its estimate that the average American child will have watched 8,000 murders on television by the age of twelve, is so alarmed about the baneful effects of TV that he describes them in terms of "fascism"*



# Cultivation Analysis

- research methods (content analysis and survey) derived from empirical tradition
- theoretical concerns derived from critical studies
- attempts to investigate long term effects at the societal level



# Cultivation Analysis

- “Violence Profile”: content analysis of a sample week of prime-time television to establish “base-line” data: amount of violence in prime-time programming
- 1973: Gerbner begins to address “effects” by adding in survey research

# “Cultural Indicators”

## Key Argument:

Television "cultivates" or creates a world view that, although possibly inaccurate, becomes the reality simply because we believe it to be reality. We base our judgments about our own, everyday world on our own sense of "reality" (1973).

# Gerbner's Conclusion:

“... exposure to violence occasionally incites some viewers to commit and/or imitate specific violent actions and ... some people may also become desensitized to violence. For most viewers, however, television's mean and dangerous world tends to cultivate a sense of relative danger, mistrust, insecurity, vulnerability, dependence, and--despite its supposedly 'entertaining' nature--alienation and gloom.”





# Underlying Assumptions

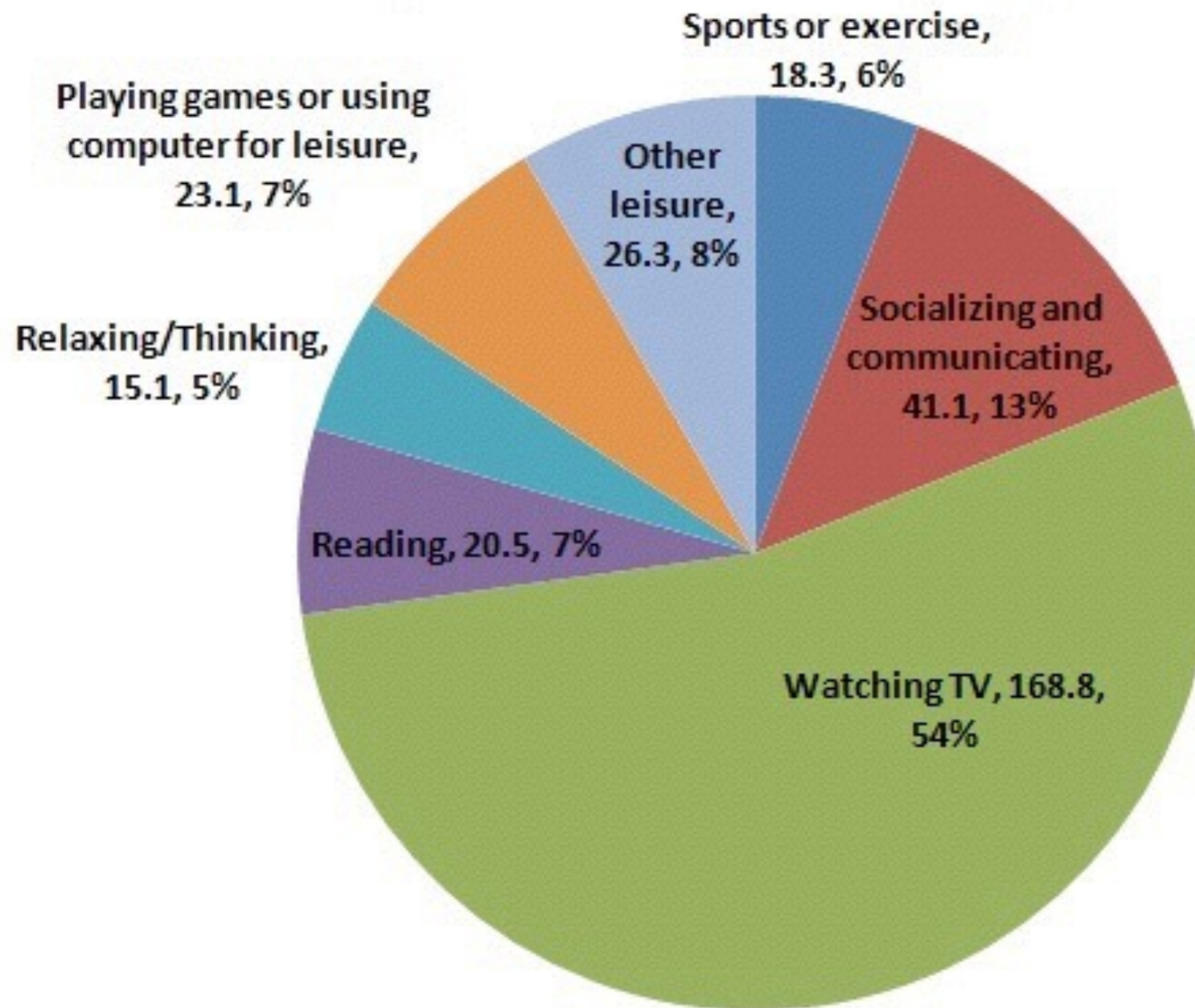
I. TV is unique from all other mass media because:

a. TV viewing consumes more time and attention than all other media and leisure time activities combined.



- On an average day, individuals age 15 and over spent half of their leisure time watching TV. (Data are from the 2010 survey).

## How an Average American Spends his/her Leisure Time



*Time figures are in minutes (with total leisure time per day being ~5.2 hours)*

 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

 BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

<http://www.bls.gov/tus/charts/leisure.htm>

# Underlying Assumptions

I. TV is unique from all other mass media because:

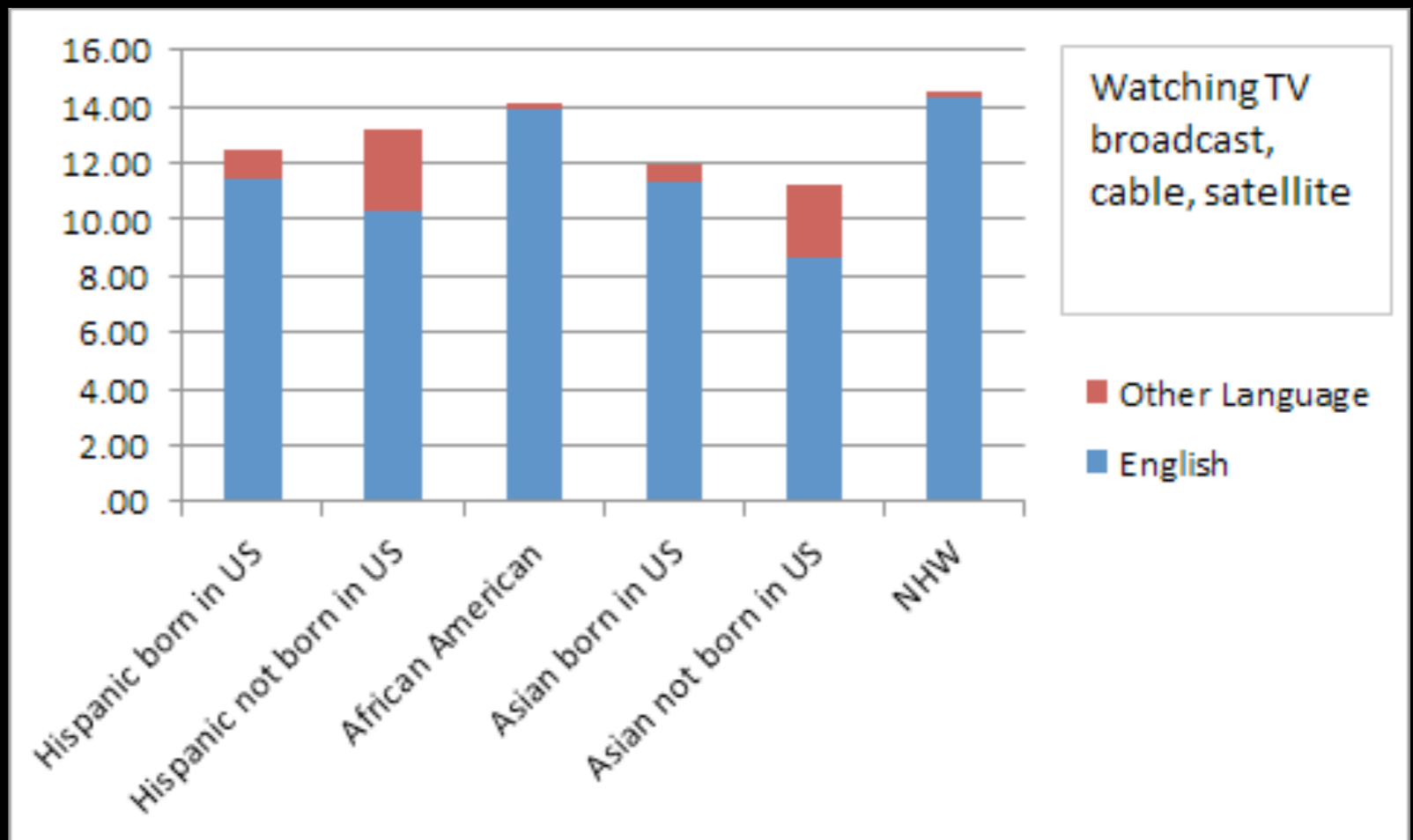
b. TV viewers do not need to wait for, plan for, go out to, or seek out TV.



# Underlying Assumptions

I. TV is unique from all other mass media because:

c. TV requires no literacy



# Underlying Assumptions



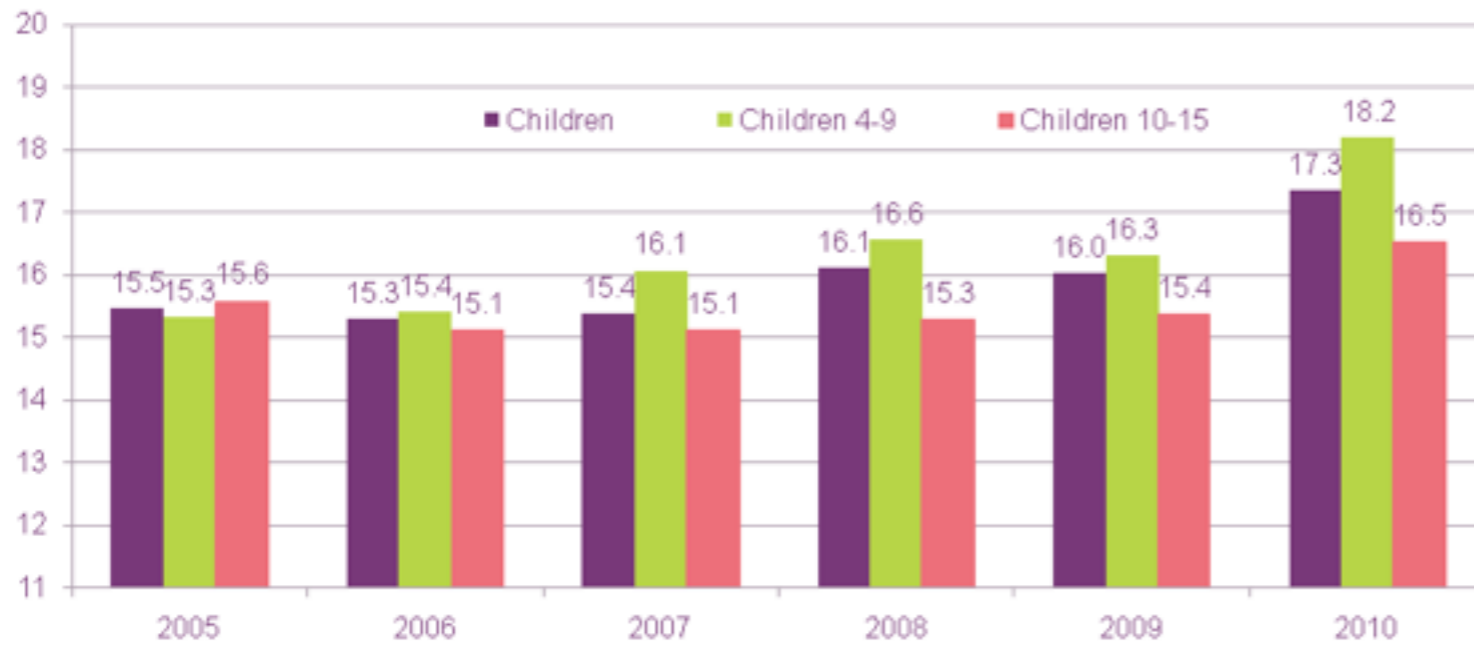
- I. TV is unique from all other mass media because:
  - d. TV is a cradle-to-grave experience.



**Figure 2.19**

Average hours of weekly TV viewing by children

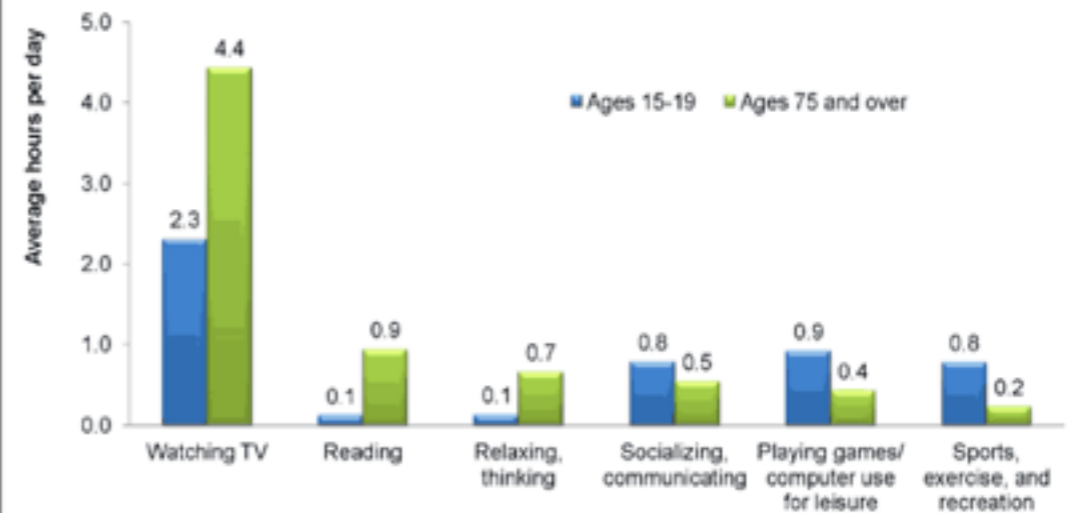
Average weekly viewing (Hrs, Mins)



Source: BARB



Average hours spent per day in leisure and sports activities, by youngest and oldest populations



NOTE: Data include all days of the week and are annual averages for 2010.

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, American Time Use Survey



# Underlying Assumptions

- I. TV is unique from all other mass media because:
  - e. TV is in the business of assembling large, heterogenous audiences and selling their time to advertisers.



**Table 1133. Multimedia Audiences--Summary: 2010**

[In percent, except total (228,112 represents 228,112,000). As of Fall 2010. For persons 18 years old and over. Represents the percent of persons participating during the prior week, except as indicated. Based on sample and subject to sampling error; see source for details]

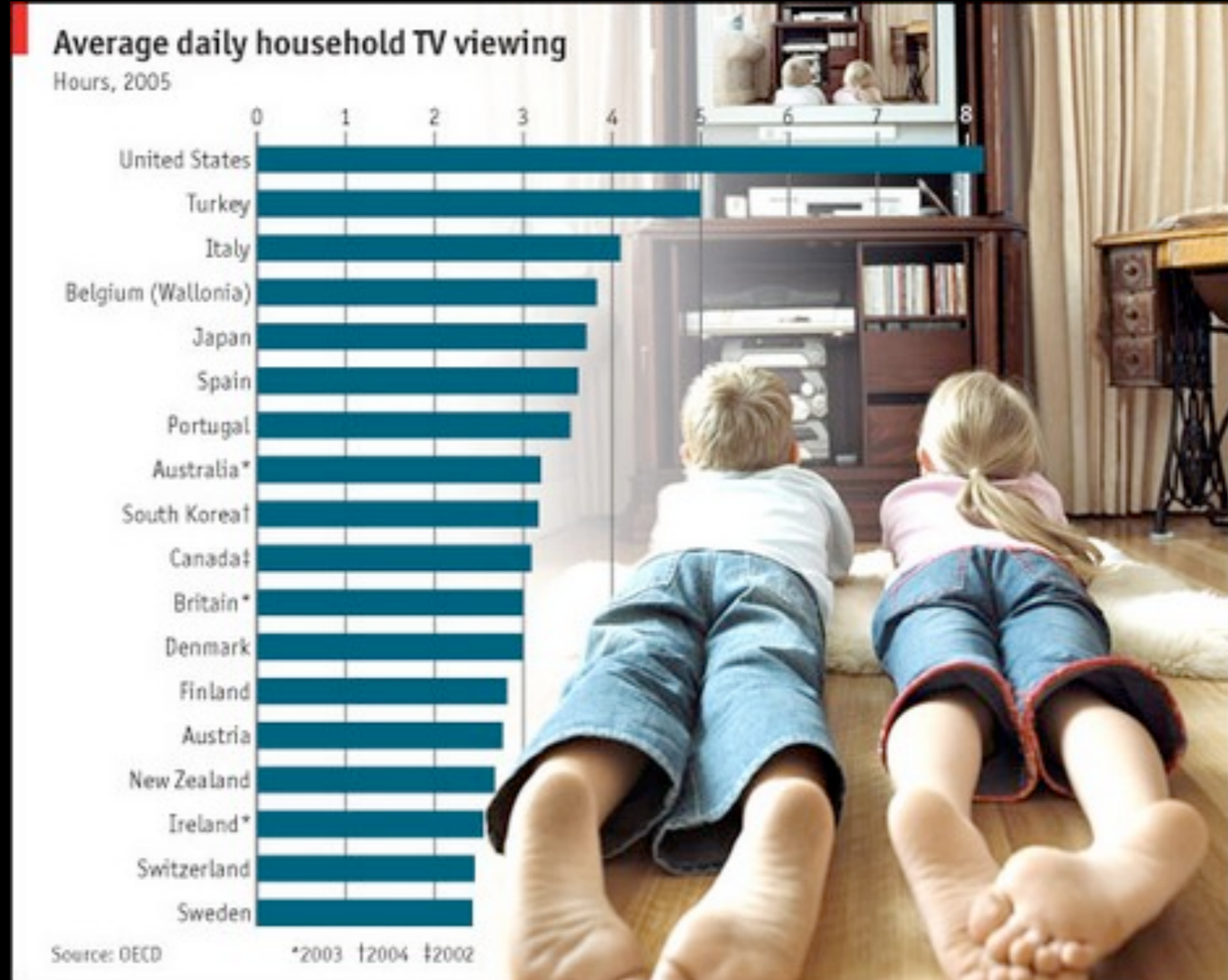
Item	Total population	Television viewing	Television prime time viewing	Cable viewing \1	Radio listening	Newspaper reading	Accessed Internet \2
<b>Total</b>	228,112	92.91	83.06	82.61	82.14	67.19	77.31
18 to 24 years old	28,815	89.61	71.88	77.62	85.67	58.66	92.70
25 to 34 years old	40,710	89.57	77.47	77.77	86.42	58.37	88.35
35 to 44 years old	41,552	92.42	83.47	83.04	86.84	65.49	85.17
45 to 54 years old	44,605	93.94	85.44	84.64	86.48	70.48	80.02
55 to 64 years old	34,456	94.31	87.41	85.85	82.26	72.50	76.12
65 years old and over	37,973	97.07	90.34	85.76	64.55	76.33	43.10
Male	110,308	93.02	82.65	82.40	83.56	66.71	77.07
Female	117,804	92.81	83.44	82.80	80.81	67.65	77.54
White only	171,486	92.58	83.31	83.85	82.01	69.49	79.48
Black only	25,866	95.48	85.23	82.24	83.99	67.62	71.43
Other races/multiple clasifications	30,759	92.63	79.84	75.98	81.30	54.02	70.15
Not high school graduate	32,211	92.91	82.14	72.90	74.00	49.17	42.40
High school graduate	70,358	94.20	85.00	83.58	80.26	66.99	67.43
Attended college	63,819	93.05	82.08	85.03	85.52	69.01	88.33
College graduate	61,723	91.30	82.33	84.06	85.04	74.96	95.40
Employed:							
Full time	109,492	92.29	81.71	84.26	88.35	68.27	88.55
Part time	27,646	91.40	79.60	80.67	84.87	68.56	85.16
Not employed	90,974	94.12	85.73	81.20	73.84	65.49	61.41
Household income:							
Less than \$10,000	11,226	89.85	78.81	64.48	72.50	54.76	44.66
\$10,000 to \$19,999	19,365	92.31	82.91	70.33	72.39	58.16	46.84
\$20,000 to \$29,999	22,396	92.06	81.81	74.18	73.75	62.49	56.40
\$30,000 to \$34,999	11,098	93.72	83.59	80.49	77.12	62.54	62.51
\$35,000 to \$39,999	10,938	92.70	85.00	80.08	79.87	63.83	68.91
\$40,000 to \$49,999	20,079	92.92	83.92	80.96	81.23	66.11	73.65
\$50,000 to \$74,999	43,492	93.31	83.58	84.92	84.19	69.74	84.11
\$75,000 to \$99,999	31,643	93.63	83.99	88.21	88.15	69.65	91.12
\$100,000 or more	57,875	93.23	82.75	90.14	87.41	73.10	94.97

FOOTNOTES  
\1 In the past 7 days.  
\2 In the last 30 days.  
Source: GfK Mediamark Research & Intelligence, LLC, New York, NY, Multimedia Audiences, Fall 2010 (copyright).  
For more information:  
<http://www.gfkmri.com/>  
Internet release date: 9/30/2011



# Underlying Assumptions

2. TV is the central cultural arm of American society.



# Underlying Assumptions

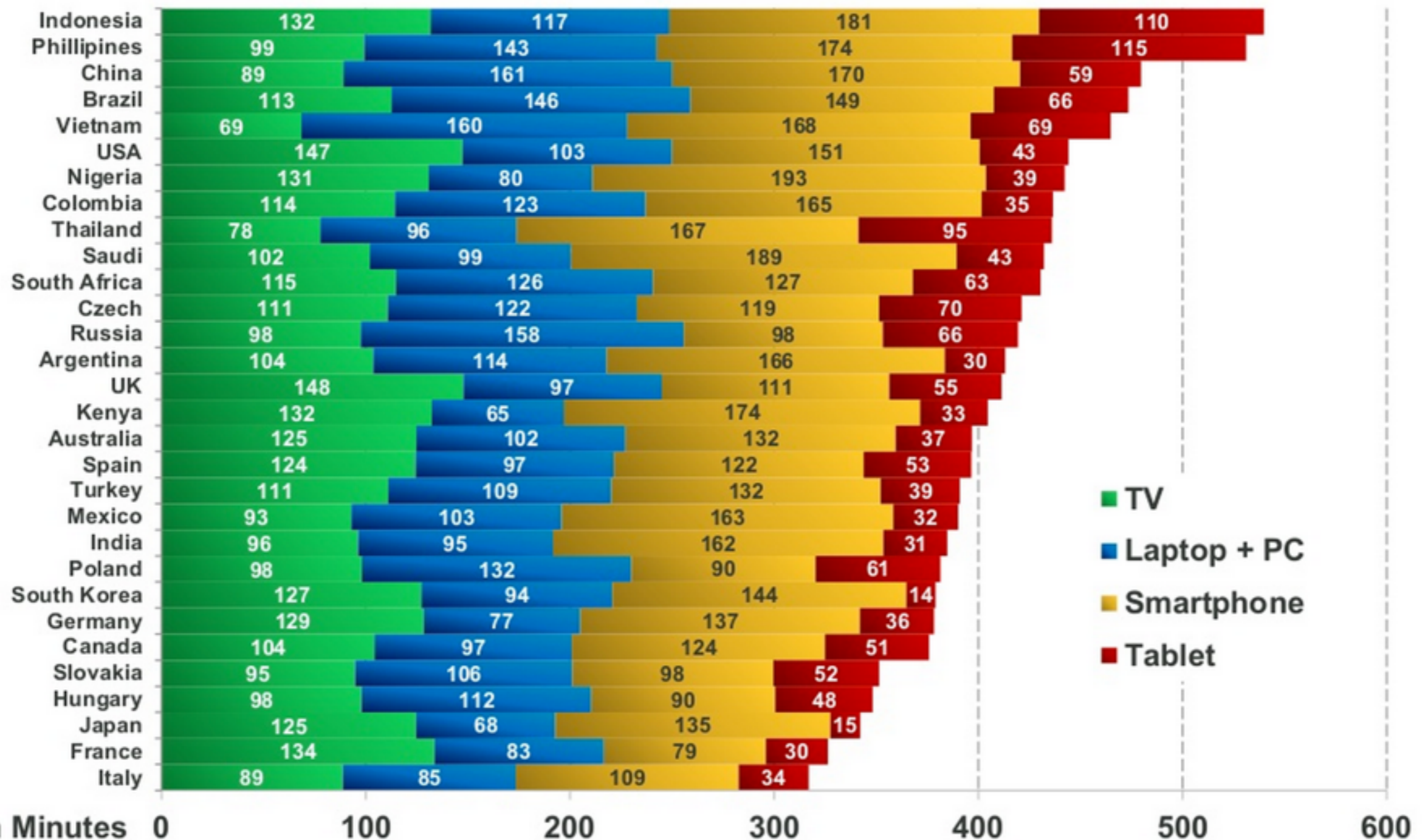
2. TV is the central cultural arm of American society.

Average daily TV viewing time per person in selected countries in 2013 (in minutes)



# Smartphones = Most Viewed / Used Medium in Many Countries, 2014

## Daily Distribution of Screen Minutes Across Countries (Mins)



# Teens spend nearly nine hours every day consuming media

By Hayley Tsukayama November 3   Follow @htsuka



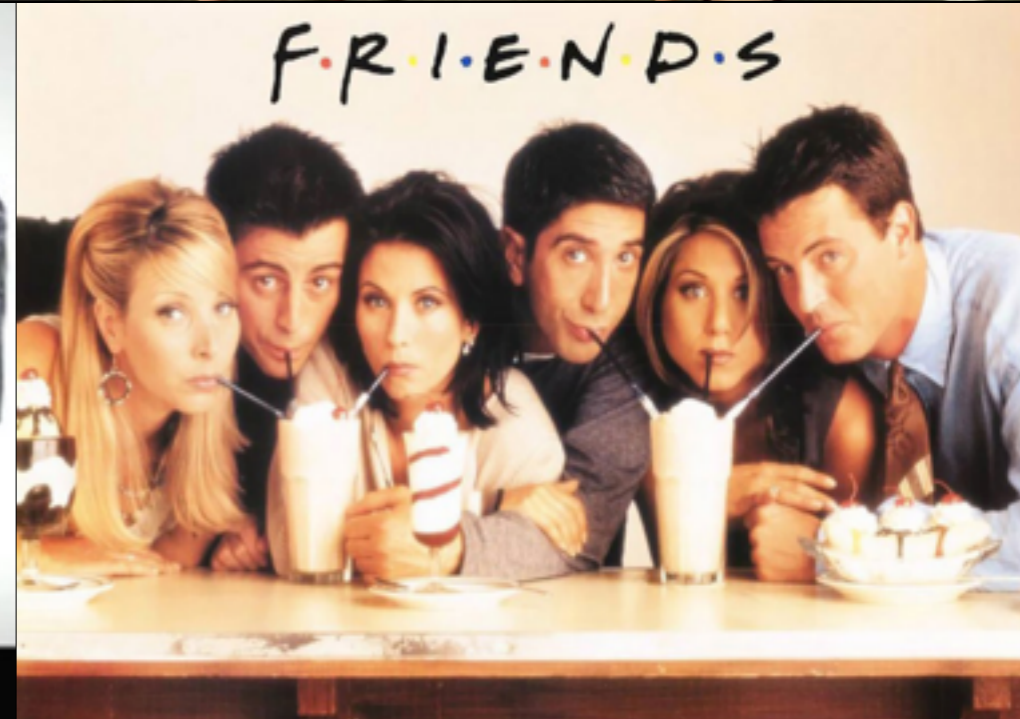
(Jung Yeon-JE/AFP/Getty Images)

Teens are spending more than one-third of their days using media such as online video or music — nearly nine hours on average, according to a new study from the family technology education non-profit group, Common Sense Media. For tweens, those between the ages of 8 and 12, the average is nearly six hours per day.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-switch/wp/2015/11/03/teens-spend-nearly-nine-hours-every-day-consuming-media/>

# Underlying Assumptions

3. TV cultivates a general consciousness on which people's conclusions and judgments are based.



# Underlying Assumptions

4. TV works to stabilize social patterns.



# Underlying Assumptions

5. The measurable, identifiable contributions of TV to culture at any one time are relatively small.



# Research Methods

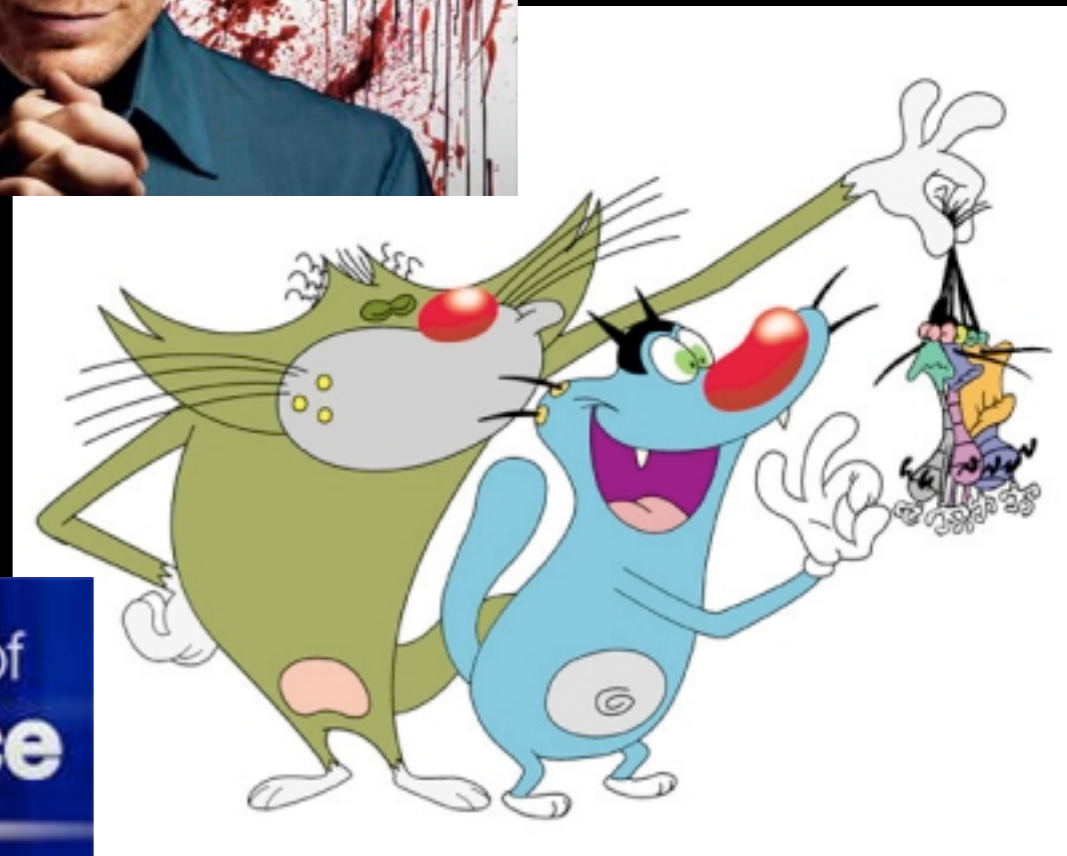
- content analysis of programs
- devise questions and survey individuals
- compare the social realities of light vs. heavy TV viewers
  - light = 0 - 2 hours/day
  - heavy = 4 or more hours a day



# Step 1: content analysis

- measure amount of violence on TV
  - includes all evening prime-time and weekend daytime
  - argues viewers select when to watch more than what to watch

- 5 - 6 violent acts / hour of prime-time TV
- found in 2/3 of all prime-time programming
- Saturday AM: 21 violent acts / hour
- violence in 16% of all TV news stories



# Who commits violence? Who is victimized by violence?



- MEN: 10 perpetrators : 11 victims
- WOMEN: 10 perpetrators : 16 victims
- MINORITY WOMEN: 10 perps : 22 victims
- FOREIGN WOMEN: 10 perps : 21 victims

# Who commmits violence? Who is victimized by violence?

- only one group disproportionately villains
- **DIVORCED WOMEN:**
  - 11 perps : 10 victims



# Research: Step 2

Devise and administer survey

**HYPOTHESIS:**

Those who watch more television will express greater interpersonal mistrust and perceive the world as a "mean" place as well as endorse statements that reflect alienation and gloom.



# Research: Step 2

## FIRST-ORDER CULTIVATION

- test perceptions of reality
- heavy viewers tendency to give “TV answers”



I. Of all the crimes that occur in the US in any given year, what proportion are violent crimes like murder, rape, robbery, and assault?

a. 15%

b. 25%

2. In any given week what are the chances that you will be involved in some kind of violence?

a. 1 in 10

b. 1 in 100



# SECOND-ORDER CULTIVATION

- test overall feelings of alienation and gloom



I. Are there any situations you can imagine in which you would approve of a man striking an adult male stranger?

a. yes

b. no

2. Is there any area right around here (e.g. within a mile) where you would be afraid to walk alone at night?

a. yes

b. no

# Criticisms of Cultivation Analysis

I. can we separate TV  
from other media  
(e.g. newspapers)?



# Criticisms of Cultivation Analysis

## 2. cause vs. effect conundrum

- heavy TV viewing causes fear/alienation?
- fear/alienation causes heavy TV viewing?

(esp. in high crime areas or among  
the elderly, ill, and unemployed)



# Gerbner's 3 Bs

- **BLURRING** of traditional distinctions of people's world views
- **BLENDING** of realities into television's cultural mainstream
- **BENDING** of the mainstream to the institutional interests of TV and its sponsors



"The historical circumstances in which we find ourselves have taken the magic of human life--living in a universe erected by culture--out of the hands of families and small communities. What has been a richly diverse hand-crafted process has become--for better or worse, or both--a complex manufacturing and mass-distribution enterprise. This has abolished much of the provincialism and parochialism, as well as some of the elitism, of the pre-television era. It has enriched parochial cultural horizons. It also gave increasingly massive industrial conglomerates the right to conjure up much of what we think about, know, and do in common" (Gerbner).

Why this matters:

Nancy Signorielli:

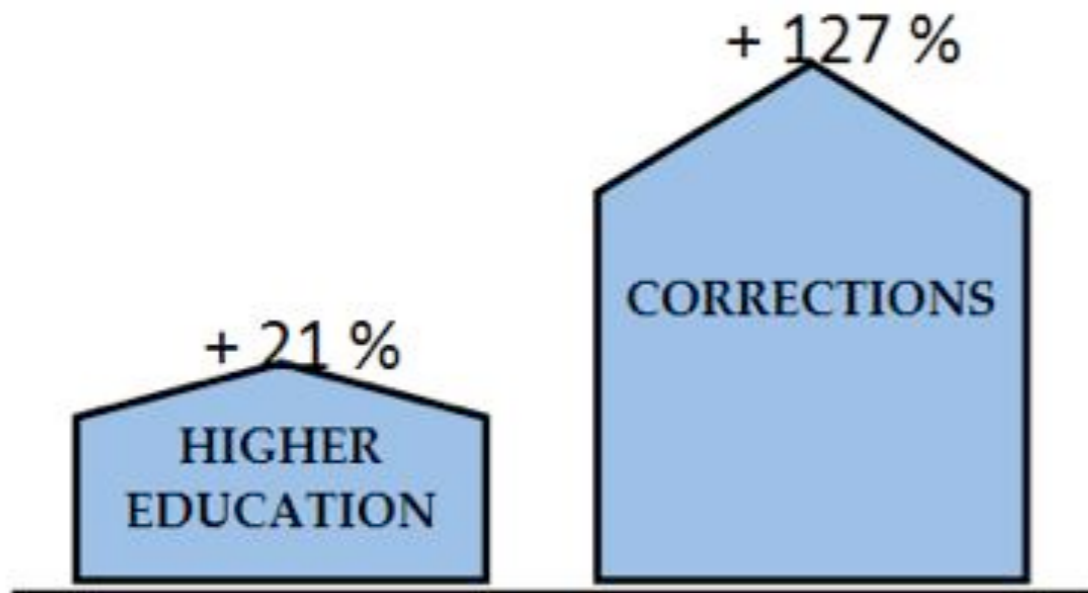
"Fearful people are more dependent, more easily manipulated and controlled, more susceptible to deceptively simple, strong, tough measures and hard-line postures--both political and religious. They may accept and even welcome repression if it promises to relieve their insecurities and other anxieties. That is the deeper problem of violence-laden TV."



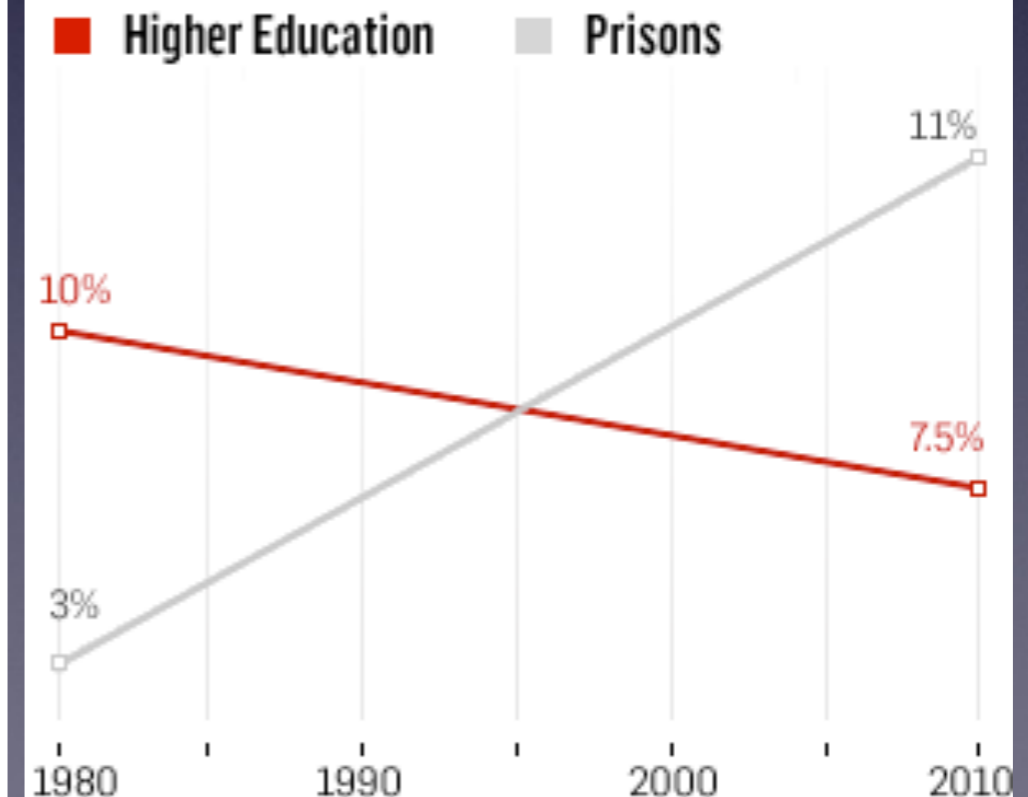


#### OF BOOKS AND BARS

Between 1987 and 2007, states' spending on corrections grew at 6 times the rate of spending on higher education.



#### CALIFORNIA GENERAL FUND



# ORBAN'S RATINGS RISE AS HUNGARIAN FENCE DETERS MIGRANT 'INVASION'

f SHARE 15437 EMAIL g+ SHARE 5 TWEET 280



by REUTERS | 7 Nov 2015 | 964

**With an anti-immigrant campaign and razor-wire border fence Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban has reversed a slide in his party's popularity, emerging at home as a winner in the crisis that has divided Europe.**

<http://www.breitbart.com/london/2015/11/07/orbans-ratings-rise-as-hungarian-fence-deters-migrant-invasion/>

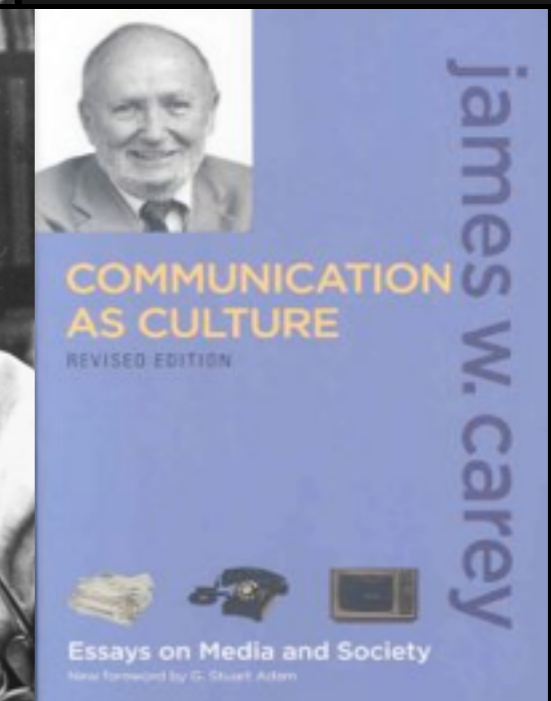
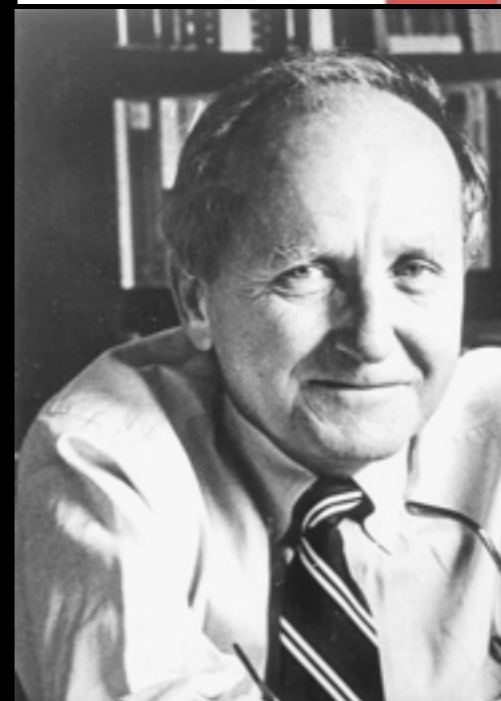
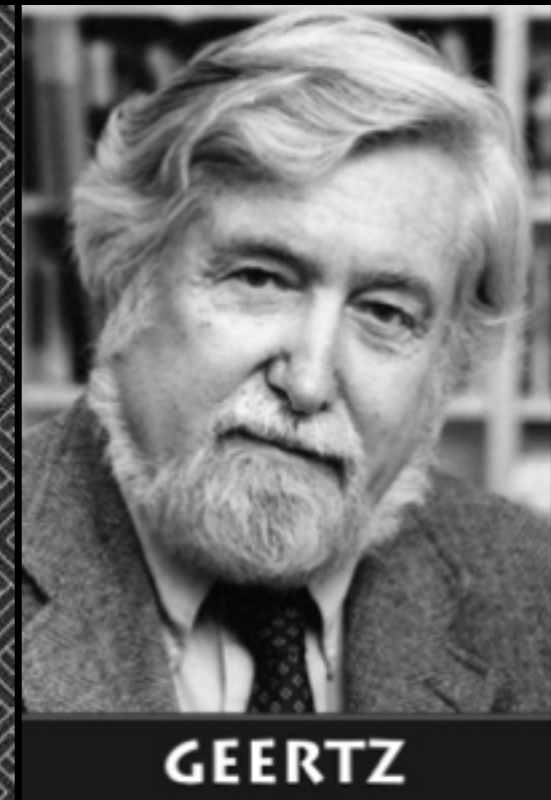
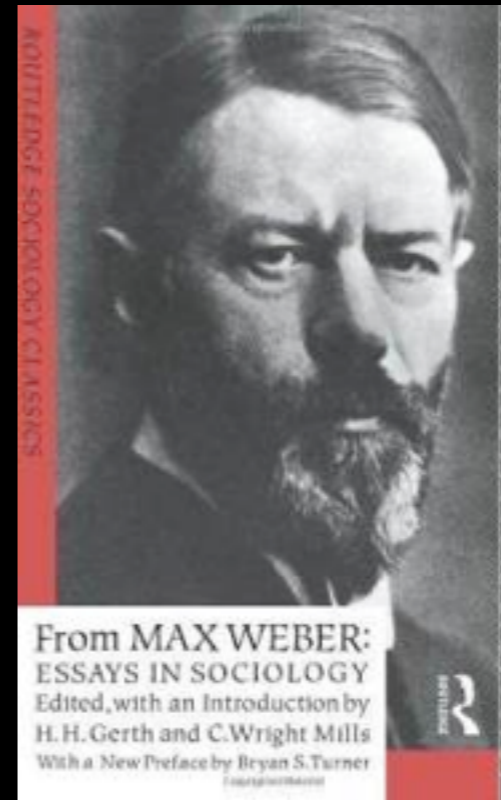
3.

# Cultural & Critical Studies



# Cultural Studies

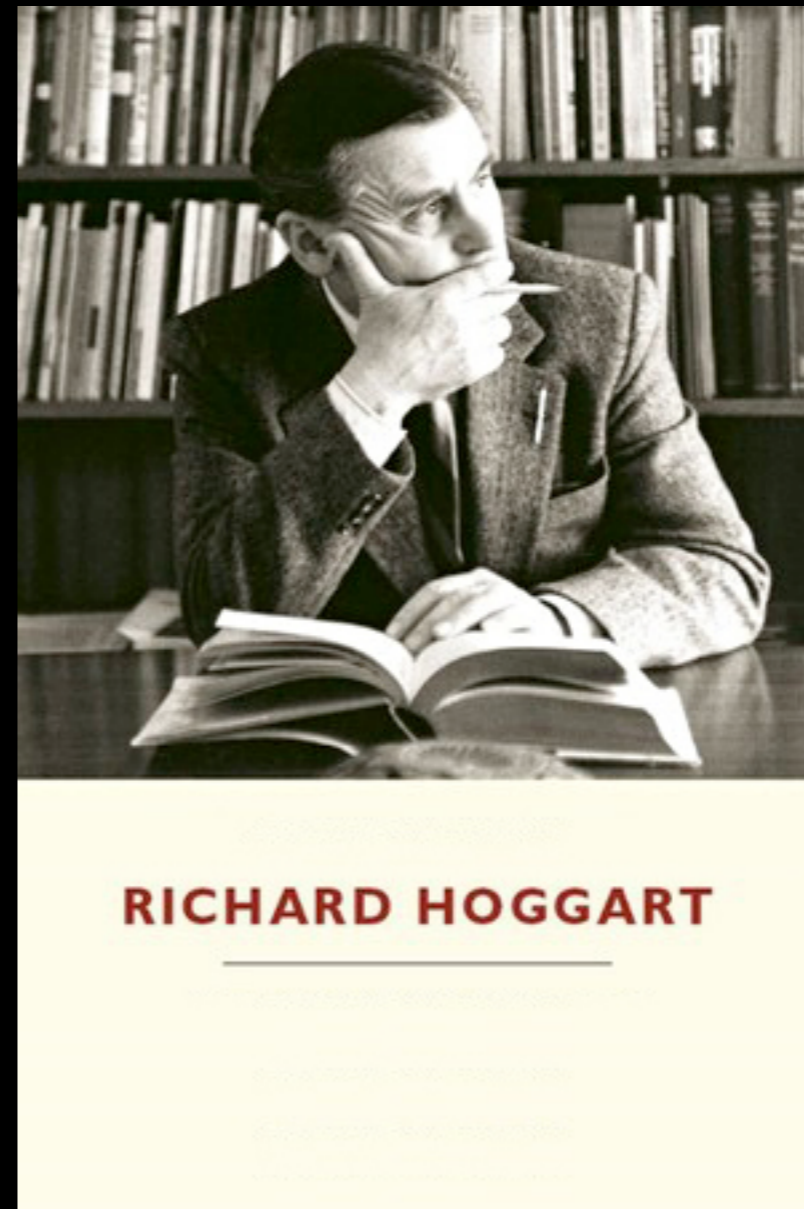
- US research tradition
- origins in sociology (M. Weber), anthropology (esp. C. Geertz), and literary criticism
- concerned with: “webs of significance”





# Critical Studies

- UK research tradition (precedes US)
- origins in Marxist (or neo-Marxist) theory (w/ some ties to Frankfurt School tradition)
- more explicitly political

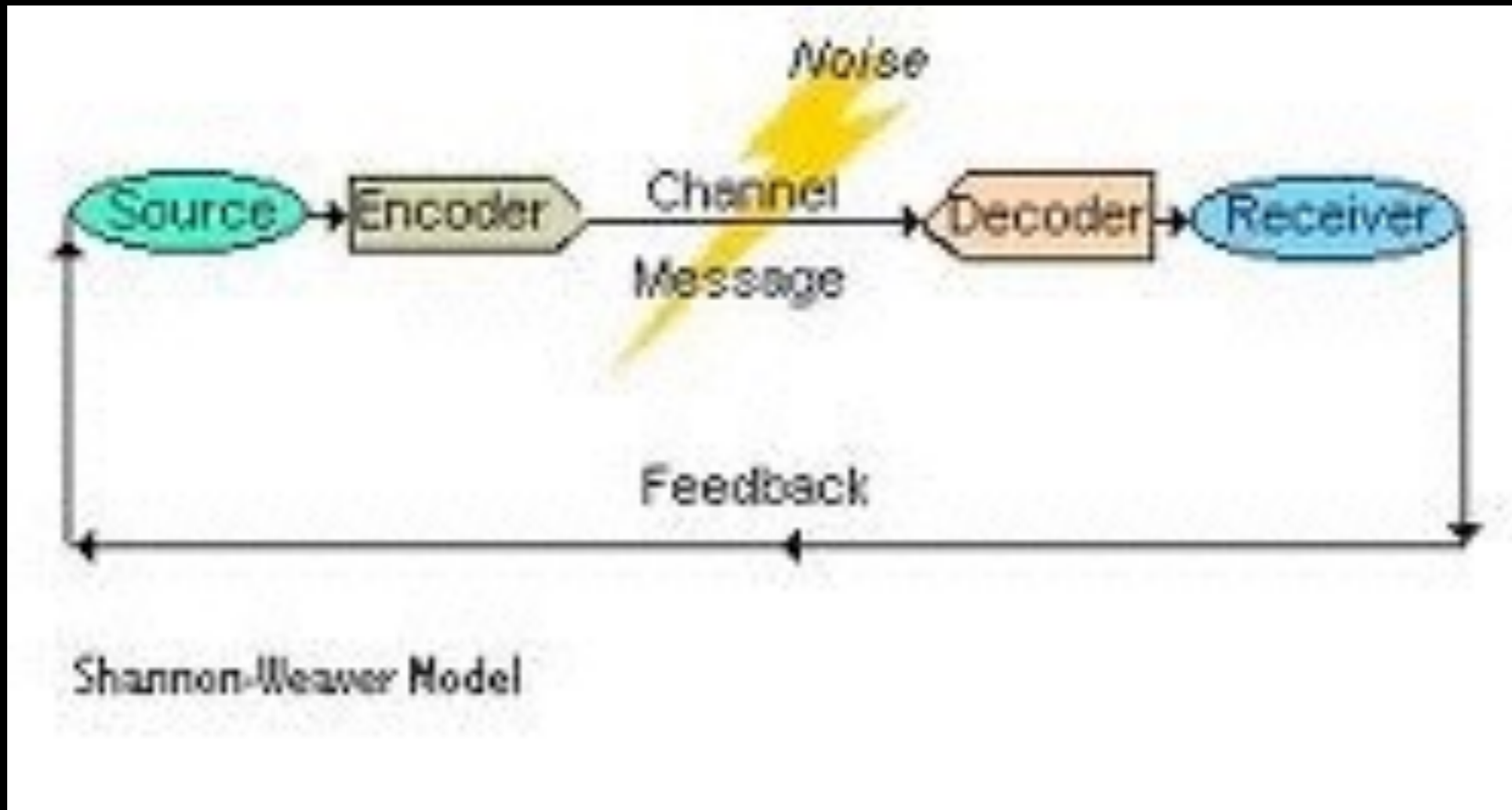


Stuart Hall





# James Carey



- critique of transmission (or transactional) model of communication used in limited effects tradition



Ann is tall.

Is Ann tall?

Ann is tall!

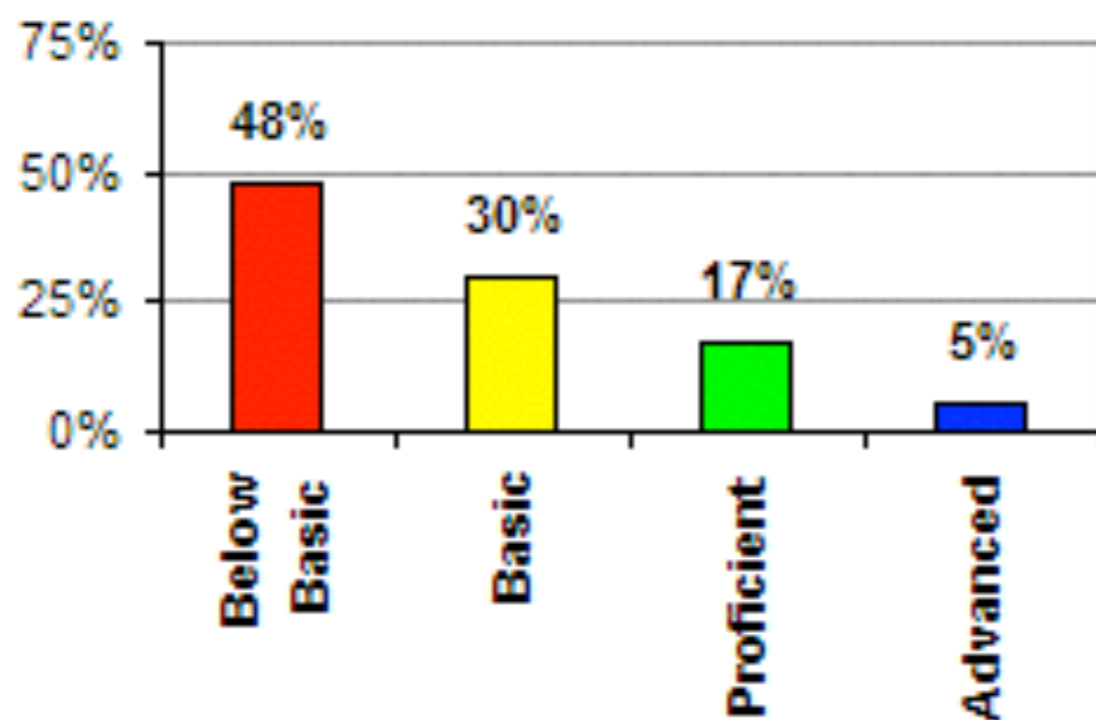
Sit down.



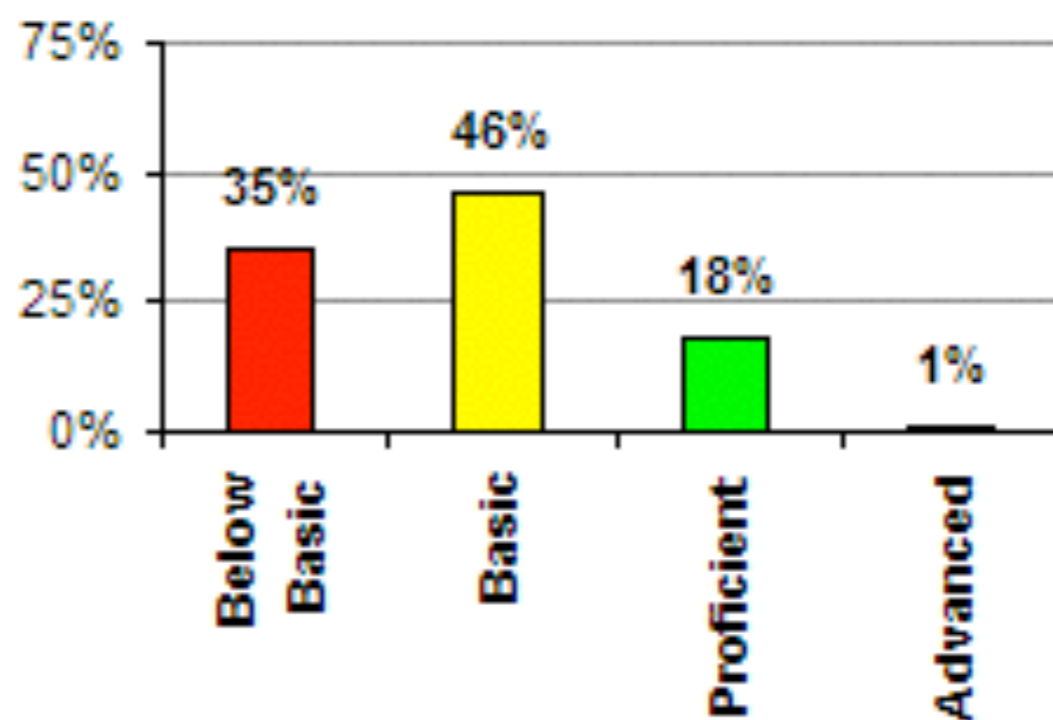




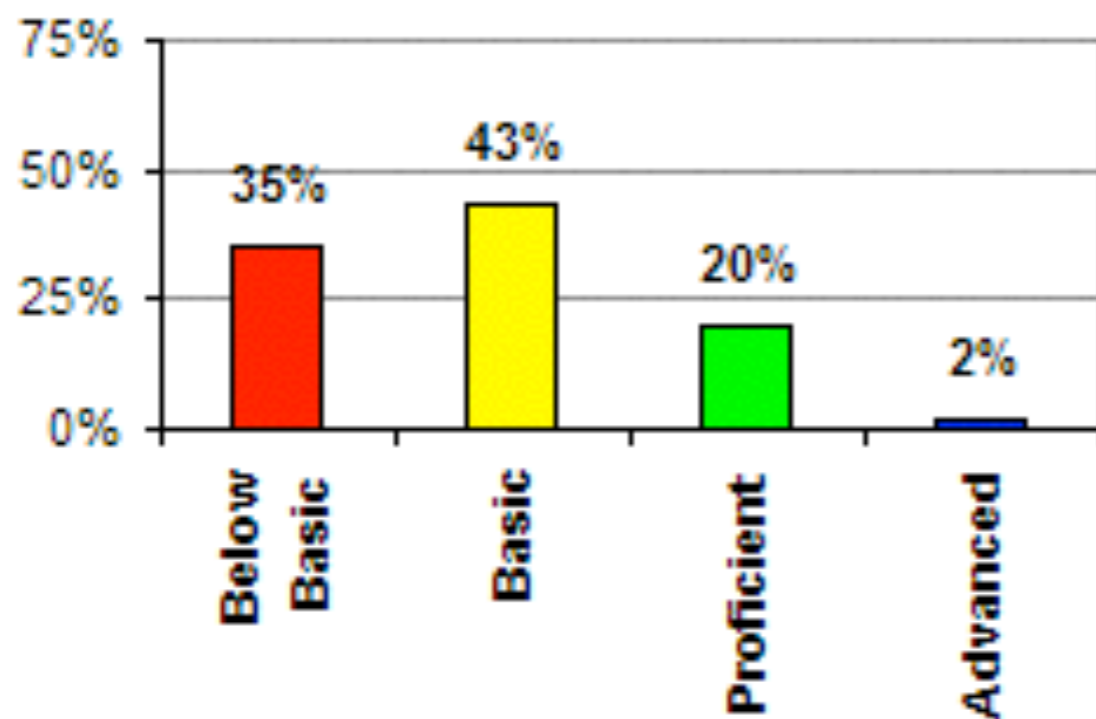
4th Grade Reading



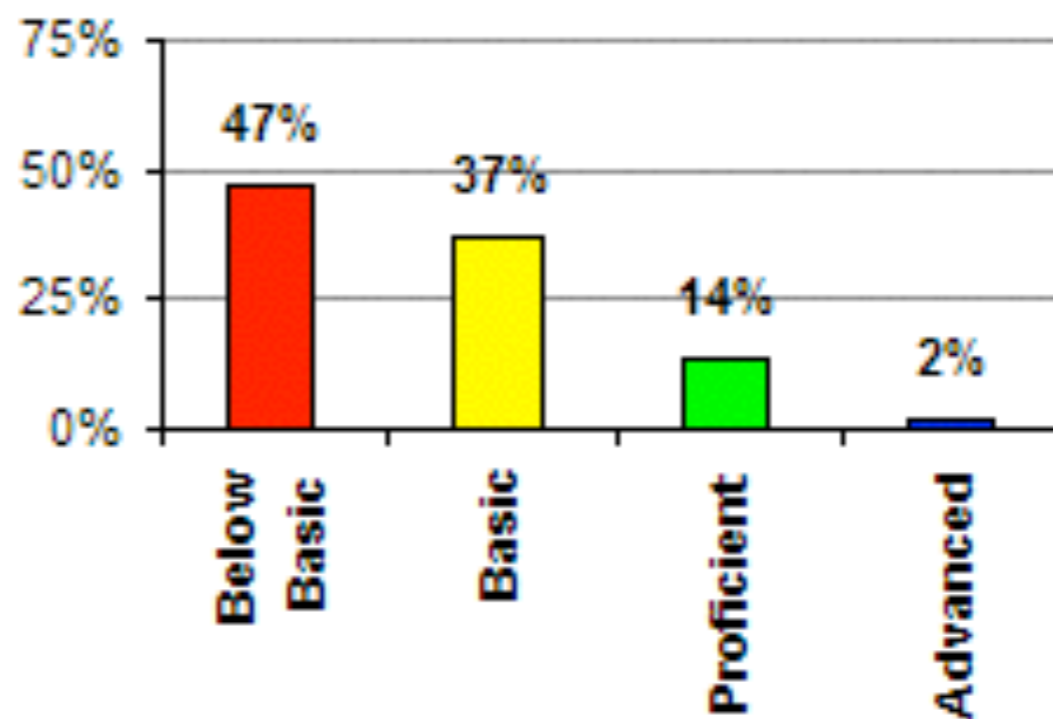
4th Grade Math



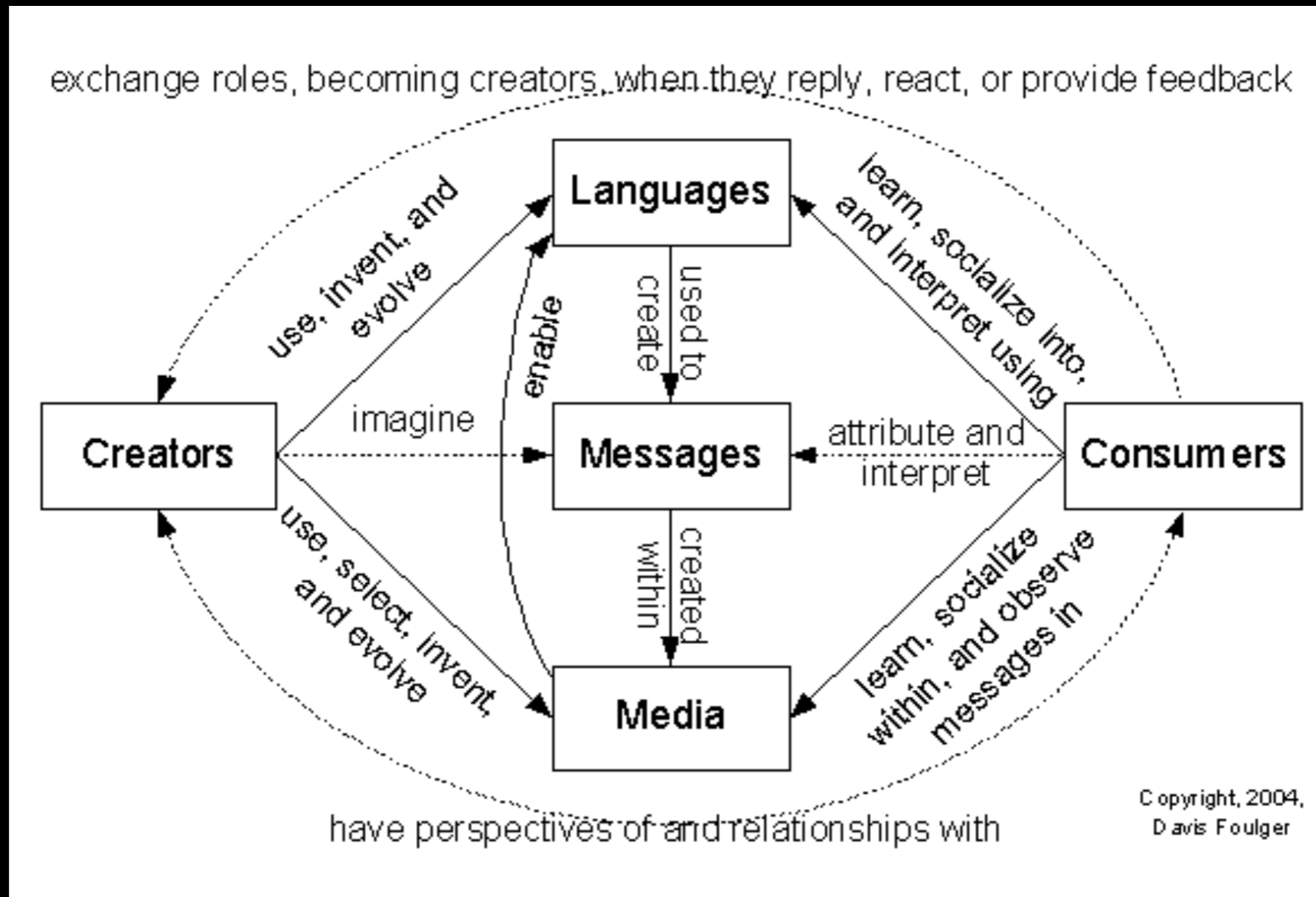
8th Grade Reading



8th Grade Math



# James Carey

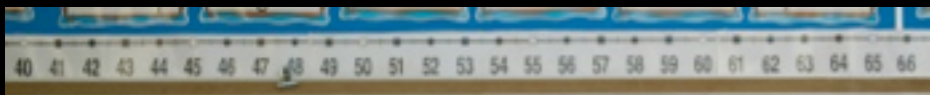


- advocates for ritual model of communication

# Ritual Model of Communication

- shared sense of reality held by all who participate in the ritual
- examines the ways communication constructs, maintains, repairs, and transforms reality









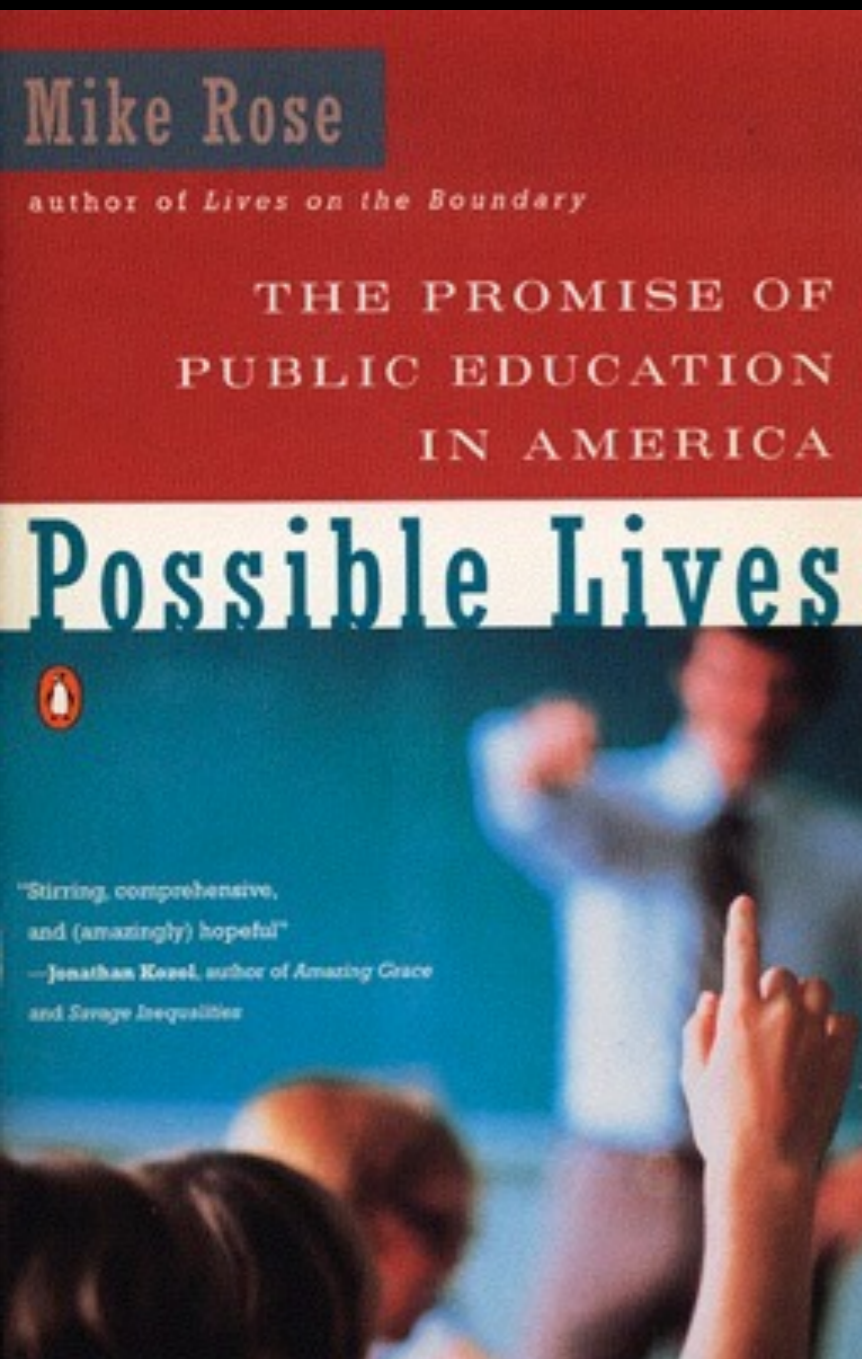
physical space of the classroom



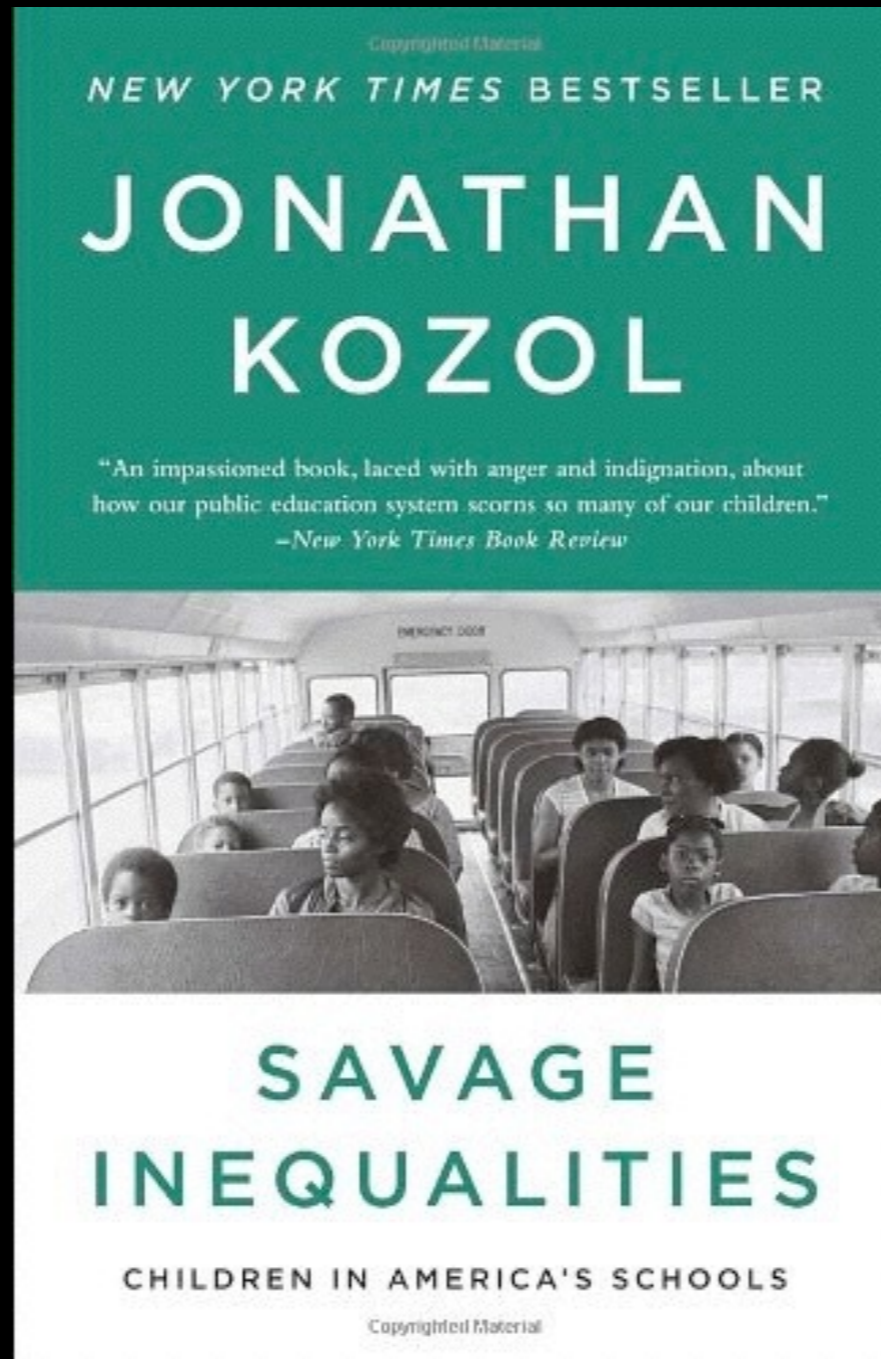
physical space of the classroom



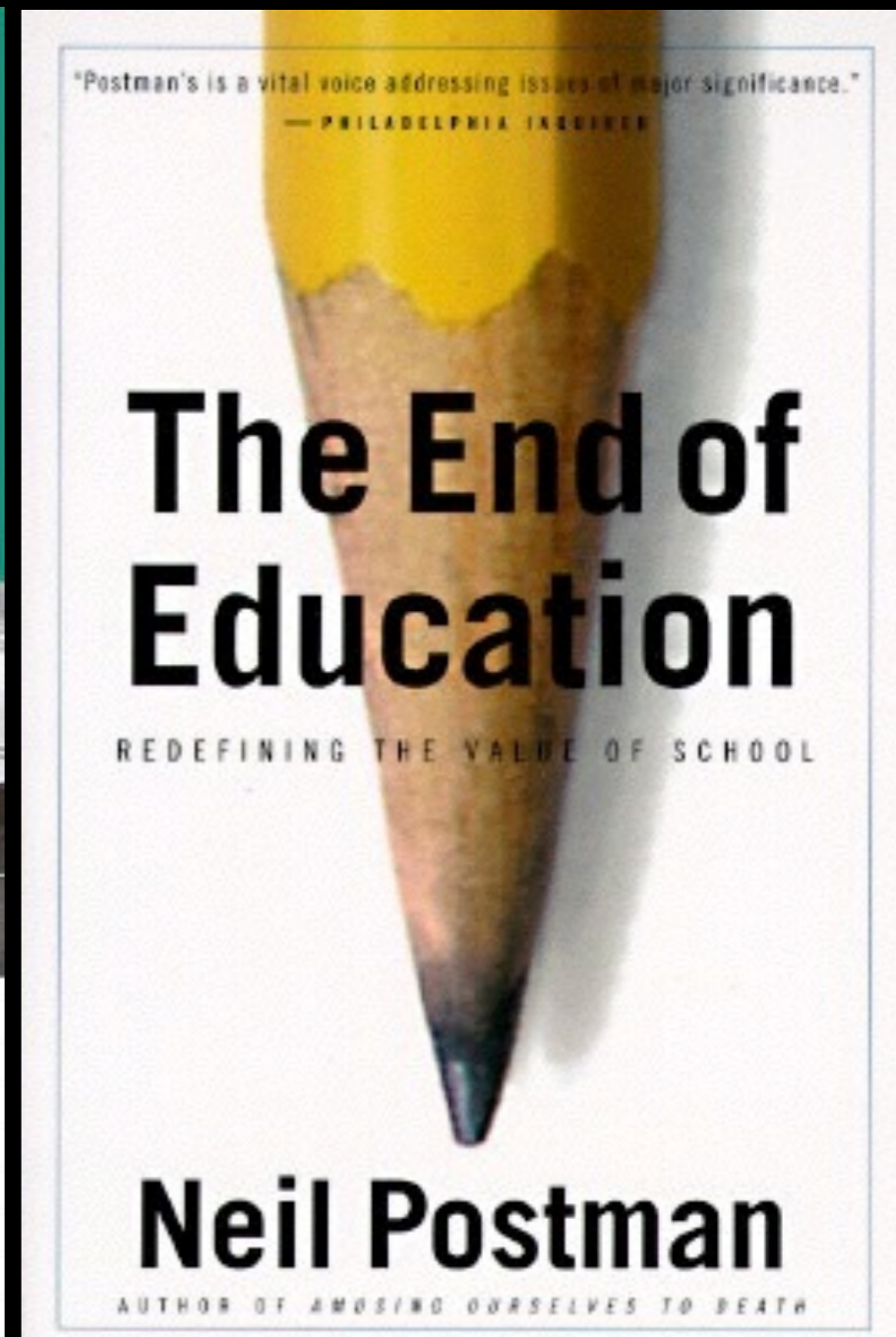




1995



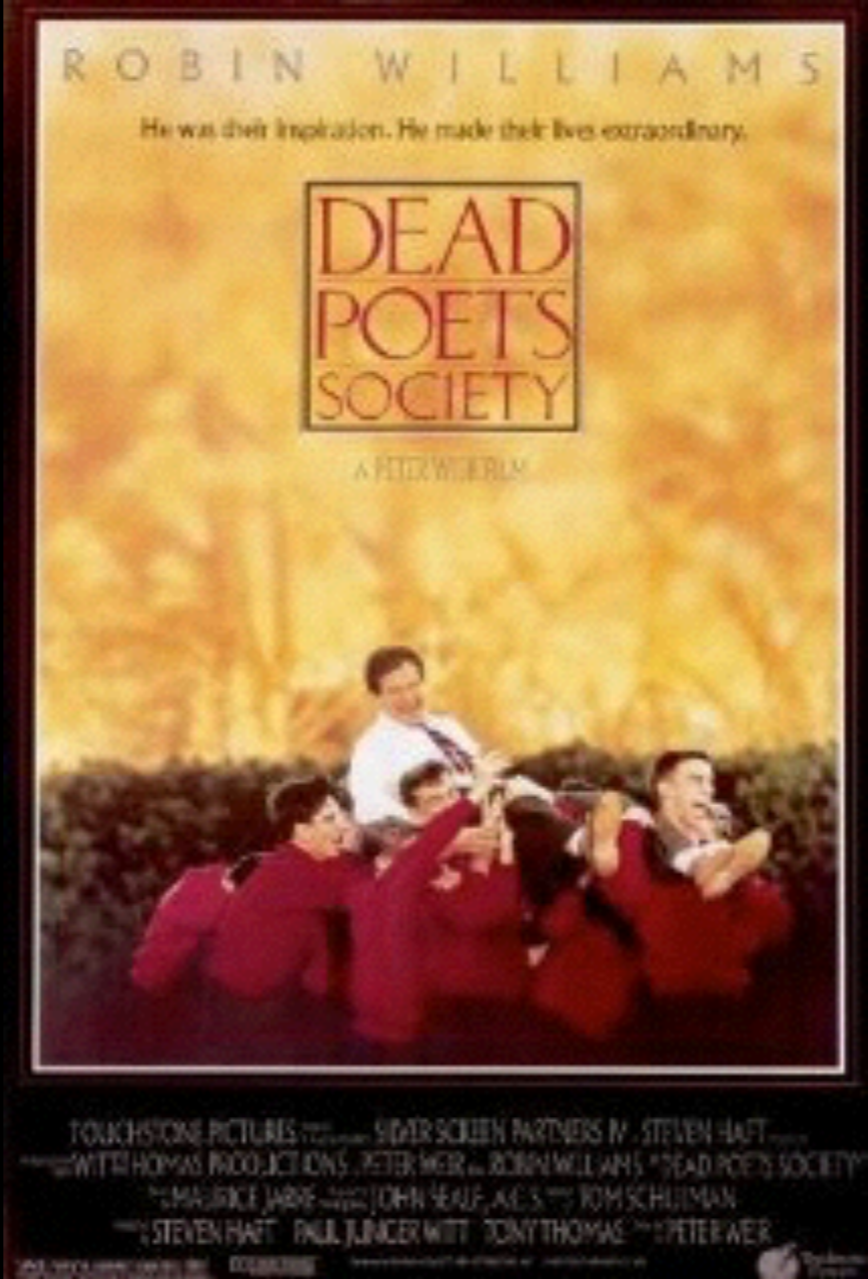
2005



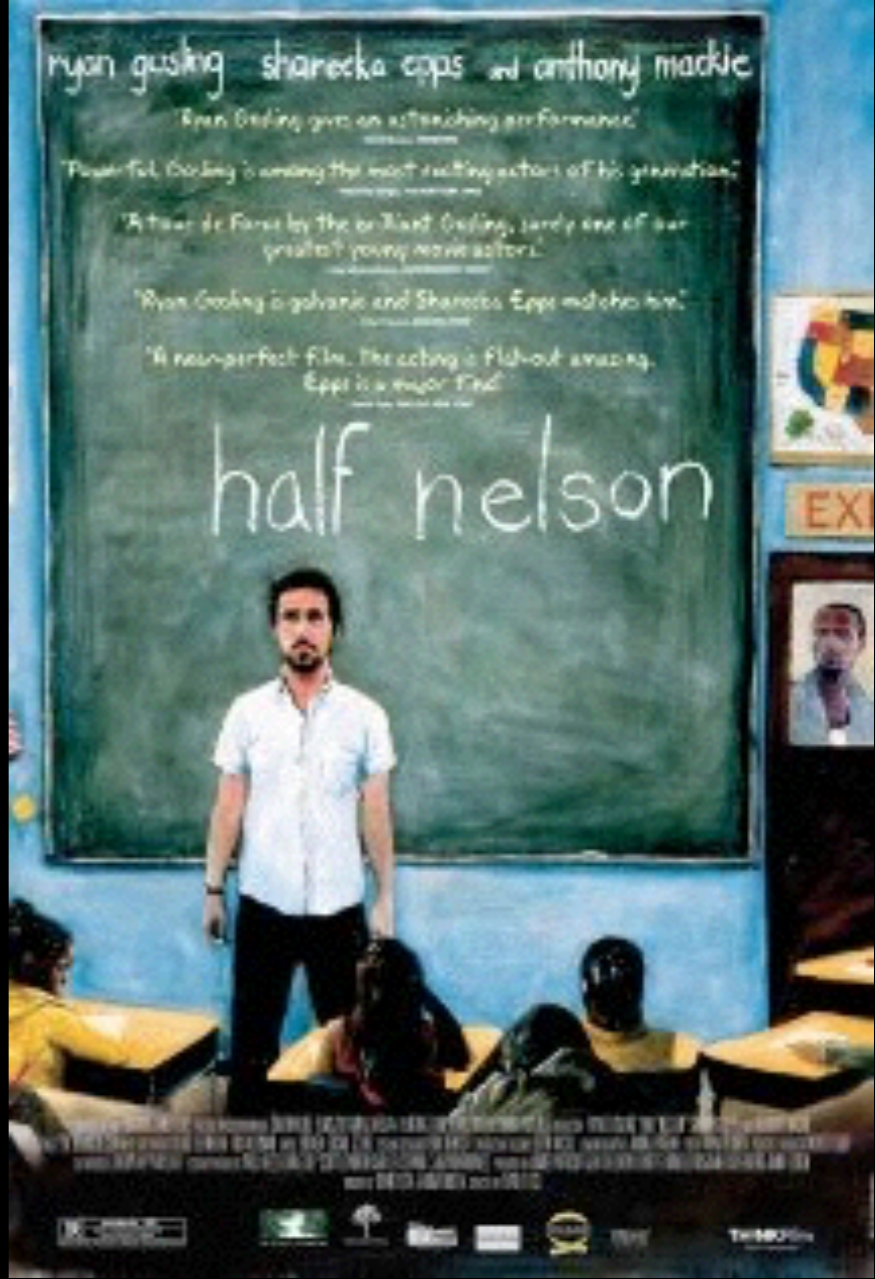
1996



2010



1989



2006

# “thin description” vs. “thick description”

- thin description: observable behaviors  
e.g. content analysis
- thick description: "the meaningful structures by which behaviors are produced, perceived, and interpreted--- and without which they would not exist."

(C. Geertz)

# transformation of reality through language

“Reality is a product of work and action... It is formed and sustained ... and celebrated in the ordinary business of living. To set the matter up in this way is neither to deny, ignore, nor mystify social conflict”

(Carey, “Reconceiving ‘Mass’ and ‘Media,’” p. 87).



- **“Reality is, above all, a scarce resource.** Like any scarce resource it is there to be struggled over.”
- **“The fundamental form of power is the power to define, allocate and display this resource.”** (Carey, “Reconceiving ‘Mass’ and ‘Media,’” p. 87).

# Ideology defined

- ideologies are structures
- ideologies as “grammar,” we grow up to internalize a set of rules
- Stuart Hall: the frameworks of thinking and calculation about the world--the "rules" which people use to figure out how the social world works, what their place is in it, and what they ought to do.

- ideology emerges as our “common sense” view of the world
- Barker & Petley: “Academic work whose methods and conclusions support populist, ‘common-sense’ assumptions and gel with newspapers’ own ideological positions is far more likely to receive coverage than that which doesn’t. The latter is likely to be ignored or travestied” (p. 8).

# exposing ideologies

- Tony Bennett: The operations of ideologies are not necessarily invisible, but their invisibility is a condition of their effectiveness.
- THEY HAVE TO BE MADE VISIBLE.

WOMAN WITHOUT HER MAN IS NOTHING

WOMAN, WITHOUT HER MAN, IS NOTHING.

WOMAN: WITHOUT HER, MAN IS NOTHING.

# ideologies

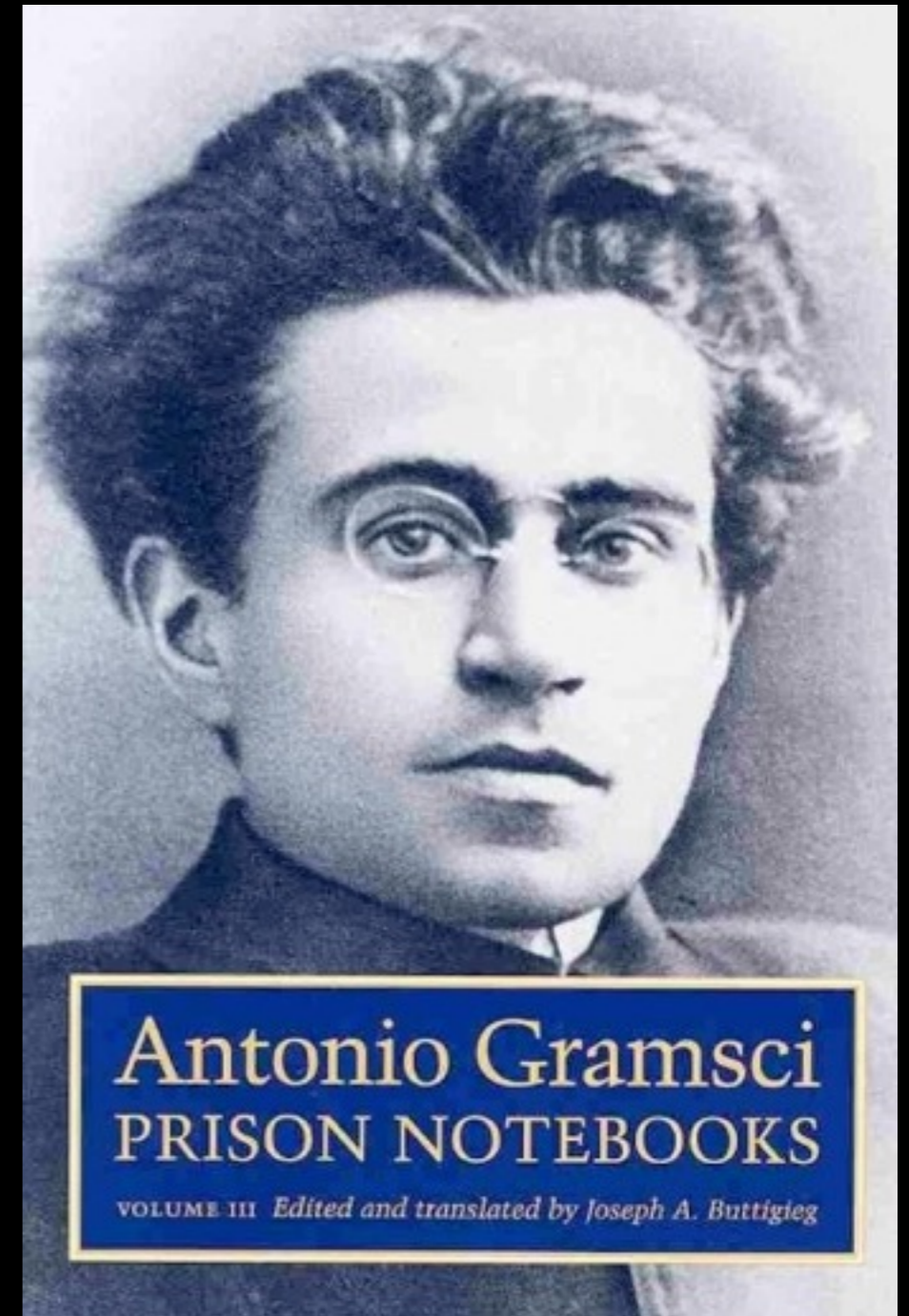
1. Ideologies exert material force; they become real and have real consequences, real effects. Ideology is material because it is inscribed in practice.  
(Even before that--“How we look at the world is how it becomes” Wes Jackson.)

# ideologies

2. Ideologies are the site of cultural struggle, a contest for the power to define reality. Because no ideology is ever fixed or static, this struggle is on-going and important. Ideologies are also the prize to be won in that struggle, a form of power or currency.

# to examine the struggle: hegemony

- concept of “hegemony” stems from the work of Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)
- *Prison Notebooks* (1929-1935)





how do we come to want  
what society wants us to want?

- A: hegemony
- cultural *process* involved in securing a dominant ideology

# process entails

- legal and legitimate **COMPULSION** (e.g. laws)
- but principally by winning the active **CONSENT** of those classes or groups who are subordinate
- carrots and sticks



Name: ZACH

# Needs and Wants

Color the needs red. Color the wants blue.



~~A~~

yes No

yes



yes

yes

No

# T.J. Jackson Lears:

“Ruling groups never engineer consent with complete success. At best they mix approbation with apathy; resistance with resignation.”

# T.J. Jackson Lears:

The essence of hegemony is not manipulation, but legitimation. Certain views and behaviors get rewarded; others do not. The values and experiences of the dominant group (or the ideas and values that will benefit that group) are validated in public discourse, while those of the subordinate group are not.

# double consciousness

- conflict between how you perceive your own life to be and how it is described (how it ought to be).
- every language contains the elements of a conception of the world (Gramsci)

**WORLD'S HIGHEST STANDARD OF LIVING**



*There's no way  
like the  
American Way*

Mary Bourke, 1937



Dorothea Lange, 1937