

The background is a dark, monochromatic collage of various vintage audio equipment, including Marshall, Gibson, Peavey, Epiphone, and Vox amplifiers, and a television set displaying a color test pattern.

# Cultural Hegemony : *The Power of the Media*



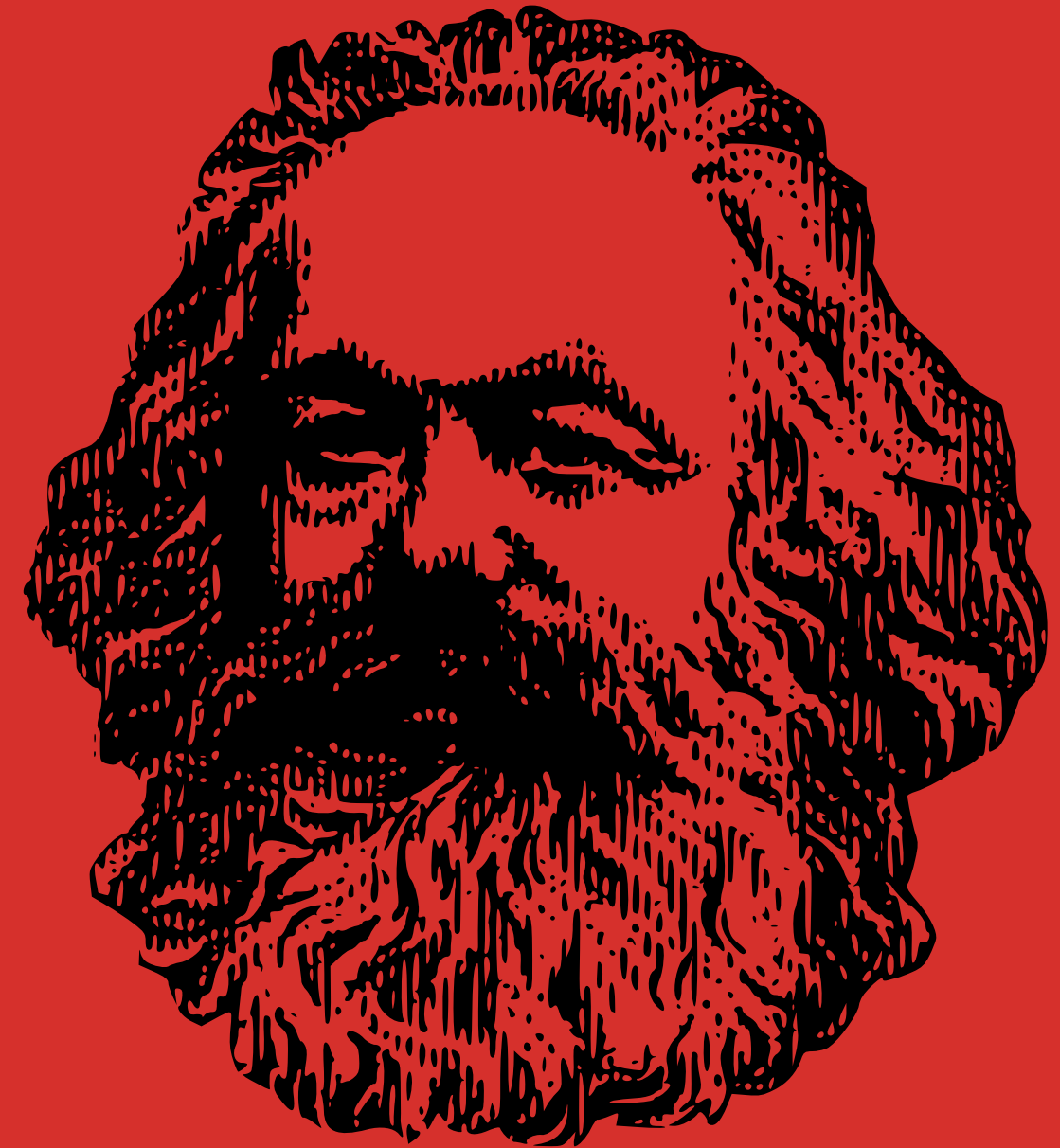
# MARXIST THEORY

## RULING CLASS


- Owns the media
- Uses it to shape public opinion and promotes its own interests
- Interests : power, capitalism...

## WORKING CLASS

- Exploited for their labor
- Manipulated by the media
- The media distort reality to make them accept their condition



# HOW IS IT IMPLEMENTED ?

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1. Bourgeoisie imposes it's point of view
  2. Omission of information
  3. Distortion of reality
  4. Normalization of the unthinkable

Examples given by John Pilger, an  
australian journalist

# 1. BOURGEOISIE IMPOSES IT'S POINT OF VIEW



- Instruct editors to **spread particular messages**
- Their media = source of **propaganda**
- **Their interests** > respect for truth and factual information.

## EXAMPLE :

### RUPERT MURDOCH : World's most powerful media boss

- Kicked the BBC off his satellite when China complained that unwelcome news was reaching into it's country
- Murdoch's organization had since linked up with the People's Daily, the mouthpiece of the Beijing Regime.

**Factual news is sometimes unwelcome  
Power and business can be a priority**



# 2. OMISSION OF INFORMATION

**EXAMPLE :** The forgotten United Nations Development Program's report



Inconvenient information



Focus on trivial information



# 3. DISTORTION OF REALITY

## EXAMPLE : BBC and the Gulf War

### EXPECTATIONS :

- Modern, technological weapons
- Precise weapons
- Few casualties

### REALITY :

- Old fashioned dump bombs
- Most of them missed their target
- Thousands of civilians deaths





# 4. NORMALIZATION OF THE UNTHINKABLE

## EXAMPLE : Talking about War on TV



Hello everyone!  
Again today a huge  
number of death has been  
registered....





# WHY ALL THAT ?



## Social institutions = key role

- Working class accepts its condition despite the unfairness of the system
- Interest of the ruling class
- Power of the system

**False consciousness : people don't know that they are being duped**



# WHY ALL THAT ?

## CULTURAL HEGEMONY :

A way for **dominant groups** to **maintain their power** by **shaping the way people think**, what they value, and how they understand the world.

## HOW?

- **Controlling the cultural institutions** that produce and distribute **knowledge**
- Making the **dominant culture** appear **natural**





## TO SUM UP : **MARXIST THEORY**

- The institutions of the mass media are owned by the ruling classes
- Media industry workers are exploited just as other workers
- These institutions are used to indoctrinate the masses into believing capitalism is good for all.



# THE LIMITS OF THE MARXIST THEORY

- **Decreasing** power of the mass media
- Media owners **can't control everything**
- Marxism neglects the importance of **governments/regulations**
- Marxism underestimates the capacity of individuals to **criticize** and **resist** media messages
- Media can be a tool for **social movements** and **social justice** struggles
- Marxist theory may not apply uniformly to all **media contexts** and **countries**.





## TO CONCLUDE

Marxist media theory offers an **important critical perspective** on how the media can be used to maintain ruling class power.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize its **limitations** and not use it as a single, comprehensive explanation of how the media operates in society.

It is important to continue to **explore different perspectives** on the media and its role in society.



**Thank You For**  
**Attention**