Anchorage: Use of language to ‘anchor’ the meaning of an image to suit the purposes of the producer.

BAME: Acronym for ‘Black, Asian and minority ethnic’.

Banner headlines: Large headlines that fit the width of the printed page.

Bias: Treating people differently because of social differences and labels. Conscious bias is when the biased person or institution is aware of what they are doing. Unconscious bias is when they are not.

Binary opposition: This consists of two concepts that mean the opposite of each other, e.g. hot:cold. Levi-Strauss analysed communication in terms of these oppositions.

Brand awareness: Public perception of a brand – knowing it exists, recognising it, showing interest in it, perhaps consuming it. Much advertising and marketing is aimed at increasing brand awareness.

Cinephile: A lover of cinema, usually meant as a lover of art house or foreign language film.

Circulation: See Production, distribution and circulation.

Connotation: The associations of the denotation. Often expressed as nouns. May vary in their meaning – be ‘polysemic’. For example, the sign ‘dog’ connotes ‘dogness’ which could mean ‘warmth and devotion’ or ‘fear and danger’.

Conscious bias: See Bias.

Consumerism: The ideology that we should judge ourselves and others on our material possessions, that our lifestyles (e.g. our clothes, houses, cars, media use) should define our individual identities. The opposite is ideas of duty or religious renunciation.

Convergent media platforms: Platforms, such as websites, that enable audiences to access previously distinct media forms (e.g. film, television, radio, newspapers, magazines).

Copy/body copy: The written element of a newspaper or advertisement. Body copy is the main body of a newspaper article.

Covert promotion: Promotion that aims to be within media products (unlike advertising, which is separate to the product). Includes sponsorship, product placement and promotional activities.

Cultural capital: Capital is wealth you can invest to make more money. Cultural capital refers to aspects of culture such as education that help a person progress in society. Media literacy (a knowledge and understanding of media forms) is part of cultural capital in modern society.

Cultural globalisation: How modern media create a global culture based on shared use of media products such as globally successful film, television and popular music.

Cultural hybridisation: How global cultural products may mix elements from different national cultures (e.g. the use of Chinese Kung Fu in Hollywood films).

Curated media: Media where a professional has made a judgement about what is good, so the audience can relax and don’t have to make a choice.

Data mine: The use of audience data gathered by online media platforms in order to attract advertisers. A free service is provided to the audience in exchange for this data being offered to advertisers to micro-target audiences based on their demographics, their tastes, their likes or their searches.

Demographics: Measuring audiences in terms of social characteristics, such as age, gender, class, region, nation, race and ethnicity.

Denotation: The literal meaning of a sign.

Diegetic sound: Sound from within the fictional world (diegesis). In music videos, for example, diegetic sound may be used when there is no music playing.

Discourses: A system of shared knowledge embedded in social institutions, such as medicine, that exercise power over people.

Distribution: See Production, distribution and circulation.

Ethnocentrism: Belief that your own culture is natural and normal, and that other cultures are inferior and strange.

Expressionism: The opposite of naturalism. Media language that draws attention to itself, that expresses emotional states, e.g. harsh lighting might express alienation.

Flagship programme: A television or radio programme that gains a lot of attention so helps define its channel as a brand.

Formal and informal language registers: A formal language register is used in formal situations,
Free market capitalism: An economic system where the free market delivers most goods and services as commodities (things the consumer pays for). The opposite is socialism, where the state runs the economy. Social democratic states have a mix of free market and state provision.

Gender performativity: The idea that gender roles are constituted in their performance (‘we are what we do’) and thus, for example, that there is no essential masculinity or femininity. The opposite theory is that which sees gender as grounded in biology.

Generic conventions: The shared understandings of what elements fit in which genres.

Generic corpus: The body of media products in a genre. Each subtly adds to, and thus changes, the genre.

Generic slippage: Where products play with genre in such a way that the audience is surprised, e.g. by sudden changes in genre, or disorientated by uncertain or unreliable codes and expectations. Common in Bollywood film but considered postmodern in the West.

Genre hybridity: The stable mixing of different genres in one product. Many genres are commonly hybridised with romance, for example, to increase their audience appeal.

Heterosexism/heterosexist ideology: The idea that the norm is to be straightforwardly male or female and heterosexual. It follows that people who deviate from this norm, such as homosexuals, must be defined by this. The opposite of Queer Theory, which sees genders and sexualities as fluid.

Hyperreality: A sense of reality constructed by media products that refer to other media products.

Linear narrative: A narrative with a beginning, middle and end in which earlier events cause later events. This causal chain is key – the narrative can use flashbacks and flash forwards to change the order in which events are narrated.

Middle-market tabloids: Generic hybrid newspapers that share conventions of both tabloid and broadsheet newspapers to target a middle-market audience.

Mini-major: A Hollywood studio smaller than the big six ‘majors’ but big enough to compete with them.

Mode of address: How a media product addresses its audience. This might be warm and inclusive, or formal and objective, for example, as in tabloid and broadsheet newspapers.

Multiple narrative strands: A narrative in which several parallel storylines progress (as in a soap opera) that may or may not affect one another. More complex serial narratives may tie together all these strands in the final resolution, but some may be left hanging.

Myth: The organisation of meanings into commonly repeated forms that express ideology (e.g. the myth of Britishness may be signified by bulldogs, Union Flags, the monarchy, Big Ben).

Narrative disruption: The event(s) that disrupt an initial equilibrium and drive a narrative towards a resolution. For example, a murder can disrupt the peace of a community and cause investigation and solution.
**Narrative equilibrium**: The state of stasis before the narrative disruption occurs. This is often inadequate in some way, so that the resolution leads to an improved equilibrium. The transformation from the initial to the final equilibrium suggests the key values or ideology of the narrative.

**Naturalism**: The opposite of expressionism. Media language that is self-effacing to suggest a transparent window on the world. Often linked to social realism.

**News values**: The values that govern which events are selected as news and which events are rejected.

**Niche audience**: A specialised audience; the opposite of a mass audience.

**Open source software**: Software whose underlying code is published so it is available to be used and modified by others, promoting free exchange and participation.

**Parasocial interaction**: When audiences use media products to provide a sense of companionship and care about media characters in the way they would care about real people.

**Patriarchy**: The system and ideology of male power described by feminism. Literally it means ‘rule of the father’. Patriarchal ideology includes the male gaze, stereotypes of male power (including violence) and activity, and female submissiveness and passivity, the ideology of romance and the family, and the separation of a masculine public realm from a feminine domestic realm.

**Personal identity needs**: How audiences use the media to find role models, to build up their sense of who they are, to reinforce their beliefs and values, or by identifying with characters.

**Pirate radio stations**: Unlicensed and therefore illegal radio stations sometimes operated from ships (hence the name).

**Playlist**: Where radio management choose a list of songs (e.g. around 40 records each week for Radio 1) for repeated daytime play. This is common in popular music radio, where presenters are given little choice in what music to play in order to increase accessibility.

**Polysemic**: Offering many meanings, so open to different readings.

**Positioning audiences**: How products try to put their audiences in particular positions. This might be emotional positioning (e.g. making them feel fear or sympathy), cognitive positioning (how they think about representations in the products), social positioning (e.g. as males or females) or cultural positioning (e.g. being positioned as British or American).

**Postmodernism**: A very general set of ideas about culture after modernism. If traditional art forms use traditional conventions (e.g. traditional architecture) and modernism broke with these by breaking conventions to create something pure and new (e.g. modernist glass and steel towers), postmodernism uses conventions in a playful and ironic way to create something new out of intertextuality (e.g. mixing up different styles). Media products tend to postmodernism by their very nature because most use existing genre conventions to create something different. The fact that postmodernism is difficult to pin down and define is itself quite postmodernist, as it reacted against the dogmatic ideals, truths and revolutionary breakthroughs that characterise modernism by adopting a certain fuzziness.

**Product placement**: Placing brands in media products for payment. These might be props, brands featuring perhaps as background advertisements, branded vans or shops.

**Production, distribution and circulation**: Production is the making of the product, distribution is getting the product to the retailer, circulation is how the product is consumed.

**Prosumers**: Consumers who are producers at the same time.

**Psychographics**: Measuring audiences defined by tastes, attitudes and psychological traits. There is no agreed system of classification for this.

**Public Service Broadcasting (PSB)**: Broadcasting intended for public benefit – these benefits (especially those for the BBC) are the subject of vigorous political and cultural debate, and are overseen in Britain by the regulator Ofcom.

**Queer ideology**: Counters the idea of fixed and stable genders and sexualities (e.g. Butler’s idea of gender being performative). Includes demands for LGBT rights and celebration of gender and sexual diversity.

**Race and ethnicity**: Race is a system of exclusion (marking people as ‘other’). It may or may not be based on characteristics such as skin colour. Ethnicity refers to inclusion – the culture to which people feel they belong (e.g. they share a language). Where an ethnic group is subject to racism or excluded people form a common culture the two overlap, so the terms are often used together. A common error is to confuse ethnicity and ethnic minorities; for example, to state ‘there is no ethnicity’ in a representation when there are no visible ethnic minorities present. Anybody
Glossary

Realism: Realism is the set of conventions by which audiences accept a representation as ‘real’ or ‘realistic’. If an Ancient Roman character in a period drama used a mobile phone this would break the rules of realism. If she or he spoke in English, a language not yet invented in Ancient Roman times, this would not break the rules. This suggests that, as with language or genre, the rules of realism are arbitrary, unwritten, and only noticed when broken. There are different sets of rules for different genres and for different media forms, and there are many different forms of realism. A very expressionist supernatural horror media product should still have emotional realism, for example, and should obey its own internal rules.

Reithian values: The values espoused by John Reith, the first Director General of the BBC, summarised as ‘informing, educating and entertaining’.

Sandbox video game: An open-world game that enables the players to roam and create the virtual world at will rather than following a narrative progression set by the game.

Saturation distribution: Filling all available cinemas simultaneously with a blockbuster film on its opening weekend in order to create a cultural event and crowd out other films.

Second screening: Watching a media product and texting or posting about it simultaneously. Tends to encourage live television viewing, so is important for the future of linear (scheduled) television.

Secondary medium: A media form normally consumed while doing something else.

Semiotics: The study of signs. (See Barthes in the Academic Theories section.)

Serial narrative: A narrative in which a story develops from episode to episode leading to a narrative resolution in the final episode (as opposed to series narratives, which have resolutions at the end of each episode, though some series narratives also offer some serial narrative arcs).

Serif and sans-serif typefaces/fonts: Serifs are small ornaments on fonts, sans-serif fonts do not have these so look cleaner and more modern. A typeface is a family of fonts. Arial is a common sans-serif typeface. Times New Roman is a common serif typeface.

Shared code: The idea the genres are defined by codes and conventions that come into existence in the interrelationship between media products, their producers and their audiences. A producer looks at existing products that have been successful with audiences and produces new products using the same conventions to meet the audiences’ expectations, but with subtle variations to maintain interest.

Showrunner: An individual (or a small team), usually a writer-producer, who places a personal stamp on a drama and gives it an ‘authorised’ quality.

Sign: Any unit of language that designates an object or phenomenon. It consists of a signifier (a word, an image, a sound) and its meaning – the signified.

Skyline: A line of text or boxes (sometimes called skyboxes) above the masthead promoting a newspaper.

Sleeper hit: A product that starts small but builds up a large audience through word of mouth.

Social needs: How audiences use the media to help their social interactions, to feel they are members of society, or as a substitute for real social interaction.

Social realism: The set of conventions by which audiences accept a representation as reflecting real social conditions, especially the plight of the poor and powerless. The term may imply the depiction of a social group or social truth that is under-represented in other media products.

Standfirst: A block of text that introduces a newspaper story under the headline, normally in a different style (often bold) to the body copy and headline.

Statutory body: A body established by law and charged with carrying out a duty for the state. Ofsted, which regulates radio and television, is a statutory body. IPSO and Impress, which regulate newspapers, are not.

Stereotyping: A commonly repeated generalisation about a group, event or institution that carries judgements, either positive or negative, and assumes any example of this group, event or institution will fit the stereotype. This generalisation is inaccurate because it is an over-simplification, even if it is based in reality. It can refer to a representation that comprises a simple stereotyped characteristic rather than a complex and individualised set of characteristics.
**Stripped schedule**: A television or radio schedule that repeats the same programme at the same time every day.

**Surveillance needs**: How audiences use the media to learn what is going on in the world by seeking information and analysis.

**Synergy**: A relationship in which both parties benefit so the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

**Teaser trailer**: A trailer released early in the marketing campaign to elicit audience curiosity about a film.

**Technophiles**: Lovers of technology and shiny machines.

**Through-composed music**: The music has been commissioned specifically for the drama to fit its tone and particular scenes, and runs throughout the drama rather than using existing music.

**Timeshift watching**: Recording scheduled television and watching at a different time.

**Unconscious bias**: See Bias.

**Vertical integration**: Where a company owns the supply chain, for example, when Hollywood owned the studios that produced films and the cinemas in which they were exhibited. More commonly, media conglomerates own companies that make related products such as film, television and video games. Technically, this is horizontal integration, but the principle is the same: to reduce risk by diversifying.