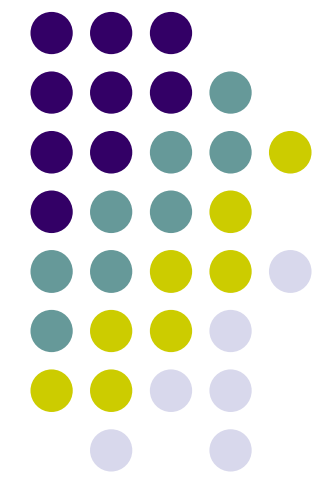


MORAL PANICS

Definition

How moral panics affect the society?





Definition

- The concept of moral panics was first popularized in 1972 when Stanley Cohen wrote 'Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers'.
- Moral panics: a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests. Its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media.

- Moral panics projection of fears that surround the introduction of new communications media – including film, television, information phone calls and Internet.
- These panics are generally fuelled by media coverage of social issues.
- A moral panics is specifically framed in terms of morality and usually expressed as outrage rather than unadulterated fear over the potential misuse of some technology or practice.



- In a technological society, it is the new technologies that figure prominently as the focus of moral panics.



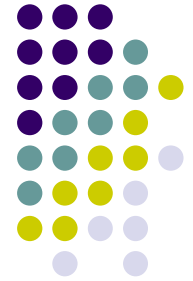
- Internet pornography and its accessibility to children has been perhaps the longest-running moral panics of recent times. The fear is justified: however parents can now download software to block offending websites and protect their children

- Though not always, very often moral panics revolve around issues of sex and sexuality.

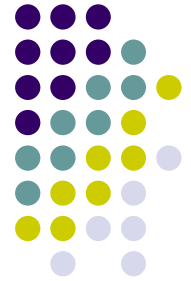


- Examples of moral panics:
 - Camera phone – fear of people making photos in pools and gyms
 - Hooded tops – sweatshirts with hoods are the latest clothing of demonized youth in the UK
 - Horror comics – caused moral panics in the 1950's

- Pedophilia – fear of molesters makes for sensational news
- Poisoned candy – the poisoned Halloween scare of the early 1980's
- Pornography – reaction to Internet pornography in the 1990's and 2000's
- Rock N Rolls musics
- Role Playing Games – alleged links to devil worship and suicide



Moral Panics involving new communication technologies



- the unanticipated result of technological convergence – the amalgamation of different technologies, such as mobile phones and digital cameras

- Stanley Cohen explored moral panics as a means to explain the societal reaction to that era's phenomenon- Mods and Rockers.
- A moral panic is a panic over what is seen as deviant
- The subject of the panic is usually not a new phenomenon, but something which has been existence for many years and suddenly comes to society's and media's attention.
- In this sense, Cohen explains deviancy and deviant are created by society



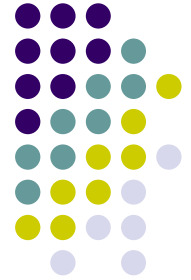
- Throughout the ages, media and society have been concerned over children, the next generation, are doing, or what done to them.
- Moral panics often occur when desire to protect them and ourselves is expressed.
- People became more worried than ever about what video were doing to kids and what the kids would do as a result.
- This new technology had become a new threat





- Moral panics are an important process the media and society undergo, process which makes statements about the nature of that society and the time period in which it exists
- A moral panic is unique to the society, era and entertainment form it encompasses.
- By examining a moral panic and its causes and effects, a society's values and fears and other aspects of cultural identity, are revealed.

How Moral panics affects us?



- Threats to the stability of life as society accommodates the new media. The moral panic around cyber-porn, for example
- Young people were cyber competent while their parents and teachers were not. Panic reflects the fear of the powerful faced the powerless others
- The emerging media threaten established profits, existing social structures, job security and redundancy of respected skills

- For some people the effect of this negative is pervasive fear that can result in an avoidance of the new medium.



- New medium carries stories on violent videos, pornography on the Net
- The Internet is feared for its ability to remove individuals psychologically from their social setting (the phone, the television, the book)

- Those that fear new technology – who panic at the release of yet more powerful tools into the hands of individuals, business and government.



- There may be people uncomfortable in a world where services are accessed, goods purchased and transactions increasingly mediated via keyboard and screen.
- They are people left behind by the technological revolution of the past 30 years, whether through poor education, lack of opportunity or through choice.

- Others experience moral panic because the world is changing too fast for them and because they do not understand the process of social and economic change
- The moral panic about cloning and stem cell research are two recent examples of how the potential benefits brought by biological science can be interpreted as something fearful.





Conclusion

- Moral panics normally have a short life, however opportunistic politicians and some elements of the media intervene they can be prolonged.
- Some moral panics never truly die out. Crime and horror comics, music – metal rock, rock and roll



- When the child masters a new tool, skill, or technology, this foreign device can seem threatening to the older generation.
- Using that difference gives substance to the generational gap while giving cause to believe the next generation will not be greater than the preceding one.