



Getting to Know...

Component 2C: *Attitude*

Second Edition, May 2023

zigzageducation.co.uk

POD
12252

Publish your own work... Write to a brief...
Register at publishmenow.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter [@ZigZagMediaFilm](https://twitter.com/ZigZagMediaFilm)

Contents

Product Support from ZigZag Education	ii
Terms and Conditions of Use	iii
Teacher’s Introduction.....	1
What Should I Know?	2
Getting to Know.....	3
1. Modern media industries	3
2. Audience	5
3. LGBT representation in <i>Attitude</i>	7
4. Aesthetics of <i>Attitude</i>	9
5. How <i>Attitude</i> is made and distributed.....	11
6. Masculinity and depiction of gender	12
7. The function of <i>Attitude</i> and niche media	14
8. Advertising and marketing.....	16
Show What You Know – Essay Questions	17
Answers	18
Appendix 1. How Zoella and <i>Attitude</i> have approached digitalisation differently	21
Appendix 2. Blurring the lines between amateurs and professionals (Zoella and <i>Attitude</i>).....	23
Appendix Answers	24

Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been written for the Eduqas Media Studies A Level specification (A680QS), with a specific focus on Component 2: Media Forms and Products in Depth: Section C: Media in the Online Age – Group 2: *Attitude*.

As a 'Getting to Know' pack, this resource has been constructed to actively engage students with the source material through a range of stimulating, focused and entertaining magazine-style articles exploring different topics across the media frameworks and theories. Discussion tasks are included throughout to recap knowledge. At the end of the resource, we have included a range of more challenging essay-style questions for students to test their learning.

The structure of the pack is as follows:

1. What Should I Know? – a brief overview of the key facts/information of the set product.
2. Getting to Know... *Attitude* – eight articles on a variety of topics. Here we have tried to focus on more niche aspects of the text that may not have been covered by textbooks, in order to broaden students' understanding.
3. Show What You Know – two essay-style questions on the set products, complete with an answer section.

The appendix includes two further articles which discuss *Attitude* (Group 2) with Zoella (Group 1). These articles are only relevant to those students studying *Attitude* in conjunction with Zoella, and **not** those students studying JJ Olatunji / KSI, although they may still find the *Attitude* content useful.

The aim of this resource is to provide variety for those students who may feel overloaded by textbooks and other learning materials with a solely academic writing style. Ideally, the blend of informative content and entertaining presentation style will not only help to strengthen a student's knowledge of the texts, but also to foster a genuine interest in the texts.

May 2023

Second Edition, May 2023

Changes have been made to the resource to account for the changes made to the set products, for assessment from 2024.

What Should I Know?

What is *Attitude*?

- *Attitude* is a magazine and website focusing on gay men's lifestyle content and LGBT issues in the UK.
- The magazine has been published since 1994; it originated in the UK but has subsequently become an international franchise in Belgium, the Netherlands, Vietnam and Thailand.
- *Attitude* focuses on gay rights issues, celebrity interviews (not limited to gay male celebrities), and other topics.
- The magazine has run columns and features on notable public figures and celebrities.
- The content often sits in a zone between lighter celebrity and entertainment topics contrasted with stories about homophobia, male victims of sexual assault, and confrontational interviews with politicians.
- Published monthly, with both physical and digital copies available.
- The digital editions are optimised for iPads and tablet use, while the website version is for use on smartphones.
- *Attitude* has a Twitter account that is actively updated and interacts with users.
 - As of August 2019, the account has 169,000 followers and is following 1,000 accounts.
 - The magazine retweets accounts and tweets that are related to *Attitude*'s content.
 - Editor Cliff Joannou is active on social media, including Twitter and Instagram.

Who owns and publishes *Attitude*?

- The head offices of *Attitude* are located in Clerkenwell, Central London.
- *Attitude* was previously published by Vitality Publishing but was bought by Stream Publishing.
- *Attitude* has been edited since 2015 by Cliff Joannou. He himself is a gay man and describes himself as 'Writer. Fighter. Activist. Diva. Clubber. Listener. Lover. Friend. Brother. @Attitudemag to pay the bills...']'.
- Stream Publishing Ltd is an independent UK-based publisher that produces content for a variety of clients, including P&O Cruises, Vauxhall and FlyBe.
- Darren Styles is the owner and CEO of Stream Publishing. He is an openly gay man, and his support of *Attitude* is a deciding factor in Stream's acquisition of the title.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



INSPECTION COPY



Getting to Know...

1. Modern media industries

Ownership patterns

For the longest time in modern history, the group of people who have held all the selection of humankind. At the top of the pyramid has been a wealthy elite, often held the financial, political and social powers. These are the monarchs, the dukes, industry billionaires. Historically, as a result of both Western colonialism and industrialisation, the majority of this ruling elite has been both white and male.

This is not to say that the modern world is a utopian society where companies are owned by people who accurately reflect the wonderful variety of the world, no. Most major companies are still owned by the same 1% of white male billionaires, but there are companies breaking the mould.

Traditional media industries – television, film, radio, print, etc. – is just as much of an industry as any other major industry. So, accordingly, the same group of people have been pulling the strings. It's only in the last few decades that media industries have diversified in terms of who owns the companies.

These ownership patterns have influenced which ideologies and values are portrayed and how. If you're a monocle-wearing billionaire with a solid-gold house and a rocket ship, and you want to own a Hollywood studio, you're not going to produce a film with the core message of 'poor, terrible human beings', are you? No, of course you're not! You're going to make a film that reflects your beliefs in a shining light.

Diversity in modern media

There has been an increase in the level of diversity we see in modern media, but it's on the production aspect of things. Hollywood studios have been keen to counteract this by casting more people of colour in major films, but the companies themselves are still owned by the same billionaires as ever. So, while this has been praised for more diverse representation (in whichever medium), the criticism has been that these PR moves are just a smoke screen to keep the systems in place.

Attitude, however, could be seen to represent a shift towards more diversity in the media. In 2012, the title was acquired by a UK company named Streamline Pictures. One of the reasons here, though, is that Darren Styles, the CEO of Streamline, is an openly gay man himself. It's a sign of a personal liking for the product and what it was doing.

Feminist perspectives

From a feminist perspective, *Attitude's* more diverse management may be viewed as a positive change – gay and bisexual men may still benefit from being higher in the hierarchy of power, but they have also experienced stigma and oppression as a result of their sexual orientation. It's important to be eager to challenge this and help out other similarly affected groups.

A more oppositional take to this could be the idea that these men in positions of power are still subject to systematic bias. Theorist bell hooks, whose works are often focused on the intersection of race and sexual orientation, potentially make the case that white men with wealth and industrial power, such as those mentioned above, benefited from the hierarchy of society that places them at the top of the pyramid.

Curran and Seaton – power

When you scroll through the list of all the properties owned by the Walt Disney Company, you'll find that almost all American media is owned by just six big conglomerates, Curran and Seaton.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



dynamics existing in today's media industries make a whole lot of sense. Curran and Taylor's group of massive conglomerates owns most media properties, and, in turn, this results in a lot of oriented and uncreative content.

Making money is the goal of these behemoths, and arty, risky or niche content doesn't make money. Why do you think the 'House of Mouse' keeps churning out CGI remakes of proven franchises like *The Lion King*? Sweet, sweet cash – what else?

Attitude is, by its very nature, a piece of media that would never be a huge money-maker because of the nature of its content and audience. Equally, *Attitude* isn't published by some huge conglomerate or similar but is, instead, produced by a smaller-scale domestic publisher.

But, of course, the existence of one magazine made by and for gay men doesn't contradict the broader concepts. However, it does align with their theory that increased social diversity is a way of introducing more variety and risk-taking in mainstream media.

Discussion Questions

- 1) Do you think it matters to the audience of *Attitude* if the editor of the product is a member of the same psychographic factors.
- 2) Why might people who oppose media conglomerates argue that more diversity is the best solution? Consider ideologies in your answer.
- 3) How might the success of *Attitude* positively affect creators of other LGBT media?

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



2. Audience

Who reads *Attitude*?

A bit of basic groundwork here – sexual orientation is classed as being a **demographic** psychographic one. Ok, good, let's carry on.

In a very handy move for us, *Attitude* has published a very informative summary kit that aims to appeal to potential advertisers.

The average *Attitude* reader is:

- **Aged 20–30** – a relatively young primary audience (compared to other magazines)
- **Gay male** – the majority of readers identify as gay (as for bisexual men, there's more on this)
- **Professional** – primarily middle class, working a professional role, typically urban
- **Mid-to-high income** – a well-paid man with a large amount of expendable income and social/personal interests
- **Style conscious** – appearance, fashion and grooming are all important to the reader
- **Early adopters** – he is among the first to hop on board a new trend in technology, leading the way as a trendsetter

The 16–24 age group dilemma

Readership of magazines and newspapers, even digital subscriptions, is overall on a decline. The decline in readership is highly concentrated among younger age groups. Sure, you can read online, but instead they tend to pick-and-mix content from a much broader selection of sources.

These younger demographic groups that are saying 'nah I'm fine thanks mate' to the idea of a magazine are much more likely to identify openly as LGBT+. In fact, the number of 16–24-year-olds who identify as LGBT+ stacks in at 4.2%, twice as high a proportion as the general UK public.

So, while *Attitude* has a notably young core audience of 20–30 somethings, overall the 16–24 audience are less likely to take their place. This isn't just some issue with *Attitude*, it's an industry-wide problem, but *Attitude* certainly isn't safe either.

Psychographic factors

Political stances

Media made by/for LGBT people is often **left-wing or left-leaning**, which is a definite psychographic factor in audience appeal.

While there are LGBT people who are conservatives, those who don't hold any strong political beliefs, these groups are probably in the minority overall. Conservative and right-wing political beliefs have traditionally been opposed to LGBT equality, viewing it as being antithetical to their own beliefs. There are many prominent right-wing politicians openly opposed to LGBT equality, including those who oppose same-sex marriage/relationships. In Russia, under Vladimir Putin's government, open 'promotion of homosexuality' is illegal, so a magazine like *Attitude* would be unable to exist, and anyone who tried to publish it would be arrested. In Brazil, the right-wing president, Jair Bolsonaro, once remarked in an interview that if he had a gay son, he would hope that he would '... die in an accident'.

As a result of the ongoing opposition to LGBT equality (and existence in some countries), most gay media is left-leaning and supportive of LGBT rights.

Left-wing political beliefs are often associated with support for LGBT equality and rights.

COPYRIGHT PROTECTED



progressive political views that encourage acceptance. *Attitude* is similar in this respect to a left-wing political product but has been actively critical of politicians accused of lip-service to the community without actually providing any support. The core audience is left-leaning and have progressive views that align with those of the product's editors.

Supporting the community

In marginalised groups, there is often a greater drive to support – financially and socially – businesses owned and run by members of their own community. An example of this social support is in the United States, where black-owned businesses will often receive strong backing from the local community.

The reasons behind this may be that, as groups that have faced discrimination and exclusion from mainstream society, they may feel an increased need to help others in their community. This support has been geared against them.

So, some readers – maybe more casual or occasional readers – may be buying copies of *Attitude* not because of the content, but as a way of acting on their **desire to help others** in their community.

Niche audience targeting

By the nature of its content, *Attitude* is being aimed at a smaller niche audience.

The Office for National Statistics is a government organisation that runs surveys and publishes their figures for 2017 estimated that approximately only 2% of the population is bisexual. Split that figure in half along the male/female divide and you get a 1% split for each gender, meaning that *Attitude* has a potential audience of approximately 670,000 people.

Bear in mind that this is just a rough estimate, and this isn't a Maths exam, so the key point is that the target market is a very small slice of society.

Discussion questions

- 1) Given the niche nature of its target audience, do you think that *Attitude* conforms to Hesmondhalgh's idea of risk-averse, profit-driven media companies?
- 2) Why might some LGBT people view *Attitude's* existence as a magazine specifically counterproductive to social acceptance?
- 3) Media that caters towards heterosexual women often appeals to a secondary audience. *Playgirl* is a famous example, as is *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*. As a reversal of this, does *Attitude* have a secondary audience of straight women or not? Explain your answer.

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



3. LGBT representation in *Attitude*

Attitude is an example of a media text that contains a great deal of LGBT representation. A product that features zero gay people would probably sell poorly and receive a lot of negative feedback.

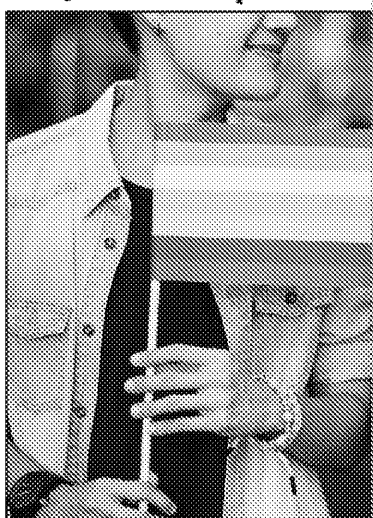
Attitude's way of representing gay and bisexual men diverges from the way that mainstream media represents them in the following ways:

- **Representing themselves** – a major component of *Attitude* is the fact that this is media that depicts the community of the creators, and they are representing their own marginalised group. Unlike many mainstream fiction media, where minority characters are often included but in a less important role as a form of **tokenism**, or mainstream current affairs that are not focused on the LGBT community specifically, *Attitude* is created and edited by gay men who choose how they represent other gay men.
- **Prioritisation** – Many LGBT people may feel that mainstream media often puts their representation as an afterthought, or as a box that needs to be ticked, instead of being intentional. *Attitude's* primary focus on the gay community means that the representation of gay and bi men is being prioritised in this particular text, a rare thing in the wider media landscape.

To
cha
in a
incl
typ
mi
scr
crit
a g
mi

Why is *Attitude* (and other LGBT media) necessary?

For marginalised groups in society, mass media can be alienating by either misrepresenting their community or simply not representing them at all. They might feel that they are being unfairly portrayed by media companies that are ideologically biased against them, and, as a result, they might seek out their own media.



A notable example of this is how in America there are a number of magazines, websites and other media texts that are targeted towards an African-American audience that have been produced by African-American creators because they feel that mainstream media glosses over aspects of their existence or represents them inaccurately.

Attitude's existence, and that of other LGBT media, might be a way of trying to address this. It is important to remember that because of mediation and mediation, no representation can be truly authentic. Instead, texts such as *Attitude*, that feature more nuanced representation of a specific group, aim to provide a more authentic representation than the mainstream image of that group in media, which often uses negative stereotypes of the melodramatic and overtly sexualised.

Does *Attitude* exclude or misrepresent other groups?

Attitude is a text that is marketed towards one specific group – gay men (who are represented in their online articles). Does that make it exclusive – and potentially alienating? There have been ongoing debates about the lack of diversity in mainstream media, and yes, *Attitude* is lacking in diversity as a result of this very focused content.

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



However, that approach fails to take into account the context of the real world. It historically misrepresented or under-represented the LGBT community just as men of colour and other groups of people outside their view of 'normal'. So, the argument for not including straight men or women, etc. overlooks the fact that the gay community is one of the groups that society has typically labelled as 'outsiders'.

Equally, the issues of race and ethnicity still exist within the LGBT community. The same in society – a gay white man and a gay black man may both experience prejudice but the black man will face additional discrimination because of his race. Someone can be gay regardless of their own sexuality, so how race is represented is still something to consider.

Overall, it would seem that *Attitude* is not intentionally exclusive of straight men but is merely specifically targeted to a gay male audience in the same way that a product like *FHM* is targeted to heterosexual men.

Discussion Questions

- 1) How have patterns of ownership within the media affected how LGBT people have been represented and why?
- 2) Do you think that *Attitude* actively excludes a heterosexual audience or not? Explain your answer.
- 3) From an industrial perspective, how would *Attitude* change if it catered to lesbian and gay/bi men? Give one positive impact and one negative impact.

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



4. Aesthetics of *Attitude*

As you would expect with a media text with a core audience described as being 'Attitude's visual style is carefully constructed and professional.

Web design layout

- **Typography** – the 'attitude' font is a serif font with design features that make it appear intentionally constructed yet subtle.
 - The edges and ends of letters are often squared off – the dot of the letter 'i' is a square, and there are many straight lines
 - These straight lines and angles contrast with the curves, such as those on the letter 'd', where the width decreases as they blend into the bars, creating the impression they are tightening.
 - **The font used for headlines is sans serif, bold and upper case**
 - These features are eye-catching and clearly signpost article links for users
 - **The article text font is a lightweight, sans-serif font**
 - This helps readability for users
 - Titles of media texts (and similar things) are italicised
 - Quotes are shown by speech marks and are not italicised or emboldened
 - The use of typography is very contemporary in how bold, simplistic and clear it is
- **Advertising** – adverts appear below the masthead, and to the right of the page. As you scroll down, the adverts lock in place to keep them visible.
- **Colour scheme** – the colour scheme is very minimal, with a **white** background and black design elements, with **pink** serving as a secondary colour for certain elements, such as the 'subscribe' button.
 - The masthead also features some **red text** for emphasis, and the images used relate to which category of story they are.
 - News is red; entertainment is orange; community is light orange; business is green; travel is blue-green; active is blue; and theatre is violet.
 - The rainbow colour-scheme motif relates to the LGBT pride flag/symbol
- **Interactive design** – the website has some interactive features, such as the featured stories on the front page that cycles through the latest stories, and the tab headings that change when you hover over them.
 - The function of interactive design like this is to add some visual flair to the website. If the website is just static and flat, it can look unprofessional.
- **Logos** – the logo is simplistic, solely consisting of the name 'attitude' stylised in a serif font.



Why things look the way they do

- Attitude's* visual language displays a visual language that has been intentionally put together for an exact reason. For why the website looks the way it does (unless you want to email us up to you), we can have a look at the semiotics of the design and make some of our own observations.
- **The rainbow motif as a sign of identity** – the rainbow-striped flag is an iconic symbol that is recognisable across the world. The design of *Attitude* to incorporate the motif specifically in the colours of the tabs and categorising the articles could be seen as a way to visually represent this identity.
 - **Clean and simplistic design as a sign of modernity** – minimalism is very modern. Compare the villas of the 1600s with all their fiddly details and flourish, and compare them to beach houses of today filled with empty white space and expanses of glass.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Galaxy, or any modern expensive trinket. Look at the inside of a Tesla, with its touchscreen on the dashboard.

- The taste consensus of the late twenty-first century is all about simple, and you can see this in web design.
- *Attitude's* white background, the lack of details, the bold black fonts, these are all indicators that the designers have wanted to achieve a clean aesthetic, likely to fit with the prevailing trend in contemporary web design.

→ **Accessibility** – the wider LGBT community is very focused on inclusivity, and on being seen and heard by other people. For people with visual impairment or dyslexia, a busy and complex website is difficult to process and use – the bold simple font against a white background might be chosen just for aesthetic reasons but also so that the content is as easily readable as possible.

Discussion questions

- 1) Why do you think the editors and designers of the *Attitude* website decided to use a simple font instead of a more decorative one, including them in the aesthetic?
- 2) What cultural associations might the combination of black text on a white background have?
- 3) Analyse the logo in terms of semiotics – what meaning does it create and convey?

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



5. How *Attitude* is made and distributed

Attitude is pretty conventional in terms of how it gets made and delivered to ease the article may be a little dry, but try to power through.

Production

- **Planning** – the process of *selection*, choosing what should be posted online or arranging celebrity interviews, organising dates for shoots, etc.
- **Sourcing and researching articles** – getting decent content means doing your time-consuming process for writers.
- **Writing and editing process** – writing the content for word by the editor after something ready to be read.
- **Photography/filming** – photoshoot, capturing images, filming behind-the-scenes.
- **Online content** – online articles might be uploaded as and when, instead of a digital magazine.
- **Layout** – designers and editors put together the layout for the digital magazine (arrangement of articles, typography, etc.)
- **Sign-off and publishing** – after all the content has been collated and polished to be published.

Attitude's digital copy has been optimised for iPads (and other tablets) – which has the same size as a piece of paper, if perhaps a bit smaller – so you can use the touch to interact with content that way. On a phone screen display, the content is likely to not utilise fully, and the mobile version of attitude.co.uk is much more suited to this.

Distribution

As of August 2019, *Attitude* has approximately 11,000 monthly digital subscribers. The figure for physical distribution is unknown, but this section of the course is about the digital copy. The digital copy contains the same content as the physical, and is released simultaneously with a download link in their email, making the process direct and relatively secure.

Circulation

Controlling the circulation of a digital file is pretty difficult – probably impossible – because digital files can be infinitely copied while still leaving the original intact, and whether that's really immoral.

Discussion questions

- 1) Pirating content online, such as a PDF copy of *attitude*, is illegal in many countries. Is it immoral? Explain your answer as far as possible.
- 2) How do online articles differ from a digital copy of a magazine in terms of format?
- 3) What are some of the advantages of digital production in print media?

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



6. Masculinity and depiction of gender

Traditional masculinity

First off, we've got to just go over the groundwork of what traditional male gender roles are, i.e. refresh our collective memories on what the stereotypical ideal of 'being a man' is.

- **Stoic or emotionally repressed** – men are expected to be rational, and to keep their feelings internal.
- **Physically strong** – being muscular and, ideally, tall (everyone's heard 'short man syndrome' jokes, etc.); being interested in and playing sports are also pursuits deemed to be a male ideal.
- **Head of a family** – being a father and husband that has control of a household, both financially and in terms of relationships.
- **Science, maths, technology** – men are expected to be more interested in the social sciences, the arts or healthcare.

These are stereotypes, rigid and inflexible, and we all know that these don't depict the breadth of male personalities in real life. But it's important to recognise these are also the ideals that have been presented as being **ideal** by the **dominant-hegemonic ideology of society**, and that these have likely shaped the identities of many men as they have grown up.

We also have to face the fact that gay men have often been excluded from the idea of being masculine because historical attitudes towards the LGBT community have been, well, pretty terrible really. It's only in the last half century or so that society has become more accepting – both culturally and legally – so it's no surprise that male gender roles are linked to heterosexuality, such as the idea of having a wife and children.

Gay men have long been stereotyped as being feminine, something that becomes insults that have been used to deride them in society.

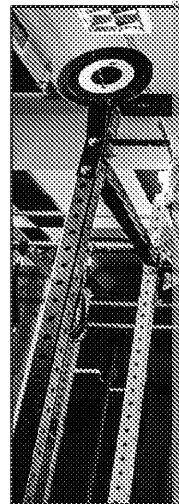
The cultural discourse surrounding this issue is becoming more open, and the number in media has generally (although not completely) – decreased something that can programmes such as *Moonlight* (2016), *Love Simon* (2018), the 'San Junipero' episode, a growing number of other texts. So, how does *Attitude* tackle the issue of depicting

How does *Attitude* depict masculinity, if at all, and in what way?

- **Feminine and masculine traits** – *Attitude* features a range of men, whether straight or gay, and they all exhibit their own type of personalities.
- **Emotional openness** – there are interviews with celebrities discussing mental health and anxiety, which is something often dismissed as being a 'weak' or 'normal' thing.
- **Body image and appearance** – there is much more diversity in body shape, size, and clothing.

The important thing about how *Attitude* depicts masculinity is the variety of it. At first, it takes a stance of 'screw this traditional masculinity nonsense' but then proceeded to depict a narrow and restrictive view of what it is to be a man, that would be just a new pro-

Don't
the
that
wid
inst
heav
cap
heav
Islam



INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Does the male gaze still apply?

The male gaze as a theory was coined to describe women in imagery, and how the audience; instrumentally, a heterosexual male spectator.

Theories about sexualisation in media have generally focused on women being objectified. However, as the author writes about how male bodies are still given power and agency even when sexualised. Action films in which the stars appear both sexual and powerful are often referred to as 'male gaze'. Photos posed in the 'Boys' section of the *Attitude* website are hardly equivalent to the objectification of women in magazine photos or something similar. The poses are suggestive rather than aggressive, and the sexualisation of male bodies is clearly the focus of the photographs.

This section of *Attitude's* website could exemplify that the issue of sexual objectification isn't solely a phenomenon affecting women in imagery.

Discussion questions

- 1) What cultural factors have influenced mainstream representations of gay men?
- 2) How could the negative stereotype of gay men as being very feminine be connected to the male gaze?
- 3) How might media such as *Attitude* help with changing the dominant-hegemonic gender roles in what way?

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



7. The function of *Attitude* and niche media

You might be wondering – why does *Attitude* exist? There are plenty of other magazines for example, *GQ* and *Men's Health* (and others I can't think of right now).

But that overlooks the fact that a major part of *Attitude's* content, identity and readership zeroes in on issues and topics that are specific to the gay community, such as health, activism campaigns, etc. Those other lifestyle products mentioned before aren't so specific that they are just **neutral by omission**, and they are more distanced from political

There's often a stigma surrounding straight men breaking from a society's strict gender roles. *GQ* might be hesitant to run stories on gay issues at the risk of alienating some of

Uses and gratifications

Blumler and Katz's theory of uses and gratifications is a hugely useful tool for trying to understand why we consume the media we do. After all, we can never really do something for no reason – there's always something giving us to do what we do. Even on those zero-energy days when there's going to be a reason why you decided to play *Grand Theft Auto V* instead of reading a magazine instead of listening to a podcast.

Identity – for much of *Attitude's* core audience, they may have felt like outsiders growing up in unsupportive environments, or in small towns with little-to-no LGBT physical spaces because of the feeling of being 'different' from the social norm. Having a media outlet focused on the gay community in the UK might be a great way to feel part of a greater whole and to be confident in their own personal identity.

Education – for readers who aren't gay or bisexual, they might read *Attitude* to better understand the experience of this group in British society. Media – especially when it is focused on a specific subsection of society – can be an enlightening window into a world you don't experience yourself.

Escapism – this is likely to be a less frequent use among audiences, as *Attitude* does cover some distressing real-world stories that are unlikely to help anyone trying to

Entertainment – *Attitude* is not all strait-laced seriousness, and there is still a focus on fun, written content. The articles are not all focused on current affairs; there are many featurettes about events or festivals, style editorial issues, and other stories that are more about being informative or a point of identification.

Forming a community through media

Media can often be a basis of a community, and can help build interpersonal relationships online. You know how it is – you're in a coffee shop (or a pub, but only if you're 18+) and you're drinking meeting a new group of people. It's a bit awkward at first but then maybe you love each other, and, in a way, the ice has been broken.

Social media can act as a way of joining the dots between people who might not otherwise meet who have similar interests or share the same sense of humour. In the case of *Attitude's* writers' personal accounts, or the *Attitude's* main account on Twitter, might use it to interact with other followers.

Attitude's website itself has a 'Community' section. This isn't a social media community like you have users like Reddit or Facebook – but it's more about the extended gay and bisexual community and revealing interviews with gay celebrities / public figures, and a recurring 'table

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



strangers meet for the first time. It might not be a space where readers can directly help to create the feeling of a broader community to an individual reader.

All of these are ways that an online media outlet, such as *Attitude*, can ascend above and pictures on a page, and can become a valuable tool in forming and strengthening

Dispelling stereotypes

Another function of *Attitude* might be as a way of **dispelling harmful stereotypes** about how he believes that stereotypes come about in media, through a process. Basically, this involves taking an entire group of people in society and reducing the perceived set of attributes.

But, of course, these traits might have very little or no connection to the actual traits of the stereotyped, but merely what the media is doing the essentialising *perception* done to insult, degrade or otherwise marginalise groups in a society (women, so people get understandably annoyed when they pop up in a film or TV show. So product of a lack of knowledge of a group or a culture by the writers or producers, bigotry. Regardless, whether it's the result of a screenwriter from Southern California, a nuanced and authentic Chinese character, or it's a Rupert-Murdoch-esque CEO trying to push an agenda through intentionally harmful representations, stereotyping is not something

Attitude helps to dispel stereotypes by the very fact that it does the opposite of essentialising and featuring a broad selection of men from the gay community (such as Troye Sivan and Schumacher), it broadens the range of representation.

Equally, the content fights stereotyping because of the fact that these are real people that have been written in a certain way. Depicting real people from a marginalised group into a variety into the wider canon of media that exists.

Discussion questions

- 1) Why do you think *Attitude* exists as a separate product in place of a mainstream magazine, including a section targeted at gay men? Consider the different audience demographics.
- 2) Some niche media can become popular in mainstream society – do you think *Attitude* can and why?
- 3) How might a shared interest in niche media contribute towards creating real-world connections? Answer to audience theories.



INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



8. Advertising and marketing

If you want to sell something, you've got to market it. Even if you just want to sell table on your driveway, you have to whip up a sign for them or they're just going to markets itself like every other online media product, otherwise it would go out of

Social media presence

Social media is a key part of online marketing because it's cheap and a lot of people for advertisers. Running an advert in a magazine or on the side of bus, or paying expensive, but it costs absolutely nothing to post a tweet or an Instagram story.

Twitter in particular has become a popular network for newspapers and the like, primarily because it lends itself well to online journalism in the following ways:

- **Character limit** – both headlines and tweets have to be short, concise and easy to read.
- **Sharing is encouraged** – unlike Facebook, Twitter's primary mechanisms are geared towards sharing content. Tweets can be spread much faster and wider content reach, which is spread by comments and tagging rather than likes.
- **Huge audience** – Twitter is a hugely popular site with a large active user base that has been growing account numbers for the last few years.
- **Written content** – YouTube is for videos, Instagram favours photo and video content, and Facebook is for socialising and messing around with filters, but Twitter is very much centred on text.

Equally, many writers and editors have their own Twitter accounts that they use for helping to share the content of their publications. Cliff Joannou, editor of *Attitude* has a Twitter and Instagram, something that no doubt helps in increasing the visibility of the reach of the official account.

Attitude also sends out a monthly newsletter to readers who sign up with their email address, an industry convention, and is a dependable way to drive traffic to their website by featuring articles and features to an audience who clearly already have an interest (or else).

Third-party advertisers

We've established that you have to advertise and really get people talking about your company to go bust. But promoting your own gear is expensive as well, so you have to leave space on your pages (physical and digital) to other companies to keep the cash flowing.

Handily, *Attitude* has made all the information needed for partnering with it available in its **media kit**, so we can see all the rates and figures. In the physical magazine, you can get a sweet full-page spread for £3,500, while a full-page on the mobile iPad edition is only £1,000 but can be used as a hyperlink straight to a company website. These figures are reasonable in the world of advertising, and they speak to the fact that *Attitude* has a relatively small circulation compared to a major magazine such as *GQ*. By the way, if you want a full-page colour ad in *GQ* you'll be prepared to fork out at least £20,000 for the privilege.

For brands, *Attitude's* niche audience is a bonus. Advertising to the wrong people for your product is just a waste of time and money, so the fact that *Attitude's* core readership is ideal for ad agencies. Wasting money is for the artsy people, not for brands.

Discussion questions

- 1) How is digital marketing advantageous – for media companies like *Attitude* and to traditional marketing methods?
- 2) How does the content and audience of *Attitude* influence which brands and products go through them?
- 3) Do you think that a tweet or post made by a media outlet like *Attitude* can be classified as advertising? Explain your answer.

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Show What You Know – Essay Q

Below are a number of practice essay questions. Have a go at answering them, using

- 1) How does *Attitude* depict gender through the use of visual codes? How and how not conform to traditional representations of masculinity and femininity?
- 2) How is *Attitude* both a conventional and an unconventional media text? Consider ideology, media industries, the content of the product itself and the way it is



INSPECTION COPY



INSPECTION COPY

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Answers

INSPECTION COPY

1. Modern media industries (*Attitude*)

- 1) From a perspective of relatability and shared experience, it most likely matters *Attitude* that the editor has experienced what it is like to be gay, otherwise it is just a marginalised group for money.
- 2) People who oppose conglomerates and corporations for ideological reasons in these structures doesn't make them less unfair and oppressive in a broader sense.
- 3) The success and prestige of *Attitude* might inspire other LGBT media to be more financially backers that it is a viable investment.

2. Audience of *Attitude*

- 1) Niche content such as *Attitude* subverts the profit-driven and risk-averse idea of mass media. It doesn't have mass-market appeal and is limited in terms of scope and reach.
- 2) Some people may view *Attitude* as being counterproductive by separating the LGBT community from the rest of society, acting as a form of self-segregation.
- 3) *Attitude* is unlikely to appeal to an audience of straight women due to the fact that the content is focused on the experience of being a gay man; this would be difficult for straight women to relate to.

3. LGBT representation in *Attitude*

- 1) The majority of business owners historically would have been oppositional to LGBT rights, which is reflected in the use of harmful stereotypes in mass media as an ideological tool.
- 2) This is opinion based, but the student should make reference to the tone and content of the article and their stance.
- 3) From an industrial perspective:
 - a. NEGATIVE – a broader audience might make its content less focused and less commercially successful.
 - b. POSITIVE – a broader audience could mean that it appeals to a much larger market, and therefore, much more financially successful.

4. Aesthetics of *Attitude*

- 1) The decision to subtly include the colours was likely made because if they were more prominent, they would be overpowering visually, and make the text hard to read.
- 2) The combination of black text and a white background creates the mental association of a newspaper or magazine.
- 3) *Attitude* – the lack of image or graphics creates a focus on the title itself.
 - a. *Attitude* can mean how someone is behaving, or it can be used negative connotations/rude.
 - b. The lower-case text contrasts with the semantic meaning of the word, creating a sense of identity.
 - c. Black conveys a serious tone / subject matter.
 - d. The design of the font conveys the contemporary nature of the product. The curves, squared edges) convey the product's style-conscious nature.

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



5. How *Attitude* is made and distributed

- 1) This is 100% the student's own opinion, but they should back up their stance. Piracy leaves the original file, so it's not like theft of a physical object, or people's content, and it's still unfair/immoral not to pay for it as many people's jobs rely on the product fairly.
- 2) A digital copy of a magazine still uses the formatting of a magazine with page numbers, article copy, similar use of images and photography – a digital article is laid out in text instead of columns and no page breaks.
- 3) Lower cost; increased interactivity; no need for physical distribution; popular

6. Masculinity and depiction of gender in *Attitude*

- 1) Many mass-media companies have been owned by conservative rich men with their own views. *Attitude*'s views have been critical or even outright bigoted.
- 2) Gay men being depicted as extremely feminine could be seen as linked to mockery and disliking of femininity and female personality traits.
- 3) *Attitude* could help to broaden the attitudes of people in society who may not see people beyond negative stereotypes, and help change the dominant-hegemonic view of being one specific type of person (feminine, theatrical, fashion-focused, hyper-masculine).

7. The function of *Attitude* and niche media

- 1) The primary audience of a men's lifestyle product such as *GQ* may be mostly gay men, there might be no desire expressed by the readership for a section focused on straight people. People may feel that having only a small section dedicated to their issues is not worthwhile to readers.
- 2) *Attitude* is limited in terms of mainstream popularity because it caters to a specific sexual orientation – which is not a hobby or an interest that you can just pick up like superhero comics, for example.
- 3) A shared interest in niche media could result in social bonding because it is a common topic that acts as a solid basis for conversation and discussion.

8. Advertising and marketing (*Attitude*)

- 1) Digital ads can be targeted much more specifically to an individual, based on their interests, and also be updated more easily and more inexpensively.
- 2) The content and audience of *Attitude* appeals to gay men who are high-income earners in fashion, meaning they are likely to have a similar target market (clothing companies, menswear brands) will choose to advertise through them.
- 3) This is open to interpretation.
 - a. The student may argue that a tweet/post with no link or product being advertised is content and not advertising.
 - b. The student may argue that any content created by a brand is linked to the brand and acts as an advertisement of the company by spreading recognition of the brand.

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



Show What You Know – Essay Questions

- 1) How does *Attitude* represent gender, and why?
 - a. *Attitude*'s depiction of gender identity and masculinity is varied.
 - b. Its website features interviews with male celebrities – some of whom wear make-up, whereas others are more traditionally masculine in their appearance.
 - c. Drag queens are featured in its stores, alongside politicians, celebrities and models.
 - d. The dominant social ideology has, and still does, associate traditional masculinity with being masculine, while also negatively associating gay men with being feminine, weak and effeminate.
 - e. The decision to subvert the narrow view of traditional masculinity is an important one, as it shows that gay men can have conventional masculine traits and that straight men can have traits conventionally labelled 'feminine' or 'gay'.

- 2) *Attitude*
 - a. CONVENTIONAL MEDIA TEXT
 - i. It is a professionally produced website, owned and developed by a large media organisation.
 - ii. The layout, visual appearance, the functionality and way it is distributed are all typical of a mainstream media outlet.
 - iii. The owners and staff are male in an industry where many CEOs and executives are gay men.
 - iv. The content is conventional for a lifestyle product – such as the arts and fashion sections, and the entertainment sections.
 - b. UNCONVENTIONAL MEDIA TEXT
 - i. The content caters towards gay men, making it a niche text.
 - ii. The owner and editor are both gay men themselves.
 - iii. Society is heteronormative, and most media is created with an assumption of a straight audience.
 - iv. *Attitude* is a text made by a marginalised group for the same group, and offers a more diverse and inclusive representation of said group compared to mainstream media.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Appendix 1. How Zoella and *Attitude* have approached digitalisation differently

It's 2019, and we're in the Fortnite TikTok era of the Internet where everyone is constantly online and connected. Every company and creator has had to adapt and incorporate the Internet or risk being left behind. *Attitude* and Zoella are two different animals when it comes to the Internet. *Attitude* has been uprooted from its own world and forced to adapt to a brand-new ecosystem, while Zoella has emerged fully formed and perfectly adapted to this new world.



Attitude – adapting to the times

Attitude started in 1994 when physical publishing was still a booming industry and limited computer users were really into computers as a hobby. The World Wide Web was only four years old in 1990, so it was taking shape but still expensive and complicated to get involved with.

Attitude has had to digitise its content; on a practical level, this actually offers a lot of advantages over a physical magazine. Apart from street newspapers that are sold face-to-face by individual vendors, magazines really don't lose out on much by transferring their content onto a website. Some of the benefits that come from going digital include:

- **Lower cost** – the financial cost of printing, shipping and selling physical magazines is significantly higher than the cost of uploading digital copies and emailing them.
- **Less environmental impact** – ink and paper production, printing and the carbon footprint of delivery lorries are all negatives of physical publishing that can be avoided by publishing online.
- **Wider reach** – online content can be shared and spread to a massive audience far beyond what is possible with physical copies. For a niche magazine such as *Attitude*, it's easier to get content to reach its intended audiences.
- **More opportunities for advertising** – online advertising can be updated and targeted to reach an individual visitor to *Attitude's* website.
- **Video and audio content** – you can't play a video on paper, unless you're scanning it. Publishing articles online means that writers can link to related videos or audio recordings, increasing engagement to their content.

There are many titles – notably large newspapers such as *The Times*, the *Financial Times* and the *Guardian* – that post their articles online but under the lockdown of a paywall or a number of (irrelevant) ads that force you to subscribe to see more. This strategy helps to control the circulation of content but the percentage of people who are willing to pay real money to read online articles is low. So, attitude.co.uk doesn't do this – you can read and watch as much of the content as you like. So, on the masthead there are adverts for subscriptions, but there's zero obligation to pay.

Even though *Attitude's* success in the 1990s meant that the company had to evolve, the fact that the title has no real competition in doing so. The fact that content is available without a paywall means more potential readers can enjoy the content, instead of being blocked by a paywall.

Zoella

OK, so 2009 really wasn't that long ago at all in the grand scheme of things, but digitalisation was moving at such an extremely rapid pace that an original iPhone could probably be in a museum by now. By this point, social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter had been established, and the foundations for the Internet we know now in 2019 had all been laid out.

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Zoella's content didn't exist – and probably couldn't have – before 2009 simply because there was no outlet for it. You couldn't pitch the idea of a regular person talking to a camera on a YouTube channel because who would want to watch that?

Because Zoella began on the major social networks that have pretty much remained the same since, she hasn't had to adapt to completely different technology – only to expand into new apps and technology.

Developments in social media:

- **Snapchat** – the picture-chat app was launched in mid 2011 and has been huge for Zoella's account (@zoella) where she regularly posts content.
- **YouTube changes to the format** – YouTube has introduced a number of new features such as live streaming, changes to channel layouts and the algorithm that recommends content.
- **Instagram stories and IGTV** – Instagram has added vertical videos, ditched the square format for a vertical-video feature, called "Stories", where creators post original content for 24 hours.

Discussion Questions

- 1) Zoella has appeared on television programmes and has written books, proving that she has moved into traditional mediums. Do you think a celebrity who has become famous from the Internet can reach a similar level of success? Consider audience response.
- 2) Why does *Attitude's* core audience, both in terms of demo and psychographics, make this a smart business move?
- 3) There are now professional media companies (BuzzFeed, Barstool, Shots Studios) that focus on online use – how could this negatively impact user-generated content and smaller creators?

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Appendix 2. Blurring the lines between amateurs (Zoella and *Attitude*)

Attitude – traditional professional media

Attitude, despite being non-traditional in subject matter and content, is still an professionally created media.

In 1994, there would have been very little avenue for amateur creators to publish a zines or university papers; if you wanted to become a journalist or a publisher, you experience. This is still pretty much the case today if you want to go into the industry exists to produce your own magazine and publish online without any requisite experience.

Of course, society has become more equal in terms of professional opportunities for those involved in journalism and publishing is probably more diverse than it was. Training in the subject is still going to be a key requirement to entry.

Zoella – amateur creator

There's no denying that Zoella started off as an amateur creator. That's not to diminish and beauty, but merely to acknowledge the fact that she was not producing videos or writing a blog as a professional journalist. Her blog and channel began as passionate thoughts on style, show her 'hauls' and make content that she wanted to make.

Clay Shirky, a media theorist who has written about the Internet, has taken a sleek relationship dynamic between the professional creator and the amateur audience.

In the past, if you wanted to make a short film and share it with the world, you'd need a camera, lights and a recording studio, and then you'd need to either work in the industry maybe get it broadcast or sold in shops if you were lucky. Now, you can rent or buy the money, you can post your film online for free, and you can potentially become successful needing any money, professional connections or previous experience.

Amateur creators becoming professional through fame and success

The funny thing is that even though someone like Zoella may start off as an amateur creator, producing and publishing their own work, they eventually become a form of professional creator because of their success.

Many successful YouTubers have a videographer, an editor, a manager and other people working with them to produce their work and maintain their image. Sure, they're not a professional media producer in the sense that they don't work in the old-school industries, but there's no denying that at that level they're not really an 'amateur' in the true sense of the word either.

Future outlook

Clay Shirky wrote about how the amateurs are becoming professional creators that have changed since the time he wrote that. While it is still definitely something that is to happen, the more that these online institutions (YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) profit drive, the harder it's going to be for new amateurs to achieve the same level of success.

But the Internet will evolve as it has always done; therefore, by 2025, much of the current landscape will be irrelevant anyway.

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Discussion questions

- 1) Why is making Internet content much less risky than producing conventional media?
- 2) How has the modern Internet become similar to pre-existing media industries?
- 3) Do you think that it is harder or easier to become Internet famous now than it was in the past? Argue both perspectives.

Appendix Answers

Appendix 1. How Zoella and *Attitude* have approached digitalisation differently

- 1) Online audiences are typically much younger than those of traditional media that world – unless they are hugely famous like Beyoncé or Terry Crews – with a large fan base. Internet content often follows internal trends and styles, which someone trying to co-opt this.
- 2) *Attitude's* core audience are known to be early adopters of technology, and it is beneficial for marginalised groups to form online content communities – so going digital is an advantage of this.
- 3) This could see online marketing becoming more like traditional media, where you and company backlist to produce content that's likely to succeed and become an entry point. This makes user-generated content appear more amateur by comparison.

Appendix 2. Blurring the lines between amateurs and professionals (Zoella)

- 1) Internet content is much less expensive, or even free, to make – if it fails, the cost is minimal.
- 2) The modern Internet is like traditional media industries because of the fact that a few companies (Google, Facebook, Amazon, etc.) own the major assets.
- 3) Internet fame is harder to achieve because:
 - a. It's harder because there are far more people vying for the same spot, and it's harder to cultivate because things have been done already.
 - b. It's easier because there are larger pre-established audiences and more established fan bases.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED

