One of the enduring questions in media management research and regulations has been about the relationship between media competition and media performance. Over the past quarter century, the rapid consolidation of ownership in media industries in the United States and other developed nations has focused the attention of scholars and policymakers on how the changing structure of media markets may be affecting the public interest.

Two key assumptions have dominated these discussions. The first is that media competition is a positive force, improving service of the public interest. This assumption parallels general theories in economics, which hold that competition leads to more consumer choice, lower prices, and higher-quality products as organizations strive with one another to attract customers. The second assumption is that media play a central role in society by providing diverse ideas, informing the public about current events and social issues, and serving as a watchdog on the government. Therefore, any trend that would serve to undermine the media’s performance of these roles would be detrimental to society.

This ongoing concern about media consolidation has produced a large body of research on the effects of competition on media performance. However, the research is based primarily on observations of the U.S. media market, and the majority of the work has focused on newspapers. (30 分)

Fans represent an important segment of television audiences that programmers cultivate across genres, from sports to soap operas, situation comedies and dramas to adult-oriented animated programs. At a minimum, fans represent a steady base of viewers that programmers and sales personnel collectively describe and package to advertisers and advertising agencies. At times, fans are openly promoted and celebrated. Although scholars have examined fans for sports, soap operas, and reality programs separately, they have not looked for commonalities in fandom across programming genres. Do fans prepare for their programs in similar ways? Are they motivated by similar or disparate sets of motivations? Do they view and respond in similar ways, or is viewing and response unique to each type of program? In short, scholars have not examined the extent to which the fandom experience cuts across genres. (20 分)
Decentralized, participative, and democratic systems of control are becoming more prevalent in contemporary organizations as we begin what at least some observers have called the post-bureaucratic age. When control is embedded in the lateral, mission-centered, highly coordinated actions of a comparatively “flat” organization, a system of “concertive control” exists. In such concertive control systems, the locus of control shifts significantly from management to workers who collaborate to create rules and norms that govern their behavior. In some highly coordinated professional organizations, control emerges largely in a horizontal pattern of interaction among dedicated members. This collaborative process can be stimulated by top management or by workers who produce a value-based corporate vision statement “that team members use to infer parameters and premises (norms and rules) that guide their day-to-day actions. In one case, using the corporate vision statement as their guide, workers collaborate with one another to create social rules that “constitute meaning and sanction modes of social conduct”. Such a subtle and internalized form of control can be even more tightly enacted, of course, when the employees themselves create the vision or mission of the organization. (\geq 5 \text{ 分})

Traditionally, content is the most important asset of media companies. Not long ago, content protection was easy. Content and distribution mediums were interdependent with one another, making the unwanted transfer of audio and video content practically impossible. In the age of the Internet, this automatic copy protection is gone. Content is no longer linked to a specific medium and it is easy to exchange content. The challenge for media companies nowadays is how to react to this changing environment. Should they set up a new form of protection based on Digital Rights Management Systems, thus restricting user activities and generating higher costs? Or should they utilize any new possibilities of price differentiation? Should they possibly provide content partly or even totally for free and open up new revenues through the selling of hardware? Are slight changes in the traditional exploitation chain sufficient, or will the structure of the media industry alter by the entry of telecommunication and hardware businesses? Considering this, will content still be the most important asset of the media companies? (\geq 5 \text{ 分})