Theodor Adorno  
(1903-1969)  
Member of the Frankfurt School. With Horkheimer, he argued that popular media is the product of a 'culture industry' that keeps the population passive, preserving dominance of capitalism at the expense of true happiness. Mass media is standardized, and the pleasures it offers are illusory — the result of 'false needs' that the culture industry creates. This argument is elitist, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's wrong.

**Selected Works:**  
The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture (Routledge, 1991)  
Dialectic of Enlightenment (Verso, 1997)  
Aesthetic Theory (Univ. of Minnesota, 1998)