
Reflections about Media, Violence, Identity and Representation

Through an 'information society' Lens

*IT for Change
Court of Women, Vimochana
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The Information Society Lens



- Technology has transformed the real into the post-real and human into the post-human
- A paradigmatically different context
 - A new public sphere
 - A new post human reality - a blurring of the fundamental categorical divides between self and other



A Political Science Perspective

- Theory of the Public Sphere
 - Space for the generation of public opinion with moral-political validity
 - Vehicle for mobilising public opinion as a political force; empowered citizenry influencing the state

The Transnational Public Sphere



– Nancy Fraser

- Communicative arenas not correlated to
 - Political citizenry
 - Nor to sovereign states
- Deterritorialised space
- Dispersed subjects of communication
- A global economy
- How of communications – disjoint and overlapping visual cultures
- Addressee of communications – not the state; curious mix of public and private transnational powers

Feminist Philosophy of the Contemporary



- The posthuman condition – technology provides a material and symbolic apparatus
- Not only a blurring of the self and other but a crisis of categories
- Shift in the axis of differentiation
- The multiplication of difference

Feminist Philosophy of the Contemporary



- A coming together of cyber-ideology and hyper-individualism
- A multiplicity of pluralities upon which global capitalism thrives



Towards an Understanding of Media.....



The political economy of global capitalism consists in multiplying and distributing differences for the sake of profit. It produces ever-shifting waves of genderisation and sexualisation, racialisation and naturalisation of multiple 'others'.....



.....advanced capitalism looks like a system that promotes feminism without women, racism without races, natural laws without nature, reproduction without sex, sexuality without genders, multiculturalism without ending racism, economic growth without development, and cash flow without money. Late capitalism also produces fat-free ice creams and alcohol-free beer next to genetically modified health food, companion species alongside computer viruses, new animal and human immunity breakdowns and deficiencies, and the increased longevity of these who inhabit the advanced world. Welcome to capitalism as schizophrenia!

Rosi Braidotti



Media and Representation

- A paradigm beyond representation
 - Virtual as a site of reality (not only a tool)
 - A site of gender construction
 - Media as personhood

- A hyper reality that is not about representation but a discourse about naturalisation and normalisation



Media and Representation

- A disappearance of the normative-political
 - Through segmentation of audiences (who are a homogenised whole as consumers)
 - Consolidation of class interest – the political economy of media



Media and Representation

- Increased choice/ possibilities – you can take more or less the thing you want at a given time
- Veneer of participation - Reality TV or google or facebook is the same
- By placing the individual at the centre media promotes a version of participation that is commodified and conformist, where content democratization or plurality also means a coopted or controlled 'public'.



Media and Representation

- Media is not a moral-political force
- Society as a collective – missing discourse



Gender and Violence

- Normalisation of the bizarre
- Trivialisation of the political-normative
- Segmentation of feminist agenda??



Gender and Violence

- Under the mask of multiplicity
 - Persistence of gender stereotypes and misogynistic streaks
 - Reproduction of flat images of gender, class and race
 - Pornography not about sex but about power!



A Feminist Theory of the Public Sphere

- Fair, Inclusive and Critical Argumentation for Public Interest
- Who are the sovereign powers whom public opinion should constrain?
- What institutional frameworks are necessary, especially to address the transnational corporate control of the media and public sphere?

A feminist media practice



- Beyond nostalgia and denial
- New Institutional frameworks
 - Media regulation
- Subversion of dominant codes through feminist media praxis, a media beyond hegemonic masculinity
- Claiming the spaces, addressing our imaginative poverty