A digital public sphere?

Online participation and democracy

1. Habermas placed the blame for the decline of the public sphere on the commercialisation of the media

2. Traditional mass media has also facilitated linear mass communication from the few to the many, Which does not lend itself to interactive exchange of culture and ideas

   Digital transformation

1. Digital transformation of media has led to a growth of interactive communicative possibilities, And offers the potential to revive the public sphere

2. Convergence between mass and interpersonal media, and the notion of mass conversation, Has led to optimistic predictions about re-engagement of ordinary people And seizing back power and influence from the establishment

Social role of television

1. online democratised productivity is Where everyone contributes to the creation of content and citizens increasingly can express themselves – culturally and politically

2. Enabling people to privately and publicly articulate and debate conflicting views

Internet

1. The internet does enable an unprecedented combination of scale and interactivity, Providing much information, conjecture and culture for users to engage with And the possibility to produce, distribute and share content.

Blogging

1. Networked social media bring together private selves with broader society and politics

2. The information and unstructured environments of Facebook, Twitter, the blogosphere Enable private individuals to participate in matters of public and political importance

Private

1. The public content of major media content producers is entangled with these private spheres of digital interaction

2. News, for example, increasingly is dependent for its circulation on the filtering and sharing practices of social media users and in turn, such practices strongly influence what stories are covered and how

Society talking to itself

1. Perhaps the internet is more suited to a situation where society does talk to itself rather than being talked at by the powerful few

2. There are plenty of examples of interest groups or individuals effectively utilising the potential of the internet to mobilize support for their perspective And thus contribute to the broader political environment.

3. Millions more interact with one another in relation to matters of everyday culture or politics, Through different forms of social media through sharing, appropriating, commenting and arguing in ways, That can feed out of their private spheres and into more public ones.

Enduring power differentials

1. We should be cautious though about assuming contemporary digital environments are going to fundamentally transform power relations

2. The net has, become a highly effective means for large-scale corporations to maintain and develop their dominance.

Audiences

1. Crucial though it may be as a socio-cultural development, much of the content created and published by ordinary internet users, Will be engaged with by tiny audiences

2. The most influential content still tends to originate with the powerful organisations

Means and presence

1. Such companies have the initial presence and means of promotion to consistently attract such attention.

2. It is important to recognise that apparently democratising possibilities have been accompanied by alarming concentration of the ownership of mainstream commercial media, With a small handful of multinational media conglomerates dominating all sectors of the entertainment industry.

Interactivity of the internet

1. The interactivity of the internet may increasingly subject those who publish, share or interact with content, To surveillance and control by powerful interests

Advertisers

1. The most obvious beneficiaries of this ability to track and monitor our every move online are advertisers, And the media and tech organisations who sell them access to consumers via their platforms or content.

Fragmentation

1. Media digitalisation alongside a broader climate of neo-liberal deregulation is gradually diluting the national public culture, Which is needed for effective public engagement and debate

2. The apparent decline of national cohesion is a profoundly significant development

National identity

1. The construction and facilitation of national identity by media in 20th century was fostered through Media bound society together as people had little choice to watch or read the same things

2. The daily agendas and conversational topics of whole societies were strongly influenced by a small number of programme schedulers

Digitalisation and deregulation

1. Digitalisation and deregulation are reducing the number of media experiences that national populations share with one another

2. Signs of such narrowcasting can be a threat to the notion of a unified national public

Options for consumption

1. There are more specialist channels, and greater opportunities to consume individual items of content on demand, Which enable viewers to stream content on demand.

Increased choice.

1. When offered an increased range of choices over what to consume and when it is argued that people, Tend to consume specialist or individual interests or identities

2. Where media targets each of us individually and we become ever more focused upon the minutiae of our individual tastes and preference.

Fragmentation and digitalisation

1. Rather than encouraging people to share content with or engage with diverse groups of others as part of inclusive and broad public spaces, The ability to select, refine what or who to engage with seems likely to favour the pursuit of particular interests and identities and associations with narrower groupings for much of the time

Implications

1. It is easy for internet users to avoid contact with matters of public or socio-political importance such as current affairs and political controversies

2. Rather than encouraging political interest, knowledge or participation among those for whom such topics had little appeal, the internet, actually maximises the ease with which people can opt out of the broader public sphere, in favour of developing their individualised tastes and interests

3. Secondly – those who do continue to engage in political discussions may do so through engaging with content and individuals sympathetic to their existing views

Debates

1. Rather than testing and developing their ideas and explanations in a rational open-minded way, Conservatives, liberals, environmentalists, socialists, may end up conversing among themselves

2. This Strengthens existing beliefs and collective hostilities towards those who differ.

Clusters

1. Some social media networks can facilitate contact and debate between members of different clusters
2. But on networks of retweets on Twitter, clustered into clearly identifiable left and right wing networks
3. Also, large proportions of society are brought together through their engagement with particular content, news events or other activities

Globalisation

1. The specific transfer from country to country of sounds, images and ideas has made a contribution to transnational commonalities and connections

Relationships

1. Consumers around the world can be expected to consume the same films, box sets and music tracks, as well as celebrity culture
2. Digital and online technologies are increasingly enabling collective global news experiences, Where people across the world engage simultaneously with the same event
3. The internet offers its users potential access to infinite amounts of imagery, sounds, music, commerce and ideas from anywhere in the world.

Fragmentation

1. Mass cultural goods account for only a proportion of the global mediascapes
2. Universal super products like Coke, and Justin Bieber, are accompanied by smaller scale specialist forms of expression , That have transnational reach
3. Rather than global homogenisation - it is a combination of fragmentation and globalisation

Global flows

1. While increase in global flows is undoubted a significant degree of national distinctiveness continues to pervade media channels and public discourse
2. Even though the internet now forms their primary outlet, newspapers continue to remind readers of national affiliations through their news values, priorities and forms of address

Fragmentation and globalisation

1. In their combination, fragmentation and globalisation implies a weakening of people's everyday participation in the broader national public cultures. We may be reminded of our national identity to the extent that it is ingrained into our consciousness, But the intensive imagined sameness is liable to recede as our everyday engagements with media and culture become more distinct