

Social media and materialism

Social media reality: Ideologies and exploitation

Social media

1. Social media have been the subject of ideological myths
2. It has become obvious though that we do not simply live in a society, but that we live in a capitalist society and that capitalism needs to be considered in the context of the internet
3. Technological determining overestimates the role of technology in society
4. Social media determinism focuses on the cyberspace as the icon of the technological and electronic visual age
5. Critical theory and critical political economy of the media analyse how exploitation, commodification and ideology interact in shaping media communication in society
6. Talking about social media, requires that we engage with the concept of the social and social theory

Exploitation

1. The unpaid labour of internet users, targeted advertising and economic surveillance
2. Google is the world's largest advertising agency, And developed a sophisticated targeted advertising system that collects a multitude of data about user interests and activities
3. Snowden has revealed how surveillance also dominates on social media.

Optics

1. Alternative online media try to make alternative critical information available to foster critical debates.
2. Non-profit non-commercial internet projects like Wikipedia, advance common production, common control and common ownership

Social media: Anticipate and limited sociality

1. In contemporary capitalism, the boundaries between play and labour have become blurred.
2. Google's management philosophy is characterised by stressing play labour (play labour) which is the expression of a new spirit/ideology of capitalism

Policies

1. Social media corporations tend to assure users they deal with user data responsibly, But at the same time define and enable consumer privacy violations
2. Social media and social production happen within private ownership

Total commodification of the internet

1. Corporate social media's values comes from the illusion of users who contribute to their network.
Without being paid for it
2. We want free online experiences so much that we are happy to not be paid for information that comes from us

Social media and big data

1. The terms social media and web 2.0 have become popular for describing types of World Wide Web applications e.g. Blogs, Twitter, social networking, wikis etc.
2. As the word 'social' features in social media – what is social about social media
3. The term web 2.0 was coined in 2005 by founder of O'Reilly Media (Tim O'Reilly) who noted the following characteristics
4. Radical decentralisation, radical trust, participation instead of publishing, users as contributors, rich user experience, the web as platform, control of owner's own data, remixing data, collective intelligence, attitudes, better software by more users, play, undetermined user behaviour

Crisis

1. In 2000, a crisis of the Internet economy emerged.
2. The inflow of internal capital had driven up the market values of internet companies, But profits could not hold up with the promises of high market values. The result was a financial bubble (dot-com bubble), Which burst in 2000.
3. The ideology is that web 2.0 is something new and different and that it has new economic and democratic potentials and Helped to convince new investors to invest in the internet economy.

The branding of the self

1. Blogging is mainly self-centred and fosters status-seeking behaviour, which promotes marketing and advertising techniques into relationships and social behaviour.
2. The cult of celebrity – and neoliberal logic of competition and individualism, where one accumulates likes, followers, friends or check-ins. The more of these one has, the higher one's cultural online capital and social capital.

Corporate imperialism

1. Corporate media chains dominate the internet economy
2. Web 2.0 is contradictory
3. Corporations appropriate blogs and web 2.0 in the form of corporate blogs, advertising blogs etc.

Marketing and sharing ideology

1. Web 2.0 and social media constitute a marketing ideology
2. Facebook and other social media use the notion of sharing, although the logic of profit, advertising, commerce that is at the heart of their operation

Social media

1. Defining social media requires understanding of sociality
2. What does it mean to be and act in a social way

Playing around with identity

1. Goffman's the Presentation of self in Everyday life – discusses the various verbal and nonverbal modes of communication, that define who we are.
2. Goffman leads us to consider the self in relation to how we perform for others.
3. For Facebook users, this may mean showing different – or multiple sides of self, that we feel, maybe awkward, showing to certain groups of people in our lives

Virtual context

1. The virtual context of social networking, allows us to experiment with our very selves
2. Online social networks free us from the requirements of the real world
3. And to try out self-conceptions to find ones that fit with what we would like to be in the social context

Learning to play

1. Facebook allows us to communicate via wall postings and private messages, sending gifts, playing games
2. Some of the pretence of pretending is removed from Facebook
3. But this particular social networking site also encourages a real person personal with real identities
4. Thus, we must become someone real, from the multiple perceptions of who I am

Postmodernism

1. In the 1980s and 1990s there was a growing concern about the fragmentation of self that resulted from the fact we play different roles with different people
2. In the mid-1990s Sherry Turkle's life on the screen, called attention to the shifting roles that we play

The herd

1. At the outset, it might look like Facebook encourages us to all become alike, but the diversity of opinion, viewpoint and preference suggests otherwise
2. We are friends with our political differences or a competitor in a game is a friend.

Learning from a play

1. The search for our personal identity, our sense of what makes us us,
2. Not something fixed and stable

Life as play

1. As well as increased narcissism, there also appears to be more acceptance, more open-mindedness, Toward varying views online.
2. Facebook enables easy communication of people from varying geographic, economic and social lives
3. It may stimulate self-discovery and solidify citizenship

Spectacle 2.0

1. Facebook – whilst referred to as a social networking site, we spend a lot of time on it by ourselves

Situationist International

1. These were a group of avant-garde artists and philosophers from different countries established in 1957-72
2. Guy Debord and Raoul Vaneigem
3. Debord's book – the society of the spectacle – and Vaneigem – The Revolution of everyday life
4. Highlight the situationist ideals.

The spectacle

1. At the beginning of society of the spectacle, Debord writes that in modern societies Everything that was directly lived has receded into a representation, our lived experiences appear before us as spectacles.

Defining spectacle

1. Debord defined the spectacle as the mass of superficial relations between people, mediated by commodities and images.
2. This is the general processes in our society e.g. the way clothing has become fashion or that transportation has become a new car
3. These superficial relations constituted a negation of real life and alienates people from each other and themselves.

Mass Media and spectacle

1. The mass media symbolises the spectacle. The central function of most media is consumption – even when we actually do things.
2. These take place in the larger context of culture as spectacle

3. The spectacle destroys dialogue and transforms the real world into images which then become images which remain as the only truth.
4. What is left of personality is shining white teeth and freedom from body odour and emotions
5. This restricts us from experiencing anything real and forces us to believe in the images imposed by the spectacle

Spectacle

1. Debord defined the spectacle as a social relation between people mediated by images
2. Mediation is an overriding component on social media – through the process and structures
3. Everything becomes a representation – including friends.
4. Friendship becomes a spectator sport – a spectacle.

Debord

1. The more the spectator contemplates, the less he/she lives
2. The more she/he identifies with the images imposed by the spectacle, the less he or she understands of their own life and desires
3. The spectator is always alienated because the spectacle is everywhere and real life occurs in the shadow of the spectacle

Passivity

1. Passivity and inauthentic experiences can be applied to Facebook as well.
2. The way that Facebook and other social media, isolates us behind our screens, whilst giving us an experience of being with others–
3. The situationists claimed that the spectacle functions by creating separation and bombarding the viewer with images of activity, participation and belonging, but these social media, do actually offer user interaction

Profiles and profiling

1. Through the use of images and spectacle, corporations seduce us into thinking of ourselves and others in terms of whatever they are imposing

However

1. On social media communication doesn't appear to be unequal power relations between receiver and sender
2. Although there are commercial operations that often dominate social media, the user can resist and challenge these messages and images in a playful manner.

Subversions and situations

1. Situations that challenge the spectacle E.g. Improv Everywhere's Freeze Grand Central = where spectators were forced to encounter their own activities from the outside

Range of situations

1. Derive is a process where people drop their usual everyday habits and work (from Old French **deriver** to flow, pour out; **derive**, originate, from Latin *derivare* to lead or draw off (a stream of water) from its source)
2. To appreciate the meaning and impact of experiences like walking, smelling things, shapes and colours
3. A **détournement** (French: **meaning** rerouting, hijacking)

Derailing and play

1. Another kind of situation is to subvert pre-existing artistic productions by altering them giving them a new meaning and Placing them within a new context E.g. Ad busting, culture jamming.
2. The symbols break free of the spectacles constraints in opposition to the meanings and usages

Facebook

1. The Facebook Newsfeed offers a constrained online derive by jumbling together the ironic postings, heartfelt updates, interesting news stories
2. However, some argue we are tricked into thinking we are part of a community actively participating in life, whereas we might actually be accumulation of passive spectators, Seduced by the illusion of participation in movements or causes.
3. Some argue this itself is a new spectacle
4. Others argue these are artistic pursuits that can translate and transform our lives.