# Introduction: Gender and New Media

- Possibilities of the Internet

- Facebook and writing styles

- Gender in the online world

- Online gaming

- Cyberbullying

- Learning outcome 1: Show critical understanding of gender theories with regard to a variety of popular culture forms (new media)

- Learning outcome 3: Assess the ways in which gender are constituted and or challenged in and through particular forms of culture (Facebook, Second Life, Gaming)

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Possibilities of 'new' media

- New forms of media – convergent culture, participatory culture, user generated content

- Either multiple identities online or reinforcing real life identities

- Fantasy identifications (authentic fantasy) and or real authenticity

New Possibilities → **Internet** ← Pessimistic Internet

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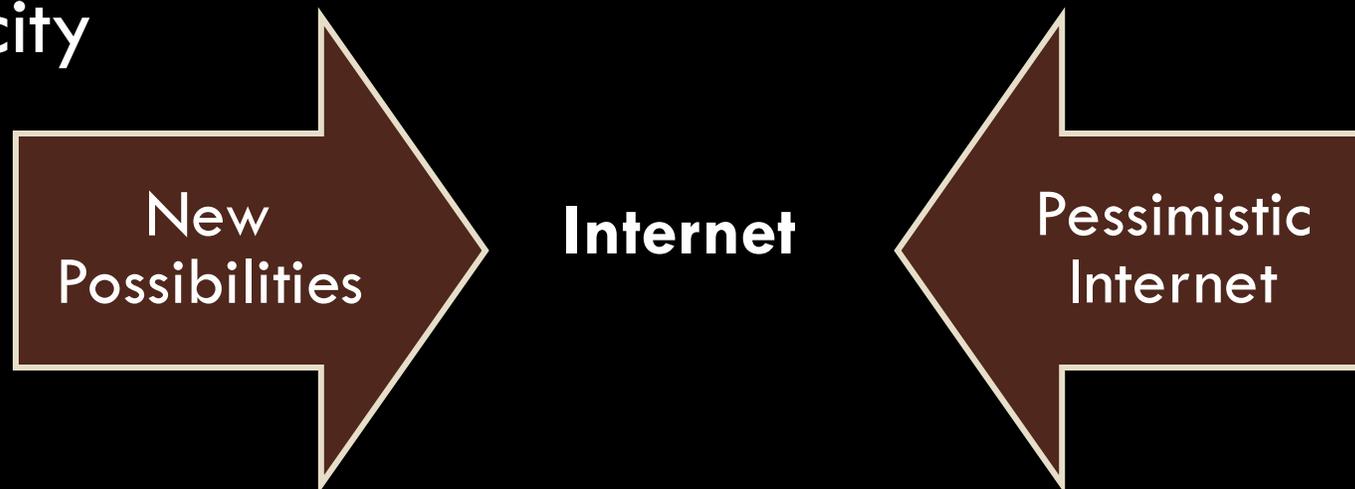
Facebook

- Same stories told and retold
  - Especially in photographs
- Is online self more real than real life identity?
- Baudrillard's hyperreality= representation more real than reality
- Performances – may lead to exaggerated caricatures
- Gender fixity

Report/Rapport styles of writing

- Report style = list, telling people things without emotion, political, sport

- Rapport style = linked with others – emotion in language used, connections with others

- No difference in terms of genres, but people tended to stick with one or other

- Examples

Who wrote these FB comments Male or Female?

- 'finally has a face book profile picture see left!'
  ◦ (Female)
- 'Monday Morning. Deep breaths. Sunny smile. No sharp objects.'
  ◦ (Male)
- 'My lovely daughter is 13 today.'
  ◦ (Male)
- 'RIP Pete Postlethwaite :-(Too young!'
  ◦ (Female)
- 'Tickets booked! :oD'
  ◦ (Female)
- 'My bloody car is broke. I'm not happy.'
  ◦ (Male)
- More complex than simple dichotomy of report/rapport

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Queering gender online

- Internet reinforcing hegemonic gender conventions

- Gaydar – young men asked to appraise body image and gender performance

- Attacks on performances which violate traditional masculinity

- 'I only like men who are men. If you are a man who thinks he is a woman then that is just wrong. Do not message me.' (Richardson and Wearing 2014: p.140).

Online gaming

- Aggressive, macho, homophobic and misogynistic

- Display of technical knowledge

- Difference between: playing like a girl – playing as a girl

- Lara Croft –Tomb Raider (objectified but cross-gender identification)

- Motivations for playing: competition and self-challenge

- Greenberg et al. (2010: p.242) 'The majority of video games have direct competition, clear role definitions and explicit goals – all strong features of male play.'

- Female gamers can suffer abuse

Other studies

- Schott and Horrell (2000) men have control over game technology in households

- Jenkins (2006) video games mirror gendered play spaces

- Females – domestic sphere and males more fantasy scenarios

Virtual supermodels

- Webbie Tookay – Stephen Sthalberg for Elite agency

  ◦ E.g. Miss Digital World (2.29 mins) and 2012 Miss Virtual World (2.16 mins)

  ◦ You can find many more e.g. Miss Virtual World Evening Gowns 2013 (39 mins)

' She never ages, never gains weight, never develops cellulite or throws a tantrum' Stephen Stahlberg

- Virtual sexism
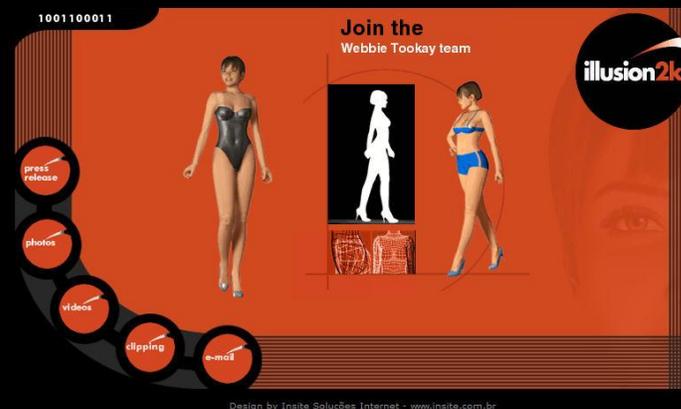
Cyberfeminism

- Intersections between gender identity, body culture, technology

- Cyborgs with ambiguous gender identities

- Cyborg = human and machine (1.47 mins)

- Often given female identity or a definite gender

- Machines often described as female

- Possibility exists to challenge but often conform

- Second Life norms of avatars

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Trolling and cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying – intimidation and harassment online

- Those who are too feminine, too masculine and those who 'don't fit into hegemonic norms'

- But also women tend to be targeted online

  ◦ E.g. Caroline Criado-Perez online threats of sexual violence

  ◦ Campaign for a woman to be featured on British Bank Notes

- Gender and sexuality - one of the battlegrounds of new media

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Mobile Phones

- Mobile phones –gender relations of family, friendship, work are inscribed and revealed.

- Used more by women than men for care-giving and emotion (Green and Singleton, 2013)

- Particularly when we focus on personal relationships and doing family, friendship and community

- interpersonal connectedness – you can agree/disagree with this research.

- An interesting survey on Tinder (1.59 mins)

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Gender and relationships

- Media choices carry messages about gender

- And how we use media in relation to dating

- Gender differences in social media usage

- Including the type of media we use and why

- And the type of images we post up.
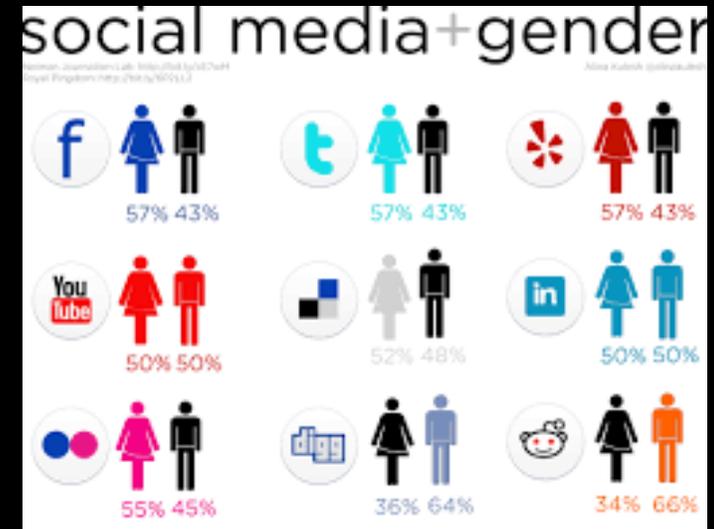
Summary

- Identities on the internet – new possibilities versus pessimistic internet

- Facebook and writing styles – (report/rapport styles note gender based but individualistic)

- Gender in the online world - often reinforcing gender stereotypes

- Online gaming– dominated by males both industry and perceived audience

- Learning outcome 3 : Assess the ways in which gender are constituted and or challenged in and through particular forms of culture

- Essay Question: You can also focus on specific new media e.g. Facebook, specific game, specific website etc.

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