

Week 13: Muted Group Theory + Media Ecology

***COMM 2100 Introduction to Comm Theory
SI Session***

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Muted Group Theory

Muted Group: People belonging to low-power groups who must change their language when communicating publicly-thus, their ideas are often overlooked

- Who gets the attention when we say “Hi guys”?
- Why does NBA (National Basketball Association) mean male basketball while WNBA means female one?
- Think about the language, and think about the social group that's muted.



Q: How do you understand the commonalities and divergences between muted group theory and feminist standpoint theory?

Q: Are there any other muted groups besides women? How are ethnic minorities, the poor, or members of the LGBTQ community muted in our society?

How does muting happen?

Naming and Gatekeeping

- Naming: Power discrepancies between the sexes ensure that women will view the world differently than men. But men have more power to name it.
 - Most of the dirty words are about women.
- Gatekeeping: Who's stories get told.
 - Gatekeepers: Editors and other arbiters of culture who determine what will appear in mass media.
 - Malestream expression: Traditional mainstream mass media, controlled by men.
 - Algorithmic oppression: Bias encoded in social media and search engines that favors dominant groups and oppresses marginalized groups.

Word	Women	Men	Overused by	LL
fuck	1719.21	2105.07	Men	179.15
shit	996.36	1198.84	Men	85.96
ass	63.48	63.48	Neither	0
bitch	262.02	142.88	Women	168.1
nigga	10.97	18.82	Men	9.51
hell	344.57	309.89	Women	8.54
whore	11.23	10.43	Neither	0.14
dick	124.34	133.64	Neither	1.54
piss	257.84	253.08	Neither	0.21
pussy	19.33	33.7	Men	17.92
slut	20.11	15.74	Neither	2.49
tit	88.03	195.24	Men	187.47
fag	18.02	30.28	Men	14.3
damn	117.81	102.84	Neither	4.73
cunt	94.3	295.86	Men	487.84
cum	8.62	17.79	Men	14.7
cock	82.02	93.08	Neither	3.22
retard	11.23	26.86	Men	29.71
blowjob	1.04	1.88	Neither	1.1
wanker	21.42	49.96	Men	52.82
bastard	68.44	110.54	Men	45.49
prick	47.02	84.36	Men	48.8
bollocks	14.62	37.3	Men	45.96
bugger	18.8	18.3	Neither	0.03
bloody	227.01	173.51	Women	33.47
crap	100.05	89.66	Neither	2.64



How should we express ourselves?

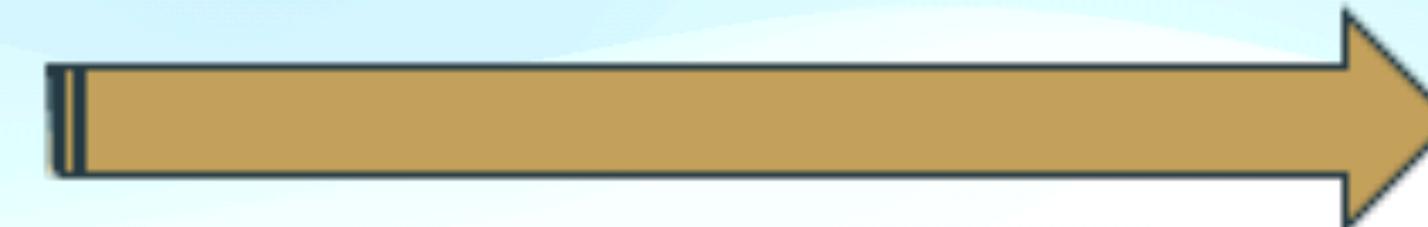
- Translation: Speaking truth in men's talk/system. But translation could be hard.
- Networking with women: speaking out in private.
 - *Q: How would you use “speaking out in private” to analyze female subreddit?*
- Enriching the lexicon: Have a feminist dictionary
 - e.g., Sexual harassment - coining a term to label experiences.
 - e.g., data rape: unwanted sexual activity with an acquaintance, friend, or romantic partner.

Media Ecology

Media ecology: the study of the interrelationship of people, media, culture, and consciousness, and of the changes that occur among them. - it's about media technology.



Water is ubiquitous and influential.



Fish did not discover water.



“In fact, because they are completely immersed in it. They live unaware of its existence.” — Marshall McLuhan



The media effects on people not only come from the contents, but also the medium (technology) itself.

The medium is message/massage

Medium: a specific type of media.

Media: Generic term for all human-invented technology that extends the range, speed, or channels of communication.

- Small exercise: which one do you prefer as a person in your generation?
- Message: gradual and invisible

140 words' text to know a news story	300 words' news article
Words: "Thank you! You're the best!"	EMOJI: ❤️
Post on twitter when you're experiencing hurricane to ask for help.	Call for neighbors when you're experiencing hurricane.



Media is the extensions of human



Tribal Age



Liberate Age



Print Age



Electronic Age



The digital age?

Digital Age: A possible fifth era of specialized electronic tribes contentions over diverse beliefs and values.

- Algorithms. Social media. wearable technology.....
- *Q: Which part of our body is extended?*
- *Q: Do you believe that McLuhan's vision of global village will/have come true?*
- *Q: How do you think about Postman's Faustian Bargain?*

*Thank you!
See you next week!*