Stasis and shifts in feminist media scholarship

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Resumo

Originally a keynote speech at an international feminist conference, the article reviews patterns in women- and media research and poses new directions. Over forty years of feminist analysis of media, researchers have focused disproportionately on women’s representations and excluded the structural causes for those representations. The author emphasizes the need for macro-level investigations in communication law and policy, industry structures, and financing to better understand the gendered power dynamics that cause women to be underrepresented in media decision making positions and in serious news and programming.

Palavras-chave

Women and media; feminism and media; feminist theory of media; global women’s media issues

Texto Completo:

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In her essay, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” Chandra Talpade Mohanty explores the simplified construction of the “third-world woman” in hegemonic feminist discourses. In contrast, in her essay “US Third-World Feminism: The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World,” Chela Sandoval specifically analyzes “US third-world feminism” and how it is the model for not only oppositional political activity, but also consciousness in the United States and how this has not been recognized by hegemonic “western” feminist discourses. Both articles raise questions of essentialism as a necessary element in feminism itself, and of naivety, validity and value of essentialized feminist works. Over the past few decades feminist media scholarship has flourished, to become a major influence on the fields of media, film and cultural studies. At the same time, the cultural shift towards ‘post-feminism’ has raised questions about the continuing validity of feminism as a defining term for this work. This book explores the changing and often ambivalent relationship between the three terms women, feminism and media in the light of these recent debates. At the same time it places them within the broader discussions within feminist theory - about subjectivity, identity, culture, and...