

**DIFFERENCES
INEQUALITIES
AND SOCIOLOGICAL
IMAGINATION**

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ABSTRACT BOOK

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Abstract Book

European Sociological Association (ESA)
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In a second step I will outline the core challenges for good media studies. In a nutshell the core challenges for good media studies refer to the development of better media and a better internet. In the deepening crisis of capitalism the notion of a better internet should be theorised with respect to two fundamental threats. The first threat comes from nation states and their desire to establish complete control over all communicational practices of internet users. This is the threat of surveillance, which results in Orwellian monitoring and the accumulation of big data in the name of a 'war against terrorism', which conveniently establishes (and at the same time hides) control over all forms of resistance. The second threat comes from capital and its enclosure of the digital commons, which needs to be contained by strategies of 'counter-commodification' (Wittel 2013) and the enclosure of digital commodities.

In a third and final step I will outline three fundamental realms of resistance – the realm of critique, the realm of destruction, and the realm of construction – and link them to specific aspects of a Marxian political economy, more specifically to value (which corresponds with critique), to commodity (which resonates with destruction), and to labour (which equals construction). This third step is a conceptual experiment. While the links and connections between forms of resistance and core categories of Marx's political economy are not exclusive and much more fluid than indicated, they all point to the significance of a political economy approach to what I call good media and communication studies.

The Crisis of Sociology and the Revival of Critical Theory in New Media Studies: Paths and Perspectives

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For several years now the sociological debate has been sharing the perception of an internal crisis of identity of the discipline that has become almost exclusively empirical and descriptive, thus making marginal other search paths. This drift has effectively sidelined the critical soul of sociological studies that characterized its classic authors (Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel). In this contest New Media Studies represents the exception since from the beginning they have become a fertile ground for the application of critical theory. The paper analyzes the reasons of this exception and speculates that this is mainly due to the centrality that the user holds in the environment of Web 2.0, which results in unexpected possibilities of cultural resistance on the part of the subject. These reflections have been developed specifically within the tradition of Cultural and New Media Studies. This contribution would also look at other models of critical sociological matrix. Some of these approaches have already found application in the study of new media, such as, for example, the issues of privacy and surveillance which are analyzed in the light of the thought of Michel Foucault about the microphysics of power. Other approaches vice versa could be usefully applied in the investigation of the specificity of the communicative dynamics of social networks. We will, in particular, consider the phenomenological analysis of Schutz and Goffman's study of the Forms of Talk. A further enrichment of the critical theory in the study of new media could also come from the classic anthropological studies on the gift (Durkheim, Mauss, Malinowski) and in particular from the category of the "poisoned gift".

RN18S10 - Challenges and Perspectives for Public Service Media and the Mediated Public Sphere Today

Potentials and limits of the mediated public sphere - three levels of analysis