

Media Representations of Gendered Sexual Violence: Thinking from the Margins

In a highly mediated world, much of what we perceive is filtered through discourses that circulate in social media, television, film and mainstream news. In the Anglo-American context, how do media representations of sexual violence (SV) intervene to shape our understandings of rape culture and toxic masculinity? How do feminist responses enter these narratives? Which voices are continually centred, and which are routinely banished to the margins? For example, while the #metoo movement has become emblematic of a cultural zeitgeist around sexual violence that spans over 84 countries, in the US, critiques from women of colour have drawn attention to how systemic forms of privilege continue to determine whose experiences of sexual violence are spotlighted. In my research, I analyze: 1) how media storylines on SV position certain bodies as worthy victims, while disappearing others 2) how these narratives are co-implicated with research on SV, which also continues to centre the experiences of White, cis, heteronormative, middle class, able-bodied girls and women, and 3) what alternative discourses and representations challenge the universal subject that still underpins certain kinds of public feminisms.



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