Minority Representation and the Media Studies

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Abstract

How we acquire the discourse about identity? Also, how the discourse be constructed? This research examines the relationship of identity and media discourse, which will help shed light on the questions above. Representation of minority changes the surface through articulation to different signification and sometimes expands the range witch connotes in the course of history. As Stuart Hall has proposed, mass media discourse is an arena which different social forces struggle over meaning. Researches witch see mass media discourse formation as actual set in where power of discourse excised and process which signification occurs by transforming the way it represent and how collate differ from other communication researches simply address disparity of power between actors by describing privileged "sujet de l'énonciation" creates authorized conversation field. Analyzing the articulation or re-articulation process in media discourse between social forces, especially over the representation of ethnic identity is in need to pursue theoretical development in Media Studies.

Keywords: Media discourse, Ethnic Studies, Neo-conservatism, Identity, Articulation

1. Overview on Ethnic Studies and Minority Representation

The dominant paradigm of minority for the fast half-century has been that of ethnicity. By 1920s, biologic and Social Darwinist conceptions of race predominated. Thishierarchical conception of race which considered as natural and preset in history—for example eugenics was cHallenged by class- and nation- based paradigms of race after mid-1960s (Omi and Winant 1994:12, Selden 1992).CHallenging the dominant race conception was encouraged by the social movements of 60s and also was building theoretical foundation of the movement itself.

"These theoretical cHallenges originated with the black and other racial minority movements which rejected two central aspects of the ethnicity approach: the European immigrant analogy which suggested that racial minorities could be incorporated into American life in the same way that white ethnic groups had been, and the assumption of a fundamental, underlying American commitment to equality and social justice for racial minorities"(Omi and Wiannt 1994:12).

Stuart Hall a theoretical leader of Cultural Studies who introduced neo-Marxism to mass communication research questioned why and how specific articulation of collective representation of identity by the mass media was accepted as unswerving, under neo-liberal regime. He set his focus on this discourse articulation process.

It is imperative to critically question the meanings of media representations and expose discourse formation.

The research takes a critical look on the argumentations ofmediarepresentations or conceptualizations of identity presented in current academic particularly surrounding cultural analysis (i.e. ethnic studies). Moving beyond theaccuracy or inaccuracy of specific representations,this research focuses on the question of power relations. This is done through discourse analysis of collective identity

The aim of this research is to raise awareness about thesignificance of discourse analysis in terms of analyzing the articulation or re-articulation process of discourse between social forces, especially over the representation of ethnic identity.This is done by presenting a view from the social constructions of reality by P.L. BERGER and Thomas LUCKMANN. Hopefully, elaborating the approach from the sociology of knowledge enables participation in these discourses to conduct themselves more skillfully through such conceptual labyrinths of cultural studies.

2. Cultural Project and Discourse analysis in Cultural Studies

In 1979, Stuart HALL became and sociology professor at Open University. The start of the Open University in Britain cannot be separated with the rise of minority politics. It started up as implementation of educating working class adults. He took this opportunity to access normal people—the women, the black students, in non-academic environment. This attempt could be said the manifestation of his aim to expand public pedagogy as cultural politics. The text book made for course D318 of Open University includes "The work of representation" and "The spectacle of the 'Other'" written by him. In those articles, he developed his theory on power of representation and minority politics. Stuart HALL as an intellectual and a public icon

used its name to have enweaving relation with the public through mediated Open University courses and hoped to well up grassroots movement counter to neo-liberalism.

HALL adopted this discourse approachfrom Ernesto LACLAU[1]and introduced to media studies. Heexplores how the representation (shared language of a culture, its signs and images), provides a conceptual index that gives meaning to the world rather than simply reflecting it. He concerned the shaping of our collective perceptions, and how the dynamics of media representation reproduce forms of symbolic power.

By looking at the process of discourse formation, we will be able to see the identity as generatedin a formwhich isalwayscollated to representation; "subjected self". Because identity is a suture point of discourse practice inviting specific discourse socialized subject and the process of construction of self by calling （HALL 1996:5=2001:15）. Moving beyond the inaccuracy of specific representations, he claims that the process of representation itself constitutes the very world it aims to represent.

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The mining exists within its representation. Cultural Studies question where these meaning come from, and how they are constructed through representation, especially images seen through the media.
Cultural Studies vividly demonstrate the ways in which actors produce and actively consume circulating representation, though it failed to show the changes in representations over the time. If unification is sustained under certain circumstances, then that might changes in the course of history.

3. Rethinking the significance of discourse analysis

Representation of identity changes the surface through articulation to different siginification and sometimes expands the range witch connotes in the course of history.

Analyzing the articulation or re-articulation process of discourse, especially over the representation of ethnic identity is in need to pursue theoretical development in Ethnic Studies. As HALL has proposed, mass media is an arena which different social forces struggle over meaning. Researches witch see mass media discourse formation as actual set in where power of discourse excised and process which signification occurs by transforming the way it represent and how collate differ from other communication researches simply address disparity of power between actors by describing privileged "sujet de l'énonciation" creates authorized conversation field.

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[1]Discourse theories-like those of Michel Foucault or Ernesto LACLAU and Chantal MOUFFE aim to set the groundings to analyze the social macro-level of power/knowledge relationships or the articulation of collective identities (Keller 2005: 2).

Stuart HALL's Discourse Analysis
Signification
Signifying practice
Formation
Articulation

Legitimation 'explains' the institutional order by ascribing cognitive validity to its objectivatedmeanings.Legitimation justifies the institutional order by giving a normativedignity to its practical imperatives. It is important to understand that legitimation hasa cognitive as well as a normative element. Legitimation not only tells the individualwhy he *should* perform one action and not another; it also tells him why things are whatthey are. (HALL, "Deviance," p. 276)

HALL says power consistently strives to fix meaning to support its agenda. Then Power consistently strives to fix meaning to support its agenda.Looking at the changes in discourse and how its accepted "legit" will help to understand the an enweaving relation of discourse and society especially when it works to reconfirm the existing social order of American society.
Analyzing the articulation or re-articulation process of discourse between social forces, especially over the representation of ethnic identity is in need to pursue theoretical development in Ethnic Studies. In many studies on ethnic groups, this systematical view on minority representation and its interwoven relation with neo-conservative wave are overlooked due to convergence to the actual racist experiences of minorities.

4. CASE STUDY Asian American representation and changes in education policy

Creation of Model Minority Representation

Starting in the late 1960s, Asian people were said to be the role model of other minority groups for their assimilative successand were given the name of "model minority." This model minority representation is created under the influence of neo-conservatism. In neo-conservative self-responsibility rhetoric, Asian people were praised for gaining better social position through their hard work and following traditional "American value," ascontrast to other minority groups who actively participated in social movements.The startled White majority who felt threatened by growing visibility of minorities began to criticize those minority groups who raise their voice to gain better social treatments in American society.
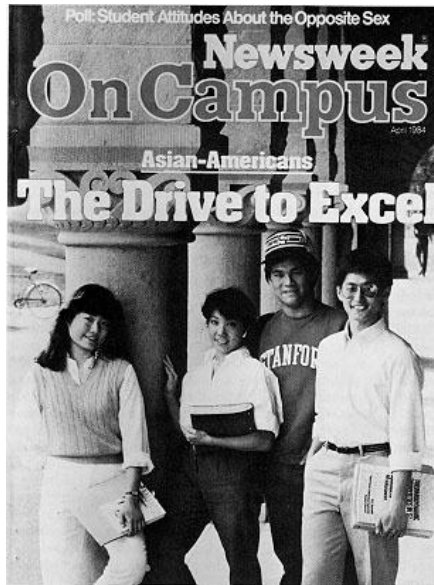
Source: Newsweek, (On Campus special issue)   TIME, (On Whiz Kids special issue)

From Successor in Assimilation to Victims of Model minority representation

Over the course of changing political and social contexts, "the ideal of racial equality has shifted to hold a very different meaning than that propagated by the Brown decision (2006, 14). We may see this interesting shift through a Supreme Court case which brought by a group of Chinese Americans. The Brian Ho, Patrick Wong, & Hilary Chen v. SFUSD lawsuit[2] cHallenged race-based admissions policies that were intended to ensure diversity by giving special consideration to African-American and Latino students in San Francisco United School District (Robles 2006).

The Ho plaintiffs portrayed Asian Americans as model minorities to portray themselves as victims of discrimination, and used an argumentation constructs Black and Latino students as undeserving and unqualified beneficiaries of affirmative action.In the *Ho* lawsuit, African Americans were cast as villains, whether explicitly or illicitly by a group of Asian Americans, who claimed reverse discrimination and specific harm to their ethnic group (Robles 2006, 29).Together this type of minority representation is seen in the media coverage. The media quickly picked up this case and linked to anti-Affirmative Action cases which White students sued the top schools for refusing their entrances. In those media coverage, Asian students are said to be refused from the top schools due to their growing visibility, in other words their excellence. In the case of Ho vs. SFUSD, Asian people were illustrated as model minority and positioned second to White people as works of ethnic studies had been criticizing.

The argumentations exploited by Asian activists shifted over time. This shift is co-opted by a neoconservative movement.The neo-conservative self-responsibility rhetoric, has worked to cast African Americans and Latinos as undeserving beneficiaries, through invoking merit and equality also using the model minority representation.The media, firstly representing them as overachievers then by

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[2]Ho v. San Francisco United Sch. Dist. 147F.3d 854, 860 (9th Cir. 1998).

employing the study achievements of ethnic studies positioned Asian people as victims of stereotyping, then to the victims of AA (wrongly refused from their wished schools due to spare spaces for other minority groups.)

The crux of my work is not wholly about following the changes in argumentation surrounding race in these different arenas, but it is also about examining the way that media and political articulation of race/color differences influencing social race/ethnic formation through media representation.

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