

Broadcasting and the Commons

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Why the Commons ?

- Problems with the idea of the Public Sphere
- The split between the political and literary public spheres
- Deliberation presupposes empathy
- The Commons as open and diverse
- The problem of economic and cultural enclosure

Three Cultural Economies

- Commodities --markets- prices- consumers
- Public Goods- nations - taxes – citizens
- Gifts - networks- reciprocities - communards

Public Service Broadcasting (PSB)

- Three key contexts
- Managing mass political participation- citizens v crowds
- Emerging mass consumption- from living standards to life styles- consumerism
- American cultural ascendancy

PSB

Key Institutional Features

- Political- relative autonomy-professional responsibility
- Economic- no shareholders / no advertising/
no charge for services at the point of use
- Cultural- cementing the nation / providing
resources for responsible citizenship /
championing the cultural canon.

PSB as a National Commons

- Celebrating national rituals
- Inventing traditions
- Promoting the selective cultural canon
- Constructing shared experiences and imagined communities

Tensions

- The Capital and the regions
- The academy and the avant garde
- Professional monopolies v popular participation

Limited Market Competition

- Competition for
- Creative talent / cultural rights
- Audience time and attention

- But not for
- Revenues –either advertising or direct customer purchases

The National Commons Under Pressure

- Increased commercial lobbying – the launch of ITV
- A mounting crisis of representation-the invention of Channel 4

Marketisation

- Privatisation
- Liberalisation- cable and satellite
- Re-gearing regulation- from the public interest to competition and consumer choice
- Commodification – access by price

Corporatisation

- State Owned enterprises – China (CCTV)
New Zealand (NZOA, NZTV)
- Public private partnerships- co production
- Maximising the commercial values of assets
- Two cultures – national public/international commercial

Dismantling the Dual Economy

- Push for greater access to public funds by commercial players
 - – outsourcing
 - - competition for direct public subsidy
- Ring fencing competition from public broadcasting in profit rich areas of activity.

Dimensions of Digitalisation

- The digital switch-over
- The rise of the public internet
- The convergence of platforms

The Digital Commons

- The revivification of public institutions (museums, libraries, universities) – from places to spaces
- The emergence of new gift economies- collaborative production, vernacular archives

Three Challenges

- Economic
 - –property rights v the creative commons
 - The new enclosure movement-
commodifying cyberspace
- Social – the persistence of ‘digital divides’
- Organisational- dispersal, fragmentation

Rethinking the role of PSB

- As multi media resource- on screen / on line
- As trusted gateway
- As central node in a public network
- As a site of creative/deliberative encounters – experts and lay public, professionals and enthusiasts