

CENTRE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA & GOVERNANCE

Jamia Millia Islamia

New Delhi



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Title: A Presentation - Changing the Atmospherics in Public Spaces: An Experiment with Pen Drives, You Tube, and T.V.s.

By

Prof. Sheena Jain

About the Lecture

About the Presentation: The idea of using certain unprecedenred possibilities created by digital technology in the contemporary electronic era to change or atleast see whether or how it may be meaningful to intervene in the prevailing visual and auditory environment in public spaces, was triggered off by the experience of tea breaks in a dhaba in the course of distributing the newspaper Faridabad Majdoor Samachar in the Okhla Industrial Area. The beaming of sensational news and B grade films on t.v. sets which are a staple of such places in towns, rururban settings, along highways, as well as on public transports such as buses, it was felt, tend to create an atmospherics dictated by tastes mediated by commercial interests and unthinking conformity to norms of how to run certain establishments catering to 'the masses' . In such a scenario, it may be worth while to use the increasing access to personal computers and internet sites such as you-tube to select short films and other kinds of audio visual material transferred on to pen drives to introduce something different to the audiences, who seem often to be passive and tired recipients of what may be more stressful noise and bluster than entertainment (even when perceived through the lens of that term), and to become in fact an accepted 'taste' through exposure over time. The practical technical means include equipment which is fairly cheap - pen drives, and already in use computers as owned by students and others in professions that require their use, and a set top box like device that can connect to any model of tv and convey the contents of a pen drive for its transmission on to the tv screen. It is this equipment and a selection of films and film excerpts that i would like use to demonstrate in this presentation this particular idea of intervening in the sphere of the creation and transformation of popular culture, which could be taken up as the basis of student projects for research into tastes and media use. Details of method and theoretical inputs can be collectively discussed and formulated by faculty and students, who may well be familiar with the work of scholars like Pierre Bourdieu whose book *Distinction* is a classic in the field of the sociology of culture and focusses specifically on 'tastes'.

About the Speaker

About the presenter: Prof. Sheena Jain was a faculty member in the Department of Sociology, JMI, till 2014. She has since been exploring the activities in and around Delhi within the industrial working class, mainly in association with the newspaper Faridabad Majdoor Samachar. Her academic work includes a major focus on social theory and the contribution of Pierre Bourdieu's study of the symbolic. The sociology of film has also been an area of interest.

Venue: CCMG, Network Governance Lab

Date: Thursday, 25th January, 2018

Time: 2:00 pm

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