

Fact or Fiction: Exploring Critical Media Literacy in the Current Socio-Political Climate

- **Brief Intro: Boal and Theatre of the Oppressed**
- **Theoretical Underpinnings**
- **Overview of Newspaper Theatre and techniques**
- **Image of the Headline Activity**
- **Discussion & Reflection**



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Freire, bell hooks, and democratizing the news

- Problem-posing education and the co-creation of the real
- If reality is co-created, always becoming, it resists objectivity
- What does that mean for mainstream media?
Further, how does the digital era impact this epistemology?

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No one, no matter how intelligent and skillful at critical thinking, **is protected against the subliminal suggestions that imprint themselves on our unconscious brain if we are watching hours and hours of television [and other media]**. In the United States television has become primarily a **series of spectacles that perpetuate and maintain the ideology of imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy**. There have been times in the history of the United States when the media have been a location where diverse voices are heard despite the hegemony of more conservative forces. (hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 11)

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Boal and Theatre of the Oppressed

- Humanize Humanity
- Augusto Boal created Theatre of the Oppressed in the 1970s in Brazil during Brazilian dictatorship and bourgeois government
- Theatre placed at the service of the oppressed
- Theater in itself is not revolutionary, but these theatrical forms are a **rehearsal for revolution.**
- Inspired by Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, cultivating critical consciousness
- Everyone can act and has theatre inside of them

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Introduction to Newspaper Theatre

- Returning theatre to the people
- Demystifying the supposed objectivity of journalism, showing every article as a work of fiction meant to protect the dominant class
- Prior roots in Germany and the U.S. with the “living newspaper”
- Brazil - staging the newspaper theatre stories to resist dictatorship, which was represented by censorship of the cultural struggle
- Ironical, metaphorical, allegorical, heightened critiques
- Confronting new facts, reacting politically and artistically in new ways

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Newspaper Theatre Document - Various Techniques

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N14N5d0l63EKzhsPY8DYDYluWKXe8WVZ/view?usp=sharing>



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Image of the Headline Activity

Let's work through a exercise:

- Choose a headline or slogan from an advertisement
- Create a static image to illustrate the word(s)
- “Dynamize” and demonstrate images
- Discuss



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Closing Circle

- What are you taking away with you?
- Questions?
- Thoughts?



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Suggested Resources

- Boal, Augusto. "The Fourth Category of Popular Theatre: Newspaper Theatre." *Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to Make Politics*. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Speranza, Sabrina. "Newspaper Theatre: The oldest branch of TO in the post-print present." *The Routledge Companion to Theatre of the Oppressed*. Routledge, 2019. 150-155.

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