

**Sapiro, Chapter 8**  
**Gender & the Institutional Media of Communication**

1. Media literally "mediate" our perception of the world.
  - a. explain that "media" is plural of "medium" - a means, not an end
  - b. media reflect and create social and cultural values.
  - c. relatively new media - electronic (tv, radio, computer)
  
2. News - some influence, but isolated leaders
  - a. Print media
    - i. historically women have participated in print media - first printing press imported to colonies by woman in 1638
    - ii. through 19thC, women helped shape news coverage of world
      - (1) "ladies" press
      - (2) feminist journals
      - (3) female muckraking reporters - Ida Tarbell, "Nelly Bly" = and between world wars; war reportage
      - (4) as editors and publishers (Kay Graham of Washington Post)
    - iii. nonetheless, "hard news" and editorial largely a male domain
  - b. electronic media
    - i. some inroads, especially at NPR
    - ii. however, appearance overly important (Christine Craft lawsuit)
    - iii. women still behind in production areas
  
3. Gender and the Message of the Media - perpetuating fear and insecurity
  - a. George Gerbner (1978) argues that media are resistant to gains made by women:
    - i. women's issues are discredited by media ("Year of the Woman" in 1992)
    - ii. women are segregated and ghettoized (women's page) and women's fears are activated ("is your child being abused at daycare?")
    - iii. media minimize, sensationalize, and glamorize violence against women (rape stories; dead women at beginning of thrillers; eroticized women's deaths)
  - b. women's media stay in business by perpetuating women's insecurities (putting recipes next to diet advice; "women in jep" movies)
  
4. Commercial media (strange division, in my view)
  - a. advertising creates new and artificial needs in woman-as-consumer (fashion industry; housecleaning and hygiene products)
  
5. The Artistic Media
  - a. arts are often presented through the mass media
  - b. women have been discriminated against in definition of art
  - c. objects of use (quilts) have not been defined as art
  - d. men tend to dominate the highest levels of traditionally female kinds of art (folk music, cooking, fashion/textiles)
  
6. Women as Subjects in Art
  - a. narratives prescribe roles; tradition of the female "nude" as art; visual arts especially transform women into little except bodies
  - b. violence encourages desensitization; normalizes violence against women and minorities
  - c. pornography vs. eroticism