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Rosalind Gill has worked extensively in the area of gender and the media. Indeed, and as such, she is the first to admit that this text is a long time overdue. She conceived and coordinates a Masters course in Gender and Media, currently offered at the LSE, her work for which, no doubt, has both inspired and necessitated the composition of this book. An authoritative text for such a course – a digest of her vast experience, informed thoughts, research, teaching, and both methodological and substantive understandings of the subject – Gill’s contribution to this area is most advantageous to both students and scholars alike.

Essentially, this text addresses representations of gender within our media, in their individual forms, whilst synthesizing the notion and pertinence of postfeminism. Her critical analysis of these media forms is as insightful as it is disconcerting; the text is organized so as to examine the ways in which our media have developed, and demonstrates new ways of considering the content and contexts of the media in terms of gender. Her illustrations are most apt: visual and textual evidence have been carefully selected, though I doubt the seeking out of suitable examples was too challenging; perhaps (unfortunately) there are too many to choose from! Her thorough contemplation of theoretical works along with empirical research projects provides an excellent and up-to-date account of the relationship of gender to and with the media.

This book, unlike others of its kind, gives a broad, yet detailed, overview of each media type. This sets it apart from most comparable texts, which have tended to look at an individual medium distinctly rather than, as Gill has so successfully achieved, painting a fuller picture and considering many parts of it. Whilst this limits the extent to which each chapter can explore, it serves to strengthen the claim that ‘the media’
engenders (no pun intended!) and emphasizes contemporary gender concerns, inversely and adversely, each component performing a role, simultaneously reinforcing the other actors. Gill thus embraces a social constructionist attitude towards the interpretation of gender within these omnipresent mainstays of society, i.e. the media.

*Gender and the Media*, whilst considered a Gender Studies text, can be equally appreciated by a wider audience. Gill’s consideration of recent advertising campaigns, familiar TV chat shows, (in)famous headlines and contemporary magazines demonstrates the ubiquitous nature of gender and the significance of gendered women (and men) through confused and contradictory representations and reproductions within the media, leading to a combination of exploitation with empowerment and oppression with autonomy, therefore accentuating the essential nature of (post)feminism.

This text is certainly written in a most comprehensible style. The tone of writing is accessible and agreeable, though, at times, this can distract the focus and complicate Gill’s organization of ideas. The very nature of the subject matter, however, lends itself to her style of writing and, for the most part, forgives these deviations. The structure of each chapter is also such that the reader is easily able to (re)locate the argument and (re)assess the discussion through examination of her strong conclusions in each instance.

The considerable bibliography verifies Gill’s appreciation of the volume of work that has been carried out in respect of both gender and the media. This book offers a broad overview of the area and would serve to provide a synopsis of the main themes and concerns to any student. Equally, it could act as a first point of reference for scholars and offers plentiful suggestions for further reading in the research of specific areas. It is perplexing, however, that Gill’s frequent references to the notions of ‘compulsory heterosexuality’ and ‘subordination in heterosexual relationships’ (pp. 20, 178, 223) fail to have acknowledged Rich\(^1\) in the bibliography. The extent of these claims should surely be supported by such a key text?

Overall, *Gender and the Media* reiterates many of the feminist and postfeminist arguments regarding portrayals of gendered women to society, consolidating these within the context of the media (the second school, favourite pastime and companion of the masses) and frames these within an up-to-the-minute illustration of the causes/effects of the media and their contributions to contemporary gender (in)equality. This is a text that will be a most welcome addition to every Gender Studies course reading list, in addition to Media Studies and Film Studies, if not Linguistics, Journalism and Literature and more.

**Note**