

Cross-disciplinary illiteracy is dangerous: Prof. Rajan Gurukkal

Anjali Nair S H
Athira B Asok

Kariavattom: Cross-disciplinary illiteracy is dangerous says Prof. Rajan Gurukkal, Vice Chairman, Higher Education Council, Govt. of Kerala. He was inaugurating the National Seminar on 'Trending Disciplinary Convergence in Media Studies'. The three day National seminar was organised by the Department of Communication and Journalism Kariavattom campus, University of Kerala.

The proceedings commenced at 10:00am with the invocation. Assistant Professor Lal-mohan P, organising secretary of the seminar welcomed the chief guest and other dignitaries and called upon Dr. M.S Harikumar, HOD, DCJ, University of Kerala to deliver the presidential



Prof. Rajan Gurukkal inaugurating the three day National Seminar at the Botany seminar hall, Kariavattom

address on the occasion. Prof. Rajan Gurukkal in his inaugural speech emphasised the need to develop cross-disciplinary literacy in Media studies so that it could recognise the area as an area of knowledge that does not belongs to any of the established disciplines. Media studies which

has an interdisciplinary character right from its inception, outcasted its evolutionary fundamentality during the growth as an independent discipline. It has validations in the areas of Culture, Philosophy, Social Science and many more areas, is in the phase of inevitable introspection. This is where

according to him media studies as a discipline can prove its stature, genre and potential. He further stressed that modern researches had proved to be hybrid in nature and the disciplines started loosening their boundaries. He complimented the Department of Communication and Journal-

ism for hosting the three day national seminar on such a relevant topic of research. His ideas opens up a new avenue for convergence research among media students through convergence of synthesised knowledge in multiple areas. Syndicate member, University of Kerala, professor

P.M Radhamani, former HOD and present Chairman of board of studies, Prof. Subhash Kuttan offered their felicitations on the occasion. Ms. Maggie J, Assistant Professor, DCJ, University of Kerala thanked the chief guest and other dignitaries for having consented to grace the occasion.

Cyborgisation and transhuman approaches..

P J Sam Alex
Ajmal N S

Kariavattom: T T Sreekumar, in his keynote address at the National Seminar, tried to shed light on the scope of convergence across various disciplines. He pointed out how convergence works transgressing across various disciplinary domains like any natural sciences or humanities disciplines. He cited examples of the emerging discipline of digital humanities which is a conflux of humanities and communication disciplines. He pointed out that the need of the hour is not just to celebrate interdisciplinary studies but also critically look at the way in which interdisciplinary processes shape disciplines at various domains. Moving on to the core topic at hand, he elaborated

on Cyborg from a perspective that provided us insights into larger processes that actually help make interdisciplinary studies possible - a fusion of natural sciences and human sciences.

Distinguishing between Robotisation and Cyborgisation, he explained: Robot is an effort to attribute human capabilities to a machine while Cyborg is the method of amplifying the human capacities with help of machines attached to the body. It's about becoming a machine yourself. Quoting Donna Haraway he opined, the distinction

between Science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion. Latest innovations surpass the fictional imaginations



Prof. T T Sreekumar

and Cyborg is one such idea. He explained the historical prospects of how post-mod-

ern thoughts emerged and the subversive role post modernism played in questioning the existing notions. He pointed out how the political ideals of socialist and feminist politics along with Western and Soviet Marxism encountered the political consequence posed by postmodernism. At the convergence of these compulsions and relatively contradictory relationships between them, the idea of Cyborg is gaining more attention among anthropologists, philosophers, scientists, engineers etc. How the idea of Cyborg and human-machine interactions has been propagated in the mass culture through literature and sci-fi movies like the Matrix and Star Trek were looked upon briefly during the session. T T Sreekumar observed that every theoretical and prac-

tical attempt towards collaborating humans and machines was based on mind-body duality. He also put forward his anxiety about digital divide in the age of Cyborg where modernity is differently experienced and how it creates inequalities in a trans-human world. In today's radical imagination of society, the idea of Cyborg and scientific developments that lead to its refinement has been recognized as a major challenge in rethinking emancipatory politics. He briefed about the ethical issues that may emerge with the innovation of technology and how a trans-human era may cast shadow over the lives of common people. The emerging patterns of online dissent and resistance on the cyberspace for various social and political reasons through net art were also observed.



Civil Society and Media Culture

Anandu A
Athira A S

Kariavattom: The Core Sessions of the three day national seminar on “Trending Disciplinary Convergence in Media Study” commenced with the key note address by T.T Sreekumar. Nine seminar papers on diverse areas in media studies were presented during the two sessions on the first day. The seminar paper presented touched almost all spectra of media studies.

The first core session of the day was chaired by Dr. Subash Kuttan, Board of Studies Chairman (Journalism), UOK.

Ms. Maggie J presented the first paper on the topic ‘A review on Media Interpretation on Environmental Issues.’ The study was based on the interpretations by the newspapers in general on environmental issues. (The Environmental Communication has attracted a wide audience and has evolved into a new discipline in the media domain.) Environmental issues has been given lesser importance after the implementation of new economic policy.

The presentation of Mr. Bibu V.N. on the topic ‘Online media, Digital Public Sphere and Voice of Women’ emphasised the Habermasian and post-Habermasian conceptions regarding public

sphere and counter publics. The paper further tried to focus on the role of the social media as a medium in protecting and promoting women rights in India.

The different dimensions of the growth of communication technology in the wide global media scenario and the near future technological advancement like Virtual reality, Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence etc were explained by Mr. Renjith R on the basis of his topic ‘The role of technology in the evolution of Mass Media’.

The second Core Session of the day was chaired by Dr. N. Muhammadali, HOD, Dept. Of Journalism and Communication, University of Calicut commenced with the presentation of Dr. Abdul Munner V, on the topic ‘Political Communication: An Interdisciplinary Enquiry into a Multi-Faceted communication discourse’. This paper tried to explore the interdisciplinary nature of political communication.

The next presentation on

the topic ‘Media Theory, Research and Practice: How to Bridge the Gaps?’ was done by Dr. Sanjeev S.R. The paper was an attempt to trace the relevance of media theory in practice. The analysis put for-

ward the fact that although the study group has ascertained the significance of formal media education and theoretical grounding, less importance has been given to these aspects in the real world media practices.

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can be utilised to strengthen communication that advance agriculture and better living.

The Presentation of Ms. Sreeja.S on the topic “Women at key positions: Engaging cinematic public

of using political advertising in Kerala and its role in mediating one’s involvement with voting decision.

The Seminar presentation by Mr. Naveen Vetrivel on the topic ‘Fishing in troubled waters: Media framing of the India-Sri Lanka Fishermen Issue’ was based on a study on content analysis conducted in six newspapers. The study results indicated a clear shift in bias between Indian and Sri Lankan newspapers and how they used human interest angles to give a pro-people twist to their reports.

The Seminar presentations of first day mainly focused on the themes like civil society and development and the papers intended to observe the role and activities of media in Political and development Communication. All the presentations provided a platform to understand, discuss and debate of different aspects of political and developmental Communication. The active interactive session with the audience after each sessions made the space more lively.



MEDIATION : Beyond Secular Visual Narratives

Amritha S
Lekshmi M

Kariavattom: “Images are stimulants to visual experiences and creates a moral responsiveness in us”, said Sujith Kumar Parayil, in his keynote address. He analyzed the formation of the visual subject in the domain of early modern Indian visuality (painting, photography and cinema) and also the conjectural rupture created in the sensorial perception of the subject by the new or social media visuality.

The first part of the presentation proposed that it is a secular visual narrative structure that predominantly idealizes the visual perception of Indian modernity. Secular visual narrative had created an ‘encounter’ that resulted in the formation of a new kind of sensibility. The distance between the subject of suffering

and the viewer creates a space. This in turn contributes to the empathetic or sympathetic responses in the visual narrative concepts.

Mr. Parayil also explained three modes of visual narratives- ‘Derivative’, ‘Desi’ and ‘Beyond’. While the Desi and the derivate tend to portray the hegemonic practices, the ‘beyond’ does not have a language of its own to claim an identity. The socially and culturally conditioned visual reflexes have been predominantly used in the visual

language of the ‘beyond’, in order to characterize the conditions and consciousness of the dalit, subalterns or women. They were subordinatedly visualized in the derivative-discourse. They were always recognized with differences.

The ‘sense’ of a picture is not only created out of seeing it but also out of sensibilities like hearing sounds that makes us closer to the subject. The repulsive ‘feel’ thus

created in us helps us to understand and generate further notions. Even without visual faculties, music is able to create different sensibilities in us.

When you see a close up scene, a moment is given for us to see that image. It is during this second, our thoughts get activated. There would be a gap between you and the object on screen. This gap is filled with either the ‘perception’ image, the ‘movement’ image or the ‘affect’ image. The secular visual narratives of Indian Visuality has to do with the sensorial perceptions.

In the case of social media, new kinds of visualities are surfacing. The domain of social media visuality is a contested site where, on the one hand, it shows a continuity of secular narrative structure, but on the other hand, there are daunting political images that try to

distract this secular imaginary and attempt to cater a new visual subjectivity. It propagates new ideas on politics. However the former narrative structure and the resultant humanitarian perceptions are emerged out within a visual encounter and its affective promises but the latter narrative structure not exclusively depends on the images and its immediate affects, rather goes beyond the specific referent and trying to resurface certain mythical morals, as against the ‘universal subjectivity’, through the violent and disruptive images.

He concluded his presentation saying that it is not technology that makes the visual subject rather it is the technological dissemination of the knowledge that makes the subject and we live by the sensorial perceptions of these visual subjects.



Prof. Sujith Kumar Parayil

Truth never matters in post truth era: T V Madhu

Ajay Mohan
Aswathy S

Kariavattom: We are currently living in a post truth era where truth is not at all a matter of question but a redundant kind of discourse. Truth is a validity claim in the sense that it is a promise bridging rational consensus, said T V Madhu in his keynote address. Truth accommodates a definitional property of empirical propositions, like in Maths, where a triangle can have only three angles. Truth is not said to be 'truth' only when there are opposite certain

possibilities. If someone says that something is not true, he is actually contradicting himself.

Public sphere is one of the hotly contested topics in social and political theory today, though a debating empirical

concern as well as concept in critical social theory. It is a

quasi empirical notion. Individuals, rational debates of public



Prof. T V Madhu

concern apart from private interests and public are the three

prerequisite requirements for a space to become a public sphere where individuals are the unique participants, he affirmed. The public sphere has always been a mediated space. It is a notion where an 'ideal' becomes an essential part of the conception of public sphere, added Madhu.

Communication facilitates the formulation of a public opinion in a public sphere. Speech acts are the basic units of communication. There are certain validity claims presupposed in these speech acts like, intelligibility, truth,

justification and sincerity.

A perfect communication takes place when an individual successfully defends all these four validity claims. Madhu concluded his lecture by quoting Benedict Anderson's definition of public sphere as a kind of temporality created by the media, where everyone meet and discuss something that is common. Media manufactures content as well as shapes. Media is a requisite for public sphere to function but lately it has turned out to problematize the sphere through agenda setting.

Decoding Social Realities Of Media

Nandagopan S
Sagar S Nair

Kariavattom: Fourteen papers were presented in three sessions on the second day of the National Seminar held at the Department of communication and Journalism, UoK. The seminar papers presented during the occasion tried to investigate and navigate the disciplinary process of media studies as a multifaceted one. After the completion of two sessions on the first day, the seminar continued with its remaining sessions on the second day.

The Third Core Session chaired by Dr. Sanjeev S.R. (Asst. Prof., Dept of journalism and mass communication, Mar Ivanios College) commenced with the seminar presentation by Mr. Rajeesh kumar T.V on the topic 'Patriarchy, Fans and Political Economy: Foundation Analysis of Social Media discourses in Kerala'. The paper seeks to analyse the discourses in social media in the wake of actress Parvathy's criticism of patriarchy in Malayalam film industry through a Foucauldian framework of discursive practices. The second paper by Ms. Shruthi. S. Mohan on the topic 'Evolution of a Hyperreal Community Through Social Media' emphasise the transformation of the human race to a hyper-real community through social media

The presentation by Mr. Mohammed Irshad on topic 'The Nations and Nationalisms

in the popular Indian Puranic-Characters' based Cartoon Serials' finds relevance for the analytical study on various aspects of Identity construction with relation to the presented images and hegemony based on the constructed identities. The next presentation titled 'A Study on Gender Sensitivity in Crime News Reportage: A Case study of The Hindu and The Times of India' by Rashmi Raja V.R aims to analyse two of the Indian national dailies so as to look at the grammar followed for crime news reporting and intends to reward the articles which have followed the style sheet of gender sensitivity.

The fourth session of the seminar begins under the chairing of Dr M S Harikumar (HOD Dept. of Communication and Journalism, UoK). Dr. Irish Koileo presented her paper on the topic 'Media Approach to Ockhi -Myths and Realities: A specific study based on Gender perspective'. It was based on the approach of the major newspapers towards the Okhi disaster and the follow-ups carried on immediately after the media, especially print media in both regional as well as national dailies. It was followed by the presentation of Mr. Deepak G Nair on the topic 'News on Public and private TV channel: A comparative study of DD Malayalam and Manorama News'. This paper deeply examines variance in news presented on DD Malayalam and Manorama news in Kerala context. Next presentation was on the topic 'Role of Media in Society' by Ms. Kavi-

yasampath. Her seminar tried to explore the functions and responsibilities of media in society with more emphasis given to the social, economic and cultural impact of media in social progress and Good Governance. The presentation by Col. Anand Kumar on the topic 'Media and Evolution of Gender Equality' analyses the aspects of media and gender in most media platforms including Print media, Radio, Television and Internet. The study further emphasised the theme of gender equality in two important media platforms including Cinema and Advertising

The fifth session chaired by Ms Maggie J (Asst. professor, Dept. Of Communication and Journalism, UoK) begins with the presentation by Mr. Suresh K.S on understanding 'Crisis and Critique: A View on Environmental Protest'. The paper aims to enter into the discussion through presenting a contemporary environmental protest at Odochuttapadukka in Trivananthapuram district where Indian Medical Association tried to set up a biomedical waste disposal plant. The second presentation was done by Ms. Sinila D.B.S. on 'Use of personification and Exaggeration: An Analysis of Humour Elements in selected Advertisements'. The paper examined the humour elements appeal used in selected advertisements to increase their effectiveness and attract consumers. The session continued with the presentation of Ms. Pushpa K.S on 'Effectiveness of Games and Multimedia

package on Imparting Nutrition Education to School Children'. The general objective of the descriptive study conducted at Govt Higher Secondary School was to impart nutrition education to school children through games and multimedia packages. The presentation by Ms. Thejaswini J.C on 'Internet Memes as Digital Carnival: Analysing Memes on the movie Kasaba', tries to explore the unorganised free play of image in internet memes and also look at the intertextual nature of memes to explore their growing extent of multiple signification process. The next presentation by Ms. Swathy Balasarawathi Nair on the topic 'Press Freedom and Cartoon Controversy in Human Rights Vista' revolves around the question whether expressions such as the cartoons falls within the group of expressions properly protected by the Right of Freedom of expression. The last presentation of the day was by Ms. Ansiem George on the topic 'Therapeutic Impasse and Consequence of Social Networking'. This study was an effort to convey the message that the uncontrolled use of social networking results in consequence including physical, psychological, social and spiritual problems. The second day of the seminar indulge deeply into the more wider aspects of media studies and its interdisciplinary character right from its inception.

Media Studies: Discipline first rather than interdisciplinarity

Ansa Salim
Sukrutha S

Kariavattom: The current media scenario in India get evolved as an interdisciplinary approach in evaluating social fluctuations. In the absence of a strong tradition of media studies, the challenge that Mr. Jenson Joseph put forward before us was a concrete framework to make sense of the old media and the new media cultures simultaneously.



Prof. Jenson Joseph

The paramount theme of the seminar 'Trending Disciplinary Convergence in Media Studies' was deeply criticised in the key note session of Mr. Jenson Joseph, Assistant Professor, Symbiosis International University Pune. He opines that the present day scholars working on contemporary political and cultural transformations from disciplines ranging from Political theory to Anthropology and Philosophy identify theorising the changes in media ecology as key to comprehending the horizons of change in front of them.

In India, an area where inter state affairs held hostage to zero sum politics, media has a greater responsibility in creating the framework of trust and

understanding since the status of the region are socially, culturally, historically and economically interconnected. He pointed out that media studies in India are yet to show necessary maturity and wisdom in enabling a room for regional media studies too. With expansion, the field of communication and media studies became more and more diversified.

The ascent of different media and communication aspects emerged and developed into more or less independent branches. This process of proliferation was in no way halted by the convergence brought about by the digitalization of media production and distribution. Taken together, then, the expansion and diversity of the field made it over-abundant. Placed in a broader perspective of the history of science, such proliferation is problematic.

Communication and media studies today are abundant that the field runs the risk of losing sight of its scholarly roots and embracing only the surface of the realities it investigates.

When analysing the interdisciplinary approach in media studies, Professor Jenson Joseph strongly advocates the idea of vibrant academic mode in media studies which is not yet attained by society. He shared an in-depth thought in media studies and its relevance in contemporary society. His concluding words suggested that media studies should evolve as an effective discipline and it demands priority rather than thinking interdisciplinary.



Media evaluating Social Fluctuations

Amrutha CV
Bhavapriya JU

Kariavattom: The third and last day of the national seminar titled 'Emerging disciplinary convergence in media studies' showcased an extravaganza of knowledge regarding communication and media studies through nine different presentations. The seminar presentations mainly focused on the changing nature of communication process and the coverage and framing of news by newspapers.

The seventh core session chaired by Dr. Subash Kuttan (Former HOD, DCJ, UoK) began with the presentation of Mr. Shaheersha. A. H on the topic 'Attitude of Professional Journalism In Kerala Towards Citizen Journalism'. This paper analysed the attitude of Professional journalists

and new media experts towards citizen journalism. The next paper on 'The changing nature of political Communication in a transforming mass media domain' was presented by Ms. Nayana.R. This paper covered the various aspects on the changing nature of political communication in persistently changing new media platforms. The third presentation of this session was on the topic 'Effectiveness of Statutory Warnings on Kerala Audience: A Study based on Disclaimers that Appear in Films and Serials' was a combined presentation by Ms. Jubbi Francis Kalukkaran and Ms. Anuja Das P.M. This paper aims to identify the influencing capacity of Statutory warnings on Indian audience and whether it is relevant in the present day scenario. The next presentation

on the topic 'Facebook and homeland Communication in Diaspora: A Study based on the Facebook mediated homeland communication meth-



ods of Gulf Malayali was by Mr. Yadunandan. The presentation was based on a study that focused on how transnationalism is reflected on the social media behaviour of Gulf Malayali.

The seventh session continued under the chairing of Ms. Parvathy Chandran (Asst. Prof., St. Xavier's College). The presentation by Ms. Ma-



lini Srinivasan was on the topic 'Media, message and source credibilities: An experimental analysis of interdependencies'. The presentation was based on an experimental analysis used to theorise

the interdependencies of credibility frames and their relationships with demographic variables. The session continued with the presentation by Mr. Anto. P. Cheerutha on the topic 'Media Communication and Climate Change: A Study on Online Malayalam Newspaper Framing of 'Ockhi' Cyclone. The set core objectives of this study includes the identification of different frames adopted by the online editions of four major Malayalam Newspapers in covering newsstories relating to Ockhi disaster and to identify the variation in coverage pattern among them. The next presentation was on the topic 'A Study on digital space in creating sustainable tourism awareness' by Mr. J. H. Akas. The paper attempted to observe the role of various media in creating eco-tourism awareness among tourists in Kanyakumari

district based on a prepared questionnaire. The next presentation of this session was by Ms. Deepamol Thomas on the topic 'The role of Campaign Journalism as an indicator to Environmental Protection'. This paper tried to study the primary responsibilities of media in alerting the public on various environmental hazards through Campaign Journalism. The last presentation of the session was by Ms. Jais Merlin P. Augustine on the topic 'Evaluation of Rural Health Communication Strategies: A micro level study of MR vaccination campaign on Kerala'. The aim of this study was to analyse the strategies and effectiveness of health communication campaign particularly MR vaccination campaign at a micro level in Alakkodu Grama panchayath in Malapuram district.

Curtain falls for National Seminar

Akshara A K
Sumod S M

Kariavattom: The three day long National Seminar on 'Trending Disciplinary Convergence on Media Studies' organised by Dept of Communication and Journalism, University of Kerala was concluded on 28th of February. Senior Journalist Jacob George was the Chief Guest of the Valedictory Function.

Dr. M S Harikumar, Head of the Communication and Journalism department, Prof. Subhash Kuttan, Chairman, Board of studies (Journalism), Dr Lal mohan P. (Asst Prof. of Communication and Journalism), Maggie J (Asst Prof. of Dept of communication and Journalism) were also present in the closing ceremony.

Prof. T T Sreekumar (EFLU Hyderabad), Dr Sujith Kumar Parayil (JNU, New Delhi), Jenson Joseph (Asst Prof, Symbiosis International University), Prof. T V Madhu (University of Calicut) and Prof Achuthsankar S Nair (University of Kerala) delivered keynote address. Academicians, practitioners and research scholars from different Universities also presented seminar papers on various aspects of Media Studies. The Seminar brought together an array of academicians, working Journalists, media personalities, research scholars and students from different universities and reputed institutions across India.



Senior Journalist Jacob George addressing the gathering of the valedictory function of National Seminar

Unleashing the power of Big data on the digital domain

Dilsha D
Lucky S Prakash

Kariavattom: "When you analyse data from life science, there is no fake data in life science, but there are fake news in new media. New media has tremendously grown in size and information technology has observed that this is an example for big data" said Prof. Achuthsankar providing insights into the pros and cons of the new media in the era of big data. In the session he gave an overview of the big data science from the perspective of a media analyst. He pointed out to the extent of large volumes of data and information available today both through print, visual or digital media. There are 1.5 lakhs photos being shared and uploaded via internet per minute, 25 lakhs of google searches and 25 lakhs of video searches per minute. Through these figures and calculations, he observed that new media has become synonymous to big data spanning across var-

ious disciplines of knowledge. Prof. Achuthsankar opined that the future of computer science lies in biology and each human being is storage centres of huge data. New media has a prolonging role in this stor-



Prof. Achuth sankar S Nair

age function. The principles of data management system is not much applicable for big data sources such as new media, it should be addressed in a more scientific way. He explained the three properties of big data such as volume, velocity of change, variety as it does not exist in one form. It varies from texts, photos, videos, actions like comments, shares etc. Big amount of data and information used are left on the

digital world as this data cannot be searched and studied since they lack a definite structure. He also shed light on the demerits of new media, the issues of fake news, scandalising public images etc. He briefed about the channels through which big data flows, how new media platforms like Facebook is being utilised by brands, politicians etc to study human nature and manipulate their decision-making in their fa-

vour. He stressed on the need for more efficient methodologies of news and data analysis on new media platforms and hinted on the obstacles in studying the big data phenomenon due to the heterogeneous nature of data available online. He opined that everyone has become both producers and consumers of big data due to the proliferation of new media and increased internet penetration in the society.