

The Transformation of Communication

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Castells claims that incorporation of technologies such as the Internet has altered the communication and social process in a profound way.

- Before these technologies, communication was mainly limited to the conventional media broadcast that include television and radio.
- The use of electronic communication means has caused distinction between the virtual and the real and the virtual realm becomes the first reality of human beings.
- This is a revolutionary change that has implications on the understandings of self, society, and interaction in society.
- The incorporation of electronic communication systems has drastically revolutionized the structures of our human lived experiences.

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The End of the Mass Audience

- The most significant characteristic is the change in the structure of the audiences and the shrinking of the mass audience.
- People are able to intervene in media spaces and thus commodities have shifted from being passively consumed (Castells, 2018).
- This erases the divisions between the production and the consumption, the mechanisms that enable the active involvement.
- The limited, uni-directional, mass public address model of communication has been substituted by two-wayed dynamic, networked communication.
- Nevertheless, it evokes concerns of echo chambers and polarized public debate (Castells, 2010).



Audience Definition and Examples | Media Studies

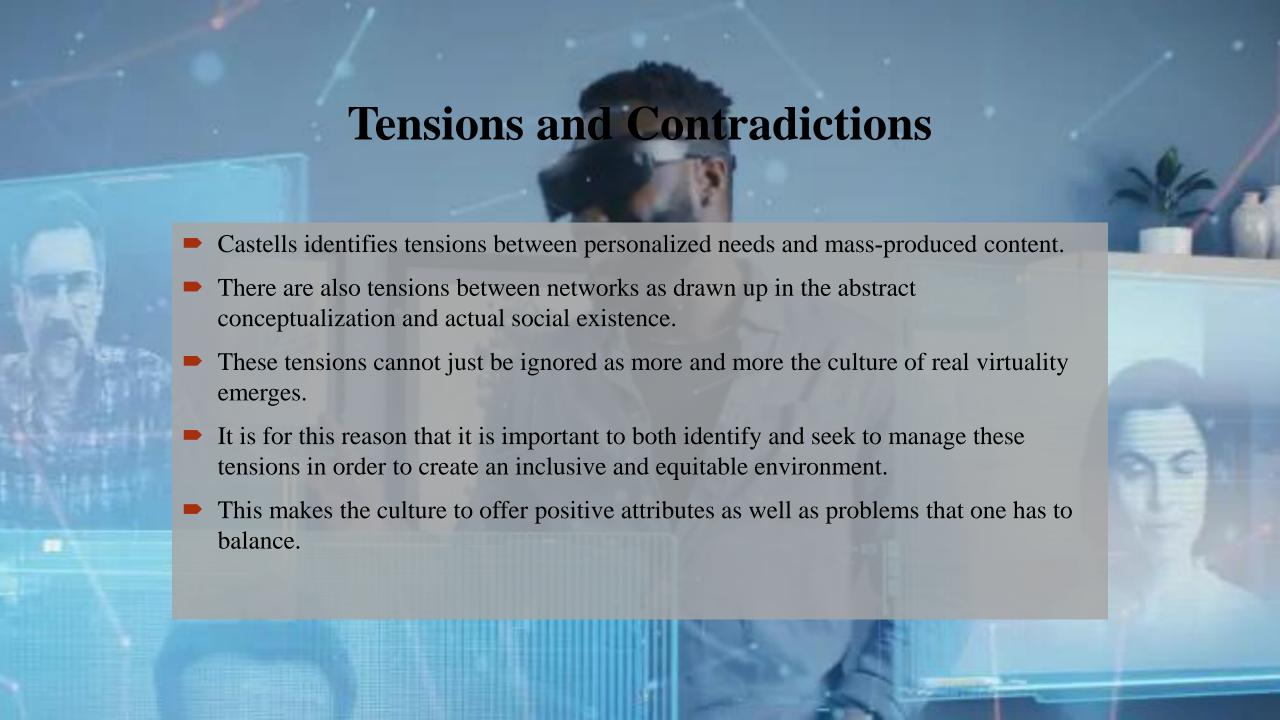


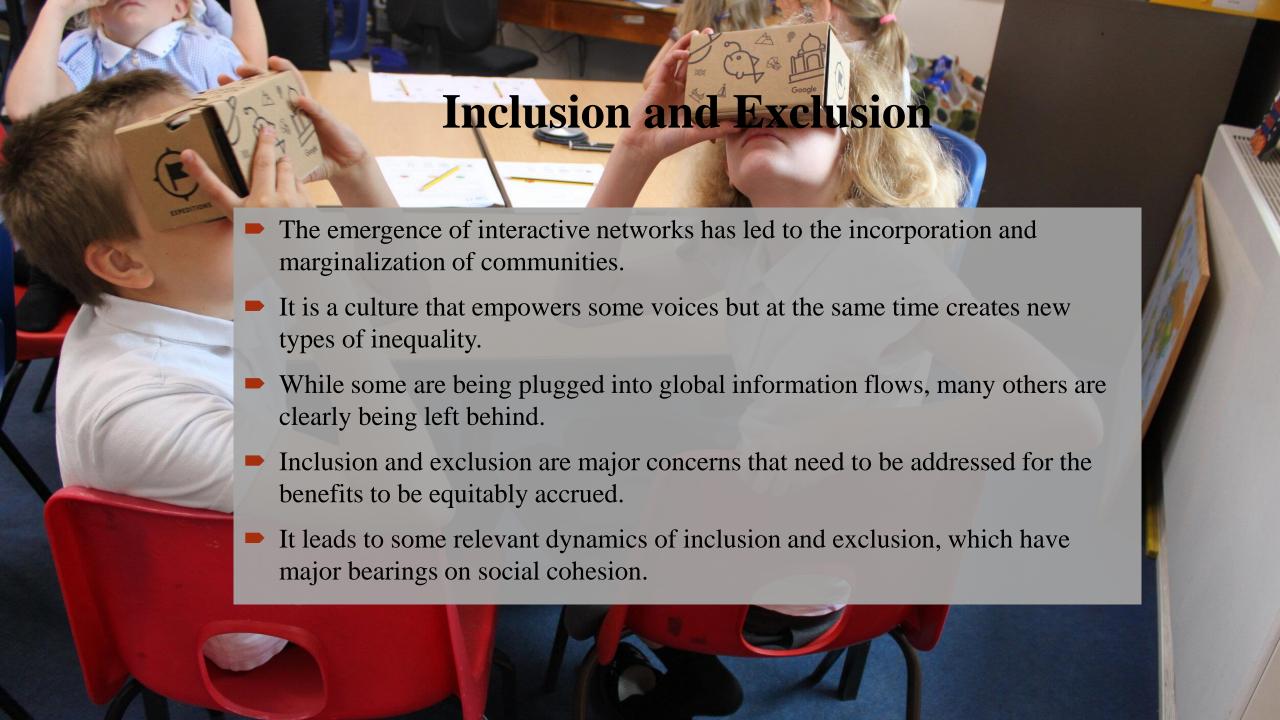
Virtuality as Social Reality



What is immersive virtual reality and how does it work? - Telefónica

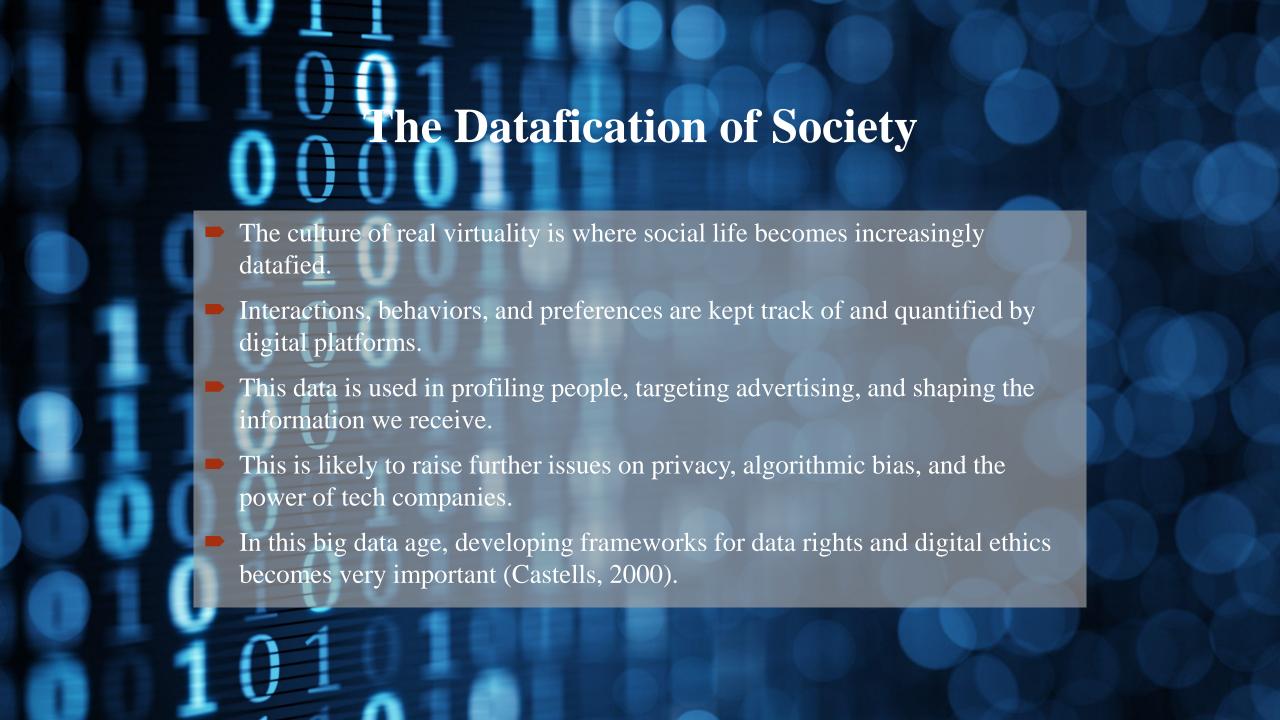
- Castells argues "virtuality" has become the dominant mode of social experience and interaction (Castells, 2000)..
- The virtual environment mediated by technologies is now the primary "reality" people inhabit.
- This challenges traditional notions of identity, community, and social interaction.
- The virtual has become the new normal, transforming the human experience.
- Castells sees this as a fundamental shift, not just an enhancement of previous communication (Castells, 2010).











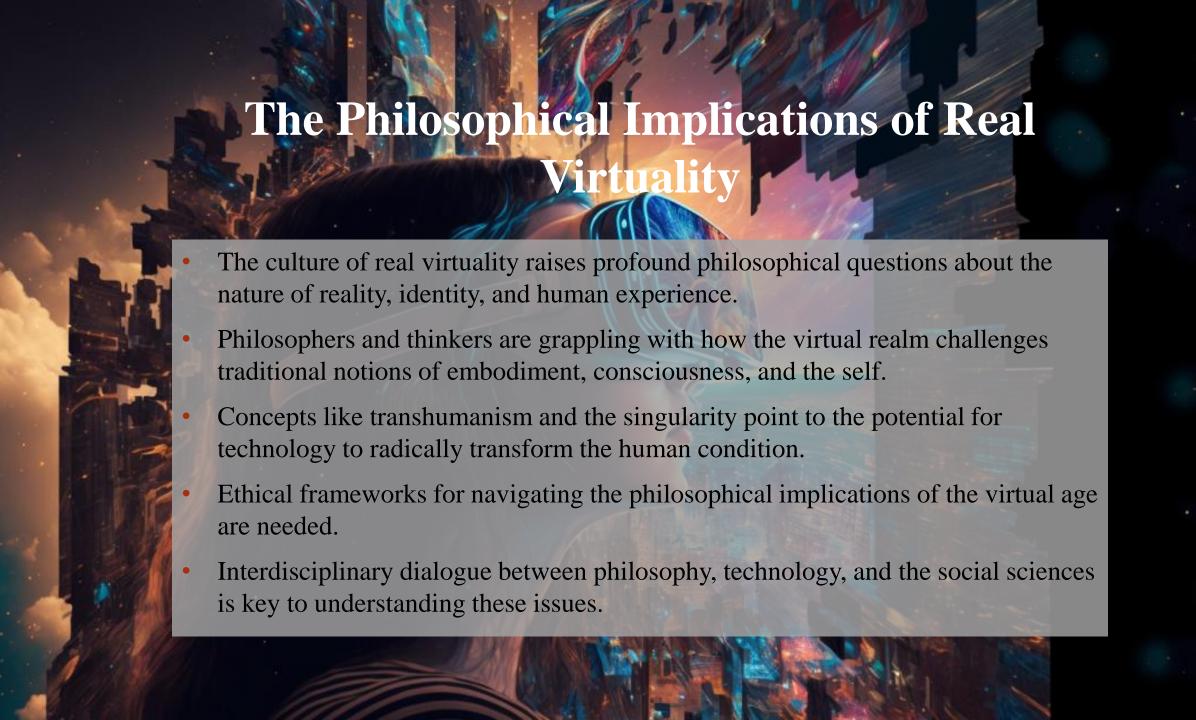


The Geopolitics of the Virtual Realm

- The culture of real virtuality has geopolitical implications that come about through states vying for control over digital infrastructure.
- The issues of cybersecurity, data sovereignty, and internet governance have already started assuming center stage.
- Digital technologies are at present being used by states and citizens alike for surveillance and resistance.
- The virtual arena becomes the new frontier of both cooperation and conflict between nations.
- It is for this reason that the real challenge is urgent—the development of international frameworks and norms that can govern virtual reality.

The Environmental Impact of the Virtual Age

- The culture of real virtuality has environmental consequences through the energy use of digital technologies.
- The proliferation of devices, data centers, and digital infrastructure has a significant carbon footprint.
- ► E-waste from discarded electronics is a growing problem that requires sustainable solutions.
- The virtual realm also offers opportunities for more sustainable practices like remote work and virtual education.
- Balancing the benefits and costs of the virtual age from an environmental perspective is crucial (Van Dijk, 1999).





The virtual has become the dominant mode of social reality, blurring boundaries and challenging traditional notions.

age.

- However, the culture of real virtuality also creates tensions and challenges that must be addressed.
- Castells' work provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the interplay of technology, society, and culture.
- As we navigate the complexities of the information age, critically engaging with this concept and its implications is essential for shaping the future.

