

Podcasting to Smash the Patriarchy: The Heart as a case study of quiet activism

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Abstract:

The #metoo movement established the disclosure of sexual violence via social media as mainstream and offered participants a platform to share experiences, receive support and feel part of a community. In response to this, we explore the use of audio methods such as podcasting as a conduit to describe embodied experiences and the ways in which non-visual media can provide a safe, positive environment to reveal deeply personal information and help to overcome trauma.

In this talk, we use the miniseries 'No' of podcast The Heart as a case study to highlight patriarchal power and sexual violence myths as the host revisits previous relationships and sexual experiences. The result can be profoundly discomfoting but also emancipatory – simply talking about sexual violence can constitute a revolutionary act given the stigma and victim blaming prevalent in Western society. By making private, intimate experiences public and centring female perspectives, The Heart highlights the disparate, gendered perceptions of the same interaction in nuanced ways. In the same way that #metoo underscored the universality of women's experiences of male harassment, we argue that The Heart is an example of both 'quiet activism' and public scholarship that challenges patriarchal assumptions.