

# 10+1 Remarks on Participation & The Media (guest blog)

 [blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2012/06/02/101-remarks-on-participation-the-media-guest-blog/](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2012/06/02/101-remarks-on-participation-the-media-guest-blog/)

2012-6-2



Pilar Carrera

*We all love public participation in media don't we? From [Dan Gillmor's 'We The Media'](#) to [Clay Shirky's 'Here Come's Everybody'](#) via [Wikipedia](#) and the [Guardian's Open Journalism](#), it's been seen as a lovely thing for both the industry and the citizen. I call my version of it [Networked Journalism](#). But is it really working? Have we over-expected? Do we (the professional) really embrace sharing? Pilar Carrera is a media lecturer at Madrid's Universidad Carlos III studying participatory journalism who is currently a visiting fellow at my Department at the LSE. Here is her (tongue-in-cheek) set of questions we should ask ourselves about the "hype-Internet fueled unidirectional mass media trauma" we call 'PARTICIPATION'.  
Apocalyptic or utopian or just "nothing new under the sun"?*

1. Who sets the rules? (or , what comes to the same: Who launches the debate in which I agree to participate and who moderates it?)
2. What is a more patronizing formula: "citizen journalism" (now, apparently, in decay) or "open journalism" (still not taking off)?
3. What if I am not interested in participating but only in having my unidirectional say online? Will I be deported into the desert of the Real?
4. Where am I allowed to make my entrance in the online journalism chambers?: through the back door that leads to the basement where other "citizens" (exclusively) play participation, or through the main door into the big hall where journalists (and, eventually, I) have their say?
5. Why should I want to be led into participatory ghettos if I can walk alone through the Wild cyberspacial West?
6. Are supervised or "on your own" modalities of participation a way to make business (for those who fueled participation), a civil duty, a hobby, a kind of epochal twitch, or just everyday life?
7. What if I want just to be a passive participant while watching "The Ladykillers" on whatever sort of screen? Shall I, after the The End, tweet about it or go straight to my Facebook wall, or post on my blog, or search for Mackendrick on YouTube, to fulfill my spectatorial self? (There is not irony in this question)
8. Aren't we mistaken participation for writing back or answering back or doing some online searching? Isn't the pure spectator, mouth shout, quiet fingers the one who participates in the most compelling manner?
9. Does participation necessarily imply any creative momentum? Isn't redundancy (also known as "virality") the most common way of participatory activity?
10. Why are those who criticize participation always singing the "Chosen People Song"? Didn't they understand that we are ALL, as "content creators", just tenants on the Internet Real Estate?
11. The media should create too (those who work in the media business are supposedly payed for) great passive participatory experiences. This means they should provide great entertainment, great news, great movies, great documentaries, every now and then at least. They should provide a fully passive, intellectually rewarding, first class time-killing products... just in case "citizens" wanted, just for a while, when the working day is over, disconnect through connection, not to search, but to find.

To be continued...

- Copyright © 2014 London School of Economics and Political Science