

**Printed Media?**

There was a dialogue between me and my friend who is studying in SOAS, we were talking about my questions about printed medias in London. There was the time when I was starting questioning the existing print culture in this mostly paperless lifestyle city---moreover, in this digital era. I thought 'prints are dead'---that what was my friend back in my country once said. At that time, my curiosity revolving around free newspapers all over London, then comparing with paid newspapers in how news is being delivered, although I can simply Wikipedia their political views out, that was fascinating to discover it by myself in a manual way---making collages; cataloguing news headline using glue and scissors like the deadline was nothing. *"You can start researching how was newspaper back then in our country, and how is it now"*, she said. I spent time observing those newspapers and discovering the biases in the mass media. That was the moment when I thought I discovered something, then I feel trapped with the topic, even though I feel like very invested in this 'area'. I do not even know why am I doing it, it is too huge for me.

**Media Biases? Media Representation? Which one?**

I feel a bit lost, until a one-on-one, or I can say, a dialogue, with Jayoon kind of lead me into a new direction, she was being supportive towards the topic, although, I need to be more specific. I talked about her the reason of why I chose it as my main interest, I honestly did not know why, but I started to talk about bell hooks' video essay that I like, where hooks explained about how mass media uses more certain kinds of representations for specific impact and effect. I can say it is a very interesting issue that I can relate to easily without having a 'trapped' feeling but I am afraid it does not have any relation with my previous projects. After restarting my thinking process by questioning the decisions and projects I have made, there are some questions that come to my mind: What I found by cataloguing the newspapers? What is interesting about that? Where am I now and where do I want to go next? and why I need to go there? The only thing I knew at that moment is, I hoped I cross paths with something meaningful to myself that motivates me to keep doing it, one small step at a time.

**Structured and Agency?**

A dialogue with Guy Barton helped me to find a clear direction. He talked about Agency—where you are in control, versus Structure—where society tell you what to do (and I am going to research more about this). How much does media create a certain structure? What could be if we explore ourselves in an unstructured version of ourselves? This reminds me of a children picture book written by Vita Murrow, *Power to The Princess*, an illustrated book contains an anthology of fairy tales retold in a new generation, where Princesses (and Prince) have altered ending—they do not need to be saved because they have their power, they can do anything they want to do without being afraid of how the society see them. I think, a non-traditional way of fairytale retelling might change how I perceive the world if it was being released years ago, when the literatures are mostly built by patriarchal society that patronized on how a woman has to be. Magazines, novels, all printed medias I could access when I was ten are telling how is it to be a 'good' girl. (Oh, maybe that is the reason why I turned down the girls' magazines offered by my mother, and chose the general kids' magazine and dinosaur books instead.) Speaking about breaking the structured gender roles, this also related to what I got in a dialogue with Maya Ober.

### **Women Representations in Printed Media?**

When I feel 'trapped' in what I want to discover, Maya Ober brings up some interesting issues to look at about the woman standardization in media. The thing is started at 'how is it to be a woman in Indonesia?' Specifically, a Moslem woman in Indonesia? It might have relations to the colonialism and its heritage. Did it impact these post-colonial contexts? How about the literatures when you were a child? Is it disconnected from the Indonesian reality? How is it in Indonesia and in the UK? She strongly advises me to weave the narrative of my research through my personal story, there where I might find a frame for my research and find something that I could possibly unfold. In the end, she also told me to find how this issue of gender, race class, and sexuality intersecting and connected. I might want to try to look at this from outside. This also supported by Houman when I did the last one-on-one tutorial. I also talked about my fear, I always think I cannot make something 'serious' through my witty drawings or childish designs, he told me to think about George Orwell's Animal Farm, how it infiltrates something serious in a childish way. It helps me to feel confidence to move forward in this direction.

### **To quote Matthew, "... The echoes from other contexts."**

I have never known that I will cross path with this issue when I was doing is literally only cutting and pasting newspaper I collected from the buses in hope finding something meaningful. I have never thought about this, because I do not think it matters, I do not think my concernment is a real issue in another part of the world. I also had some virtual dialogues with three hometown friends who lately I found we shared the same concern when we were in a primary school. As hooks said, people want to deny the direct link between representations and how we live our lives. Although, this is sure a huge area and extremely challenging for me, I think I know *why* I want to do this and I hope it works.



*(Ironically, I thought about this while I am straightening my curly hair.)*