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Title: The public sphere and information ethics

Abstract:

The aim with this contribution is to provide a good theoretical reconstruction of the concept of the public sphere and to show its possible relevance for the field of information ethics. This will be done, with close reference to one of the most important philosophers of our time who is also known for his work in communication theory – Jürgen Habermas. The contribution will consist of the following parts: 1) A brief sketch of Habermas's intellectual background. 2) A discussion of Habermas's concept of the public sphere as it was historically and systematically introduced in his early work – *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962). 3) Habermas's work on the public sphere (since the 1960s) will then be discussed – for example his concepts of public reason and communicative action and its relevance for information ethics will once again be shown. 4) The last part will end with some critical remarks on the concept of the public sphere (and its relation to information ethics) and its relevance for a context such as South Africa.