



TRANSFORMING AUDIENCES 2

CREATIVITY / KNOWLEDGE / PARTICIPATION

ABSTRACTS

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Changing media, changing audiences, and the making of generational identities

This paper presents an empirical examination of the generational approach to media consumption as a useful key to study the transforming audiences, refusing both the simplifying attitude that dominates in marketing, and the new generations' definitions based on the emerging technologies (like "web generation", e.g.), made by many popularizing commentators.

Generational identities are, in fact, an increasingly relevant issue within contemporary society: while people deals with economical and technological gaps related to differences between cohorts, generations become active resources to make sense of their living. Generations are helpful labels to define their position in the new environment of collective identities, boosting a wide range of discourses and debates: intergenerational conflicts around welfare; the production of 'generational' goods and services; generational factors in shaping digital divide, and so on.

The paper aims to show the main results of a five years long research project developed by OssCom with the goal to investigate the role of media in the cohorts' process of genesis and self-recognizing, where biographical and historical traits, social discourse and reflexivity continuously intersect. The role of generations in the field of cultural production and consumption is, in fact, more and more relevant as each generation is characterized by a different experience with media products and media technologies. The constitution of digital networked society, too, is affected by some differences between baby boomers and post-war generations, but also between digital immigrants and digital natives.

Those differences are destined to have relevant consequences both in the development of products, applications and consumption practices of the culture industries. They are relevant also in furthering participation in democracy, involvement in (virtual) communities and reflexivity for an enhanced living in a mediated world.

Fatimah Awan
University of Westminster, UK

Creative and visual methods in qualitative audience research

Traditionally, in qualitative audience research many of the methods employed by empirical studies remain grounded in participants producing instant verbal (or sometimes written) accounts of their feelings and experiences – usually within the context of an interview or focus group discussion – and/or lapse into privileging the researcher's interpretations as the 'authoritative voice'. Within recent years, and as a direct response to the perceived limitations of and dissatisfaction with these established research techniques, a growing body of work has utilised creative and visual methods in which participants are invited to create artefacts such as collages, drawings, videos and models to express their feelings and experiences. To interpret these non-linguistic products these methodologies do require participants to supply their *own* interpretations of their work using language; however, language is only reintroduced following time engaged in the non-verbal reflective process of making items. In doing so it is argued that by affording participants reflective time to consider their thoughts and feelings before producing a response, we receive richer insights into what a particular issue or representation really

means to an individual and this, in turn, helps yield more nuanced research results. This paper will discuss a research project, currently in progress, in which young people were asked to create identity boxes to explore how they make sense of their complex mediaworlds, and will consider the benefits – and some methodological problems – of using creative and visual methods in qualitative audience research.

Benaz Batrawi

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Honour crimes and TV audience reception: An analysis of meaning production and gender interpretations.

This research investigates how audiences produce meanings and interpretations when watching programs of honour crimes. Moreover, it examines whether gender identity makes any difference during the process of meaning production. The researcher draws on theoretical accounts of audience reception model, discourse decoding, and gender and mass media. The researcher examines the three decoding positions that reader takes and explains why taking one position rather than the other. Taking into account a number of interactive factors; mainly gender, level of education and locality, the researcher analyzes two genres; a documentary and a drama, through the eyes of women and men. The study concludes that women mostly develop a resistant discourse asserting their feminine identity against the dominant culture when producing meanings of honour crimes, while men mostly develop a defensive discourse to protect their masculine identities.

This study faced a number of challenges, mainly in accessing information resources on the national level because of topic sensitivity and travel movement restrictions, in addition to the challenge in accessing some resources in the on line library in UK because of distance learning system. Rarely finding any on line study or research done in the Arab World that focused on audience reception separately or audience reception and honour crimes jointly was also a challenge.

Organizing focus groups took long, exhausting, and an expensive process. It was uneasy to compose three groups that differ in gender, age, locality, level of education, and occupation. The three groups were composed of women only, men only, and one mixed group. More than two third of the invited participants showed up and participated.

It was noticeable also that applying a research in two languages, Arabic for discussion and English for literature, the originality of the produced meanings might be affected by translation which eliminates the differences in level of education among the participants.

Finally, being a feminist and against the phenomenal of honour 'crimes', the researcher subjectivity was challenged to keep neutrality as much as she could. Nevertheless, she tried the best to maintain academic honesty and objectivity.

Giulia Battaglia

School of Oriental and African Studies , UK

In search of Indian documentary film audiences

As part of a longer ethnographic research on the interwoven connection between local production and local circulation of documentary films in India, this paper will explore the phenomenon of documentary film audience in India. It will contribute to discussions about audiences as objects of investigation through ethnographic research, not isolatable from the context of their consumption (Morley 1992; Mankekar 1993, Gillespie 1995 Ang 1996, Hughes 2003 among others).

Who is the documentary film audience in India? Who experiences or consumes documentary film and how? Which role do television, internet, screenings and film festivals play in the scene of disseminating Indian documentary films? To what extent are viewers involved in the process of production of meaning by watching a documentary film? The Indian documentary scene has a history that goes back to the beginning of the 20th century. Through the time it has changed its feature though by and large has always been characterised by the search of independence of representation and communication in production and circulation of films (Barnouw&Krishnaswamy 1980; Mohan 1990; Narwekar 1992; Lal 2005; Garga 2007; Dutta 2007). In a form of documentary 'activism' the major concern of documentary filmmakers in the past thirty years has been to communicate and dialogue with an audience.

While constantly in search of their audience – either in production or in circulation – Indian documentary filmmakers break the traditional distinction between production and consumption of documentary films by putting both in dialogue in several practices of documentary cinema: post-discussion screenings, workshops, seminars, online networking, blogs, interactive festivals, on-line interactive archives and so on. However, how do audiences response to this endeavour?

For the Transforming Audiences 2 Conference, I would like to discuss the relationship between the making and the consuming of documentary cinema in India, as a result of twenty months ethnographic research of combined qualitative and quantitative data collected through different films activities and through a constant participation at documentary screenings in Bangalore city.

Ghodsii Bayat

Allameh Tabataba'i University, Iran

Cultural capital and media consumption: A case study of young media users in Iran

This paper wants to explore the cultural capital (As a collection of values, beliefs, attitudes and different behavioral patterns of social groups) of young Iranian media users through their media consumption, behaviors and actions. This article would like to concentrate on the tendency of young user's media consumption (internet, satellite TV, Radio, cinema, books, magazine and news paper). Besides doing a survey, interviewing the sample group can lead us to the correlations between media consumption and:

- 1- Users' differences in cultural and economical capitals
 - 2- Users' social group
 - 3- Gender's characteristics
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Emma Beddows

Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

It's what the fans were begging for: Providing a new theoretical framework for discussing the relationships between transformative audiences and commercially sanctioned texts

One of the most widely recognised forms of transformative consumption is fan fiction, which refers to "any prose retelling of stories and characters drawn from mass-media content" (Jenkins, 2006, p285). Abigail Derecho claims that audiences use fan fiction to extend existing narrative archives. She describes fan fiction in this context as "archontic" – that is, literature which is archival and thus cannot be reduced to a single text (Derecho, 2006, p64). Derecho claims that through extending literary archives, fan fiction allows audiences to assist meaning formation through participatory engagement. Espen Aarseth offers an alternative view of transformative consumption which describes fan engagement as "ergodic". Ergodic literature is that which requires the activity of the reader (such as following a hyperlink, turning a knob, or accessing secondary media) to propel the narrative forward (Aarseth, 1997). This implies passivity on behalf of design, and places responsibility of meaning construction with the "assembler" (Dena, 2004, p2; Apperely, 2004).

Derecho and Aarseth differentiate between the interpretive and transformative aspects of consumption by defining transformative practices which contribute to the movement/expansion of narrative. By bridging these concepts we can develop a new theoretical framework for understanding the role of transformative audiences in contributing to sanctioned texts through the production of fan fiction.

In this paper, I will to discuss methods of transformative consumption of multi-channel texts using both Abigail Derecho's concept of "archontic literature" and Espen Aarseth's concept of "ergodic literature" as a framework for arguing that fan fiction can be seen as both "ergodic" and "archontic" in the way it constructs meaning. The objective of this discussion is to develop a rigorous theoretical framework for understanding the role of fan fiction within commercially sanctioned narratives. I will use the *Alien versus Predator* franchise as a case study in this discussion due to the unique relations of production and consumption in its construction which influenced its emergence as a blockbuster franchise.

Stina Bengtsson
Södertörn University, Sweden

Media use as pleasure and rest: Hedonism and the construction of everyday life

Modern media is used for many different purposes, create different meanings and has different tasks to fulfil in everyday life. When people are asked about their media use, they mention for example information seeking, learning and social aspects of everyday media use.

But there are also less outspoken dimensions of everyday media use, holding a less explicit position in the narratives of ourselves and of our everyday lives. These dimensions include the kind of media use that we speak of as “needed a rest”, “relaxation”, “doing nothing” or “just because I like it”.

In this paper I will penetrate these dimensions of everyday media use, showing differences in the various strategies to use media and discuss how these different kinds of media use are connected to particular moral perspectives, i.e. two different kinds of hedonisms (traditional and modern). I will also argue that these different kinds of hedonistic ways of dealing with the media contribute to different ways of handling and experiencing, in a phenomenological way, the fundamental elements of everyday life. The aim of this paper is thus to show how different moral perspectives of everyday media use generate different constructions of the everyday as a culturally organized space. Leaning on the fundamental phenomenological dimensions of time, space and social relations and the role of the media within these, I will demonstrate how the distinction between media use as pleasure and as rest points towards two profoundly different ways of and experiencing the everyday.

Floriana Bernardi
University of Bari, Italy

The magic of words. From reading to reacting: the crucial role of Gomorra’s audience

By reaching worldwide audiences, Roberto Saviano’s non-fiction novel *Gomorra* has become a literary phenomenon of astonishing proportions, carrying out a devastating insight of the mechanisms of modern Camorra, the Naples mafia. After the millions copies sold of the book and after Saviano’s several interviews and articles on “the System” – as the Camorra is called by its members – something unexpected has happened among the Italian audience.

Many initiatives have arisen, especially out of the cyberspace and particularly from *MySpace* and *Facebook*. Thanks to these social networks, a critical, active citizenship has developed, which can strongly contribute to support a great cause: rescue Italy from mafias’ tangled power and stop the silence on such a dirty business.

Among the most important initiatives born on the net, there’s the opening of a useful website, www.oltregomorra.com, whose aim is “go BEYOND, make sprouts become deep roots». The Internet space of *Oltregomorra*, always *in fieri*, aims at giving the audience “a view on mafias different from the one suggested by the traditional means of communication”. All the website sections, among which there is also an accurate “dictionary of Camorra”, aim at creating a databank on mafias and at promoting the way

of thinking and acting of the “Italy that resists”, that is the whole of associations and institutions which try, daily, to deconstruct the several expressions of mafias’ ideology.

To conclude, what emerges from my research is the ability of words, particularly literary words, of transforming audiences. Thanks to the Web 2.0 and the main social networks, Saviano’s audience has built an opposition force to the Camorra’s complex mechanisms of power, it has helped to bring to public evidence its world connections and infiltrations; it has failed to silence the journalist-writer’s voice. The audience’s initiatives have contributed to spread knowledge about all the mafias, thus creating a new sense of citizenship against their resigned unavoidability.

S. Elizabeth Bird

University of South Florida, USA

Not dead yet? Some thoughts on the future of qualitative audience studies

While the concept of “the audience” continues to be problematised, especially in a Web 2.0 world, the study of audience activity still seems useful. In this presentation, I will try to raise some questions about the current state of audience scholarship, and offer some suggestions for future directions. Using examples from my own work, I will discuss the move toward research on practices rather than response, raising issues such as whether the model of the “fan” has become overly central, and whether researchers have come to rely too heavily on virtual ethnography as a surrogate for other forms of engagement with audiences. I will also discuss the need for qualitative audience researchers to contribute to policy-related issues, such as health education and international development, in which “transmission” models still often dominate. Finally, with the recent proliferation of work on the media’s role in the construction of collective memory, I see this interdisciplinary field as ripe for more involvement from scholars experienced in qualitative and ethnographic approaches.

Alicia Blum-Ross

University of Oxford, UK

Shot/Reverse shot: Participatory youth filmmaking as counter-narrative

Based on two years of ethnographic fieldwork, this presentation will explore how discourses of ‘youth’ and ‘citizenship’ are trafficked, contested and re-created in participatory video (PV) projects for young people in London. Using the filmic metaphor of the shot/reverse shot sequence, I demonstrate how PV initiatives for young people situate themselves as the missing perspective in the one-way conversation about youth in the UK mainstream press and offer an alternative form of ‘citizen media’.

Here, I exhibit case studies from my research; two short films made by young people that focus on police stop and search procedures. Analysing both the process of creating the films as well as the final ‘products’ I will demonstrate how PV initiatives present both unique and problematic opportunities to encourage young people to create ‘counter-narratives.’ The audiences and dissemination strategies for these two projects will also

be discussed, with regard to whether youth 'voice' needs to be listened to in order to be authentic.

Through ethnographic accounts of these two projects, this presentation will detail the difficult positioning of young people by government funding bodies and filmmaking facilitators, as both creative agents as well as problems in need of solution. For instance, one of the initiatives was supported by the government's 'Preventing Violent Extremism' fund, but also provided the means to critique police harassment of young Muslims. The other uses a more experiential mode of filmmaking to demonstrate the emotional ramifications of young people, mostly minority men, being stopped by police. However, I conclude by questioning the extent to which these attempted 'reverse shots' do in fact allow young people to re-imagine their own roles as citizens, and the long-term impact such initiatives have, both on young people and on media portrayals more generally.

Göran Bolin
Södertörn University, Sweden

Mass media, personal media and producer-audience relations in the new digital economy

The mass audience, as a concept, has since long been considered outdated in media and communications research, with the argument that we have since a couple of decades moved into a situation where the media have become increasingly directed to niche audiences, and – from the perspective of audience studies – viewers, readers and listeners have adopted a wide range of different reception practices, leading to a spectrum of interpretations of the same texts. Indeed, the arrival of internet can be seen as the kiss of death for the mass media/mass audience, to the benefit of new concepts such as 'me media', personal media, etc.

The pronouncement of the death of the mass audiences might have been too hasty, though, and there are indications that there still are some similarities between the ways in which the mass media and the new digital 'personal media' operate in relation to their viewers, readers, listeners. An observable tendency today is that with digitization, media producers are again starting to adopt market models from the mass media. With digitisation it has become increasingly difficult for the music business, for example, to charge for content (i.e. records). In analogue and tangible form, market models build on sold records (that is, the text/record is the commodity), but when music is distributed digitally in intangible form via file-sharing networks and on social networking sites, business models (again) become based on selling audiences to advertisers (as in traditional broadcast radio and television – the audience or the user is the commodity). This phenomenon is not only restricted to the music business, but extend also to the on-line gaming business, where texts become a means to reach users who can then be sold to advertisers.

This paper discusses similarities and differences between 'old' broadcast business models, and their relation to the mass audience, and the new digital network models, where 'behavioural targeting', 'advergaming' and 'asynchronous ads' are becoming the tools for grasping 'the digital consumer' in the age of 'mass personalisation'.

Priscilla Boshoff
Rhodes University, South Africa

‘We all might be South African but I’m Indian too’. Bollywood, South African Indian youth and post-apartheid Indian diaspora identity

Bollywood’s popularity as a global media and the simultaneous commodification of the Indian exotic have occurred at the same time as the valorisation of ‘difference’ in the local South African political landscape. South African Indian youth, the youngest members of the 19th century labour diaspora, are inheritors of a conservative – yet adaptable – home culture and the marginalised identities of (post)apartheid South Africa. Their desire to create an identity for themselves that encompasses both their self-perception as ‘modern’ South African subjects and guardians of their traditional home cultures is achieved through the tropes of Bollywood, which speaks to its diasporic audiences through images of an idealised ‘traditional yet modern’ India. While India is not a place of return for these youth, their re-activation of a diasporic identity through Bollywood’s representations of a successful Indian diasporic culture and their participation in South African Bollywood concerts and award ceremonies has provided an opportunity for young South African Indians to re-imagine their local Indian identity in ways that help to mitigate the political and social uncertainties of their minority status.

Jérôme Bourdon and Cécile Méadel
Center for the Sociology of Innovation-CNRS, France

The black box of professional audience measurement: How television audiences are turned into numbers

Based on a empirical research inside the French company in charge of television audience measurement for the television industry, this paper will try to understand how this institute produces indicators ("ratings") which are widely accepted by all actors (advertisers, agencies, broadcasters of all kinds, producers, rights holders and and, on several occasions, by academics) and also partly circulate much beyond professional circles: they are appropriated by politicians, by television commentators and critics, and by the mainstream media (including the Internet). It refuses both the naive notion that such measures are strictly scientific and faithfully represent audiences' preferences - and the hyper-critical view of ratings as apparatus of surveillance and domestication of audiences. In other words: it will assume that ratings say something about audiences. To misquote Spinoza: "we do not believe in ratings because they are true, they are true because we believe in them".

But how is such a widespread social belief constructed and accepted? The paper will show that ratings are not only industrial indicators but have more complex political and cultural implications and make "democratic claims". It will analyze ratings as the products of a highly complex statistical-technical-social systems, requiring cooperation between agents with different and common interests. It will use moments of crisis and changes to show how conventions used to produce ratings change according to the configuration of the system. Finally, it will suggest that ratings are also part of a movement of globalization of television which tends to format not only programs and schedules, but also audience representations.

David Brake

London School of Economics, UK

The costs of self-presentation: dimensions of potential harm to content producers

Historically, concerns about potential media-related harms and their mitigation in audience studies have focused almost exclusively on the need to protect *audiences* from harmful, misleading or offensive material. But as new digital technologies have democratised the process of public content creation, concerns have arisen about potential harms to *producers* that can arise, particularly when they deliberately or inadvertently reveal sensitive information about themselves. Qualitative research I have conducted into the personal bloggers (Brake 2009) and MySpace users (Brake 2008) provides empirical evidence of content producer practices and their consequences. This paper also draws on a review of the literature about risks of social network sites for young people (Livingstone and Brake in press) to summarise emerging approaches to mitigating harm to producers. I apply a predominantly symbolic interactionist theoretical framework - in particular drawing on the work of Goffman and Meyrowitz - to analyse and categorise the potential harms identified to producers of self-presentational content both on social network sites and elsewhere online. The resulting framework identifies several dimensions relevant to the assessment of risk and of harm arising from online practices. The combination of the new empirical evidence outlined above with the new analytical framework highlights areas of potential concern that appear to have been neglected by those seeking to mitigate harm and suggests avenues for future research.

Geir-Tore Brenne

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Mediation, interaction and collective memory

In this essay I have sketched out an approach to collective memory that focuses on how collective memory is linked to networks of mediational processes. I am considering the distribution and maintenance of collective memory among networks of live roleplayers in Scandinavia and Russia, using an ethnographic method. The distribution of collective memory is traced to a range of instances of interaction, which create shared knowledge between the parties that participate in it. I consider different mediational means used in interaction – language and face-to-face interaction, electronic media, print, and visual media. Collective memory is founded on the knowledge that becomes shared through these mediational practices. As interaction is mediated by mediational means, I show that the mediational means themselves shape what knowledge that is mediated, and therefore also shapes the nature of collective memory. The collective memory is not a static pool of knowledge, rather, it is ongoing active processes of mediation in forms of debates, actions, talk that mediate further interaction. While having a focus on electronic and printed media, I look on this intertwined with the use of face-to-face interactional nexuses. The importance of face-to-face interaction is not diminished with the use of electronic media, on the contrary there may be some indication that it increases since face-to-face nexuses mediate further electronic interaction. The face-to-face nexuses are highly concentrated areas of interaction, in part intensified by the use of electronic and print media, and face-to-face interaction enables the mediation of tacit knowledge. I argue that some shared knowledge is necessary for mediated interactions, however asymmetries in knowledge and perspective seem in several contexts to facilitate interactions.

Axel Bruns

Queensland University of Technology, Australia

From prosumer to produser: Understanding user-led content creation

Alvin Toffler's image of the prosumer (1970, 1980, 1990) continues to influence in a significant way our understanding of the user-led, collaborative processes of content creation which are today labelled "social media" or "Web 2.0". A closer look at Toffler's own description of his prosumer model reveals, however, that it remains firmly grounded in the mass media age: the prosumer is clearly not the self-motivated creative originator and developer of new content which can today be observed in projects ranging from open source software through *Wikipedia* to *Second Life*, but simply a particularly well-informed, and therefore both particularly critical and particularly active, consumer. The highly specialised, high end consumers which exist in areas such as hi-fi or car culture are far more representative of the ideal prosumer than the participants in non-commercial (or as yet non-commercial) collaborative projects. And to expect Toffler's 1970s model of the prosumer to describe these 21st-century phenomena was always an unrealistic expectation, of course.

To describe the creative and collaborative participation which today characterises user-led projects such as *Wikipedia*, terms such as 'production' and 'consumption' are no longer particularly useful – even in laboured constructions such as 'commons-based peer-production' (Benkler 2006) or 'p2p production' (Bauwens 2005). In the user communities participating in such forms of content creation, roles as consumers and users have long begun to be inextricably interwoven with those as producer and creator: users are always already also able to be producers of the shared information collection, regardless of whether they are aware of that fact – they have taken on a new, hybrid role which may be best described as that of a *produser* (Bruns 2008). Projects which build on such produsage can be found in areas from open source software development through citizen journalism to *Wikipedia*, and beyond this also in multi-user online computer games, filesharing, and even in communities collaborating on the design of material goods. While addressing a range of different challenges, they nonetheless build on a small number of universal key principles. This paper documents these principles and indicates the possible implications of this transition from production and prosumption to produsage.

Steffen Burkhardt

University of Hamburg, Germany

Audiences and the transformation of political scandals

Media scandals play a significant role in the information and communication environments of democratic societies. Analysing the scandalisation of Hillary Clinton in the 2008 presidential election political campaigning strategies produced by transforming audiences become obvious. Particularly in the internet people produce a polarised discourse about Clinton. Her opponents criticised her violation of gender norms, because she wanted to be the first female president in the White House. "How do we beat the bitch?" the conservative camp asked the amused Republican Party nominee John McCain in a famous YouTube video. This question refers to the cultural practice and tradition of discriminating women that do not subordinate to male hegemony. We systematically analyse this mediated witch-hunt for Clinton in online communication and introduce a new concept of media scandals, which explains the mechanisms of audience inclusion and exclusion in grassroots media and political campaigning in the internet: (1) The scandalisation of Clinton as leading candidate for the Democratic nomination is

produced by mediated forms of political marketing and functions as morality discourse about gender issues in contemporary society. (2) The relevance of the scandalisation reveals itself as a central meaning-constructing story about the public and political visibility of women in the USA, including the construction of female identity. (3) The scandalisation is a development which has equally taken place in the field of grassroots media. Consequently, the scandalisation of Clinton serves as research object in a specific media frame, from which a deeper insight can be gained into political audience dynamics. (4) The transformation of political scandals is a mechanism of social control, and a mirror of public morality. (5) By the use of diverse online communication offerings and easy-to-use creative tools scandals give reasons to reflect on the perception of morality in the civic culture, allowing audiences to participate in political campaigning.

Oliver Carter

Birmingham City University, UK

From amateur to professional: Fan DVD production in Euro-Cult cinema fandom

The ubiquity of home computing technology and the World Wide Web has presented fans with the opportunity to create online networks to engage in discussion based on their interests. In addition, the availability of desktop publishing software and video production software, both free and illegally obtainable online, has allowed fan production to become professionalised. The distinction between amateur and professional fan production is becoming blurred. This form of fan production is best exemplified in Euro-Cult cinema fandom. Fans are engaged in the building of fan DVDs, using industry standard video editing software and DVD authoring software to produce composite versions of commercially unreleased Euro-Cult films, particularly those which are commonly referred to as *gialli*. These DVDs are then distributed through fan networks and online file sharing technologies.

Drawing on my knowledge as both a fan and a researcher of Euro-Cult cinema, as well as an active producer of fan DVDs, I adopt an auto-ethnographic approach to examining this particular phenomenon. In addition, this piece will raise theoretical and methodological questions about the study of fan audiences, drawing on the author's developing post-graduate research. It also builds on the current lack of work in the area of fan production, itself an oft-neglected area of study, and draws on contemporary issues such as copyright, social media and modes of distribution. This example of fan DVD production in Euro-Cult cinema fandom offers a new perspective on how fan cultures are considered and researched.

Christian Christensen

Karlstad University, Sweden

Social media and the replay-relay audience

A great deal of the recent discussion on the "crisis" of contemporary journalism has been linked to the rapid rise of blogs, alternative news websites, citizen journalism, Facebook, YouTube, Twittering and other online phenomena, in conjunction with a parallel rise in the mistrust of mainstream news organizations. Rhetoric on the role of so-called "new technologies" in challenging journalistic orthodoxy, however, tends to focus on the

production side: how material generated by assorted bloggers, vloggers, tweeters, citizen journalists and digital investigators has called into question the once holy position held by professional journalists. While certainly important, such discourse obscures the equally important way in which “social media” recalibrate informational balances in power, namely that such media act as relay and replay mechanisms for media content that also challenges the professional news *status quo*.

The public flaying in April 2009 on US cable television of MSNBC’s Jim Cramer by Comedy Central’s John Stewart over the financial news channel’s less-than-critical free-market cheerleading in the run up to the recent economic crisis is but one example of non-journalists trumping their professional counterparts in the raising of critical issues and asking of uncomfortable questions. Stewart’s hammering of Cramer was on cable television, but both the immediate and extended afterlife of such an event has been radically altered by YouTube and Google Video. Viewers who missed the show, or bloggers and commentators who wished to use the interview as points of discussion, can now treat these video-sharing sites as informational archives. There are numerous examples to be found on myriad social media websites of non-journalists engaged in the type of muckraking and hard-nosed commentary that a great number of people had hoped would come from journalists themselves. In addition, YouTube and Google Video have also become fora for resonant critiques of the performance of journalism and large media organizations themselves.

In this paper I argue that we must extend our understanding of the challenges to contemporary professional journalism (and thus our understanding of contemporary citizenship) by addressing not only those who produce their own material, but also the very sites that allow audience members to witness, replay and relay examples of non-journalists filling informational holes and asking critical questions. This will be done by linking technological change and re-conceptions of journalistic definitions and practice with the rise of informational entertainment programming, challenges to the dominant news paradigm, and the emergence of the “monitorial citizen.”

Paulo Coelho Dias

Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology, Portugal

Audiences and users around the world: The importance of watching scientific programmes like, for instance, National Geographic and BBC Wild Life in terms of the process of learning science.

The aim of this paper is showing whether or not there is effective learning in Science by watching scientific television programs, like *National Geographic*, *BBC Wild Life*, etc. (informal education) comparatively to science classes (formal education). Within this goal and in terms of Sociology of Education, the process of learning of the students has been analysed in both contexts (television and classroom), considering the influence of some fundamental social factors like families’ *habitus*, gender, age and motivation for learning science. It’s based, fundamentally, on the theory of Bourdieu & Passeron (s. d.).

Methodologically speaking we have worked with 340 students of the 5th form and 311 students of the 7th form correspondent to a sample of the four schools of Olhão in Algarve (South of Portugal). We have identified the learning strategy of the students by using a questionnaire. Considering the goals of the paper the students have been grouped in terms of their respective learning strategy: a-) only classes; b-) classes and scientific programmes; c-) only scientific programmes; d-) by using at home didactic

resources. The results of these groups have been compared both in verbal and written terms.

The results show how relevant can be watching the referred TV scientific programmes ever since that watching is complemented with the formal way of studying science. On the contrary, watching those programmes alone have proved to be a very weak way of learning science.

This study also proved the importance of some variables, like family, gender and student's motivation for science to explain times they spend watching television and formally studying for science and also to explain the use students do of their didactic resources.

Considering the State of the Art about learning from television, there have been done until now several studies using *quasi experimental* methods to show how different aged people can learn by watching television programmes. These different studies focused their analysis in the process of learning immediately after viewing the referred programmes. However useful these studies might have been, the truth is that the relevance of watching scientific programmes at home in terms of the learning process of science in the classroom was still to analyse. So, this study is a contribution for the comprehension of the relevance of watching the referred scientific programmes, showing some possible reasons for the complementarities that exists between those two learning process.

Marta Cola

University of Lugano, Switzerland

Transnational audience participation in local-multicultural TV programme: the case of “The Bridge”

We talk quite often of the multicultural context defined as the socio-cultural context, today prevailing for a large part of the world population at least in Western countries (Grillo 2004, Martiniello 2004, Penninx et al. 2004), in which people and groups referring to different cultures happen to coexist in the same geographical space, creating what is often described as a *de-facto multicultural society* (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2004: 9). As noted by Giddens (2000), we are therefore confronted with changes that involve experiencing new cultural differences which will add themselves to those normally existing within every society.

In this kind of society, characterized by an explosion of migratory flows, the role of media and communication technologies influence social and cultural identities formation strongly. Media can, in several and diverse ways, contribute in creating what Morley (2001) defines as simultaneously occurring processes of homogenization and fragmentation, and of globalization and localization.

In this scenario, the important role played by media is double: on one hand media can help migrants in connecting themselves with the host society dominant cultural and social identity, and therefore media can contribute to a process of integration in the host society. On the other hand media can help the local population in knowing and understanding “the others” and contribute as well in the process of integration and creation of multicultural society.

This paper aims at presenting the case of “The bridge” television programme and in particular it aims at reflecting on its participatory audience. “The bridge” is a weekly

magazine dedicate to foreigners integration, broadcasted by a Swiss private television. The programme aims at favouring mutual openness and comprehension between Swiss and foreigners, in order to growing the respective knowledge of culture and traditions. The paper will answer questions as: who is watching the programme? Which is the role of the programme for its audience? More in details it will be investigated the strong role of audience participation in creating the programme content.

Nick Couldry and Natalie Fenton
Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

From consumer/producers to actual politics? Social media and the practice of democracy

For abstract, see entry under Fenton.

Manuel José Damásio
Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias, Portugal

On-line communities and media social environments

New interactive technologies force us to rethink the complex relation between the individuals and the media. Nowadays this relation blurs old frontiers between production and reception and entails new processes. The present paper presents and discusses the findings of one ongoing project that deals with the study of the emergence of a media based participatory culture and the linkages between face-to-face and virtual communities. We specifically focus on the study of the phenomena of cultural transfer of practices between existing local communities in Portugal and their on-line counterparts. Tough, this research aims to study the relation between a media participatory culture and communities' media usage, namely from the point of view of user's specific activities – here understood in the context of “activity theory”. Results are presented on the analyses of two existing local communities that posses distinctive characteristics where a specifically developed tool was introduced in order to allow for larger on-line activity and participation. We discuss how longitudinal analysis results of users/communities patterns of behavior help us in defining the variables in media use that reinforce participatory potential. Besides that, we also intend to verify if such behaviors possess some trace of local variables specific to the local reality where the organic community exists and if such variables are transferable between the physical and the on-line community.

Anna Daniel, Terry Flew, Christina Spurgeon and Mimi Tsai
Queensland University of Technology, Australia

User behaviors and intentions in digital media and information in Australia

This paper reports findings from a study of user behaviors and intentions towards digital media and information in Australia, currently being undertaken by the Queensland University of Technology Creative Industries Faculty and the Smart Services Cooperative Research Centre. It has used a literature review, online survey and focus groups to explore attitudes and behaviors towards digital media and information.

The literature review outlines current trends in the Australian digital media and information sector, key issues and emerging opportunities in the Australian environment. It highlights emerging technical opportunities and flags barriers to access experienced by Australian consumers. The Australian market differs from global counterparts, possibly due to restrictive download limits and pricing confusion experienced by consumers. This tends to make Australian consumers more selective in what they access online.

Study findings shall contribute to the development of further analysis on Australian users and their behaviors and intentions towards digital media and information. Initial findings highlight that multiple disconnects between:

1. Changing user intentions towards online and location based news and information;
2. The ability by consumers to act on these intentions via the availability and cost of technologies; and
3. Current online offerings of traditional news providers and opportunities.

These disconnects present an opportunity for digital media suppliers to appraise and resolve. Doing so may enhance their digital media and information offering, attract consumers and improve loyalty.

Emerging themes include:

1. Mainstream news seems to be of little interest to the 18-30 year old age segment;
2. Mainstream news 'competes' with bloggers;
3. Trusted brands (and mastheads?) continue to be important, especially during challenging socioeconomic times;
4. Propensity to pay may depend on payment method as much as price;
5. The need to massage content to the medium; and
6. Opportunities for the newspaper in the local community.

Emiliana De Blasio
LUISS University, Italy

From spectators to participants? Political engagement and social networking in Italy

Many scholars think that behaviours in some social networks (such as primarily *Facebook* but non only) could increase political participation and civic engagement, not only *online* but even in interpersonal "physical" relations. We have observed three tendencies: a) the first one is represented by the growth of *networked individualism*; b) the

second one is constituted by the growth of involvement with an impact over civic attention and engagement; the third one is the growth of the networking like a tool to increase the social participations but mainly in the *subjects who still had political and social interests*.

Exploring the prismatic universe of the web 2.0 spaces for Italian politics we propose a simple taxonomy concerning the main functions (information, fund raising, involvement, mobilization) of websites, networks, blogs, etc. An interesting case is represented by the forms of *representation, belonging and action* produced by the students' engagement against Government policies about research and education.

We have observed some contrasting phenomena, linked in new form of access to the social networking sites and to the media in general: it seems the youths are transforming their positions, from spectators to participants. The paper will even present the latest findings of a research (that will be accomplished in the Summer 2009) realized by the Centre for Media and Communication Studies of Rome and directed by the paper's presenter.

Hanna Domeyer and Uwe Hasebrink
Hans Bredow Institute, Germany

The meaning of media repertoires: A qualitative approach to the understanding of transmedial patterns of media use

Research into media audiences traditionally focuses on the use of single media such as television or newspapers, genres like news or daily soaps or specific contents. Thus, audiences and media use are studied and constructed as the audience and the use of the specific media form of interest disregarding the wide range of different media an individual uses and the interdependences amongst them. This leads to several shortcomings that become even more obvious in times of convergence and differentiation of the media.

Based on these observations Hasebrink and Popp (2006) proposed a transmedial theoretical and empirical approach to research into media use. The concept of "media repertoires" starts from a user-centred perspective and asks which stable set of media offerings he assembles and according to what patterns he combines different forms of media. The research programme of this project integrates quantitative secondary analyses of representative media use surveys and a qualitative study which is at the centre of this presentation.

The qualitative study aimed at two things: First, it was to learn about the inner structure and the interrelations within the media repertoires of different media users, the specific functions different parts of their repertoires fulfil in their everyday lives, and the subjective meanings their media repertoires have in their specific personal positions and social milieus. Second, it was to find out whether the assumption of an inner structure and subjective meaning of media repertoires can be empirically justified and what research methods are fit to explore them. An analytical model was drafted and applied differentiating between levels of media use, aspects of media repertoires and relational criteria to describe these. Methodologically the study combined media diaries and qualitative interviews including different forms of visualisation of media repertoires.

Linda Duits

University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Jesus is my homeboy: Young evangelicals and popular culture

In this paper, I examine how young evangelicals use popular media in identity practices. Studies on youth cultures have tended to focus on elements of resistance and deviance, privileging spectacular subcultures such as those of punks. Although religious youth cultures are globally abound, studies on them are rare. The study centres around the EO-jongerendag, a manifestation organised by the Dutch Evangelical broadcasting association. This yearly multimedial stadium event connects Christian worship to different forms of popular culture and is attended by over 30.000 young Dutch people. I approach the event as a site for the negotiation of identities, and the participants as a distinct subculture.

The research material comes from participant observation at the 2008 event, in-depth interviews with 15 attendees, expert interviews with organizers, and a content analysis of two web forums that focus on the event (the official website and a 4000+ member group on the largest Dutch social network site). The paper provides an ethnographic analysis of the EO-jongerendag and the different websites involved with the event. It shows how media use is central to the construction of a young, evangelical subculture. Both the EO and the young people involved use popular culture (such as the websites, 'MTV'-like logos and Christian rock music) to show to an imaginary outside that Christian youths are as cool and exciting as secular youngsters. Next to providing insights into young evangelicals, the chapter contributes to emerging theory about the transforming audience, as it theorizes media users as social and engaged in dynamic and creative practices that often take place outside the conventional television dominated living room.

Phil Ellis

University of Plymouth, UK

Flow(ing) audiences: re-working the site(s) of new television

This paper will seek to address the potential for agency in television audiences in the age of remediated and convergent media. Clearly, the nature of contemporary television is both uncertain and fluid as its apparatus, production, distribution and reception struggle to find form in a capitalist structure that is at odds with the technological, social, political and artistic potential inherent in the emerging media form.

I propose that it is this very tension that opens up creative possibilities that had been closed down and locked out of pre-convergent television. This discourse will be articulated by examining semiotic readings of message-making and receipt in relation to pre-convergent television, enhanced television (or web interrelated), through to networked television (Castells 2004) on the Internet (Terranova 2004).

Crucial to this debate are the roles of the makers of 'programmes' as well as the positioning of an active receiver or 'audience'. These will be explored through a brief examination of the post Habermasian Public Sphere and cultural citizenship (Van Zoonen 2005), as a means of highlighting the political tensions between empowered viewer/users and the needs of the broadcast industry to 'monetise' the viral *feedback* (Joselet 2007) exemplified in the mash-ups of remediated broadcast. Mash-ups and similar acts of resistance can be seen as key acts of agency and affect (Gray 2008) or as Tactical (de Certeau 2002), creating a new type of 'flow' in the avoidance of the invasiveness

(predicted by Williams and Dovey), of personalised selling and product placement that, unchallenged, will be heralded as the hegemonic 'common sense' of new television.

The low-grade technical quality and production values of web cam sites and YouTube-type mash-ups mirror early television's 'darkened stage' and the single camera realised on the (literally) small screen, exemplified in early experimental television drama such as the first ever tele-play: Pirandello's *The Man with the Flower in his Mouth* (BBC: 1930) and the first scheduled tele-play *Das Schaukelpferd* (*The Rocking Horse*) by Adolf Weber in 1936. While early television sought a technological escape from these limitations, this paper will argue that it is limitation (or constraint) itself, aligned with the current uncertainty of a 'new' television and its myriad of creative possibilities that might be harnessed as resistance to the programme and the market by the audience. The competing elements and attractors (Wood 2007) of the digital interface and the immediacy of creative and productive *feedback* allow for a new television that is empowering, active and demands open meaning production and exchange for a new audience. Flow is now viral. The viral is agency. The paper will be accompanied by a mashed-up or live re-working of *The Rocking Horse* (2009) and/or *The Man with the Flower in his Mouth* (2009).

Gunn Sara Enli

University of Oslo, Norway

Dancing with the audience: Negotiating viewer influence in vote-in formats

In the classic contribution *Deciding What's News*, Herbert J. Gans (1979) uses the metaphor 'tango' to characterize the conflicting interests that might influence the source-relations: "The relationship between sources and journalists resembles a dance, for sources seek access to journalists, and sources seek access to sources. Although it takes two to tango, either sources or journalists can lead, but more often than not, sources do the leading (Gans 1979:239).

The formats European Broadcasting Union (EBU) format *European Song Contest* and the BBC Worldwide format *Dancing With the Stars* invites the viewers to take an indirect part in the production of the shows by means of a cumulative influence through televoting. The formats serves a purpose of combining tradition and innovation in European public broadcasters, and as stated in the BBC policy document: "the audience is placed in "the front seat".

Through cumulative influence, the audience is a new external 'source' or 'force' negotiating with the media producers. The paper addresses the following questions: what are the strategic rationale for public broadcasters to include digital return channels such as the mobile phone and the web in classic PSB entertainment? what degree of influence on programming are the audience provided by in the media production? and what characterizes the key dilemmas for PSB in the process of including the audience as a contributor in the production? The analysis focuses on two incidents of conflict between amateur voting and institutional strategies in *Strictly Come Dancing* (BBC) and the Eurovision *Song Contest* (EBU). In 2008, the BBC was in trouble after the contestant John Seargent decided to leave the show in spite of massive support from the voting audience. From 2009, the ESC withdrew from participation and re-entered the professional jury as a response to the viewers' 'neighbour-country voting'. These two episodes illustrate how professional standards and the communicative ethos in PBS might come in conflict with the ideal of 'dancing with the audience'.

Sophie Esmann Andersen and Anne Ellerup Nielsen
University of Aarhus, Denmark

Engaging and exploring the climate conscious consumer-citizen

In line with postmodern consumer demands of interactivity, connectivity and creativity (Cova 1997, cf. Gauntlett 2005; 2007) this paper seeks to explore new and creative ways of engaging the consumer-citizen in achieving the goal of creating a greener, carbon neutral city. The paper is empirically based on the staging of advanced ICT installations exhibited in relation to the climate conference **Beyond Kyoto** (and part of the Municipality of Aarhus' campaign **CO2030**) and data collected during the exhibition (the user-driven contents of the exhibition as well as observations and interviews). The exhibition consisted of two main elements; *Co2fessions/Co2mmitment* and *Climate one the Wall* entirely constituted by audience-created contents which were projected onto bus shelters throughout the city of Aarhus and in large scale using a prominent building in Aarhus as a backdrop.

The purpose of the paper is three-fold and relates to the following research questions:

1. How can the exhibition as a social, audience-created media contribute to create awareness, engagement and commitment to fight climate change challenges?
2. Which climate statements and stories are created by the audience?
3. How can these statements and stories be used in conceptualizing the social responsible and climate conscious consumer-citizen?

Elizabeth Evans
University of Nottingham, UK

Instant history: Researching emergent media audiences

The emergence of new technologies capable of carrying audio-visual content traditionally associated with film and television and the new forms of viewer or user engagement that these changes elicit are becoming an increasingly important focus for audience researchers. However, the implications and consequences of studying audiences in such a rapidly changing field have yet to be fully articulated. When one object of study (television) can be transformed in a short space of time it is also necessary to consider precisely how a second (the audience) can also undergo such a transformation, often within the space of a single research project.

This paper will explore the methodological issues that are raised when working with audiences in such a rapidly changing media landscape. It will present the case study of three participants in my research into television drama and the emergence of the internet and mobile phone as platforms for television content. These three participants took part in two focus groups, one year apart, but expressed significantly different views in the second to those they had discussed a year previously.

This paper will explore the various factors that may have contributed to this change of heart and the way that they demand a particular kind of methodological focus and awareness. In particular it will explore the necessity to conceptualise research with new media audiences as 'instant history' and to position it carefully within a context that both precedes and follows the moment of research. At the same time, this paper will call on

models of 'ownership' to explore how the 'instant history' of new media audiences offers a vibrant area for research into processes of emergence and how new media technologies move from being interesting gimmicks to vital parts of our daily lives.

Lisa Farrance

Victoria University, Australia

'Radical, non-corporate truth-telling': exploring the potential of alternative media

We need a new critique for media that is outside the mainstream. Neo-Marxist theorisation of the media – from that of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory to the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and more recent critiques influenced by Althusser – has variously sought to understand the relationship between mass media and power relations. The main drive has been to expose the ideological nature of mass media content. While mass media coverage remains an important problem for social movements, the new media environment requires a different kind of critique. Radical use of new media technology is more analogous to an organisational tool, than it is to the traditional mass media model of information/ entertainment delivery. Contemporary social movements – from the Zapatistas, to the protests at Seattle and Genoa, to the anti-war movement(s) of more recent years – have begun to reshape media use by turning digital technologies to their own ends. They are doing more than 'giving voice to the voiceless'. These 'new-media-savvy' activists are challenging ideology about the role of media itself. They are, at least in part, expressing the emancipatory potential of media envisaged by earlier critical, media theorists. However, they do continue to struggle within a media environment dominated by corporate and Imperial interests – interests with the power to co-opt, commodify and destroy this potential, both ideologically and structurally. Renewed theorisation of this struggle – between transformation and destruction, between conscious political activity and dominant ideology, between agency and social structure – is key to understanding the truly radical potential of alternative media.

Natalie Fenton and Nick Couldry

Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

From consumer/producers to actual politics? Social media and the practice of democracy

In this joint plenary Natalie Fenton and Nick Couldry will address the critical question of participation in 'actual politics' in the digital age through the lens of digital activism and consider what researching media not only as texts or structures of production but as 'practice' can contribute to that analysis.

Can new media can bring about a new form of political activism? If so, what are the consequences for how we conceive of and carry out our political citizenship? How and to what extent have changing media technologies and the shift towards a central role for information and information technologies transformed our ability to engage in political life? If a digital context destabilises the old dichotomy between the audience and the producer, how is our understanding 'the political' in media studies changed?

Natalie Fenton will consider the tensions between those who argue that social networking sites are breaking down the barriers between public and private spheres of communication, and offering a means of communication that is for the public by the public, as against those who peddle a more negative assessment of such communication as no more than an incessant 'daily me' that personalises and depoliticises public issues, while reinforcing old inequalities and feeding corporations better data for online marketing.

Building on Fenton's discussion, Nick Couldry will consider what research into new media audiences can learn from recent work on processes of democratization in sociology and political theory. How can such work inform our understanding of the particular media-related practices that might contribute to actual politics and actual processes of democratization?

Fenton and Couldry will jointly conclude that, by their one-sidedness, both positive and negative readings of new media's potential contribution to actual politics misunderstand the nature and impact of social media on the political contours of contemporary life. Once this is appreciated, there are important ramifications for media theory, in its understanding of both how exactly the producer/consumer divide might be being destabilised and how more effectively to theorise media as practice.

Sébastien François
TELECOM Paris Tech, France

'Homemade crossover' videos: are active audiences creating a new kind of hybridity between mass-media contents?

Since the 1980's, several media researchers have focused on the audiences who make new footages of TV programmes: vidding for example, i.e. the use of pieces of music to give another meaning to TV show extracts, are now better understood thanks to the fan studies (Coppa, 2008). Consequently, the increase of such remixes on the internet nowadays may have drawn media attention, their scientific interpretation has not changed a lot. Similarly, finding on YouTube or Dailymotion parodies of mass-media contents, something probably as old as the mass-media themselves, but now also made by enthusiasts, is not a surprise. Does that mean digitalization and internet development only change the scale of active audience practices?

A particular set of videos I found for my PhD research have led me to another opinion: I have called 'homemade crossovers' the videos in which an internet user tries to mix two fictional universes – may it be two TV shows, two movies or even one of each. This form of "grassroots productivity" (Jenkins, 2006) is interesting not only because it gathers media worlds that should have stayed separate for aesthetic or economic reasons, but because it defines crossovers not as creative industries do. Indeed, as these videos are often limited to the size of a movie trailer or TV opening credits, they have not been created to start new stories nor simply to promote the original media products, but for other purposes research has to disclose.

My presentation will try to show, through few examples and a comparison with vidding, that 'homemade crossovers' are a good opportunity to broaden our understanding of media reception, especially among fans: in fact, these videos keep debunking the myth of the exclusive aficionado and, according to the online declarations of their creators, they are often more a demonstration of mastery and skills, than a true act of resistance against media industries.

Larry Friedlander
Stanford University, USA

Interfaith rituals and global communities: The Guest Book project

I am beginning to work on a project initiated by researchers at MIT and Boston College on a five-year long series of events and rituals designed to bring together members of different faiths and to create global community and audience. The theme of the project is the tradition of hospitality or of 'hosting the stranger' in five major religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. The plan is to stage day-long rituals, one a year over five years, centered around exploration of differences and commonalities in the different faiths by focusing specifically on how each faith welcomes the stranger in its midst. These events will take place in major religious centers that have also been the sites of conflict and violence: an abbey in Ireland, a Sufi center in Egypt, temples in India and Nepal, and a center in Jerusalem. My work will be, in partnership with Glorianna Davenport of MIT and Richard Kearney of Boston College, to devise the structure of the day-long rituals that will take place, using a combination of new technologies and ancient liturgies, music and group activities (such as cooking and building objects).

The project will explore how an international community can be formed through a mixture of high-tech strategies and local, deeply-rooted religious traditions. The first workshop on the design of the interfaith days will take place in July in Glenstal Abbey in Limerick Ireland.

We will be working with a group of clergy, members of the monastic, and the local community as well as with technologist and artists to create a template for these 'days'.

The challenges are many: how to articulate differences while laying the basis for convergence and understanding, how to devise rituals that will have meaning in highly divergent international settings, how to preserve and extend the experiences to an audience that is not on-site, how to integrate advanced technology into ritual and everyday actions, and so on.

In my talk I hope to report on our progress and to reflect on the larger implications of this work for the use of new techniques to transform people through innovative media strategies.

Dina Friis Toft
Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Transforming audiences and the role of digitally mediated settings

According to Traweek there is a gap between the process of gathering and representing data. Often things relevant in the data gathering have to be translated in order to be put into writing. This has the effect of silencing important knowledge (Traweek 1999). This focus calls for reconsiderations in digitally mediated settings as data gathering seems to make things visible due to traceability.

Traditionally, ethnographic research has been reasonably fixed chronologically and geographically: travel to the field, perform the fieldwork, return home, analyze data, present the results in writing, and finally publish. However, in mediated settings the

picture is blurred (Beaulieu & Estalella 2009). This means that often analysis is part of the writings on a researcher's blog. The analysis consequently becomes visible to the research subjects while the researcher is still gathering data. Representing research subjects, for instance on a blog while still gathering data, includes analysis and responses to it as part of the data gathering process. The question is: how does transforming the audience by exposing analytical perspectives transform the audience? What happens to readers of a blog, users of user groups, or contributors to politically heated debates on the internet as the analysis of them becomes part of their conscience while they perform these activities? What negotiations are there when transforming audiences into research subjects in the process of gathering data and representing this data respectively?

Transforming audiences often refers to strategic attempts to change the behavior of an audience. This paper will focus on another transformation, pondering the theme of intervention and its consequences in digitally mediated settings. It will look into how such subjects are being transformed, by the researcher, into analytical actors, and further contemplate what will happen when the audience becomes aware of those analyses. Does that knowledge transform them? This becomes interesting in digitally mediated settings where analytical figures become visible and become part of the data gathering process.

In my representation I will go in to depth with this gap and its role when conducting studies on the internet for the researcher and the audience respectively, using empirical examples from my fieldwork on viral marketing.

Alberto García García, Raquel Vinader Segura and Ramón Galiano Sansegundo
Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain

Strategies for an efficient contents' creation in mobile television

Mobile television appears, not as a substitute of the traditional television, but as a new way of consuming audio-visual contents, generating a new business model. Considering that traditional television contents have to be adapted to mobile television is an erroneous concept. Audiovisual consumption in this type of device, which was not designed for this purpose, changes the way of conceiving and consuming the contents, being the screen just the main common element.

The mobile phone, as a personal device, allows us to communicate with other people, listening to music, to browse the Internet, as agenda, calendar, as tool of leisure with video games, to take photos and, even, to record videos. It allows television to leave the indoor reception and being able to be consumed in many daily situations.

Mobile television involves a personalized consumption of contents, while conventional television programs are thought to attract massive audiences. Technical aspects of this device modify the audio-visual language. Mobile television contents should not follow traditional formats or structures: short shots should be used instead of long ones and a specific narrative to allow snack consumptions. The user looks for contents to enjoy in an easy way and occasionally to obtain information.

Adapting the conventional television programs could be the first step to generate a market demand with the minimum possible cost. But mobile television will require specific contents which attend to *immediacy*, *interactivity* and *customization* criteria.

Immediacy at the access, downloading and cataloguing contents in an effective way that make possible to attend to the selection criteria of the minorities. Youtube, for example, could be a model to get this objective.

Interactivity of the user with the contents and services: mobile telephones allow the access to services and useful contents. Examples as traffic information, Google Street View, weather forecasts, etc., can help to reinforce the idea of specific contents for these devices.

Customization to attend to consumers' specific needs. Mobile phones offer additional contents to the traditional ones: deleted scenes, alternative plots, sports statistics, etc. All these possible experiences create a model of specific business for mobile television.

FONTA group (Formación en Nuevas Tecnologías del Audiovisual) at Universidad Complutense of Madrid, studies how to identify all these variables for offering parameters for the production of specific contents, the basis for competitive advantages to this emergent model of television.

David Gauntlett

University of Westminster, UK

Media Studies 2.0: Towards a way of working with today's media landscapes

The call for a 'Media Studies 2.0,' originally made two and a half years ago, was based on the premise that the discipline needed to shift focus from 'reading and viewing' to a media culture of 'making and sharing', and that a different set of tools and methodologies would be required to understand both the positive and negative aspects of the opportunities afforded by new technologies.

In this presentation, which introduces a general discussion of 'Media Studies 2.0,' I will revisit the argument and consider some of the responses, which include a number of online discussions, and the special issue of a peer-reviewed journal. The place of a revitalized media studies will be considered in the context of a cultural shift from 'sit-back-and-be-told culture' to more of a 'making-and-doing culture'.

Kamille Gentles-Peart

Roger Williams University, USA

American television and West Indian women's negotiation of body politics

In this paper, I explore American television's role in shaping the body politics of West Indian immigrant women living in the United States (US). Body politics refers to the cultural and social discourses that inform and regulate the public presentations of our bodies. Diasporic women enter their new home with a set of body politics cultivated in their homelands, but are forced to engage with the beauty ideologies of their receiving culture. What ensues is not the wholesale displacement or the complete retention of pre-migration aesthetic systems, but rather a process of cultural citizenship, a negotiation that produces hybridized, ambiguous body politics.

Media are implicated in this process as they present immigrants with the dominant ideals of the receiving nation, but, being polysemic, they also provide immigrants with resources that can be used to navigate the hegemonic ideals of their host country and those of their homelands. Using small focus groups with first-generation West Indian immigrant women, I examine how American television influences West Indian women's negotiation of West Indian and American discourses of the body. More precisely, I elucidate how these immigrant women employ US mainstream television texts to claim cultural citizenship in relation to hegemonic ideals of beauty, and how television helps them to challenge as well as comply with these ideals in their own lives.

This study expands transnational feminist audience theory by exploring how "third world" women *living in the West* engage with Western media. Furthermore, using diasporic women as its subject, this paper is significant in addressing the media-informed body discourses of a population in the US that is not American. Finally, the paper also highlights how mainstream US media both promote Western beauty ideals and provide resources that help audiences negotiate those ideals.

Lincoln Geraghty
University of Portsmouth, UK

Authenticity, popular aesthetics and the sub-cultural politics of an unwanted blockbuster: The case of 'Transformers'

Online fan discourses surrounding the authenticity, cultural worth, and aesthetic look of the Steven Spielberg produced and Michael Bay directed live-action *Transformers* (2007) movie were both heated and imaginative. Such debate is centered on the premise that a reworking of what was once a favorite childhood cartoon series and toy range challenges the fans' own authentic appreciation of a franchise to which they have remained loyal since the 1980s. As adults, now collecting the merchandise long after its has stopped being made (purchasing toys on eBay, at conventions, through fan clubs), they continue to share in their memorialization of the mythos surrounding the series by re-watching the cartoons on DVD and participating in online blogs and web chats that follow similar patterns of induction into an exclusive cult community such as can be seen with fans of *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*.

The cultural and personal value that the cartoon series and toys still hold with fans was under threat by what was seen as an unwanted blockbuster film of the Transformers brand. Bay's attempt at revamping their favorite toy for modern mainstream cinema screens was seen as an affront to the cult status Transformers now enjoys both online and at conventions. In opposition to the film fans produced and uploaded their own fake trailers and outtake scenes on YouTube poking fun at the live-action nature of the film and the directorial talents of Bay, who they saw as potentially ruining the film on evidence of his other blockbuster flops such as *Pearl Harbor* (2001) and *The Island* (2005). I argue in this paper that while some fans appreciate the fact that their much loved but lampooned series is finally getting the cultural and blockbuster recognition it deserves, such vociferous online fan activity intimates a deeply hierarchical and systematized structure of sub-cultural taste and political discourse. This discourse is rooted in the personal value fans have attached to the Transformers toy and cartoon series. Bay's *Transformers* poses both as a threat to the values and tastes that have been built up around the franchise and as a sign of Hollywood's continued fascination for resurrecting multimedia franchises. More generally, this paper highlights the persistent power of canons, authenticity, and aesthetic value in film communities and how they contribute to the creation and fragmentation of fan identity and culture.

Through close textual and discourse analyses of the fan produced films on YouTube, blogs, online discussions, and anti-Bay propaganda I shall be identifying and analyzing the various themes of authenticity, popular aesthetics and personal politics that are also related to notions of subcultural distinction, taste and fan hierarchies. Treating fan produced material as indicators of the inherent value they themselves place on the original Transformers text, this study will draw attention away from the perceived notion that a film's cultural value and worth is simply allied to box office receipts and its mass critical reception and instead attempt to place fan discourse at the centre of debates concerning the valuing of popular film.

Peter Goodwin

University of Westminster, UK

The future of the mass audience revisited

Discussion on the transformation of media audiences produced by Web 2.0 should be informed by past predictions about audience change. The notion of de-massification of the media audience was current in academia and industry in the eighties well before the spread of the internet and the creation of the world wide web. An important and sophisticated critique of this first generation of demassification theory published in 1991 was W Russell Neuman's *The Future of the Mass Audience*. Neuman's essential thesis was that the developments in communication technology then being discussed, while very real and important, would not yield the degree of media demassification then expected, because of a) 'the mass psychology of habitual audience behaviour' and b) 'the political economy of the communications industries'. This paper will re-examine Neuman's thesis, with the benefit of 18 years hindsight and ask to what degree either of its two central elements still stand up in the era of Web 2.0..

Jostein Gripsrud, Jan Fredrik Hovden and Hallvard Moe

University of Bergen, Norway

Class, education and cultural practices: A changing relationship

In his *Distinction* (1979) Pierre Bourdieu presented a strong case for the major importance of class socialization (via habitus) for the formation of cultural tastes and practices, and his findings have later been supported by a wealth of other studies. A research question which has been little explored, however, is the relative role of educational socialization in this matter, even if it traditionally has been seen as very important (as implied e.g. in the notion of *Bildung*). The understanding of this relationship, one may argue, becomes even more important as the proportion of the population with some form of higher education has risen sharply in most Western societies.

In the last 10-20 years, these societies and their mediated public spheres have also been affected by other forms of rapid socio-cultural and technological change, including the introduction and proliferation of commercial broadcast channels and the swift adoption of interactive and mobile media. Taken together, such changes are of profound importance not only for our understanding of media audiences and the future functioning of the mediated public sphere, but also for the relationship between class and culture.

To explore these questions empirically, an extensive survey of the cultural tastes and practices of the students in all of the institutions of higher education in Bergen, Norway, which was first done in 1998 (N=1100) was repeated in 2008 (N=1200). Together, these two sets of data, each of which include also semi-structured interviews with about two dozen students, provide unique insight into the changes to and interrelations between cultural preferences, media use, social stratification and higher education. Through a series of multiple correspondence analyses, PCA and tabular analysis, the paper outlines the major changes in cultural tastes and practices and their relation to class and educational careers in this 10-year period. The use of new media, including changing audience/producer relations, is given particular attention.

George Dawei Guo
University of Westminster, UK

Re-locating the value of historical dramas on contemporary Chinese TV: a sociological study of mediated emotions in a changing society

This paper grows out of the author's doctoral research project looking at the reception of contemporary Chinese historical TV dramas (from the mid-1990s till now) within China. Inspired by American scholar Jason Mittell's idea of TV genres as cultural categories, the author positions those historical dramas most of which narrate the ancient Chinese history through a contemporary perspective into a complex conceptual arena where all the (ir)relevant socio-cultural forces come together.

From the early October 2007 to the late March 2008, the author had conducted 10 focus groups and 15 in-depth interviews in two urban settings in China (*Beijing and Changsha*). The respondents involved are mainly young and middle-aged adults, both male and female, with nearly 60 people altogether. Based on preliminary data analysis, the author argues that the experience of time, genre knowledge and quality provide us three starting points to further discuss Chinese audiences' understanding and value judgment on those historical dramas.

Going beyond the active/passive audience studies model, this particular paper considers the audiences' engagement a rather complicated social process in which the audiences should be treated not only as consumers but also as 'cultural citizens' (eg. Hermes, 2004; Hill, 2007). In the meantime, the author puts forward a working model of 'time-experience' that characterizes the audiences' practice of watching those historical TV dramas according to their social and cultural status in contemporary Chinese society.

R. Ateş Gursimsek
Roskilde University, Denmark

Design for the virtual world: User-driven innovation in Second Life and the role of design in multi-user environments (MUVes)

With the introduction of Multiuser Virtual Environments (MUVes), such as Second Life, individuals are provided with more comprehensive means of experiencing the Metaverse. As one of the most predominant examples of the kind, Second Life not only provides real time online communication like MUDs or MOOs, but also enable their visitors to travel in 3D virtual environments, have animated emotional and/or functional interaction with others, buy and decorate their own virtual houses, and run virtual businesses,.

Not only Real Life companies and their virtual branches conduct business in Second Life, but also small entrepreneurs and creative individuals who managed to commodify their ideas and creations in virtual worlds. In that sense, Second Life can be considered as a manifestation of an emerging alternative economical dimension, in which participants can experience the roles of virtual consumers, merchandisers, producers, and designers.

Considering how significant spatial organizations and personalized artifacts are in Second Life, this article investigates how design affects the user preferences about their representational selves (avatars), the spaces to which they feel attached, and their social positioning in the virtual community. The paper will observe how this interaction takes place, try to understand how the design/creation and use/exchange processes of virtual objects affect this interaction process, and estimate where possible fields can be revealed for design to interfere.

For this purpose, this study focuses on how 'design practice' and 'designed objects' can be used to observe users'/participants' sense-making processes in virtual worlds. Following this determination, this research categorizes the two levels of object-oriented-interaction (either between avatars through objects, or between avatars and objects) as '*sense-making through designed object*' (I) and '*sense-making through design (practice)*' (II). Although these are categorized here as two separate levels of interaction, the general scope of this research also assumes that there are certain elements, tools and places of virtual worlds that involve the study of both kinds of interaction (III).

Christine Hine
University of Surrey, UK

Multi-sited ethnography and the emergence (and disappearance) of digital media practice

In this paper I explore some recent thinking on the constitution of ethnographic objects of study, and apply this thinking to recent developments in the media landscape. In the first part of the paper I use the example of the Antiques Roadshow to demonstrate the diverse locations within which television is enacted, and the diverse media technologies through which it can be experienced. The Internet emerges as a context to be taken seriously, and as a medium for engaging with other media. However, the significance of the Internet needs to be explored as a situated outcome of practices of meaning-making, rather than a transcendent set of implications. A multi-sited approach which explores connections between diverse manifestations of the show has a lot to offer, particularly if it focuses on the co-construction of media texts and diverse technologies and takes a sceptical attitude towards the taken-for-granted boundaries of texts. In the second part of the paper I look

more closely at the emergence of digital media practices, exploring the contexts within which new practices arise, are experienced as new and become routinely unremarkable.

Mark Hobart

School of Oriental and African Studies, UK

Philosophical and theoretical paradigms and ethical concerns: Is 'the audience' an empty signifier?

The rapid expansion of research on media audiences has been accompanied by very little critical philosophical inquiry as to what is at issue. Just as 'the text' has developed protean senses, so 'the audience' has come to include those who, more or less actively or passively, attentively or desultorily, participate in, attend, witness, listen to or view directly or indirectly events, spectacles, films, broadcast media, the Internet. And the term is often extended to readers of print media. The audience is also shorthand for the epistemological problems presented by mass populations, here conveniently imagined as knowable – and controllable – through their engagement with the mass media. The various disciplines that claim privileged knowledge about mass media further confuse matters by each defining audiences differently. In naturalizing and universalizing late twentieth century Euro-American commonsense notions however, they are at once anachronistic and Eurocentric.

So critical reflection on how 'the audience' is invoked in media studies is overdue, not least in view of the proliferation of hermetic histories of audience studies that hegemonize a narrow Anglo-Saxon academic genealogy. So let me pose some sceptical questions. If the senses and referents of 'the audience' are so diverse, ambiguous and confused, short of succumbing to naïve realism how far can the audience be a coherent object of study? To what degree is audience studies founded upon an illusion created by abstracting practices from their contexts? If so, does it actually matter? If 'the audience' is in effect an empty signifier, how might we sensibly proceed? One way is to rethink audiences as practices. A weak version would study the diverse and contested practices that variously constitute audiences. A stronger – more critical – version would also question the purposes, practices and presuppositions not just of media practitioners, commentators and politicians, but of its knowing subjects – media scholars themselves.

Sascha Hoelig and Uwe Hasebrink

University of Hamburg, Germany

Hans Bredow Institute, Germany

The structure of the internet as a communicative space: The users' perspective

Current information technologies afford a wide range of different communication forms. As a consequence the conventional distinction between mass and interpersonal communication including their ascribed functions, e.g. providing news and information, or management of individual relations is challenged: Nowadays several forms of group communication, user generated content or personal publishing have to be considered. All these forms are arranged on the continuum between the two poles of mass and interpersonal communication, and they often are combined into communicative hybrids. To be up to this challenge we propose the concept of *communication modes*, which

refers to the user's definition of a usage situation as a specific form of communication. It is assumed that this definition of what is going on in the respective communicative situation has significant consequences for the processing of the respective information and for the realized functions.

In a current empirical project this concept is applied to internet usage: The aim is to explore the interrelation between different information needs and communication modes. In their everyday lives users have various information needs concerning a) general orientation, b) certain topics, c) social network interests, or d) individual problem-oriented issues. According to several studies the technical infrastructure of the internet is used to gratify each of them. But yet it is not clearly understood, according to which criteria users make differences between different forms of internet-based communication and their respective functions. In order to identify these criteria, we conducted a study using an open card sorting method combined with think aloud protocols: Subjects were asked to sort different forms of communication with regard to their functionalities. The results show that users refer to criteria like specific user's activities, communication partners, addressed and achieved audience as well as the temporal distance – criteria, which we interpret as elements of communication modes, which structure the convergent communicative space of the internet.

Stewart M. Hoover

University of Colorado at Boulder, USA

Imagined religion, imagined masculinity, real politics: Mediated values in the transition from Bush to Obama

The 2008 US election invoked some very traditional themes in its construction of an imaginary of "true" or "authentic" US American citizens and national culture. This was most obvious in the McCain campaign, which imbricated neo-traditional representations of masculinity, traditional (including "religious") values and identity through McCain's own persona, the public construction of Sarah Palin (there is some irony here) and the late-in-the-campaign emergence of the trope "Joe the Plumber." This discourse suggests that a putative "crisis of masculinity" is rampant. Prominent voices (particularly neo-conservative ones) suggest that religion can resolve this crisis and that "the media" are implicated in causing it.

This paper will argue a more complicated situation where the media sphere plays an important role in articulating and representing social imaginaries around identity and values, and that their role is more subtle, layered and profound than critics (including the new president himself) assume. Based on audience research from ongoing in-depth field research in media households, this paper will seek to unravel the complex and layered ways that contemporary tropes and symbols of social value, as expressed in the 2008 election, emerge from evolving relations between the domestic and media spheres.

The paper will argue that the shifting nature of gender relations in the U.S., rooted in the domestic sphere and its response to trends in labor markets, has led to contradictions in the culture around gender identities, power, and values, and that these contradictions—and their putative means of resolution—are heavily inflected with attributions to foundational religious values. It will further suggest that this process is constituted in evolving imaginaries of power, identities, and politics, and that the media sphere is the central context for the working out of relations between religious values, politics, and identities today, even as the US moves beyond the Bush era.

Guanxiong Huang

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Subtitle groups: Online circulation of US TV drama among Chinese fans

This study intends to map the digitalized reception, production, and distribution of US TV drama among Chinese fans online. Nowadays, due to rigid control of official distribution hierarchy in importing and broadcasting transnational cultural products in mainland China, Chinese audiences are actively seeking US TV drama online, and forming the “shadow cultural economy” (Fiske, 1992) of fan production and distribution on the Internet.

When a new TV episode is broadcast in the US, subtitle groups of fan communities download the episode from official website and translate the subtitles from English to Chinese. Then, they add the Chinese subtitles to the episode and upload it to the online fan community for other fans to share. In this way, Chinese fans can enjoy the latest US TV drama only 10 hours later than American audiences. Furthermore, the Chinese subtitles added are not merely direct translation from English to Chinese, but include a lot of comments of story lines and particular scenes, often with the specific interpretation in the Chinese context.

I choose the most famous online fan community “Eden” as the case focused. I participated in this online forum for 6 months and conducted interviews of fans. Besides, two parts of texts were analyzed: one part was added comments and changed translation of subtitles in TV episodes; the other part is fans’ comments and discussions in the online forum.

This study explores the Internet empowerment of audiences in the transnational consumption of cultural products. Fans play a critical role in the circulation of US TV drama in mainland China because they possess “subcultural capital” (Fiske, 1992) in the Internet era, such as video editing software, online network to distribute, etc. Previous studies of Internet empowerment mostly focused on social movement, however, this study fills the gap of Internet empowerment in the transnational cultural flow and shows that subtitle groups help to break down the time/space constraints of transnational audiences and explore a new way of fan production.

This study also finds that as a subculture in cyberspace, fan culture expresses its resistance to the Chinese mainstream culture and official distribution hierarchy through discourse and practice. Fans mention a lot of current affairs in ironic style and use a lot of specific terms in cyberspace. The youth fan culture is not only forming a hybridized culture in the “culture borderland” (Harindranath, 1998) between American and Chinese culture, but also expresses a political resistance to the Chinese official ideological control.

Huifen Joann Hu

Jacobs University Bremen, Germany

Transnational Chinese cinema and its audienceship: The reception of Ang Lee’s cinema by Chinese and European Audiences

This paper examines the reception of transnational Chinese cinema between real audiences of differing cultural orientations. By exploring the gaps *and* consistencies (or what I have termed disjunctures and congruencies respectively) of responses to transnational Chinese films between Chinese and European audiences, I reconsider the

popular notion that the reception of transnational films is uneven or asymmetrical from region to region and continent to continent. The major empirical strategy to help support my theoretical (re)considerations is a qualitative one with a bottom-up approach since the research relies on soliciting thick descriptions obtained from the data collected.

Selected cinematic works of Ang Lee have been chosen for purposes of this study since the filmmaker and his works are paradigmatic of transnational Chinese cinema. The main set of data is collected via separate focus group sessions with Chinese and European participants after the screening of each of Lee's films. Two of Lee's Chinese- and/or China-themed feature films are to be used for this purpose: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) and *Lust, Caution* (2007).

The Chinese audience group consists of participants from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan while the European group consists of participants from Germany, France, and the Netherlands. I employ a mix of discourse and content analyses to the data collected. T

his dissertation sheds light on issues relating to cultural (in)authenticity (familiar versus exotic) and its subsequent relation to the reception of possible self-Orientalising reinventions of China in Ang Lee's cinema. More importantly, the work of this paper articulates the negotiations that take place when reception of a transnational cinema also quite consequentially becomes transnational in nature.

Lizzie Jackson

University of Westminster, UK

Mediation practices for purposeful participatory public service media

The BBC is one of the world's most established public service broadcasters and widely respected, however the Corporation has found it difficult to adopt participatory practices such as engaging with audiences. This paper presents findings from a production study of the BBC New Media Division undertaken over two years (2002-2004), a period of time when the BBC began to change from being a broadcaster to a public service media outlet providing 'islands' of participatory media. 'Participatory media' is defined as iterative content produced by a collaborative and creative activity which takes place within a shared online space facilitated by a media outlet, the rules and outcomes of which are negotiated between the producer and the audience. This is in partial opposition to Henry Jenkin's definition of engagers as being 'participants who interact with each other according to a new set of rules that none of us fully understands' (Jenkins, 2006: 3). The BBC's participatory media offered to audiences was often highly restrictive, following a set of 'House Rules', and moderated. The hypothesis of the paper is the BBC should foreground a more collegiate relationship with the audience, providing sociable hosts and re-framing audiences as active participants. Participant observation of six months of developmental production workshops took place from December 2002 to May 2003 during which five 'Interactive Presenters' hired by the BBC on a BBC Talent scheme explored what mediation and facilitation might be required by active audiences. Wider observation of the BBC New Media Division was also undertaken from Autumn 2002 to the Spring of 2003. Social media theories showed there were similarities and differences between sociable broadcast presenters and online hosts in new media. Both types of personae facilitated the sociable relationship between the broadcaster and the audience, however the new media host's relationship was ongoing rather than episodic and additionally provided what could be termed 'customer relationship management'. This kind of mediation was not attractive to producers who felt uncomfortable engaging with

audiences. The study offers a deconstruction of BBC facilitation practices and makes recommendations on what could be automated, what could be effected by audiences for themselves and what tasks should remain the province of trained, specialist mediators.

Anne Jerslev

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

X-Factor audiences on the Internet – affective performances

The aim of the paper is twofold. Partly, I will *present* an analysis of the discussion on Danish public service channel DR's website of Friday night entertainment show *The X-Factor* during the broadcast of the show in the spring of 2008. The discussion was overall centred round two general subjects, *ethical conduct* and *taste*, on the one hand the proper conduct of judges, the debatable rules of the game, and the proper conduct of DR towards audience participation, on the other hand who should win and who should be voted out. The debate seemed to be driven by the display of and clash between emotional tensions partly stemming from watching the show (most writers rushed to the debate forum right after or even during the show) and partly because of the lack of a hierarchy of (good) taste guiding the discussion on the forum (we all have the right to voice an opinion and no opinion is better or more right than another). Opinions were formed in a digital space structured through *the interdependency and interplay of consensus and dissent* and with strong moral judgments of both the show and Denmark's Radio; thus, it could be argued that the program's entertainment value (as discussed by cognitive psychologist Peter Vorderer et alii) was at once *extended* and *reinforced* through these specific affective performances of identity markers on the Internet.

The second aim of the paper is to *question* the above analysis by *arguing for a renewing* of the classical question in qualitative audience studies about what qualitative empirical data can tell about media reception. What kind of data and what kind of knowledge is it possible to gain from an Internet debate (for example compared to focus group interviews)? Are comments qualitative data at all? Do anonymous comments, with no clear gender or age markings for example, provide any valid knowledge about anything – except that they are fun to read?

Sigrid Jones

University of Vienna, Austria

Wii are family: Gaming families and video gamers on Flickr

This paper presents a proposal for using the online photo-sharing community Flickr as a tool and place for studying audiences. This means a combination of established research methods – the analysis of user generated content and the use of photography in social and ethnographic research. The use of photo-sharing sites to generate, collect, and analyze visual data for research purposes is outlined through a case study conducted on Flickr, with an emphasis on family photographs of people gaming. It provides an insight into how gamers present themselves and are represented in photos for and by their friends and families. Thus, this paper addresses issues concerning two media practices as situated within homes and families: taking photographs and playing digital games.

Personal photography and photo-sharing serves many social purposes: (1) constructing personal and group memory and the construction of identity in creating personal narratives, (2) creating and maintaining social relationships through 'distant closeness' (Van House, 2004, 2007) and (3) self-expression and self-presentation. Flickr supports all of these uses. Taking photographs and sharing them online is a media practice, where various forms of representations, performances, visual and verbal narratives, and visual discourses are produced. In the study at hand these photographic practices combine with the practice of gaming: families or individual family members playing digital games, and to a larger or lesser extent constructing their identities around game play. A close reading of a selection of photographs and their internal narrative be will carried out, as well as an analysis of the external narrative, the context and the social relations within which the image is embedded at the moment of viewing on Flickr (Banks, 2001 Visual Methods in Social Research) drawing on the theory of *multimodal discourse* by Kress & Van Leeuwen (2001) and Carey's model of *communication as culture* (Carey, 1986) in order to understand new digital media practices.

Anne Kaun

Södertörn University, Sweden

Mediated public connection in Estonia

In contemporary scholarly as well as everyday discussion notions of declining respectively polarised public, civic or political engagement are dominating (Bhavani 1991; Putnam 2000; Pattie, Seyd & Whiteley 2004). In the context of that discussion the paper aims to challenge traditional ideas of political participation and engagement by asking what do young people perceive as the political. What do public issues actually mean for young adults in (post)-transitional societies like Estonia?

Thus employing the notion of mediated public connection developed by Couldry, Livingstone & Markham (2007) the author asks through what media orientated strategies is public connection developed and possibly deepened? What does a different articulation of mediated public orientation mean for the formation of cultural identity and cultural citizenship?

Contextualised within the background of the tense situation within Estonia – especially while thinking of questions of ethnicity and citizenship - this investigation aims to explore the articulation and strategies of developing (mediated) public connection among young people with different ethnical backgrounds.

During a pilot study participants aged between 18-29 years living in Tartu, Tallinn and Narva wrote online diaries over an eight week period in order to reflect about everyday life issues that play a somewhat important role in their lives. Through the diaries the author traces and analyses a potentially common public orientation among the participants. Findings generate an understanding into the formation of two significant factors among young people in the Baltic States; that of cultural identity and civic culture. Thus providing a broader and more integrated picture of mediated public orientation, and offering insight into the subjective understanding of what citizenship and civic culture actually means in terms of everyday life of young adults.

Anastasia Kavada

University of Westminster, UK

Collective action across multiple platforms: Avaaz on Facebook, MySpace and YouTube

Political groups currently use a variety of platforms for their campaigning needs, including social networking, video- and picture-sharing sites. These platforms allow them access to wider audiences and offer applications that aid mobilization, coordination and community-building. At the same time, maintaining a presence on multiple platforms requires time and resources. It also risks of diluting and confusing the organization's image, as well as fragmenting its supporter base. Furthermore, platforms differ in their design, regulations, access requirements and degree of interactivity. This affects their potential for collective action and their suitability to the organization's strategy and political culture.

This paper explores the affordances of different platforms for collective action, as well as the synergies and tensions of multi-platform presence, by focusing on the case study of Avaaz. Aiming to bring people-powered politics to global decision-making, the Avaaz strategy involves rapid response to urgent problems by mobilizing large numbers of subscribers to donate money or sign petitions. Examining the Avaaz.org website, its channel on YouTube, its group page on Facebook and its profile page on MySpace, this paper identifies the affordances, tensions and complementarities of these web platforms in terms of the organization's image and its relationship with its participants. The empirical data derives from a feature analysis of the selected websites, as well as textual analysis of the comments left by users and of the organization's self-presentation.

Nicola Kaye

Edith Cowan University, Australia

Online/offline – developing communicative social spaces via creative practice

This paper examines some possibilities afforded by online/offline contexts in building communicative social spaces via creative practice. The paper asks whether online/offline relationships in conjunction with visuality can help facilitate public interaction, not in a passive way, but in strengthening communication and engendering individual agency.

There is much historical evidence of visual practices used to facilitate change, to subvert dominant ideologies and develop communicative spaces. Some such groups, referred to as *newest social movements* (NSMs) (Day, 2005) employ visual methods to help inculcate their message, such as the human rights project *Witness* (www.witness.org), which gives activists video cameras to create stories that are webcast on the *Witness* website. This paper will explore the online possibilities for the visual as a productive tool within NSMs, and examples will be addressed.

A reflexive analysis of three creative online/offline models that the author has been involved in to develop communicative spaces and hence audience interaction, will act as case studies; a web residency utilising webcams, blogging and a chatroom, an exhibition incorporating audiences in the work in realtime and a website privileging the visual as a means for disseminating information and encouraging community participation.

This research interrogates creative practice, and in particular visuality, with the aim to position communicative action (Habermas, 1991), reflexivity (Bourdieu, 1999; Giddens,

1991; Maton, 2003) and praxis (Haug, 1999; Couldry, 2000) as productive tools in developing communicative spaces (Jones, 2006) to generate social interaction. The research will also demonstrate that these theories are influential in researching online visual efficacy in generating communicative social spaces.

Sohyung Kim

University of Sussex, UK

Paradox of teen fandom: The politicizing of teen fans of a boy pop band TVXQ

My main concerns in this paper are with the relationships between fandom and politics. From conventional and elite views, popular culture kept distancing from politics. However, in highly mediatized and changing media circumstances, the transformation of either audiences or publics as collectiveness of fans or citizens depends upon particular activities at a particular time and space (Livingstone, S. 2005, pp.32-33). Hence, my research is to interrogate the peculiar Korean experiment of where fandom provides a platform to contemplate current politics and to practice political citizenship. To explore this, I noted the 2008 vigil rally in Korea that massive rallies against the government's hastily agreed US beef import deal lasted 65 days and evolved into the significant and expansive scope of political actions. From the beginning of the rallies, a large number of teens, especially teen fans of pop stars got actively involved. To investigate the peculiarity of this teen fandom, I will look into online communications within the online fan community of DBSG - Yuaerubi and beyond, and carry out in-depth interviews with the teen members of Yuaerubi who actively partook in the rally offline and online. And I will also examine how media orchestrate this teen fandom and political event. By doing this, I hope I disclose the politicizing of teen fans to cross the boundary between teen fans and political actors in the Korean context.

Kaoruko Kondo

University of Westminster, UK

Digital expressions: ethnographical research on digital users (audiences) in the UK

The paper will show and discuss findings from the research on digital users which were conducted from 2005-8 for three years. The final aim of this project was to design user-friendly digital interface collaborating with Brunel university (electronic engineering team), based on the data: how people use digital technology at homes and why they use them in their everyday life. The data was not only gathered from interviews and participant observation, but also from the participants' digital works. At one visit, we asked them to express their everyday life by using any digital devices which could be transferable to us (e.g. digital photos, video clips). The digital works by the participants showed how much the media (c.f. digital TV, computer and game consoles) are inevitable and surround our everyday lives. It was also important how they made their works or examined their levels of skills: easy and quick. The participants tended to use digital camera photo taking rather than video taking. It is also found that the participants do not enjoy editing digital works. One exception was a video work by a participant who used to be a BT engineer and took early retirement. Integrating these works with the interview data, people tended not to be very active to create digital works in their spare time. From our findings, the

paper will also discuss the methods we used compared to the old studies (c.f. Eronen 2003). Ethnographical approach was appropriate to examine user (audience) –centred views in designing the digital interface: longitudinal research and setting the fieldwork in their homes (compared to the setting in a particular public space) was able to provide us more real and honest opinions in their actual home space and changes of their digital media consumption behaviour along with the digital technology was developing.

Jukka Kortti

University of Helsinki, Finland

Multidimensional social history of television: Social uses of Finnish television from the 1950s to the 2000s

Finnish television celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2007. At the same time, in August 2007, Finnish television switched over to digital and terminated analogue broadcasting entirely. Through over TV's half century histories, television audiences have witnessed not only manifold technological changes but a profound modernisation process all over in the western world. This means also adjustments for the television's primary audience, family. But has television as a social medium really changed that radically during the last decades?

The presentation discusses the social uses of television from the late 1950s to the mid 2000s. In the tradition of media ethnography, it depicts both the structural and relational uses of television. It looks at changes of watching television in social intercourse: in family viewing, gender preferences and social life outside the home. The television programmes themselves are a secondary focus in the study – how they affect viewers' everyday lives (shared favourite programmes, rhythms of life, visiting neighbours, family relations, etc.)

The primary sources for the study comprise two collections of written reminiscences about television in Finnish everyday life. Collecting written reminiscences, ethnographic writing, has a long tradition in Finnish history and folklore studies, and methodologically they have been categorized as oral history research data. This type of oral history data has rarely been used in media studies. The study combines the methodologies of media ethnography and oral history.

The presentation shows how multidimensional the uses of television have been over the decades and how TV has played often an important role in social life. Looking broadly at the findings, you could say that despite the many technological and cultural changes in television's history, most of the main features of television habits remain. TV still is a social family media.

Maria Kyriakidou

London School of Economics, UK

Audiences as witnesses: Watching suffering around the world

Images of disasters and human suffering have become a regular feature of modern media and scenes of tragedy and catastrophe are part of the everyday media experience of audiences around the globe. This empirical observation has given rise to a range of

interrelated theoretical debates mainly focusing on the ethical implications of the media in representing crises and emergencies and their role in framing relations among distant others across geographical and cultural borders. It is this broader debate the present paper addresses by adopting an audience perspective. The presentation will particularly focus on the concept of “witnessing” and its implications as a distinct modality of audience experience. Currently attracting renewed interest, the concept draws attention to the moral and emotional implications of audience exposure to images of suffering and human pain. Drawing upon this conceptual framework, the paper will introduce an empirical dimension to what has so far been a largely theoretical discussion. It will set out to explore the question of what this kind of mediated experience means for actual audiences and how it is implicated in their perceptions of the world and their place in it. The paper will be empirically grounded on a study of Greek audiences in relation to the media coverage of distant disasters. Drawing upon material gathered through focus group discussions, the focus of the paper will be placed on the ways people experience such tragic events as vicarious witnesses through the media. What are the emotional implications of watching images of suffering? How do audiences negotiate their sense of agency and space in relation to these images? What does it mean to witness through the media? These are the questions the presentation will address.

Eyal Lavi

Goldsmiths College, UK

Media mistrust and identity: negotiating uncertainty in practice and theory

Trust, or its decline, is the subject of much recent research, as well as a source for general anxiety about the consequences for society. Most of the evidence cited for this decline in trust, including within media research, is quantitative – it tends to treat mistrust as a single phenomenon and is often blind to specific contexts which give rise to media mistrust.

The qualitative research reported here, based on interviews and ‘scrapbook’ exercise with London-based Jews, argues for a more nuanced understanding of media mistrust and calls into question some of the assumptions of the ‘crisis of trust’. A first step towards a typology of media mistrust is taken and links between certain types of mistrust and participants’ Jewish identity are interrogated. High levels of mistrust are reported, especially among older participants, which is related to perceived anti-Israel bias in the media. However, this mistrust is associated with general media literacy and personal dealings with media more than with Jewish identity.

In conclusion, it is suggested that trust be seen in the wider context of ambivalence towards media, an ambivalence typical of reflexive modernity. Negotiating this ambivalence becomes part of the media experience, the articulation of identity and people’s orientation to place.

Kerstin Leder

Aberystwyth University, UK

Imagining is believing: Viewing choices as cultural and emotional phenomena

This paper is part of a wider cross-national and cross-generational audience study of media-related fears and anxieties. Over the course of several months, qualitative material in the form of viewing diaries, open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews was gathered from three-generation families in Germany and the UK, in an attempt to explore the meanings and functions of broadly 'fearful' responses to film and television. Rather than presuming a media/fear relationship of mere cause and effect, the project charted a number of complex processes in which audience members took on a variety of viewing roles as members of physical and/or 'imagined' audiences. As a result, 'fear' emerged as a fluid and complex concept, and one which contained both personal and social dimensions.

During the course of the study, it emerged that specific media material functioned as reference points in participants' discussions of emotional 'thresholds' (compare Hill, 1997), even if family members had not in fact seen those films or programmes in their entirety (or any scenes at all). This paper interrogates the different criteria against which participants evaluated such material imaginatively, for instance through associations with directors, fellow audiences, specific textual content (e.g. forms of media violence) or, importantly, the emotional responses they *anticipated* in the light of previously formed ideas.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) work on the social uses of art and culture has informed much media studies debate about taste formations and social hierarchies of consumption. Yet, his perspective on taste as manifestation and corroboration of class distinctions has failed to take into account any embodied notions of choice. This paper draws out the possible meanings and significance of participants' preferences and classifications, suggesting that audiences employ both cultural (aesthetic) and emotional 'measures' when opting to engage with the media.

Hsiao-wen Lee

University of Westminster, UK

China's public and popular media

The focus of this research is whether the Habermas' 'bourgeois public sphere', which is characteristic of Western society, can be extended to China. My main contribution is to demonstrate that the concepts of 'sentiment' and 'reason' are central to any discussion of the public sphere in China. This is in sharp contrast to the West where rational discussion and the rule of law are the twin foundations of the classical discourse of the public sphere. China's society is distinct from Western democracies the west in at least two fundamental ways. In the first place, the political system remains 'communist' with a single party controlling all of the media. As a result, the degree of freedom of thought and speech is extremely limited, and there is no obvious way in which the mass media can act directly as a forum for free and informed discussion of public policy. Secondly, whereas the rule of law is understood as a central element in Western democratic culture, it has a subordinate place in Chinese culture.

I examine these assumptions through a study of the readership of popular press. I wanted to discover how the popular press engages with the general public, how the

general public read and judge media messages, and crucially whether the popular press could employ an indirect approach and work to constitute an 'imaginary' public in China. In the end, I conclude that while China's cultural, political and economic system of control is the main factor leading to the restriction and dissent of the general public, a 'reasoning' popular public might, in time, be shaped through their reading of controversies in political and public affairs in the popular press.

Valentine Lerouge and An Jacobs

VUB - Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

The young audience: digital picture books as a catalyst for learning through play and the longing for books

Screen media become more prominent in the lives of preschoolers, at the expense of picture books (Livingstone 2002). Digital picture books combining these, afford a new way of reading promotion, focus on interactivity and the attainment of reading and language skills. Preschoolers, as any other audience can play both an active and passive role while using the product. Previous research has shown that while acting passively, children absorb the digital picture books in a fast time with a guarantee on acquiring words (Verhallen 2004)¹. The transformation into both active and passive roles of the audience was explored during the project *Animated books*. This was done by investigating the interplay of both the informal (i.e. library) and formal (i.e. school) context in which children interact with books, supplemented with the affordances of the digital picture book. Therefore we made use of the product ecology approach (Forlizzi 2008) and gathered insight from observations of the children and their caretakers, interviews with their caretakers and librarians, and an online survey with adults working in these contexts (i.e. teachers and librarians). The social interaction amongst the audiences, influences the use. In the school the cognitive development is a priority, whereas in a library the digital picture book should be a stimulus to look in other picture books. Therefore the preference in additional games, related to the content of the book, is equally differentiated. The perception of the digital picture books by preschooler did not differ by gender, but the observations did reveal cultural differences. Interviews with librarians showed that since the digital picture books have been introduced, the lending rate of the matching physical copy has augmented in a vast rate. Functional, social and emotional elements of the product influence the computer skills and language development of this young audience.

Eva Cheuk Yin Li

University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Queering popular culture: Negotiation and management of sexual identities of Hong Kong lesbian audience

Popular culture is the site of power contest and resistance (Hall, 1981). Each stage in the complex circuit of culture interweaves broader socio-cultural and political threads with relations to identities articulation, negotiation and management. Popular music in Hong Kong has its queer roots originated from Cantonese Opera performances. Gender dragging has been performed with long history. With a discursive schizophrenic sex culture, Hong Kong society holds ambivalent views on modern queer performers and

audiences. Marxist and feminist reception studies tend to over-empower the weak in popular culture but often overlook the further intricacy.

This paper employs the framework of the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) and feminist reception theories. Through critical engagement with lesbian audiences of HOCC, a Hong Kong popular female singer with intentional androgynous performances, individual and collective stories of multiple power interplay in reception are presented. How lesbian audiences of HOCC negotiate and manage their sexual identities via participation and discussion on texts, performances and tabloids. The logic of this circuit of culture links lesbians as marginalized groups with popular culture and the broader socio-political context with residue colonial memories, misplaced Chinese ethics and revived rightist Christian values in Hong Kong, a selectively sexually repressive city. How lesbian audiences negotiate and manage their identities with broader social structure through various forms of participation, which proffers them with alternative cultural capital in strategic queering of social spaces, making popular culture an increasingly intensive site of discord.

Ethnographic study of semi-structured in-depth interview, participatory observation and virtual ethnography of this paper opens more refined reception possibilities, such as inevitable heteronormalization of popular culture as social space and a further retrograde 'closet' politics among Hong Kong lesbians. In this way, the study contributes to feminist-queer reception theories and spatiality of sexuality in popular culture in an Asian city.

Ann Light and Clodagh Miskelly
Sheffield Hallam University, UK
Independent Researcher

Persuasion 2.0? Social networking spaces as sites for negotiating behaviour

We consider how the advent of social networking has led to development of different tactics for persuasion in communication for social change. These new communication spaces - underpinned by user-generated content - involve what was once the target audience for persuasive messages in relationships that increasingly offer the means to persuade each other.

Drawing on theories from both communication and design for social change, we give the example of FairTracing, a Web 2.0 research project intended to make provenance of goods more visible by illustrating supply chains from producer to consumer and push practices toward ethical production and consumption. Put in the context of popular tools like Facebook and Twitter, now used for political purposes because they assemble like-minded people, we explore how the tool might influence a particular set of attitudes and behaviour. Different approaches place greater or lesser emphasis on control over the message. Some are weighted more towards collaboration to be persuaded, others toward collaboration to persuade. We note that social networking spaces are potentially more flexible and user-controlled than other online collaborative environments intended to persuade, such as interactive drama and "Serious Games". Thus, we illustrate the new ambiguities when audiences become creative that join old issues of interpretation.

In particular, we examine how Web 2.0 media share characteristics of being polyvocal, lacking a central authoritative voice and involving stakeholders who act both as persuader and audience. These participative structures allow the pluralistic nature of issues such as fair trade, social justice and environmental concerns to surface. However, they also bring the challenges associated with large numbers of voices from a range of

cultures, speaking different languages, with different stakes and levels of expertise, and speaking and listening from significantly different contexts. The flexibility and complexity of these spaces may hinder any move from dialogue to action. There may be so many voices that dialogue is lost.

Sonia Livingstone and Ranjana Das

London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

The end of audiences? Theoretical echoes of reception amidst the uncertainties of use

Over half a century now, audience reception research with televisual media has produced a useful repertoire of concepts that have established beyond doubt the engaged, critical and often creative nature of interpretation at the interface of readers and texts. While this body of research has embedded terms like genre, texts, reception etc in our vocabulary, it is increasingly evident that there indeed is a problem with the rapidly altering meanings of terms the moment one tries to position oneself in a pan-media continuum. Television audiences now write back, media texts are multi-linear, and textual genres hybrid and fluid, received inventively across multiple platforms and modes.

This paper reports from some recently completed fieldwork where the text-reader metaphor, a conceptual tool historically used for screen reception, deriving originally from the Germanic tradition of reception aesthetics, was carried into a project with the users of interactive digital media. Drawing on the televisually derived repertoire of audience reception studies, and the recent body of literature around digital literacies, we analyse data from creative interviews with young people in London.

Carrying the text-reader metaphor into social networking, we argue that the multilinear, multimodal and multiplatform nature of texts makes necessary a fundamental re-working of the concept of reception as an individual skill of reading to a collaboratively activated interpretative practice which fundamentally and physically alters texts, and sometimes, though not always their syntaxes and shapes. From here, we conclude that genres are still a useful concept, central to digital media. Our analysis of social networking sites reveals clear generic conventions and we examine the renewed utility of concepts like model readers and interpretative contracts.

Finally, in discussing the utility of terms heard most often in internet-related research, such as affordances, modalities, legibilities and literacies, we conclude that in order to take audience reception forward into a pan media continuum, it is indeed important to begin and sustain a rich cross-fertilization of concepts across the boundaries between 'old' and 'new' media reception and use.

Stine Lomborg
Aarhus University, Denmark

The collaborative produsage of blogs

As an author-driven genre of online communication, blogs are often described as stages for individual self-performance. But as I will argue in this paper, blogging is also an ongoing conversation between peers, framed by the specific affordances of online communication. It stretches across blogs through links and blogrolls but is perhaps most visible within blogs in the exchange of comments and posts.

A core ambition with the paper is to explore what can be gained from treating blogging not as the exchange of individually produced messages, but as a highly social accomplishment that requires collaborative effort and engagement. This implies viewing the specific blog-text as bearer of the functionalities and social meanings that users ascribe the blog as a communicative genre, and the everyday practices of blogging.

The paper reports findings from a longitudinal qualitative study of conversational practices within personal blogs. I analyse complete recordings of posts and comments over a six months period in three quite different personal blogs and interviews with the blog authors.

Using the analytic lens of conversation analysis, I argue that the blog genre is continuously constructed and shaped within and through the users' interactional practices. I demonstrate how the interactional space in blogs is collaboratively structured by conventions of turn-taking and turn adjacency, and how these general interactional conventions are adjusted to the specific qualities and constraints of online conversation in blogs. I further analyse how emergent generic conventions are linked to participants' mutual expectations, arguing that these expectations are key to understanding how author and audience are mutually constitutive in the blog genre. I finally show how the conversations are used to establish, mark and develop social relationships between participants and that this sociality plays a pivotal role in participants' sensemaking of the engagement with blogging.

Mia Lövheim
University of Oslo, Norway

Bloggers and audiences: a case study of young female top bloggers in Sweden

Until recently most research on blogs and blogging has focused on their potential as a new form of public sphere. Blogs as a social genre questions conventional conceptions of a single audience or public sphere. As Jill Walker Rettberg puts it (2008:57) blogs typically "...support a dense network of small audiences and many producers". dana boyd also points to how new forms of online social spaces or "networked publics" are shaped by persistence, replicability, searchability and invisible audiences.

Research on the social dimension of blogging has been analyzed through social network theory, focusing on the flow of information, structure and relations *within networks of blogs*. Here, the focus has often been on the *practice of linking and patterns of links* between blogs. This practice does, however, seem to be most frequent among the "classical" type of so called filter blogs. As argued by Herring et al (2004, 2005) most blogs rather tell stories of personal life, and are used as a form for private self-expression

as well as public disclosure. Here, *comments* rather than links seem to be the main form of interaction between bloggers and their readers.

This paper will discuss relations between bloggers and audiences through an analysis of a sample of the top ranked young, female bloggers in Sweden. The analysis will include patterns of linking in these blogs, but mainly focus on ways of addressing readers among bloggers, and comments to postings from readers of the blogs.

The paper will end with a discussion of how an analysis of these factors, as well as links, can contribute to studies of new forms and relationships of communication through social software, in particular issues of how gender, age and genre affect the reception and position of “non-elite” media producers.

Edwina Luck and Ben Hamley
Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Social capital theory within virtual social networks

This paper identifies the role that virtual social networks play in both the presentation of opportunity to consumers and business; and in supporting and distributing an emergent theory of cognitive facilitation known as social capital. Social network theory examines interactions and comprises four dimensions: actors, relations, ties, and networks. “Actors are the nodes in the networks” and a comprised of several attributes, or “several characteristics which define them, such as age, gender, socio-economic status, or organisational status” (Haythornwaite, 2008, p. 5). Exactly ‘how’ these relationships are managed and to what extent success facilitates acquisition and management of resources, brands (or capital) could commonly be considered ones ‘knack’ for business.

However, in today’s tough financial times, success cannot be left to fate. We reviewed existing theories and models on social capital theory network diffusion and consumer behaviour when examining the possible link between capitalisation and virtual innovative tendency. Unlike previous systems of group behaviour classification (eg VALS), the social capital system aims to show that successful objective achievement is connected to understanding and acting on opportunities presented in the network rather than pre-existing psychological attributes. Drawing from this, we devise a model of virtual social capital framework that will illuminate network typology and may be applicable in forecasting and targeting of programs, products and services - which is important for marketers and business sectors. This conceptual research draws from models and theories from a variety of disciplines including consumer behaviour, integrated marketing communications, public relations, entrepreneurship and networking.

This paper will stimulate further discussion and advancement of psychographic and consumer behaviour theory within marketing communications and brand value creation. Our research found that virtual social networks will continue to grow in usage and increase in their importance in consumer and business markets. Yet, the *kind* of community, in which participants gather to conduct a certain activity, will be the future of social networks.

Peter Lunt
Brunel University, UK

Audience participation: Questions of governance, reflection and ethics

Since the 1980s, successive genres of popular TV have engaged the public as performers on a variety of programmes. The increasing visibility of the public on Talk Shows, Reality TV and Lifestyle TV developed the longer tradition established in genres including entertainment shows with studio audiences, game shows, talent shows, participation in documentary and current affairs and candid camera. The more recent genres such as Talk Shows and Reality TV seem to take participation and public performance into new areas so that there are greater opportunities for expression and the actions, thoughts, voices and feelings of participants became the very stuff of TV programmes rather than an indicator of public reaction or opinion. The academic literatures addressing these genres have seen a shift in topic from debates over public sphere theory in the case of talk shows to questions of identity and governance in the case of Reality TV. In that context the shift from a focus on performance as social engagement to the idea of enrolment in regimes of social control reflects broader debates in social theory. In this paper I respond to the recent adoption of governmentality theory as an approach both to analysing reality TV and interpreting Foucault. I develop these arguments by exploring the continuities and discontinuities between governmentality and developments in both public sphere theory and the sociology of reflexive modernity. The paper ends with some reflections on the ethics of the self and on the problems in taking debates in social theory as programmatic for research in media and communication.

Adrienne Magliocco and Eoin Devereux
University of Limerick, Ireland

Desperate for what? Irish male fans of Desperate Housewives

Using a Social Constructionist perspective we investigate the relationship between a sample of Irish middle-class male fans and the globalized text *Desperate Housewives*. The fieldwork for this study was undertaken in a provincial town in the West of Ireland. In examining this example of fandom, we examine our subjects emotional involvement with the text(s); their identification with (male) characters; their use of Personal Frameworks in interpretative activity, especially in relation to social class and gender relations. In relation to the latter we discuss the variety of gender based discourses at play in the construction of the key female characters as 'Devils' 'Angels' and 'Damsels in Distress'. Our study's contribution to the field is two-fold. It adds to the relatively small amount of research literature concerned with Irish media audiences (and their reception of media texts in particular) and it explores the media lives of a sample of middle-class males.

Winston Mano

University of Westminster, UK

Netizens and the Zimbabwean crisis

Can democratic credentials that are lacking in much of Africa be fostered by online media?
Can Web.20 chatrooms produce democratic dialogue that helps deal with political problems on the African continent?

The paper uses the example of Zimbabwean diasporic forums to discuss how netizens have tackled real African challenges. The online Zimbabwean communities are interacting in new spaces, asking and answering pertinent political questions, discussing top political news, views and gossip and at times help set the political agenda for the country's national media.

During and in between national elections this new space has been crucial to the extent that Zimbabwean cabinet ministers, politicians and leading civic leaders find it useful to participate in online media debates. ZimDaily.com and New Zimbabwe.com are among the leading sites for Zimbabwean diasporas which have open have engaged with the Zimbabwe crisis. The paper uses the example of ZimDaily.com to discuss the opportunities and threats that comes with Web 2.0 democracy.

Tim Markham

Birkbeck, University of London, U K

Audience participation and the politics of recognition

This paper investigates whether audience participation in mass practices of media production could amount to a form of substantive public engagement, conceived in terms of the politics of recognition developed by Hegel, Honneth and Fraser. It begins from the premise that the mere fact of activity cannot be assumed to be empowering or expressive, and argues that practices such as blogging and contributing to wikis should instead be seen either in Foucauldian terms, as disciplinary incitement, or as a Bourdieusian field of cultural production. The latter is more methodologically promising, and the paper presents evidence of an analysis of the role these new practices have both in projecting audience identity and performing social distinction. This symbolic economy is based on currencies of authenticity and morality, perceived as artless but in fact predicated on the practical mastery of specific techniques which come more naturally to some than others. The reorientation of audiences to new cultures of media practice is significant for three reasons. First, it simultaneously enshrines and obscures the durability of individualism – including in collective production such as wikis. Second, it reflects (rather than causes) the elevation of personal authenticity over institutional authority as a dominant criterion for ascribing value to cultural objects. Third, the communicative context in which these practices are situated does not support the structured, structuring feedback and exchange necessary for public recognition. However, while recognition is generally given to be central to subjectification, and the absence of recognition is broadly seen in pathological terms, the paper ends by suggesting that the lived experience of media audiences might contradict these assumptions. Citizen journalism and the blogosphere do contain instances of Buberian genuine communication, fully cognisant of the subjectivity of other media producers. But there are others engaged in new media practices who do not expect it to amount to public engagement, and who, narcissistically or otherwise, are content with recognition in the form of seeing one's words on a website.

Andrea Medrado
University of Westminster, UK

Listening to ‘Lamp Post’ radio in a Brazilian favela

This paper is based on a study of the everyday listening of community radio in Pau da Lima, a favela (slum) located in Salvador, Brazil. Drawing on ethnographic data, it focuses on the listeners of one particular medium - what residents call ‘lamp post’ radio - which consists of loudspeakers attached to various lamp posts on the streets. The ‘lamp post’ radio station shares many traits with ‘community radio’. Managed by people from the community, the station airs health messages and public announcements and contributes to ‘giving a voice to the voiceless’ in many ways. On the other hand, it does not entirely fit the community media literature because the station has a commercial business model, airing advertisements for the local shops. Thus, this paper embraces a more flexible definition of community radio. The loudspeakers on the lamp posts also help to create a competitive sonic environment in the favela. Not to listen is often not a choice and one has to shout in order to be heard. Thus, this paper aims at exploring how the ‘lamp post’ radio fits within the residents’ sonic everyday rhythms. It also asks: to what extent does the ‘lamp post’ radio represent a public resource for its audience? What are the implications of this loud sonic environment for radio? How can radio compete for attention? By focusing on the listening experiences of the favela residents, this paper attempts to fill in a research gap as there are very few studies of community orientated media audiences (Downing, 2001; Meadows, 2007). In addition, given that most of the ‘Western’ writing on radio (Douglas, 1999; Hendy, 2000) tends to describe the medium as ‘private’ and ‘domestic’, this paper also suggests that the study of radio audiences need to embrace the collective and public dimensions of listening in ‘non-western’ contexts, such as the Brazilian favelas.

William Merrin
Swansea University, UK

Media Studies 2.0: Addressing limitations of the field in the digital age

This paper argues that contemporary developments in digital media have rendered obsolete both the traditional concept of the ‘audience’ and the ‘audience studies’ developed by broadcast-era media studies. Building upon a critique of the existing limitations of the concept and its associated field of study, the paper considers how the audience has given way to ‘users’ and how this change demands new approaches, new theorisations, and new subjects and modes of analysis. The paper argues that rather than being a development of audience studies and its idea of the ‘active audience’, the nascent field of ‘user studies’ challenges its limited ideas, assumptions and values. In particular, in foregrounding the idea of ‘use’ it re-roots humanity in the broader historical, philosophical and cultural traditions of the relationship between the organic and the mechanical, emphasising issues of tool-use and technology, creativity, craftsmanship and labour, play and fantasy and modes of materiality and experience. A user studies also foregrounds the connection of users and their communicational, cooperative networks and the world of ‘me-dia’ they produce. User studies, therefore, describes an expanded field of study: one more theoretically and historically grounded and more able to follow and interrogate contemporary media practice by us – by its users.

Lothar Mikos

University of Film and Television, Germany

Popular TV, identity and the pleasure of learning

Identity formations in reflexive modern societies could be understood in terms of active engagement with the media of popular culture. Referring to the work of Pierre Bourdieu identity is a process of distinction from other lifestyles and milieus. Cultural capital plays an important role in the coherence of a lifestyle as expression of identity. Reflexive modern societies are characterized by an increasing struggle for distinction because of the huge diversification and fragmentation of the society. Media, especially popular television, are resources for the individuals in processing their identities. Therefore active engagement with popular media like television can be understood as a significant practice for the formation of identity. But in the public and scholarly debate it is not given very much attention to the importance of popular television for the construction of identity.

Only in very few cases scholars brought attention to the “idea of learning” (Hill 2005; Mikos et.al. 2004). As Annette Hill wrote: “When audiences consider information in reality programmes they are likely to talk about information as learning, and learning as practical tips and advice for themselves and their loved ones. The term ‘learning’ suggests an informal, personal relationship with facts in popular factual television, compared to the more formal terms ‘knowledge’, ‘information’ or ‘education’ that we associate with more traditional types of factual television” (Hill 2005: 89). What could be highlighted here is, that audiences look for symbolic material in popular television as resources for their identities and self-empowerment. Therefore the pleasure of learning with Reality shows, other factual programmes and also drama series is deeply rooted in the social communication in everyday life, the needs and wishes of the audiences and their struggle for a “good life”.

The paper will deal with the “idea of learning” (Hill) in popular television. Based on own empirical research on popular TV formats like *I’m a Celebrity – Get me Out Of Here!*, *Big Brother* and political education of youngsters with popular media I will outline some prospects of future audience research in the area of popular TV.

Richard Mills

St Mary’s University College, UK

‘Images of Broken Light’: The Beatles on *You Tube*

This paper will concentrate on two main points. The first is that *You Tube* deconstructs The Beatles’ image and provides new insight into their image, personalities and music. Secondly, it is an interactive forum for the dissemination and exchange of original material: Beatles fans are cultural producers as well as cultural consumers. *You Tube* gives the audience the freedom to resist the commoditisation of culture. For instance, the Beatles’ music and image breaks free from the constraints of big record companies and global producers: Beatles fans become creative consumers. Fans produce sound collages, parodies, versions of songs and post interviews and clips that were presumed lost.

The main revelation about The Beatles on *You Tube* is this wealth of original material which has not been seen before. I will look at outtakes and unreleased performances of songs and how they differ from the originals I will do this through scrutiny of their solo work as well as Beatles work. For instance, the Beatles’ songs *India*, *Carnival of Light*, *Child of Nature*, *Brian Epstein Blues*, *Spiritual Regeneration* and *Dehra Dun* (both home

recording made in the Maharishi's ashram in Rishikesh, India) are only available on You Tube. They are not available on any Beatles record or the Anthology series. There is also a wealth of rare material that would not exist if it wasn't for You Tube. For instance, the footage of *The Mad Day Out* session on the 28th July, 1968 and there is also film of the second Budokan concert in Japan that has never been seen before. I will discuss on this has changed perceptions of the Beatles and their work. This gives a perspective on the Beatles' work that diverges from the music and image promulgated by the Beatles' canon.

The creative consumerism of You Tube has resulted in the Beatles' work being reinvigorated by fans' input. There are numerous re-workings of their songs and their image by fans and also by other musicians. Danger Mouse and Jay Z, for instance, have famously mashed the Beatles' canon adding a contemporary hip hop and dance dimension to their music. They and many other contemporary artists also add a humorous take to the Beatles' image. In fact some of the innovative techniques used to produce 'new' material are so convincing that it is difficult to distinguish the imitators and satirists from the Beatles themselves.

In short, using rare outtakes, rare press conferences, lost studio tapes, Beatles parodies (including *The Rutles*, *Rutland Weekend Television*, Peter Serafinowicz, a slew of spoofs by unknown fans such as *The Teables* and *The Rutbeats* and even a *Sesame Street* parody), the home videos of John, Paul, George and Ringo I will analyse how technological innovation is translating the Beatles' work anew and how this material is a necessary resource for Beatles scholars and a riposte to Beatles mythology. Indeed 'images of broken light' on You Tube resonate with the Beatles' songs and image reinterpreting their work for a contemporary audience.

Gabriel Moreno

University of Westminster, UK

Transnational audiences and the social uses of television news

The vocabulary of transnationalism is normally used to describe large-scale processes that depict immigrant communities as co-existing with both their societies of origin and destiny. In the research of audiences, the notion of transnational media commonly attracts discourses of extended "imagined communities" and cultural deterritorialization that fuel the proliferation of new "mediascapes" and "ethnoscapes" in the developed world. These perspectives are important because they allow closing in the relationship between different forms of communication media and novel experiences of migration, but are now in need of producing a more specific theorization of transnational audiences. With this purpose, this intervention will put forward a conceptualization of transnational audiences that draws on findings that followed the reception of television news by Mexican origin informants in Los Angeles. The argument will focus on domestic sessions in which respondents argued about the importance of particular news items, at the same time engaging in arguments with other family members showing disagreement, agreement in the interpretation of a multiplicity of news events. This approach, it is suggested, reflects on broader aspects of domestic life that in a way resonate with the social uses of television perspectives developed within the tradition of cultural studies. The social uses that the intervention will outline, it will be concluded, are of use to conceptualize with more precision what transnational audiences are.

Dumisani Moyo

University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

We're all storytellers: citizen journalism in the age of digital 'pavement radio'

This paper critically analyses the rise of citizen journalism in Africa using the coverage of Zimbabwe's 2008 election as a case study. It starts from the premise that while the term 'citizen journalism' is fairly new in media and public discourse, it however describes a practise that has long been in existence in Africa's urban settings – in the form of something that Stephen Ellis (1989) has termed 'pavement radio.' The paper goes on to discuss the role of citizen journalism in Zimbabwe, focusing specifically on citizens' uses of SMS and web logs to exchange information during the controversial delay in the releasing of the 2008 general election results. It explores and analyses the various emerging aspects of citizen journalism and how they manifested themselves during this moment of political tension. The paper concludes that citizen journalism contributed a great deal to the circulation of public opinion, and to some extent influenced the way mainstream media covered this post-election period, thereby stopping the potential wholesale theft of the Zimbabwean people's victory in that election.

Eggo Müller

Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Spaces of participation: Interfaces, conventions, routines

Against the background of current debates about participatory media blurring the boundaries between the spheres of production and consumption (Andrejevic 2004; Jenkins 2006), this paper discusses how different forms of participatory television and websites – *America's Most Wanted* (Fox since 1988), *Big Brother* (CBS since 2000), YouTube (after its acquisition by Google) – create and institutionalize 'spaces of participation'. The concept of 'institutionalization' as 'socially constructed templates for actions, generated and maintained through ongoing interactions' (Barsley/Tolbert 1997), is developed as a framework for the microanalysis of the relation between the interface as constructed by a television program or a online video sharing site, and the specific forms of user interaction as they develop in participatory screen practices. The paper argues that though spaces of participation of online video sharing sites seem less restricted than those of participatory television programmes at first sight, users' activities are structured by the architecture of the interface, by cultural conventions of video making and by routinized practices on online video sharing sites.

Darren Mundy and Robert Consoli
University of Hull, UK

Changing audience/producer relations in educational contexts

If 'audience' is a concept in crisis then modes built on traditional views of media audiences must also be increasing in frailty. One such mode, the traditional lecture, faces significant challenges as learners become increasingly used to both active and interactive agencies in their consumption of media products. Technological convergence and the rising use of social network platforms built on Web 2.0 principles of collaborative authorship, can be combined to promote evolving forms of lecture, based on regarding the audience (the learners), as interactive participants in learning scenarios. This paper focuses on an analysis of two experiences where such principles have been evaluated in the classroom setting.

The first experience focuses on the introduction of a tool named the Wireless Interactive Lecture Demonstrator (W.I.L.D tool) to the learner environment. The tool allows students to in real time manipulate content delivered to them through traditional presentational slides using wirelessly enabled devices – thus turning learner audiences into producers of their own content. The second experience demonstrates the power of harnessing a global social networking tool (in this case YouTube) and opening learner products up to the world through mechanisms for video responses. Both of the experiences raise significant challenges in relation to the technology and its use, changes to pedagogical approach and ethical issues associated with learner identity and censorship. The paper contributes to growing interest in Web 2.0 and its implications in education.

Kris Naessens and An Jacobs
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

Researching audiences of computer and video games: methodological approaches and thoughts

Computer and video games have gained strong significance as a medium in the past decade. Sales in the US have tripled since 1996 (ESA, 2008) and the gaming market surpassed the DVD/Bluray/video market for the first time in 2008 (Lee, 2009). Along with this enlargement, we also witness the medium's audience becoming more diversified.

The stereotypical view of a computer and video game players solely being young, male and socially isolated does not hold out anymore. New gaming platforms such as Nintendo Wii and games like Sony's SingStar offer features aimed specifically at groups of persons traditionally not associated with gaming, such as women and people over 40. Recent figures corroborate this trend, e.g. 47 percent of Nintendo DS sales are made by women (Shiels, 2009).

Since the introduction of the first gaming consoles for personal use in the seventies, academic research has show vast interest in who plays computer and videogames. The literature in the field has long time been dominated by the medium's supposed negative aspects such as addiction and effects of onscreen violence, and by its focus on experienced players. Recently, these research choices have lost ground to studies focusing on more positive aspects of the users' experience of games, taking into account a more diversified audience.

In this paper we will detail two types of methods within gaming audience research which we both employed in a recent project, one being user tests in a usability lab and the other

being an ethnographic field study. We will discuss how and why the different research techniques were used within both frameworks and to which insights in the experience of games by different types of users they lead. Special attention will be paid to the use of innovative research techniques, such as co-creation and diaries.

Ola Ogunyemi

University of Lincoln, UK

Understanding the users of Africa Have Your Say website: an exploration of appeal and taboo subjects

The Africa Have Your Say (AHYS) website is authored and moderated by the BBC World Service as an extension of its public service remit towards the ethnic minorities in the UK. Baroness Scotland affirms this remit at the launch of the BBC World Service online services in 2002 by stating that they "...help the UK users access news of particular relevance to their community; to provide a window on the world to all those who seek it; and to enable new audiences (people who for reasons of language, family and heritage, have strong links with other parts of the world...) to discover the quality, range and depth of its services through the Internet" (Baroness Scotland, 2002). These online services serve the ethnic minorities in their indigenous languages, for instance, Arabic, Chinese, Persian, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. But the online service for the black and ethnic minority (BME) is in English language.

I have been monitoring the AHYS for the past twelve months and it is evident that it is not only attracting a huge number of users among Africans at home and in diaspora but it is also acting as a 'contact zone' for deliberating about the political and socio-economic problems afflicting African continent. For instance, the AHYS enables users to 'having a say' by posting comments or by writing their life narratives in words and in pictures. It also services as a vital information resource by providing 'news front page' from Africa, America, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Middle East, South Asia, UK and on specialist issues such as 'business', 'health', 'science and environment', 'technology', and 'entertainment' in 'video and audio' clips. In short, it verges on what Deuze (2003) called 'dialogical journalism', that is, a vehicle for "public debate through hyperlinks to message boards, polls, chat rooms, forums, and comments pages offering another platform for debate" (Deuze, 2003).

While a wealth of research has been conducted on the internet, for instance, some scholars noted that "the new media technologies utilize the human desire to connect with others and the ability of the internet to provide user interaction across the globe, unhindered and in real-time only amplifies its success" (Odlyzko 2001), there is a gap in literature about the online activities of the black and minority ethnic (BME). The methods to be used include interview with the moderators of AHYS and survey of users to gain an understanding of the appeal of and who contributes to the AHYS in terms of demographic composition; and about what taboos have relevance among the users of AHYS and whether the moderators of AHYS are sensitive to such taboos. The operational definition of taboo is taken from the five categories of forbidden by Thody (1997).

Sabrina K. Pasztor
University of Illinois-Chicago, USA

Social networking sites and constructs of true and fake identity

The prolific and continuing growth of the internet, cyber communities, virtual worlds, online virtual identities, and social networking sites (SNSs) on the worldwide web has changed the way many individuals live. With 120 million active *Facebook* users, matched by 110 million *MySpace*, 30 million *LinkedIn*, and 16 million in *SecondLife*, social networks are expanding in ways previously unprecedented and unanticipated (Coyle & Vaughn, 2008). SNSs facilitate interaction amongst members from “all continents and all age groups” (Cachia, Compano, & Da Costa, 2007), connecting friends and strangers virtually based on shared interests, community or political allegiances, or activities (boyd & Ellison, 2008). Correspondingly, sites continue to evolve their participation guidelines for membership, redefine types of membership accounts granting various levels of site access, and develop security/ policing systems and norms to regulate participant behavior in an attempt towards “perfect enforcement” to combat cyberlaw violations (Zittrain, 2008).

We need to be mindful that the true value of the network lies in the *relationship connection* that is made available via visibility of the network’s nodes (the medium brings forth the transmission of the message on a virtual networked scale).

The expansion of online relationships in the public sphere presents a significant issue that has yet to be resolved: that of ascertaining identity, authenticity, and trust (boyd, 2004) on social networking sites. Because of the growth of computer-mediated communication exchanges through SNSs, there is considerable merit in assessing how much information being transmitted and interpreted is authentic, truthful and credible (Lewis & George, 2008). Specifically, further analysis of the online environment that supports deceptive communications as contrasted with those supportive of authentic communicative practices has considerable traction in future discourse on social networking sites and identity.

Research Questions

RQ1: In what online situational contexts do individuals disingenuously or authentically portray their offline identities?

RQ2: What are the implications of this for (1) the further development of *legitimacy models* to ascertain the weight and authenticity of site content; and (2) the impact on consumer behavior?

Methods of analysis

Qualitative discourse analysis will be used to compare and contrast two distinct case studies involving two social networking sites, Friendster and Facebook.

The content of Friendster will be examined as related to “fakesters” and false identities, frequently created by corporate organizations or celebrities who assume the online identities of other legitimate members, to better interpret deceptive communication practices in online communities. By contrast, Facebook content related to commemorative memorial “walls” as collective sharing experiences that pay tribute to a deceased member of a social network will be examined as representative of accurate or truth-based communicative activity in the same environment.

Geoffroy Patriarche, Michel Hubert and Bertrand Montulet
Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis, Belgium

Transforming travel times, places and practices: Further insights into audiences and users on the move

User studies have stressed the role played by mobile phones in blurring the boundaries between private and public domains, shaping the meaning and experience of time, sustaining social relationships and supporting real-time coordination (e.g. Caron, Caronia, 2007; Ling, Yttri, 2002). Nevertheless, the diverse interrelationships between mobile media/ICTs and everyday spatial mobility are still largely unknown. Mobility research has pointed out the greater access to a larger choice of transportation modes, the growing variability and complexity of everyday travels (e.g. multimodality, interpenetration of professional and private travels), and the increasing opportunities for re-appropriation of travel times and places thanks to mobile media/ICTs. In addition, new and diverse media offerings provide various kinds of information concerning everyday mobility (e.g. real-time timetables delivered online or through mobile phones). The purpose of this paper is to report on ongoing empirical research into these new audience/user conditions.

The theoretical framework draws upon the little existing research in the field (e.g. Flamm, 2005; Holm & Kendall, 2008; Lyons, Holley & Jain, 2008) and further combines relevant audience/user studies and mobility research. The relationship between media/ICT use and everyday mobility is defined as one of mutual construction whereby travel times, places and practices shape and are shaped by media/ICT use. The research method is twofold. First, young people aged between 25 and 35 who either work or live in Brussels were interviewed about their media/ICT uses while on the move. Second, ethnographic research was carried out during train travels, resulting in extensive field notes. Empirical findings suggest that individuals adjust their everyday mobility to fit their media/ICT-related mobile activities. More significantly, individuals actively use mobile media/ICTs to transform their travel times, places and practices in the desired direction. Yet transforming mobility requires social and technical resources that are unequally distributed in time and space, as well as among people.

Ingrid Paus-Hasebrink & Uwe Hasebrink
University of Salzburg, Austria
Hans Bredow Institute for Media Research, Germany

The social web in young people's everyday life – Findings of a qualitative and quantitative study in Germany

1. Research question:

Based on self-socialisation theory, this paper inquires how relevant teenagers and young adults in the age of 12 to 24 consider social web offers to be within their management of identity, social relations, and information.

2. Theoretical background:

In a society characterised by individualisation and relative freedom of choice, but also by a bewildering diversity of life concepts and value systems, achieving a solid self-concept is a difficult task. More than ever adolescents have to be experts in designing their identity, in coping with developmental tasks, and in sustaining their position as autonomous individuals. The social web offers manifold forums and forms for these processes of adolescents' socialisation.

3. Method:

Based on the triangulation concept, group interviews (n=12) were carried out at two locations (urban/rural) in Germany based on a screening questionnaire with young adults (n=450) differing in their social web behaviour. The main interest was the determination of young people's preferences and themes when dealing with social web applications and their peer related (medial) everyday activities. Out of those group discussions, subjects were chosen for qualitative in-depth interviews (n=29) through theoretical sampling. In addition a representative telephone survey among German online users between 12 and 24 years (n=650) was conducted in October 2008.

4. Selected Findings:

The presentation contains selected study results such as risks and opportunities of social web usage regarding young adults' identity formation against the background of social-ecological factors (i.e. formal education, role of parents and school) and their individual attribution of meaning. Based on several dimensions of social web usage – creativity, relevance, intensity, reflexivity, initiative, innovation – six comprehensive patterns of acting with the social web were identified. These patterns are rooted in the social conditions of the respective subjects.

Chloë Peacock

University of Brighton, UK

A theory of 'double distinction': identity, consumption, and the Apple brand

This paper focuses on the relationship between identity, consumption, and the Apple brand, examining how Apple consumers actively reflect on their consumption habits and their relationship with the brand, to reflexively construct an identity.

Through interviews with Apple consumers, the analysis argues that Apple consumers articulate a discourse of "being different", which involves a practice of double distinction. Distinction emerges in multifaceted and even contradictory ways through the expression of lifestyle and taste. Apple consumers firstly construct themselves as being different from the mainstream because they are Apple consumers, and secondly, present rationalizations about their own consumption, usually built around their lifestyle, which makes them exceptional in the Apple group. In doing so they perform a double distinction in order to validate their consumption and sense of self.

Through their narratives and by reflecting on their lifestyle, the participants demonstrate that they feel their consumption positions them as part of an exclusive group. This is a practical anticipation of social meaning, and the value for participants appears to be derived from feelings of being elite. However, despite acknowledging a group habitus, most participants then choose to renounce it, very often by justifying their own consumption through lifestyle practices that distinguish themselves from the group, allowing the individual to create a critical distance and a separate identity. Most importantly, however, the practice of double distinction works within the central ideology of the Apple brand of "being different", and as such, represents a brand 'lock in'. (Callon 1998, Lury 04).

Debra Pentecost

Vancouver Island University, Canada

Painful knowledge: Audiences and war photography

The war photograph has incredible potential to jolt its way into one's consciousness. Further, in a world inundated with fictional and factual televisual representations of war, there is still something potent about the still photograph. However, questions can be raised about the efficacy of critical war photojournalism and its impact upon public attitudes, impressions, and memories of armed conflict.

Several theorists have engaged with the problem of audience responses to traumatic news imagery. A central question is whether audience exposure to the world's horrors as mediated through concerned photojournalism contributes to a strengthening of conscience and compassion, or conversely, to undermining or deadening such responses. Inevitably, war photojournalism has the potential to do both.

While much has been written about the power and impact of war photography, rarely does such discussion encompass systematic, in-depth analysis of the processes of audience reception. Utilizing the concepts of "icon" and "memoir" from photography theory, we know audiences perceive photographs as potent icons, and as memoirs functioning to authenticate or contribute to processes of collective memory. However, it is necessary to turn to communication theory and utilize the concept of the "active audience" in order to articulate the process of photographic reading. People come to these images with varying life experiences, and a wide array of factors function to filter or mediate the processes of reception, interpretation, affect and moral judgment.

My talk will present an audience reception study I conducted on war photojournalism. I found respondents assumed four major audience positions when making meaning from images of war. Further, I will articulate various factors respondents claimed intensified or buffered their engagement with war photographs. In the process of emotionally assimilating "painful knowledge" my audience study saw evidence of a willingness to bear witness to troubled world affairs, balanced by a propensity to avoid disturbing experiences.

Enrica Picarelli

University of Naples 'L'Orientale', Italy

Dyna Moe's *Mad Men* Illustrated

Dyna Moe is a freelance American artist who gained notoriety in 2008 by creating amateur illustrations inspired by AMC's hit series *Mad Men*. After publishing vignettes and other Mad Man inspired artwork on both her blog (<http://www.nobodyssweetheart.com/drillpress/>) and Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/nobodyssweetheart/sets/7215760617887453/>) for a year, she is currently negotiating a position at AMC as official illustrator for the show's third season.

This paper offers a case study of Moe's engagement with *Mad Men* in the light of Henry Jenkins' theory of participatory culture and fandom. By following Moe's growing investment with the series as documented in her blog and in an interview given to the author, the paper traces the trajectory that has seen her affective engagement with *Mad Men*, usually expressed as an almost instant response to her viewing experience, turn into a commitment that demands a different, more thoughtful and "corporate" approach to the show.

Enriching the 60's analog-inspired aesthetic canon of the series with artistic incursions that employ digital techniques such as vector design, Moe realizes hybrid products that successfully attracted the interest of AMC. Her 2009 *Mad Men* calendar, first publicized and sold on her blog, as well as characters' paperdolls, tarots etc. are an example of collaborative fan work that undermines antagonistic notions of fandom as active resistance.

Starting off as an amateur illustrator dwelling at the margin of the canon, Moe is now progressing toward its centre as her interest in *Mad Men* acquires an authorial value in itself. This shift from bottom-up to top-down involvement reflects the turbulent nature of convergence culture, and asks us to change our dichotomic view of producer-consumer relationship according the changing nature of such identities.

Jo Pierson and An Jacobs

Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium
Artesis Hogeschool, Belgium

User Innovativeness in digital media development? Reflexions on current conceptualisations

Nowadays audiences are supposed to be in the driver's seat of creative destruction - based on disruptive technologies - and of the co-creation of new media, content and technology. Lowering of thresholds for multi-media content production, distribution, storage, retrieval and consumption are seen as enabler for user empowerment, especially in relation to DIY media. The research on the mutual shaping between these media and the transforming audiences takes place in different fields like innovation management, human-computer interface research, sociology and media studies. However these disciplinary visions are being bridged gradually. In this paper we reflect upon the current dominant visions of the user as innovator in this changing media landscape. We aim to reconceptualise user categorisations.

New evolutions in the information society (like interdisciplinary research, open innovation, convergence and web 2.0) go together with substantial changes in the position and influence of audiences. Different terms and concepts are used to classify the users depending on their involvement in innovation. Combining micro-sociological concepts about strategy and tactics (e.g. De Certeau, Flichy) with the classic (but possibly too rigid) Nielsen 1-9-90 classification leads to a typification of user innovativeness in three main categories: using producers (prosumers, lead users, pro-ams,...), producing users (bloggers, citizen journalists,...) and everyday users. For the moment the latter group is perceived as much less important in digital media innovation, although the active transformation by users in their use of things and systems is well commented on (e.g. Dourish, Molotch, Shove et al.). To question this categorisation and compare it with the messy everyday socio-technological practices, mixed qualitative approaches for audience research, like living lab, probing, projective techniques and visual methods are applied within our projects to stimulate media technology design in Flanders (Belgium). By adapting this, a reframing of the role of audiences is possible for the future developments.

Cristina Ponte, José Azevedo and Joe Straubhaar
New University of Lisbon, Portugal
Oporto University, Portugal
University of Texas at Austin, USA

Digital inclusion and participation: how disadvantaged families deal with the digital in Portugal and the US

In those societies with access to new media, concern continues to grow about the digital divide, between generations and between majority and minority social groups. In Portugal, this challenge is marked by major cultural and educational differences between children and adults, with children leading in the digital access and use (Hasebrink, Livingstone et al., 2008). Research in Austin, Texas, has shown that better educated children can help pull their parents into digital media use, but the process requires further research to understand (Rojas, Straubhaar et al, 2004).

An ongoing joint Project, Digital Inclusion and Participation (2009-2011), funded by the FCT of Portugal and the University of Texas, aims at to understand the conditions and tendencies for access and appropriation of digital media with a focus on families and groups that are digitally excluded; to identify which national, regional, social and cultural modes and contexts affect digital inclusion and participation.

Focused on families, the research considers the generational, gender, national and ethnic composition (grand-parents, parents and children; male and female age groups; migrants) and maps life trajectories, cultures and relations/mediations with technologies. Information will be collected and examined by both qualitative 'life history with technology' interviews and subsequent surveys.

A broader frame of comparison includes the social history, media systems, education, digital access and digital literacy in both geographic contexts. Based on contextual and theoretical frameworks and focused on children and young people, this paper presents the research questions oriented for the comparative study in Portugal and Texas.

Liina Puustinen and Janne Seppänen
University of Tampere, Finland

Images of trust: Audiences experiencing news images

Trustworthiness is one of the key ideals of news photo journalism, which has confronted severe changes during the past decades, transforming from analogical to digital technology. The mutilation and manipulation of images is easier than ever, and there are famous examples of photojournalists having been caught of retouching news images. What do the audiences of newspapers think about this? Do people trust news images? How do people actually experience watching news pictures? What kind of emotional narratives do they provide?

Reception of images is mostly a nonverbal process. Therefore, the methodological dilemma is how to capture audience's experience on reception of the news images. It is also problematic to measure the level of trust on news images without provoking people to suspect trustworthiness of the images. Too often the question of trust is restricted to an answer of either yes or no. This is what we aim to overcome with the methodological choices of a combination of qualitative and quantitative research.

We are planning to conduct qualitative in depth interviews with 15-20 focus groups and show them incentive news pictures of print and online press to have them talk about their viewing experience. The interviews will be recorded with sound and image. Additionally, there will be a quantitative survey on the audiences' acceptance of various types of digital manipulation of news images. This will be compared to the results of the survey on media professionals' views on digital manipulation of images conducted by Jenni Mäenpää (2008) in Finland and the survey on audiences' opinions by Edgar Huang (2001) in the US. This paper is a description of a work in progress and we invite possible new methodological ideas.

Julie Reid

University of South Africa (UNISA), South Africa

Looking at myth and defining the audience: how myth and counter myth in popular media (re)establish post colonial audience identities

This paper introduces a discussion of the social value of myth in popular media texts, with particular consideration to post colonial Africa, as a means for media audiences to more comfortably establish re-mythologised identities. What is of particular importance in this study is how myth, and in particular counter and political myth, operate practically to inform the new mythologies of previously colonised societies within a post colonial environment, and also how counter myths are functioning to (re)establish these people's social and political identities.

Popular media texts, such as films, have in recent years become sites for cultural reconciliation and forgiveness which encourage audiences to come to terms with past colonial era traumas. Equally, the stereotyping of certain peoples which persist in many films set in and about Africa continue to inform audiences in the politically outdated colonial era formulas of identity.

Since myth and counter myth act as the social mechanisms for the establishment of collective identity and nationhood, the representation of myth in popular media texts should be considered with special urgency in contemporary Africa, where such audiences are currently contained within particularly sensitive political contexts.

Various examples of this type of mythic activity will be discussed, which include popular advertising campaigns, soap operas and films, including *Tsotsi* and the South African genre of Truth and Reconciliation films. These texts will be discussed with regard to their mythic content, and its resultant effects (whether ethical or unethical) on audiences.

Stijn Reijnders

University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Places of the imagination: An ethnography of the TV detective tour

Visiting the settings of popular media products has become a booming niche within the tourist market. This article considers one specific example: the TV detective tour, guided tours of the locations and settings of popular TV detective programs. What explains the growing popularity of these tours? The article proposes that the locations in question serve as physical points of reference to an imagined world. By visiting these locations and focusing on them, tourists are able to construct and subsequently cross a symbolic boundary between an 'imagined' and a 'real' world. To explain this process, a new concept is introduced: *lieux d'imagination*.

This concept is supported and developed on the basis of ethnographic analysis of three popular TV detective tours: the Inspector Morse Tour in Oxford, the Baantjer Tour in Amsterdam, and the Wallander Tour in Ystad, Sweden. In all, 31 interviews were conducted with tourist office employees, tour guides, local inhabitants, and tourists; these interviews were supplemented with participatory observation. Analysis of interview transcripts and observation records shows that *lieux d'imagination* result from a complex process of negotiation and appropriation.

This paper offers a valuable contribution to audience studies. During the last few years, various researchers have argued for an enlargement of the research field to include areas outside the living room. The modern media audience appears to be more of a "diffused audience" or a "mobile audience" than in earlier times. Media use would appear to be moving into the public space. The research into the TV detective tour is entirely consistent with this argument, and offers a theoretical as well as empirical contribution.

CarrieLynn D. Reinhard

Roskilde University, Denmark

The application of 'Dervin' Sense-Making Methodology to media reception studies: Interpretivism, situationality and empowerment of media users

Audience or media reception studies is concerned with questions about what, when, where, how and why people engage with media technologies, channels and content. Across divergent fields of inquiry, it is accepted that to understand the impact of the media on the audience, one must also know the extent to which the audience engages with the media. Amid various ways of defining the concept of audience, and ways of labeling them as related to the media products they engage with, at the core of an audience are human beings attempting to make sense of their lives. Increasingly, the media are integrated into the everyday lives of people, for a range of purposes, including simultaneously informative and entertaining. As part of their everyday lives, the media work to constitute the reality people attempt to make sense of every day.

Dervin's Sense-Making Methodology (SMM) provides a theoretical and methodological **approach for understanding audiences at the intersection of individual, collective and situated dimensions** – to understand the individual human being making sense in the situations that constitute his or her daily life as both an individual and as part of a collective. Applications of this approach are discussed to show how the knowledge of

audiences gained via this methodology can further our understanding of audiences when aligned with two other approaches: uses-and-effects and critical/cultural. The SMM approach promotes appreciating the interpretive lifeworld of the media user. The SMM approach promotes the discussion and comparison of the media's role across and within situations where individuals are coping with the demands of their lives. The SMM approach promotes empowering individuals to discuss their interpretations/performings with the media in their own words, allowing them to make sense of how the media fits into their lives and the world, i.e. to become theorists of their own lives.

Miriam Ross

University of Glasgow, UK

IMDB and Youtube: New sites for public discourse on cinema

In my paper I will be discussing the way in which IMDB (the Internet Movie Data Base) and Youtube have emerged as sites for public engagement with and negotiation of contemporary films. Using the sites' pages dedicated to contemporary South American films as a case study, I aim to outline the way in which the message boards, and other user generated content on these sites, provide a platform for issues such as; access to South American film; national and transnational identity in these films; and identification and misidentification with themes and characters in the films. To do so, I will be drawing upon post-Habermasian work on the 'public sphere' as a theoretical base for the significance of the interaction with these issues.

Often research into on-line fandom provides detailed analysis of how users interact in the 'virtual' world rather than how they represent voices participating in a public sphere that is made through relations with the off-line world. An area I will be addressing in this paper is the question of how on-line sites such as IMDB and Youtube can be used by spectators to position themselves in relation to an external cinematic culture, particularly when this ties in with perceived national and regionally-bound identities that exist off-line. In this instance, South American films provide an interesting starting point for analysis as they are the products of relatively small national industries yet the user generated content on Youtube and IMDB suggest there are international and diasporic spectators who not only invest in the content of these cultural products but also make links between their online and off-line use of the films.

Andy Ruddock

Monash University, Australia

Old whines in new bottles? Media and influence in youth drinking cultures

'Media Studies 2.0' ignores its own advice by failing to attend to the history of thought on media power. The call to the 'new' pays far too little attention to the 'old'. Consequently, although 2.0 recognises power as an issue, it cannot really engage with it. I make my argument in reference to advertising and alcohol abuse among UK students. In 2006, twenty-four undergraduates at a university in Liverpool were asked to create their own alcohol awareness campaign, based on their readings of how the drinks industry promotes its products through a variety of communication strategies. Data from the project suggests that drinking cultures mark a shift from a conflict to a co-operation of

model of media influence. The UK drinks industry deploys a mix of 'old' and 'new' media to co-opt drinking traditions for commercial gain. In this project, 'creativity' returned to '1.0' notions of hegemony and reception.

Philip Savage

McMaster University, Canada

Revolutionary radio: Audience models from Canadian public radio in the multimedia era

Three audience revolutions in the 1930-40's, 1960-70's and currently have led to new understanding of identity and democratic media in Canada.

The radio service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) began in the 1930's in a period of turmoil around economic survival and political identity in a vast, bilingual and largely rural landscape. The first generation of broadcasters to speak in real time to a national Canadian audience revolutionized audience engagement with in-depth professional on-air discussion, linked with local adult literacy groups and national political activism. They started new national groupings with active regional input in the National Farm Radio Forum (NFRF) under the slogan: "Read-Listen-Discuss-Act". By the 1960's the next generation of radio producers (oddly, not TV) transformed the public broadcaster through CBC's "Information Radio Revolution" and enabled – using integrated local and national radio schedules – the growing mid-sized towns and cities to act as entry points for the new social activism and nation-building of Pierre Trudeau's "Just Society". In 2009 in Toronto, Canada's largest and reputedly the world's most multicultural city, the latest generation of CBC Radio producers seeks to sound like and reflect the "glocalization" of five million people from over 200 orally- and visibly-distinct ethnic communities. They have a deliberative post-national content strategy for reflecting new multi-layered identities with an understanding of diverse audiences at its core.

Evidence from policy and planning documents, audience data and in-depth interviewing tells the story of radio's leadership historically throughout the entire CBC organization – including the latest digital platforms – in driving successive multi-media advances to advance democratic media engagement. Today the re-invention of CBC's oldest medium holds the key for the most creative Web 2.0-like notions of choice, interaction and feedback with and for audiences. That leadership is examined in light of technological and content revolutions relative to the problematic and dynamic notion of national and local identities mandated by Canada's *Broadcasting Act* (1991), with lessons for media internationally.

Kim Christian Schrøder
Roskilde University, Denmark

Mapping news consumers' navigation in the cross-media news landscape: Towards a new map of news consumption

The paper offers new insights through an innovative mapping of the use and users of today's news media landscape, as the everyday consumption of news across the range of available news media and formats is shifting as a result of transformations of technology, culture and lifestyles. The map of cross-media news consumption is shaped by the variety of needs and functions filled by the available news media and genres, from the provision of vital democratic prerequisites, to the supply of lifestyle, celebrity and entertainment materials that serve as an input to the conversations of social networks.

Theoretically the study is anchored in Habermas's notion of the public sphere, and its recent reconceptualizations in theories of 'cultural citizenship', 'civic agency' and 'public connection'. The project operationalizes these theories through the concept of users' *perceived worthwhileness* of news media, a concept which incorporates the different functionalities of the situational cross-media use of journalism by citizen/consumers in everyday life.

Empirically the paper presents the findings of a large-scale survey (December 2008) that clarifies the imminent challenges facing journalism practice, as a consequence of accelerating divisions between 'overview' and 'depth' news media (across print, broadcasting and the internet), and ambivalent audience perceptions of the opportunities for User generated content. The project is carried out in a partnership of university-based researchers and analysts from one of the major newspaper publishers in Denmark.

Gauti Sigthorsson
University of Greenwich, UK

The creative masses of '*Digital Britain*'

The present recession has prompted scholarly and journalistic questioning of the contributions of the cultural industries to the economy. The talent-rich metropolitan clusters of London and New York are well-placed to ride out a thoroughgoing shakeup of the media markets if they manage their infrastructure, space and resources strategically, as Richard Florida has recently argued. This seems to be the assumption behind the recent *Digital Britain* interim report, and Gordon Brown's remarks that a digital revolution "lies at the heart" of Britain's economic recovery and that broadband and the media industry can play a leading role in pulling the UK out of the recession. Focusing on the *Digital Britain* report and consultation documents, this presentation seeks to unpack some of the fundamental assumptions behind this link between digital infrastructure, creativity and profitability. In particular the implicit notion of an engaged audience of users, generating "content" as well as shaping new media platforms calls into question long-held theoretical constructions of the mass audience of consumers as spectators; instead, the audience emerges as a potential economic powerhouse, an underused resource for tomorrow's cultural industries.

Birgit Stark

Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

Competition between the Internet and traditional news media in Austria: empirical results of a longitudinal study

The media landscape has undergone quite a dramatic transformation in recent years. In particular, factors such as increasing digitalization and rapid Internet diffusion have had an enormous effect on media choice and usage patterns. Discussion about the role of traditional media in a world connected by an electronic information superhighway has increased. The debate poses several research questions, but one of most important is: Will consumer time spent on the Internet and other online services come at the expense of time spent with traditional media?

Up to now, the changes in Austria have not been examined from a user perspective. This paper addresses the research gap, by means of a longitudinal study that analyzes data from Media Analyse between the years 1996 and 2007. The study focuses on both the impact of the Internet on the use of traditional media and the differences between young and older users. The results of the study show that the use of traditional media has remained almost the same for the population as a whole. However, a change in media usage patterns is taking place among “the Internet generation”, a cohort which has grown up with digital technology. One trend is particularly noticeable within this target group: the importance of the newspaper and television is declining. Moreover, the results clearly indicate that the Internet has a competitive displacement effect on traditional media in the daily news domain with the largest displacements occurring for newspapers.

Toshie Takahashi

Rikkyo University, Japan

The mode of audience engagement: Ethnography on Japanese engagement with media and ICT in the global age

With the powerful invasion of ICT into our lives, arises the question of the 'end of the audience' and therefore the 'death' of audience studies. Many internet studies have been developed as an alternative tradition of audience studies by emphasising differences between the 'users' of computer-mediated communication and the 'audiences' of mass communication. However, the term 'user' may be limited in its use as an umbrella term as it tends to hide or at least under-emphasise, in cases of sending email or using a mobile phone, the person on the other side of the communication process (Livingstone, 2008). The concepts developed within the variety of traditions of audience research, such as selectivity of programmes, involvement with the characters, use of television personally and socially, interpretation of it socially or critically, and participation in it are still relevant in the current media- and ICT-rich environment. In recent internet studies, two empirical trends are continuous with both the reception and consumption traditions of audience studies (Press and Livingstone, 2006). Thus the theoretical aim of this article is to develop a diversified rather than polarised or reductionist conception of the active audience in terms of the concept of 'audience engagement' (Takahashi, forthcoming). This phrase, I hope, avoids the active-passive dichotomy and encompasses any type of engagement from merely turning on a television, computer or mobile phone to critical and political engagement with media and ICT. The concept of 'audience engagement' encompasses some of the ideas developed within active audience theories in both Western and Japanese media audience studies, including uses and gratifications studies

within American communication studies, audience reception studies of British cultural studies and European reception theory, as well as from *Joho Kodo* (information behavior) studies of Japanese audience studies. The ethnography on Japanese engagement with media and ICT in the context of globalization and social change reveals nine such dimensions of audience engagement – information-seeking activity, connectivity, world-creation, para-social interaction, utility, interpretation, participation, *uchi*-creation and recreation and self-creation.

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Starring system: writing fan cultures as a dialogical performance of [aca]fandom

The contemporary media landscape is a complex global environment that recently evolved to a many-to-many communication channels of interactive technologies. In fact, due to the digital convergence, old and new media collided in a cross-media platform where the audiovisual narratives are created not only from the media industries (*primary* and *secondary texts*) but also from the grassroots participatory cultures (*tertiary texts*). Those sociotechnical changes affect also the way people manage their presentation of selves and interact in their everyday lives. In fact media audiences are evolving into networked publics that participate in the construction of niche peer cultures. It is the case of fans, consumers with an intense engagement with a media content, genre or celebrity, that adopt digital social media with the aim to communicate with likeminded people. Fan cultures and special interest groups thus emerge from the ongoing interaction of the fans in different social spaces, that could be both online (fan communities) and offline (fan conventions).

My study focuses on how fan cultures can be understood as a *starring system*: a network of multifaceted and multisited individual and collective performances of fan audiencehood where the boundaries between media figures (and academics) and viewers are blurred. In fact, during an explorative ethnography on Italian television fandom I've observed the emergence of a networked collectivism of amateur experts that performs their competence and their passion publishing *tertiary texts* as *fansite*, *fanart* (video remix, avatar, wallpaper, ...), *fanfiction* and *fansubs*.

In order to describe the *starring system* from the point of view of the audiences, I argue that the researcher should embark on an ethnographic experience to dialogue with fans and to give narrative visibility to her identity as an aca/fan thus performing her audiencehood. For this reason I propose to combine an analytical auto-ethnography with a multisited participant-observation.

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Audiences, identity and ‘quality television’: Fan responses to the end of *The West Wing*

This paper seeks to draw on the existing literature in fan and audience research, particularly within television studies. By focusing upon issues of identity, ontological security, and cultural value, the paper draws on the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens to explore how fans drew on their attachment to the American political drama series *The West Wing* to perform identity work in various ways, either through explicit identification with characters or on-screen relationships, or by discursively aligning themselves with this text which was culturally deemed to be ‘good’ and ‘quality television’. However, during the course of my data collection *TWW* aired its final episodes, enabling examination of how fans articulated their responses to this event and how the demise of the fan object threatened their attachments to the fan object and to fellow fans. Fans appeared to negotiate their responses to the end of *TWW* in three main ways. These, broadly, consisted of fans rearticulating their reasons for their love of the show and bidding it a fond farewell, admitting that their fandom would need to be renegotiated in the face of the show’s cessation, or stating that they did not care about the ending of the show as it had already begun to lose its appeal for them.

Ultimately, this paper aims to examine the response of fans of *The West Wing* as their fan object approached its final episodes; providing one of the first studies that examines fans at the moment that their fan object ceases to be an ongoing text. By identifying their prevalent discourses of cultural value and ‘quality television’, the paper aims to demonstrate how these fans used the show to continue to perform identity work, along with considering how threats to the sense of ‘ontological security’ gained from their fandom of the show were negotiated.

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Beyond ‘attitudes’: To the thoughts themselves!

Positivist media studies draws for its understanding of research method from a particular account of scientific thought. According to this dubious narrative, the relationship between screen events, audiences and their behavior is *deductive-nomological*: that is to say, as in studying the physical world, these events and subsequent behavior are considered to bear a symmetrical predictive and explanatory relationship to each other. In the terms adopted by this pseudo-science, audience *attitudes* are a core link in this mythical causal chain: they constitute the responses to screen stimuli within the ‘Message-Attitude-Behavior Relationship’ (Grunig, 1982). But they cannot fill this conceptual role because they are not *events*: ‘one’s “attitude” suggests a more stable end-state’ (Nabi and Krcmar, 2004: 295).

In this paper a phenomenology of ‘indigenous understanding’ (Hutchinson et al., 2008) comes to the aid of positivism. Attitudes are a type or genre of belief. Establishing their content through talk sets out our perspectives on objects, persons or places - the cultural *horizons of understanding* from which we view. In a *fusion of horizons* (Gadamer, 1975) audiences *articulate* advertising’s perspectives evaluating a product-enhanced life. We thereby respond to the screen by *aligning* with narrative agents, *appropriating* the latter’s mediated behavior as a scenario adding meaning to our lives - or are *alienated*. Our thought thus ‘actively’ engages with media content - rather than being a causal effect.

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Intersections: When the stories of others run into the stories of the self

Narrative theories of identity take as a given that the need for “story” is intrinsic to shaping and defining meaning in our lives. These story-making practices order and make sense of life’s events, create temporally meaningful episodes and elucidate purpose.

Social theory considers the relationships between such personal narratives and larger social and cultural contexts and creates space to investigate the workings of reflexive subjectivity – the active shaping and development of the self by engaging with cultural memes and resources, among other things. Films are one such cultural resource and have a role to play in the narrativizing process as they provide creative texts from which we may build hermeneutic bridges to interrogate or redirect personal experiences.

This paper will present an overview of the theoretical framework, the methodology and the initial research findings of a qualitative and exploratory research study in which participants were asked in in-depth narrative interviews to reflect upon any films that significantly affected their views of themselves, their lives or the world in general. By exploring how viewers make meaning from diverse films in a fashion that inform their own life stories this research aims to shine a light on some of the mechanisms in play when the ‘stories of others’ affect one’s ‘own story’.

A three-tiered typology is proposed which classifies how respondents have engaged with films in the service of identity construction. The tiers are ranked by an increasing level of intervention into narrative identity concerns: The first tier aims to comfortably keep an established narrative identity going; the second tier aims to deliberately develop and expand one’s personal narrative identity; the third tier is more actively hermeneutic as the respondents draw on film viewing experiences to metaphorically and symbolically negotiate an understanding of their identities, and to revisit or “restory” elements of their life narratives.

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‘I want to hold it in my hands’: Readers’ experiences of the phenomenological differences between women's magazines online and in print

Most audience and reception research tends to focus on how audiences use, read and interpret media texts, while the perceptual, physical and aesthetic dimensions of media experiences receive less attention. Yet, we experience media through our senses, and perceptions of form and aesthetics could be an integral and important part of the general media experience. These dimensions could be particularly relevant in order to understand the continued appeal of an old medium such as women's magazines in competition with websites featuring similar journalistic content.

This paper investigates the phenomenological differences between reading women's magazines in print and reading similar material remediated on magazine websites. Analysis of interviews with a group of Norwegian women’s magazine readers will

demonstrate that these readers strongly prefer magazines in print, and that their reasons for this preference relates to the ways in which magazines are perceived and experienced as physical and aesthetic objects. Most of these readers are eager and capable internet users, but the experience of surfing the web and the experience of reading a printed magazine hold strikingly different meanings for them. These phenomenological differences will be further investigated through textual analysis of some Norwegian women's magazines online and in print.

The paper will apply and discuss the concept *media experiences* as a substitute for the more well-known concepts *media use* or *media consumption*. The central argument is that thinking about the relationship between audiences and media as a form of experience might highlight new and important dimensions regarding the place of media in people's lives.

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Youth values in Japanese popular song lyrics

This paper attempts to situate the place of music media content in the everyday lives of Japanese youth. Despite the increasing presence of “digital culture” (i.e. mobile technology or interactive file-sharing) no revolution in the subject of Japanese popular songs has occurred. My analysis of messages conveyed by Japanese music media shows that over the past decade lyrical content has remained virtually unchanged. The songs that top the Japanese music charts are lyrically abundantly similar, and, as my content analysis shows, this resemblance is found not only in theme choice, but also shared words and key phrases. Given such a high level of generalization, what relationship, if any, does such content have to the particular identities of the music audience?

To answer this question, I undertook a multi-part study. First, I content analyzed the major themes and values embedded in Japanese popular song lyrics over the last decade. A random sample of twenty songs from three, randomly chosen, yearly *Oricon* charts from 1998-2007 was combined with sales data (from RIAJ, for instance), resulting in a list of 103 popular songs from that period. Themes and motives were then coded, enabling the identification of central issues and expressions dominating Japanese mainstream music today. The salience of core themes was then checked with young Japanese music consumers via both focus group and in-depth interviews. This allowed the analysis of both group and individual perspectives from young Japanese people on values found in song lyrics today.

A major finding is that in Japan, the boundaries between creators and audience are challenged less by new technologies or the rise of “non-elite” media, and more by the unchanging content of “everydayness”. If true, one important role of content is in protecting the presence and role of traditional, non-participatory media in the lives of young Japanese people. However, what emerged most clearly from this ethnographic data were core youth identifications, including ageism, gender, status, and social affiliation.

Zhijia Zhang

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Segmented media and identity in China under consumerist hegemony

The Chinese media system has gone through a drastic process of commercialization since China launched its reform and opening up program in the late 1970s. Moreover the process has accelerated since the early 1990s. As Chinese media organizations are transformed from being pure party-organs to being both official propaganda outlets and market-oriented business operations, they have also become instruments of consumerism.

In the context of segmented media market and social differentiation in China, from being propaganda target to being target consumer, could Chinese audience's identity be influenced by the segmented media? With *Esquire* China as a case, the paper focuses on the impact of these media to their target audience's identity through semiotic approach. The case study of *Esquire* China first analyzes the magazine's identity construction by revealing how the myth of upper class has been signified by consumerist codes. Then it turns to see how readers identify with the identity constructed.

Drawing upon the literature on the critique of consumerism in the West as well as WANG Hui's critical scholarship on the depoliticized logic of neoliberal developmental politics in China, this paper argues that consumerism has been both a legitimate ideology and a governing technology of the Chinese party state during the reform era. The paper then explores the limits of the Chinese media's consumerist hegemony by demonstrating its tension with the China's socialist legacies, the limits of the neoliberal developmental logic, as well as the negative consequences for Chinese audience's identification.

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Audiences, publics, and politics in the Arab world

This paper revisits the notion of audience participation in a changing Arab media environment. It examines the relevance of media and the role Arab audiences play in the political process. More specifically, it explores the extent to which the emerging Arab mediascape can invigorate the civic sphere in ways which give Arab audiences an added significance. The larger aim of the paper is to attempt to develop an analytical framework for thinking through the notion of civic engagement in a region marked by heavy media consumption but constrained by non-participatory structures of governance. In this sense, understanding audiences in the Arab world has not only a media dimension, but also a political dimension. To develop this argument, I start off by highlighting noteworthy developments in the Arab media sphere which have a bearing on the nature and degree of engagement within the context of a redefined public realm in which "audiences" play a central role. This leads necessarily to an examination of shifting boundaries and interlaced dynamics between two categories which can be distinguished only theoretically and which tend to overlap within a reconfigured Arab communicative space—"audiences" and "publics." Rather than be content with setting these two concepts against each other, I propose a spiral discussion of the dynamics under consideration in an attempt to map out the contours of an engaged—though uneven—form of citizenry. I end with a consideration of what I term "a media-mediated civil sphere," the significance of which is only starting to emerge, and an inquiry into the dispositions which make this civic sphere, if not viable, at least thinkable and possible.