

Ethnographies of audiences, fans and users

1. The development of an ethnographic tradition of research, centred on in-depth interviews with and observations of media users
2. Studies of romance readers (Radway 1987), soap operas (Ang 1985) and magazine readers (Hermes 1995)
3. Alongside elaborations of the user of domestic media technologies by an increasingly audience-focused Morley (1988) and Ann Gray (1992)
4. Offering qualitative accounts of how media fit into the everyday worlds of audiences

Control and symbolic creativity

1. Paul Willis (1990) emphasized the control and symbolic creativity of groups of young respondents over their media use
2. Emphasis was placed on the productive social activities of consumers, including the creation and exchange of popular music mix tapes

Fan cultures

1. studies of fan cultures – focused on the engagement of particular groups of consumers
2. Henry Jenkins (1992) – ethnographic study of community of sci-fi film and television fans shows noted How participants integrated cultural narratives into everyday contexts and reflected on content
3. This would extend towards production of their own DIY texts, in the form of stories or videos that offered alternative versions of the official product
4. Jenkins – makes sense of such activities through an extension of de Certeau's notion of textual poaching

Internet

1. Jenkins noted the ability to connect, converse and share ideas on the internet
2. Have begun to transform fan cultures
3. With individual fans able to engage with a vast range of individuals and interpretations
4. Before, during and after consumption of their favourite texts.
5. The internet enhanced the participation in fan communities, and Made perspectives and creations of fans more visible –
6. The boundaries between producers and audiences were also blurring.

Criticism

1. One criticism of early fan culture studies was the tendency to focus on spectacular groups of fans, Who attended conventions, produced DIY media or participated in community forums

2. Which left the identities of more ordinary media fans largely invisible
3. Jonathan Gray – suggests this can reinforce stereotypes of fandom as a marginal activity And exclude fans who love a show – watch it religiously and talk about it, but engage in no other fan practices or activities

An audience continuum

1. Early fan culture studies may have singled out and differentiated the practice of small communities of very committed fans
2. The possibilities of participatory culture sometimes have been argued to over-estimate the power of media users.

Levels and types

1. Others have sought to identify and make sense of identifiable levels and types of media use through typologies of user engagement
2. The most well-known and often cited typology developed by Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) – as part of the Performance audience paradigm
3. This focused on the shifting and overlapping audience types, And integration of audience processes within everyday life and identity

The audience continuum

1. Consumers – media use is relatively generalized and unfocused with productive activity limited to everyday talk about texts with friends
2. Fans – heavy general media users liable to develop strong attachment and interest in certain widely circulated genres, stars or texts,
 - without leading to intense or organised contact with other fans or productive activities beyond everyday conversation
3. Cultists - develop particular concentrated specialist attachment to certain genres or texts
 - Regularly communicate with discrete yet informal networks of other fans and
 - Consume, create, circulate specialist fannish literature or media specific to such communities
4. Enthusiasts – who intensively consume, produce and share specialist small-scale media produced by and for organised networks of highly intensive fans
 - Including art, poetry, criticism, or fiction based on the characters or scenarios of the mass circulated fan-object
5. Petty Producers – whose enthusiasm goes beyond amateur appropriations and creativity towards their own professional or semi-professional forms of cultural production
 - That are organised through the market rather than through groups of enthusiasts whether as musicians, writers, film makers and so on.

The continuum

1. No typology or continuum can incorporate all the different variables or types of media consumption into its schema
2. Abercrombie and Longhurst's categories need to be updated to the contemporary digital media environment
3. For example, the first two categories – how do these relate to social media and how ordinary consumers or fans engage on social media activity
4. But, the audience continuum brings together consumption and production into a single spectrum

Digital Fandom

1. Re-assessment of fandom
2. fans are users of new interactive technologies
3. Focusing on Alternative Reality Games, which provide immersive experiences
4. They are game like narratives played on and offline
5. Using modes of mediation to immerse the player in the narrative

Transmedia

1. Alternative reality games are transmedia entities
2. Their universe and stories are dispersed over several media platforms
3. They encourage immersion, participation, engagement for players and fans

Producer/consumer

1. Producer – uses the new technologies to create and share media content in a semi-professional way.
2. Producer – some characteristics of creative fans – s/he is a producer and reader of media content, belongs to a community, collaborates with inter-creativity.

Example

1. Fan fiction blog – is collaborative, within a community of fans
2. The comments that follow each post represent the jump off points for debates within the community
3. The blog is an encounter of the intertextual and intratextual
4. The intertextual perceives the text as being open
5. The intratextual perceives the text as a closed complete entity defined by the connections between the internal features
6. Six features of intratextual – self-reflexivity, organization, the direct address, meta-knowledge, playfulness, recursive expansion

Blog

1. The fan fiction blog represents this mash up – a kind of rewrite of media text, drawing upon different aspects of the cut text.
2. The whole community takes part in its development

Web Commons

1. The web commons is representative of this fan community culture
2. It uses the internet as a resource or source for the community and is the symbol of joint and participative action in this community
3. Characteristics – collective action, collaborative self-governance, social capital – of benefit to all members
4. Wikis are examples
5. Wikis – interactive texts, developed using the concepts of collaboration and cooperation from Web commons
6. They contribute archives, narrative databases, compiled by fans around a media text.
7. They call on collective intelligence and contribute to collective knowledge
8. The ARGs are a good example of a mash up between a standard economy (promotion of a media text) and reward economy (community, work, play)

Identity role playing

1. Identity role-playing enables fans to construct an identity using profiles based on the series narratives, And on the experiences of fans themselves
2. Fans can perform identities through the fragmentation of virtual identities, through the reconstruction of narrative texts, and through a person interacting with reconstructed characters
3. We need to consider the relationship between the text, the medium and the technology

Fan phenomenon

1. The community is the strength of fandom
2. The ARGs highlight the link between collaborative work and playfulness
3. ARGs are based on interactive, immersed, participative, collaborative communities of players
4. They are hypermediated and immersion is enhanced but they use real locations in their game systems.

Antifandom

1. This is the term that describes audience members who strongly dislike a given text, genre or personality
2. But may seek out these objects of detestation
3. It extends the dominant, oppositional and negotiated reader positions by Hall
4. Particularly in relation to reality television