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Idol Inter/nationalism: Diplomacy at Risk

Authors

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Abstract

Since the dawn of Web 2.0, there has been a rapid and rampant increase in immaterial engagement of foreign cultural products for global audiences particularly in relation to music and television. For South Korea, this has meant that the Korean Wave products that have been disseminated across Asia over the past fifteen or so years have gained increasing attention in other continents as it is now easier than ever to engage with media products that were once available only domestically or within overseas niche communities. But this is not only done through the Internet as a major proponent of the Korean Wave has also been overseas K-pop concerts and conventions that are often sponsored or hosted by South Korean embassies. The Korean Wave has long been acknowledged and promoted by official channels as a vehicle for disseminating Korean culture and thereby affecting cultural relations through the potential for soft power. This soft power is twofold as it works insidiously to promote a nationalism within South Korea but also internationally to portray South Korea as a cosmopolitan Asia and further, as emblematic of a grander Asian culture.

However, this image of a cosmopolitan Asia is shattered as the propagandized images of Korea that are brought about through K-pop both domestically and internationally fundamentally contradict each other. K-pop is formed in light of domestic audiences as a way for shaping cultural identity and identification with a distinctly Korean culture which stands out on a global scale and thus can be converged on as an object of nationalistic pride. However, it is simultaneously conveyed as something essentially international through the inclusion of foreign individuals in K-pop groups, the release of alternate language versions of songs, and the inclusion of foreign language learning as part of the K-pop idol training process.

The discrepancy between these images is called into question particularly within the regions of East and Southeast Asia wherein pertinent geopolitical issues limit K-pop's potential for wide appeal. K-pop cannot escape its national branding brought about by state-sponsoring, government investment, and an undeniable identification with the 'K' of K-pop – Korean culture – to globalize to its full potential within the Asian continent. The results of this include fears of cultural imperialism, geopolitical disputes, and a tension between nationalisms.

My paper will seek to explore this tension strain between nationalism and cosmopolitanism brought about by the Korean Wave as it spreads throughout Asia and thereby explore the

relationships between neo-globalization, cultural exchange, and cultural imperialism. It will discuss at length how popular culture – long thought of as a lesser, lower, and unworthy version of culture – has implications on international exchanges of the economic, political, and cultural natures. Finally, it will contemplate the potential of the existence of a cosmopolitan Asian culture in a politicized world where it is impossible to be both local and global.

Submission ID

91

Shanghai Disneyland Park is “Awesome”! – Investigating Chinese Visitors’ Cultural Experience of Awe at Shanghai Disneyland Park

Authors

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Abstract

The sense of awe has been defined as an emotional response to stimuli that is vast and transcends current mental structure yet facilitates a need for accommodation (Keltner & Haidt, 2003). Studying the emotion of awe is important given that it was found to promote life satisfaction and social well-being (Joye & Bolderdijk, 2015; Krause & Hayward, 2015). However, the existing studies of awe have been done with individuals with Western culture, and limited studies have been done with Eastern participants. (Razavi et al., 2016). Therefore, in order to expand the scope of awe research beyond the Western context, it is crucial to explore how individuals from Eastern cultural understand and experience awe.

Previous studies have found that entertainment experiences such as playing VR games can evoke awe (Possler, Klimmt, & Raney, 2018). However, those awe experience was elicited in artificial laboratories. These settings limited the space that participants can walk around and reduced the time they interact with the virtual environment, which might reduce or participants’ feelings of awe in comparison to being directly exposed to an awe-elicited entertainment environment. Additionally, previous studies only studied how individuals playing games alone would evoke awe rather than playing with others. Therefore, studying awe in a larger and realistic entertainment environment such as in an amusement park might offer new findings to the existing literature.

The study will use Shanghai Disneyland as a specific case to investigate the awe experience among Chinese visitors. Shanghai Disney Park is the first Disney-themed park opened in mainland China and attracted 45 million visitors from 2016 to 2022 (Statista, 2022). Most importantly, the park features both Chinese (i.e., the Garden of the 12 Chinese Zodiac Animals) and Western elements (i.e., Castle and the U.S.A Main Street). These special combinations of both Eastern and Western cultural features might have unique influences on Chinese park visitors' awe experience, and therefore worth investigating. Finally, the park has attracted visitors from various age groups. Statistics indicated that 50% of the visitors in 2021 were aged from 20 to 30, and more than 30% of the visitors were aged from 35 to 50 (Hunan Morning Post, 2021). Therefore, it would be likely that visitors with different age groups would have different understandings and experiences of awe in the park.

Overall, this study intends to answer:

RQ1: What does "awe" mean to Chinese individuals?

RQ2: What elicits different-aged Chinese visitors' awe experience at the Shanghai Disneyland Park?

RQ3: How does Chinese culture influence different-aged Chinese visitors' awe experience at the Shanghai Disneyland Park?

Participants will be recruited through convenience samples in China. Semi-structured individual phone interviews will be conducted through snowball sampling. All the participants must be Chinese citizens who are older than 18 years old, currently residing in China, and have recently visited the Shanghai Disneyland Park within the last 12 months. The responses to the interviews will be analyzed using a grounded theory approach (Frey et al., 1999; Lindlof & Taylor, 2017).

Submission ID

93

Alternative modernity, gendered representations and resistance: the reception of Turkish soap operas by women in Greece

Authors

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Abstract

Since the beginning of the 2000s, the production and exportation of Turkish soap operas is in constant development. First diffused in countries that were under the influence of the ancient Ottoman Empire (which means the Balkans and the Middle East), Turkish TV soap operas have been diffused until today in more than 140 countries and have been watched by almost 400 million viewers worldwide.

Turkish TV soap operas propose a fantasy world of globalized consumerism and romantic love that defies national boundaries. Nevertheless, what differentiates Turkish soap operas from similar cultural products produced elsewhere is that they propose an alternative modernity characterized not only by traditional gender roles and social structures but also by social conservatism.

During the last decades, Greece has become a major consumer of Turkish soap operas. Despite the considerable success of these drama series in terms of audience ratings, watching Turkish soap operas is nowadays a “guilty pleasure” in Greece. The stigmatization of Turkish television soap operas as well as of their audiences is due not only to reasons intrinsically related to the nature of soap operas in general, but also to reasons related to the historical past and the troubled diplomatic relationship between the two countries. As a consequence, women who watch the soap operas in question are represented within the public sphere as hysterical and alienated housewives who have nothing better to do in their life than watching the cultural products of the “enemy”.

Through this paper I aim to present a part of the results of my empirical research concerning the representation of gendered identities projected by Turkish soap operas as well as their reception by women in Greece. More precisely, my aim is to highlight the ways in which women in Greece resist to dominant hierarchies through their reading of these particular media texts. How resistance to dominant hierarchies occurs through the reading of these texts proposing an alternative modernity and what does this tell us about the condition of women who consume Turkish soap operas in Greece?

My findings are based on a qualitative survey based on semi-structured interviews, conducted between 2016 and 2018, with fifty (50) Greek women of Turkish soap operas, aged

between 17 and 89 years old, with various social backgrounds and residing in different geographical areas in Greece (Athens, Chalcis, Thessaloniki and Komotini). Furthermore, I conducted an analysis of the gender representations projected through more than fifty Turkish soap operas as well as an ethnography of Turkish soap opera production studios that took place in Istanbul in 2017.

Submission ID

186

Exporting the Chinese Dream: World Reception of China's Nationalistic Movies in the Neo-global Age

Authors

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Abstract

In the past decade or so, there has been a new wave of movies made in China that represent a more self-affirmative position of China in the new world order. Works like *Wolf Warrior* and *The Wandering Earth* assert a powerful and influential China that is not simply occupied with its domestic affairs, but also looks outward at other countries in need or the entire humanity, and unhesitatingly plays the role of a savior.

While Hollywood has successfully dominated in this trope of storytelling, it has been noted that China's "Main Melody/Mainstream films" are distinct with their undertones of governmental propaganda (Su, 2014). In other words, film critics and regular audiences alike have pointed out that if Hollywood productions primarily lure their global audiences with captivating storylines, stunning action scenes, and provoking imagination of science fiction and alternative realities, Chinese cinema has not produced films that could compete with their Western counterparts on those counts. Despite their record-breaking box office returns and tremendous publicity about their ambitions toward a global audience, such nationalistic movies from China have not been met with much critical acclaim domestically or globally.

In this work, I focus on this trend of narrating and exporting a distinct Chinese Dream and specifically study two latest releases that both curiously portray China's patriotic and world-saving soldiers during the Korean War, whose prominent opponent and villain was the United States of America and its anti-Communist missions. Both released in 2021, *The*

Battle at Lake Changjin had received way more coverage than *Sharpshooter* with regard to the former's record-shattering budget and box office, although the latter was directed by a world-renowned Chinese director Zhang Yimou, and presented the collaborative debut between Zhang and his daughter Zhang Mo. Despite the fact that both movies were centered around a historic war in the 1950s instead of contemporary China, when the Chinese Dream took shape, one cannot help but notice the larger production backdrop of rising tensions in U.S.-China relations and the increasing projection and reinforcement of nationalistic pride as China contends for more soft power and influence in a neo-global world.

Through my critical textual analysis and more heavily audience reception analysis, I engage with the body of literature that has in great details decoded the messaging of China's "Main Melody/Mainstream films", which by and large promote the government's anti-imperialist, pro-socialist, collectivist, and patriotic values (Bai, 2017; Cai, 2014; Chen, 2017; Li, 2017; Shi, et al., 2017; Su, 2014; Wei, 2017; Wu 2012). Such an exuberance of cultural and political self confidence took on new currency as the Western world has been mired in the COVID-19 pandemic for almost two years whereas China had swiftly quelled its first major outbreak and resumed much of its normal life since early 2020, allowing the takeover of world's largest movie market from America even earlier than originally estimated. I study reactions to the two releases in the larger international and cross-cultural public sphere and discuss the continued tension between commercial success and sociocultural impact.

Submission ID

325

'Being an Anime Fan in India'- Analysis of Fan Responses on Quora

Authors

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Abstract

In India, the popularity of Japanese animation series, which is generally known as *anime*, has been studied in context of children shows. Probably because animated series are long since categorized under children's media in India, its impact and effect on teens or adults is not considered worth analyzing. However, there exists a subculture of anime fandom in India which mostly has young teens and adults as its members. What is worth noticing is that with anime being promoted by major OTT platforms like Netflix and Amazon prime video, the size of this fandom is slowly but gradually increasing. This study aims to gain insight into the socio-cultural experiences of Indian anime fans in a society where animation is seen as something that is meant for children.

By mobilizing the core/periphery paradigm, Botorić (2021: 13) introduced a concept of *periphery fandom* which refers to a 'sub-ordinated fan community experience where members are deprived of access to their objects of fandom.' The distinction between a periphery fandom and core fandom lies in the *accessibility* of and (fandom's) *visibility* to objects of fandom (Botorić, 2021: 7). Compared to other global anime fandoms, Indian anime fans had difficulty accessing anime for decades and if they have become visible to the producers and distributors of anime still needs to be examined. In local scene, the position of Indian anime fandom at periphery is deliberated because the core position is taken up by fandoms of politics, religion, cinema and sports (Chaturvedi et al. 2020). Thus, the peripheral position of Indian anime fandom seems to be twofold. This study intends to find if there is a shift in the position of this fandom with the rise of OTT platforms in India.

A few Indian studies that focused on anime were conducted in relation to content, design and distribution, but anime fandom and fan culture is still unexplored. Jaggi (2011, 2014) studied the Japanese animation content vis-à-vis children's television in India. Mayekar & B.S. (2016) designed a pitch for an animated film inspired from Japanese animation style. Anime fandom outside Japan is explored in terms of fan productivities, social protocols (Lamerichs, 2013), experiences, opinions, values (Chen, 2007), motivations (Armour & Iida, 2016, Reysen et al. 2018), social identification and parasocial relationships (Ramasubramanian & Kornfield, 2012).

Like any other fandom, anime fandom is associated with certain stereotypes, for example, fans being socially awkward, lacking social skills, introvert, nerd, obsessed among many others (Reysen et al. 2016). Reysen et al. (2016) found 'significant discrepancy between non-fan perceptions of anime fans and the actual beliefs and behaviors of anime fans.'

It needs to be examined if Indian anime fans experience stereotypical stigma associated with anime fandom in general. To fill this gap in literature of fan studies and popular culture, this study uses Botorić's (2021) concept of *periphery fandom* to analyze the social and cultural experiences of Indian anime fans who use online media to access their objects of fandom and multitude of social media platforms to gain visibility in the Indian as well as

global fandom scene. We posit our research question as: What are the social and cultural experiences of Indian anime fans?

With the rise of digital technology, fans' accessibility to their objects of transnational and transcultural fandom has become easier. Thus, online media is considered as the research site for this study. The specific social networking site being considered for this study is Quora - a community of user generated questions and answers - with over 215.8 million monthly visits by Indian users (Sannam S4, 2019). As per Indian anime blogs, Quora is also one of the platforms fans frequently use to interact with each other. The researchers will analyze the questions and its respective answers related to Indian anime fans and status of anime in India. Textual analysis will be used to analyze the responses. Textual analysis 'involves understanding language, symbols, and/or pictures present in texts to gain information regarding how people make sense of and communicate life and life experiences' (Hawkins, 2017: 1753) and thus, helps in analyzing the socio cultural experiences of Indian anime fans.

Submission ID

346

Explicit Consumption and Implicit Exploitation: Cyber Fandom in China

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Abstract

This study aims to critically examine the conditions in which fans interact and engage with celebrities and each other in online talent shows in the digital era in China. Previous studies have demonstrated the possibility for audience (fans inclusive) to negotiate with the meanings and to influence the production of popular culture due to the advancement of commodification in the cultural industry (see Jenkins, 1992). This trend has also shown its existence in China since 2005, when the television talent show *Super Girl* normalized the commercial value of fan-idol relationship (Yang, 2009). As such, the forms and content of fandom are transforming in the process of digitalization of life in China today. On the one hand, the proliferation of the internet in the country has routinized digital media use and

normalized the value of data (Yin, 2020), which grant more power to platform owners in shaping the social and cultural order (Zhao, 2021). On the other hand, alternative views on the internet have triggered tighter official control from the Chinese government (Cui & Wu, 2016), with the consequence of homogeneity of content among various cultural institutions. In response, popular culture takes new genres to adapt to the participatory norm oriented, platform-data driven and state-control tightened conditions. As a result, cyber fandom in China exist in a condition of political homogeneity and datafying commercialization, which mimic Frankfurt School's pessimistic accusation on the colonization of social structure on culture, and assertion of the deceptive nature of popular culture on mass (Storey, 2018). We argue that such transformation of conditions has led to the reconfiguration of fan cultures from a structural level, in that **fans are explicitly granted the decision making-power of their consumption through online participation, yet are implicitly exploited by the industry through manipulation of their digital traces.**

To bolster our argument, we conduct a critical discourse analysis on some of the most popular Chinese online talent shows (*including Idol Producer, Youth With You, and Produce 101*) that yielded substantial fan participation and internet-wide controversy, specifically focusing on the contestant characteristics, program format and process, fan practices and articulation, as well as the circulated discussions and criticisms. The preliminary data reveals three patterns of cyber fandom culture: 1) **standardization of idols and the production modality**, 2) **manipulation of fans' participation**, and 3) **construction of conflict with anti-fans**, which echo the essence of exploitation. As we contend, these patterns of the exploitative nature of cyber fandom is largely shaped by the platformized audience metrics, the commodification of fandom, and the data-ization of fan material. In turn, they reconsolidate the manipulative power of the industry at mezzo level and state control at macro level. The current case situates and demonstrates the characteristics in the Chinese context as well as with digitalization and highly demanded participation which creates a concealing masquerade for the exploitative essence. This study thus extends the critical understanding of the notion of exploitation in the digital era while it also sheds a faint light on the intrinsic nature of digital economy.

Submission ID

373

Gay characters in Singaporean audiovisual fictions

Authors

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Abstract

There is a lack of representation of LGBTQ+ people in Southeast Asia and these persons still face stigma and marginalization. However, LGBTQ+ filmmakers of the region have found in YouTube a place where they can safely portray their intimate LGBTQ+ narratives.

The aim of this study is to analyze the representation of LGBTQ+ people in narratives created by Singaporean filmmakers and available on YouTube. There are scarce studies on analyzing the representation of LGBTQ+ people and characters in such cultural context. As a matter of fact, Chan (2008) found that LGBTQ+ people have been banned from TV local channels. Thus, such sexualities are not portrayed or presented as a social ill. This is certainly related to the fact that Singapore prohibits homosexuality by law. Despite that, empirical literature suggests that exposure to positive portrayals of LGTB+ in the media produces positive effects on individuals' attitudes towards them (Madzarevic & Soto-Sanfiel, 2018).

This research adopts a mixed method approach to achieve a more profound understanding of gay character's representations. It includes a quantitative study intended to reveal the general trends of such representations and a qualitative study to explore their characteristics in greater depth. The audiovisual corpus consisted of all Singaporean LGBTQ+ content available on YouTube in the first quarter of 2021 (1 webseries and 2 short films).

Specifically, the quantitative study consisted of a descriptive content analysis of all the characters presented in the Singaporean LGBTQ+ narratives following the model proposed by Marcos-Ramos & González de Garay (2021). The qualitative studied applied a discourse analysis (Wodak & Krzyzanowski, 2008) focusing on discourses associated to the general trends of the analyzed narratives at *macro and micro levels*.

The results show that these gay characters follow a homonormative model and cis-heteronormative canons. Also, they reveal the persistence of some distorted discourses in the narratives, such as constructing stories that mainly represent male Singaporean-Chinese homosexuality, and a lack of female LGBTQ+ characters. Moreover, the narratives do not really advocate for the normalization of homosexuality since LGBTQ+ realities are not presented as being naturally integrated.

All of the above leads us to conclude that LGBTQ+ characterization in Singaporean fiction must overcome some challenges, including the inclusion of LGBTQ+ representations in fiction for general audiences, and not only for market niches available online. Likewise, LGBTQ+ filmmakers must also reflect on the nature of their representations, since a distorted construction of the LGBTQ+ reality is counter-productive with regard to sexual and gender non-normative orientations.

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532

The Reverse Infiltration of symbols from Tanbi Subculture to Mainstream Culture in Media Age China

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Abstract

Since the flourish of the third revolution of science and technology, a new context of globalized cultural communication has been gradually established, permitting Japanese Tanbi comics which portrays the imaginary love between young boys to enter the Chinese market in the 1990s. With the further development of the Internet and social media, the Tanbi subculture flourished and popularized in China, becoming a considerable popular culture group among the Generation Z. The Tanbi subculture was even listed as one of the most commercialized and renowned popular cultures in the early 21st century. Some specific cultural symbols flowed out of the Tanbi subculture and assimilated into the knowledge of the mainstream culture audience.

Although the Tanbi subculture is prevalent and commercialized in China, few studies have been done to analyze how and why Tanbi subculture becomes acceptable and commercialized among the public and how it converges and interacts with the mainstream culture in China. To fill the research gap, our interview study, 18 in-depth interviews, was conducted in November 2021 to explore the infiltration from the Tanbi subculture to mainstream culture in the frame of the media world utilizing qualitative methodology.

Researching on the mainstream audience's acceptance of the Tanbi subculture, we found that the spreading of the Tanbi subculture along with the new signified of its symbols developed during the spread of the culture enriched the possibilities for thinking and expression of the public, and the new and generalized signified furthermore helped the original symbols of the Tanbi subculture become popular among a broader audience. Besides, we found that when mainstream audiences come to know the exact definition and more concrete understanding of Tanbi or related terms, people will have communications about Tanbi subculture with people who have physical social relationships in the reality. Furthermore, we found that the exposure of the Tanbi culture and its symbols on the mainstream platform and media which are familiar to individuals is vital for the culture to spread to a wider range of public.

The significance of the research is as follows. First, the Tanbi subculture's large amount of audience and their growing demands of commercialized Tanbi cultural products afford this research a basic universality. Second, our inductive analysis briefly provides a new view of understanding the infiltration of the Tanbi subculture into the mainstream culture from a semiotics perspective.

KEYWORDS: Popular culture; Tanbi subculture; Semiotic; Infiltration; Media age

Submission ID

575

Feminist affect on social media: An analysis of the discourse of housewives in China

Authors

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Abstract

Social media has been theorized as a vehicle of digital feminism, which re-establishes the collective vision of feminism for a neoliberal age, despite its precarity (e.g. Baer, 2016; Yin & Yu, 2020). I join this conversation by directing attention to the mundane, popular feminist discourses generated by trending hashtags on Weibo, the dominant social media platform in China. Specifically, I focused on discourses related to housewives for my analysis. I argue for envisioning feminist articulations on social media as affective discourses whose political implications do not necessarily lie in whether they ideologically challenge patriarchy and neoliberalism, but in their “symbolic”, “semantic” and “liminal” feminist energy that is in need of directions and synergy with other systematic efforts (Papacharissi, 2015, p.131). I also suggest understanding such feminist affect in relation to the political-economy of the social media platform, which may have contributed to higher visibility of de-politicized pro-woman discourse at a time when neoliberal beliefs are the hegemonic rationality.

The housewives or stay-at-home-mothers is among other gender-related issues that often get trending on Weibo, for whom feminism has become “commercial correct”(Li, 2020). Several relevant hashtags include #is housewife independent woman?#, #Zhang Guimei is against being a housewife#, #re-entering workplace is hard for housewives# and several others that sympathize with divorced housewives who get low compensations. Most

recently, the famous male celebrity Wang Lihong's wife Li Jinglei charged her husband and his family for exploiting her reproductive labor as a housewife, causing heated discussions on Weibo.

My observations of the above cases found that a global re-negotiation of the terms of domestic labor is formed across the board. The streams under the hashtags, often a mix of opinion, fact, and emotion, sympathize housewives' work as substantial labor, complain about the imperfect system that render housewives a risky job, or call for respect for housewives. By revealing the housewives' underprivileged situations and recognition of the under-represented domestic labor, the affective discourse cast a challenge to the male-centered dominant ideology that devalue labor in the sphere categorized as private.

Such global feminist affective energy, however, is largely channeled to neoliberal rationality rather than to a challenge to the patriarchal structure and the marketized principle, at least at the moment. Calling women to work with an individualized logic and celebrating housewives' autonomy and entrepreneurialism are the most visible discourses, whereas discourses that address gendered labor division and public welfare are limited and marginalized.

I further argue that such affect channeling can be related to the political and economic conditions of the media. With Weibo employing commercially friendly empowerment terms, and the state-sponsored media retreats from emancipatory vocabularies, the depoliticized, individualized feminist discourses are granted more "luminosity" (McRobbie, 2009, p.54).

Yet, instead of another piece accusing neoliberal incorporation of feminism, I see the political implications of such feminist affect co-enabled by market-state as "liminal" (Papacharissi, 2015, p.131), that is, a transitional impulse that is open to productive (or unproductive) directions. Such interpretations also resonate with Rottenberg's (2014) evaluation of neoliberal feminism as a process. As a corollary, it is necessary to consider how such feminist affect can be further directed towards establishing a truly empowering paradigm, and how a collaborative vision of all types of resources, be it celebrity, commercial, state institutions, grassroots, or legacy media, can be made potential.

Submission ID

669

Investigating patriarchal fandom governance in China through discursive analysis on “Fanquan Nvhai” (fangirls)

Authors

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Ms. Chen Fan - Independent Researcher

Ms. Jingyi Guo - Independent Researcher

Abstract

“Fandom governance” is termed by scholars to refer to state-run media and official institutions in China “adopting a strategy of governing citizen-as-fans by borrowing register, scripts, and games from China’s online fandom” (Guo, 2018; Wong, et al., 2021; Yang, 2021). Although fandom has been employed as a strategy of governance, it is also the object of governance, especially during the “*Qinglang*” or “clear and bright” Campaign launched by The Cyberspace Administration of China(CAC) in 2021 to crackdown “chaotic online fan culture”. As for public discussion and media reports on fandom governance, either regarding fandom as the object or strategy of governance, “*Fanquan nvhai*”, or fangirl, is a central and visible symbol, through analysis of which this paper aims to investigate different dimensions of fandom governance, to interrogate the gendered power dynamics embedded in it, and to contextualize it in the online speech regulation, emerging online fandom, and gendered hero-worship tradition in China.

Through discursive analysis, we outline how “*fanquan nvhai*” has been differently depicted and discussed, disclosing the state’s paradoxical attitudes towards “*fanquan nvhai*” as well as online fandom. At the intersection of gender and age, fangirls are mostly represented as insane, childish, credulous and passive who are “brainwashed”, “manipulated”, “bullied”, “defrauded” and who are to be “helped” and “rescued”, echoing and increasing “the endurance of a gender stereotype” (Gerrard, 2021; Hannell, 2020). However, they are highly praised as “efficient and dedicated volunteers” during the covid-19 pandemic in the early 2020 and “young and promising patriots” during Hongkong Event in the late 2019. Online fandom is represented as both “a trial field for youth culture and public sphere” and “a chaotic and harmful place outside the law”. Though seemingly contradictory, all of them serve to the state’s political agenda.

Based on the different portrayals of “*fanquan nvhai*”, two sides of fandom governance were found: fandom as the object of and the strategy of governance. Both of them are gendered. Different “state-fangirls” relations were constructed in each condition by rhetorical devices such as contrast and metaphor: “father-daughter” relation for the former one and “idol-fans” relation for the latter. We then scrutinize the gendered power dynamic

embedded in fandom governance through the theoretical perspectives of heterosexual nationalism and patriarchal nationalism (Craig, 2013; Kumari, 2018; Yuval-Davis, 2010).

Last, we contextualize fandom governance at the intersection of China's internet speech regulation, emerging data-ization and capitalization of online fandom, and gendered hero-worship tradition (Lu & Zhao, 2018; Yin, 2020), by providing an overview of internet speech regulatory policy and action since 2013 and comparing the discourse of "fanquan nvhai" and that of "shijin babaofan" (fans of then President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao) one decade ago.

Submission ID

670

Burritos, Dosas, & Chop-Suey: Food, Soft Power, and Pop Culture in Neo-Global US Diasporas

Authors

Dr. Ishani Mukherjee - University of Illinois at Chicago

Dr. Maggie Williams - Northeastern University

Abstract

In a peri-pandemic time of neo-globalization that has created fractures and increased awareness of how our societies, institutions, cultures, economy, and media operate, we locate popular culture as a critical site where such changes can be explored. As critical-cultural media scholars, we are concerned with popular representations of cultural identity. In light of neo-globalization, we are specifically concerned with reassessing diasporic identity and food cultures depicted in popular media.

The recent Hulu series, *Taste The Nation with Padma Lakshmi* (2020), offers a unique case study to explore immigrant communities in the United States and their food cultures, representing "stories that challenge notions of identity, belonging, and what it means to be American" (Hulu Press, 2022). The series was released in June 2020 – in the early days of the pandemic and the renewed racial reckoning of that summer. With ten episodes in season one, each episode connects historical and recent events with food and culture. For example, in Season 1, Episode 5 of the travel and food docuseries Padma Lakshmi travels to San Francisco's *Chinatown* to explore, taste and experience what makes Chinese food a favorite of the American palate. We learn how discriminatory migration policies, racism,

economic necessity, and ethnolinguistic othering of Chinese immigrants resulted in the simplification of diverse “flavors of a vast country” into an assimilated one-stop dish – the ‘Chop Suey’ (Hulu Press, 2022). This pop culture episode also presents a neo-global narrative of how recent waves of Chinese immigrants and Chinese-Americans are reimagining food as a disruptive technology to vie for an authentic cultural identity and to innovate economic development in the host-space “as both a goal and an ideological commitment” (Namaki, 2019, p. 74).

Neo-globalization has problematized and disrupted normative assumptions of how intercultural communication and cultural harmony intersect in human movements and migrant-host relations (Jandt, 2016; Namaki, 2019). The acculturation of immigrants relies to a degree on the quality of their relation and cultural harmony with members of the host community – determined by their choice of assimilation, separation, marginalization, and/or integration as the preferred communication strategy (Mukherjee & Williams, 2020). Food, in such cases, has functioned as a cultural broker for migrant groups to mitigate the “dislocation and disorientation they experience in new and unknown spaces” (Parasecoli, 2014, p. 416). Then again, “by recreating a sense of place around food production, preparation, and consumption, both at the personal and interpersonal levels” (Parasecoli, 2014, p. 416), diasporic communities have negotiated their “out-group contact and relations” with their “in-group identity and maintenance” (Neuliep, 2015, p. 440).

In this paper, we conduct a critical thematic analysis of *Taste the Nation with Padma Lakshmi* to explore how both media and food can function as soft power, creating ideological disruptions in social, cultural, spatial, mobile, and economic norms. Using the *migrant-host relationship model* (Jandt, 2016) to decode our case study in the context of neo-globalization, we question and challenge how cultural identities and diasporic cuisines have traditionally been circumscribed within borders (political, national, regional) and socio-economic spaces.

Submission ID

671

Popular media, sexism, and gender antagonism: The market-state complex of misogyny in China

Authors

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Abstract

On October 14, 2021, a Chinese standup comedian Yang Li was caught on fire as she was featured in a short video for Mercedes-Benz. Yang rose to fame for her sarcastic comments on men during online gigs. The endorsement video soon drew fierce contention and controversy, in which the self-identified male netizens attacked her and claimed to boycott Benz while the rest highly endorsed Yang and Benz's collaboration. Such controversy was not new to Yang. Early in 2021, Intel pulled a Chinese laptop ad featuring Yang due to the backlash from majority male users, who called for boycotting Intel as it collaborated with a woman who insulted men. Both Intel and Mercedes, as transnational companies, have had a hard time pleasing consumers in China, both men and women due to the accusation of sexism though for different reasons: men criticize these companies using a misandrous woman figure in their male-oriented consumer markets, while women believe that these companies' withdrawal of/reservation about collaborating with Yang shows their capitulation to and conspiracy with Chinese men in enhancing the sexist gender culture.

This study focuses on the popular media events and discourse on sexism and gender antagonism in China to map out the popular phenomenon of misogyny buttressed by a market-state complex. The 40-year reform and opening policies have led fast economic growth in China, resulting in multiple social, cultural, and technological transformations that left durable imprints in gender politics. The recent decade has witnessed a surge of gender-related phenomenon, events, discussions— leftover women, anti-sexual harassment, gender-based work discrimination, gender morale and traditional values, and the aforementioned gendered comedic barbs in gigs—in a variety of media genres and platforms. Commercial media are the trailblazers in introducing “gender” into their content for captivating audience and increasing ratings for profits. It, on the one hand, broadens the scope of social discussion on various phenomena related to gender, yet, on the other, confines the gender topics and content to commercial logic and monetization of audience' participation and passion. Social media best capture the audience's sensibilities in sensational-driven topics, highlighting controversies, discussion, contentions, and antagonism between sexes and among genders that usually spawn toxic internet culture of sexism, misogyny, and discrimination.

The commercialization of popular media events on gender is in coalescence with a patriarchal state gender politics. Government-sanctioned gender discourse, though highlighting a

nominal gender equality, is usually policing women instead of men to meet its political and social agenda. To implement the recent “third-child policy,” the propaganda machine relentlessly promotes happy-life pictures of multi-kid families in various media and assures women of financial and institutional support of raising children, bypassing the basic but essential issues of reproductive rights and domestic labor division. In September 2021, Health Times (*jiankangshibao*, 健康时报), an affiliated newspaper to the People’s Daily, the state mouthpiece, crusaded several female internet influencers, blaming them engaging in attention-seeking activities by faking illness and selling products. The report generated a sexist term “bingyuan” (病媛, bing refers to being ill, yuan to beautiful women) that was soon widely endorsed by other official media and popularized on social media, generating a backlash against women, especially those pictured their fancy lifestyle and indulged in marketing purposes. Though later it was found out that the accusations toward those “bingyuan” were untenable, the state-sponsored sexism and misogyny, coupled with commercial media events and discourse, encourage harsh gender contention and create a hostile environment and toxic culture of gender antagonism.

Submission ID

673

Inter-generational changes of fan culture from the perspective of Media Ecology----Take the development of Harry Potter in China as an example

Authors

Ms. Ziming Yuan - Communication

Abstract

Abstract: From the perspective of Media Ecology, this paper explores the characteristics and differences between fan groups with different ages. Through the changes of *Harry Potter*'s media, the author analyzed the effects of new media environment on **fan base** and **original texts**. Finally, the paper puts forward some suggestions for the innovation and development of *Harry Potter* industry in China in the following years, as well as the prediction of *Harry Potter*'s future trend, on the basis of survey data. **The research methods include:** in-depth interview, questionnaire survey and observation. The author conducted in-depth interviews with three students who were in line with the image of ‘*Harry Potter* fans’. These three respondents came into contact with *Harry Potter* through the

original books, movies and games respectively; The author made an electronic questionnaire, and a total of 84 valid questionnaires were collected; The author also used the observation method to analyze the relatives and friends around her, includes their fanatical characteristics, and how they express their identity as fans. In all, by using these methods, this paper explored the impact of Harry Potter and popular culture in Chinese society from the characteristics of fans, and how those self-declared fans express themselves in daily life. **The highlight of the paper** lies in using the **development of media** to divide the generations of fans rather than the traditional model of age. The author divided the media presentation form of *Harry Potter* into three stages: paper media stage, audio-visual media stage and the stage of integrating into the virtual world(game) and real life.

Conclusion: Through analysis, it is concluded that fans came into contact with *Harry Potter* through different media, have different self-orientation in the community; In the fan base, the knowledge gap between different generations may become smaller and smaller, or even disappear; The influence of the new media environment on *Harry Potter* fans and the original work should be treated both positively and negatively; The future development of *Harry Potter* will be a general uptrend and will continue to prosper for a long period of time.

Submission ID

711

Social encounter between cultural groups: the affective and cognitive responses to alternative genre on YouTube

Authors

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Mr. Kejian Shi - Xiamen University

Prof. Kanghua Li - School of Media and Communication, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Abstract

Cultural production and consumption are particularly segmented in the digital realm, yet genre or emerging sub-genre has been emblazoned on cultural products effectively directing audiences' interpretive decisions. Experimental evidence confirms that genre does not directly affect audiences' worldview, rather, audiences' familiarity with a genre or the story theme does (Bilandzic and Busselle, 2008; Green, 2004). However, this study wishes to

problematise the familiarity argument, in that 'familiarity' is not an innate predisposition that can be accurately operationalised and measured, but a diachronic and ongoing process that has been cultivated by various sources, in which the interaction shed light on how cultural values and aesthetics have been interpreted or confronted in a neo-global world. Therefore, this study investigates how YouTube audiences interpret alternative genre – in this case, adapted Chinese danmei drama – and wishes to decipher how have intercultural audiences' adaptation for norms been connected with social groups.

The theoretical accumulation around cultural proximity pertaining to language groups and transported effects of narratives assumingly shared more common among enclosed sub-cultural communities are confronted with empirical evidence. Combining natural language processing (NLP) and qualitative data analysis (QDA), we scrutinised the affective and cognitive response from public comments (N=77002) between Feb to June 2021 on YouTube. Our findings demonstrated that, firstly, cultural hegemony in a neo-global world dominates intercultural communication with tacit forms that sometimes subcultural creators reinforce rather than challenge the status quo. Secondly, intra-group subcultural identification facilitates high-context communication regardless of language groups, which problematises the convenient presumption in the academia that often parallelises proximity between cultural groups with language groups. We need to re-evaluate social groups and their formation in a neo-global era as well as how aesthetics blending has been happening. Lastly, strong affective responses on narratives as well as critical responses on cultural creators and institutional restriction are identified. This echoes existing findings that narrative transportation reduces audiences' critical thought because they do not wish to interrupt such a favourable state.

Submission ID

716

Together with Internet Pets: A Study on Content Presentation of " Raising Pets by Clouds " Video

Authors

Ms. Wenrui Xie - Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications

Prof. Pei Huang - Beijing University of Posts and Telecommiunications

Abstract

With a great need of human mobility to big cities in China, a large number of young people leave their hometown to work in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and other big cities. Lack of emotional support and poor living conditions are considered to be the two major dilemmas they face. In view of this, raising pets has become an important way to relieve the psychological pressure of young people. During the time of pandemic, more and more people have chosen "raising pets by clouds", which means to watch someone raising pets online, so as to experience the feeling of having pets around. As a result, there has been an expansion of "cloud pet raising" communities with a number of people watching, commenting and discussing videos and pictures of the pets online. How videos make people virtually together? Based on the social presence theory, this paper makes content analysis on 50 videos by using Shen & Khalifa's awareness social presence (Shen & Khalifa, 2008) concept as a way to observe. By classifying videos into categories such as reflecting daily life, mukbang, skill challenge, personification, editing skills, this paper analyzes video contents from the aspects of shooting, narrative and so on. It is found that close-up shooting from the limited perspective, and use the positive narrative style are beneficial to the construction of audience's awareness social presence. Furthermore, the influence of specific video production techniques of "raising pets by clouds" bloggers on audience's feeling of social presence is explored. The researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 10 active viewers who had left comments below the "raising pets by clouds" video, so as to have a deep understanding of the social mentality of contemporary young people. Watching the video of "raising pets by clouds" allows audience to experience the joy of having pets without actually raising pets and feeling relaxed in the process of watching, and it also helps them maintain a positive attitude towards routine daily life. This paper explains how "raising pets by clouds" video makes the audience have the awareness of being together with pets online, and how intimate relationships can be established between people and pets without co-presence.

Submission ID

723

The price of voice: Online emotional labor of game companions under the gig platform

Authors

Dr. Tong Yuan - Chongqing Normal University

Abstract

Game companion (*peiwan*) is a newly emerging service in the digital era. Gamers pay for companions to keep them company when they play online games. The game companions are overwhelmingly female gig workers. They help the gamers improve their skills, but more often offer emotional support, encouragement, and comfort.

The existing research on emotional labor mainly focuses on offline face-to-face settings. For example, Hochschild (1983) found that flight attendants are paid to uphold smiles that requires a coordination of mind and feeling. In recent years, a series of studies on digital platforms centered on platform capitalism (Srnicsek, 2016), algorithmic management (Sun, 2019), and collective resistance in the platform economy (Lei, 2021), among others. The online emotional labor of game companions sits at the intersections of emotional labor and digital platform studies. This paper attempts to explore how game companions perform their emotional labor under the impact of the gig platform.

Taking *Bixin*, China's leading game companion app, as an example, this study deploys a walkthrough technique to examine the app's intended purpose and its embedded cultural meanings (Light et al., 2018). In addition, this study conducted online in-depth interviews with 21 game companions who have worked for more than one year and five employees of *Bixin* from March 2021 to June 2021 to obtain empirical data.

The results of this study show that *Bixin* platform connects gamers, platform managers, and game companions, but offers no possibility of face-to-face interactions among the three parties. Unlike the traditional type of emotional labor which largely depends on observable facial and bodily display (Hochschild, 1983), game companions assemble in a virtual workplace to conduct their duties solely through voices. It greatly increases the difficulty and intensity of their work, which makes the game companions feel burnout. To motivate its registered game companions and strengthen their professional identity, *Bixin* emphasizes the significance and potential of the career in its training material and other official documents. Consequently, the game companions start to conduct deep acting to feel a sense of self-achievement. In addition, *Bixin* has set up a scoring mechanism. The game companion's salary is linked to customer review scores. According to the interviewees, they have developed some strategies to get win the hearts of gamers. First, they make every effort to provide emotional support, and please their boss in various ways, such as choosing their words carefully, paying special attention to their intonation, and taking the initiative to find topics that interest their boss. Second, they offer a free order to prevent bad reviews. Third, they do relational work such as sending greetings on Wechat to maintain personal relationships with their boss in everyday life. In conclusion, this study enriches the current discussions on workers' response to digital platforms, and finds out that the strengthening of the professional identity and economic rewards ensure the

submission and obedience of the game companions. As an outcome, they rely heavily on the platform and continue to perform their role as passive gig workers.

Submission ID

758

Wandering in Addiction: A Study of the Emotional Motivations and Cultural Practices of "Tongren" novels fan groups

Authors

Dr. Siqi Liu - Communication University of China

Abstract

Background: The collision and convergence of cultures is a distinctive feature of the evolution of societies today. "Tongren" refers to a subcultural group keen to re-create the original works and prototypes of existing novels, movies, TV plays, and comics, equivalent to secondary fiction (fanfiction, parody) in English. "Tongren" culture in mainland China has developed along with the popularity of the Internet. "Tongren" fan groups have gradually attracted the attention of mainstream society under the research perspective of fandom culture and subculture.

Research Questions and Research Methods: This paper explores several questions such as the emotional reasons for "Tongren novels" fan groups to read and how perceived this culture, further Understanding the reproduction of the meaning of "Tongren novels" fan groups. This paper takes the "Tongren novels" fan groups as the research object, using the methods of online participatory observation, text analysis, and in-depth interviews. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 online and offline interviewees. And then, constructing three-level coding conceptualized the information. The interview time ranged from 30 to 60 minutes.

Findings: Our finding indicates that (1) Emotional factors are the direct drivers of reading behavior in "Tongren novels" fan groups, specifically: emotional empathy, emotional projection, and emotional compensation. (2) Cultural consumption behaviors based on interactive rituals enable group members to reach meaningful complicity. "Tongren novels" fan groups compartmentalize and categorize groups that do not understand fanfiction culture externally, forming a relative other. Internally, they construct self-identity and psychological proximity, classify themselves as members of the group, observe the circle norms, find

ways of equal dialogue, and thus achieve meaningful co-conspiracy. (3) "Tongren novels" fan groups read texts in a state of "Wandering in Addiction. "On the one hand, they indulge in the cultural circles they belong to, while on the other hand, they use "Tongren" culture in their daily lives." Tongren novels" are no longer understood simply as a material manifestation of the act of interpreting a text but as a new form of culture. It even became a literary work with popular aesthetic value and was accepted by mainstream society.

Theoretical Ponderation: The study of "Tongren "culture should be freed from the institutionalized framework of confrontation and brought into a more equal and independent interpretation space. The thinking of cultural studies in the industrial age is still of great value in today's digital era. With the change of media carriers, contemporary youth groups' values and cultural outlooks should be examined with a new perspective. It has positive implications for enriching cultural studies in the Internet era.

Submission ID

822

The uninvited eye: Youth women's surveillance practices, imaginaries and self-inspect on social media

Authors

Ms. Yifan Gao - Communication University of China

Abstract

Intro: Social media has led people into the "post-panopticon" era (Bauman & Lyon, 2012). Online surveillance has become more lateral, participatory, and "liquid" (Andrejevic, 2004; Albrechtslund, 2008; Bauman & Lyon, 2012). Interpersonal surveillance is increasingly common, and online surveillance has internalized into individuals' daily lives, as "part of everyday reflections on how things are and of the repertoire of everyday practices" (Lyon, 2017, p.825). However, non-mainstream groups may be subject to more social surveillance based on pre-existing power hierarchies such as gender, race, etc. (Duffy & Chan, 2018), and thus to more introspection or scrutiny of self-presentation on social media by these "uninvited eyes". This study focuses on online liquid surveillance on women and that conducted by women.

Method: This study uses experience sampling and in-depth interviews to analyze: (1) gender differences on social surveillance; (2) young women's strategies of engaging in (being)

surveilling(ed) and avoiding (being) surveilling(ed) on social media; and (3) their surveillance imaginaries and its influence on their self-presentation on and usage of social media. Participants (N=21) of this study were recruited from Chinese social media platforms. The empirical sampling for this study was conducted over a 2-week period during which participants were asked to complete an instant questionnaire each evening to record their social surveillance behavior for that day. The in-depth interviews were conducted after the empirical sampling.

Results: Women are more frequently surveilled than men on social media. The current data (based on independent and paired samples tests of experience sampling data) indicate that (1) women (M=1.07) are surveilled by others on social platforms more often than men (M=0.34) and the difference is significant ($p<0.05$), and that (2) a significantly higher proportion of women are surveilled by men (M=1.87) than by women (M=0.78) ($p<0.05$).

Young women tend to conduct social surveillance motivated by emotional needs, mostly concerning intimate relationships, such as surveillance on friends, partners, exes or partners' exes, etc. Surveilling others has become most participants' daily routine, and it largely impacts their social relationships with non-intimate friends in real life.

Young women tend to have specific imaginary audiences on social media and would edit the content, form, and sharing range based on their imaginary audience's expectations of their roles. Some participants review their social media as a habit to examine whether the tweets accorded with their online roles and delete the ones that didn't.

Discussion: This paper discusses spying as a specific type of social surveillance and its gender difference. Most participants mentioned that a large portion of their surveillance was spying and that this would influence their self-presentation and self-concealment. This paper found that young women tend to use smurfs to avoid being spied on or found to be spying, while men use smurfs more to spy on others, creating an absent presence.

Conclusion: This paper analyzes young women's motivations and behaviors of social surveillance, their strategies of avoiding being surveilled, as well as the influence of their surveillance imaginary on self-presentation. Women are more surveilled by others on social media, and their daily lives and social relationships are also more influenced by social surveillance.

Submission ID

829

Self-Portrayal of Facebook users- A Study of Urban Educated Youth of New Delhi

Authors

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Dr. Kiran Bala - K.R. Mangalam University

Dr. Pooja Rana - Amity University, Manesar

Abstract

Since last 15 years, social media has made this globe virtually sociable. In 2020, over 3.6 billion people were using social media worldwide, a number projected to increase to almost 4.41 billion in 2025 (Published by Statista Research Department and 28).

Social media users are sociable on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat rather than in their physical spaces. They may have thousands of friends on social media, but they are lonely, irritated and anxious. There is growing worry about the potential harmful effects of social media addiction (Swar and Hameed, 2017; Kircaburun et al., 2020). While trying to search on google scholar there are 78,000 results with “social media” and “mental health” keywords. The psychological consequences of these social media platforms have been studied by many scholars all over the world. Many scholars have studied the influence of social media on many metrics as a result of the desire to understand the effects like Addiction, anxiousness, self-presentation, and gender differentiation.

In January 2020, India had 324 million Facebook members, accounting for 22.9 percent of the country's total population. The largest user group was between the ages of 25 and 34. As a young country, it's vital to look into effects of social media on the youth. With the ever-changing and increasing dynamics of social media, Facebook has been a big prompter and facilitator of depicting people to themselves. This platform, in the form of an interaction giant, has changed society in many ways. Excessive use of Facebook by users has made it a parallel world of reality.

The researchers through this study attempt to evaluate self-presentation strategies used by youth on the largest used social media in India i.e., Facebook to determine influence of the same. This study explores the self-presentation, personality, and behaviour of urban-educated youth of Delhi on Facebook. The researcher focuses on the data collected, which is further analysed and concluded using statistical tools like ANOVA and Chi-Square. The sample consisted of 300 urban educated youth of Delhi; research tools consisted of a well-designed structured and standardised questionnaire and content analysis of posts of active Facebook users. Questionnaire in this research gives primary data which

is further validated through content analysis of Facebook profiles of active users using the Big 5 personality model and Self-presentation model by Jones & Pittman. The complex nature of Behaviour and personality of youth is analysed based on gender and age with areas for future research.

Submission ID

943

Love and exhaustion of “data fan-workers”: Digital exploitation of Chinese fans’ affective labor on social network platforms

Authors

Dr. Meijiadai Bai - Liaoning University

Dr. Jiahe Wang - Shanghai Jiaotong University

Dr. Fang Wu - Shanghai Jiaotong University

Abstract

Data-fans are those who do affective labor to manufacture traffic and sales data for their idols on social network platforms. They are often called “female data fan-workers” (数据女工), for the similarity between the work they do, and that of the female factory workers on the assembly line. With in-depth interviews and participate observation, this paper studies their motivation, ways of organizing such work, sources of exhaustion, and how their labor is exploited by media platforms and entertainment industry capital. This paper emphasizes the cruelty of fans’ compulsory data labor. Although fans do get emotional value by deeply engaging with the data-production process, a phenomenon that demands our attention is that the platforms realized exploitation of fans’ data labor by incorporating the surplus traffic data into the valorizing system of cultural commodities.

With 20 interviews of data-fans, including two male interviewees, this paper holds three arguments. First, recruitment of data-fans and handy tutorial of how to do data-labor abounds on the public space of the social platform. The easy encounter of such information secures endless labor supply for such a high turnover work organization. Second, out of respect to those who are responsible for such exhaustive, repetitive, but necessary data-labor, many fans, after quitting organized data-work, remain silent about the dark side and insider knowledge of such work, and continue to do daily data-labor. The only

difference is that solo data-fans can decide their own workload. Third, fans' pleasure does not come from data-labor, but they accept the idea that data labor is necessary dirty work for idols in the contemporary entertainment industry which calculates commercial value based on traffic data. Their exhaustion results from the labor's nature being intensive and repetitive, with an unpredictable schedule, in an environment full of conflicts between fans. The authors discover that, by directing young female fans' affect demands to the platform-based idol industry, and by transforming audience activities into traffic data, the industry invented a new mechanism to drive fans to produce monetizable traffic data out of their affective energy. This set of mechanisms realized exploitation of fans, mostly women, on a large scale, and capitalization of their affective needs. Such under-regulated mechanisms also have a negative influence on online public opinion, therefore they are not periphery issues that only affect women-fan as a minority group.

Submission ID

955

The Collapse of Fandom Collective Identity under the view of Interaction Ritual Chains

Authors

Mr. Yaohao Wang - Tsinghua university

Abstract

In the past decade, collective identity from the perspective of computer mediated communication (CMC) has gradually gained global influence. However, compared with the initial phases of collective identity, such as expression, establishment and formation, the later phases of collective identity, such as negotiation, maintenance, diffusion and rejection, has received less attention. At the same time, the frequent happening celebrity crisis in recent years make the rejection and collapse of fan collective identity more common, which gains a universal attention.

This study attempts to explore the potential reasons for the collapse of fan collective identity under CMC environment. Based on the four initial conditions, which are group assembly, barrier to outsiders, mutual focus of others and shared mood, in the interactive ritual chain theory, this paper discusses the possible reasons for the collapse of collective identity from the reasons for the establishment of collective identity.

This study will explore and verify the research questions and hypothesis through the combination of semi-structured interview and grounded theory. Through the Internet, we have conducted in-depth interviews with 12 respondents. The 12 respondents had the experience of breaking away from the online fans group within one year, including film and television star fan groups, music star fan groups, sports star fan groups, E-sports star fan groups, etc. More qualified respondents will be interviewed later in this research plan.

After sorting out the interview results and coding them through NVIVO12, this study draws the following preliminary conclusions. Firstly, under CMC environment, group aggregation in virtual space is difficult to be interrupted immediately, but interrupted step by step under the restriction of intelligent technology. Secondly, cognitive dissonance is a main reason for giving up fans' group identity after the barrier disappears, but some fans will continue their group identity after reaching cognitive coordination again. Thirdly, the ambiguity of subject cognition, such as whether you like the band or a single member of the band, will affect the shaping of fans' group identity, the contradiction caused by vague subject cognition may interrupt fans' group identity. Fourthly, fans with different behavioral logic and cultural backgrounds will pay different attention in the same group, resulting in enrollment and resistance, making some fans give up their fan group identity. Finally, different basic attitudes towards stars will make it difficult for fans to form shared mood, which will lead to contradictions within the fan groups and make some fans give up their community identity.

The research significance of this study mainly has two aspects. Firstly, it fills the research gap in the rejection and collapse of fandom collective identity; Secondly, it makes a new supplement to the later phases of interactive ritual chain theory. This study can provide a new theoretical perspective for the frequent fanaticism and celebrity crisis events in recent years.

Submission ID

1055

Compelling Enough? Discourse Analysis of the Effectiveness of Influencers' YouTube Apology Videos

Authors

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Abstract

Recently, social media influencers have been experiencing numerous scandals. In order to restore their image, they opt to post apology videos and statements. As Benoit (1997) states, once the image is damaged, perceptions are more important than reality. In other words, it does not matter whether the accused is *actually* responsible for the act, but whether they are *perceived* responsible. Benoit introduces 5 image restoration strategies (IRS) that companies and individuals usually select when trying to apologize: *denial*, *evasion of responsibility*, *reducing offensiveness of event*, *corrective action* and *mortification*.

Many interactive researchers have focused on YouTube comments, providing some insightful findings, such that YouTube comments impact how viewers perceive the associated video (Walther et al., 2010), and commenters engage more with negative comments than positive ones (Thelwall et al., 2012). Even though YouTube comments are asynchronous, researchers believe they are still part of multi-participant interaction (Boyd, 2014).

The main goal of this study is to investigate whether influencers' YouTube apology videos are effective in the audience's eyes. Therefore, we pose the main research question:

RQ: Are YouTubers' apology videos effective, and if so, to what extent?

In order to answer this question, we conducted a two-part study in which each part focused on a specific subquestion.

SQ1: Which image repair strategy do YouTubers implement when creating their apology videos?

SQ2: How effective are influencers' YouTube apology videos based on the audience's comments?

We focused on four YouTube celebrities who have been involved in the same scandal. The scandal known as Dramagedon started in 2019 when the four most prominent beauty YouTubers, Jeffree Star, James Charles, Shane Dawson and Tati Westbrook, got caught in an online drama. In the first part of our study, we analyzed five apology videos. In the second part of this study, we used discourse analysis to analyze 2212 YouTube comments posted under apology videos. Similar to the previous studies (Benson, 2016), our discourse analysis study followed the framework for analyzing the structure of spoken interaction proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975).

We concluded that YouTubers do not use only one strategy but rather combine two or more. Mortification and evasion of responsibility are the two most used strategies. Sandlin & Gracyalny (2017) provided 7 categories of YouTube comments (nonverbal content of the apology, verbal content of the apology, public figure's reputation, perceptions of apology sincerity, perceptions of apology insincerity, decisions about forgiveness, decisions about

withholding forgiveness). However, we have found comments that do not fit into any of these categories, and we named new categories *non-content content* and *preexisting bias*. The comments in the first category refer to the content that was (un)intentionally produced but has attracted the viewers' attention, such as background, audio quality, appearance, etc. The preexisting bias is similar to public figure's reputation, but is something that the public persona cannot change, such as age or gender. The only female influencer in our sample received many comments regarding her age and gender that were not present in the comments below male influencers' videos.

Submission ID

1092

Can Intangible cultural heritage become a part of popular culture? Research From the Perspective of Audience Perception

Authors

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Abstract

By July 2015, China has become the country with the largest number of items in the List of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH), with 40 items inscribed in the List (Ye Peng, 2016). In general, although the situation of the transmission and protection of ICH in China has improved, the overall situation is still not optimistic. With the advent of the digital age, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and other technologies enable wider spread of ICH. Based on the 5W communication model, this paper focuses on the new communication paradigm of ICH in the digital era from the perspective of the audience through case studies, questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews.

To summarize the development trend of ICH, 11952 valid questionnaires were obtained in 21 cities in China between October 2019 and December 2020. Based on the results and data analysis, we were able to identify three main dilemmas. Including "Cognitive Dissonance: The Cognition Dilemma of Intangible Cultural Heritage Communication Audience", "Generational Imbalance: the crisis of audience fault under the solidification of subject matter", "Regional Division: Intensified Trend of Ethnic Culture Stratification".

From the traditional communication era to the digital communication era, Kevin Kelly has pointed out that there is interdependence between the media form and brand-new media ecosystem (Peak, 1999). Therefore, the innovation and change of the communication of ICH are extremely urgent. ICH is embodied in intangible practices, performances, knowledge, or skills, which exist in a complex and diverse way but without concrete material bearing. Its "rheology" lies in that the performances of ICH will adjust to local conditions and update with advance of the times change, while not affect the core of the intangible characteristics and its cultural connotation. It presents the dialectics of inheritance and variation, consistency, and difference (Liu Juan, 2012). To merge traditional culture and contemporary culture, we need to combine traditional deductive method and modern digital technology to build a new, innovative channel. Only in this way can the ancient ICH burst forth with new vigor and vitality. However, as ICH is "living", it is a dynamic legacy that can be continued only by "people". Therefore, the activation and reproduction of the ICH can be truly realized in the digital era only if those are based on the changes of content and communication channels and the introduction of the participation of the transmission source, namely people.

Based on the research in China, we can extend the research findings to the digital communication and protection of ICH all over the world. A new combination of production factors must be introduced into the system. Integrating ICH into daily life through digital communication technology is essentially to seek the spiritual core of modern cultural development in democratic countries while promoting the inheritance, continuation and even innovation of traditional cultural lifestyle (Hu Huilin, 2013). This not only shows the cohesion of Chinese spiritual civilization, but also occupies the position of important cultural value guidance. As an important part of Chinese tradition, non-positronic works are one of the main forms of embodiment of the core value of Chinese culture. In modern life, people's return and tracing of national cultural beliefs provide fertile soil and foundation for the inheritance and dissemination of ICH. Science and technology in the digital age make the tension of the core value of ICH stronger and wider.

Submission ID

1107

Emotional transfer: The influence of celebrity effect on city punching intention

Authors

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Abstract

Abstract:Background Entertainment celebrities are becoming an opportunity for fans to get to know a city. The phenomenon of punching in on social media platforms has attracted attention, and celebrity-related locations are favored.celebrities actively, clearly express their love for the city of birth.Celebrities' cities of birth provide a highlight for city communication because of their special association with celebrities, making them popular places to punch in.

Methods Questionnaire survey and in-depth interview were used in this study.Two screening questions, "Do you have a favorite celebrity?" "Do you know the city where your favorite celebrity was born?" To select suitable subjects for this study. Finally, 429 valid questionnaires were collected. Based on the theory of meaning transfer, a theoretical model of celebrity involvement, celebrity worship, fans' perceived celebrity place attachment, city image and punching intention is constructed. In this study, 13 fans were interviewed in the way of semi-structured interview about their opinions on celebrities and their birth cities. The interview time of each fan was about 40 minutes, and about 40,000 words were formed in the end. The theory reached saturation when the interview reached the 13th person.

Results First, celebrity involvement has a positive impact on city image and punching intention. Celebrity worship has a positive impact on city image, but there is no significant correlation with punching intention, which may be mainly due to celebrity absence, geographical distance and other reasons. Second, fans' perception of celebrity place attachment plays a mediating role between celebrity involvement and clocking intention, celebrity worship and city image, punching intention, but the mediating role between celebrity involvement and city image is not obvious. Thirdly, city image positively affects punching intention, and city visibility plays a moderating role.

Conclusions After clarifying the mechanism of fans' emotion transferring to the city where celebrities were born, we should make reasonable use of fans' power to improve the city image, expand the subject of city communication, increase the popularity of the city and drive the development of the city. Fans, celebrities, governments and media who play a role in the process of emotional transfer should all play an active role. Celebrities should strengthen their social responsibility to make their attachment to the place more visible.

Fans' celebrity involvement and worship should be in favor of self-development and follow the order of punching activities. Cities attach importance to their physical image, create celebrity matrix to show the spirit of the city, and develop cultural tourism. All media should use celebrities' topic heat to highlight the city's attributes.

Submission ID

1176

‘Follow me’: social media, celebrity and emotional labor

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Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to better understand social media content creators' views on celebrity and how they are connected with their work practices and aspirations. Youtubers, Tiktokers, Instagramers, and streamers have been conceptualized as microcelebrities, celebrities with distinct features that have emerged from the new digital culture (Hearn, 2008; Marwick, 2007; Mendick, 2015; Senft, 2008, 2013). Micro-celebrity has been defined as not what a person is, but "something that people do" (Marwick, 2015: 140), "a self-presentation technique in which people view themselves as a public persona to be consumed by others" (Marwick, 2016: 333). Thus, online processes of celebrification (Driessens, 2013) merge commodification and branding of the self with intimacy and the performance of authenticity (Jerslev and Mortensen, 2015). While a decade ago public discussions about social media creators focused on whether what microcelebrities do can be considered 'work' (Deller and Murphy, 2020), being portrayed as 'undeserving celebrities', in the last few years they have become 'model workers' and entrepreneurs (Duffy and Wissinger, 2018). Thus, social media platforms are presented as an opportunity to obtain economic (and celebrity) capital by "doing what you love". In the context of the new 'attention economy', one key aspect of social media creators' work is to accrue followers and maintain them, through the creation of an emotional (and professional) relationship with their audience and the performance of 'personal connection' and 'accessibility'. In this context, emotional

and relational labor are key concepts (Baym, 2017, 2018; Ouellette, 2013). In these last few years, several creators have publicly explained the cost of emotional labor and constant visibility (from Elle Mills to EIRubius) and the toll of the demands of the personalized media economies (Guarriello, 2019). Thus, it is important to examine in the context of the new 'attention economy', how notions of work and celebrity are linked together. Our research aims to answer the following research questions: How do social media content creators view celebrity and how these views are interwoven with their work practices and aspirations? How do they accrue and accumulate visibility (celebrity capital)? What is their relationship with their audience and how are they affected by their comments? To fulfill this aim, we draw upon in-depth interviews with 18 Spanish social media content creators that earn economic revenue from their activity. The sample includes male and female creators that publish content on more than one platform (including TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitch) and with different ranges of followers (more than 500K, between 100K-500K, less than 10K). All the interviews have been transcribed and qualitatively analyzed using thematic analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1969) and the software NVivo. The results obtained allow us to discuss and delve deeper into the new celebrity imaginaries linked to the emotional and relational labor, authenticity, and the increasingly thinnest boundary between professional and personal life in the digital age.

Submission ID

1216

“A tale of two homes amidst COVID-19”: digital place-making practices of Chinese overseas students on Douyin

Authors

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Abstract

International student mobility during the pandemic is an ongoing socio-spatial process characterized by various changes, immobility, and challenges (Yu, 2021; Mok et al., 2021). Scholars have summarized that the COVID-19 pandemic has exemplified discrimination, marginalization, and racism against international students (Fronck et al., 2021; Weng et al., 2021). The immobility, quarantining at home (the space they stay in the hosting country), and the inadequacy on traveling and returning to the original home imposed by the

pandemic and its related policies remind us of negotiating a new way of rethinking, reconceptualizing what mobility and home mean to them. Such “tricky to be in both two homes” dilemma gets sub-joining amidst pandemics, decreasing overseas students’ mobility, resilience, and well-being.

Douyin, the twin of the international mobile short video app TikTok, has become a popular and rapidly growing social media application (Zeng & Abidin, 2021). As a channel to disseminate information with an absolute superiority in speed, reach, and penetration (Merchant and Lurie, 2020) and a platform with multiple affordances, Douyin has enabled an increasing number of overseas student users to browse and share information, create content and seek for assurance during the global health crisis (Zhao and Zhou, 2020). Such infrastructures and realities are increasingly providing essential opportunities for overseas students to cope with the current dilemmas.

A prominent framework of digital place-making that contributes to understanding the impact of digital technology on mobility includes Hjorth and Pink (2014), Halegoua and Polson's (2021), and Wilken and Humphreys' (2021) theories. Digital placemaking not only involves using digital technology to enhance their sense of place. This framework concerns the production and reception of digital media produced by overseas students to navigate everyday realities and transform their space to stay in a meaningful home while waiting to return to their countries and home.

Drawing on digital thematic analysis, we purposefully sampled 50 videos out of 560 videos under the hashtags #Overseas Chinese student study abroad during Covid-19# (n=297) and #Overseas Chinese students returning to China# (n=263) as a case study to examine the overseas students' digital placemaking practices on the platform Douyin. By following the research question: **How Chinese overseas students use Douyin to foster an ability to connect to and get a sense of assurance and home in place while against restricted immobility through digital placemaking practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.** We come to two preliminary findings: (1) Chinese overseas student creators share collective emotions and support, living experiences, and valuable suggestions of (post) pandemic (im)mobility with the peer audience and respond to the encountered voices that do not understand and show enough empathy towards them; (2) Specifically, this paper examines the mediating role of embodied mobile media in their online-offline placemaking practices and we propose a concept of platform togetherness to summarize their coping strategies and networked behaviors in response to the pandemic-related (im)mobility.

Keywords: Chinese overseas student; digital placemaking; Douyin, platform togetherness

Submission ID

1269

Perception of Development of Stuart Hall's Reception Theory in the Post-pandemic Era: Take Comments in Sina Weibo for Example

Authors

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Abstract

The outbreak of COVID-19 exacerbates the existing class conflicts, which can express in popular culture. What has been changed in the decoding of texts and how to communicate effectively in social media? As a rapidly rising and important information access channel for netizens, Sina Weibo was chosen as the social media to study. Comments in Sina Weibo reflect the decoding positions. A qualitative study was conducted to investigate how college students perceive changes in decoding positions of comments in Sina Weibo towards cultural texts. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 20 Chinese college students from BNU-HKBU United International College including four grades from freshmen to senior. After the demonstration of one example of comments from Sina Weibo about changes in decoding positions given by the researcher, interviewees recalled how their decoding positions were influenced by the pandemic when viewing cultural texts in Sina Weibo and their observations about some drastic changes in the ways other netizens decode cultural texts after the outbreak of COVID-19. They were also asked to identify the reasons for the changes in decoding positions. Interviewees' decoding positions remain within the three types of decoding positions in Stuart Hall's reception theory. However, in the post-epidemic era, interviewees are generally more sensitive and tend to be radical in their interpretation of cultural texts than they were in the pre-pandemic era according to their comments. When they process the texts, interviewees consider the pandemic as a factor that can influence their decoding positions. All of the decoding processes are drowned into the background of the pandemic, therefore, the general range of decoding has narrowed down after the pandemic, and the possibility of selection of each of three positions changes. When interpreting statements that are not linked or not directly linked to the epidemic, interviewees may first go through a filter about the epidemic to search for some. When interpreting statements directly related to the epidemic, interviewees subjectively tend to choose oppositional positions and make negative comments both consciously and unconsciously. Communication implications are drawn from the study.

Submission ID

1279

Rejection and re-negotiation in neo-global movie consumption: Comparing the discourses on Chinese and Western social media

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Abstract

Disney and Marvel's strategy to create a truly global movie franchise, one which can truly be consumed by people all around the world, has recently hit a wall. While all other movies in the Marvel Cinematic Universe received wide release in Mainland China, several more recent movies were not accepted for distribution. This shows both the limits of a globally-oriented marketing orientation and the growing power of nation states to negotiate such efforts (Flew 2020).

Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings (2021) fits the description of a "global-local film," a movie which "combines traditional Hollywood elements such as stars, action-adventure, and special effects [...] and foreign elements such as foreign themes, locations, actors, and directors" (Margant 2011: 142). *Shang-Chi* had a preponderance of elements of Chinese culture, took place in China and a China-inspired mythical realm for the majority of screen time, and featured a cast predominantly of Chinese heritage. It was also produced by the dominant Hollywood movie production corporation, Disney. Yet it was not released in Mainland China and had a generally negative reaction to Chinese audiences, both those who did manage to see it (largely by pirated digital copies) and those who did not.

This paper explores the discourses on Chinese and English-language social media regarding the lack of release of *Shang-Chi* into mainland movie theaters. It looks at postings on two Q&A platforms, Quora and Zhihu, and two BBS platforms, Reddit and Baidu. It will compare and contrast the different strategies the online discursive communities use to make sense of and negotiate the meaning of *Shang-Chi* in regard to its lack of release.

Our primary data suggests that Chinese and Western social media users employ different discourses in discussing the movie: while Chinese condemn the stereotypical misrepresentation of Chinese-ness, Western ones tend to focus their critique on the China's alleged censorship and the nationalistic sentiments of Chinese. With a critical discourse analysis, we demonstrate how those discourses find their roots in the different socio-cultural contexts of China and the West. We illustrate that they are neither simply anti-imperialistic nor

neoliberal sentiments which are parallel to the longstanding debates by globalization scholars, but rather more nuanced interpretations of global movie production and consumption as well as negotiations of Chinese/Asian identities. On the one hand, the differences in their discourse manifests the conflict between state-led patriotic sentiment and neoliberal rationality, particularly enhanced in the pandemic era. On the other hand, they are embedded in the neo-global popular culture that challenges the existing Hollywood-led domination of the global movie industry. Further, we discuss how this transformation of movie consumption discourse adds to the sophistication media culture in an age of neo-globalization. Thus, this paper contributes to the understanding of the changing dynamics and characteristics of neo-globalization.

Submission ID

1290

A qualitative inquiry into Negotiations and Articulations of LGBTQ+ identities on Spotify

Authors

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Abstract

Music streaming services like Spotify increasingly mediate how music is consumed, experienced, and shared (Hagen, 2015). If music, as DeNora (2000, p. 74) argues, is “a technology of self”, then Spotify definitely is too. Spotify affords users to discover and curate music and, at the same time, to construct and curate a public profile and build a network of friends/followers so that intimate identity work and self-construction coincide with social identity work and impression management (Goffman, 1959).

For LGBTQ+ people, Spotify can be a site where one can make sense of their identity, find role models, create a sense of community and belonging, and negotiate how to articulate a music and sexual identity. However, Spotify’s algorithm-driven and commercially inspired affordances provide both opportunities and constrains/risks and users can make use of them in very diverging ways.

While a considerable body of research has examined the relations between music and queer lives, little is known about the role of music streaming within these relations.

Therefore, we conducted twenty in-depth interviews with LGBTQ+ Spotify users to understand the relations between LGBTQ+ identities, music, and music streaming. What does it mean for LGBTQ+ people to engage in discovering, enjoying and curating music on streaming services, both intimately/privately and socially/publicly?

The narrators we interviewed displayed a wide range of music practices and views on music and identity, while three overall trends seemed to inform their discourses:

- The ubiquity of music in everyday life: because music is so much of a given in the daily lives of most people, narrators were not accustomed to and found it hard to profoundly dwell on the role of music in their lives and to make sense of this;
- The both private and social character of Spotify: Spotify's peculiar combination of private and social features and its cross-overs to other media also inspired divergent negotiations of users, negotiations that could sometimes be quite paradoxical and were acknowledged to be so;
- The elusiveness of identity and sexual identity: identities, and especially sexual identities, clearly were relevant to and instructive in many of the narrators' music practices, but a clear description or coherent definition of something like "queer music" was hard to make.

It was clear that music is "used as a means by which we formulate and express our individual identities" (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p. 1), but these negotiations do not follow clear, predictable paths.

Submission ID

1315

From Male Same-sex Romance to "Socialist Bromance": How the Commercialization and Popularization of Danmei May Affect the Gender Order in China

Authors

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Abstract

Danmei is a distinct literary and cultural phenomenon that developed in mainland China and focuses on depicting male same-sex romance. It is fundamentally different from gay

literature in that the texts are primarily written by women and are tailored to women's desires. As women's socioeconomic status in China rises, their attention and needs are becoming increasingly commercially valued. Danmei fiction has been commercially exploited to a large extent as the most influential genre of female-oriented literature, the most notable expression of which being the popularity of drama adaptations of Danmei fiction. These dramas have sparked significant public interest and debate due to the confusing and contradictory emotional relationships between the male protagonists portrayed in them, particularly the "socialist bromance".

The term "socialist bromance" refers to a confusing relationship that appears to be both bromantic and romantic, desexualized and sexualized at the same time, as the Danmei adaption usually obfuscates the homosexual elements of the original while constantly giving the audience clues to the love between the two male leads as they see fit in the details. From male same-sex romance to socialist bromance, apparently, some "corrections" took place during the adaptation of the Danmei novel into a popular drama-not only has homosexuality as the core element of Danmei been neutered and transformed, but women as the leading force of Danmei are instrumentalized and marginalized, used as a smokescreen to obscure the homosexual love line. In short, as Danmei has been commercially transformed into popular culture, homosexual elements have been consumed while being devalued and obscured, and women have been ingratiated while being ostracized. From this perspective, therefore, the emergence of Danmei adaptations and the popularity of socialist bromance are neither revolutionary advances nor can they contribute to improving the lived reality of the gay community and women.

Using the theoretical device with the male homosocial bond at its core provided by Sedgwick, which explains the mechanisms of the construction of the hegemonic heterosexual binary gender system, however, we can see that the modified Danmei elements represented by socialist bromance go right to the heart of the construction of the male homosocial bond, blurring the artificially created divide between male homosocial desire and male homosexual desire, and thus demonstrating a potential to fundamentally subvert the established hegemonic gender system.

In short, although the Danmei adaptations currently prevalent in Chinese popular culture and the resulting trending concept "socialist bromance" seem to contain overtly derogatory elements of homosexuality and femininity, the successful infiltration of such Danmei elements into popular culture, at a deeper level of analysis, can be positive, if not revolutionary, in terms of shaking up the current Chinese gender system and hopefully creating more space for the establishment of a more egalitarian society.

Submission ID

1341

Datified Fan Philanthropy: A Ritual of Social Engagement and A Strategy of Legitimization on Digital Platforms in China

Authors

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Dr. Fang Wu - Shanghai Jiaotong University

Abstract

Fan philanthropy refers to the charity activities organized by fans in the name of their idols, such as spontaneous donations for poor children (Jeffreys, 2017). With the booming development of digital platforms, China's online fandom has become an emerging algorithm culture (Yin, 2020). Nowadays, fan philanthropy, more dependent on digital platforms, has transformed offline achievements into data performance. Fan philanthropy is not only a ritualized practice of fans' social engagement but also a widely applied strategy to prove fans' value to digital platforms, and to legitimize the fan culture to the authority. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the following questions: What are the characteristics of fan philanthropy practice in China's digital platform environment? What is the motivation of fan philanthropy? How do digital platforms and Internet regulatory policies affect fan philanthropy practice?

Based on China's typical online social platforms Sina Weibo and WeChat, this study collected data from fans who had organized or participated in fan philanthropic activities in the mainland of China through participatory observation and semi-structured interviews. We conducted interviews with a total number of 20 interviewees lasting from September 2021 to January 2022 with each one ranging from 40 to 90 minutes.

According to the study results, the characteristics of fan philanthropy practice on digital platforms in China are as follows. First, a core-edge mobilization mechanism exists inside fandom. Fan philanthropy is necessary for the core fans to maintain their respective fan capital. Secondly, fan philanthropy reflects the cooperation between the official and the folk. For fans, cooperating with official organizations not only ensures the stability of fan philanthropy, but also stands for official recognition. Thirdly, fan philanthropy depends on the platform logic. Fans utilize philanthropy to generate favorable data which becomes the bargaining chip in the fierce fan circles' competition. In terms of the motivation of fan philanthropy, this study found that fans are out of self-protection strategy. Facing doubts and stigma from the public, and strict rules and regulations, fandom gains legitimacy through fan philanthropy. In fan philanthropy, digital platforms serve as intermediaries for fans to coordinate with the authorities and venues for fans to publicize and organize activities. Platforms internalize fan philanthropy practice as traffic data. As regards the regulation,

the official supervision guides the fan integration in society. Besides, they use the power of fandom to promote the mainstream value ideology. Fan philanthropy embodies a negotiation between fan object attachment and the mainstream value. In summary, datafied fan philanthropy has become a ritualized social engagement of fandom to keep fan capital internally and ensure its legitimization externally.

Submission ID

1348

Palestine in the Big Screen: A Thin Line between Representation and Misrepresentation

Authors

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Abstract

In October of 2021, the U.S.-based, Egyptian filmmaker Mohammed Diab produced an Arabic drama film about a 17-year-old Palestinian girl who was conceived with smuggled sperm from her father who is a political prisoner in Israel. *Amira* (2021) is set in Palestine, although Jordan was the substitute filming location, and received positive reviews from international critics and reviewers.

The 138-minute film is a co-production among Egypt, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates with a cast from Palestine, Jordan, and the United States. The melodramatic story revolves around Amira, a 17-year-old Palestinian girl who was conceived with smuggled sperm of her father, Nawar, who is serving a life sentence in an Israeli jail. Amira grew up believing that she came to life due to artificial insemination from her father's sperm that was smuggled from Megiddo prison. She later discovers that the sperm belonged to the guard whom Nawar bribed to smuggle his sperm.

Despite the good critical reviews and the director's belief that he was highlighting the issues of political prisoners in Israel, *Amira* (2021) has a 2.2/10 score on Internet Movie Database (IMDB) based on 7,554 votes. This comes as no surprise as upon its release, the film stirred outrage among local viewers who denounced the film's storyline and described it as offensive.

The hashtag Pull_Out_Amira in English and اسحبوا فيلم أميرة in Arabic trended on Twitter with viewers, activists, local celebrities, and journalists expressing their rejection to the

narrative presented in the film. The Palestinian Society Prisoner's Club strongly condemned the film and accused the filmmakers of exploiting a sensitive national matter for marketing purposes. Moreover, they argued that the film serves the Israeli narrative by whitewashing Israeli crimes and insulting Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

The controversy surrounding film productions that tackle the Palestinian Cause but stray away from the traditional political, revolutionary messages is the foundation of my research. These productions present new stories that do not follow the politically and socially constructed rules of life in Palestine and tend to receive heavy criticism locally, despite the international critical acclaim. Moreover, they seem to highlight the disconnection between the global and local audiences when it comes to Palestinian narratives.

To understand the local response to the film, I use *Amira* (2021) as a case study. I look at media coverage, the call for a boycott on Twitter, and opinion pieces the film received in Arabic and interview the president of the Palestinian Society Prisoner's Club, Qadura Fares. I base my research on Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding model and the representation theory to discuss the particularity of Palestinian cinema where fiction becomes political.

Submission ID

1443

The resignification of Hip Hop culture in Mexico and its alliance with the feminist movement

Authors

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Abstract

In 2014, for the first time in Mexico, a movement of female rappers became known because they began to position themselves as feminists. Artists such as Batallones Femeninos, in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, and Mare Advertencia Lírica, in Oaxaca, became the spearhead of an artistic movement that sought to denounce the gender-based violence committed against women in the periphery of the country. The common denominator of these women was that they self-assigned as part of the Hip Hop culture, a culture where they found the pertinent enunciation conditions to promote their artistic proposal. In Mexico, there is little knowledge about how women enter Hip Hop and how they become

feminists. Although there is a systematic silence about the participation of women in emerging cultures (Matterlard & Neveu, 2004; Regalillo, 200; Nateras 2002), this invisibility has gradually disappeared thanks to the incorporation of academics interested in telling the story of Hip Hop from the vision of women. In this sense, this research aims to show how the history of Hip Hop in Mexico is being resignified to articulate it with the feminist movement and its "exhaustive analysis of the conditions of oppression of women" (Castañeda, 2008, p. 10). Writing the history of women in culture is relevant because it implies moving away from naturalistic perspectives that continue to see the feminine from the immediacy, adherence to the other, or from what is apparently biological. History -as an academic discipline- arises within the androcentric culture that is accustomed to looking at the male subject as the protagonist of the processes of social transformation, attributing to women the secondary roles of invisibility. In this research, the history of women in the Hip Hop culture in Mexico has been recovered from the genealogical method; that is, starting from non-linear historical discourses, but from the different origins from which they emanate (Foucault, 1980, 20). In such a way that the general question of this research is: What is the genealogy of the feminist women involved in the Hip Hop culture in Mexico? The hypothesis is that: the origins of feminist women involved in Hip Hop culture in Mexico are determined by the social and cultural movements of the periphery that allow them to become aware of themselves, leading to gender awareness that is articulated with the feminist discourse. Undoubtedly, this research has represented a contribution to the history of Hip Hop in Mexico, a history that by the way is hardly being written, but analyzed from a gender perspective allows us to glimpse the specificity that makes Hip Hop a global proposal aimed at solving the problems of our times.

Submission ID

1447

Up North (2018) and the Renarration of Northeast Nigeria

Authors

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Prof. Anthony Adah - Minnesota State University

Abstract

With the surge of Islamic insurgency in northeast Nigeria, local and international mainstream media have given disproportionate attention to reporting the effects of suicide

bombings and kidnapping on the Nigerian people and their broader implications for global security. For example, the 2014 kidnap of 276 schoolgirls by the terrorist group, Boko Haram, was widely reported; it led to the closure of schools and sparked the global campaign 'Bring back our girls', which was popularised by Michelle Obama. However, non-violent activities in the region are often ignored by these media. This paper reflects on Nollywood's (the popular Nigerian film industry) reimagining of the northeast by countering the dominant ideology of Boko Haram. Using Chris Atton's alternative media as conceptual and analytical tools, we examine *Up North*, as a renarration of Bauchi, a neighbouring city to the hotbed of Boko Haram's operations in Borno. Although Atton's (2012) alternative media focused on the press, they are useful for reading this media text, and thus demonstrate wider applicability to various media forms. Directed by Tope Oshin, *Up North* follows Bassey's migration – after an initial resistance – to Bauchi and the transformation that he and his family undergo in the process through an engagement with female education: one of the ideas rejected by the terrorist group. Through (con)textual analyses, we argue that *Up North* significantly challenges Boko Haram and its coverage by mainstream media. As alternative media, the film re-envision the people, culture, and location by dismantling the dominant narratives of violence and hostage-taking. It reinforces the notion that Nollywood deals with subjects not given regular coverage, and in the process, attempts to salvage damaged sensibilities and misconceptions held by southerners and the world. Our paper contributes to global discourses on [popular] media at the margins.

Submission ID

1460

Popularization of Deviance and Demoralization: The Case of Chinese Cyber Fandom Culture

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Abstract

This study examines the process in which deviant discourse and actions online emerging as popular culture among young users of Chinese internet. By deviance, we particularly refer to online actions that are contradict and in conflict with public interests and concerns, such as issues related to public health and education. Particularly, we set the research

context within fandom culture for two reasons. First, fandom has become one of the dominant forms of online social phenomenon (Yan & Liu, 2021). Second, with the proliferation of digital technologies and their norms of participation, fans are witnessed with more discursive power in terms of shaping and influencing how idols conduct self-presentation (Jenkins, 2009). As such, the empowerment of fans granted by the technologies also benefit the group of netizens who are willing to compromise self-gratifications at the expense of public interests. In fact, this has become a popular culture in the Chinese cyber fandom culture (Gray, 2003)[WD1] .

Different from other forms of representing deviance self, such as trolling and spreading uncivil words, deviant fandom takes its new form that echoes the essence of popular culture with the ends of enrolling more participants. We argue that the popularizing process of deviance fandom is driven by the platform economy with ultimate goal of network traffic. This shed same light with Snierk's (2018) view on the exploitive nature of platform economy, and Frankfurt School's critique of devalue creativity, authentic human relation and morality (Storey, 2018).

Three case studies were conducted to better examine and explore the process and meanings of popularizing deviance fandom culture. The cases are Kris Wu Yifan scandal, Liu Xuezhou suicide, and Ding Zhen's popularization. Each case has its fan circle, and deviant fan patterns. Preliminary data have shown to us three patterns in the process of popularizing deviant fandom: 1) de-publicizing the moral nature of the event; 2) distracting rational views from de-moralized majority opinions generated by bots; and 3) ritualization of state-constructed idols. The findings indicate not only the current complicate fandom culture on the Chinese internet, but also how publicness and morality are eroded by the platform structure.

[WD1]Gray, Jonathan. "New audiences, new textualities: Anti-fans and non-fans." *International journal of cultural studies* 6.1 (2003): 64-81.

Submission ID

1487

Mapping Cultural Tastes of an Online Participatory Culture Community

Authors

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Abstract

Cultural tastes play an important role in how people identify, form, and maintain groups. In recent years, the relationship between one's preference of cultural product and manner and their social network has gained attention, particularly against the backdrop of the world transiting into the endemic Covid-19 era. Current studies have established the different types, preferences, and non-shared cultural tastes with social networks' existence, formation, and maintenance. However, the present state of literature typically conceptualises cultural taste focus on consumption based on quantification of self-reported offline data. Therefore, in light of these issues, this study analyses how cultural tastes reconceptualised with the participatory culture theoretical framework shape the social structure of an online community. Participatory culture is defined as the re-appropriation and expression of culture towards the dominant narrative.

This paper describes the structure and characterises cultural tastes relationship with the formation and function of an online fan fiction community. It uses qualitative network analysis – an interpretative textual analysis assisted with network analysis to study a fanfiction community on a hybrid social media and blog site Tumblr. Specifically, the study scrapped Tumblr posts centred on a popular cultural phenomenon of Star Wars and visualised a bi-patriate network. This bi-patriate network consists of a set of nodes representing users connected to other users by a set of edges or ties that represents affiliated hashtags.

Preliminary findings of the fanfiction network showed distinct sub-communities bridged by peripheral users with existing outer isolates. The network content characterised the network's structure revolving around three themes. These themes portrayed that the network structures were organised around the purposed for catharsis, education, and social-political dissent expressed through different media formats.

Given that this research's main aim is to describe the relationship between cultural tastes and social structure, it recognises its limitation in uncovering users' motives and perceptions. Nevertheless, these findings provide a crucial starting point, which paves the way for resource-intensive future studies, such as digital auto-ethnography, in-depth interviews, and focus group studies. This study contributes to the field by shedding light on a re-defined cultural tastes concept with a mixed qualitative computational method.

Keywords: cultural tastes, participatory culture, online community, social media, qualitative network analysis, bi-partite network

Submission ID

1572

Children’s coping in domestic violence: A textual analysis of representations in U.S. music videos

Authors

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Dr. Carol Liebler - Syracuse University

Abstract

Globally, many children witness domestic violence, with estimates as high as 25 percent of children under five years old being exposed to such violence (UNICEF, 2017). In the U.S., each year about ten million children and adolescents witness violence between their parents or caregivers (AACAP, 2019). Despite its prevalence, there is sparse media representation of this phenomenon or communications research about it. This study applied textual analysis to investigate the representation of children exposed to domestic violence in narrative music videos. This study further assessed music videos’ potential to raise social awareness around this issue.

As representation is a constructive process (Hall, 1997), our focus here is on how domestic violence is socially constructed in popular media, with particular attention to children. Our first research question, which drew upon Family System Theory and Resilience Theory, is: How do children cope with domestic violence as represented in music videos? Also, as gender stereotypes manifest in media coverage of child victims (e.g. Hayes, 2014), the second research question queried: How do children’s behaviors in domestic violence music videos vary in relation to gender?

Purposive sampling was employed by searching the key words “child, domestic violence, music video” on Google. The sample was restricted to videos produced by U.S. artists, although their viewership on YouTube is global. Videos (n=19) varied from 300,000 viewers (Collin Raye’s “11th Commandment”) to 350 million (Kelly Clarkson’s “Because of You). We examined these music videos as multimodal texts, with analysis focusing on the scenes, storyline, background information, lyrics, and pitch.

Children are largely depicted in these videos as passive witnesses to domestic violence, as they were most likely to turn to inward-turning strategies such as tolerating (Mullender et al., 2002), while fewer children adopted “outward-looking” strategies such as seeking help, finding a safe place or supporting abused family members. According to Resilience Theory, such representation serves to minimize their resilience and active agency (Masten et al., 1990). Also, gender played a role in how children’s agency and resilience were portrayed. Most of the sampled music videos showed girls in domestic violence contexts, not boys, thereby emphasizing girls’ vulnerability. This finding is congruent with patriarchal ideology that represents girls and women in media as weak and less resilient (Yousaf et al., 2017).

Music videos, despite their representational limitations, are a popular cultural platform that may provide insights on children in domestic violence, spotlighting the problem and perhaps increasing public attention. Certainly, showing the global public the negative influences of domestic violence on children may increase social awareness around this issue and perhaps provide more social support to children exposed to domestic violence. The representation of children’s passivity in these videos serves to emphasize how domestic violence adversely affects children. Future research across cultural contexts and with other types of media texts should further examine these phenomena.

Submission ID

1588

Feign as Life Sharing Posts? Constructing a User Response Model towards Commercial Posts with Grounded Theory

Authors

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Abstract

It's not uncommon for people to mistake a commercial ad for a beautifully packaged UGC(User Generated Content). When commerciality is embedded in authentic sharing, is the boundary between advertising and UGC getting blurred? In the past decade, “native advertising(IAB, 2013)” has become a popular concept in the advertising world, which emphasized embedding the advertising into native media environment, in line with the trend of "de-advertising". A variety of ad products have been labeled as "native", such as Google's “Ad Words”, Facebook's “Sponsored Stories”, YouTube's “Featured Videos” etc. This

paper compared the difference between native advertising and daily UGC on social media from the perspective of user participation to measure the advertising effectiveness.

User participation has been held up as an important criterion to evaluate the success of digital marketing. Most scholars explored the factor and effect of "user participation" in the framework like SOR(Stimuli-Organism-Response), TAM(Technology Acceptance Model) etc., but ignored whether there existed a difference between such covert advertising and daily content. RED, a famous Chinese creative outlet platform with 200 million monthly active users, is very similar to Instagram. However, RED is unique in that it is intended to guide users to share their favorite products, life experiences, etc., which makes it more commercial than any other APPs. Commercial post is identified as the user generated content of product promotion in cooperation with advertisers, which is an embodiment of native advertising on RED.

According to Shao (2009), Dai (2017), Barki & Hartwick (1994), user participation was illustrated from four dimensions in this paper: click-through, interaction, involvement and attitude. Survey data from 389 RED users was collected, and the statistical results showed that the difference of user participation did exist. Compared with commercial posts, daily posts were more likely to be clicked-through, liked, commented on and favorited, and attracted more involvement, recognition, and affection as well.

In addition, a semi-structured in-depth interview was conducted with a sample of 12 users, to make a nuanced look at the formation of the difference. It was found that some users would pose unconscious avoidance towards ads, while some users actively click-through them out of curiosity, so there wasn't much obvious difference on click-through dimension. For the sake of maintaining their self-images, users tended to interact with daily posts more, which caused the interaction difference. In terms of attitude, with the improvement of media literacy, most users can accept commercial posts, but it was difficult for them to develop a favorable impression. And it was regrettable that the lack of interestingness and the skimming strategy adopted by users made it more difficult to get involved in commercial posts.

This paper proposed a subdivided dimension of user participation, evaluated the micro-effectiveness of commercial posts from the perspective of user, discussed whether native advertising has successfully achieved "de-advertising" . This paper hopes to provoke some thoughtful consideration for advertisers when practicing native advertising on RED, with a vision to reaching the best balance between user experience and commercial profitability.

Submission ID

1591

AI Assistant as an Apparatus of Control Power: Mechanism of AI Surveillance

Authors

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Abstract

This research examines the new modality of power AI assistants embody and analyzes the mechanism of AI surveillance and its effects. With the growing penetration of AI assistants, both the use of AI services run by global ICT giants and criticisms of mundane surveillance and privacy threats are surging unprecedentedly. Unlike surveillance in disciplinary society, AI surveillance is not considered repressive or negative, and in digital networks, the power that regulates subjects' behaviors and compels them to follow specific subject models is barely recognized. The paradox that the convenience provided by AI is the result of AI surveillance requires a theoretical analysis of the rationality of power operating through digital networks. This is because new technological conditions always correspond to specific modalities of society, and surveillance is a means of materializing and substantializing power.

In digital networks controlled by AI assistants, freedom and control condition each other and construct a new dialectical relationship. By rethinking Foucault's concept of governmentality and Deleuze's control societies, this study reveals that the key principle of power through networks is 'control through freedom.' Control power manages the circulation of data while functioning as an infrastructure for digital activities through environmental intervention in codes and algorithms. It also promotes interaction among people and smart devices and collects data by producing autonomy. The efficient operation of power depends on how control generates individuals' autonomy. As a result, AI surveillance operates with the following three mechanisms to maximize users' autonomy: mechanical automation of data collection, on-demand personalized help, and backgroundization. AI surveillance is neither oppressive nor objectifies individuals with pre-existing frameworks or intentions. Instead, those surveilled consider themselves in control of AI assistants since they are provided with personalized services. Also, as AI surveillance becomes naturalized, interactions with AI assistants are considered completely secured and private. Under the regime of AI surveillance, the subject and object of surveillance change. AI assistant becomes the subject of surveillance, which only mechanically extracts the correlation of big data and never understands the pragmatic meaning of data. Individuals who are objects of surveillance are taken care of as 'dividual' or subject of profiles essential for maintaining the automated networks of data circulation rather than being treated as unique subjects. Surveillance is nothing more than a mechanism of self-regulation of a digital environment based on the control and management of various variables, which circumvents individual subjects

and is irrelevant to semantic models such as consciousness and representation. As a result, there is less room for resistance relying on the subjective and signifying model, such as privacy criticisms or discourse struggle, to intervene and be effective.

This research would shed light on theoretical understanding of the relation between technology, power, and surveillance and the operation of control power. Only by grasping the dynamics between freedom and control networked power has brought about could a method of resistance to 'mechanic enslavement' that reduces subjects to a disposable element of a technological system be devised.

Submission ID

1598

Bengali Mother in Cosmopolitan culture: Discourses in Wonder Munna YouTube videos

Authors

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Abstract

This paper attempts to analyse the discourse of 'Bengali mother' in the cosmopolitan culture brought by the capitalistic globalisation. The advancement of web 2.0 has given the opportunity to share everyday experience through cultural signs and symbols in a localised context. In the late capitalistic society, the system of commodification turns online ideas, objects, activities etc. into tradable commodities (Dijck et. al., 2018). The localised creativity and appropriation in global digital platforms have started producing cultural hybrid products, which are important aspect for cultural analysis.

Wonder Munna YouTube channel makes videos on Bengali everyday experiences in humorous ways. 'Bengali mother' is one of the important ordinary characters in the videos. Indrani Biswas, the creator of this channel, represents this character in many ways through various daily stories. This paper makes an effort to understand how this character is shown through everyday interactions and activities in global-local (glocal) cultural context. This paper first tries to comprehend the concept of "everyday" or, "ordinary" and then try to explain the content of this channel in this context. Later, the paper discusses the details of created discourse around Bengali mother in three videos of this channel, which particularly

deals with the stories of technological and cultural change in neo-global context. In “*Google jokhon Maa*” (If Google was a mother) video, the Bengali mother is metaphorically portrayed as Google search engine, as she knows about everything. The important aspect here is how she acts as the search engine and adds her personal opinion with the searched results. In “*Ek din to morei jabo*” (One day I will die) video, Bengali mother’s reactions on Facebook trends are described in a witty way. How Bengali mother tries to speak in English is shown in “*Maa-er English bola*” (Maa speaks English) video. In all these three videos, Bengali mother’s behaviours and acts are responses to the ‘reflexive modern culture’ (Bennett, 2005) in virtual space. Hence, the dynamics of local cultural interaction in global digital platforms are analysed through – the construction of Bengali mother’s identity in digital space in the era of hybrid culture.

This paper uses multimodal discourse analysis method developed by Bateman (2014) to analyse above mentioned three videos. This method is useful to understand image-text relations and the derived meaning from it. How different modes are combined in different versions of everyday stories (in the form of videos) to represent the identity of Bengali mother is examined using this method.

Submission ID

1633

The virtual-real continuum of VTuber culture: online interaction among neo-global streamers and audiences

Authors

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Ms. Qingyang Tang - School of Journalism and Communication, Beijing Normal University.

Ms. liming liu - Beijing Normal University

Abstract

Introduction

Virtual streamers, also known as VTubers, refer to media characters with virtual avatars broadcasting live. The avatar is generated by 2D or 3D technologies and manipulated by the real person. The VTuber is somewhere between a puppet and Pinocchio, suggesting the singularity of virtual and real interaction. This new digital existence is different from

what para-social theory indicates—an illusion of interaction. Given the emerging trend, we raise the research question, “As a kind of media practice, whether the performer is interwoven with the virtual avatar or just disguised to obscure his/her real appearance, how is the authenticity of performance and interaction evaluated?” This question becomes the key to measuring whether VTubers turn illusion into reality

Method

This study investigates how individuals make sense of their lived experiences by doing an interpretive phenomenological analysis. We send messages to the active viewers (i.e., high fan rank, high reward amount, and numerous bullet comments) of the famous virtual streamers to invite them to participate in the interviews.

Result

1. Revised para-social theory: The judgment of interactivity is transferred from relationship to subject.

When the streamer presents his/her real personality, the audience’s appreciation is directed to the real individual behind the virtual avatar. The audience’s attention stays on the interactive experience with the fictional character, when the person behind performs the character strictly as pre-setting. The development of para-social theory emphasizes the authenticity of the subject as the object of audiences’ mental response, rather than the communicative behavior.

2. Dynamic appreciation: Online social interaction becomes a virtual-real continuum.

The audience presents three typical appreciation practices. The first type purely appreciates the appearance of the fictional character and has no concern about who the performer is. The second type is addicted to the real person no matter of fictional or real appearance. The third believe that a VTuber is an integrated media persona, the personality of performer cannot be separated from the avatar. Instead of stipulating the interaction pattern between audiences and VTubers, the result indicates audience’s understanding of what is reality and what is fiction is a continuum with a dynamic track.

3. Reality beyond the virtual world: Multi-social networks under reciprocal cycles.

The communication between audiences and VTubers is maintained by their reciprocity. Live streaming and bullet comments technology enable audiences to simultaneously communicate online with VTubers and other audiences, generating a multi-social interaction relationship that is different from the previous para-social one. Some fans even have an offline relationship with VTubers.

Conclusion

Virtual live streaming reflects the effort to link the virtual world with real life through digital existence. The virtual–real continuum, created by both performer and audience, represents a transitional form of mediated communication. The interaction between the audience and the virtual streamers is shifting from para-social to a highly authentic pattern. The diverse interaction choices of the audience become the driving force of the interactive script, and the new features of the technology will expand the freedom of round trip from the virtual world to reality.

Submission ID

1634

Mememes, spoofs and satire in the Covid-19 era in Mauritius

Authors

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Abstract

Mememes, spoofs and other satirical materials have invaded the web and social media. They often represent humor, if not irony and mockery in contemporary culture and constitute alternative forms of political communication that run counter to official narratives. Taking into consideration their production and circulation in Mauritian digital spaces namely on social media platforms like Facebook, this paper asks what is the discursive significance of these forms of communication; what conflicts do they highlight and what impact do they have on democracy. Through discourse analysis and convenience samples of mememes, spoofs and satire produced around political issues of governance in the Covid-19 era and issues of everyday life, this paper underlines the carnival nature and the virality of these networked forms of communication. While they may problematically amplify scandals and polarisation by creating a greater distrust of the Mauritian polity they are also distinctive of the need to return to a moral life.

Mauritius has celebrated a little more than half of a century of independence from Great Britain. It has established itself as a hybrid democracy advancing in the consolidation of electoral democracy but at other times backsliding in terms of the political perception of corruption and nepotism, the lack of political participation and accountability in public affairs and everyday life. Postcolonial politics since independence has had the effect of

creating a crisis of political representation and it is in the underlying political crisis that memes and other satirical contents have flourished especially in the Covid-19 era when lockdowns have been imposed and the quotidian has been disrupted. Memes mock, subvert and highlight the wrongs in society through the remixing of languages, visuals and interpretations of conflicts. This paper argues that these online caricatures may be populist in nature but that they need to be taken into account as a way to restore trust in the social and political organization of democracy.

Submission ID

1718

ONLINE STREET: NEGOTIATING SEXUAL DISCOURSE DIGITALLY

Authors

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Abstract

Prostitution has for a long time been associated with back street business and epitomized stigmatized behaviour. However, the number of commercial sex workers on Kenyan streets has significantly reduced in the recent past. This reduction has been attributed to globalization, innovation, and social sites dubbed “online street”. Neo-globalization processes have contributed to radical shifts in future scenarios. These innovations have catalyzed various activities online and social networking. However, it is not clear how this has shaped online prostitution. This article examines the recent developments to develop a more nuanced and multidimensional understanding of online discourse on prostitution. Sex workers are a heterogeneous group with different needs. With the new unregulated medium, the Internet provides for a new wave of an unrestricted mode of prostitution. Kenya has been framed as the leading digital hub of innovation in Africa. An ethnographic approach and in-depth interview from the social group administrators were employed to understand the factors driving the sex workers away from the physical street or the red district to “online street” and the recruitment formula. The generated data was analyzed thematically and presented in narrative form using paraphrases and quotations. The feminist theory was applied to enhance the understanding of the study. The preliminary findings of this ongoing study indicate that social media offers a convenient and anonymous platform

for sex workers. Unlike the older days when sex workers were known to be women dependent on men for income, this is not the case with online sex workers. Most of them are employed and willing to pay men for sex, thus changing gender roles. Then men are also in the platform looking for clients, though, unlike ancient days where men would be out looking for women, the administrator was the link. In addition, the online platform was seen to offer privacy and decency where ethics and health concerns were also observed. Based on the findings, the government may be required to find another method of regulating prostitution within the country.

Submission ID

1921

From "data labor" to "connected learner": A study on fans' data reading and analyzing practices from the perspective of informal learning

Authors

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Dr. Fang Wu - Shanghai Jiaotong University

Dr. Yang Lai - Ohio University

Abstract

The previous research on data practice mostly started from the perspective of data labor, but paid insufficient attention to the subjective initiative of fans. With the booming development of digital platform, fan studies have found that fans can obtain informal learning opportunities from textual practice, such as language learning, writing learning and so on (Campbell et al., 2016). During the period of *Youth With You Season 3*, a group named "La Si (fans who analyzing data and generating tables)" appeared on Douban. They analyzed the overview of idol data in the form of tables, such as the number of likes or re-tweets on Weibo, album sales, magazine sales, etc. Therefore, this study investigates the characteristics, categories and causes of fans' table creating practice, and also focuses on whether fans can get the opportunity to improve their numerical skills under the background of digital platform.

Based on Douban, this study selected 20 fans who had table creating practice. The interviews were conducted in the form of online voice, and each interview lasted from 40 minutes to 1 hour and a half. In addition, we also used a questionnaire survey to test interviewees' numerical skills.

After in-depth interviews with 20 "La Si", there are three major findings. First, fans' table creating practice mainly includes three steps: voting, data collection and table creating. The topics of contents are divided into two categories: one is the data record of idols themselves, and the other is the comparison of data between different idols. Second, the purpose of table creating practice is not only to make idols' online image more positive through publicizing the commercial value, but also to protect the idols' rights who are treated unfairly by the company. Third, three ways of informal learning represented by self-directed learning, social learning and incidental learning run through fans' table creating practice. The intention of self-directed learning is obvious, which is mainly reflected in fans' voting, and most interviewees complete the preliminary accumulation of data independently. In contrast, social learning emphasizes fans' mutual teaching under the agitation of emotional psychology, which is reflected in data collection and table creating. For one thing, interviewees with data skills will design plug-ins to reduce errors such as pre-sales and sold-out albums. For another, interviewees tend to choose the data that is conducive to their idols, especially in the horizontal comparison between idols. In addition, the forms made by other fans also become vital reference. For example, Weibo likes and retweets are presented by line charts, while the data of periodic achievements such as album sales are presented by bar graphs. In the process of socialization, interviewees have improved their numerical skills as well as their sensitivity to numbers. Moreover, incidental learning is mainly reflected in the follow-up table creating practice, which often occurs after the process of socialization. It also has a side effect on interviewees' attitudes and the ways of processing data in their study and work.

Submission ID

1930

Tourists in a Virtual World: Theorizing the Cross-Cultural Dynamics of Video Game Play

Authors

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Abstract

We spend increasing amounts of time in digitally facilitated virtual worlds, arguably the most sophisticated of which are currently realized in video games. Particularly within game studies, there exists a long tradition of research into human experiences within virtual worlds, while the potential of an emerging “metaverse” has shifted renewed attention towards such virtual spaces and such questions as to how they are constituted, how their users interact with them, and how these interactions, in turn, influence their users.

This paper asks under which circumstances and in which ways, virtual game worlds can stimulate the acquisition of cross-cultural competencies of players located within their specific cultural context, interacting with games potentially developed in another. This is grounded in the observation that playing a game can be conceptualized as a form of “traveling” (Bjarnason 2020) and that players of (some) games frame their experience of a game as being akin to a tourist, experiencing a foreign locality (Brückner 2020). Such experiences can even form an incentive to physically visit the actual sites depicted in a game (e.g., Dubois et al. 2021).

Through an analysis of German and Japanese user reviews and a series of recorded play sessions with 19 German and Japanese participants, the paper outlines a theoretical framework that describes what kind of cross-cultural experiences are possible under which circumstances in which kinds of games. The framework juxtaposes the degree of “realism” in a game and the degree of cultural proximity (Straubhaar 1991) between player and game contents. Realism is here defined by the degree of similarity of a game’s aesthetics, story, and mechanics (Schell 2008) to the non-virtual world. A high degree of realism in a game, that is a high degree of similarity to the non-virtual world, in concert with a low degree of cultural proximity, is argued to be an ideal configuration for in-game touristic experiences. Potential problems resulting from such a configuration, such as a tendency to overestimate the verisimilitude of the game world are also discussed.

Submission ID

1949

Gender resistance and allusion reconstruction of Chinese female rappers -- Based on the observation of Chinese female rap variety show "Hei Pa Girls"

Authors

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Abstract

In the rap culture system dominated by men to a great extent, female rappers are extremely easy to be forced by the social environment where they are located and fight with them. Different from traditional rap countries, female singers emphasize the cross theme trend between gender, race and class. Chinese rap not only reflects the resistance to gender culture in a specific environment, but also reveals the characteristics of female writing under the values of Chinese traditional culture. In this paper, the "Hei Pa Girls" ("Hei Pa" is the homonym of "hip hop") produced by Tencent network platform is regarded as a typical observation sample of Chinese female rap, and "she" is the most open-minded gender expression feature of the rap program. The author hopes to draw a tentative outline of Chinese hip-hop feminism with the help of this research: first, the performance in "Hei Pa Girls" is caused by the attention economy of China's entertainment production field. Second, "Hei Pa Girls" is actually an ambiguous and mixed "female" discourse wandering in reality and tradition. On the one hand, it can show the voice characteristics of some feminist discourse, but on the other hand, it inevitably falls into the habitual cognition of the current Chinese social language. Third, the program text in "Hei Pa Girls" continues the female rebellious narrative allusions of "nvxia" and other strong women images in Chinese traditional culture from ancient to modern times, and reconstructs the text in combination with the current society, so as to make it glow with new era value. In other words, "Hei Pa Girls" is an alternative gathering of Chinese "women" texts under the cloak of pop culture and hip-hop music, and provides a powerful analysis perspective for the development of Chinese women's pop culture and rap art.

Submission ID

2116

MEDIA FRAMING OF INTERRACIAL ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN KENYAN INDIANS AND KENYANS OF AFRICAN DESCENT: An analysis OF selected episodes of Auntie Boss and Varshita

Authors

Ms. Ummekulsum Bohari - Strathmore University

Dr. Muthoni King'ori - Strathmore University

Abstract

As regions become more cosmopolitan and citizens become more global, interracial relationships have become more common. But despite increased diversity, suspicions, misunderstandings and animosities between races have persisted. Various scholars have conducted various studies in an attempt to uncover the reasons for this cultural divide. In Kenya, there is a huge racial divide between Kenyans who originally migrated from South Asia and indigenous Kenyans - citizens who lived in the country before colonisation. The divide between the two races can be traced to the colonial policy of divide and rule. Colonialists segregated the three races into levels with Europeans taking first place, Asians second, and Africans coming in third. These animosities associated with colonialism have persisted into contemporary Kenya. In present day Kenya, the divide is felt in various forms but is only debated in public forums occasionally. This paper is interested in the racial divide between Kenyan Indians and Kenyans of African descent. This study proposes to examine the racial divide between the two groups from the perspective of media framing. The research will examine how media framing has influenced perceptions on interracial romantic relationships between the two groups. The research will employ the qualitative research design to uncover media frames on interracial relationships from the Auntie Boss and Varshita shows - two shows that are screened on Kenyan television. Qualitative content analysis will be used to analyse the frames used to depict interracial relationships in the show. In addition, a focus group discussion will be used to get perceptions on interracial dating from selected youth. A key informant interview will be used to understand production processes that determined how the issues of race and romantic relationships were depicted in the show. Thematic analysis will be used to analyse the data.

Key words: Interracial relationships, Kenyan Indians, Kenyans of African descent, qualitative content analysis, cultural divide, media framing, thematic analysis

Submission ID

2147

Visual constructions and representations of femininity in digital food pictures

Authors

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Abstract

In recent years, with the boom of social media, it has become a trend for users to upload and share food pictures through social media. Digital food pictures are representations of the production and consumption of food culture. Digital food has become a specific practice field to construct various types of femininity. In order to explore the visual characteristics of digital food pictures, this paper selects 600 food pictures on two major social media platforms in China – Dazhong Dianping and Sina Weibo, and employs methods of content analysis and symbolic analysis to examine how do digital food images construct femininity and its cultural implications.

The study found that digital food pictures with femininity can be generally categorized into three types: the erotic, the performing, and the exquisite. First, the erotic food images highlight local features of food in close-ups, linking the "spill" convention of "food porn" to the fluidity of the female body, evoking a maternal, ocean-like fullness. This type of image conveys a "warm, motherly" femininity, a positive and creative representation of traditional femininity in digital media.

Secondly, the performing type of digital food picture is mainly based on the direct display of body, mostly with good body shape, fair skin and beautiful appearance, and food are placed in the same picture, but in secondary angles. The consumption landscape shows a "sexy and beautiful" femininity, which is the usual trick of cultural producers to attract consumers' attention and desire. But it is worth noting that there are characteristics of male body performances in this type of food pictures, with exquisite clothes and beautiful body shapes, etc. It subverts the basic cognition of feminism, which shows that digital food pictures have reproduced the power structure of men and women.

Finally, the exquisite type of food pictures are mainly based on the visual practice of high tea with bright and soft light and exquisite layout. The pictures contain sweets, cakes, flowers, gauze, candles, pink and other elements to implicitly construct a "delicate girly" femininity. Such pictures contain a large number of traditional female symbols, highlighting femininity in consumption and leisure scenes. On the surface, it reflects women's pursuit of quality of life, but in fact this is not the improvement of women's economic level. The result is the product of social comparison and the domestication of consumerism.

In summary, social media appear to empower digital food producers and consumers by reproducing the femininity of both male and female. However, judging from the femininity shown in food pictures, the nature of femininity is still "maternal, sexy, beautiful, and delicate". Therefore, digital media has not become the driving force for the transformation of femininity, but has instead re-enacted and strengthened traditional femininity in a digital way.

Submission ID

2212

Interpretations, audiences and contemporary LGBTIQ+ serial fiction: an empirical study

Authors

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Dr. Leonarda García-Jiménez - University of Murcia

Dr. Miquel Rodrigo-Alsina - Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Abstract

Studies on the LGBTIQ+ groups and the media have increased in recent years (Lovelock, 2019), especially those related to the analysis of media messages (Kohnen, 2015). However, there are still few studies on the interpretation that audiences make of this representation. These studies, in addition, have been carried out with individual techniques, such as the interview, and have not been implemented considering group interpretations and interactions, as focus group does (McInroy & Craig, 2017).

Therefore, the objective of this study is to research audience interpretations, both cisheterosexual and LGBTIQ+, about the representation of current series with characters and plots of the LGBTIQ+ collective.

The methodology is based on four focus groups (Slocum, 2003), two with cisheterosexual participants and two with LGBTIQ+ participants from different geographical locations. Each focus group is made up of 8 people. The total number of participants is 32. The participants had to discuss issues based on the bibliographic review after viewing various fragments of current and relevant television series in popular culture: Euphoria, Pose, Orange

is the New Black, Looking, Sense8, Shameless and Transparent. To guide the interpretation processes of the participants, a script was designed, which was structured in three parts: first, all the participants were asked about representation and inclusion; second, they were asked about the role of the characters and their naturalization and, finally, they were asked about their identification with the characters.

The results show, among others, that both groups can identify the existence of abundant stereotypes. In addition, they point out that there is a use of the pinkwashing technique by television producers with the aim of creating a friendly appearance with the LGBTIQ+ collective, which is corroborated by other similar studies (Sánchez-Soriano & García-Jiménez, 2020). Moreover, while the LGBTIQ+ participants affirm that they can identify with any character, regardless of their sexual orientation, the cisheterosexual participants affirm that they cannot identify with issues of diverse sexuality.

The conclusions of this study confirm the active audience paradigm regarding the media in matters of sexuality. However, there is a greater tendency towards criticism by the LGBTIQ+ collective and a greater acceptance of media messages by cisheterosexual participants.

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Submission ID

2213

Travelling through social media platforms: a comparative analysis of travel bloggers of YouTube and Bilibili

Authors

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Dr. Fernanda Pires - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Abstract

In this article, we will do a comparative analysis of travel bloggers from two different platforms: YouTube and Bilibili. In recent years, we have seen the rise of a platformization of cultural production (Poell, Nieborg and Duffy). That is to say, there is an emergence of new actors like influencers that depend on platforms with computer architecture and automation systems (software, hardware, algorithms, AI) to create their content and make their way of living. Helmold (2015) explains that platformization entails the "rise of the platform as the dominant infrastructural and economic model of the social web" (p.1). In this context, videos-platforms have gradually become an important form of expression: YouTube is one of the largest video uploading sites globally and the second-most used social media in Spain (Loose, Spearman and Gewiese). Bilibili has a user share of 47%, and it is one of the Top 3 video-on-demand services in China (Loose et al.). Therefore, in this article, we have two main objectives: 1) to identify the main practices of travel bloggers from Spain and China in these platforms; 2) to compare the travel bloggers practices used to attract and maintain their followers on both platforms.

Therefore, the ten most influential travel bloggers on the YouTube platform and Bilibili will be selected following previous research of YouTube influencers (Scolari and Fraticelli). We will do a qualitative inductive analysis of the travel blogger's practices present in their videos following the principles of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss), which seeks to identify the basic social processes as central points of the theory.

Studying travel bloggers' practices and uses within platforms like YouTube and Bilibili offers a universe of possibilities for understanding these social phenomena in both occident and orient. Therefore, the article will present the leading sets of practices carried out by the studied travel bloggers. Five practices were detected: recommending restaurants and hotels, enjoying nature and city views, spending time with friends, using or wearing the travel bloggers' or other people's brand in videos, and expressing feelings on camera. These activities change depending on the location of the trip and the personal preferences of the travel bloggers. Moreover, the identified practices show how travel bloggers engage their followers, the impact of personal expression and personality on the effectiveness of their videos, and how to generate income by producing travel videos. In addition, the study

found that the videos produced by travel bloggers on the Youtube platform are more professional and have more natural scenery, while the travel videos on Bilibili are more lifelike and colloquial.

Keywords: YouTube, Bilibili, travel bloggers, media practises, platforms, qualitative analysis

Submission ID

2215

Fever in the Mirror: A Network Agenda-Setting Analysis based on Fans and Mainstream Media in #227 incident on Weibo

Authors

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Abstract

[Background]

From February 27, 2020, a boycott against Chinese idol Xiaozhan was sparked by a report of homoerotic fan-fiction from his fans on Weibo. It was called "227 incident" and was covered by more than 20 mainstream news organizations.

Social media not only enable fans to attach other fans and idols directly but also make it easier for fan issues and content to be visible for heterogeneous ones, such as mainstream media. In fan studies, mainstream media has long played an important role in shaping fans' identities and self-perceptions. So, what are the differences between the concerns of the fans and the media? How do mainstream media's agendas impact fans' agendas? This study employs network agenda-setting(NAS) theory, big data, and machine learning algorithm to explore the attribute agendas of mainstream media and fans in "227 incident".

[Literature review]

Fans and Mainstream Media

In early fan studies, the discussion of the relationship between fans and mainstream media was mainly manifested in a sort of distant interpretation and indirect observation of fans from the mainstream, while the resistance characteristic of fans against mainstream has

been emphasized, such as "Fan-tagonis" (Johnson, 2007), "subpublic" (Stanfill, 2018), and other concepts that emphasize the marginal status of fans who against mainstream culture. As Jenkins (1992: 19) has noted: "Public attacks on media fans keep other viewers in line Such representations isolate potential fans from others who share common interests and reading practices, marginalize fan activities as beyond the mainstream."

Nowadays, mainstream media have accounts on social media so that fans can interact directly with them, which deconstructs the traditional vertical, pyramidal hierarchy of interaction between fans and mainstream to some degree. However, Boyle, Rowe, and Whannel (2009) have argued that the media still play the authoritative role of "key cultural narrators" and "news and information leadership in the digital age", so fans cannot escape from the judgment and people also gain understanding about fans through media coverage and attitudes of mainstream authorities.

Network Agenda-setting Theory

This NAS model was initially derived from the cognitive network theories (McCombs, Shaw, and Weaver 2014), highlighting that people's mental representations of the reality "were usually operated pictorially, diagrammatically and cartographically, rather than centrifugally" (Su and Hu 2020, 2). This paradigm provides an extended perspective on media and public agenda discussions because it focuses more on the salience of network structure than previous theories. We apply NAS model to map the attribute network of mainstream media and fans.

[Research Question]

- How did mainstream media and fans construct issue attributes in their networked depictions of the #227 incident?
- Was the former stage of the #227 incident's attribute network positively associated with the latter stage's network in mainstream media and fans?
- Did mainstream media have a significant effect on fans' attribute networks?

[Process]

Data Collection

and User Classification

The keywords "XiaoZhan 227 OR boycott XiaoZhan" are used to collect tweets on Weibo from February 27 to July 27, and May 10 is determined as the boundary because XiaoZhan stated that he didn't need the "support" from fans on that day. According to their profiles and the "Media Matrix List", those tweets' IDs are coded as fans and mainstream media accounts.

Topic Modeling to Generate Main Attributes of Agendas

Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA)-based topic modeling is applied to all tweets to generate the main issue attributes. We train the model using the R packages "jieba" and "lda".

SVM for Coding

A certain number of samples are randomly selected and categorized by coders. Using these labeled tweets, a support vector machine(SVM) model is built to detect the issue attributes in the full corpus.

Network Analysis

We visualize the semantic networks using the R package "igraph". Each node is represented as an attribute, such as "freedom of creation" or "fans' craze". The tie between nodes means that they co-occur in a tweet. The thicker the ties, the more often they occur together.

Quadrufic Assignment Procedure (QAP) & Multiple-Regression Quadratic Assignment Procedure (MR-QAP) Analysis

The QAP test is used to calculate the correlation between mainstream media and fans, while the MR-QAP test is used to test the predictive effects of attribute network of mainstream media, to the later network of fans.

[Theoretical Contributions]

This study provides theoretical and practical implications based on two dimensions:

- (1) Extending fan studies into social media by applying NAS theory to a case within a Chinese society.
- (2) Different from the traditional paradigm of cultural research and qualitative approach, SVM and "big data" analytics are employed in this empirical study.

Submission ID

2385

Fan Identity and Media Competence: An Analysis of Chinese Fan-media Practice with Role and Ability

Authors

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Abstract

Today, fandom is a considerably influential and global phenomenon; recently, more researchers have begun exploring global fandom in an online context. Matusitz (2005) stated that more diverse self-identities are more likely to emerge in the online world and Sandvoss (2005) asserted that media objects are part of the fan's sense of self. Hence, understanding fan-media is a bridge to broadly understanding contemporary life and groups of a society driven by online network technology.

Albeit global fandom is noted as a universal phenomenon, it is also regional, thus the related research must consider the characteristics of each culture. However, there are far more studies on western fan culture than Asia (Chin & Morimoto, 2013; Smutradontri & Gadavani, 2020). Especially in the East Asian context, Japanese and Korean fan studies have comprehensively developed, but relatively little research on the global fandom studies in China (Williams & Ho, 2015).

Fiske (1992) described “productivity and participation” as broad characteristics of a fandom. The Chinese global fandom also carries out various levels of production and participation. However, compared to Korean local fandom which is usually represented by a sole official fan community, there are individual communities that perform specific roles such as news update, subtitle production, photo or video production on Weibo in China. Therefore, based on “role and ability”, the fandom with one star is organically distinguished. This point expands on the concept of Fiske (1992) above. Furthermore, at the point where there is a lack of clarity over ‘fan’ (Taylor, 2015), it advances insight on “self-awareness” and “community awareness”.

We harnessed a linear regression model to discuss (i) the categories of China's global fan-media practice; and (ii) the relationship between fan identification (self-identity and collective identity) according to the classification of Chinese global fan-media practices.

We collected questionnaires from the Tencent Questionnaires in China from October 1 to 5, 2021 from respondents who said they were K-pop fans (n=326, validity=99.3%, female=72.7%, male=37.3 %, mean age = 21). According to news, more than 10% of K-pop albums in 2021 were sold in China, namely, the market is sizeable. We classified Chinese

global fan-media practices into six categories. Findings indicate that part of the practices significantly predicted self-identity and collective identity in different significant levels. Specifically, regression results showed that the “purchasing cyber cheering tools” group was the highest and significant predictor of fan identification, and there was no significant correlation with the “fan-fiction production” group ($p > .05$). In the case of fandom identification, the “information transport and translation” group was the highest. And “visual content creation” group followed, but there was no significant correlation with the “posting and sharing relevant information” group ($p > .05$).

In other words, the self-identity of fans who paid for material resources was high, and the collective identity of fans who paid for non-material resources such as “foreign language ability” and “content creation ability” was high. This partially supports our hypothesis and expands on Fiske's (1992) theory by discussing the role and ability, which is a distinct characteristic of Chinese fan-media practice. Moreover, it aims to advance the regional diversity of global fandom studies in Asia.

Submission ID

2455

Platformization of Music Consumption and Audience Behavior: Changes and Continuities of K-Pop Fandom in the Era of Spotify

Authors

Dr. Taeyoung Kim - Simon Fraser University

Abstract

This study examines the impacts of platformization on the global music industry and how it has reshaped the nature of consumption of popular music. The rise of several streaming services like Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube Music has disrupted many of the production and distribution mechanisms in the commercial popular music business led by a handful of record companies and airwave broadcasts. Despite controversies over their exploitative profit distribution models, the growing penetration of streaming services and their multidirectional interfaces enabled more audiences and independent creators to reflect their preference on the system in the form of playlists and posting their music online

(Colbjørnsen 2021; Hodgson 2021; Prey, Esteve Del Valle and Zwerwer 2022). That said, as long as the entry of streaming services restructures music distribution and aggregation systems thanks to their advanced technologies as intermediaries, it is worth studying how such changes influence audience behaviors.

That said, this study examines how audiences utilize streaming services to enjoy their favorite music and how streaming services contribute to their selection of music and artists. With a case study of international fans who enjoy watching and listening to Korean pop idol music (K-Pop)—one of the most emerging non-US pop music genres worldwide thanks to the development of digital technologies and social media, the study explores how audiences get access to listen to, take part in the streaming platform to reflect their tastes on its system. In addition to this, it also investigates how these new intermediaries navigate audiences to develop their preferences with their curatorial power as intermediaries (Prey 2021). Based on both in-depth and focus group interviews with Canadian and US K-Pop fans who enjoy listening and watching Korean pop music content and actively engage in fan activities, this study examines both how they utilize streaming services as a means of developing their taste in K-Pop and how streaming technologies influence their consumption of music. The findings of this research will shed light on understanding the complexity of platformization in the music industry as a multidirectional phenomenon and revisiting the discussion of distribution power in the era of streaming services.

Submission ID

2529

Calling all (European) audiences: Eurovision, neo-global content and Twitter

Authors

Dr. Elisa Paz - EU Business School

Abstract

The Eurovision Song Contest, more commonly known as Eurovision, is an international musical competition that takes place in Europe every year, in which mainly European countries participate by performing an original song for the contest. The performances are broadcast on live television in each participating country, since the contest is organized by

European Broadcasting Union, and then participating countries vote for each other and pick a winner.

This event is embedded in the Europe's recent popular culture imaginary, gathering audiences from different regions, ages and cultures around a lively music festival that aims to showcase precisely this diversity in the continent.

Although its purpose is mainly to entertain audiences, the origins of Eurovision are more symbolic and highly politically relevant. The Eurovision Song Contest was formed after the Second World War with the main objective of encouraging collaboration among European countries. The contest was not easy to materialize, due to the cultural and language differences in the European continent. In spite of this, the contest is very successful among audiences from all participating countries and in a rather cross-generational manner too, which has only increased with new forms of media such as social platforms.

This paper takes a closer look at this particular form of communication, particularly the social network Twitter, which is the preferred platform for social television practices and used as a second screen. The most popular tweets and key agents of the social discussion are identified for further analysis discussing two cases.

On the one hand, the Spanish selection of the winning song this year presents an interesting discussion about borders, national and (neo)global identities because the overwhelmingly favourite act of Spanish audiences was a song in Galician, a co-official language in Spain, with strong Galician folklore symbols and musical elements, although ultimately a professional jury chose a song in Spanglish with a very different cultural tone. This caused the outrage of the Spanish audience, who expressed their annoyance on Twitter.

On the other hand, the festival itself (which takes place in May 2022) is also an interesting object of study because of how different cultures present themselves, combining mainly two approaches: those who bet on a regional cultural representation and those who follow trends related to media imperialism, with the United States as a reference. This paper will further analyze how audiences react to these performances, considering (1) the country of origin, (2) the language, (3) the content (topic) of the song, (4) the presence of cultural elements, and (5) the performance.

This will allow for further discussion and clarification of how younger European audiences understand cultural borders, how they react to diversity and connect with dissimilar acts, and how heterogeneous or homogeneous the performances are.

Submission ID

2539

Participatory culture in the reception of Spider-Man, a globally known comic book character, through the translation of the mexican youtuber Rafatos

Authors

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Abstract

Keywords: Reception Studies; Participatory Culture; Spider-Man; Youtubers.

The era of globalization has generated new perspectives regarding the media context and receptive information content. Thompson (1998) emphasizes that media communication has an irreducible symbolic dimension, which occupies a production, storage and circulation of significant materials for the individuals who produce and receive them.

Thus, it can be explained that symbolic power is that which comes from the productive activity, transmitter and receiver of significant symbolic forms. Therefore, symbolic activity is an important feature for social life; through the productive activity and coordination of individuals.

For reception studies, the transmedia storytelling of a superhero such as Spider-Man offers the opportunity to study how audiences in local contexts appropriate their products that are designed to have a global reach.

Researchers such as Henry Jenkins (2006), have called a participatory culture, a culture that is characterized by breaking down traditional notions of viewers as passive entities, recognizing both producers and consumers are participants who interact around media texts.

Therefore, being a receptive study, it seeks to qualitatively observe a Spanish-speaking online community dedicated to following the transmedia storytelling of Spider-Man; a superhero known for being a New York teenager who has a wide variety of merchandise and fans globally.

Through participant observation and surveys in virtual communities on the social network, Facebook, it was possible to obtain results from receivers who like Spider-Man; in which the majority of the spectators are male; as well as having the average age of 15 to 25 years old. In the same way, the analysis of a local reception, in Mexico City, of the superhero is taken into account; in which a group of fans act as a kind of cultural translators for other members of the Mexican audience.

In 2016, a youtuber called Rafatos emerged, who has dedicated himself to analyzing, explaining and translating the different Spider-Man narratives. This character receives thousands of visits a month, who comment on the events from his point of view and for Spanish-speaking fans.

Analyzing the videos of YouTubers allows observing the dual character of the members of participatory cultures; since they are producers who borrow the contents of the series to make their own messages, but also narrative fans who propose their own interpretation and make it public in a local way. This happens because the process of reading and appropriation carried out by this group of fans is being made public.

This research seeks to continue with receptive studies and participatory culture in virtual communities to observe new online activities and their link with advertising and distribution of one of the most emblematic characters in comics, Spider-Man.

Submission ID

2568

Children and Border-crossing in Latin American and Latinx Film

Authors

Dr. Claudia Bucciferro - Rochester Institute of Technology

Abstract

Across media platforms, stories of immigration and border-crossing are often told from the perspective of adults, although the presence of children as protagonists of these stories has demanded greater attention in recent years, particularly in the Americas. In television newscasts and newspaper articles, for example, children are sometimes mentioned or interviewed, and may be included in pictures or video, but most of the stories continue to be centered on adult perspectives, such as those offered by experts, community activists, volunteers, and law enforcement. Against this backdrop, film narratives that address themes related to border-crossing and children offer a unique glimpse into often overlooked subjectivities. They also provide an opportunity to portray complex social realities shaping phenomena such as immigration and border-crossing, referencing economic, political, and cultural elements. In Latin American countries, neoliberal economic reforms and political transformations have impacted large groups of people in recent decades, leading to social

disruptions and new migratory waves. This, in turn, has been reflected in cultural production, particularly in films produced by directors with various national affiliations.

This paper examines the symbolic presence of children in Latin American and Latina/o/x film, considering how movies reference topics such as border-crossing and youth. The theoretical framework is critical/cultural studies, engaging with work published by Latina/o/x and Latin American scholars, and drawing on literature on film, media, and communication studies. For the purpose of analysis, 10 films were selected according to the following criteria: they offer narratives that include children, were directed by Latin American or Latino/a/x filmmakers, and were released between 1995 and 2020. This includes the following movies: *Al Otro Lado* (dir. Gustavo Loza, 2001), *La Misma Luna* (dir. Patricia Riggen, 2007), *Machuca* (dir. Andrés Wood, 2004), *No Se Aceptan Devoluciones* (dir. Eugenio Derbez, 2013), *Roma* (dir. Alfonso Cuarón, 2018), *El Laberinto del Fauno* (dir. Guillermo del Toro, 2006), *Children of Men* (dir. Alfonso Cuarón, 2006), *Beautiful* (dir. Alejandro González Iñárritu, 2010), *Central do Brasil* (dir. Walter Salles, 1998), and *Apego* (dir. Patricia Velásquez, 2019).

The analysis used qualitative text analysis as a methodology and focused on identifying thematic patterns across these films, considering how young characters are represented and what kinds of border-crossings are portrayed in the stories. Findings indicate that children appear in Latin American and Latinx film as participants and witnesses of larger social and historical processes, crossing material and symbolic boundaries, from national borders, to class-based demarcations, to the intangible markers that separate reality from fantasy. Their presence on the screen adds an emotional element to the stories, which facilitates a discursive engagement with ethical dilemmas and humanitarian imperatives.

Submission ID

2577

Datafied urban communities: City museums as sites of data practice in smart cities

Authors

Dr. Natalia Grincheva - LASALLE College of the Arts

Abstract

As public hubs for constituting citizenry, museums have established their important role in shaping cultural and political discourses, educating citizens and, elevating feelings of local belonging. Especially, city museums have been recognized as prominent contributors to the curation and circulation of urban representations and narratives of the city's cultural and political landscapes. In the past decades, many city museums across countries and continents have experimented with programming that engaged visitors in debates on a wide range of urban issues, including environmental, health, diversity and inclusion, architecture and design, scientific and technological progress, economic development, or political mobilization. In my presentation, I will discuss how city museums have expanded their curatorial and representation agenda in the raise of smart cities, especially in light of increasing datafication processes transforming the urban life.

Specifically, my presentation will explore connections and synergies between city museums' visions and programming as well as emerging smart city issues and dilemmas in a fast-paced urban environment marked with the processes of increasing digitalization and datafication. The presentation will draw on research conducted in 2021 that employed policy/document analysis and semi-structured interviews with smart city government representatives and museum professionals in three selected cities representing three different continents (North America, Europe and Asia Pacific). It aimed to investigate both smart city policy frameworks as well as city museums data driven installations and activities in such cities as New York, London and Singapore. A comparative program analysis of the Singapore City Gallery, Museum of the City of New York, and Museum of London identified such sites of data practices as Data Storytelling, Data Interpretation, and Data Eco-curation. It also helped to conceptualise such museum roles in smart cities as an Educational Institution, Facilitator of Civic Activism and Smart City Stakeholder. Discussing these sites as dedicated spaces of smart citizen engagement, the research revealed that city museums can either empower their visitors to consider their roles as active city co-makers or see them as passive recipients of the smart city transformations.

Keywords: City museum, smart city, Open Data, data-driven installations, Singapore City Gallery, Museum of London, Museum of the City of New York

Submission ID

2695