

## TECH3022-17 Advanced Social Media Production

### Lecture Twenty-Four: Revision – Collaborative Media

#### 1 Exam Structure & Format

##### Section A: Compulsory

- Netnography
- Data Collection
- Ethical Research
- Data Analysis

##### Section B: Four from Eight

- Collective Intelligence
- Crowdsourcing
- Web 2.0
- Spreadability
- Media Engagement
- Meaningful Participation
- Participatory Democracy
- Literacies

Each Question is fifteen points (15). Answering eight questions out of a total one hundred and twenty points (120). This will then be averaged from 100%.

#### 2 Reading

Boellstorf, T. (et al) (2012) *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds – A Handbook of Method*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Delwiche, A. & Henderson J.J. (eds.) (2013) *The Participatory Cultures Handbook*, Routledge, London.

Jenkins, H. (et al) (2013) *Spreadable Media – Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*, New York University Press, New York.

Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *Netnography - Doing Ethnographic Research Online*. London: Sage.

[Look for the [E] on the lecture notes section on the TECH3022 DMU Commons Wiki Page]

#### 3 Past Papers

<http://www.library.dmu.ac.uk/Resources/ExamNet/> [Search for TECH3022]

#### 4 Question Styles

- The questions ask you to 'state' or 'identify.'
- The questions relate to what is discussed or described in each of the chapter sections that are identified in the weekly reading suggestions.
- The questions do not call for you to 'speculate', 'explain' or 'discuss' the relative merits of these issues.
- The questions do not call for you to give your own personal opinion or to relate these issues to your own personal experience.

## **5 Answer Styles**

- Answers can be written as bullet-points.
- Answers should state clearly and precisely the main points or issues that are described in the suggested chapters – no more and no less.
- Answers should not be discursive, i.e. they do not have to attempt to debate the relative merits of an issue, unless this is undertaken in the chapter on which the question is based.
- Answers can provide impersonal examples that are founded in verifiable reported observation, i.e. in the mainstream media, but they should not be speculative or subjective, i.e. based on your own opinions or made-up stories.
- Answers should make an objective and specific point, and should not relate to an overtly general view or your personal experience.
- Think of your answers as if you are writing a Wikipedia entry and stick to the facts.

## **6 Section A**

(This section is compulsory, answer all questions)

### **6.1 Netnography: Kozinets - Chapter 4**

Robert Kozinets describes Netnography as a rigorous form of online investigation.

- What are the main characteristics of Netnography?

### **6.2 Data Collection: Boellstorff - Chapter 5**

Boellstorff (et al) point out that “ethnographic research is fundamentally a holistic project,” in which researchers “seek to understand shared practices, meanings, and social contexts, and the interrelations among them.”

- Identify the main attributes of the ethnographic research technique.

### **6.3 Ethical Research: Boellstorff (et al) – Chapter 10)**

Ethical Research: According to Boellstorff (et al) “researchers have an obligation to take good care of the information that they are gathering.”

- What safeguards should be used in an online ethnographic study?

### **6.4 Data Analysis: Kozinets – Chapter 7**

According to Robert Kozinets, “netnographic data analysis... consists of contextualising the meaning of the exchange and interaction in ever-widening circles of social significance.”

- How you would analyse data from an online ethnographic study.

## **7 Section B**

(You must answer Four questions from this section)

### **7.1 Collective Intelligence: Delwiche & Henderson – Chapter 11 (Levy)**

Collective Intelligence: According to Pierre Levy, knowledge producers are required to understand and manage their activities in the digital environment in ways that cope with the varied and abundant flows of knowledge that are around us.

- What is Levy's concept of collective intelligence.

### **7.2 Crowdsourcing: Delwiche & Henderson – Chapter 13 (Brabham)**

Crowdsourcing: According to Darren Brabham crowdsourcing could be used to improve public participation in the crafting of government policies, injecting more of the voice of the people in democratic processes.

- What is involved in crowdsourcing?

### **7.3 Web 2.0 Participation: Jenkins, Ford & Green – Chapter 1**

Web 2.0: According to Jenkins, Ford & Green, we need to rethink the concept of value generation associated with online media.

- What is involved in the Web 2.0 model of participation?

### **7.4 Spreadability: Jenkins, Ford & Green – Chapter 5**

Spreadability: Jenkins, Ford & Green argue that the culture of spreadability is built on technical affordances that encourages collaboration on projects by a 'hive' community.

- What are the main characteristics of the spreadability model?

### **7.5 Media Engagement: Jenkins, Ford & Green – Chapter 3**

Media Engagement: The way that we access and consume television has been changing, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green. We have witnessed a "shift from an appointment-based model of television viewing toward an engagement-based paradigm."

- What is different about engagement-based models of media?

The way that we access and consume television has been changing, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green. We have witnessed a "shift from an appointment-based model of television viewing toward an engagement-based paradigm" (Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2013, p. 116). The appointment model of television viewing meant that "committed viewers" had to "arrange their lives to be home at a cer-

tain time to watch their favourite programs.” In this model, “content is created and distributed primarily to attract this attention at a certain time,” and in a way that could be “predicted and subsequently metered and sold to advertisers for profit.” This is a model of media engagement, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, that saw audience ratings as the “primary commodity exchanged through the practices of broadcast media” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 116).

By contrast, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, the “engagement-based models see the audience as a collective of active agents whose labour may generate alternative forms of market value.” This is an approach that places a “premium on audiences willing to pursue content across multiple channels” and modes of delivery.” The point, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, is that television is now defined by the value that is placed on media that ‘spreads,’ on the basis that audiences are engaged with content that they find meaningful and which they are prepared to “recommend, discuss, re-search, pass along, and even generate new material in response” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 116).

The challenge, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green is to develop a set of literacies, that will help audiences as the “confront and ever-shifting configuration of platforms and financial arrangements as they seek the content they want from an industry not yet able to sell it to them in the forms or context they desire” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 117).

What was once considered to be marginal or cult about our media viewing habits and practices, is now being reconsidered as part of the mainstream participative media practise rationale. As Jenkins, Ford & Green note, “in a world where audiences now regularly use Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and video-sharing sites to react to mass-media offering, media producers and marketers increasingly recognise and respect the influence of... grassroots intermediaries” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 142).

In Jenkins, Ford & Green’s model, the role of fans becomes an essential characteristic and practice in the emerging networks of media engagement. Fans are described by Jenkins, Ford & Green as capable of adding value to the circulation of a media product, as they are able to act in different ways to the model of the passive audience that used to dominate television and mass media.

Because fans operate from a “broad spectrum of behaviours” they are able, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, to contribute to the greater economic and cultural value of media texts. Firstly, this is because fans will intensely watch, listen and attend to media products, both in their primary form and in their secondary form. This provides additional economic value because fans are more likely to endorse or recommend a media product to other people in their networks.

In this sense, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, the audience has been co-opted as a contributing labourer in the economic exploitation of media products. As Jenkins, Ford & Green outline, this is because “audiences, wittingly or not, create economic value for commercial interests through generating the content around which attention gets collected and commodified and through the valuable information they shed, which can be sold to the highest bidder” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 127).

The challenge, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, is to design and develop media practices that tap into this ‘surplus value’ and develop content that audiences can engage with as a ‘total experience’ that is founded in ‘transmedia engagement,’ rather than simply as pre-determined products that are made and aimed at dedicated demographically profiled audiences.

As Jenkins, Ford & Green note, “the television industry’s gradual evolution from an appointment-based model to an engagement-based one reflects shifts occurring across the media industries, as networked communication makes visible the once invisible work of active audiences in creating value and expanding engagement around media properties” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 152).

## 7.6 Meaningful Participation: Jenkins, Ford & Green – Chapter 4

Meaningful Participation: Jenkins, Ford & Green argue that participatory culture is a “vital step toward the realisation of a century-long struggle for grassroots communities to gain greater control over the means of cultural production and circulation.”

- What are the main attributes of participative media?

Jenkins, Ford & Green explain how media is being transformed both by technology and by the expectations of audiences, who now want a greater degree of “meaningful participation” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 153). The argument is, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, that the new technology of social media enables people to move from being simply consumers of media to being producers of media.

Users of media technology are therefore put forward as an active form of media participation, even though some of these practices might still be regarded as less active than others. According to Jenkins, Ford & Green the introduction of new forms of media technology, with their vastly lower “barriers to entry,” they enable forms of cultural production that involve greater skill and a wider sense of participation in the process of production that goes beyond the model of media consumption that had previously been dominant.

While Jenkins, Ford & Green are aware that there are many people who are just simply listening or watching mass media products, they argue that there is sufficient potential in the wider sense of participation in social media technology that people are no longer “locked out” of meaningful participation, but at least have opportunities to expand and develop their own media creation and use.

The change that Jenkins, Ford and Green summaries is expressed in the distinctions between “competing frames” of activity, including:

- Lurking versus legitimate peripheral participation.
- Resistance versus participation.
- Audiences versus publics.
- Participation versus collaborations.
- Hearing versus listening.
- Hearing versus listening.
- Consumers versus co-creatives.

This framework of change in the idea of participatory media suggests, according to Jenkins, Ford and Green, that there is a “struggle between conflicting and perhaps contradictory pulls – between a corporate conception of participation (which includes within it a promise of making companies more responsive to the needs and desires of ‘consumers’) and a political conception of participation (which focusses on the desire for us all to exercise greater power over the decisions which impact the quality of our everyday lives as citizens)” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 156).

According to Jenkins, Ford & Green “much as the media industries have long sought ways to ‘passively’ measure audience engagement, fearing the ‘subjectivity’ which occurs when audiences become co-creators of audience data, the Web 2.0 paradigm – for all its empowering rhetoric – increasingly rests on the passive collection of user preferences” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 176).

Alternatively, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, it is possible to conceive of audience activity in different ways, and to reimagine the idea of 'passivity' by acknowledging that media audiences are "publics with the capacity to reshape" the media they interact with (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 176).

At the heart of the "spreadability model" of media participation put forward by Jenkins, Ford & Green, is the "idea that audience members are more than data, that their collective discussions and deliberations – and their active involvement in appraising and circulating content – are generative" (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 176).

This means, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, that is media that is created in this new model "doesn't spread, it's dead" (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 188), and if it can't be "quoted" then it might not mean anything.

According to Jenkins, Ford and Green, "The social practices of spreadable media necessitate material that is quotable – providing easy ways for audiences to be able to excerpt from that material and to share those excerpts with others – and grabbable – providing the technological functions which make the content easily portable and sharable" (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 188).

Based on the sense of involvement that comes through the spreadable media model, Jenkins, Ford & Green argues that participatory culture is a "vital step toward the realisation of a century-long struggle for grassroots communities to gain greater control over the means of cultural production and circulation." Therefore, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, "if we see participation as the work of publics and not simply markets and audiences – then opportunities to expand participation are struggles we must actively embrace" (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 193).

## **7.7 Participatory Democracy: Delwiche & Henderson – Chapter 17 (Fuchs)**

Participatory Democracy: Dieter Fuchs argues that "citizen's participation in political decisions is an essential feature of democracy."

- What are the characteristics of online participative democracy?

According to Dieter Fuchs "participatory is conceived as a primary subtype of democracy" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 163). There are two primary subtypes of democracy, according to Fuchs, "participatory democracy and representative democracy" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 163). While debates about democracy are current and of the moment, Fuchs' points out that debates about the nature of democracy have go back to Athenian times in ancient Greece.

Fuchs' explains that "the meaning of the concept of democracy can... be outlined in a hierarchical structure. This structure contains three levels, which are: 1) the concept, 2) its attributes, and 3) on the lowest level, the components of attributes" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 164).

In general, according to Fuchs, democracy is said to be either: "government by the people," "rule by the people," "self-government," and "collective self-rule" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 164). In all definitions of democracy these definitions can further be groups as either a process 'government,' or a process of belonging as a 'people.' Put simply, democracy is said to be "the realisation of collective goals through collectively binding decision," which are fundamental to a sense of common affairs and governance of those affair.

Fuchs' argues that "by understanding self-government as self-determination, democracy is reduced to a means to an end, and, furthermore, it is joined to claim that is hardly accomplishable" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 164). The challenge, according to Fuchs, is to find a way to shape and structure the decision making process so that it can cope with the complexities of modern society, while at the same time respecting and engaging the life situations that grow out, or form part of the society as a whole. This means acknowledging, according to Fuchs, that "people consist of individual members of a societal community, who possess political rights."

While also acknowledging that "there is a membership rule that determines who is part of the group and who is not." Likewise, Fuchs suggests, the question of who enjoys political rights and who does not is engaged with on the basis of equal access to the process of democracy. Fuchs suggests that these issues can be subsumed into the wider debate about "political equality" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 165).

For example, in Athenian democracy, only property owning men could participate in the democratic process, which meant that "women, foreigners (metics) and slaves were barred from the demos" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 165). Obviously there has been some change in thinking in modern times about the more inclusive model of democracy that is promoted today.

Fuchs points out that there are specific differences between participative and representative democracy. According to Fuchs' "the specific difference between the participatory and the representative mode is that, in the former, citizens are directly involved in political decisions whilst, in the latter, they are indirectly involved through representatives elected by the people" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 165).

Participatory democracy can therefore be described as a form of democracy in which people rule themselves directly. This involves an extensive degree of activity and involvement in the self-governing process. This is a direct form of democracy.

The question that arises, according to Fuchs, is how much participation do people have to undertake in order for them to be recognised as directly participating and to comply with the terms of participatory democracy?

Representative democracy, however, involves a decision-making process that takes place indirectly by elected representatives. This is the form of decision making that is most associated with modern Western Democracies. The underlying question that Fuchs outlines, however, is to what extent it is now possible to bypass representative democracy and mover towards forms of direct democracy, enabled by social media and ICT?

There is a third term that is also used to describe democracy that Fuchs outlines, and that is deliberative democracy. This is a process in which deliberation is given primacy, and citizens are given the opportunity to discuss and unpick the issues that are being decided.

When contentious issues of disagreement are aired, for example, then the deliberation process is said to be able to assist citizens come to a consensus. As Fuchs explains, "the central idea of all deliberations is that, via a regulated exchange of arguments for different positions on controversial issues, consent can be achieved that the participants can agree with for good reasons" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 168).

This deliberative form of democratic participation assumes that it is through the opinion-forming process that the exchange of arguments and the political preferences of the participants, that decisions will improve and thereby increase the validity of those decisions.

As Fuchs summarises: “the citizen’s participation in political decisions is an essential feature of democracy,” that can meet changes in expectations about the social processes of communal life that have changed due to increases in educational levels, due to changes in technology, due to the range of information that citizens can access, and due to some changes in the fundamental values of society – such as individualism and personal identity.

The challenge, according to Fuchs, is to figure out how the internet and other social media technologies can be used to overcome the growing scepticism towards politicians, parties and institutions of representative democracy?

## 7.8 Literacies: Delwiche & Henderson – Chapter 22 (Rheingold)

Literacies: Howard Rheingold argues that “online social networks can be powerful amplifiers of collective action precisely because they augment and extend the power of ever-complexifying human society.”

- What does the incorporation of sociability models of media entail?

Howard Rheingold argues that “online social networks can be powerful amplifiers of collective action precisely because they augment and extend the power of ever-complexifying human society” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 215). Being sociable, according to Rheingold, is “central to what it is to be human.”

Rheingold asks if it is possible to incorporate the practices and ideas of being sociable to the new and emerging information networks and media networks that are being established via the internet? Rheingold suggests that while we are “beginning to learn a little bit about the specific socio-technical affordances of online social networks, is it possible to derive a normative design?” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 216) In other words, in what way can software designers and developers think about the benefits of social applications and software?

Rheingold asks “can inhumane or dehumanising effects of digital socialising be mitigated or eliminated by better media design?” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 216). Rheingold acknowledges that the “explosion of creativity that followed the debut of the Web in 1993 was made possible by deliberate design decisions on the part of the Internet’s architects,” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 217) such as the decentralisation of decision making.

While the internet has been a hugely important technical infrastructure that has changed our lives, Rheingold suggests that it is now time to turn our attention to “building systems that support human sociality,” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 217) and not just technical networks.

Rheingold suggests that we need to develop literacies that encompass the skills, ideas and practices that are associated with expression and action online. Rheingold describes literacy as the most important method Homo sapiens have used to “introduce systems and tools to other humans, to train each other to partake of and contribute to culture, and to humanise the use of instruments that might otherwise enable commodification, mechanisation, and dehumanisation” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 217).

These literacies will, according to Rheingold, acknowledge the participatory nature of digital and online media, and will be distinctly different from traditional media in three interrelated characteristics:

- “Many-to-many media now makes it possible for every person connected to the network to broadcast as well as receive.”
- “Participatory media are social media whose value and power derive from the active participation of many people.”
- “Social networks, when amplified by information and communication networks, enable broader, faster, and lower-cost coordination of activities” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 218).

Rheingold believes that a “participatory culture in which most of the population see themselves as creators as well as consumers of culture is far more likely to generate freedom and wealth for more people than one in which a small portion of the population produces culture that the majority passively consume” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 218).

This is because, as Rheingold argues, “a population that knows what to do with the tools at hand stands a better chance of resisting enclosure. The more people who know how to use participatory media to learn, inform, persuade, investigate, reveal, advocate, and organise, the more likely the future infosphere will allow, enable, and encourage liberty and participation” (Rheingold, 2013, p. 218).

## 8 References

- Fuchs, D. (2013). Participatory Democracy. In A. Delwiche & J. J. Henderson (Eds.), *The Participatory Cultures Handbook* (pp. 163-170). London: Routledge.
- Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2013). *Spreadable Media*. New York: New York University Press.
- Rheingold, H. (2013). Participative Pedagogy for a Literacy of Literacies. In A. Delwiche & J. J. Henderson (Eds.), *The Participatory Cultures Handbook* (pp. 215-219). London: Routledge.