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Letter from the Editor

When I first heard I was going to be the editor-in-chief of the *Foolscape* I was ecstatic. I knew that I had a huge job ahead, because this was to be the inaugural volume of the journal. As essays started pouring in I became certain the *Foolscape* would be a success. The brand new academic journal is drawing essays from the fastest growing program at the University of Toronto, Book and Media Studies (BMS). With over a thousand students enrolled in BMS classes we can offer a large palate for a wide variety of students.

With this journal I hope to start a new tradition of academia, within the program of BMS, but also within St. Michael's College. The goal of this journal is to explore old and new media, and the ways in which they have changed the society in which we live. Marshall McLuhan, in his book *The Medium is the Massage*, noted that "the youth of today are not permitted to approach the traditional heritage of mankind through the door of technological awareness. This only possible door for them is slammed in their faces by a rear-view-mirror society" (100). It is the hope of this journal to provide that door, through which students and their peers might transgress conventional boundaries surrounding the study of technologies.

Enjoy,

Keely Kundell, Editor-in-Chief

Abstract

*Using Nicholas Cook's method for analyzing musical multimedia, this paper discusses the relationship between the literary, musical, and cinematic forms of "Dwarves' Song" in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. This essay argues that the instance of multimedia of the film *The Hobbit* is exemplary of Cook's theory of a consistent and conformant interaction of multimedia. "Dwarves' Song" is transformed from a diasporic song of loss into an anthem that motivates the dwarves' journey to reclaim their homeland.*

Howard Shore's "Dwarves' Song" in Peter Jackson's film adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* is a diasporic song of the displaced dwarves after their homeland, Erebor, is taken from them at the hands of the fire-breathing dragon Smaug. Though Tolkien's song in his novel is much longer than Shore's adaptation for Jackson's film, the adaptation captures the dwarves' desire to return to their rightful home, as well as roots their motivation in Smaug's violent destruction and invasion of their beloved land. Shore transforms the dwarves' song from a painful memory handed down through generations into an anthem that compels them to courageously reclaim their homeland. Theorist Nicholas Cook, in his book *Analyzing Musical Multimedia*, outlines three models of multimedia: conformance, complementation, and contest (Cook 100). These are determined through what he calls the similarity and the difference test. Cook shows that the similarity test asks whether the different media – in this case, words and music – are working toward the same creative goal (Cook 100). If they are, it is an instance of conformance; if not, the difference test is performed (Cook 100). The difference test then asks what difference exists between the words and the music (Cook 100). In the case of text and music evoking things that are different, but which do not oppose each other, Cook calls this an instance of complementation; if text and music do oppose one another, Cook declares the two media in contest (Cook 100). Using Cook's method, the similarity test reveals that the media involved in converting the "Dwarves' Song" from the original literary version to film adaptation are conformant: the media – lyrics, music, and images – remain aligned along the same premise (Cook 99). To say it in Cook's words, "there is

no metaphorical difference between “Tolkien’s song, Shore’s composition, and Jackson’s interpretive adaptation (99). “Dwarves’ Song” remains the oral culture expression and motivation for the dwarves’ journey. Using Cook’s analytical method, I conclude that Shore’s “Dwarves’ Song” is an expression of conformant media (100). As Tolkien wrote the song to reflect the oral tradition of the Dwarf culture, Shore and Jackson conform to the orality of the song in composition and cinematography to invoke memory and to spark heroism among the dwarves, and use leitmotifs of varying instrumentation to transform the song of loss into a victorious anthem.

Shore bridges the interpretive gap between Tolkien’s literary song and Jackson’s film version. Tolkien’s dwarves’ song is a song that replicates an oral culture, it is a song that contains the history of their displacement. Tolkien’s lyrics tell the story of the dwarves’ lost home, and their lost caverns of treasure deep within the mountain. It is a song that provides the dwarvish culture with a generational memory of their loss. Jackson’s film adaptation of *The Hobbit* understandably leaves out some details of Tolkien’s narrative, and consequently Shore’s film score and specifically his composition of the “Dwarves’ Song” reflects these omissions as well. In order to transform the song of the dwarves into a narrative propellant, Shore squeezes the lyrics of the Tolkien’s song into eight lines:

Far over the misty mountains cold
To dungeons deep and caverns old
We must away ere break of day,
To seek the pale enchanted gold.

The pines were roaring on the height,
The winds were moaning in the night.
The fire was red, it flaming spread;
The trees like torches blazed with light (Tolkien
26-28).

Shore takes the fifth and seventh stanzas of Tolkien's song to create his adaptation; the effect of his choice of lyrics positions their concern with reclaiming their homeland. Tolkien's full song details the various treasures that are contained in the Lonely Mountain; leaving these details out of the film composition, not only conserves running time, but also focuses the narrative purpose of the dwarves' song: to compel the gathered dwarves to continue with their journey to reclaim what was taken from them. Writing about Jackson and Shore's first collaboration on another of Tolkien's works, *The Lord of the Rings*, Estelle Jorgensen comments, "Tolkien's tale is transformed and interpreted" (Jorgensen 47). Even though Jorgensen is discussing Shore's work on Tolkien's trilogy, her comment is still relevant when applied to Jackson and Shore's collaboration on *The Hobbit*. Despite the omissions, Shore's composition remains conformant in that it maintains the essence of heritage and orality. Considering Jorgensen's comment, Shore's lyrical composition interprets the orality of Tolkien's dwarves' song in a way that places the focus on the dwarves' return to Erebor for the purpose of repossessing their rightful home, omitting Tolkien's detail of their desire for their treasure. As stated, Tolkien's song presents the Dwarf culture as an oral culture; Shore mimics the orality of Tolkien's dwarves' song musically. Cook describes three types of relationships between media:

unitary, dyadic, and triadic (Cook 101). A unitary relationship occurs when one medium is dominant over the other - as opposed to a dyadic or triadic relationship, where in the case of a dyadic relationship two media mutually interact, or as in triadic, where two media are reliant on a third element (Cook 101).

I posit that the relationship between Tolkien's lyrics and Shore's composition is unitary; even though Shore has selected the lyrics he uses from Tolkien's piece, Tolkien's lyrics dominate Shore's music, determining the oral feel. Again, regarding the score for *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, Jorgensen quotes Shore saying that he wished to "re-insert' some of Tolkien's poetry into the film score" (Jorgensen 46). It is safe to assume that Shore's approach to scoring *The Hobbit* would be similar. Shore 're-inserts' Tolkien's poetry into his "Dwarves' Song" composition by maintaining characteristics of oral culture: the melody of the composition is rhythmic and repetitive - characteristics that are indicative of oral culture, as rhythm and repetition can be easily committed to memory (O'Connor). The Dwarf people have presumably been singing this song since shortly after Smaug usurped their land, and as such, the song would be passed down through generations. When the gathered dwarves sing together, none need to be reminded of the lyrics or the tune because the song has been their inheritance. After omitting over half of Tolkien's literary version of the dwarves' song, Shore 're-inserts' Tolkien's poetry and creates the sense of the ingrained song of oral culture through the rhythm and repetition of his composition. Shore complements Tolkien's orality of the dwarves' song, which helps to make the song in Jackson's film adaptation the motivation that keeps the

narrative - and the dwarves - moving forward toward Erebor.

As Shore's composition bridges the gap between Tolkien's song and Jackson's film version, the way in which Shore's composition is appropriated in the film adaptation is part of the interpretation of Tolkien's original. In the film, the dwarves sing their song in Bilbo's parlor room while congregated around the fire. The camera pans the gathered dwarves, showing wide angles of several dwarves as well as close up angles of individual dwarves while they sing. The combination of close up and wide angle camera shots creates a mood of memory and motivation. Kathryn Kalinak states that music "resonates emotion between the audience and the screen" (*Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* 19). She continues, saying that music is the greatest practice to express emotion in that it harnesses "the power of musical conventions to provide an audible definition of the emotion represented in the film" (*Film Music* 19). The first stanza of Shore's adaptation is the memory of Smaug's invasion; the scene begins with a close up of Thorin looking longingly into the fire. When the song begins, "Far over the misty mountains cold," Thorin and his men are not only proclaiming their destination, but also remembering their homeland (*The Hobbit*). When they sing, "We must away ere break of day," the camera closes in on Gloin, who sits with a look of determination as he and his companions anticipate reclaiming their home and their gold (*The Hobbit*). When the second stanza begins, "The pines were roaring on the height," the camera takes a wide angle shot of the company standing together collectively, remembering the takeover of their home, just as they will stand together against Smaug as they begin their journey to take back

Erebor (*The Hobbit*). Again, all three are examples of Cook's theory of conformance: in each case the lyrics, music, and images are brought together to express the collective memory of the dwarves. In another of her articles, Kalinak claims that music is "expected to perform a variety of functions: provide characterization, embody abstract ideas, externalize thought, and create mood and emotion" ("The Classical Hollywood Film Score" 268). Again, the combination of the camera angles creates this mood of memory and motivation; the camera work intuitively draws attention to the dwarves' collective memory, and uses that memory to spark their action. The gathered dwarves remember their loss but they are also moved by their memory to act. The conformant interpretation of the orality and collective memory of the song transforms the "Dwarves' Song" into an anthem.

After this first introduction of the "Dwarves' Song", Shore uses the melody as a leitmotif throughout the film which solidifies it as the dwarves' anthem. Shore and Jackson utilize the dwarf song melody as a leitmotif in varying instrumentations on at least six occasions throughout the film. Kalinak states that "one of the primary functions of the leitmotif was its construction to the explication of the narrative" ("The Classical Hollywood Film Score" 276). Each use of the leitmotif marks a key moment in the dwarves' journey. The first use occurs once Bilbo has joined their company; this occurrence highlights the official beginning of their journey. Another instance of the leitmotif takes place when the company leaves Rivendell; one single trumpet sounds the melody of the "Dwarves' Song" in crescendo. The instrumentation of the leitmotif in this way makes it special - the journey has been temporarily halted while at Rivendell. The elf lord has translated

the map for them but has opposed their journey. Tensions run high between the elves and the dwarves due to deep-seated resentments. The dwarves defy the elves and depart, the trumpet sounding their persistence in taking up their quest. The trumpet creates an atmosphere of triumph. Kalinak says that the creation of mood and atmosphere relies “on the ability of the composer to discern implicit content and respond with appropriate music” (“The Classical Hollywood Film Score” 269). If not for Shore’s inclusion of the motif in this way the mood of the moment would be lost, and the audience would be less able to comprehend the importance of the dwarves’ defiance.

Another important instance of the leitmotif occurs while the company is challenged by goblins; after facing certain defeat, Gandalf cries, “Take up arms, fight!” (*The Hobbit*). The leitmotif is heard again, this time with drum and trumpet instrumentation with a faster tempo. The fast tempo and drum beat is matched by the running of the company upon their flight from the mines; the trumpet again signals their victory over their adversary. Kalinak says that, “by resonating emotion between the audience and the screen, film music engages audiences in processes of identification, which bind them into the film” (*Film Music* 20). Incorporating leitmotifs in this way helps to correspond moments of victory with the “Dwarves’ song”, and by extension transforms the dwarves’ song as an anthem to the dwarves’ victory.

The most important use of the leitmotif in the film occurs at the end, in the dwarves’ final act against the pale orc after the dwarves think that Thorin has died. Their moment of valor is marked by the melody that has been paired with victory at every previous turn of the narrative. Kalinak says that “film music

does more than define emotion however - it generates it" (*Film Music* 19). The association that has been created throughout the film between the leitmotif and victory comes to the fore, while the dwarf company is evading the orc the audience becomes caught up in the suspense of the narrative and the impending victory of the dwarves. Kalinak claims that the leitmotif helps to accomplish overall unity within the score, offering coherence ("The Classical Hollywood Film Score" 276). The appropriation of the various leitmotifs is an expression of conformance as well; each instance of the leitmotif occurs to achieve the same goal of translating the action into emotion for the audience - more specifically, to convey the mood of victory. The leitmotif builds upon itself throughout the film to create and define moments of victory. From the moment the dwarves sing their inherited song through to the close of this first instalment of *The Hobbit* the melody of the "Dwarves' Song" has become the source of strength and beacon of hope that grants victory for Thorin and his men. The Shore-Jackson use of the leitmotif adds to the effect of the song becoming an anthem through the atmospheric association with victory.

The song of the Dwarf diaspora, as Tolkien wrote it, reflects the dwarves' oral culture. Shore mirrors Tolkien's intention in his adapted composition through his use of rhythm and repetition that intonate a song of generational oral culture. The reflection of orality is furthered in the song's appropriation to film; the cinematography creates the mood of memory and motivation while the audience witnesses the dwarves sing their history and longing. The song is finally transformed into an anthem through the use and instrumentation of the "Dwarves' Song" melody as

audience witnesses the dwarves sing their history and longing. The song is finally transformed into an anthem through the use and instrumentation of the “Dwarves’ Song” melody as leitmotif. These elements are indicative of Cook’s theory of conformance: meaning that the media are consistent with one another, relying on the same metaphor to assert meaning. Kalinak and Jorgensen confirm music’s active enforcement of emotion and audience response; the “Dwarves’ Song” melody appropriated as a victorious leitmotif throughout *The Hobbit* repositions the “Dwarves’ Song” from just song to anthem.

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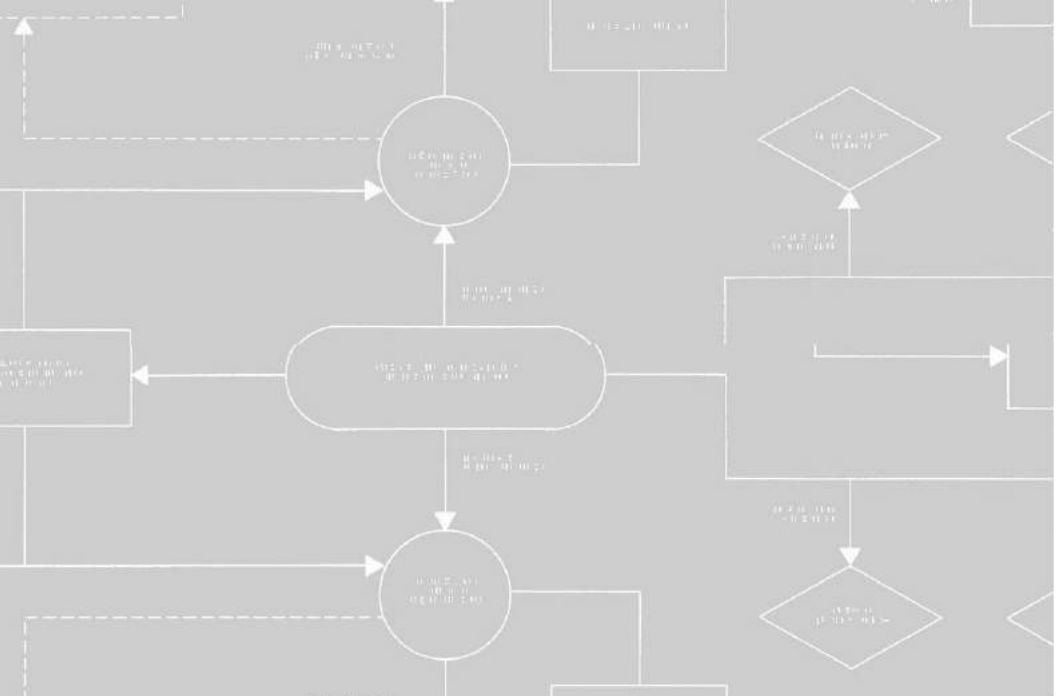
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Online Dating Services: The Extension of Man

By Vanessa Hoffmann



Abstract

Online dating websites are the updated version of personal advertisements that are found in print newspapers. Both mediums allow individuals to communicate to a larger pool of prospective partners while filtering out perceived flaws that they wish to hide. Online dating websites operate on a much larger scale than the print advertisements, which in turn exposes the user to a larger audience, creating a greater risk of ridicule and profile manipulation. However, the risk of insincerity exists in all formats of dating and one must trust their instincts when filtering out potentially deceptive mates.

Online dating profiles are not the first of their kind; prior to the Internet and still existing today are “personals” advertisements that can be placed in newspapers and magazines. These advertisements are not solely for the purpose of dating, and also can include requests for renovation assistance, a pet sitter, or a mover to name a few. These advertisements can, not only be used for seeking out requests, but they can also be used for advertising one’s own services. However, online dating profiles began to be created as a way to shift the information overload to a new technology in the digital age: the Internet. The profiles that users create offer more functions in order to have a more active and productive search for one’s “soul mate”. By having an online profile, one can have access to a larger pool of potential candidates. The profile also allows them to have more space in a format that can be virtually free – depending on the website being used. Some websites require a subscription fee while others allow one to post without making any forms of payment. However, the fee-based websites often offer free trial periods where customers are able to

experience the website prior to making a decision concerning monetary payment. The shift from print advertisements to online profiles “occurs with the extension of the body in new social technology and invention. A new extension sets up a new equilibrium among all of the senses and faculties leading, as we say, to a ‘new outlook’ – new attitudes and preferences in many areas” (McLuhan 125). This is important because the new outlook can create a new effectiveness for the dating tool. This paper will use McLuhan examples to argue that online dating services are an extension of man; man is defined as the individual user of the tool. It will describe how the media translates the individual in the digital age as well as showing how the transition from print advertisements to online dating has both positive effects and negative consequences. After outlining both positive effects and negative consequences, the paper will defend that the positive effects outweigh the negative.

The online social network service that acts as a platform for the dating websites has the capability of translating the intentions of the user while eliminating distractions such as personal traits they consider to be flaws. “The tendency of neurotic children to lose neurotic traits when telephoning has been a puzzle to psychiatrists,” such as “stutterers [who] lose their stutter when they switch to a foreign language,” (McLuhan 56). This is similar to how the online platform can allow users that have issues such as social anxiety or personal insecurities to translate their information to a platform that allows them to become more accessible to prospective partners while also alleviating their personal stresses. Some of the flaws, or the perceived flaws of the user can disappear

when the user is using a different platform in order to communicate more clearly and efficiently. For instance, a person's inability to converse with the opposite sex can be unnoticeable when they publish a personal profile online. This can be applied to McLuhan's idea that, "We can translate more and more of ourselves into other forms of expression that exceed ourselves"(57). McLuhan has also expressed that, "In this electric age we see ourselves being translated more and more into the form of information, moving toward the technological extension of consciousness"(57). This same thought can be applied to the current digital age because the role of online dating services is to translate and deliver the necessary personal information of one seeking a compatible, intimate partner, to the prospective mate. These online dating platforms can act similarly to how clothes can become an extension of one. "Clothing, as an extension of the skin, can be seen both as a heat-control mechanism and as a means of defining the self socially"(119). Clothing is the extension of our skins that one can manipulate to convey expression; it is used to communicate non-verbally. One can use clothing to "dress to impress;" whether one dons a suit in a job interview in order to appear serious, prepared, and professional, or one might choose to wear expensive jewelry or designer clothing while attending a dinner or event in order to express one's actual or the aura of one's success, wealth, and high class social status.

McLuhan believed that in regards to the notion that the medium is the message, "the personal and social consequence of any medium – that is, of any extension of ourselves—results from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension

of ourselves, or by any new technology” (McLuhan 7). This means that the positive and negative effects of utilizing online dating services instead of print personal advertisements are a result of introducing this new technology. One positive that can also act as a negative to having an online dating profile is that the content is available to a much wider audience. Although this can have positive effects including a better chance of finding a compatible match due to the increased exposure, it can also have a negative impact since one is exposing one’s vulnerabilities to a large audience which might consist of individuals who might not be very sensitive to the person’s desires and insecurities that they have posted. As a result, the individual’s image or profile can be manipulated in a way in which they do not desire, such as public mocking or creating a “meme” out of the persons’ image in order to generate entertainment and social media activity on other online platforms.

A “meme” is, “an image, video, piece of text, etc., typically humorous in nature that is copied and spread rapidly by Internet users, often with slight variations” (Google). For example, a teacher posted a picture on an online social networking service of herself holding a sign that read, “I’m talking to my 5th grade students about internet safety and how quickly a photo can be seen by lots of people. If you are reading this, please click ‘Like.’ Thanks!” (“Teacher Goes Viral”). This image was sent virally around the Internet, with different viewers sometimes choosing to manipulate the picture with software such as Photoshop and attaching these altered images. The photo was originally posted onto Facebook and within a day, it was “liked” over 7,000 times and

“shared” over 500 times (“Time 4 Learning”). The photo was also saved by a user and reposted to another website, Reddit, where it was posted under the section titled, “/r/photoshopbattles” which encourages users to manipulate the image. Since it was posted on Reddit, it has generated over 1000 comments (x2501x). Fortunately, many people respected the efforts of the teacher to create such an impactful example for her students and chose to not only participate in her experiment with their manipulations, but they also chose to keep the doctored images relatively appropriate in order to avoid embarrassing the teacher.

However, this is not always the case. Taking a photograph of something, more specifically of a person, freezes the person in time and transforms them into an object. Transforming the individual from person to object dehumanizes the person. Therefore, it makes it easier for one to perform inappropriate behaviours to embarrass the objectified person such as manipulating the photo while including a negative connotation. This is because the manipulator often does not know the individual in the photo and since the image is no longer considered personified, it has essentially become an inanimate object. Although this example was not one taken from online dating profiles, the rapidity of the image’s movement throughout the Internet had the same effect that one from a dating profile would have, or from anywhere else for that matter. One’s profile image can be altered in the same way that the teacher’s image was changed. The idea that you are exposing yourself to a virtually endless number of individuals who can choose to respect you or ridicule you is the same no matter what you choose to show on the Internet.

A personal consequence of both print and digital dating advertisements is that it is not guaranteed that the individual responding to the advertisement or profile or the individual posting the advertisement or profile is being entirely honest with their intentions or about who they really are. This is enacted similarly to the way that one can enact their clothing selections to portray ideas that are suggestive of social identities or statuses that might not accurately depict the individual and are contrary to the individual's true identity. Individuals can manipulate their profiles by including a photo that is not actually of them, or add text that does not accurately represent their true selves.

For instance, one user's profile on the online dating website, OKCUPID, selected the username "IWontMurderYou" (OKCupid). The profile appears to be themed around the man being explicit that he does not kill people, but also alludes to aspects of his life that hint that he's a murderer. In the "What I'm doing with my life section," the user says, "I'll tell you this right up front: certainly not murdering ANYONE, least of all you! Beyond that, mostly digging"(OKCupid). In the, "I spend a lot of time thinking about" section, the user makes a subtle reference to the film, *Silence of the Lambs*, which is also listed as a favourite movie and says, "what it would be like to wear someone else's skin (in a metaphorical sense)"(OKCupid). The user continues this theme throughout every section of the profile. Although one can never be positive, unless they personally know the user, one is likely to assume that this profile was created as a joke without it being explicitly stated due to the nature of the profile. One might not take this profile seriously and feel that the user is mocking the process

of online dating. This will always be a risk when one is dating, even in face-to-face contact. There is always a chance that one's intentions are not genuine and it often takes one's intuition and trust in others to filter through the deceptive individuals in order to find the wholesome ones.

Online dating websites allow one to create a personal profile in order to extend and translate the individual similar to how print personal advertisements found within newspapers and magazines partake in similar ideology. However, unlike print personal advertisements, online dating profiles allow one to be shared amongst a substantially larger pool of individuals that can potentially include one's future compatible mate. This technology has both positive and negative personal and social effects that have been discussed in the previous sections. The online dating profiles can act as an individual's clothing that they utilize in order to convey certain information about the individual, whether the knowledge being delivered is accurate or false, or even if the receiver acquiring the information misconceives it. The online dating website acts as, "a collective skin or garment" with the intended purpose to, "accommodate the needs of large groups," (McLuhan 123) who have sought out assistance in the search for a compatible, intimate partner. "Clothing as extensions of skin ... [is a medium] of communication, first of all, in the sense that [it] shape[s] and rearrange[s] the patterns of human association of community" (127). The online dating profiles and websites as a whole provide individuals seeking intimate companionship a community designed to provide them with compatible options while also allowing them to be explicit regarding their interests, desires, and expectations. They also allow for individuals to experience an

alternative option to meeting prospective partners in public, which is especially helpful for those who have limited time to do so or have social anxieties and insecurities that they prefer to mask through this new technology. Although one might oppose the use of this technology and argue that it creates unrealistic dating practices, the online dating practice allows those who struggle with the preliminary events in dating due to their sensitivity to their perceived flaws, to circumvent those flaws which allows them to meet potential partners and build up trust to become vulnerable enough to reveal these flaws to selected mates.

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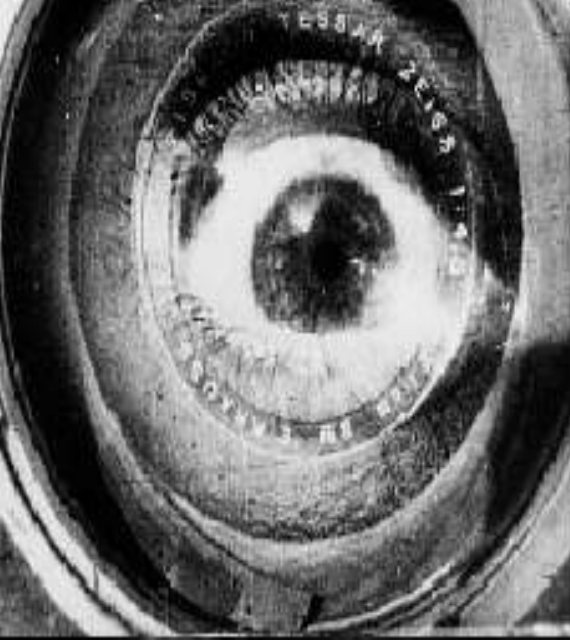
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McLuhan's Ideal Artists for Autonomy
and Subjectivity: European Art Film-
makers Resist Hollywood Hegemony
By Guoxuan Wang



Abstract

In the era when Hollywood films dominated the market, moviegoers gradually became accustomed to indulging in these narratives for escapist entertaining. Marshall McLuhan contends that the advancing technologies fragment people's sense ratios, trapping them in a closed mental state. European art filmmakers thus function as McLuhan's ideal artists, emphasizing the cinematic form by producing unique films that resist the submissive American viewing experience. These European film styles encourage audiences to imaginatively question and challenge cinema to develop their subjectivity and autonomy.

In the electronic media age, the invention of cinema was motivated by people's interest in moveable images and the recording of history. Because film expands human sight and sound, these two motivations behind film's emergence exemplify media theorist Marshall McLuhan's concept of media as "extension[s] of consciousness" (4) as proposed in *Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man*. Throughout cinematic history, motion pictures gradually became more and more realistic with the arrival of sound, colour and 3D effects, which continuously altered people's sense ratios by amplifying vision and sound, while isolating other senses. This fragmentation of the body permits the audience's technological adaptation to the film medium, thereby creating a closed system between the user and the technology, following McLuhan's premise. This mutual interdependence between the human and the technological not only allows the medium to change viewers' perception of the society, but also transforms people's interaction with films according to their cultural back-

ground. More than just highlighting the invisibility of the mechanical medium, Hollywood narratives reproduce prevailing ideology. In addition, American media imperialism hypnotizes global audiences into homogenization. By contrast, European art filmmakers are a kind of corrective to American mainstream cinema's brainwashing effects. In this sense, they are McLuhan's "ideal artists" because they emphasize the cinematic form to make viewers question it and encourage use of thought and imagination for self-autonomy and subjectivity.

Improving Film Technologies and Fragmentation of Sense Ratios

The evolving film history is one of the media revolutions that mark a constant changing of human sense ratios and fragmentation. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, McLuhan contends that when a human extends some body parts into materialist technology, this person's sense ratio is altered. "He is then compelled to behold this fragment of himself 'closing itself as in steel'" (McLuhan 300). This fragmentation creates a closed system and eventually forces him to become part of the technology. For film, continually improving technology makes onscreen representations more and more realistic, absorbing audiences into the medium even more. Every significant development of cinematic technology not only aims to approach a more authentic realism, but also embeds the viewers into the medium by continuously changing his/her sense ratios and subjectivity. The invention of cinema was the result of a combination of photography, entertainment and curiosity in representations of motion. For this reason, the medium of film became an extension of human eyes

and ears that altered and enhanced visual observation and hearing, respectively.

Innovative cinematic technologies continuously alter the physiological sense ratio and human subjectivity. For McLuhan, subjectivity is “in continual flux and is constantly undergoing changes created by technological adaptation through ontological transformation” (Harvey 336). Therefore, the alterations of individual sense ratios allow our bodies to physically adjust to updated cinematic techniques. The earliest motion pictures were shorts documenting daily life and travel logs designed to exploit the useful functions of the film medium. During this period, people’s sense ratio was changed by mainly focusing on vision; films were silent, forcing viewers to rely on their visual sense to gather all the information from a story. As a result, this isolation of vision from the other senses made people predominantly visual beings when engaging in watching film as a medium. Peep holes were used by people to see shorts individually. Audiences could interpret the information freely; human subjectivity was fairly autonomous since these documentaries did not assert or impose ideas. Gradually, people’s sense ratios changed during the silent era when movies were shown in theatres with a symphony band. During this era, although both vision and sound played crucial roles in presenting realism in black and white, intertitles still isolated sight from other senses. Subjectivity was limited by the constructed narratives because imagination was cut off by the interruption of inserted words. The advent of sound was the first time that sight was subordinate. This technology did not separate vision, but predominately underscored auditory effects along with

the visual while fragmenting other senses. Prior to sound technology, viewers often spoke to each other during films, but sound technique further restricted subjectivity when dialogue and music interrupted spectators' free discussions. The coming of colour and 3D effects in film approached more authentic cinematic realism and fragmented human sight from the other senses once again. Subjectivity became more threatened as the cinematic world began to closely resemble real life. Until the invention of new technologies, human experience of sight, sound and touch mingled together as a unified sensation, except that smell and taste were still isolated from the other senses.

Each stage of cinematic innovations ran parallel with more fragmentation of the sense ratios when watching movies. Just as the McLuhan quote speaks of a fragmented sense "closing itself as in steel," humans become merged into the medium. In analyzing film history, the technological approaches to onscreen realism unconsciously absorb people into the narrative world through the mechanical medium. More often than not, the audiences become obsessed with the movies so it is arguable that they lose their self-recognition and subjectivity. McLuhan's concept of self-amputation of specific senses prevents audiences from realizing the difference between reality and fiction. Hence, some people become numb, like Narcissus who becomes hypnotized in the reflection of his own image on the pond in the Greek myth (McLuhan *Understanding Media* 45). It is the medium that removes people's autonomy and imagination is cut off from those who behold the fragment of themselves in a closed system. This narcotic state sometimes assimilates and absorbs the viewers into the film as a

medium, or it completely transports audiences into an unrealistic world. Subjectivity, according to McLuhan, “is contingent on the use of technology” (Harvey 336). Relying on using the film medium can strip the audience’s self-recognition and influence subjectivity. For instance, *Final Destination 4* (USA 2009) and *Scream 4* (USA 2011) illustrate these two perspectives. In the former, one scene depicts viewers watching a horror film in a theatre, but a gas explosion does not wake them up from indulgence in seeing the movie. Because they are wearing 3D glasses, they regard the explosion from the back of the screen as part of the narrative visual effects rather than reality. Self-amputation traps them in using the film medium. Thus, their imagination is cut off from their senses and they die in the accident unconsciously by blending into the film medium. In *Scream 4*, the narcotic state transports the human subject into the film world. The introduction sequence shows a cycle of killing of friends from watching a horror movie within a movie within a movie. In the act of watching films, the characters lose their autonomy as a result of their overwhelming engagement with the story, and become killers within the film’s film. Next, it is significant to understand how Hollywood produces blockbusters to subtly absorb spectators, through the medium of film, into consensus with their dominant ideology.

Material Technology, Cinematic Apparatus and Hollywood Production of Ideology

Among all the national cinemas, American commercial cinema stands out for its prevailing reliance on technological innovations to conceal the mechanical medium and to make popular,

entertaining films with capitalist ideology. Hollywood movies not only generate realism through advanced technologies, but also underscore the success of individualism through narratives. Therefore, the medium of film extends beyond the physical body to a mental and psychological level that creates consensus with the ideology of the United States. For cinema, its medium is not only a visual extension of the viewers, but also a political extension of the status quo.

McLuhan categorizes film as a “hot” medium to interpret the relationship between the user and the medium itself. He argues that film is a “hot” medium compared to TV, which is a “cool” medium, because film “extends one single sense in ‘high definition’ [... a] state of being well filled with data” (*Understanding Media* 24). For McLuhan, movies mainly engage the spectators in a one way interaction with stories, meaning that films represent or present subjects while the audiences simply watch. Television, on the other hand, permits reciprocal communications between the users and the medium because the viewers can change channels with a remote control. The flow of visual effects and narratives on the movie screen imposes ideology on the viewer, stripping the subject’s self-awareness into a state of oppression. The nature of cinema makes it a powerful medium to support the ideology through disseminating information and telling stories favouring the status quo. Hollywood produces its dominant ideology by using cinematic technology to conceal the mechanical aspect of the medium and to create an imagined unified reality for the audiences. Baudry’s article “Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus” (1970) can best support this perspec-

tive, providing some insight into grasping the ideological effects of movies on shaping society. In contrast to McLuhan's emphasis on typography of the filmic photography and literacy of the audiences, Baudry takes a different approach in his discussion of film as a medium, with three manners of denial of difference. These three registers occur at three distinct levels in cinematic representation: cels, editing and gaze. The first denial of difference is "a strip of processed film" (Baudry 42) in which discrete celluloids are united consecutively during projection. The adjacent cels are similar in nature, but the film strip refuses to reveal their slight differences during projection. In other words, Hollywood's movies attempt to conceal the mechanical aspect of the film medium. Second, denial of difference, according to Baudry, is also "an illusion of continuity" (42). This spatiotemporal continuity is hidden in the shot-to-shot editing process to create a sense of reality.

Hollywood's standard continuity editing presents a smooth flow of shots in a strong storyline. It attempts to create a pictorial and narrative unity that absorbs the spectators; thus, it will take autonomy away from audiences. Third, Baudry's final denial of difference is the creation of the "transcendental subject" (43). The transcendental subject is Baudry's term for the conflation of the apparatus's gaze and the spectator's gaze, resulting in a single unified subject. Instead of differentiating themselves from the characters onscreen, the viewers identify their own similarity in the diegetic narrative world. In other words, Hollywood aims to represent the audience members as if they are the characters in movies. This ideological approach not only causes the failure of audiences to recognize the film as a medium, but also elicits

unconscious identification of the spectators and the fictional characters.

Hollywood advanced technologies to reinforce the dominant capitalist ideology. More than just fragmenting the individual's sense ratios, the strong emphasis of Hollywood movies' high-technology isolates the individual from the environment. The result is a state of self-amputation. The self is, in McLuhan's terminology, cast in steel in this closed nervous and psychic system. Because American ideology emphasizes entertainment, cinema supports this perspective with strong visual attractions and creative narratives that also become the crucial factors for the dominance and hegemony of Hollywood films in the world.

Media Imperialism, American Dream and Cinema's Influences

The United States has exerted its hegemonic influences on other countries since the early twentieth century, particularly through its advanced film technologies. Since the existence of Hollywood, American corporate cinema has produced a wide range of movies annually and has subsequently exported them to other countries. Nowadays, Hollywood movies dominate in theatres worldwide. This phenomenon can be explained with cultural imperialism theory, or the Coca-Colonization hypothesis. This theory claims that the United States or other First World countries export productions of popular culture to Third World countries along with "their capitalist ideologies and value systems" (Berger 206). It is believed that these popular media are merely entertainment; however, their subtle political and social implications can shape their societies and thus the societies'

perceptions of the United States. In fact, the strong depiction of a wonderful American life is an element that attracts other national audiences because Hollywood movies are escapist entertainment. This is a factor in the decline of national cinemas in poor countries.

Hollywood movies disseminate their social influences to other countries through effective portrayals of the American Dream. The American film industry fully employs the relationship between the film medium and society to achieve economic and political goals. More frequently than not, American movies present an image of a desirable American society for citizens to enjoy living in. For instance, *The Devil Wears Prada* (USA 2006), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (USA 2005) and *The Pursuit of Happyness* (USA 2006) all illustrate the American Dream from various perspectives. The first one presents a fashionable American society for women, the second presents a food paradise for children's imagination, while the last one presents a single father's realization of ambition through his optimistic work ethic. Regarding Hollywood cinema, because of the aforementioned technologies, spectators "undergoing the experience accept it subliminally and without critical awareness" (McLuhan *Understanding Media* 311). Just as with American viewers, their sense ratios are changed via sight, and then social fragmentation occurs to isolate them from their surroundings. Foreign spectators become numb while exposed to these ideal images of a different society. As a result, American cinematic hegemony assimilates foreign audiences and enslaves them under its capitalist ideology. The cultural imperialism theory assumes that the media are extremely

powerful and influential and it promotes global homogenization. To some extent, some immigrants move to the United States because they are influenced by the representation of American society in cinema through narratives and visual effects. In other words, Hollywood movies strengthen capitalist ideology and the American Dream, and assimilate the viewers.

European Filmmakers against Hollywood's Hegemony in Pursuit of Imagination

Throughout history, European artists created the most influential styles and artworks to challenge conventional art forms. For McLuhan, the artist is someone who is aware of media by emphasizing the form of a medium, rather than the content. He writes, "the artist struggle[s] to retain and to regain the integral, the interplay of sense in a world that [is] seeking madness by the simple road of isolation of the senses" (*The Gutenberg Galaxy* 207). It means that artists need to challenge the existing status quo in cinema which aims to fragment sight from other senses so that the sense ratio can restore its balance. By calling awareness to the film as a medium, European art filmmakers resist conventional Hollywood style filmmaking and the concealment of the medium.

Before touching upon European art filmmakers, it is significant to grasp what is art and how to define an art film. According to M. H. Abrams, art entails four crucial critical aspects, including pragmatic, objective, expressive and mimetic (Berger 133). Pragmatic art is functional and active; objective art projects its own reality; expressive art expresses the reality of the artist

emotionally; mimetic art imitates life. Based on this interpretation, Hollywood movies belong to mimetic art because they strive to resemble real life. However, American films function like photography, which represents life rather than criticizing it. This motivation of the mimetic Hollywood cinema makes audiences numb while watching movies. In this sense, even artistic Hollywood directors are not McLuhan's artists. On the contrary, European art filmmakers are artists based on McLuhan's model because they elicit the spectator's awareness of the artistic form when watching a film. Indeed, many European art film directors create movies that are objective art and expressive art. They are philosophical thinkers, emphasizing subjectivity and expressivity through radical forms. Thus, the spectators of European art films can develop personal imaginative interpretations of a film's meaning.

In European art films, directors focus on the film form to provoke intellectual viewing. In their book *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer write that the mechanical reproduction of the culture industry's products encompasses a standardization of the ways viewers respond to the form, and create conformity to the status quo and its norms (Gripsrud 35). The Hollywood film industry exemplifies these characteristics. To resist the dominant Hollywood hegemony, European art filmmakers become artists in McLuhan's sense because they inspire critical reading and engaging with the cinema, rather than encouraging spectators to be submissive. Competitive European art styles such as Dadaism, surrealism and cubism shaped various art film forms. For instance,

Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí's *Un Chien Andalou* (France, 1929) highlights confusion and transcending reality; thus, this surrealist film becomes one of the most influential avant-garde films. German Expressionism employs exaggerated and distorted sets and makeup, stylistic acting, and costumes that are marked by Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Germany, 1919). Soviet Montage exploits colliding and conflicting scenes to emphasize the contrast between social classes which is best found in Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (Soviet Union, 1925). These early European film forms disturb the spectators, causing them to question the content portrayed, and encouraging them to individualize personal imaginative responses and to reflect on the films' social critique of the historical periods.

When exploring cinematic functions, many other European art film movements alter the viewer's perception of film as a medium and thereby provoke critical thought. Beyond Baudry's insightful theory of cinematic apparatus, many models intertwine to explain the relationship between the medium of film and spectatorship. For example, anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss proposes a structuralist theory that cultural myths conceal social conflicts through the construction of cultural commodities to reinforce ruling power; the Marxist concept of ideology states that ruling ideas favour the interests of the status quo; Freudian psychoanalysis elaborates the repressed expressions in our subconscious (Gripsrud). The first two theories explain how mainstream cinema is manipulated by the elite to control people's minds, whereas the last one is frequently referenced in European art films that recall the repressed mind and stimulate the imagination. Ing-

mar Bergman explores the nostalgic past by blending past and present; in his film *Wild Strawberries* (Sweden, 1957) the present protagonist appears in memories. More radically, Federico Fellini presents a filmmaker's dreams and fantasies with women in *8 1/2* (Italy 1963). These two movies combine reality with imagination to leave interpretations of the meaning open to the viewers, rather than asserting explicit interpretations.

Furthermore, European art filmmakers also explore the form of film with narratives. Italian Neo-Realism and French New Wave films both shoot on location and use amateur actors for low budget productions. Jean-Luc Godard made some films to call the spectator's attention to the film's form, such as *La Chinoise* (France, 1967) which includes intertitles to interrupt the already incoherent political narrative. Michael Powell underscores the cinematic apparatus of camera shooting and projecting in his renowned *Peeping Tom* (United Kingdom, 1960). The film criticizes the act of voyeurism and the cinematic apparatus that is frequently hidden in Hollywood movies. Martin Arnold questions the denial of difference (Baudry's theory) more radically in his *Alone. Life Wastes Andy Hardy* (Austria, 1998). It uses famous scenes from Busby Berkeley musicals but reassembles them in a looping and scratching manner to imply the subtle psychoanalytic meaning and to stimulate the audience's imagination. As a result, in all of these stylistic European art films, the audiences are able to maintain their own subjective interpretation and awareness of the film as a medium. Thus, autonomy is secured. These films foreground the form and make their editing transparent in order to inspire viewers to create personal imaginative responses. These

filmmakers become McLuhan's ideal artists, provoking people's awareness of the film's medium by refusing to encourage numbness of the senses.

In conclusion, McLuhan provides insights by which we can comprehend human interactions with the medium of film and explore how this relationship affects society. McLuhan claims that the overstimulation of senses from using media leads to a change in sense ratios, and that fragmentation of the senses will result in an amputation of one or more senses within a closed system. The Hollywood film industry is a dominant cinema that conceals the mechanical medium and promotes the denial of difference to control spectators under capitalist ideology. America's media imperialism influences foreign audiences and makes them subordinate subjects to the cinematic depictions of the American Dream. Individuals have extended their "central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned" (McLuhan *Understanding Media* 3). They indulge in the virtual space in the American cinematic world as if living in paradise. European art filmmakers are McLuhan's ideal artists who free the audiences from submissive viewing. They foreground production methods and criticize both the invisibility of the cinematic apparatus and the coherence of the narrative lines in typical Hollywood films. They also encourage the spectators to be aware of the film as a medium and question the portrayal of reality by creating space for autonomous, subjective imaginative responses.

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Radio to Call Our Own: CBC Radio
One's Definitely Not the Opera and its
Contribution to Shared National Con-
sciousness

By Leah Henrickson



Abstract

DNTO inspires you to understand your own life. Through personal stories from (mostly) regular people, DNTO uncovers the magic and the humour of everyday life. Our friendly host Sook-Yin Lee always looks at the world in new and surprising ways. And the best part of the show is that each week she invites you to make discoveries along with her (CBC Program Guide).

Sook-Yin Lee's *Definitely Not the Opera* (DNTO), produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) for its Radio One network, explores the human – and particularly Canadian – experience as it “uncovers the magic and humour of everyday life.” Through this exploration, the show adheres to the Corporation's mandate as it is outlined in the 1991 Broadcasting Act, which states that the CBC must, among other obligations, “contribute to shared national consciousness and identity” (Armstrong 249). To clarify, this paper does not interpret “shared national consciousness and identity” to mean that Canadians should aspire to homogeneity. Instead, it interprets this clause to mean that Canadians should celebrate their country's diversity and communicate with and learn from one another. The Corporation's programming is not intended to prescribe culture but rather to reflect it, and to promote cultural understanding within and between Canadian communities. Following a brief historical review of DNTO, this paper examines the social implications of the CBC's choice of Sook-Yin Lee as the show's host, and concludes that DNTO largely meets the Corporation's mandate. By drawing an audience that might not otherwise participate in national discussion due to perceived lack of personal relevance, DNTO contrib-

utes to shared national consciousness; the show encourages young adult participation and makes them aware of how they can and do contribute to Canada's national identity. However, although DNTO exemplifies the CBC's program diversity offered to an equally diverse nation, representing a younger demographic creates new problems for the CBC in that it is now felt by some to present offensive or "dumbed down" material. Thus, while DNTO adheres to the abovementioned clause of the CBC's mandate by means of its content and host, the show simultaneously alienates Radio One's traditional audience, thereby revealing the potential impossibility of DNTO ever satisfying this clause entirely.

Definitely (originally "*Definitely!*") *Not the Opera* began in 1994 as an alternative to CBC Radio 2's *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*. The show was intended to appeal to listeners in their thirties and forties (Turn It On) by giving them content familiar to their generation; indeed, the show's name itself connotes rejection of the high culture typically associated with stodgy elites and the elderly. DNTO's original host, Nora Young, "[guided] listeners through the show's four-hour mix of music, talk, commentary, reviews, satire, documentaries, and more" (Turn It On). There have, however, been notable changes since current host Sook-Yin Lee arrived in 2002; the show's target demographic, for example, has shifted from the baby boomers to the millennials. DNTO has become faster-paced (likely in part due to its timeslot being halved), comprising many segments that usually last no more than ten minutes. These short segments reflect both the rapidly changing world of popular culture and the millennial audience's expectation of succinctness. An early press release reveals that this

format was “made to fit the Saturday afternoon lifestyle of a busy generation” that would not likely listen to the entire show (Turn It On). DNTO continues to appeal to a young generation by serving as a “tip sheet to what’s hot, what to watch, who to listen to, and what’s going on” (Definitely Not the Opera) with short segments that allow listeners to tune in and out at their convenience. To understand why DNTO was created, one should consider the context of communications technologies in Canada in the early 1990s. Arguably the most important development of the past twenty years has been the emergence of commercial Internet service. As Canadians gradually adopted the technology that enabled a new form and style of communication with the rest of the world, the country became inundated with information and popular culture on a global scale. This is not to say that every Canadian immediately had access to the Internet. Nevertheless, while television, radio, and print media remained widely available, the Internet made more global content available quicker than ever before. In such a global culture, magazine shows like DNTO help citizens navigate through unprecedented amounts of content by presenting short, digestible segments reviewing facets of socially-relevant topics.

When DNTO first began, it was particularly relevant to thirty- to forty-year olds. Nora Young’s DNTO focused primarily on technology through weekly segments like “Television Commentary by Rex Murphy,” “CD-ROM Review,” and “Video Game Addiction by Chris Boyce” (“October 22, 1994”). As younger generations are generally more aware of technological advancements, these segments helped the Corporation appeal to the young adult audience that it previously had difficulty reaching. Former CBC

Vice-President of English Services Richard Stursberg attributes this shift in target audience to the “Radio Revolution” of the 1970s, in which the elitist Corporation was transformed to a more informal and engaging voice. This Revolution, Stursberg asserts, was fundamentally “a democratic revolution” (218-19) that aimed to legitimize the voices not just of elite and middle-aged Canadians but also of young Canadians who, as Stursberg implies, did not enjoy equal representation in radio programming. The present issue, though, is that CBC Radio, to retain its relevance, must maintain its young adult audience, which is increasingly attracted to other media such as the Internet. DNTO now uses various media and social media networks to engage with its audience and to maintain its relevance through conversation. Further, non-mainstream music that showcases Canadian talent and appeals to the counterculture element in the audience is interspersed between the segments. Ultimately, DNTO was created – and continues – to make CBC Radio One more appealing to a young audience.

Sook-Yin Lee’s DNTO appeals to a younger audience than Nora Young’s. Young’s show, to illustrate, reviewed films and played songs from the 50s to the 80s to attract its target thirty- to forty-year-old audience. Young and segment host Ross Porter even expressed nostalgia for their teenage years (“October 22, 1994”). Contrarily, Sook-Yin Lee appeals to teenagers directly in her show. For example, in an episode about gender lines, Lee begins her show in a New College student residence’s co-ed washroom. She interviews University of Toronto undergraduates about their opinions on co-ed washrooms and

on the traditional gender binary (“Gender Lines”). To further engage a young audience, DNTO producers maintain official Twitter and Facebook pages for the show, and Sook-Yin Lee maintains her own personal Twitter and Facebook page. In addition, Lee makes frequent public appearances at popular urban hangouts. By connecting with millennials in ways with which they feel most familiar, DNTO effectively sustains the flow and exchange of cultural expression and intercommunity dialogue.

Cultural expression and intercommunity dialogue are also promoted through DNTO’s content and format. As the show’s logline asserts, “the best part of the show is that each week [Lee] invites you to make discoveries along with her.” Lee and her guests address topics that are directly related to self-development, from forgiveness (“Forgiveness”) to body image (“A Look in the Mirror at ‘Body Image’”). Exposure to stories that reflect Canada’s diversity, told by Canadians themselves, helps young listeners understand their own lives. Further, DNTO regularly involves the perspectives of visible minorities and young Canadians, offering an insider’s look into different communities by entering into them rather than by merely speaking about them. Guests usually tell their own stories in response to Lee’s prompts; the stories are “unmediated” and thereby facilitate real connections between listeners and the guests (notion adapted from West 214). These connections enable a younger generation to participate in national discussion, instilling in them a feeling of national belonging and a sense of

being able to contribute to the strength of a national identity. Admittedly, the show's narrative leans liberal; conservative beliefs are not often presented, as this would contradict the CBC's overall liberal bias, which is criticized by some (Lilley 149-59). Liberalism, though, aligns well with millennials' characteristic open-mindedness, bolstering DNTO's appeal to this group.

While Nora Young's DNTO depended heavily on discussions of ephemeral technology and contemporary culture, Sook-Yin Lee's DNTO features more enduring discussions of the human, and particularly Canadian, experience. Lee's DNTO supports a collective Canadian identity in which internal heterogeneity is celebrated. It encourages understanding of different Canadian experiences, thereby strengthening societal awareness. As communications scholar Emily West suggests, through creating a collective identity, and subsequently a collective memory, "Canada [is] represented as [an] aggregate of different people's stories rather than as an all-encompassing, big idea" (222). There is wide interpretation of what constitutes Canadianism. Lee plays upon this ambiguity to influence how Canadians see their country and themselves. Canada is characterized, as "the CBC offers images and narratives that audiences can use to make sense of themselves as Canadians, and a place where images of Canada and Canadian imaginations come together. These, in turn, do more than reflect Canadian identity; they help constitute it" (Foster 71). Lee's DNTO is an on-air space of belonging and thus encourages Canada to be a national space of belonging as listeners grow to understand their own

lives as well as the lives of those around them.

Part of DNTO's success is attributable to Lee's uniqueness. Born in Vancouver, Lee came "from a very strict Chinese family" that devoutly practiced Roman Catholicism (Bruni). In the midst of her parents' divorce, fifteen-year-old Lee ran away from home and joined "a group of really wonderful, freaky artists in Vancouver" with whom she discovered a new world view that included art, music, and literature (O'Neil). Lee went on to sing for the alternative rock band *Bob's Your Uncle* and became actively involved in producing fine art and performance art ("CBC showing its age in Sook-Yin Lee tempest"). She is spontaneous and experimental, and is "game for any insane idea" (Delap). She is, in short, cool.

Lee represents an alternative culture not typically represented by the CBC. Like those of the millennial generation, she is a member of a culture that champions individuality over obedience. Indeed, Lee's DNTO differs from Young's by being noticeably less conventional. For example, Lee, unlike Young, often interviews guests in places other than a studio; she keeps listeners, and the Corporation, alert. Notably, Lee's recent involvement in the sexually explicit film *Shortbus* (2006), which features her fully nude, had CBC producers initially threatening to fire her until public support for Lee prevented them from doing so (The Ottawa Citizen). There is, then, a balance yet to be achieved; although the CBC undoubtedly hired Sook-Yin Lee to appeal to a younger demographic through her "edgy" behaviour, issues arise when she becomes *too* edgy.

There are contrasting opinions of Sook-Yin Lee as DNTO's host. Some listeners seem to approve of Lee *because* of her involvement in controversial projects like *Shortbus*. One online reviewer called CBC's declaration of Lee as host "one of the smartest things the braintrust [sic] at CBC ever did," adding that "choosing a rock star with some nekkid [sic] screen time doesn't hurt either" (DNTO by CBC). Other listeners, however, openly criticize Lee's involvement in such projects, as well as her willingness to discuss socially taboo topics on her show. In a blog post entitled "Our taxpayers dollars are funding porn star Sook-Yin Lee" (presumably referring to Lee's "nekkid screen time"), offended blogger (and reporter for *The Catholic Register*) Deborah Gyapong writes:

A couple of weeks ago, I was listening to CBC Radio's Definitely Not the Opera on a Saturday afternoon and was appalled by an interview host Sook-Yin Lee did [regarding] efforts to combine various sex toys with virtual sex online. The dirty schoolboy/girl tone of the interview matched its graphic content and ever since I've been meaning to write to the CBC or to the Heritage Minister to protest. Saturday afternoon someone could easily have had the radio on with children listening (Gyapong).

DNTO was conceived to push beyond the conventional style of the day; it continues to do so through such tactics as conducting controversial interviews like the one Gyapong writes about to reach its target audience. In addition to those who

disapprove of DNTO's content, some also discredit Lee's commentary, opining that the show "just doesn't stimulate the grey matter in my brain in the same way as other CBC Radio offerings. It's a bit too puerile for my tastes and, possibly, for my age" ("Thumbs up and thumbs down at the CBC"). The argument that Lee's DNTO, and Sook-Yin Lee herself, represent a "dumbing down" of CBC Radio is not uncommon. Even supportive critics note Lee's "childlike whimsy," and admit that "it's true [Lee] can sound like a space cadet, or a 12-year-old" (Johnson). In 2009, Lee responded to this criticism on DNTO's official blog, writing that "some of our listeners complain that I'm stupid... but I've always maintained I'm pretty smart for a dumb person" (Lee). There is an internal conflict between the CBC's mandate and its quest for a younger audience. In trying to reflect the country's diversity through DNTO, the CBC creates controversy by presenting potentially offensive or "dumbed down" material on the show. Older listeners in particular tend not to appreciate Lee's youthful presentation and outlook, perceiving the show as juvenile or intellectually lacking. Whether or not this is actually the case – there are reviewers who commend Lee for her insight – the reality is that the show does alienate listeners, thereby excluding them from the intercommunity dialogue that it promotes.

Making DNTO fully meet the CBC's mandate as it is written in the 1991 Broadcasting Act is idealistic, and perhaps impossible. Sook-Yin Lee's DNTO illustrates that in striving to appeal to one demographic, the CBC in turn alienates others. Thus, while DNTO does largely fulfil the CBC's mandate

to contribute to shared national consciousness and identity by inspiring millennial listeners to understand their own lives and the lives of those around them, the show does not – cannot – serve the entire CBC Radio One audience. Nevertheless, DNTO does promote intercommunity dialogue and, ultimately, understanding of Canadian diversity. Through Sook-Yin Lee’s alternative appeal and unconventional radio-hosting style, millennials are encouraged to participate in national discussion. Canada’s national public broadcaster recognizes them, and meets them where they are in regards to content, form, and media.

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Peep Show: The Rise of Reality Television in an Age of Voyeurism
By Alekzia Hosein



Abstract

By investigating how the extension of television content into the “real” makes the medium more interactive, and therefore more demotic, this paper aims to examine the characteristics of postmodern society that allow for the proliferation and growth of reality TV. It will go on to find the effects of reality TV on the views of postmodern society, particularly on voyeurism, exhibitionism, and surveillance.

Recorded video has been used to portray a vision of reality to its viewers since its inception. Television programming is designed to reach a wider audience more frequently than films in cinema. Unlike film, television is omnipresent in the home of the viewer. Although it engages the reader more frequently than a film can, the interaction is one-sided. Over the last two decades the reality television genre has become a primary component of nearly every broadcasting network. While reality TV has become a cornerstone of contemporary culture for many reasons, this paper will focus primarily on the role of surveillance in contemporary consumer society that allows for the popularity of voyeurism as a form of entertainment. As television content provokes viewers to perceive them as real, the medium gives the illusion of becoming more interactive, by allowing its users to participate in selecting relevant programs, and therefore more demotic. However, these effects are merely illusory. The paper will explore how this postmodern viewership forms its television experience, and how net-

works in turn form their targeted audience in order to proliferate advertising revenue. Reality TV's success correlates to the combination of voyeurism, exhibitionism, and surveillance that flourishes in postmodern society.

Although the first televisions were introduced in the late 1920s, it was not until 1950 that television could be considered a mass medium, due to the nature of its programming and accessibility. McLuhan considered television a "cool" medium because the viewer constructs meaning of the "fragmentary commodity object" — mass-produced television programs — using his or her own cognitive apparatus (Bignell 32). However, each medium has limits fixed to its interpretation that ultimately prevent the viewer from permanently changing its intended meaning (Eco, "Interpretation" 192). With traditional scripted television, a viewer's perception is indeed dictated by personal experiences, but only within a set of boundaries predetermined by broadcasters. By understanding the process of television production, the viewer's perception allows the interpreter to produce his or her own form of realism, developing a unique "regime of truth" (Foucault 13). Reality-style television programs challenge viewers even further in their quest for finding truth.

Contrary to traditional programming, created by writers and performed by actors, reality TV programs incorporate minimal writing and often follow the lives of non-actors. Reality TV also diverges from traditional programming in its lower regard for aesthetic rules and a proportionately high level of

interaction between “popular entertainment [and] a “self-conscious claim to be the discourse of the real” (Ouellette and Murray, Introduction 2). This claim presents reality TV as “factual entertainment,” blurring the perceived lines between reality and appearance (Lewis 288). The unquestioning postmodern audience accepts this portrayed version of “truth,” and individual viewers adopt distorted perceptions of reality. The relationship between this social state and reality TV relies on the public acceptance of a surveillance culture; this culture is fostered by compliance to a standard of the taboo dichotomy of voyeurism and exhibitionism.

The presentation of the “truth” on reality TV can significantly alter the public perception of reality. The construction of reality depends on the narrative chosen and the medium used to express the narrative (Andersen 179). Reality TV producers frequently alter components of reality, like time, to engage with wider audiences. A show like *Project Runway* that broadcasts in the spring will be almost entirely comprised of footage shot the previous winter and edited since then. From week to week, however, audiences will tune in to see challenges and rankings among the competitors. Although the challenges and rankings change from week to week, the results are not nearly as new as the viewers are led to believe. Before the finale airs, the winners will have already been determined and will have already received their prizes. This alteration of time effectively changes the way that viewers perceive reality. Viewers often imply associations between “liveness” and “realness” (Jones 216). While producers often alter the time of filming to resemble the time of transmission, this attempt to foster

the illusion of liveness and immediacy is usually effective in deceiving audiences (216). Jon Dovey explains that the success of reality TV is part of a social context in which spectacle and simulation reign triumphant (137). Viewers of these programs do not care that they are being deceived so long as they are still entertained. It becomes more important for these viewers to belong to a particular social group than it is to find the truth in reality TV.

On competition-style shows, like *American Idol* and *Big Brother*, the audience determines the eventual success of the participants. Viewers can cast votes through SMS text messages, by calling, or by participating in polls online. This indirect interaction with the cast gives the viewers a new ability to control their experience with the medium. This shift of sovereignty from “god-like author-producers” to actively engaged “myriad consumers” redistributes power to the plebiscitary audience (Hartley 136). This power is manifested more concretely in the viewer’s mind than the abstract idea of determining one’s experience with a television program. McLuhan classified television as a cool medium because it did not require active participation of its audience. Traditional broadcasters would select programming without major intervention from the audience. These extra participatory factors, like surveys, suggested hashtags and on-demand video, are essential to the postmodern viewer, who is part of many networks that require his or her active participation. The result is a television model that differs vastly from McLuhan’s wherein the audience chooses, at least to an extent, the direction of the programming.

However, even when audiences cannot actively vote for favourites in a show, they still influence the outcome of the competi-

tion. Hartley draws on the example of *America's Next Top Model* as a closed experiment system (137). Although seemingly experienced judges determine which contestant gets eliminated each week, contenders of “non-standard height or build” often advance to the later rounds in the show, as well as contestants of visible minorities (137). Based on audience ratings, these are the contestants that will keep viewers most engaged in the program (137). This manipulation of the competition demonstrates the influence that viewer preference has over the fate of the contestants. The narrative is structured in a way that allows the most viewers to watch their “favourites” progress further in the competition. When audiences select the content that is important to them, they give broadcasters information about what they would like to see. Although the data collected by networks gives the impression of community interaction it is still used to provide information that is largely driven by the intentions of the broadcast network.

Even before structured game-style shows, reality television had its roots in hidden-camera style shows that became popular for their differences from the carefully edited, high-production video shown on other programs (Andersen 198). Although production quality had regressed by several generations, the viewer “with a taste for quotidian reality” found it interesting to view “regular people” rather than celebrities (Kleinhans and Morris 162). These early programs managed to employ “the discourse of traditional documentary to mitigate or to justify [their] voyeuristic tendencies” (Murray 52). Because they associated this new style with credible, research-fueled documentaries, viewers accepted reality TV programming as factual. Understanding the audience’s

acceptance of voyeuristic television programming led to the production of more popular surveillance-style programs.

After establishing a mutually trusting relationship with broadcasters, audiences were prepared for the next chronological step in voyeuristic television: *Big Brother*. This program featured a number of young people living in a house together having their every move monitored by cameras that could be viewed online or in pieces featured on the television program. Each week, television audiences would select a member of the house to be evicted and the last remaining house member would win a grand prize. The success of *Big Brother* is largely attributed to its webcast feature whereby visitors of the show's website can view surveillance of the house, even while the show is off the air (Hartley 148). Casting a vote against or for a certain character appealed to the political and escapist parts of the viewer. The viewers were in charge of determining the success of the people they watched. This method of interaction democratizes the experience of watching reality TV for the viewers by allowing the audience to choose the nature of the programming based on the majority's selections.

However, viewers' experiences with reality TV cannot always be viewed as positive. Jacques Lacan's model of scopophilic drive, explained in Mark Andrejevic's *Reality TV: Work of Being Watched*, is characterized by the duality of voyeurism and exhibitionism, and pushes participants not only to observe those around them, but also to be observed by themselves (Andrejevic 180). While audiences are watching video footage of strangers from their own homes, Lacan's model includes three

main components: the seer, the seen and the gaze (180). In following the lives of others, the viewer is considered as a “seer”. The constantly-surveilled characters or contestants of a reality TV show are the “seen,” and the link between them, the ideas cast on the seen by the seer are referred to as the “gaze” (185). However, the audience can also be perceived as the “seen” as well. Viewer behaviour is constantly being monitored by the broadcasters in the same way (190). By agreeing to play voyeur to the diegetic action on a television show, the viewer’s exchange information – often unconsciously – about their own viewing habits to broadcasters, advertisers and other market researchers. The duality between voyeurism and exhibitionism reflects the oblivious state of audiences. By providing audiences with the illusion that they are in control of the viewing experience, broadcasting companies are able to mask the fact that the viewers are the ones who are being watched, using their own methods of surveillance.

Once an audience consents to also being watched, the acceptance of this sort of surveillance in other parts of society follows. The postmodern society sees the promise of the current era of reality TV as “the hope that comprehensive surveillance might help to rehabilitate access to a frustratingly elusive [real]” (Andrejevic 301). By accessing more information about peers, coworkers, and complete strangers, members of this society feel safer. While Andersen argues that the commodification of this type of acceptance is undermining the constitutional rights of citizens, Chad Raphael brings attention to a characteristic of

modern society whereby “surveillance and voyeurism replace debate over public affairs,” referring specifically to the reality crime shows that encourage audience participation in the form of reporting crimes (Andersen 199; Raphael 129). Because reality TV is a mass medium, it eases societies’ adoption of a prescribed set of values.

The concepts surrounding reality TV rely heavily on the state and beliefs of the society to which it is broadcast. These programs often dictate neoliberal ideals to consumers. These ideals teach viewers and participants in reality programs how to make their lives fundamentally better (Ouellette, “Responsibility” 232). Whether viewers are tuned into *America’s Most Wanted* or *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, the broadcaster focuses on ways to present an ideal. In the case of the former, the presentation of moral ideals assists the state in creating unity with the citizens through the mass media; in the latter, aesthetic design ideals are presented in ways that present advertised products in a positive light.

The motivation of the broadcaster to reap financial benefits (e.g.: from corporate sponsorships and advertising) remains inherent in all realms of mass media. Finally, postmodern audiences are beginning to demand a direct experience of reality, rejecting what Andrejevic calls the “big Other,” a term used to describe production companies, advertisers, politicians, and the entire cast of mediated characters (202). If this demand is met with compliance from the “big Other” the format of television could change forever. Although it has always been a cool

medium, involving the audience to participate in creating a program's final outcome could challenge the abstraction of mass society, especially if the "big Other" is prevented from controlling the amount of information the audiences are able to access.

Bignell explains that instead of following the tradition of keeping the real and the represented as separate entities, the postmodern condition relies on the "perpetual vanishing of the real into representation" (31). Once television becomes overtly thematic or representational, it can no longer be embraced by the radically postmodern (49). It follows then that postmodern culture would embrace reality TV because the form of representation based in reality is already so familiar to the audience. Umberto Eco speculates that for television, postmodernism will be characterized by the involution of the medium on itself so that the televising of something or someone becomes its primary purpose (Eco, "Neo-Television" 22). The advent of reality TV follows Eco's prediction, in featuring broadcasts of award shows, chat programs and sports programming.

Reality television is interpreted by the postmodern audience as a truer mode of representation than traditional broadcasts because viewers experience reality programming individually, through participating in networks that cater to creators of content. Reality TV offers the viewers an interactive environment featuring relatable characters in real situations. When the situations divert from reality, viewers simply associate them with the more contemporary form television programming has taken: the thematic spectacle, a paradigm that describes the

viewers' behaviour toward the exhibition of others for entertainment. Although this genre does not always present reality accurately to its viewers, they tend to accept that television is, in equal parts, real and artificial. Audiences derive pleasure from exploring this state of combined illusion and reality. While surveillance-type programming derives from fear, audiences are more entertained by the combined voyeurism and exhibitionism that stems from watching others.

This contemporary culture thrives on the spectacle of reality, finding the greatest entertainment in that which is most similar to the truth. The resemblance between the programming and reality is uncanny, but elements of the absurd highlight the extreme strangeness of outsiders while hedonistic social norms allow programs to gloss over human issues in twenty-two minute segments, leaving the audience without a quantifiable regard toward the harshness of humanity. The postmodern state has stripped society of concepts of privacy and personal boundaries, exchanging these for components that rely on the observance of others, defining lifestyles through what audiences prefer to watch. This vacuous understanding of the self comes from the perceived reality presented in television programming. As broadcasters favour more voyeuristic programming, their audiences will demand more of the same.

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