Article 02: To Affinity and Beyond: Clicking as

Communicative Gesture on the

Experimentation Platform

Worth keeping: “multicultural affinity” in how it grouped users together for targeted advertising on FB , Existing research has attended to the ways in which the personalization of platform experience troubles the dissemination of content . this article analyzes how streaming media company Netflix conducts experiments on its users through A/B testing that decodes user clicks as meaningful information. In doing so, it may be more accurate to refer to Netflix subscribers not as users, but as test subjects. Doppelgängers are doubles or lookalikes which are, crucially, not directly related to a living person. call interactive television, which embeds testing into content itself, providing users a series of binary decision options to assess how they click through narrative. Throughout this article, I use the term idem(meaning same) to frame an understanding of identity predicated on similarity. idem, to search for which can be understood as the perceived qualities of “same-ness” that exist across categories including race, ability, and taste Netflix, as discussed below, this search idem for entails constant experimentation that aims to classify users within taste communities, where perceived affinities are grouped together. particular kind of noise or utterance, They help to formulate the metrics that guide how platform developers, advertisers, and content producers make sense of user behavior. My positioning of clicking as a gesture builds on Vilem Flusser’s understanding of gesture as an act of bodily coordination that is meant to serve as a means of communication. Rather, they emphasize the language of affinity, which is presented as a mathematical problem with engineering solutions. clicking on a Netflix show means one is interested in that program, according to such tests. President of Programming Todd Yellin put it this way in 2016: “Geography, age, Wired’s and gender? We put that in the garbage heap” (Morris, 2016, para. 2). As Brian Barrett (2016) also. Experimentation Platform positions these companies as simultaneously interested in treating members as participants in unending experiments designed to learn more about their behavior and their affinities. Throughout these and other blog posts, members of Netflix’s team extoll the virtue of their experimentation platform, and the melding of data analysis, machine learning, and human programmers. In February 2019, researcher Michael Veale shared a dataset he was able to acquire through Europe’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which allows citizens to request information on how their data is being collected. If Netflix uses these choices as part idem of their construction of. Through its emphasis on clicking as a communicative gesture, this article contributes to ongoing discussions of how human behaviors fuel the constitution and refinement of digital doppelgangers.

**Article 03: Liking as taste making: Social media practices as generators of aesthetic valuation and distinction**

Worth keeping: This research largely builds on the cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and his analysis of taste as a medium of social distinction. One dominant topic in studies of taste online concerns the expression of taste preferences on social media platforms, such as crafting profile pages to present specific “taste statements” (Liu, 2007) or selecting specific news preferences (Lindell, 2018). We consider taste neither as objectively given, nor as purely socially determined but as a temporary result of a shared sensitization for specific, detectable, and nameable differences. Social media users unavoidably participate in the creation of specific modes of shared observations, valuations, and distinctions. Bourdieu’s analysis of taste and distinction has since become one of the most-applied concepts for analyzing digital cultures and observing media practices, such as the production and circulation of Internet memes as means of social distinction, making of these hierarchies and objects within shared practices was not his main concern. This means that taste making involves the production of objects and subjects at the same time.

I read until : **Liking as taste making: the anatomy of social happenings**

**Article 05: Unpopularity and cultural power in the age of Netflix: New questions for cultural studies’ approaches to television texts.**

Words: conduit = agwgos, nuance= apoxrwsh,xroia, pervasive=diaxuth ,scarcity=elleipsh, exacerbated = epideinwsei , assertions=isxurismoi, confer=parexei, negate=arenite, vexing=eksorgistiko, niche=thesi , breadth=platos, interstitial=diamesh, gauge=metriths, incumbent=katestimeno,

Worth keeping: Although Internet-distributed television bears much in common with the television long studied and theorized using cultural studies-based approaches to analysis,

several of its features profoundly deviate from earlier television norms and require

reassessment and adaptation of theoretical frames.

But this examination returns to cultural studies’ foundational research on television and its construction of television as a form of ‘popular’ culture in order to investigate the conceptual challenges posed by the characteristics of streaming services. They allow for different experience by many measures, including enabling different viewers to simultaneously watch many different things, an affordance that undermines what Newcomb and Hirsch (1983) described as television’s ability to construct a ‘cultural forum’. A key dilemma for using a cultural studies approach to examine streaming services derives from the uncertain popularity – and thus power – of their texts. Nonetheless, the category of the popular remains entrenched in approaches to television derived from cultural studies – regardless of its distribution technology. In assessing the cultural power of contemporary television and in-home viewing, we lack an appropriate vocabulary for how to describe and theorize video services such as Netflix – something that is similar to a channel, yet notably different. Where popularity was central in many of cultural studies’ analyses of television,

this article examines how the comparative unpopularity of much streaming service

viewing challenges such approaches for analysis. A considerable amount of the perceived

influence of these series derived from their market-based popularity, which can only be

known with access to audience ratings or equivalent metrics. This inability to gauge scale of reach makes it difficult to apply a cultural studies approach aimed at making an assertion about the implications of ideological factors – dominant and otherwise – in texts. But

the success of subscriber-funded, Internet-distributed video services is not measured by

constructing a mass audience in the manner common for linear, ad-supported services. Programs lacking a mass audience are still culturally important, but we do not have – in

the inherited scholarship – good mechanisms for arguing how and why they are implicated

in the construction and transmission of significant cultural power. A series that is consumed

by many in a particular, but small, taste cluster might have cultural significance equivalent to or greater than a title viewed by more people in general – in a manner characteristic of ‘phenomenal television’. Although cultural studies theorists have been certain to make clear that the significance of popular culture is not directly or exclusively tied to its popularity. The technological and industrial affordances that allow streaming services such library capacity enables them to pursue different strategies than channels. Television has been theorized to create shared cultural texts powerful in their ability to provide consistent and wide-reaching portrayals, but Netflix can succeed without pursuing or prioritizing only a strategy of mass attraction, and this makes appreciating the cultural significance of its texts difficult. The point here is not that critically acclaimed or most-watched titles are especially culturally important, but that it is very difficult to perceive what texts on Netflix matter to different audiences in a manner challenging for cultural analysis. Another key difference of Internet-distributed video from linear television that exacerbates the tendency toward audience fragmentation is the role of time and timing in relation to audience construction and the operation of cultural power. Given this alteration, what is the proper span of time by which to gauge the viewership and cultural reach of programs in a streaming service? Thus, the contextual difference of mass versus niche media circulation and the significant differences in circulation power characteristic of linear versus on-demand distribution technologies have complicated the common previous frames of cultural analysis.