

...by giving fans the impression that they are communicating with celebrities through a familiar and personal medium, Twitter “creates a new expectation of intimacy” (156) between fans and celebrities. Similarly, Jeffrey Kassing and Jimmy Sanderson argue that celebrity and fan online interactions not only demonstrate, but, more importantly, transform parasocial relationships (185). Although online relationships and conversations between celebrities and fans remain mediated, fans increasingly experience them as real and authentic, reinforcing their feelings of truly “knowing” celebrities. Celebrities’ reciprocity gives the illusion of two-way communication, which deepens fan-celebrity relationships in ways not possible through traditional media forms (Corrigan).

—Click et al, p. 366.

- Is this communication always illusory?
- How does this work in the context of microfame?

Between January and March 2012, we conducted 45 interviews with self-identified Little Monsters from six continents. Our interest in recruiting an international sample meant that we conducted interviews past the point where we began receiving repetitive information (Corbin and Strauss). The interviews lasted between 15 and 90 minutes, and were conducted by phone or with software such as Skype, Google Chat, and Microsoft Messenger. Each was conducted in real time, either with audio or, when the participant preferred, video recording; the audio of each interview was recorded for transcription purposes. Three interviews were conducted in Korean and later translated into English. The remainder was conducted in English.

In the interviews with fans, participants were asked a range of questions, including what it meant to self-identify as a Little Monster, how they felt about Lady Gaga, how social media impacted their interest in and relationship to Lady Gaga, and their feelings about Lady Gaga's social activism. The interview participants were mostly white and mostly American, equally male and female, and equally gay and straight. They ranged in age from 14 to 53.

—Click et al, p. 367.

- What do you make of the methodology in this piece? Is anything missing?