**Euphoria Twitter as the Site of Critical Collective Effervescence**

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**Fade In**

Last winter, millions of teenagers across the world would gather on a weekly basis to watch and talk about “Euphoria.” [introduce Euphoria as the tv show] [introduce Euphoria as a cultural phenomenon] [introduce euphoria twitter is where waters of the show go to air grievances, circulate memes, and generally talk about the show’s plot and production] [its influence cannot be overstated] I’m going to argue that the collective effervescence generated by the show’s following is what made is transcend from televised object to cultural thing. [give a basic gist of what im going to be arguing] The show’s avid twitter base is simultaneously separate from and an extension of the show itself.

I want to situate Euphoria twitter in the context of Durkheim’s concept of collective effervescence and Latour’s critique of criticism. [Collective effervescence is when people gather in groups to perform a ritual, a vibe is created, a special energy that transcends any one person in the group. In Durkheim’s own words, “it is through common action that society becomes conscious of and affirms itself; society is above all an active cooperation” (Durkheim). It is effervescent in that it fizzles, fickles and fades when the group doesn’t convene. It’s fleeting, but that’s part of what makes it so special. Often, we aren’t critical of the social norms that exist under our noses because they have become second-nature, normative, unconscious facets of our behavior.] [quote defining collective effervescence] [explain how collective effervescence can occur on digital platforms] I think Latour’s essay, “Why Has Critique Run out of Steam?” is relevant to this discussion of Euphoria Twitter because of its discussion of thing and object. With the advent of twitter, anyone and everyone could become a critic. Moreover, criticism happened in real time and was collective. [bust the nut: say the thesis collective effervescence is what thinged the object] [hype makes things real, the inorganic feel organic]

**Sunday Service**

There is a ritualistic nature of the television release format. Every Sunday night millions of people across the world tune in.

**#Euphoria: A Story Told Through Twitter Analytics**

Everyone from Drake to your mutuals from middle school has tweeted about “Euphoria” this season. This rapid circulation began the very first episode of the new season and didn’t finish until the finale. Even when the show was over, the hype wasn’t really over. [the show was memeified and mummified online.] “According to Twitter, there have been 34 million tweets since “Euphoria” returned in January, marking a 51 percent increase in activity since the first season premiered in 2019” (Bergeson). The season finale drew 6.6 million viewers. This was the most tweeted about show in the past decade in the U.S. This season, the most tweeted about characters were Fez, Rue, and Nate. Fexi.

Having a live forum to react to, criticize, discuss, and pay tribute to a tv show is something entirely new. [argue that twitter is a forum of criticism, a place to criticize and say what you like and don’t like about a piece of media] [quote latour] “As Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello say, the new spirit of capitalism has put to good use the artistic critique that was supposed to destroy it” (Latour). [the metamorphosis of objects into things: how euphoria was just a tv show and could have just been a tv show but it transformed into a cultural phenomenon] [“The handmade jug can be a thing, while the industrially made can of Coke remains an object” (Latour). [I would argue that it’s the show’s collective effervescence that transformed it from object to thing] “things have become Things again, objects have reentered the arena, the Thing, in which they have to be gathered first in order to exist later as what *stands apart*” (Latour).

I would argue that the makers of the show are aware of the viral nature of their creation and use it to their advantage by creating ‘viral moments’ and memable vingettes. Part of the appeal of the meme is its seeming arbitrariness but I suspect they were planted there by the shows creators. After the first season, the creators of Euphoria knew the hold they had on young people so knew they could leverage it how they want.

When we talk about a show online, our thoughts don’t exist inside a vacuum. Euphoria twitter was not just a bunch of teens logging on, doing a little discourse, it was millions of people clocking in to perform digital labor for HBO. The line between pleasure and labor is maybe the thinnest its ever been.

At one point in class last quarter, I remember wanting to mention something from an episode of Euphoria to illustrate a point but I didn’t know how much of the audience. When I asked the class how many of them had watched Euphoria last Sunday, more than two thirds of the class raised their hand.

In this unnecessary paragraph I will launch into my honest critique of this season. In the first season, Euphoria’s beautiful cinematography served a narrative purpose. Each episode had a clear focus: it told the story of one of the characters. [my honest critique of this past season season] [insert a tidbit about Sam Levinson’s beef with Barbie Fierra] [it should be noted that this beef was also apart of the discourse] [it was strange to watch something so live] The show also deals with extremely heavy topics—addiction, sexual assault, death of loved ones—in a way that was once deep cut and intimate but now in the last season the way “Euphoria” has dealt with these themes has been irresponsible. This season, the story, Rue’s story, was not prioritized.

[concluding sentence that introduces my conclusion paragraph]. [In the future, I predict other shows are going to try to replicate Euphoria’s digital success story by manufacturing hype and hoping that it sticks and turns into organic hype. A true sensation is organic.] [Imagine you are a distribution company. How amazing would it be to have a cult following hyping up your show for free] [HBO advertised Euphoria, but they didn’t have to when people were doing that work for free. [failed corporate hashtag] For all the reasons I’ve listed today, Euphoria is truly a masterpiece in the age of technological reproductivity. Sam Levinson and the creators of Euphoria did not just make a TV show, they created a cult following. Just like HBO doesn’t merely release episodes of the show, they feed rations to their hive mind.

Bibliography

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