Week 10: Streamers and audience: Live streaming platforms and online relationships
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Twitch, YouTube, and Discord are some of the most popular live-streaming platforms. Live streaming has become popular among streamers, especially among gamers. (kaytoue2012watch) define the live streaming platforms as social television because viewers can get information and entertainment here and interact with streamers. On live streaming platforms, users watch, engage and support streamers by leaving comments, participating in chat rooms, leaving comments, and donating. Viewers grow feelings of closeness with their streamers, which are parasocial [1]. (mclaughlin2021predictors) and (wohn2018explaining) have provided many interesting explanations about the parasocial relationships between the streamers and viewers and the different factors that affect the relationship. The article by McLaughlin and the team provides valuable insights into the predictors of parasocial interaction and relationships in live streaming.

I agree with Wohn and Freeman that the viewers develop parasocial relationships with their favorite streamers, and hence they give emotional, instrumental, and financial support to the streamers. I also agree that the reasons for providing financial support to streamers vary from person to person. Some might think of it as a transaction, and for some, it might be because of the emotional closeness [2]. Streamers do not know much about their audience, and they dominate the parasocial relationship with their viewers. I like watching live streams where streamers react to movie trailers, funny videos, and comments; I have developed a parasocial relationship with some of my favorite streamers on Twitch and YouTube.
On the other hand, the hyper-personal model proposed by Walther highlights that online communication can promote the formation of personal relationships due to specific characteristics such as limited cues, anonymity, and repeated interactions. These features can create a conducive environment for people to share personal information and develop intimacy [1]. I believe such features help people easily share their private information on live-streaming platforms such as Twitch.

Given the growing popularity of live streaming, I would like to study how streamers feel when they receive emotional, financial, and instrumental support from their viewer. The study will focus on the impact of emotional, economic, and instrumental support on the relationship between streamers and viewers who donate. The proposed research examines how these forms of support impact the relationship between streamers and their viewers, particularly those who donate. This could involve exploring whether receiving more emotional or financial support leads to a stronger connection between streamers and their viewers or affects the type of content streamers create. Overall, the proposed study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between streamers and their viewers, particularly in live streaming and the support viewers provide.

References:

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