

## KEY REFERENCES:

### 1. Peter Wood (Anthropologist):

- National epidemic of anger, which he calls it New Anger

New anger: “the expression of a new cultural ideal that emphasizes the importance of individual authenticity achieved through the projection of personal power over others”.

New Anger is about declaring one’s identity.

### 2. George Gilder:

#### **Life after Television:**

**-(1994)** *“Life after Television” (techno-utopian that **Geert Lovink** calls a ‘fairy tale’”*  
*“Persona; computers will make people richer, smarter and more productive, transform capitalism into the healing force, and usher in a life beyond television where the computer will be a ‘powerful force for democracy, individuality, community and high culture”.*

*-Basic features of the Internet: enhanced community + creativity*

*Television as being ‘a tool for tyrants’ (\*tyrant: oppressive ruler)*

*He believed that “technology would soon deliver prosperity for all, eliminate the inequities of capitalism, and get rid of the bad guy, which in case was television.*

### 3. Sean Cubitt:

-Looks forward to the formation of “a new dominant mode of visibility”.

*“The possibility of a future where video supersedes television as our main source of stories and paves the way to cultural democracy”*

- **(1993)**:speculated that video would provide the foundation for a new form for cultural democracy.

- He saw the encroachment of commercial media into the Internet as the beginning of its normalization and transformation into yet another tool for commercial propaganda. Youtube is not a democracy, it is owned by the private capitalists.

### 4. Libertarians:

**-John Peter Barlow** “A Declaration of Independence of Cyberspace” (libertarian manifesto).

*-The independence of the Internet community: “Governments of the Industrial world, you weary giants of flesh and steel, ‘the internet community has no ‘elected government, nor are we likely to have one ... I declare the global social space we are building to be naturally independent of the tyrannies you seek to impose on us”.*

### 5. The active audience theory:

-media audiences just do not get information passively but rather they are actively involved in an unconscious state.

### 6. Semiotic guerrilla warfare:

-**John Fiske:** he said that popular culture (domain of television and film audiences) is a battleground, a site of struggle.

-His main innovation was the proposal to shift the direction of analysis from a pessimistic focus on ideological power to an optimistic focus on the audience's ability to engage in '**semiotic guerilla warfare**' (**the challenge to the corporate control of culture that a truly active audience represents**).

-His new perspective: " Instead of concentrating on the omnipresent, insidious practices of the dominant ideology, it attempts to understand the everyday resistances and evasions that make that ideology work so hard and insistently to maintain itself and its values".

He is right on 2 points:

- The dominant ideology does have to work very hard to maintain itself against countless counter-discourses.
- Popular culture is potentially progressive.

### 7. Henry Jenkins:

Gift economy of amateur digital production 'could be seen as a way of economic exploitation as they outsource media production from highly paid and specialized creative workers to their amateur unpaid counterparts'.

-He states: 'Youtube lacks mechanisms which might encourage real diversity or the exchange of ideas. The forums on Youtube are superficial at best and filled with hate speech at worst, meaning that anyone who tries to do work beyond the mainstream is apt to face ridicule and harassment.

### 8. Patricia G. Lange:

online hostility "results from assumed online anonymity rather than from social or cultural dynamics which may occur offline.

Amateur video production serve as a social function - creating social relationships

### 9. Jean Burgess:

The Village Cop:

- Regulating content: not allow pronography, racism and violence.
- Jean Burgess and Joshua Green: YouTube is under pressure to make the community "more palatable to the public and the advertisers".

Youtube as a patron that provides both “supporting and constraining mechanisms”.  
Youtube has a remarkable degree of tolerance.

**Collective Cultural Production:**

- **Jean Burgess:** popularity within Youtube is the result of a mass creative response to a video.

*Amateur videos became famous because they inspired parody, imitation and commentary.*

**10. Brian M. Landry:**

Brian M. Landry and Mark Guzdial: popular amateur videos on Youtube tend to show individuals engaged in uncommon activities.

**11. Teresa Rizzo:**

Ordinary people and their Extraordinary videos:

- Teresa Rizzo: Youtube functions as a cinema of attractions by engaging an audience that is “highly attuned to attractions”.
- Youtube attractions operate like the cinema of attractions, stimulating curiosity, and delivering pleasure through an endless supply of spectacles.

**12. Raymond Williams:**

Raymond Williams: centuries ago during the golden age of network “the commercial media system as consisting of ‘centralized transmission and privatized reception’”.

*Centralized + private media system = homogeneous representations of social reality.*

**13. Tom Gunning:**

He describes cinema prior to 1906 as a cinema of attractions; An exhibitionist that directly acknowledged viewers and invited them to look.

He describes the “Cinema of attractions” as the direct address of the audience, in which an attraction is offered to the spectator by a cinema showman. These early amateur films drew attention to themselves whereas the current style of professional cinema associated with Hollywood, encourages the viewer to forget the presence of the producer and the screen and be absorbed into the unfolding story.

**14. DMCA: Digital Millenium Copyright Act**

DMCA (Digital Millenium Copyright Act) is being used as a weapon in all three areas: Politics, Religion and Armed Conflict.

Youtube is not required to investigate the validity of copyright claims and the result can be a form of on-tap censorship.

The misuse of DMCA takedown notices can harm the public interest.

DMCA legislation is grossly biased in favour of media corporations.

### **15. Tarleton Gillespie:**

Argues that the Internet imposes “tight controls” on communication and digital culture but this claim cannot explain the everyday uses of the Internet by ordinary people.

### **16. Mary Douglas: “Communities”**

Another feature suggesting that Youtube provides a space for multiple communities is that people identify with it. They invest time in it and develop relationships through it. A community, virtual or real, is something that people care about. As they care about their communities, they also are seen to defend them and debate their values and goals. This is the very process of debate that constitutes a community and perpetuates its very existence.

### **17. Matt Hill: Ethnography**

- Autoethnography can degrade into narcissism (excessive interest in oneself) which he finds Fiske guilty of, or an overly optimistic evaluation of the audience’s ability to provide a full self-explanation (which he finds Jenkins guilty of).
- Hills accusation that fan ethnographies assume that both fans and academics can fully explain their cultural practices do not apply here.
- His highly skeptical assessment of autoethnography leads him to employ psychoanalysis as a method of inquiry.

### **18. Deborah Tannen: Hate behaviour/War of words.**

*“The American Culture: Stopping America’s War of Words”*

America

- American public discourse is based on the metaphor of war.
- Americans live in ‘an atmosphere of unrelenting contention’.

### **19. Flagging:**

- Flaggers: falsely flag a video for violating Youtube’s content regulations.
- Flagging a video can lead to Youtube’s removing the video or deleting a member’s account. It is a common censorship strategy within Youtube and highlights the corporation’s uneven application of its content policies.

**-Minke Kampman:** describes the flagging process as resembling “a governmental democracy in which Youtube forms the government and flagging videos are our everyday miniature referenda.

- Flagging is commonly used against gay-themed content by homophobic individuals; this tactic is known as “fagging”.

- Flagging feature erodes the democratic nature of Youtube, as in the end neither Youtube nor flaggers are transparent and accountable in their actions.
- During the war, Israel and Hamas were extensively using Youtube to influence public opinion. Hamas supporters flagged some of the Israeli videos as inappropriate and Youtube removed them. Israel was losing the *propaganda* war. The internet, specifically Youtube had a huge effect on this outcome.

## **20. Propaganda:**

- Television mitigates against change by providing a constant stream of propaganda on behalf of capitalism.
- Biased or misleading information that is promoted to publicize a particular view or political cause.

## **21. Downfall (movies):**

### **Virginia Heffernan:**

- Downfall appropriations provides particular insight into the role of appropriation as a strategy of active meaning making.
- After the viewing the amateur spoofs, Heffernan could not watch the movie 'Downfall' without seeing it through the lens of the spoofs.
- The appropriate clips informed and framed her experience of seeing the original movie. Online appropriations have the power to alter our experience of television shows and movies.
- The domain of commercial cultural production is coming under the influence of amateur cultural production.
- Heffernan's account of her experience of viewing the spoofs shows how appropriation and meaning-making in a digital, networked mediascape acquire a new degree of power.

## **22. Popular culture:**

### **Fiske:**

- Recognized that popular culture (the domain of television and film audiences) is a battleground, a site of struggle.
- His main innovation was the proposal to shift the direction of analysis from a pessimistic focus on ideological power to an optimistic focus on the audience's ability to engage in '**semiotic guerilla warfare**' (the challenges to the corporate control of culture that a truly active audience represents).
- His new perspective: "Instead in concentrating on the omnipresent, insidious practices of the dominant ideology, it attempts to understand the everyday

instances and evasions that make that ideology work so hard and insistently to maintain self and its values”.

- He is right in saying that “the Popular culture is potentially progressive”.

### **23. Cass Sunstein:**

“The U.S is pretty unusual (in) providing (the) broad protection we do to hate speech”.  
*Hate speech plays a prominent role in American discourse and receives special protection under U.S laws.*

### **24. The Harper Dictatorship:**

Youtube video entitled “*The Harper Dictatorship*”

- depicts Canada’s prime minister, Stephen Harper as a defeated Hitler who says “When are people going to realize that I’m the greatest leader?”

*There is a correlation between blog discussion of a Youtube video and mainstream media coverage of the video.*

*Amateur video practices influence mainstream media coverage and influence the type of symbols and meanings that are used within the political discourse.*

### **25. Hate:**

“*The American Culture: Stopping America’s War of Words*” **Deborah Tannen**

-American public discourse is based on the metaphor of war.

-Americans live in ‘an atmosphere of unrelenting contention’.

- **Peter wood:** National epidemic of anger, which he calls it New Anger

New anger: “the expression of a new cultural ideal that emphasizes the importance of individual authenticity achieved through the projection of personal power over others”.

New Anger is about declaring one’s identity.

- **Cass Sunstein:**

“The U.S is pretty unusual (in) providing (the) broad protection we do to hate speech”.  
*Hate speech plays a prominent role in American discourse and receives special protection under U.S laws.*

*Maybe the hatred on Youtube is due to the condition of online anonymity.*

### **26. Plato:**

“*Those who tell stories also rule society*”

- Amateur videographers are about to displace the centers of power and their storytelling machines.

- Mass involvement in video-making = deepen the relationship with commercial media + enhance the socialization of consumption practice + move away from the capitalistic persuasion.

### **26. New religious movements:**

Religious war on Youtube between Christians and atheists.

**Virginia Heffernan:** "Atheists makes the most imaginative use of Youtube".

- Rational Response Squad (activist group): "The Blasphemy challenge"  
*A challenge to deny the existence of Holy Spirit.*

Elections:

Ideology:

Community:

Confession:

### **Summary notes (Watching Youtube): 117, 120, 123, 140, 153, 156, 159 +162**

**(p. 162): Appropriate Power:** the power that active audience have to make their own meanings.

Famous moments of appropriation on Tv:

- A clip from the movie 'Downfall' has been parodied along with the politicians of America.
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**Virginia Haffernan:**

- Downfall appropriations provides particular insight into the role of appropriation as a strategy of active meaning making.
- After the viewing the amateur spoofs, Heffernan could not watch the movie 'Downfall' without seeing it through the lens of the spoofs.
- The appropriate clips informed and framed her experience of seeing the original movie. Online appropriations have the power to alter our experience of television shows and movies.
- The domain of commercial cultural production is coming under the influence of amateur cultural production.
- Heffernan's account of her experience of viewing the spoofs shows how appropriation and meaning-making in a digital, networked mediascape acquire new degree of power.

**Ang:**

- “The romanticization of the active audience’s power reinforce the ‘liberal mirage of consumer freedom and sovereignty”.

**Curran:**

- Media are powerful ideological forces and cautions against the ‘advancing tide of revisionist argument, which overstates popular influence on the media and understates the media’s influence on the public”.

Youtube and amateur video has has the power to affect the way distant others experience television and film, but it has not changed the structure of ownership within the media system itself.

**(p. 159): John Fiske:** overstate the power of the audience

**Valerie Walkerdine:** claims that Fiske “invokes an American discourse of empowerment, of voicing, and authentic creation’ that leads to overstating the audience’s ability to make their own meanings”.

**Fiske:**

- Recognized that popular culture (the domain of television and film audiences) is a battleground, a site of struggle.
- His main innovation was the proposal to shift the direction of analysis from a pessimistic focus on ideological power to an optimistic focus on the audience’s ability to engage in ‘**semiotic guerilla warfare**’ (the challenges to the corporate control of culture that a truly active audience represents).
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- He is right in saying that “the Popular culture is potentially progressive”.

**(p. 156): Youtube is a politically engaged community:**

- Political organizations and individuals use Youtube in order to put for their religious or political claims to others. Youtube as a new global arena where public opinion is formed and expressed.
- In amateur videos we see a new speech: speech through the production of original and appropriated images and words.

- DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) is being used as a weapon in all three areas: Politics, Religion and Armed Conflict.

Youtube is not required to investigate the validity of copyright claims and the result can be a form of on-tap censorship.

The misuse of DMCA takedown notices can harm the public interest.

DMCA legislation is grossly biased in favour of media corporations.

**Matt Seitz:** *“New York Times” (film critic)*

“There should be a way to distinguish between piracy-for-profit (or unauthorized, free distribution) and creative, interpretive, critical or political work that happens to use copyrighted material”.

**(p. 153): Youtube wars.**

Israel and Hamas (Palestine) extensively used Youtube to influence public opinion. Hamas supporters flagged some of the Israeli videos as inappropriate and Youtube removed them. Israel was losing the war and the use of the Internet was one of the reasons.

**Riyaad Minty:** *“Al Jazeera”*

“Whereas the Israeli army showed black-and-white videos that lacked audio, the Palestinians uploaded ‘vivid videos of the chaos and destruction on the ground following Israeli grounds’”.

*Her conclusion: Palestinians unfiltered videos from Gaza ‘allowed pro-Palestinian supporters to dominate this online war’ may be correct”.*

**Andrew Lee Butters:** *“Time”* reflecting on the 2009 Israel/Hamas war

“The fighters of both sides are well aware of the need to produce what they hope will be the defining picture or video clip of the war”.

**In 2006, Time called Iraq the first Youtube war.**

Amateur videos produced by soldiers proved to be a constant source of humiliation for the military.

**(p. 140):**

**Dolt:** amateur videographer in a commercial medium.

**Manuel Castells:** “It has become customary to post either on Youtube or similar sites embarrassing clips of opponents, sometimes recording a direct hit on the targeted audience”.

**Carter Eskew:** “Amateur video practices would promote a kind of authenticity and directness and honesty among politicians”.

**Eve Fairbanks:** “This may not be a welcome development among the political class”  
*As politicians know that different audiences require different messages.*

The traditional style of political rhetoric requires audiences to be isolated from one another. Youtube works against conventional campaign practices by bringing disparate and isolated audiences together.

**Tracking:** following a politician around while armed with a video camera that is always on and waiting for him to say something.

*This leads to more accountability for words spoken and promises made.*

**(p. 123): Autoethnography**

*A form of self-reflection and writing that is based on personal experiences.*

**Matt Hill:** autoethnography can degrade into narcissism or an overly optimistic evaluation of the audience’s ability to provide a full self-explanation.

*His accusation: Fan ethnographies assume that both fans and academics can fully explain their cultural practices do not apply here.*

*His highly sceptical assessment of autoethnography leads him to employ psychoanalysis as a method of inquiry.*

**(p. 120):**

**Patricia Lange:** Online hostility results from assumed online anonymity rather than from social or cultural dynamics which may occur offline.

**Spammer and Flaggers:**

- **Flaggers:** falsely flag a video for violating Youtube’s content regulations.  
*Flagging a video can lead to Youtube’s removing the video or deleting a member’s account.*

**Minke Kampman:** he describes the flagging process as resembling ‘a governmental democracy in which Youtube forms the government and flagging videos are our everyday miniature referenda.

*He also states that the flagging feature erodes the democratic nature of Youtube, as in the end neither Youtube nor flaggers are transparent and accountable in their actions.*

- **Fagging:** flagging against gay-themed content by homophobic individuals.

**Spammers:** use Youtube to send unsolicited advertising to Youtube members.

(p. 117)

**Nicole Lamerichs:** “by mocking the culture within Youtube, fan parodies make Youtube’s culture explicit”.

**Henry Jenkins:** “*Convergence Culture: Where old and New media collide (2006)*”.

- “The biggest change may be the shift from individualized and personalized media consumption toward consumption as a networked practice”.
- Participatory culture positions the individual as a consumer.
- We may have greater collective bargaining power if we form consumption communities.

## **Chapter 5 Notes: The Youtube Community**

- The idea of community = attached to the virtual realm.
- **Maria Bakardjieva:** the concept of virtual community “has led analysis into a not particularly productive ideological exchange disputing the possibility that genuine community can be sustained through computer networks”.
- Many Internet users see themselves as being part of a community: YouTube community. They get the feel of community through the participation of online groups.
- **Samuel M. Wilson and Leighton C. Peterson:** suggest that anthropology is ‘uniquely suited’ for the study of the Internet.
- Communities once used to be isolated and homogeneous whereas now they are highly interconnected, heterogeneous and rife with discord and dispute.
- **Benedict Anderson ‘Imagined communities’:** “communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined”.
- Community as a shared imagining (no face-to-face interaction). Internet is playing a role in mediating this imagining through amateur online video practices.
- Definition of community: shared interests. We find a community among Youtube where there are disagreements and debates.
- **Steven G Jones:** Online communities not only are “composed of people who are necessarily connected, even by interest, but rather grouping of people headed in the same direction for a time”.

- **Jan Fernback:** online communities of interest are “closed places... that lack a social role in the larger collectivity’ raises the spectre of the online/offline dichotomy against which Wilson and Peterson advise”. He further says that the sense of individuality is missing among the virtual community.

Youtube as a:

1. Village Cop: a regulator and a landlord of the virtual village
2. Commercial production: celebrities

### **The Village Cop:**

- Regulating content: not allow pornography, racism and violence.
- **Jean Burgess and Joshua Green:** YouTube is under pressure to make the community “more palatable to the public and the advertisers”.

Youtube as a patron that provides both “supporting and constraining mechanisms”.

Youtube has a remarkable degree of tolerance.

- Even though the rules have become more strict, such content do exist in YouTube.
- **Allen Weiner** (digital media analyst): assure business readers that YouTube’s executives are ‘beginning to make YouTube a far more clean, well-lit place that will attract advertisers”.

Youtube’s main client is the Corporations, so they are need to be happy in order for Youtube to grow as an advertising platform.

### **A community of Pirates:**

- Youtube as facilitating copyright violations ‘A community of pirates”.
- DMCA: Digital Millenium Copyright Act.
- **Jeffrey Brown:** Youtube is “continuing to pursue efforts to minimize its exposure to copyright infringement liability, while increasing its potential advertising revenue”.

### **Youtube celebrities:**

- Media celebrities on Youtube ie. Oprah Winfrey.
- Some people think that Youtube is for amateur only and not for celebrities.
- **Janneke Brouwers:** Oprah is seen as a threat to Youtube’s identity more like an infiltration of a ‘foreign’ medium.
- Youtube’s corporate partners are seen as exploiting the community.

### **Productive fan communities:**

- Fan communities create videos that critique media personalities ex. Britney Spears. *Convergence culture: Where Old and New media collide (2006)*.

He says that the biggest change maybe the shift from individualized and personalized media consumption towards consumption as a networked practice.

Participatory culture positions the individual as a consumer.

“We may have greater collective bargaining power if we form consumption communities”.

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- Fan parodies.
- **Henry Jenkins:**

#### **Haters, Spammers, and Other Deviants:**

- Both amateur and professional videographers have haters. Some of them direct their videos to address the Haters.
- **Anthropologist, Peter Wood:** national epidemic of anger, which he calls it New Anger
- New anger: “the expression of a new cultural ideal that emphasizes the importance of individual authenticity achieved through the projection of personal power over others”.
- New Anger is about declaring one’s identity.

- **Patricia G. Lange:** online hostility “results from assumed online anonymity rather than from social or cultural dynamics which may occur offline.

Amateur video production serve as a social function - creating social relationships.

#### **A highly reflexive community:**

- Reflection on the norms and ideals of the community as well as the constant monitoring of other people’s behaviour.
- Two of the most common genres found in this productive community are Video diaries and Parodies.

#### **Why and How do You ‘Tube?**

- **John C. Paolilli (2008):** “there is no clear picture of how people use YouTube and why”.

We are socialized to embrace self-expression via video. Advertisements for consumer electronics tell us this is normal, television shows us how to do it and norms reassure that it is acceptable.

- Youtube brings together strangers where they create social relationships.
- **Brian M. Landry and Mark Guzdial:** popular amateur videos on Youtube tend to show individuals engaged in uncommon activities.

- The single biggest technical issue facing Youtube is “Scalability”.

### **Ordinary people and their Extraordinary videos:**

- **Teresa Rizzo:** Youtube functions as a cinema of attractions by engaging an audience that is “highly attuned to attractions”.
- Youtube attractions operate like the cinema of attractions, stimulating curiosity, and delivering pleasure through an endless supply of spectacles.
- **Michael Wesch:** (visual anthropologist of **Digital culture**), explores the nature of the digital text

“everything is interconnected”

“All media are biased towards certain types of expression.

- **Edmund Carpenter (1957):** describes how each medium has a bias

“each offers a different perspective”

“different possibilities for expression”

### **Chapter 7: The Post-television Audience**

- Audiences are watching and interpreting YouTube videos not just as passive viewers but as active commentators and as producers of their own videos.
- The categories that once strictly divided society into producers and consumers are becoming increasingly blurred.
- **Raymond Williams:** centuries ago during the golden age of network “the commercial media system as consisting of ‘centralized transmission and privatized reception’”.

*Centralized + private media system = homogeneous representations of social reality.*

- **James Curran:** the power of the media system has been overstated.
- **Valerie Walkerdine:** she claims that **John Fiske** “invokes an American discourse of empowerment, of voicing and authentic creation’ that leads to overstating the audience’s ability to make their own meanings”.
- **John Fiske:** he said that popular culture (domain of television and film audiences) is a battleground, a site of struggle.

His main innovation was the proposal to shift the direction of analysis from a pessimistic focus on ideological power to an optimistic focus on the audience’s ability to engage in ‘semiotic guerilla warfare’ (the challenge to the corporate control of culture that a truly active audience represents).

His new perspective: “ Instead of concentrating on the omnipresent, insidious practices of the dominant ideology, it attempts to understand the everyday resistances and evasions that make that ideology work so hard and insistently to maintain itself and its values”.

He is right on 2 points:

- The dominant ideology does have to work very hard to maintain itself against countless counter-discourses.
- Popular culture is potentially progressive.
- **Ien Ang:** television audience as “active meaning producers”, but now, audiences are the actual producers.

### **Slippery Appropriations:**

- **Appropriative power:** the power that active audiences have to make their own meanings.
- A form of appropriation: replacing the lyrics in a song (changing the meanings).
- **Virginia Heffernan:** After viewing the amateur spoofs, Heffernan could not watch the movie without seeing it through the lens of the spoofs.

*The appropriated clips informed and framed her experience of seeing the original movie.*

*Online appropriations have the power to alter our experience of television shows and movies.*

*The YouTube generation is more powerful; where amateur cultural production is affecting the commercial cultural production.*

In the 20th century, conception of active audience = audience’s interpretative activity. Now, audiences are taking the role of the producer = re-writing the meanings embedded in television and film and is recirculating those new meanings.

- **Ang:** extent of the active audience’s power. “The romanticization of the active audience serves only to reinforce the ‘liberal mirage of consumer freedom and sovereignty”.
- **Curran:** media are powerful ideological forces and cautions against the ‘advancing tide of revisionist argument, which overstates popular influence on the media and understates the media’s influence on the public.

### **The Post-Colonial Audience:**

- Even with the increasing audience participation, corporate media still holds the prominent position.
- **Ang:** audiences that are driven to participate in a frenzy of choice merely serve as symbols of ‘the increasing colonization of the times and spaces of people’s everyday lives for the purpose of media audiencehood.

**Ang's use of the metaphor of colonization highlights the dominant/subordinate relationship that is thought to exist between television and its audiences.**

- **John Peter Barlow** "A Declaration of Independence of Cyberspace" (libertarian manifesto).

*The independence of the Internet community: "Governments of the Industrial world, you weary giants of flesh and steel, 'the internet community has no 'elected government, nor are we likely to have one ... I declare the global social space we are building to be naturally independent of the tyrannies you seek to impose on us".*

- **Bill Ashcroft + Gareth Griffins:** " All post-colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination, and independence had not solved this problem".
- 3 stages in the evolution of online communication:
  1. Email
  2. blogging
  3. amateur video
- The audience can be said to assume the position of the post-colonial. It is independent, but still subject to subtle forms of domination.
- The online audience can be thought of as simultaneously inhabiting two different states- that of the colonized television audience + post-colonial online audience.

### **Life after Television:**

- **George Gilder (1994)** "*Life after Television*" (techno-utopian that **Geert Lovink** calls a 'fairy tale'")

*"Persona; computers will make people richer, smarter and more productive, transform capitalism into the healing force, and usher in a life beyond television where the computer will be a 'powerful force for democracy, individuality, community and high culture".*

*Basic features of the Internet: enhanced community + creativity*

*Television as being ' a tool for tyrants' (\*tyrant: oppressive ruler)*

*He believed that " technology would soon deliver prosperity for all, eliminate the inequities of capitalism, and get rid of the bad guy, which in case was television.*

**Liberal Telecommunications policy discourse:** a body of theory that looks towards the liberalization of telecommunications markets but ignores questions of power.

*Within this theory, new technologies simply make power relations disappear.*

**Sean Cubitt:** looks forward to the formation of "a new dominant mode of visibility".

*“The possibility of a future where video supersedes television as our main source of stories and paves the way to cultural democracy”*

**Fragmentation:** the new position of the audience, both online and off.

- **Peter Sealey (1965):** personal reflections as a Proctor and Gamble marketer - indicate how far we have moved from mass to segmented viewing habits.

*Before 3 (60s) commercials would reach 80% of women now, it would take 97 commercials to reach the same.*

*In the earlier days, families watched the same programs (unified mass audience) now its rare due to high volume of available media channels.*

**Guylaine Saucier:** (former chair of the board of directors of the CBC)

“A multi-channel universe has led to fragmented television audiences”.

Even though the contemporary audience is highly fragmented, it is still watching commercially produced entertainment.

- **Jeffrey Cole (2003):** head of the UCLA Internet project

*Internet users watched five hours less television per week.*

**The Essence of Video:**

- **James Moran:** “ they (television and video) share so many likenesses that we recognize them as sibling media”.
- **Technological Determinism:** it assumes that a technology has inherent properties and outcomes that are determined by the technology itself.
- **Essentialist:**

**The Alternative:**

- A world of media production and consumption that is alternative to traditional forms of television viewing.
- Post-television era = more alternatives + fragmented audience.
- The study of alternative media focuses on the modes of media production that are found within new social movements.
- Within media and cultural studies, the ‘alternative’ is most often conceived of as the domain of activists, their social groups that comprise a new social movement.

- **Theodor Adorno + Max Horkheimer: *Culture Industry***

*They grossly overstated the definitional power of commercial culture when they described it as an “iron system” that ruled with absolute power.*

- **Shane Gunster:** “ The culture industry has never been more powerful, never been more invasive, and certainly never been more dominated by the commodity form than it is today”.
- **Culture industry:** production of cultural products by the institutions that constitute the content and entertainment sector. Also referred to as: commercial media or the entertainment industry.
- **Chris Atton:** observes that the domain of the ‘alternative Internet’ has led to ‘new ways of thinking about what it means to be a creator”.

*Atton on alternative practices of Journalism: within amateur video we find a form of alternative media that ‘may be understood as a radical challenge to the professionalized and institutionalized practices of mainstream media.*

*Indymedia journalism (radical online journalism): attempts to place the power of telling society’s stories ‘into hands of those who are more intimately involved in those stories. Alternative media practices are not be understood ‘solely in relation to political activism”*

- **Laurie Oulliette (1995):** *The notion that ordinary people might make Tv instead of just watching poses a potentially subversive threat to capitalist control of the media.*

*“Activist media has always been a marginalized activity, confined to small groups of practitioners and small audiences”.*

- Amateur video is alternative because it stands partially outside the dominant advertising-content relationship.
- **Clemenca Rodriguez:** prefer the term “**Citizen’s media**” (over alternative media)

*Rodriguez claims that alternative media have failed to gain any significant distance from the dominant media culture.*

## **Conclusion:**

- Mass involvement in video making could deepen our relationship with commercial media and enhance its main economic function- the socialization of consumption practices. It could also tear us away from the centres of corporate storytelling and capitalistic persuasion.

- **'flight from top-down authority'**: Sources of information such as magazines, newspapers, and local television news all are in decline.
- There is an ongoing surge in user-generated content.
- We imitate the aesthetics of the professional entertainment industry.
- **Henry Jenkins**: Gift economy of amateur digital production 'could be seen as a way of economic exploitation as they outsource media production from highly paid and specialized creative workers to their amateur unpaid counterparts'.
- **Mirko Tobias Schafer**: Amateurs as bastards

*Bastard culture: term that attempts to frame participatory culture as an illegitimate offspring of commercial cultural industries.*

*Youtube represents 'the rise of powerful corporations shaping and controlling cultural production and its preconditions.'*

- **Lawrence Lessig**: "read-only" culture of commercial media.

*Read-only culture resists the advances of non-proprietary culture at every turn.*

*The content industry resists the audience's desire to manipulate corporate media content.*

*"In Defense of Piracy" (Wall Street Journal): He states that corporations are acting in the most unethical manner towards the active audience.*

*Lessig describes the current state of relations between the audience and the corporations as hostile. "We are in the middle of something of a war here".*

**Jack Vaneti**: referred to digital pirates as terrorists.

### **The Culture of Amateur video:**

- Amateur videos: communicative, dialogic events that can provide the basis for community formation.
- Authenticity is central to the culture of amateur online video.

### **Collective Cultural Production:**

- **Jean Burgess**: popularity within Youtube is the result of a mass creative response to a video.

*Amateur videos became famous because they inspired parody, imitation and commentary.*

### **Identity in Digital Culture:**

- Amateur video practices can help construct identity but also can lead to the destruction of the self and identity

- **Lifecasting:** also known as **Webcasting;** individuals broadcast their life directly to the Internet, often wearing portable cameras.

### **Over-Determination and the Defence of Piracy:**

- **Mark Poster:** *New Media Theory:* “all citizens have an obligation to violate copyright law whenever they can”.

*Media corporations engage in the most gross violation of fair use and use the law to overextend their rights, thus stifling creativity and undermining the collective good in the name of private profit.*

### **A Cultural Democracy?**

- Video practices promise to disrupt the mainstream representation of reality by injecting diversity into cyberspace and challenging commercial media to keep up or lose their audiences to the Internet.
- **Sean Cubitt (1993):** speculated that video would provide the foundation for a new form for cultural democracy.
- **Jose van Dijck:** ‘Cultural production can no longer be theorized exclusively in terms of industry or social stratification of consumers.
- Capitalism would have the mass audience believe that they are on control, that YouTube is their world, that the consumer is sovereign, but actually, they are the tenants, YouTube is the landlord and the village cop.
- Amateur online videos maybe democratic but the appropriate political metaphor for this collective media activity is anarchism (government and laws are no necessary).
- **Mitchell Stephens:** ‘ literature in America and elsewhere continues to lose consequence.
- **Alexandra Juszsz:** written thought on Youtube is subjected to a ‘dumbing-down because ‘capacity to express ideas through words is almost entirely closed down on YouTube.