



Watching YouTube: Extraordinary Videos by Ordinary People

Michael Strangelove

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An anonymous musician plays Pachelbel's Canon on the electric guitar in a clip that has been viewed over sixty million times. The Dramatic Gopher is viewed over sixteen million times, as is a severely inebriated David Hasselhoff attempting to eat a hamburger. Over 800 variations, parodies, and parodies-of-parodies are uploaded of Beyonce Knowles' Single Ladies dance. Tay Zonday sings Chocolate Rain in a video viewed almost forty million times and scores himself a record deal. Obama Girl enters the political arena with contributions such as I Got a Crush on Obama and gets coverage in mainstream news networks.

In *Watching YouTube*, Michael Strangelove provides a broad overview of the world of amateur online videos and the people who make them. Dr. Strangelove, the Governor General Literary Award-nominated author that Wired Magazine called a 'guru of Internet advertising,' describes how online digital video is both similar to and different from traditional home-movie-making and argues that we are moving into a post-television era characterized by mass participation.

Strangelove draws from television, film, cultural, and media studies to help define an entirely new field of research. Online practices of representation, confessional video diaries, gendered uses of amateur video, and debates over elections, religion, and armed conflicts make up the bulk of this groundbreaking study, which is supplemented by an online blog at strangelove.com/blog. An innovative and timely study, *Watching YouTube* raises questions about the future of cultural memory, identity, politics, warfare, and family life when everyday representational practices are altered by four billion cameras in the hands of ordinary people.

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