Problematizing the Internet as a video distribution technology

While the Internet has rapidly become an important distribution technology for video producers, it is also a problematic one for some of them. I explore the difficulties associated with its use to distribute videos through an analysis of a one-year ethnographic investigation of community, activist and fan video producers in the US and UK. My analysis draws upon Actor-Network Theory and DeLanda's reading of Deleuze and Guatarri's concept of assemblages, and shows that while my informants were engaged in various processes to create and stabilise their video distribution assemblages, these were precarious as they were also subject to destabilising processes resulting from their complex and contested nature. This situation often resulted in the producers being left with distribution assemblages which did not satisfy their goals. Framing the problematic aspects of their distribution practices in these terms shows that these aspects can not only be understood as resulting from the producers' specific circumstances as they struggled with, for example, corporate interests, the limited affordances of the video hosting and social media platforms they used, or the social dynamics of which they were apart, but that they can also be understood more generally as arising from the processes of human-technology entanglements, thus providing an alternative perspective to previous studies.

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Please consider my paper for session 8: STS and 'New' Media