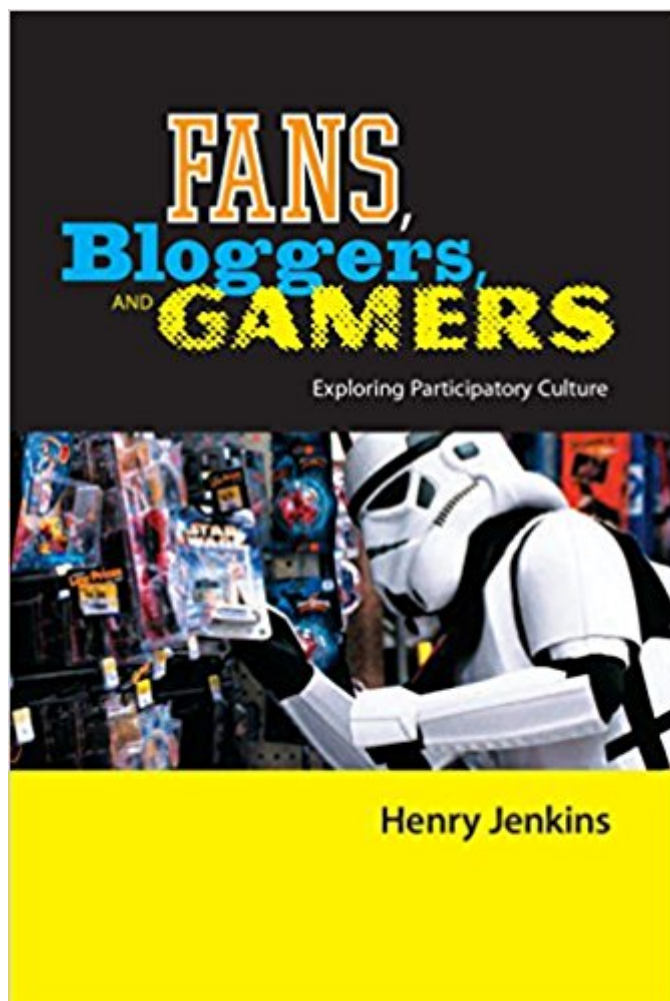


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Fans, Bloggers, And Gamers: Media Consumers In A Digital Age



Synopsis

Henry Jenkins at Authors@Google (video) Henry Jenkins's pioneering work in the early 1990s promoted the idea that fans are among the most active, creative, critically engaged, and socially connected consumers of popular culture and that they represent the vanguard of a new relationship with mass media. Though marginal and largely invisible to the general public at the time, today, media producers and advertisers, not to mention researchers and fans, take for granted the idea that the success of a media franchise depends on fan investments and participation. Bringing together the highlights of a decade and a half of groundbreaking research into the cultural life of media consumers, *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers* takes readers from Jenkins's progressive early work defending fan culture against those who would marginalize or stigmatize it, through to his more recent work, combating moral panic and defending Goths and gamers in the wake of the Columbine shootings. Starting with an interview on the current state of fan studies, this volume maps the core theoretical and methodological issues in Fan Studies. It goes on to chart the growth of participatory culture on the web, take up blogging as perhaps the most powerful illustration of how consumer participation impacts mainstream media, and debate the public policy implications surrounding participation and intellectual property.

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Customer Reviews

"Jenkins is one of us: a geek, a fan, a popcult packrat. He's also an incisive and unflinching critic. His affection for the subject and sharp eye for 'what it all means' are an unbeatable

combination. This is fascinating, engrossing and enlightening reading. —Cory Doctorow, author of *Someone Comes to Town, Someone Leaves Town* and co-editor of *Boing Boing* —“Jenkins persuasively argues in favor of taking the fan’s perspective in analyzing television-- and this is the cornerstone of the new turn in Cultural Studies.” —Claremont Review of Books

Henry Jenkins is the Provost’s Professor of Communication, Journalism, Cinematic Arts and Education at the University of Southern California.

Totally, this is a good and insightful book if you want to understand the base of media study and it provide some of interesting opinions that may inspire you in the farther study of media.

El año pasado tuve la oportunidad de leer "Convergence Culture" del intelectual y académico del MIT Henry Jenkins. Junto a *Wikinomics*, "C.C." se volvió uno de mis libros preferidos. Jenkins tiene la particularidad de escribir con una dualidad que en un principio le valió la crítica de sus colegas: Por un lado es un intelectual e investigador de dilatada trayectoria, sin embargo desde mucho antes ha sido un fan. De *Star Trek*, *Twin Peaks*, *Buffy: The Vampire Slayer* etc. Eso lo pone en una posición muy "vulnerable", puesto que sus papers representan lo mejor de ambos mundos, algo curioso y que sucede muy poco, puesto que los académicos estudian de manera alejada y desapasionada los fenómenos menos de sus intereses, mas nunca declaran abiertamente ser parte del movimiento. Con el paso de los años, Jenkins se volvió (sin siquiera proponérselo) el abanderado de los fans: aquellos geeks que compran figuras y no las abren, de los que graban series, las traducen y analizan incansablemente y de los que escriben fanzines tan buenos o mejores que el original. Con una carga no menor a costas, Jenkins ha seguido publicando incansablemente ensayos, escribiendo libros y abogando sobre la compleja relación que tenemos con la cultura, la entretenimiento y por sobre todo los medios. "Fans, Blogueros y Videojuegos" es el tercer libro de Jenkins, aunque fue escrito entre "Textual Poachers" (1er libro) y "Convergence Culture" (segundo). El libro da cuenta de la transición de la relación medio-fan y todo lo acaecido en un periodo de tiempo que abarca más de una década. Este cambio es de suma importancia, puesto que marca un quiebre en la relación que tenemos los usuarios con los medios de comunicación. Como pasamos a ser un actor de peso en esta arena y como la cultura de los fans no sólo "salió del closet" -como dice Jenkins- sino que gana popularidad hasta ser validada y

muy apetecida por las marcas. Este quiebre se traduce en movimientos que van desde fans que exigen la prolongación de una serie (como paso con X Files), fans que crean comunidades para explicar, teorizar y profundizar un programa de televisión (Twin Peaks) hasta el cosmopolitismo pop el cual permite que personas geográficamente aisladas adopten formas y costumbres propias de culturas físicamente lejanas, como los Otaku o las personas que practican el Cosplay, ambos movimientos originados en Japón. Como decía antes, el libro tiene ensayos que Jenkins escribió entre su *Textual Poachers* y *Convergence Culture*. Los ensayos recogidos abordan temáticas como el fenómeno del slash (fanzines de carácter homosexual protagonizados por personajes de series famosas). Un paper muy interesante donde Jenkins conversa y debate con su hijo (también investigador de los medios) sobre "Buffy, La caza vampiros" y su simbolismo en la relación adultos - jóvenes. O bien todo el capítulo titulado "El profesor Jenkins va a Washington" en el cual Jenkins cuenta su experiencia y punto de vista en torno al tiroteo de Columbine. Si lo recuerdan, sabrán que los dos autores supuestamente estaban influenciados por los videojuegos al momento de asesinar a sus compañeros. Pues ahí entra en acción Jenkins quien fue invitado al congreso a conversar y debatir sobre el rol e influencia que los videojuegos y los medios tienen en los adolescentes. "Convergence Culture" tiene varios méritos. La forma en que el autor va tomando el pulso y marcando hitos populares en la evolución de nuestra relación con los medios es muy valiosa, sin embargo siempre rescato cuando los textos son accesibles en narrativa; esto bota muchas murallas y nos acerca a la opinión de una de las mentes más brillantes en esta arena. Definitivamente es importante seguir la huella a los papers y libros de este autor, todo un pionero y abanderado que lucha por "nivelar" la eterna lucha que libra la opinión pública y los consumidores en cuanto a consumo de medios se refiere. Aparte de *Textual Poachers*, y *Convergence Culture*, Henry Jenkins ha publicado: "From Barbie to Mortal Kombat: Gender and Computer Games", "Rethinking Media Change: The Aesthetics of Transition. Media in transition", "The Wow Climax: Tracing the Emotional Impact of Popular Culture" entre otros. Los dejo con un video en el cual Jenkins va a Google a conversar sobre los cambios culturales y su libro "Convergence Culture". PEACE OUT

I read Jenkins's more significant book "Convergence Culture" and found this one a useful follow-up. I don't find any single, overarching point in *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers* (as other reviewers pointed out, it's a collection of distinct essays spanning several years) but as I went along, I felt that I got a deeper understanding of some interesting topics in culture, and media. For instance, what drives

people to reinterpret TV shows and movies through fan fiction? Do gamers take the violence in games seriously? How can media makers create better shows by involving their audiences? The politics around violence in video games are still active. So what Jenkins wrote about these games and Columbine massacre are worth reading, although I thought he was a bit defensive and didn't weight both sides' arguments fairly.

This is a collection of articles from Henry Jenkins, over the span of his career as a media academic. Some of the articles are good, others are less impressive, but overall he provides the reader some for thought about the evolution of pop culture studies and pop culture in general. This is a useful book for exploring some of what pop culture studies is about and providing some context as to how the academic study of pop culture has evolved as pop culture and technology have involved. It's limitation beyond the fact that it's a collection of articles, is that some of the material can already be found in the author's other works in a more comprehensive form.

Henry Jenkins provides an excellent step away from our normal expectations of media philosophers. Coming in between the doom-and-gloom media affect tradition and the corporate schlock Jenkins writes (and speaks!) for the fans. The book is a collection of articles set in three chapters: In the first, Jenkins lets us into the world of fandom (if you aren't there already) and more specifically his early focus- that of science fan-fiction. The second chapter, Going Digital, co-incides with his other 2006 book "Convergence Culture" in its mapping the flow of information and analysis of everyday Americans' change in their day-to-day. Finally, Columbine and Beyond (my favorite) looks at, essentially, the fear our elders have of new media and youth culture.

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