

Editorial Introduction

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This issue of *Participations* is yet again a bumper one – and with an unusually wide range of topics. This to us indicates two things at least. First, it shows the steadily rising attention being given to audience and reception research and debate, in a growing range of distinct areas of work. Second, it does show the role that *Participations* is managing to play in this development, as a site where different traditions (of theory and concepts, methods, and topics of research) can meet and consider each other.

And it is for that reason that over the last 18 months a process has been underway – and is now almost complete – of rethinking and then rebuilding the Journal’s editorial structures, processes and membership. In order to do this, we are moving towards a system in which members of the Editorial Board will agree to plan towards a future issue – up to two or three years ahead – and will seek out valuable work that is being done around a particular topic, to become the basis of a Special Section. This won’t prevent us still carrying individual submissions, but it will mean that we can consciously target areas of work which either are relatively undeveloped, or are working in relative isolation from other parts of audience and reception work.

To this end, we have been reconstituting the Editorial Board. Over the last few months, we have been discussing with a number of individuals who have established themselves as important figures within particular areas of our field. To our delight, many of them have seen the potential of the Journal as a site for this kind of gathering and dialogue, and have agreed to become members of this new Editorial Board. We hope to announce the new Board, and explain in full its new system of working, early in 2014.

In the meantime, the work of publishing significant work goes on. In this issue, we present seven individual essays, drawing on a range of traditions, and covering quite different topics. Merris Griffiths uses creative methods of research with children, to explore the role of commercial media in their imaginative lives. Katrien Jacobs uses a combination of methods (interviews, observation) to explore ‘Cosplay’ among young Hong Kong people, and its implications for expressions of sexuality. Galit Nimrod uses ‘gerontographics’, a distinct method for segmenting audiences, to explore older audiences’ engagements with the internet. Stephanie Pitts and three colleagues explore the ways in which players’ and audiences’ orientations to a symphonic performance, and the implications of this for the

role of music in their lives. Lisa Richards draws on fan studies and reception studies approaches to explore fan fiction perceptions of the TV character DCI Gene Hunt (*Life on Mars* and *Ashes to Ashes*). Eliisa Vainikka and Juha Herkman deploy and test the concept of ‘collective intelligence’ to explore young Finns’ uses of the internet, blogs, and online creations. And Egret Zhou uses research with Chinese ‘star-chasers’ to explore the neglected role within studies of fandom of ‘displeasure’.

With these, we publish a Special Section of contributions arising from the current “Moving Targets” project at the University of Abertay, Dundee. The project is directed to exploring the phenomenon of co-creation of digital products and services. This selection of the presentations to its October, 2013 conference brings together those aspects of its work which have particular relevance to the field of audience and reception studies. It also hopefully has the advantage of doing this so soon after the conference – showing another aspect of the benefits of online publishing, its ‘fleetness of foot’. This is a fast-evolving area of investigation, and those involved in similar work will hopefully find advantage in having early access to this still-ongoing work.

Finally, we carry five reviews, encompassing six books.

Not bad, eh?