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學術對談

《文本盜獵者》與中國粉絲文化研究

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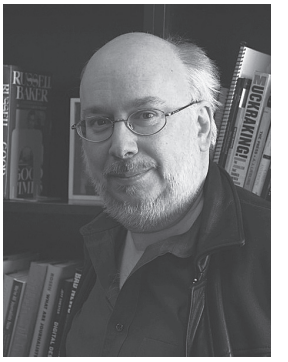

亨利．詹金斯教授
（Prof. Henry Jenkins）

「在最基礎的層面上，我們首先要理解粉絲圈在與美國不同的文化背景下是如何運轉的，知識、文化、社會、政治和經濟傳統不同，體制規範和政策不同，對個人主義和個人表達的看法不同，私人產權政治體制等等。粉絲圈是否有自己獨特的且放之四海皆準的邏輯？文化背景和社會習俗如何對粉絲文化進行建構？」

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Dialogue

Textual Poachers in China

Discussants: Henry JENKINS, Lin ZHANG
Editor: Lin ZHANG
Translator: Xiqing ZHENG

Abstract

This dialogue is prompted by the publication of Prof. Henry Jenkins' now canonical book *Textual Poachers* in Chinese. Prof. Jenkins discusses the continuities and changes in fan studies since *Textual Poachers'* initial release in the 1990s. He also reflects on the development of fan studies in China, focusing on key issues like the commodification of fan culture in the Web 2.0 era, or transnational fandom and the phenomenon of fansubbing. In general, Prof. Jenkins calls on the Chinese researchers of fan cultures to think critically about how fandom's own norms and practices assert themselves across different cultures and how they get redefined and reimagined as they were introduced into new contexts.

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致謝

此訪談基於《文本盜獵者》中文譯本的序言（北京大學出版社）。訪談者在此感謝出版社的編輯童祁和譯者鄭熙青。

HJ: 亨利 · 詹金斯
LZ: 張琳

LZ: 趁著《文本盜獵者》中文譯本的出版，能和亨利 · 詹金斯博士就他這本經典著作進行對談，我深感榮幸。2007年，我在關於文化研究和電子媒體的討論課上第一次讀到這本書。作為一名留學生，互聯網是我了解中國現狀最重要的媒介。當時中國正處在向所謂Web 2.0時代轉化的過程中，隨著個人博客和微博的興起，視頻網站以及網遊等媒體形式的發展，草根文化生產呈爆炸趨勢。我對中國興起的惡搞文化大有興趣，因為惡搞現象使平常人能夠應用新興電子工具，挪用大眾文化內容來進行文化上的個人表達或者草根社會批評。

在詹金斯博士的著作中，我找到了所需要的學術語言。儘管《文本盜獵者》寫於20多年之前，主要側重歐美文化經驗，然而「文本盜獵者」的隱喻，消費者利用大眾文化實現文化表述和社群連結，進而構建出的文化生產者形象，仍然有力地回應著中國

Web 2.0時代的草根文化生產經驗。同時，詹金斯博士在書中也強調了文化特殊性和歷史特殊性，他指出就具體文化接受、文化挪用以及流行文化中的樂趣這些問題，我們必須謹慎對待個例的特殊性，包括特殊歷史語境，具體的社會和文化環境（pp. 35–36）。

那麼在對話的開始，能不能請您簡單描述一下《文本盜獵者》寫作時的社會文化背景，並談一談這本書的哪些方面會和中國讀者特別相關？

HJ: 首先，能和中國讀者分享這本書我感到非常高興，出版者認為這本書在出版20多年後還對理解當下有所裨益，我感到十分榮幸。你個人的經歷和視角令我看到這本書在中國環境下也許有其特殊意義。

你強調了本書內容的歷史和文化特殊性，這是正確的。一方面，《文本盜獵者》描述了美國粉絲（以及其他英語地區粉絲）在參與式文化發展過程中一個重要轉折點所發生的故事。另一方面，這本書提供了一些較為寬廣的概念，有助我們從更廣闊的意義上理解草根媒體製作和參與式文化。

我寫這本書的時候，粉絲圈還隱藏在公眾視野之外，只能在非正式渠道裏活動。粉絲們用郵政系統共享自己的作品。同人小說是影印機印出來的。同人視頻是用錄像機一盤一盤翻錄下來的。他們的活動帶著極大的社會污名，無論是媒體還是學術圈都不理解他們。他們還害怕掌握著知識產權的媒體公司會對他們的混剪和二次創作提出法律訴訟。這本書是粉絲社群重塑群體身份，開始向公眾發聲，並對外進行自我辯護的一部分。

在書中你可以發覺電子時代開始的跡象，很快地這種變革就將以極快的速度和極大的規模通過互聯網擴散開：網絡為內容共享提供了新平台，隨著更多人發覺他們的價值和行為，粉絲人群也會大量增加。如果你夠仔細的話，還能在書中看見全球化粉絲文化的蛛絲馬跡：粉絲們發現了日本的動畫和漫畫，還有香港的動作片，並隨之尋找與這些地區粉絲們溝通的方式。

我從我的中國學生那裏了解到，中國現在正處於一個相似的

過程中：粉絲積極接受日本、韓國、英國和美國的節目，利用網絡和世界各地的粉絲溝通，探索他們已經成型的粉絲生產，並改造為適應中國背景的形式，例如將這些形式應用於中國媒體作品之上。每個國家的粉絲都在用自己的方式重新定義粉絲圈，但是他們也發現了粉絲圈提供了與其他地區進行文化和知識交流的便捷公共平台。如今在中國讀這本書時，粉絲圈的本地化和全球化的意義都很重要。

因此，我希望美國粉絲圈發生的改變，其細節對中國讀者來說會有趣，而我提出的大概念框架能夠成為思考影響自己文化變遷的工具。但是需要翻譯——不僅是一字一句的翻譯，而是梳理全文，看哪些在中國背景下有用，哪些沒有。

LZ: 你在書中提到了粉絲勞動的商品化，以及粉絲文化生產中粉絲社群價值與娛樂產業的商業利益之間的矛盾。例如第五章與第七章中提及的同人誌與同人視頻的盜版翻版，第八章中的同人音樂專業化問題。但是如果這些都是娛樂產業收編粉絲生產的早期信號，那麼隨著Web 2.0時代的到來，「產消者勞動」(prosumer labor)就成了最大的價值增長點。在中國的背景下，過去三五年中，我們一方面看到了業餘文化生產者(有些是未來的專業人員)不斷上升的創業熱情，將自己針對目標觀眾的文化生產積極變現，比如優酷和土豆上的「自媒體」；另一方面，文化產業出現越發策略性應用粉絲和粉絲文化生產模式的商品化趨勢。那麼你認為社群基礎的「禮物經濟」(gift economy)框架對於理解當今粉絲文化是否依然有效？在面對如今變化的時候又在多大程度上有效？

HJ: 稱粉絲圈為「禮物經濟」需要一些條件。至少，作為禮物經濟，它是和消費經濟相關聯的。傳統的禮物經濟中，通過禮物贈送，社交貨幣(social currency)因而產生。粉絲圈的禮物卻是從別人的知識資本中誕生：它們由資本主義經濟中創造產品以謀利的人製造而來。粉絲利用這些文化產品作為原材料，創造出自己的文化。他們挪用或混剪流行文化，以此為基礎，創造出同人小說、視頻、角色扮演和音樂。消費經濟中，將商品變為禮物的現象非常

常見，每次我們買禮物，剪去價格標簽，送給別人以表達自己的情感時都是如此。但我們對接下來的事有道德約束。如果轉頭就將別人送的禮物賣掉是很傷人的。

因此，粉絲圈歷史上對於從其他粉絲身上賺錢一事也有道德約束，所以對Web 2.0企業企圖將粉絲的禮物商品化以謀取利益的行為有積極抵制。粉絲不一定希望從自己的創作中獲利，但是他們絕不希望看到自己喜愛的勞動被出賣，讓不相幹的人獲利。

同時，也存在安吉拉·麥克羅比（1994）所謂的亞文化創業傳統：在所需產品和設施不能從其他文化生產者處獲得時，由亞文化內部的成員來創造產品，或者為社群提供重要的基礎設施。比如說，早期亞文化創業為美國御宅族（Otaku）引進和翻譯漫畫和動畫起到了重要的作用。在此過程中，他們為產品建立了市場。即使是更專業的企業開始購買並在美國市場上發行同樣的劇集，粉絲們對粉絲經營的企業也一直保持忠誠。

粉絲圈作為亞文化的禮物經濟價值以及讓他們開始創業的商業動機之間永遠存在緊張關係。無論是亞文化創業者還是向或不向他們購買商品的其他粉絲，粉絲圈中對此一直積極討論。因為在粉絲圈的參與史，創業者在很多方面受到了更高的道德約束；但同時，他們也備受信任，除非粉絲發現信任受到了違背，不然會一直持續下去。粉絲圈的禮物經濟特性這一簡單概念因為這些情況而複雜化，但是粉絲圈的資本主義背景從開始就令任何簡單的禮物經濟概念都不再簡單。我仍然堅持禮物經濟的概念對於理解粉絲圈的理想和道德準則很有幫助，並且當這種理想沒有達到的時候，也提供了有效的批評基礎。

LZ: 第一代粉絲研究學者基於粉絲被大眾（錯誤地）看作消極消費者這一假設，提出了粉絲反抗（resistance）這一概念。然而，儘管粉絲和企業之間仍然存在權力差異，粉絲是積極的文化生產者這一觀念在現在的社會已經廣受承認。至少現在的文化產業已經成了粉絲生產的最熱情的支持者，不斷推動、疏導甚至剝削粉絲勞動。你認為「反抗」概念如今對於文化研究仍然是有用的分析方式嗎？如此，您認為後Web 2.0時代的反抗是怎樣的形式？

HJ: 沒錯，媒體產業正在尋求以自己的生產和發布邏輯納入、反饋並包容粉絲圈的某些方面。部分粉絲在這種新經濟中獲益，有些人因此對媒體產業的決策極為高興。另外一些人則被系統性地排除在外，聲音無法傳達，意見被忽略。因此他們必須繼續積極反抗並質疑產業決策。粉絲圈就成了共同公共領域中集體行為的基礎，表達共同的不滿，產生另類願景。粉絲質疑一切：從社會性別、種族和性（sexuality）的表達，到知識產權管理的政策決定，因此，我確實認為描述現在粉絲圈的某些方面時，反抗概念依舊是有效的。

同時，我越來越後悔在關於粉絲圈的早期學術寫作中沒有多寫一些它是一個協商的空間（a space of negotiation），這個概念可以追溯到斯圖爾特·霍爾（1980）、克里斯汀·葛蘭希爾（1986）、傑奎琳·波波（1995）等人的論著。重點是粉絲們確實熱愛流行媒體商品的許多方面：粉絲們以媒體商品中他們覺得有意義的材料為起點構造自己的文化身份，但是挪用和混剪也讓我們看到，粉絲們常常需要盡力把故事按照自己的經驗扭轉。即使文本創造時並未為粉絲考慮，粉絲的行為也使得他們能將這些文本視作己有，這就將粉絲變為協商的讀者。

在此意義上，協商並非固定的立場，而是在粉絲個人或社群與媒體產品互動的過程中不斷進行的過程。就像我在《俠膽雄獅》那一章中所言，粉絲會愛上也會拋棄一部劇集，因為有時它滿足了他們的興趣，有時則背叛他們的心意。因此我們需要一個更加動態的模型來描述粉絲接受和轉變的過程，遠非單純的合作和反抗所能概括。現下我傾向於回到協商這個概念來描述此類過程。

LZ: 我們的對談中經常出現當代社會文化、政治、經濟融合的概念。這種轉變的一大推動力是全球範圍內電子文化產業的迅速擴張。《文本盜獵者》是在20世紀80年代這種趨勢剛剛在美國出現時寫下的，而在中國，這種趨勢是在20世紀90年代後期個人電腦在日益增長的城市中產階級中普及時開始的。就像您所言，新技術工具和平台讓自我表達和社群形成更為便利。「參與」的重要性模糊了文化、政治和商業之間的界限。這迫使我們重新檢視和更新理

論和分析工具，因為之前的許多理論是建立在文化、政治和商業彼此獨立的假設基礎上的。

你在作品中強調了消費者 / 公民 / 生產者和主導勢力之間的鬥爭，生產出擁有另類價值系統的社群，引發正面的社會變革，但是很多學者卻更強調消費者參與的條件和機制早已被新自由主義權力秩序（neoliberal regime of power）所限定。這種分歧僅僅是由學者的學術訓練和個人身份認同所決定的嗎？據我所知，你一直積極讓這些不同的觀念開展直接對話，因此依你看來，我們應當如何從這種學術爭論中獲益，來理解我們所經歷的這一變革？

HJ: 當然，這區別往往都歸因於重點不同。我認為我的作品平衡了盛行的批判研究和文化研究著作——強調草根權力受到的結構性限制，而我則一次又一次地指向粉絲和其他草根社群的集體主動性（collective agency）。我也努力地指出其中的限制，但是已經有那麼多人在做這件事了，我並不覺得我在這方面能做出重要貢獻。如果完全只關注結構性限制，就會因其悲觀主義而止步不前，也會忽視文化參與的鬥爭中所贏得的新領地。

當代媒體理論中有一個趨勢，過度強調學術批判的批評性一面，而掩蓋了其他可能的功用，其中之一我稱為倡導。作倡導者，看到人們對不同文化、經濟和社會結構進行的試驗，想像當下情境的另類選擇，發展不同種類的社群和身份時，我想要放大這些努力。專註於批判可能會讓我們在無法看到未來的發展，無法權衡得失的時候，就提前關閉了很多可能性。

因此，我在文化景象中尋找希望和可能性的瞬間。這樣做使我時常受到太過樂觀的批評。我接受這種批評因為確實如此。但我認為說明我們奮鬥的目標而不只是我們鬥爭的對象是非常重要的。對我來說，最有效的做法就是找到探索另類選擇的群體，並從他們的角度來觀看世界。在《文本盜獵者》中，媒體粉絲圈給了我這樣的出發點。對我來說，以粉絲的身份寫作可以成為對既定做法的批判。但是粉絲身份的部分意義在於重新塑造或想像你不滿意的內容，而不是直接拒絕它們，而學術批判則往往毀滅他們

所批判的，在身體政治層面上直接嚙肉蝕骨。

LZ: 按書中的理解，粉絲圈是女性為主角的性別化文化。在中國，粉絲圈性別相關的一面通常是在近年來興起的耽美文化相關話題中討論的。你對耽美文化的理解是正面的，是對女性的賦權，給女性一個空間表述性欲望，並實驗另類性別身份。但在中國，對耽美的評價並不一致，有些人認為耽美是女性掌握主動權將凝視調轉到男性的身體上，並顯示了中國社會對同性戀的日漸寬容；有些人則哀嘆耽美中女性缺失就是強化女性馴服。後者認為壓倒性的女性禁欲主義和卑微地位使耽美在中國流行。你認為《文本盜獵者》如何幫助中國讀者更好地理解耽美在當代中國的流行？

HJ: 在美國也一直有類似的反調：將男性人物作為全部注意力的中心就抹消了女性的生活和身份。如果要回應這個論調，女性角色罕見部原因是在商業化媒體中女性早已被邊緣化：女性角色不夠豐滿，不夠令人信服，她們的人際關係表現粗糙，粉絲們也就無從改編起。當然，我的書中也寫到，有些類別的同人小說會將女性角色發掘出豐滿複雜的形象。但是，考慮到需要多大的改寫才能讓她們獲得新生，在此基礎上的一大挑戰其實在於讓女性角色不走形，在粉絲眼中仍然還是原劇裏的人物。

當然有公然厭女的耽美同人，貶抑女性來創造男人相愛的機會，粉絲們自己也在積極地批評這類表達。長期以來，這些作品已經越來越少見，就像耽美同人中不假思索的恐同內容也隨著粉絲圈內部有關人類性向的討論而減少一樣。

美國的媒體界在過去幾十年變化極大，媒體作品中出現了越來越多有力的豐滿的女性人物，儘管在多樣性和包容性上仍要繼續努力。這些變化出現後，我們看到了更多這類人物的同人小說，其中包括男女之間以平等身份相愛的故事。然而耽美同人仍然流行，原因很多。

有一點需要說明，《文本盜獵者》和其他關注異性戀女性撰寫男男性愛的早期學術著作，其實只有部分正確。我們今天普遍承認的是，耽美同人是各種不同性向的女人（和一些男人，雖然主要還是女人）互相共享情色故事，表達自我性向的文類，但都圍

繞著一群共享的男性人物身體展開。共享的身體在此處指這些女人將自己的幻想定位於同一群人物之上，因此她們之間存在某種主體間互動。共享故事創造了一個情色的親密空間，讓美國和中國文化中的女性（她們從小都被告知不能公開地表達性感受）能夠開放地談論欲望。事實證明，這是粉絲文化中最進步的方面之一。

LZ: 讀到第二章中粉絲們在前互聯網時代互相幫助，嘗試「解碼」非英語內容的時候實在是很有趣，比如說在集體觀影時「解碼」、「大聲喊出」聽懂了的外語內容。這讓我想起了中國已經多有討論的字幕組現象。在過去十年，我們見證了中國字幕組文化的興起，而如今字幕組在政府審查和以盈利為目的的視頻網站之間掙扎求生。隨著中國幾大視頻網站成功在國際市場上市，依靠訂閱的外國影視觀看模式正在形成固定制度。然而字幕組文化仍然在產業的邊緣生存，面向小眾節目以及主流商業網站上沒有翻譯的非中文文化作品。您認為字幕組對中國年輕人為什麼有這樣長期的吸引力？如今在全球科技和媒體景觀下，作為共享經濟的字幕組會面臨怎樣的挑戰？

HJ: 我無法對這種特定形式為何在中國出現做出評論，因為粉絲圈在不同背景下演化的軌跡不盡相同。我能說的是美國粉絲中出現了極為相近的現象，至今字幕組仍然是他們獲得特定文化產品（尤其是亞洲產品）的重要手段。在美國，粉絲也陷在製作「專業」粉絲字幕的商業利益以及各種政府限制的夾縫之中，當然這些限制一般是知識產權上的。

那麼，為什麼字幕組一直存在？首先，也許繞過雙方政府和市場的限制，創立並維持一個地下傳播渠道本身就具有反抗性的浪漫色彩。沒錯，粉絲很樂於把自己看作海盜和叛逆者。但同時也出於參與的意識，成為重視你技能和專長的大社區的一員，向他人傳播你所珍視的媒體作品，這是字幕組工作過程中十分社會化的一面。在美國，很多人學習日語、中文或者韓語，就是為了在美國觀眾中推廣他們所喜愛的亞洲電視劇或者動畫；他們因此訓練出的文化專業能力超越了簡單粗糙的語言翻譯，並提供商業

翻譯中不存在的文化註解。粉絲的翻譯一般細節周備，因為粉絲們在乎這些細節。

粉絲翻譯一般比商業翻譯快得多。粉絲更樂意冒險將新文類引進新的文化背景，而商業製作者則只追求有固定市場的內容。因此，很長一段時間內，美國粉絲只做沒有商業引進版本的作品的字幕，一旦有商業引進便撤下粉絲字幕，以此為道德追求。但這個道德標準正在失效，因為粉絲們發現完全依賴商業翻譯會喪失很多東西。

LZ:《文本盜獵者》中還有什麼您認為20年後需要更多關注的話題？或者您覺得對中國讀者來說尤為相關的？

HJ: 我來把問題掉個頭吧。讓我來提出一些問題，來理解粉絲文化在中國語境下紮根的方式。我希望有些讀者能在自己的研究中觸及這些問題，說不定還能把回應發給我。

在最基礎的層面上，我們首先要理解粉絲圈在與美國不同的文化背景下是如何運轉的，知識、文化、社會、政治和經濟傳統不同，體制規範和政策不同，對個人主義和個人表達的看法不同，私人產權政治體制等等。很難說哪種情況更耐人尋味，是粉絲圈自身的規則和行為無論文化差異地保持一致呢，還是進入新背景的時候會被重新定義和想像？

如果說粉絲文化可以理解為圍繞他人生產的媒體作品而展開的協商，那麼發生在中國的協商是怎樣的？如果粉絲時常重新想像流行故事中的人物，以探討自己對性別和性向的觀點，那麼在中國式性別和性向理解的基礎上，這些被重新想像的共享人物會發生怎樣的改變？如果粉絲圈是一種新的消費主義，那麼中國粉絲圈的出現和中國文化社會中更大規模的消費主義擴張有什麼樣的聯繫？如果粉絲圈促進了文化間的交流，那麼中國粉絲與其他地區的粉絲建立聯繫的時候產生了怎樣的交流？是怎樣的社交流通促進了這些交流？如果粉絲文化中包含本地化過程，那麼中國觀眾是怎樣反向適應日本、韓國、英國和美國生產的文本的？考慮到這些國家跟中國都有複雜的歷史淵源？

每個新的粉絲圈在回應流行媒體的不同文類和風格的時候，都提出新問題，發展新形式，那麼中國粉絲關注到以他們為目標受眾的文本時，出現了怎樣的新活動？如果西方的媒體產業已經調整行為方式以應對Web 2.0時代更活躍、高調、組織化的觀眾群體，那麼中國的媒體生產者又是如何適應自己國家影響力日益增加的粉絲呢？

這些問題都僅僅觸及了表面，但我希望我的意思已經表達清楚了。中國讀者讀這本書的時候，我希望他們能用自己的經驗來檢驗書中的論點，將本書作為植根於其文化和歷史特殊性的粉絲圈可能形式的一個範例，從中獲取一些概念性工具或者問題，來探究當代中國或其他地方的粉絲圈。

LZ: 鑒於電子文化產業在中國經濟和人民日常生活中正變得越來越重要，粉絲文化也必然得到越來越多的學術關注。我相信《文本盜獵者》的出版能給中國學者、粉絲以及媒體產業從業者帶來更多了解美國粉絲圈和粉絲文化研究的機會，也會成為跨文化對話、創意性挪用和爭論的基礎，最終為建立粉絲文化的跨國共同體做出貢獻。

亨利· 詹金斯著作選

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Academic Dialogue with **Henry Jenkins**

Textual Poachers in China

HJ: Henry JENKINS
LZ: Lin ZHANG

LZ: It is such an honor and precious opportunity to have a conversation with Dr. Henry Jenkins on his now canonical book *Textual Poachers*, taking the occasion of the publication of its Chinese translation. I first encountered *Textual Poachers* in a graduate seminar on cultural studies and digital media at NYU in 2007. At that time, I had just moved to New York from Beijing to pursue graduate studies in Communication. As an international student, the Internet quickly became the most important medium through which that I kept abreast of what was happening in China. Back in China, it was also a time of transition into the so-called "Web 2.0 era" where grassroots cultural production exploded with the rise of personal blogs (microblogs), video sharing websites, and online gaming etc. I became fascinated by the emergence of *egao* culture (恶搞文化) in China—a cultural phenomenon in which ordinary people, no longer satisfied with being merely passive consumers of mass culture, started to appropriate the content of mass culture for personal cultural expression and even popular social critique using the new digital tools made available by Web 2.0 technologies.

I was searching for an academic language that would help me make sense of those changes, and Dr. Jenkins' *Textual Poachers*, and many other works, such as *Convergence Culture*, provided just what I needed.[1] Although *Textual Poachers* was written more than twenty years ago in the late 1980s and early 1990s and focused mainly on the Euro-American cultural experience, the metaphor of the "textual poacher," the consumer-turned cultural producer who refuses to be a passive recipient of commercial culture, and who purposely makes use of mass culture to serve

their own needs of cultural articulation and community formation, speaks powerfully to the experience of the Web 2.0 grassroots cultural producers in China. At the same time, Dr. Jenkins also emphasized the importance of cultural and historical specificities in his book, as he said that "we must be careful to attend to the particularities of specific instances of critical reception, cultural appropriation, and popular pleasure," "their precise historical context," and "concrete social and cultural circumstances" (pp. 35–36).

So I would like to start our conversation by asking you to give us a sense of the socio-historical context in which *Textual Poachers* was produced and in what ways you think this book would be interesting and relevant for Chinese readers today?

HJ: First, I am excited to be sharing this book with readers in China and honored that the publishers there regard it as still meaningful more than two decades after I wrote it. Your experiences and perspectives have helped me to understand in what ways this book may be particularly meaningful in the Chinese context.

You are right to signal the historical and cultural specificity of this account. On one level, *Poachers* describes what was happening amongst American fans (and to some degree, English-speaking fans elsewhere) at a key transitional moment in the evolution of participatory culture. On another, the book offers some broad concepts that can help us understand grassroots media-making and participatory culture more generally.

At the time I wrote the book, fandom was still largely hidden from public view—something that occurred through informal channels. Fans shared what they made and what they thought with each other through the postal service. Their stories were printed via xerox machines. Their videos were copied one by one using VCRs. Their activities carried enormous social stigma and were not understood by the press or the academy. And they were afraid of legal action being taken against them by the media companies that controlled the intellectual properties which they wanted to remix and retell. This book was part of the process by which the fan community began to redefine its identity, assert a more public voice, and defend its practices against outside parties.

Around the edges here, you will see signs that the digital era was beginning, that soon these transactions would take place at greater speed and scale via the internet, that the web would provide new platforms for sharing this content, and that the ranks of fans would expand as more people discovered their values and practices. You can also—if you look closely—see a few glimpses of a more global fan culture, as fans were discovering anime and manga from Japan and action films from Hong Kong, and they were seeking ways to connect with their counterparts in those countries.

As I understand it through my students from China, a similar process is taking place in China today, as fans there are embracing programmes from Japan, Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States as fan interests, using the net to connect with fans elsewhere, discovering their established practices and adapting them for the Chinese context, including applying them to Chinese media franchises. Fans in every country have redefined fandom on their own terms, but they have also found the common ground fandom offers as a way of facilitating cultural exchanges and intellectual encounters with people elsewhere. Both the localizing and cosmopolitan aspects of fandom are important as you think about what it might mean to read this book in China today.

So, my hope is that the details of how American fandom made these changes will be interesting to Chinese readers, that the larger conceptual frameworks may give people tools to think about changes impacting their own culture. But there is a need for translation here—more than just translating one word into another, really a sorting through of what works and what doesn't in the Chinese context.

LZ: You touched upon the issue of commodification of fan labor and the tension between the community values of the fans and the commercial interests of the entertainment industries regarding fan cultural production. For instance, in Chapters 5 and 7, you mentioned the bootlegging of fanzines and fan vidding; and in Chapter 8, you discussed the implications of filking professionalization. However, if these were just early signs of the entertainment industry's "incorporation" of fan production, as

we entered the "Web 2.0 era," "prosumer labor" has become the most important site of value generation. In the Chinese context, we have witnessed in the past three to five years, on one hand, the rising entrepreneurialist fervor of amateur cultural producers (some are professionals in training) that consciously monetize their cultural labor to target niche audience groups, as illustrated by the boom in "me media" (自媒體) channels on China's Youtube site Youku and Tudou; and on the other hand, the cultural industry's increasingly strategic engagement with fans and its commercialization of fannish mode of cultural production. For instance, in my current dissertation fieldwork with venture capital-backed app developers, I have encountered several entrepreneurs who are in the process of making smart phone apps that centre around the logic of "fan economy" (粉絲經濟). So how and to what extent do you think that the community-based "gift economy" framework is still useful to understanding fan culture today as we are grappling with these changes?

HJ: To call fandom a gift economy requires some qualification. Minimally, it is a gift economy that operates in relation to a consumer economy. A traditional gift economy is one where social currency is created through gift-giving. Fandom's gifts, however, begin life as someone else's intellectual capital: they are produced by people who are creating them to make money within a capitalist economy. Fans, then, use those cultural products as the raw materials from which they create their culture. So, they are appropriating and remixing popular culture as the basis for fan fiction, videos, cosplay, and music. Turning products into gifts happens often in a consumer economy, whenever we buy a present for someone at a store, remove the price tag, and give it to them as a token of our affection. But we have ethical constraints about what happens next. It would be hurtful to turn around and sell something someone gave you as a gift.[2]

Fandom, thus, has historically had some ethical constraints about making money off of other fans and there has been active resistance here to Web 2.0 companies that have tried to turn fandom's gifts into commodities from which they can profit. Fans do not necessarily want to be paid for what they create, but they do not want to see their labors of love sold for someone else's profit.

At the same time, there is also a strong tradition here of what Angela McRobbie (1994) has called subcultural entrepreneurs—that is, people who are members of a subculture and who create products or provide infrastructure seen as valuable within that community, especially those which are unlikely to emerge from other kinds of culture producers.[3] So, for example, early on subcultural entrepreneurs played a key role in importing and translating manga and anime for American otaku, helping to facilitate exchanges with Japan that had low priority for commercial interests. In the process, they established a market for these goods and fans have remained loyal to some of those fan-run companies even as more fully professionalized groups have begun to buy up rights to sell these same series in the US market.

There is always some tension here between the gift economy values of fandom as a subculture and the commercial motives which makes them entrepreneurs in the first place. Such issues are actively discussed amongst the subcultural entrepreneurs and other fans who chose to buy from them or not, and in many ways, they are held to a higher ethical standard because of their history of participation within fandom (but also, often, assumed to be trustworthy until they are found to have violated that trust). All of this complicates any simple idea of fandom as a gift economy, but the capitalist context of fandom complicates any pure notion of a gift economy from the start. I would still argue that the gift economy concept is helpful as a way of thinking about the ideals and ethical norms of fandom and it often provides the basis for critique when situations, as often happens, do not measure up to those ideals.

LZ: The very concept of fan resistance was proposed by the first generation of fan scholars based on the assumption that fans were (wrongly) perceived by the general public as passive consumers. However, though there is still a power difference between fans and corporations, the idea of fans as active cultural producers has been widely acknowledged by society today. If anything, the cultural industry has become the most enthusiastic champion of fan production, promoting, channeling or even exploiting fan labor. Do you think that the concept of "resistance"

is still a useful analytic in cultural studies today? If so, what in your mind constitutes resistance in the post-Web 2.0 era?

HJ: My discussion above of how American fans are weighing in around issues of diversity in Hollywood is simply one of many examples of the ways that fans are still actively and if anything more publically resistant to the agendas of the culture industries.

Yes, the media industry is seeking to incorporate, respond to, and contain some aspects of fandom within its own production/distribution logics. There are some fans who are being served in this new economy and some are especially happy about the decisions which are being made. Others are being systematically excluded, their voices are being silenced, their perspectives are ignored. So they must continue to actively resist or question those decisions. And fandom becomes the basis for collective action, for the articulation of shared complaints, for the emergence of alternative visions, from within a shared public sphere. Fans question everything from the representation of gender, race, and sexuality to the policies shaping how intellectual property is regulated, so I do think resistance is still useful to describe some particular aspects of fandom.

At the same time, I am more and more wishing we had said more in these early writings about fandom as a space of negotiation, a concept that we can trace back to Stuart Hall (1980), Christine Gledhill (1986), Jacqueline Bobo (1995), and others.[4] The point is that fans do love many aspects of these popular media franchises: they do provide them with materials they consider meaningful as a starting point for their own cultural identities, but appropriation and remixing also helps us to see cases where fans need to work harder to bring these stories into alignment with their own lived experiences. Fan practices allow fans to make these texts, which were often produced with someone else in mind, their own, and that makes fans the ultimate negotiating readers.

Negotiation, in this sense, is not a fixed position but rather an ongoing process which occurs at multiple points in the history of a fan's or a fan community's engagement with a favorite media property. Fans, as I discuss in the Beauty and the Beast chapter, fall in and out of love with a program, which sometimes serves their interests and other times turns its back on them. And so we need a

more dynamic model of fan reception and transformation than either co-optation or resistance provides. And right now, I am drawn back to the notion of negotiation to describe those processes.

LZ: It seems that a key idea that has emerged from our conversation so far is the convergence of culture, politics, and economy in contemporary society. A major driving force propelling such transformation is the rapid expansion of digital cultural industries on a global scale. I think *Textual Poachers* was written at a time when the industry had just begun to take off in the US in the late 1980s. In China, I would say that the digital trend really kicked off in the late 1990s with the popularization of personal computers among a growing urban middle class population. As you have described, new technological tools and platforms have made it easier for people to express and publicize their ideas and form communities. This growing momentum of "participation" often blurs the boundary between culture, politics, and commerce. This forces us, as scholars and students of media and communication, to re-examine and update our theoretical and analytic toolkits, many of which had been built on the assumption of the autonomy of culture, politics, and commerce.

While you seem to have emphasized in your work the cultural and political agency of the consumer/citizen/producer in struggling against dominant forces, generating communities of alternative values, and bringing about positive social changes, many others in our field tend to focus on mapping out the conditions and mechanisms through which such participation is already overdetermined by a new, for lack of a better phrase, neoliberal regime of power. Could we say that this divergence is just a matter of emphasis determined by factors such as the researchers' academic training and personal identification? As far as I know, you have been very active in bringing these different opinions into dialogue with each other. So from your perspective, where is this debate going and how could we render it more productive in making better sense of the transformation we are going through?

HJ: For sure, the differences often boil down to differences of emphasis. I see my work as providing counter-balance to prevailing accounts in critical and cultural studies which emphasize the structural constraints upon grassroots power; again and again, I find myself calling attention to the collective agency fans and other grassroots communities exercise. I am trying to more and more acknowledge the constraints, but there are so many others pointing them out that I do not see this as the primary place where I can make my contributions. A focus entirely on those structural constraints becomes crippling in its pessimism, and it fails to acknowledge all of the places where new ground is being gained in the ongoing struggles around cultural participation.

There has been a tendency in contemporary media theory to over-value critique at the expense of other functions that critical scholarship can perform. Among these is what I would call advocacy. As an advocate, I want to amplify struggles that are taking place, as people experiment with different cultural, economic, and social structures, imagine alternatives to current conditions, and develop different kinds of communities and identities. A focus on critique can foreclose such possibilities prematurely, before we can see what is going to happen or understand what is at stake.

So, I look for moments of hope and possibility in the cultural landscape. In doing so, I sometimes get accused of being too optimistic, and I will accept that criticism as having some validity. But I see it as important to articulate what we are fighting for and not just what we are fighting against. For me, the most effective way to do so is to locate a group which is exploring alternatives and seeing what the world looks like from their vantage point. In *Textual Poachers*, media fandom provides me with that kind of a starting point. For me, writing as a fan can be the basis for a critique of established practices. But part of being a fan is that you rework or reimagine elements that do not satisfy you rather than simply reject them, where-as critical studies often destroys what it critiques, leaving no flesh on the bone as it gnaws away at the body politic.

LZ: **In *Textual Poachers*, fandom was understood as a gendered culture with women as the protagonists. In China, the gendered**

aspect of fandom has been mostly discussed in relation to the flourishing of slash culture in recent years. In the book, you interpreted slash culture in a positive light as female empowerment that provided space for women to articulate their sexual desires and to experiment with alternative gender identities. In China, people hold competing views towards women's consumption and production of slash culture. Some extoll women's exercise of agency in re-directing the sexualized gaze back at male bodies and the Chinese society's greater openness to homosexuality, while others lament over the absence or flattening of female characters in slash culture as reinforcing female submission. The latter argues that it is the prevailing culture of female asceticism and inferiority that has contributed to the very popularity of slash in China. So how do you think that *Textual Poachers* will help Chinese readers make better sense of the contemporary popularity of slash culture in China?

HJ: There has always been similar pushback against slash in the American context: the sense that centering narratives almost entirely around male characters involves the erasure of women's lives and identities. Part of the response here has been that women are already marginalized in much of commercially produced media: the female characters are less meaty and less compelling, their relationships are grossly under-developed, and this gives fans less to work with. There have certainly been strands of fan fiction, as I mention in the book, that reclaim these female characters and offer fuller, more rounded versions of them. But, the challenge is to do this in such a way that those characters remain recognizable amongst the fan women writers and readers, given how much active work is required to reinvent them on the page.

We can see some examples of slash which are openly misogynistic—dismissing the female characters in order to make way for the male characters to love each other—and fans themselves have been actively critical of these kinds of representations. Over time, they have become less and less frequent, just as unthinking homophobia within slash fiction has been decreased by active discussions about human sexuality within fandom.

The American media-scape has changed over the past few

decades in dramatic ways, including the introduction of more powerful, more fully defined female characters, though there are still struggles over diversity and inclusion. Where this has taken place, we've seen more stories being written about these characters, including more stories where men and women can love each other as equals. But slash has remained a very popular genre for many reasons.

For one thing, the early emphasis in Poachers and elsewhere on straight women writing stories about male-male sex is only partially accurate. Today, we would acknowledge that slash is a genre where women (and some men, but it is still mostly women) of diverse sexualities share erotic stories with each other as an expression of their sexualities but focused around the shared bodies of male characters. By shared bodies, I mean that these women map their fantasies onto the same sets of characters so that some kinds of intersubjective exchange can take place amongst them. Sharing such stories creates a space of erotic intimacy, allowing women, who are often in our culture as well as yours told to repress the overt display of sexual feelings, to talk openly about their desires, and this has proven to be one of the most progressive aspect of fan culture.

LZ: It's really amusing to read in chapter 2 about the mutual assistance among fans when they try to "decipher" non-English materials in the pre-Internet days, such as how fans encouraged each other to "shout out" their comprehension of foreign materials during group viewing. This reminds me of the much-discussed phenomenon of "fansubbing" (字幕組) in China. In the past decade, we have seen the boom and decline of fansubbing culture in China as fansubbers have been struggling to survive in-between government censors and the incorporation of profit-driven video sharing sites. With the successful international IPO of several major Chinese video sharing sites, the subscription-based model of viewing foreign TV and movies has gradually become institutionalized. However, fansubbing culture persists on the margins of the industry targeting niche shows and non-Chinese cultural materials whose translation are unavailable on mainstream commercial sites. Why do you think that fansubbing

has such an enduring appeal to young people in China, and what are the challenges faced by fansubbing as a sharing economy (共享經濟) in today's global technological and media scene?

HJ: I can't speak directly about why certain patterns have emerged in China, again because of the cultural and historical specifics of how fandom evolves differently in different contexts. I can say that very similar developments have occurred amongst American fans for whom fansubbing also remains a very important practice in helping them to gain access to cultural materials, especially from Asia. Here, also, fans are getting caught between commercial interests doing more "professional" versions of fan sub and various kinds of government restrictions, which here mostly have to do with intellectual property rights.

So, why does fan subbing persist? First, there is probably a romance with the subversiveness of creating and maintaining an underground communication channel which routes around both governmental constraints and market constraints. Yes, fans like to think of themselves as pirates and rebels. But there is also a sense of participation—of being part of a larger community which values your skills and expertise, of helping to share media you value with others, and this is very much a pro-social aspect of the fan subbing process. Here, many people have learned Japanese, Chinese, or Korean languages to help make their favorite Asian-produced dramas or cartoons more available to American fans; they have developed cultural expertise which go beyond crude or simple translations and often annotate their videos with information about the culture which is not present in the commercially produced translations of these same programmes. Fan translations are often more nuanced because fans care about those nuances.

Fan translations often come together much faster than commercial translations. Fans are apt to take more risks in introducing new genres into a new cultural context, whereas commercial producers go after content with a proven market. So, for a long time, American fans had an ethical commitment to fan sub only content that was not commercially available here and withdraw it when the commercial versions were made available. But that ethic is breaking down as fans realize what they miss out on when they

rely exclusively on commercially produced and distributed translations.

LZ: Are there any other issues discussed in *Textual Poachers* that you think should have deserved more attention after two decades or would be of particular interest to the Chinese readership?

HJ: Let me turn this around and suggest some of the things I would be interested in understanding about the ways fan culture is taking root within a Chinese context. I hope some of the people reading this book may tackle some of these questions through their own scholarship and perhaps send their responses back in my direction.

At the most basic level, we need to understand how fandom operates in a different cultural context, one with different intellectual, cultural, social, political, and economic traditions, different institutional norms and policies, different ideas about individualism and personal expression, different intellectual property regimes, etc., than in the United States. It is hard to know which would be more remarkable—if fandom's own norms and practices asserted themselves across these differences or if they were redefined and reimagined as they were introduced into this new context.

If fan culture is understood as a kind of negotiation around media produced by and for others, then what kinds of negotiations are taking place in China? If fans often reimagine the characters of popular stories to explore their own ideas about gender and sexuality, how will shared characters change as they get reimagined in relation to Chinese understandings of gender and sexuality? If fandom has been a particular kind of consumerism, then in what ways does the emergence of Chinese fandom relate to the larger expansion of consumerism in Chinese culture and society? If fandom facilitates exchanges across cultures, then what new kinds of exchanges are emerging as fans in China connect with their counterparts elsewhere, and what kinds of currency enable those exchanges? If fan culture involves a process of localization, how are Chinese audiences retrofitting texts produced in Japan, Korea, Great Britain, and the United States (countries which each have complex histories in their relations with China)? Each new fandom has raised new issues, developed new forms, as it responds to different genres and styles of

popular media, so what new practices have been introduced as Chinese fans shift their attention to texts that are generated with Chinese audiences in mind? If, as we've suggested here, media industries in the west have adapted their practices to deal with a more active, more visible, more networked audience in the Web 2.0 era, how will media producers in China adjust to the growing visibility and influence of fans within their country?

These questions scratch the surface, but hopefully my point is made. As Chinese audiences read this book, I hope they will test its claims against their own experiences, taking it as one possible model for what fandom might look like, one grounded in its own cultural and historical particulars, and perhaps as providing them with a set of conceptual tools or questions they can use to explore what fandom looks like in contemporary China or elsewhere around the world.

LZ: Given the increasingly significant role that the digital cultural industries play in China's economy and people's everyday life, fan culture will surely garner more and more scholarly attention. I believe that the publication of *Textual Poachers* in Chinese will provide an opportunity for Chinese scholars, fans, and practitioners in the media industry to learn more about the history of fandom and fan studies in the US. This will serve as the basis for more cross-cultural conversation, creative appropriation and even debate, which will ultimately contribute to building up a transnational community of fan studies.

Notes

1 Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture*. New York: New York University Press.

2 Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2013). *Spreadable media: Creating meaning and value in a networked society*. New York: New York University Press.

3 McRobbie, A. (1994). *Postmodernism and popular culture*. London: Routledge.

4 (i) Bobo, J. (1995). *Black women as cultural readers*. New York: Columbia University Press. (ii) Gledhill, C. (1986). Pleasurable negotiations. In E. D. Pribram (Ed.), *Female spectators: Looking at film and television* (pp. 64–89). London: Verso. (iii) Hall, S. (1980). Encoding/decoding. In S. Hall et al. (Eds.), *Culture, media, language* (pp. 134–148). London: Hutchinson, 1980.

Selected Works by Henry Jenkins

Please refer to the end of the Chinese version of the dialogue for Henry Jenkins's selected works.