

Dead Heads' Network

ABSTRACT

Though Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) research is generally studied from the viewpoint of the kind of change the emergence of the new medium brings to the style of our communication, I examine the relationships between the fan culture of the Grateful Dead and CMC in this article, using the viewpoint of how people, who already share common values and styles of communication, use the new medium as well as how the medium satisfies them. Then, I examine the present state of the Dead Heads network in Japan and their shared ethos through the analysis of the mailing list of J-heads. As a result of the analysis, it was confirmed that there was a “sharing of strong community consciousness”, “the repulsion toward commercialism”, and “an open network” among Dead Heads. Since this paper is only a rough survey, I would like to continue to examine the actual cases of CMC respectively and describe the process of rapid changes of media and society. Then, I would like to research the dynamic process of the state of the media which is created and constructed in social relationships, avoiding falling into the argument which claims that the improvement of the technology determines every social change.

key words: computer mediated communication, fandom, subculture