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# Promoting fan labor and "all things Web": A case study of *Tosh.0*

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[0.1] Abstract—Television programs are increasingly paired with interactive media platforms in attempts to reach fragmented audiences though a medium where millions are now seeking entertainment—the Internet. Programs' online presences are cultivated and promoted by paid staffers and unpaid fan laborers. Producers monetize fan activity by guiding its form on their sites. Utilizing the concepts of sticky and spreadable media, an analysis of the Comedy Central show *Tosh.0* Web site demonstrates how producers can promote particular types of interactivity through the content and architecture of a multimodal Web site. By designing a site that centralizes the use of popular social media, the producers of *Tosh.0* concentrate fans and benefit from their creative labor. Furthermore, this study serves as a test for the scope and usefulness of the concepts of sticky and spreadable media in revealing strategic Web site design that encourages specific types of user participation.

[0.2] Keywords—Audience participation; Multimodal Web site; Spreadable media; Sticky media

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[0.3] The only thing the Internet didn't ruin was my career. I jumped on that train and rode it all the way to verified status on Twitter.

—Daniel Tosh, *Tosh.0.*, season 3, episode 14

## 1. Introduction

[1.1] Rapid convergence of Internet and televisual technologies has altered audience viewing habits and behaviors. Television programming has evolved, attempting to reach increasingly fragmented and Internet-based audiences with the addition of new media platforms to their brands. Gillan (2011) explains these efforts as part of the "Must-Click TV" model, describing "new media-influenced network programming, marketing, broadcasting, and distribution strategies and audience reception practices" (1). This model relies on Web 2.0 infrastructure and fan involvement and highlights an interactive relationship between program producers and fans. The interaction can be described as a feedback loop where the means of media production have expanded into the hands of the fans, and fan practices are imported and translated back into the industry (Watson 2010). This translation links the concept of fan labor to the maintenance of emerging multimodal brand Web sites. In other words, fan labor such as summarizing, editorializing, and modifying texts is monetized through a new technological and economic regime that has been developing over the past two decades (Gillan 2011; Milner 2009).

[1.2] The extraction of economic value from user-generated content is, as Banks and Humphreys (2008) suggest, "a dynamic and emergent process which transforms the practices of businesses and capital" (2). Sites may structurally position content to "spread" and navigation to "stick" users to the site (Jenkins, Ford, and Green 2013). The concepts of sticky and spreadable media are becoming increasingly popularized and are positioned as rivals to the dominant viral metaphor for content that spreads quickly. Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013) have discussed a series of examples to conceptualize stickiness and spreadability, but the concepts must be further applied in research to determine the degree to which they are useful for studying new media and fan phenomena.

[1.3] This article examines how the *Tosh.0* Web site employs social media and interactive platforms to engage fans in creative labor to benefit the brand. Through a design that centralizes the use of popular social media, the *Tosh.0* site concentrates fans and supports particular types of creative labor that contribute to and benefit the *Tosh.0* brand. This study serves as a test for the scope and usefulness of the concepts of sticky and spreadable media for revealing strategic Web site design that encourages specific types of valuable fan labor. Toward this end, research was guided by the following questions: What aspects of the *Tosh.0* Web site design support fans working for the brand? How do the concepts of sticky and spreadable media clarify the strategic form and function of the *Tosh.0* Web site? In the following sections I will first discuss *Tosh.0*'s intermedia context and the organizing principles of sticky and spreadable media. Next, I explicate the method employed for data collection and analysis. After a presentation of findings, I assess the presence of sticky media and spreadable media strategies on the Web site. Finally, I discuss how the recognition of these strategies is useful for understanding the form and content of the Web site and how fan labor is guided and used.

## 2. *Tosh.0*'s Intermedia Context

[2.1] *Tosh.0* self-declares that it is "cable TV's most trusted source for exhibitionist weirdoes, injurious idiots and all things Web" (*Tosh.0* 2012). The show stars stand-up comedian Daniel Tosh and features an array of video clips collected from the Internet and produced by both the show and fans. As the clips are played, Tosh engages the videos by commenting on them in a sardonic comedic style that Tosh euphemistically described in one interview as "honest and unguarded" (Parker 2009). Videos are also edited and parodied, and select "celebrities" (the people in particularly embarrassing, bizarre, or unbelievable clips) are interviewed and given a chance to "redeem" themselves to viewers in segments that the show calls "Web Redemptions".

[2.2] The *Tosh.0* Web site includes a blog, videos, images, and Twitter and Facebook comments from viewers. Tosh's comedy is crude, deliberately offensive, and sarcastic. A similar style of comedy is encouraged in fan-submitted comments on videos and photos and through specific calls for themed video submissions. Fan-submitted content adds value to the brand as an essential supplement to the site. If this content were removed today, the Web site would only host content from aired *Tosh.0* episodes and what limited amount of material is gathered by the two staff bloggers. Fan-submitted content regularly updates the site for the benefit of fans who want to be entertained and for *Tosh.0* whose producers want people to stay on the site longer in order to consume and contribute.

[2.3] This participation is the essence of fan labor when fans are what Milner (2009) describes as "active, creative, productive participants within the labor system surrounding the text they esteem. Simply put, fans work for the text" (494). He argues that activities are labor when they "build the brand" of the media text. Fans engage in value-enhancing labor by taking on part of the work of updating a text and making it interesting for themselves as well as providing feedback on content to producers (Andrejevic 2008). In addition, the more fans stick to a site, the more likely they may be to engage in activity that produces value for the brand such as sharing their own or others' videos to the site, clicking on ads, watching commercials that precede video clips, spreading videos that are branded with the *Tosh.0* logo and contain ads, and buying *Tosh.0* merchandise or tour tickets.

[2.4] Many television shows have Web sites that provide opportunities for audiences to "talk back" to each other and producers through comments, e-mail, and, in the case of competitive reality shows, voting for their favorite contestants (Andrejevic 2008; Gillan 2011; Jenkins 2006). Shows such as E!'s *Talk Soup* and ABC's *America's Funniest Home Videos* predated *Tosh.0* and utilized a comedian host, clips from other programs, and audience members. MTV's *Ridiculousness* (premiered in 2011) and G4's *Web Soup* (premiering just days after *Tosh.0*) also highlight rapidly spreading content while hosts provide comedic commentary, but their Web sites offered limited opportunities for fan interaction. The *Tosh.0* Web site is a better representation of the Web 2.0 model and was selected for study because of its unique design and heavy reliance on rapidly spreading material and user videos as main sources of content.

[2.5] Descriptions of Web 2.0 vary because the concept does not have hard definitional boundaries but a "gravitational core" (O'Reilly 2005, 1). The core consists of a set of principles and practices such as strategically positioning the Web as a platform for promoting, distributing, and redefining products where users control their own data (O'Reilly 2005). Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013, 297) describe Web 2.0 as a business model through which "commercial platforms seek to court and capture the participatory energies of desired markets and harness them toward their own ends." Pauwels and Hellriegel (2009, 52) define it as "Web development and Web design supporting interactive information sharing and collaboration on the World Wide Web." User participation is a hallmark of Web 2.0 and as social networking applications proliferate, users online are in a perpetual negotiation to determine where and how they will spend their time. Web sites that are designed to tempt users to stay longer and pay more attention to one place take on a quality that Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013) describe as sticky. Content can also be positioned to spread among Web sites and users and acquire a spreadable quality.

[2.6] Audiences desire interactive entertainment where as users they can "navigate, explore, create and construct" (McRae 2006, 6). The results of a 2011 longitudinal study on the influence of computers, the Internet, and related technologies on families and society reported that 46 percent of users visited social networking and video-sharing sites weekly, and the importance of the Internet to maintaining social relationships was at an all-time high (Lebo 2011). This demonstrates users' desires for socialization and interaction with others and arguably their interest in amateur content on video-sharing sites. *Tosh.0* capitalizes on these desires and has crafted a site where fans are encouraged to work for the brand by gathering and creating content for the site, communicating with others about site content, and spreading content marked with the *Tosh.0* brand to other sites, fans, and Internet users.

## 3. Spreadable and sticky strategies

[3.1] Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013) describe sticky strategies as techniques to centralize audience presence in particular online locations. Web sites operating under sticky philosophies attempt to grab and hold the attention of audiences, which is important for advertising revenue and sales. Traced back to the term's popularization in Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point* (2000), stickiness broadly refers to "the need to create content that attracts audience attention and engagement" (Jenkins, Ford, and Green 2013, 4). Stickiness models attempt to concentrate audience attention to a particular location by putting material in centralized places. Similar to an all-inclusive resort, stickiness attempts to provide the user with a homogenous experience and all the content needed to keep users on the site. Prestructured activities for visitors assist in creating a homogenous experience and holding the interest of individuals. For example, sites may post games, quizzes, and contests to hook a user into interacting with the site. Users and audiences are often treated as passive individuals that can be controlled.

[3.2] Spreadability emphasizes the dispersion of content across multiple sites and to users so that they do not have to visit the content's original site in order to interact with it. Spreadability serves a heterogeneous environment where users can circulate media texts for different purposes, and social connections communally shape their experiences with material. In other words, it embraces the

practices of "textual poaching" where fans "appropriate popular texts and reread them in a fashion that serves different interests" (Jenkins 1992, 23). Participation is open ended and audiences can utilize content in unrestricted ways. Spreadability values audiences being active participants in "spreading the word" about brands and assumes that "anything worth hearing will circulate through any and all available channels" (Jenkins, Ford, and Green 2013, 7). The roles of producers, marketers, and audience members are blurred.

[3.3] The conditions for sticking audiences to a site and promoting the spread of content may seem to be at odds with one another, but it is possible to promote certain aspects of stickiness and spreadability simultaneously (Jenkins, Ford, and Green 2013). This creates a sticky site with spreadable content. Fans stick to the site while spreading its content. The right combination of stickiness and spreadability may maximize corporate gain while satisfying users' need for control, interactivity, and community. Participation on the *Tosh.0* Web site suggests that producers may have found such a combination that presently serves their needs as well as that of their fans. An assessment of the site is necessary to reveal strategies that encourage fan activity and community. Toward this end, I again highlight the research questions guiding this study: What aspects of the *Tosh.0* Web site design support fans working for the brand? How do the concepts of sticky and spreadable media clarify the strategic form and function of the *Tosh.0* Web site? In the next section, I explain how data were collected and how the concepts of stickiness and spreadability were used to guide the qualitative coding process.

## 4. Methodological justification

[4.1] Up until its midseason break, season 4 of *Tosh.0* consisted of ten 22-minute episodes that aired weekly from January 31, 2012, to April 3, 2012. These episodes (4.01–4.10) and the corresponding *Tosh.0* Web site activities were targeted for data collection. This selection of texts was appropriate for analysis for two reasons. First, the episodes made a logical grouping because they included the array of recurring segments such as Web Redemptions, Video Breakdowns, and calls for fans to submit videos to the Web site. Since the focus of this study is on the design of the Web site rather than the meaning of its content, viewing ten episodes was sufficient to determine the form of regular segments. The episodes were reviewed and detailed notes were taken on the structure of the show to reveal segment patterns. Segments were then watched again from the Web site along with other content from past episodes not in the targeted season in order to verify patterns.

[4.2] Data collection on the Web site focused on two areas of "web internal analysis" for data collection: structure (hierarchy and flow of elements), and links to other sources (expressions of affiliation) (Pauwels 2005; Pauwels and Hellriegel 2009). The first step in data collection was to investigate the structure of the site to determine the hierarchy and flow of elements through common architectural design principles such as emphasis, subordination, hierarchy, and dominance (Kimball 2013). I began by taking an inventory of content on each of the main pages. I indicated in notes when content and titles repeated and where they were placed on the pages. Eyetracking visualizations studies assisted in understanding elements of structure. Studies reveal that users typically read Web sites in a roughly F-shaped pattern: two horizontal stripes at the top of the page followed by a vertical stripe down the left hand side (Lorigo et al. 2008). Content placed in this pattern should theoretically be viewed more regularly and thus may be potentially more dominant to users of the site than other content.

[4.3] The second phase of data collection focused on links within the site. I systematically clicked on links present in the site's main pages to experience and record how users might move through and off of the site. Two types of links were focused on in this phase. The first type of link was internal and sent the user to content and pages within the site. For example, one might be directed to the *Tosh.0* blog page from a number of other main pages. The second type of link was external and sent the user to other pages such as Facebook, Tosh's Twitter account, or other Comedy Central show sites.

[4.4] Screen shots and detailed descriptive notes on structure and function served as the raw data for coding. Spreadability and stickiness were the major concepts that drove initial code development. Spreadability codes focused on movement of content off and to the site. Examples of these codes are spread, collect, and create. With these basic codes in mind, data were opened up and codes became more specific such as spread to other site, spread to other user, spread to other SNS, request for collection, and request for creation. Stickiness codes focused on attempts to draw the user into the site and keep them occupied. Examples of these codes are creative investment, internal redirection, and continuous feed. These codes were also later diversified into more specific codes such as creative commentary, creative contest, redirect to home, and redirect to blog. Some data were ambiguous or served dual purposes to stick fans and spread content such as video play lists which ran continuously to draw users in yet allowed them to easily spread content off the site.

[4.5] Although coding was initially directed by preformed categories, it was not completely restricted. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how sticky and spreadability concepts may be useful to the study of fan labor, but it became apparent that advertisements and other information such as user agreements were not clearly sticky or spreadable. While clicking on advertisements may open new pages and generate value, they did not necessarily direct users to push or pull content to the site or engage in creative activities. This type of content was still important in determining where user activity led to value for the brand (advertising is a revenue source), but it could not be discussed in terms of stickiness or spreadability. In these cases codes often reflected movement and purpose such as "external link to advertisement" or "internal link legal user information."

## 5. *Tosh.0* Web site features

[5.1] The *Tosh.0* Web site contains a basic structure of navigational options and design strategies to assist users in accessing thousands of videos. The main entry point is the home page (figure 1) where at the top there are six main tabs available: Home, Blog, Video, Submit a Video, Shop, and About. The Home, Blog, Video, and Submit a Video pages all immediately offer visitors the most recent or most viewed videos or content. These items are placed prominently at the top of the pages. Next to these options are Facebook and

Twitter icons and feeds of the most recent posts and tweets from Tosh's Twitter and Facebook pages. Above the tabs is a basic search function for the site.

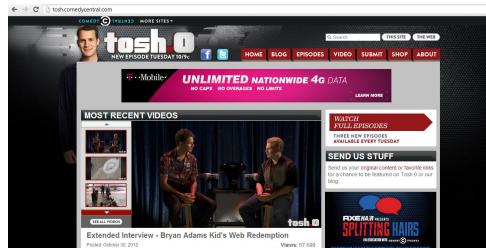


Figure 1. Screenshot of *Tosh.0* home page, 2012. [View larger image.]

[5.2] The Video tab exclusively features clips from the television show while the Submit a Video tab contains over 160,590 viewer-generated or gathered videos which can be sorted by most recent, viewed, shared, and top rated. This creates a clear separation between official content produced by *Tosh.0* and user-submitted content (figure 2). The blog features videos, pictures, and the latest Twitter and Facebook comments about *Tosh.0* gathered by two regular *Tosh.0* bloggers (figure 3). Users may comment on but not post content to the blog area. The blog also contains calls for users to "Rename This Video" and participate in photo Caption Challenges. The blog also displays *Tosh.0* clips that have become Fan Favorites. Running along the right side of the blog is the Blogroll, a list of 34 other blogs and content aggregators such as *Boing Boing*, *College Humor*, *Digg Comedy*, *Fark*, and *Reddit Funny*. At the top of the blog page are highlighted categories so that users do not have to scroll through the blog to access Fan Favorites and Caption Challenges. Sandwiched between these two boxes are commercial-oriented links for Tosh Twenty Twelve Tour dates and tickets and the Shop that sells *Tosh.0* apparel, CDs, and DVDs. Users are given navigation options to see merchandise for other Comedy Central shows.

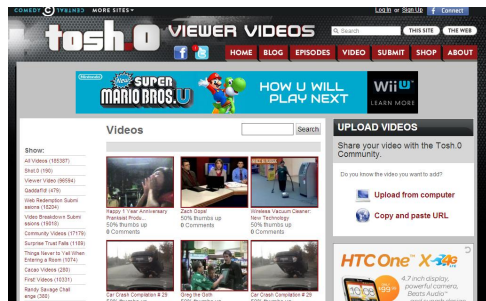


Figure 2. Screenshot of *Tosh.0* viewer videos, 2012. [View larger image.]

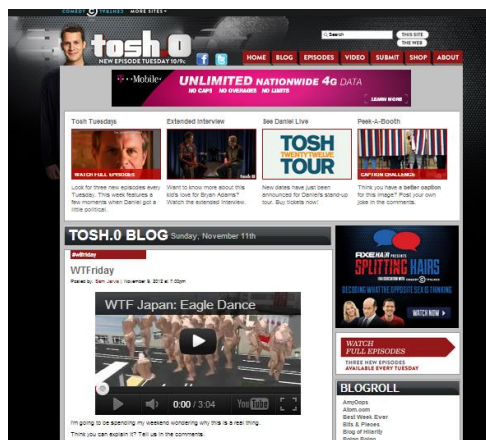


Figure 3. Screenshot of *Tosh.0* blog, 2012. [View larger image.]

[5.3] This same set of four boxes also appears on the Home Page, but they are positioned underneath the box for Featured Videos from the show. The Home Page attempts to include a little of every section. A What's Hot box includes three tables for recent clips, blog posts, and clip playlists. The blog is featured to the right of this box and below it is the What's Happening box, which contains Twitter and Facebook feeds. Below the blog box is a featured Twitter or Facebook comment about the show and a picture that has been recently posted to the blog. During the week, ten blog posts are usually submitted each day by blog staffers. These same posts are also usually posted to the *Tosh.0* Facebook page. After reviewing Tosh's Twitter account, which is linked to the main site, I determined that Tosh tweets about 50–60 times on days when an episode airs. Most of those tweets are responses to fan tweets during the show.

[5.4] At the bottom of each page is a bank of numerous *Tosh.0* links that offer alternative navigation to featured content as well as other Comedy Central Shows. The bank also consists of Friends of Comedy Central links as well as Viacom legal and business links for job postings, copyright compliance information, and terms and conditions. Repetition of content and links is a design strategy for the site and Home Page in particular. Excluding the original set of navigational links, content that is contained in the blog was featured

separately six times on the Home Page. Videos of the show were featured three times and the Shop was featured twice. This may make the site seem as if it has more content and viewing options than it really does and may lead fans to view particular content more regularly.

[5.5] Once episodes are released for online replay, the segments are posted individually on the Web site so that audiences can select specific segments to view. In fact, one cannot even see an episode in its 22-minute form. The use of short segments on the Web site may be a deliberate choice to increase the likelihood of browsing archived content, viewing ads, and spreading clips to other users and Web sites. Singular clips are short and easy to share and once one has finished playing, another will automatically begin, ushering the user into a rabbit hole of video viewing. The Web site acts as an aggregator and distributor of the bizarre, shocking, and grotesque material that users may seek online. Fans are encouraged to share content to Facebook, Twitter, and digg.com (a social news Web site) by the placement of a social media button set located on each content submission. The site is designed to accumulate videos and photos for the blog and to allow for content to spread.

## 6. Discerning the sticky and the spreadable

[6.1] The *Tosh.0* Web site utilizes both sticky and spreadable strategies to engage fans in forms of labor such as watching and commenting on videos or submitting videos of their own. It is a place where content is centralized into areas to concentrate and capture attention through prestructured interactivity. Yet it also encourages the flow of ideas and content through user-driven social interaction. The Web site utilizes stickiness by centralizing content in one location. With repetition of content on each tab, most navigational tools will take the user to similar content areas. Facebook and Twitter are also frequently linked to so that users do not have to leave the Web site in order to see *Tosh.0* social media activity or to share content to their own social media profiles.

[6.2] Spreadability is also supported by easily allowing content to disperse across multiple sites. The Web site is a repository for collected materials, meaning that it is a destination for content that has been spread. While this can also be interpreted as a sticky feature, the site's easy-to-use uploading mechanism supports spreadability through encouraging the quick spread of content from other sites. Content is packaged into easy-to-share formats. In fact, many videos have a YouTube marker on them and give the user the option to watch them there. If a user wants to share a video or a picture on Facebook or Twitter, share options are available to them on the Web site, but the *Tosh.0* name and Comedy Central markers travel with the content in order to spread the brand. The blog page directs fans to spread content with a list of other popular content aggregators and blogs.

[6.3] The structural design of the *Tosh.0* Web site demonstrates stickiness because it provides a relatively homogenous experience to fans. The site is not a social networking site (SNS) since users do not become members or make profiles which can be linked to one another, but Facebook and Twitter are popularized on the site. The site can be interpreted as more spreadable when it is engaged through those SNSs and when fans comment and contribute to the site thus making their usage more personalized. By voting for favorites (captions, videos, titles) and by passing content to and from the site, users are shaping the *Tosh.0* community and brand.

[6.4] The *Tosh.0* Web site blends spreadability and sticky strategies through its efforts to guide audience participation and interaction. Voting on videos to make them fan favorites and submitting titles and captions to photo and video challenges are the most structured activities on the site. Yet each requires users to engage creatively with content, meaning that activities are also open ended. When fans create videos in response to calls from Tosh on the show, they are also participating in partially open-ended activities. Perhaps the most open-ended activities available are video submissions not associated with specific calls, tweeting to and about Tosh and *Tosh.0*, and making other unsolicited comments on posted content. While these activities seem very open ended, they still exist within a constrained environment. Fans can only post videos to the site because the designers have decided they should have the ability to do so. These activities have been deemed to benefit the show and the brand and can be laborious and time consuming for fans.

[6.5] The site's style of comedy suggests that the Internet offers a place to create a carnivalesque space to share and ridicule embarrassing, graphic, and extraordinary content. This is emphasized through spreadable strategies because they increase the visibility and prominence of such content. Users are provided with convenient collections gathered by fans and *Tosh.0* staff, which they can easily share. The sticky strategies encourage them to stay interacting with content for longer periods of time, which may limit their exposure to other types of content.

## 7. Feedback loops

[7.1] The *Tosh.0* Web site's use of sticky and spreadable strategies assists in the aggregation of particular types of content for the show and Web site. Tosh's politically incorrect and offensive humor is positioned as ideal humor for the site, and fans are encouraged through contests and potential recognition to find videos and make comments that complement his style. To affirm what ideal content is, user videos and comments are cherry-picked to be highlighted on the show and Web site. The site cultivates activity through offering rewards of celwebtrity status and exposure of fans' submitted material.

[7.2] Tosh and his staff find rapidly spreading content (commonly referred to as viral videos) and use it for the show or post it to the Web site blog. These videos may be original creations such as home videos, original short movies, and music (O'Brien and Fitzgerald 2006). Obscene material, however, is a staple for the show and Web site. Although some images or words may be edited when the show airs on Comedy Central, the *Tosh.0* Web site hosts unedited content. In the clip "Teabag a Mousetrap" (4.02), a man's scrotum placed in a mousetrap was blurred on Comedy Central, but producers deemed the uncensored clip acceptable for the Web site; this practice emphasizes it as a carnivalesque space.

[7.3] In a 2010 interview, Tosh outlined the checklist for videos he uses for the show where the first criterion was that it should feature "someone really getting hurt" but in practice, not all videos feature injuries (Stelter 2010). Perhaps a better stipulation is that videos should feature content that will make audience members uncomfortable or shock them in some way. For example, episode 4.02 featured a video titled "Legless Ninja" showing an amputee performing martial arts. The man, missing his body from the waist down, was targeted by Tosh with jokes emphasizing his handicap. Similar to the longest running comedic reality-clip show, *America's Funniest Home Videos*, now called *America's Funniest Videos* or just *AFV*, *Tosh.0* capitalizes on injury as well as embarrassing and tragic moments put online or created by viewers for the show. These celebrities are "converted into monetary value through their capacity to perform their misery" (Terranova 2000, 52). The difference between the two shows was articulated in a fan's tweet to Tosh's twitter account that said, "AFV is for watching someone fall down. Tosh.o [sic] is for watching that same person break their leg when they fall. Then throw up."

[7.4] Viewer videos are spread from other Internet sites for a general video submission or may be gathered or created by fans for a particular purpose, such as to nominate a video for a Web Redemption or respond to a call for audience members filming themselves engaged in a particular activity, such as impromptu trust falls or parkour. Typically, Tosh will introduce activities in segments on several shows spaced throughout a season and make a call for fans to submit videos of themselves performing the activity. In episode 4.07, Tosh featured a Web Redemption for a woman who injured herself while performing parkour, which is an activity where people vault, roll, run, climb, or jump to overcome obstacles in their environments. At the end of the Redemption segment and after Parkour Girl successfully navigated an obstacle-laden area, Tosh called for viewers to submit videos of themselves doing parkour. Two episodes later and with 120 videos submitted to the Web site, Tosh featured a mashup of viewer submissions in episode 4.09. The mashup, along with all of the submitted videos, are available to be viewed on the *Tosh.0* Web site.

[7.5] Tosh also uses collected videos to produce Video Breakdowns and 20 Seconds on the Clock. Video Breakdowns start with showing the entirety of a clip. Then Tosh will replay the clip in shorter intervals, making jokes about its content. Similar to the Video Breakdown, 20 Seconds on the Clock is a segment where Tosh puts 20 seconds on the clock to see how many jokes he can make about a video while it is played in real time. The short, rapid jokes mirror the style of comments one might find attached to the videos on other SNSs, and fan comments on these videos mirror Tosh's one-liner biting comedy style.

## 8. Fan labor

[8.1] Online entertainment communities sponsored by prominent media brands (such as NBC, CBS and Comedy Central) are an increasingly powerful presence online (Gillan 2011). David Nieborg argues that many corporate practices are cleverly combining "capital-intensive, profit-oriented industrial production with labor-intensive, non-profit-oriented peer production" (quoted in Jenkins, Ford, and Green 2013, 49). The *Tosh.0* program and Web site are an example of this type of combination.

[8.2] When fans spread content to the site, the show receives clips eligible for use on future episodes though Tosh has no obligation to feature submitted content. This extraneous content is valuable, however, as it assists in building the video collection, which is a staple of the site. *Tosh.0* demonstrates that there is value in this type of content and humor because the show is economically viable and popular. The Web site already employs two bloggers that post to the blog during the week, but fans are posting content every day, at all hours. The profit motive for the *Tosh.0* site is further demonstrated through its prominent commercial elements such as the frequent push to sell Tosh Tour tickets and show merchandise and advertisements that are placed along content and at the beginning of videos.

[8.3] In order for fan activities to be profitable, the site must attempt to guide them into producing texts that are considered valuable. Activities such as video challenges and video playlists may stick users to the site longer, requiring them to view more ads. Comments and video submissions keep content in flux with new things to see and read every day. This allows producers to maintain the novelty of site content with potentially little effort. The practice of continuously updating and adding or creating new content to sites has been described by Terranova (2003) as essential for Web sites to "fight off obsolescence." Additionally she argues that most of the Internet's updaters are unpaid. Researchers have questioned and attempted to address whether or not fans are "duped" into performing acts of labor that are unpaid and unequally benefit brands (Banks and Humphreys 2008; Terranova 2000). It seems that fans are not united on the benefits and drawbacks of providing free labor but that there are nonmonetary rewards to be gained. Fans may produce for the texts they love for personal enjoyment, as a way to give back to a fan community, gain social capital or notoriety, or develop and publicize their skills. In studies on fan fiction, fan subbing, and game modding, some individuals were found to have used skills developed in fan activities to break into industries and develop careers (Coppa 2008; Mittell 2009; Postigo 2007; Yang 2009). In the context of *Tosh.0*, it would appear that fans are producing texts for personal enjoyment and a chance for brief fame if their content is used or highlighted on the show or Web site.

[8.4] According to *Tosh.0*'s User Content Submission Agreement (Viacom Media Networks 2010),

[8.5] Comedy Central acquires no title or ownership rights in or to any User Content you submit and nothing in this Submission Agreement conveys to us any ownership rights in your User Content. Comedy Central is acting only as a host, bulletin board or conduit for submitted User Content, with all of the specific rights granted by you hereunder. Although by your submission of any User Content you are requesting and directing us and any of the Parent Companies or the Affiliates with whom we have made arrangements, to take advantage of and exploit all of the rights and privileges granted hereunder (including, without limitation, the right to display and post the User Content on the Platforms), neither we, nor any of the Parent Companies or the Affiliates have any obligation to do any of these things.

[8.6] Although Comedy Central will not own user content, users should expect that it can be used without further permission. During the coding process, a review of fan tweets to Tosh indicated that a number of users want their content to be used in so far as they desire

recognition for it from Tosh or other users. For example, fans' tweets may have explicit requests for acknowledgment by asking Tosh to tweet them back. In the parkour user video mashup, one star of a submission is asked "what are you doing?" after he tumbles off a porch and he responds, "getting on *Tosh.0*." In this case, the fan who filmed himself engaged in labor for the show. In exchange for his time (and possible injury) he hoped for and received the chance to have his video used.

[8.7] The dangerous and potentially unethical nature of user video requests is that fans may be willing to jeopardize their safety and social standing offline in service of the show and their reputations as fans. In addition to putting themselves in physical danger performing parkour or impromptu trust falls, Tosh has also asked users to send in videos that break social norms. For example, one call asks fans to film themselves approaching women from behind and reaching around to touch their stomachs. Fans may have a better chance of getting on *Tosh.0* the more extreme their behavior is and have a shot at becoming a celweb celebrity if they comply with official Comedy Central agreements, terms and conditions and post their videos to the site. Further analysis of the type or subject matter of content spread to and from the site would clarify danger as perhaps an element of content that motivates people to spread it.

## 9. Conclusion

[9.1] Television industries are strategically embracing convergence with Internet technologies and social media platforms. Online brand presence is not cutting edge, but sticky and spreadable strategies recently conceptualized by Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013) to rival the dominant viral media metaphor illuminate ways in which Web sites attempt to engage audiences and fans. Sites operating under sticky philosophies are attempting to structure user experiences and concentrate them on their sites to keep eyes on sanctioned content and advertisements. Spreadability strategies encourage users to personalize their engagement and easily spread content and the brand to a number of sites. Although theorized through a number of examples, sticky and spreadable concepts deserved further consideration to test their scope and usefulness to design analysis. In this study, they proved to be useful for determining the strategic design of the *Tosh.0* Web site.

[9.2] The *Tosh.0* Web site was targeted for such a test because of its unique focus (even when compared to shows with a similar format) on online videos and fan-generated content as an inspiration for original and creative work. The Web site demonstrates characteristics of stickiness and spreadability and these concepts were useful in identifying how the site provides opportunities for fans to engage in open-ended activities that benefit the brand. Since the show is predicated on the usage of social media and amateur video, audience engagement and participation is essential to its popularity. I examined the navigational structures and site design that promoted the push and pull of content to and from the *Tosh.0* Web site. The site depends on fans to participate in the circulation of content and hooks them in with the promise of a potential carnivalesque spectacle and brief celweb celebrity status. The show's online and broadcast success may indicate that relinquishing some control over content and supporting user autonomy can facilitate the growth of a fan base and community.

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