Research workshop:

Promoting Television in The Digital Age

25-26 September 2014
Department of Aesthetics and Communication: Media Studies
University of Aarhus
Venue: meeting room Nygaard 295, 2nd floor
Thursday September 25, 14-17
Friday September 26, 9-12 + Friday lecture 14-16

In the workshop we will discuss efforts of branding television in the present multi-channel and multi-platform environment, as well as transformations in the international distribution of television content, and questioning the role television fiction and perhaps other genres as well like journalism and/or reality play in these strategies. This could include the perspective of the audience on these strategies: what do the audiences actually look for, appreciate, need or engage with? What kinds of 'mental modalities' are at work when using digital television and specific genres? And it could include the perspective of the producers and the content produced.

The workshop is organized as part of a research collaboration between Lund University and Aarhus University, and in particular the two research projects *Media experiences: Audience and Producers* (http://mediaexperiences.blogg.lu.se Lund, 2013-2016) and *What makes Danish TV series travel* (Aarhus, FKK, 2014-2018).

Participants:
1. Kim Toft Hansen, AAU
2. Gunhild Agger, AAU
3. Ushma Jacobsen, AU
4. Iris Rittenhofer, AU
5. Sanne Eichner, AU/Berlin
6. Andrea Esser, AU/Roehampton
7. Lynge Agger Gemzøe, AU
8. Jakob Isak Nielsen, AU
9. Pia Majbritt Jensen
10. Katrine Broe Sørensen, AU
11. Mads Møller Andersen, AU
12. Hanne Bruun, AU
13. Anne Marit Waade, AU
14. Catherine Johnson, Nottingham
15. Annette Hill, Lund
16. Tina Askanius, Lund

Student assistant:
Sarah Brinkmann Jensen, sarah_brinkmann_jensen@hotmail.com

Program:

Thursday September 25, 14-17:
Digital Television: Production, Reception and Television Theory

14.00:	Welcome by Hanne and Anne Marit (coffee + tea)
14.15:	**Catherine Johnson**: Brand managers, marketers and creative agencies: the dispersed production sites of television branding
15.00:	**Annette Hill** & **Tina Askanius (1)**: Sense of Place: Producers, Audiences, and International Drama Format *The Bridge*
15.45:	Break
16.00:	**Hanne Bruun**: Production cultures in digital television: genre and the power of mass media
16.45:	**Andrea Esser**: Production studies: further considerations
17.30:	Discussion
18.00:	End
18.30:	Dinner at Frøken Koch at the harbor (we will go by taxa/bicycles) http://www.kocherier.dk/FRØKEN-KOCH.159.aspx (we need to order the food in advantage – we will come back to you and ask for your order – in the meantime you can have a look at the menu ☺)

Friday September 26, 9-12:
Television across countries and media experiences: methodological challenges

08.30	Coffee + Tea
09.00:	**Annette Hill** & **Tina Askanius (2)**: Production and Audience Research
09.40:	**Susanne Eichner**: Serial culture: agency as a media experience
10.15:	Break
10.30:	**Anne Marit Waade**: What Makes Danish Television Drama Series Travel?
11.10:	**Pia Majbritt Jensen**: The Rise of Denmark's Transnational TV Culture: An Introduction to a Three-Tier Non-Resident Audience Study
11.50:	Discussion
12.30:	Lunch (participants in the two research projects have a lunch meeting)
14.00-16.00	Public lecture: **Catherine Johnson:** What's at stake in television branding? Service brands, product brands and the case of the BBC

Workshop Abstracts:

Catherine Johnson: Brand managers, marketers and creative agencies: the dispersed production sites of television branding

Since 2012 I have been working on an AHRC-funded project that examines the production cultures of the promotional screen industries: those industries responsible for the creation of audiovisual promotional content. In this paper I want to draw on this research to begin to open up for exploration the production sites that sit behind the branding of television. This paper will do this in two ways. First it will look at the role of the brand manager, focusing on the specific example of the BBC's long-running series, *Doctor Who* (2005-). Through interviews it will argue that the brand manager plays a crucial role in negotiating between commercial and creative production demands and between broadcaster and audience. Second it will look at the role of marketing and the creative agencies used to produce the interstitial and ephemeral content that circulates around programmes and channels. Focusing on the work of one creative agency, Red Bee Media, it will look at the role that marketers and creative agencies have in shaping the frames and paratexts through which programme brands are constructed. Through these case examples, this paper will argue that the construction of television brands takes place through a range of sites that extend well beyond programme production. To understand television branding we need to pay attention to these dispersed sites of production.

Hanne Bruun: Production cultures in digital television: genre and the power of mass media

The professional production of television genres is presently taking place in a competitive multi-platform and multi-channel digital production environment, and television is no longer a stand-alone-medium. This new empirical situation fuels the production studies approach in media studies. Taking my own research into the production cultures of television satire and the political talk show as a point of departure, I will outline some questions to be addressed by production studies in the digital era of television, and discuss why television still seems to dominate the production cultures.

Andrea Esser: Production studies: further considerations

It is clearly indispensible for production studies to consider both the frames and paratexts through which programme brands are constructed (Johnson) as well as the multi-platform and multi-channel environment and approach (Bruun). I want to add another, closely related aspect that we should scrutinise: the increasing amalgamation between audiovisual content and advertising messages through brand partnerships and branded entertainment. Using The Kardashians, The X Factor and Red Bull as mini case studies I will demonstrate this increasing amalgamation and its consequence. The 'distinction principle', a long held policy requirement that demands the clear demarcation between advertising and editorial content, is no longer upheld in practice. But what if audiences don't care? Even love it?

Annette Hill & Tina Askanius (1): Sense of Place: Producers, Audiences, and International Drama Format *The Bridge*

Audience research faces a great challenge in understanding our engagement with

media today. Audiences are often described as fragmented, or nomadic, moving around cultural artefacts in contemporary mediascapes. In *No Sense of Place*, Joshua Meyrowitz's (1985) describes modern audiences as nomadic, denied a sense of place in a civic minded community, adapting to market pressures in the neoliberal politics of America. Rather than see audiences as nomadic, I want argue that people are drawn to a sense of place within media content. For example, audiences roam around storytelling, engaging with such content through television, tablets, the internet and mobile media, events, marketing, branding and products, across different countries, regions and cultures. And at the same time audiences can feel a sense of place, through landscape and locality, or genre, characters and emotions, that grabs them and keeps them in the here and now of specific stories.

This idea of a sense of place for audiences in contemporary mediascapes is explored through the empirical case study of production and audience research of the international drama format *The Bridge* (Shine Group). By using interviews, focus groups, and participant observations with executive and creative producers, and audiences and fans of this drama format, empirical research emerges on the multiple ways people engage with serial television drama. The empirical research allows for an investigation into the geo-cultural paradox (Moran and Aveyard 2014) of a drama format like *The Bridge* that has transferred to diverse regions (Sweden and Denmark, Britain and France, America and Mexico) and at the same time demonstrated qualities that appeal to specific audiences in these places of production. Athique (2014) argues that audience studies fails to account for the specificity of place. This chapter offers an empirically grounded idea of a sense of place, as created by drama producers and networks, and as experienced by diverse audiences and fans.

What the research suggests is that a crime drama format like *The Bridge* draws audiences into a strong sense of place in the border territories of the three drama series *Broen//Bron* (DR and SVT), *The Bridge* (FX), and *The Tunnel* (Sky Atlantic) that is distinctive to these landscapes and political power dynamics, and that speaks to regional audiences that know and understand the cultural nuances of the storytelling, characters and locations for these dramas. The three dramas are each different in their approach to the format, with showrunners that take the dramas in different directions that are situated in the regional dynamics of where the storytelling is located. The three dramas are also shown on different channels, with different programme and network branding approaches for specific audiences and internet users. At the same time, these same audiences and fans are also engaging with the crime genre and emotional landscape of the drama that represents more universal human truths, what one viewer described as 'there are no colourful sunsets.' Here, these audiences and fans engage in similar ways to different versions of this format. So, a sense of place is created through a doubling of place in *The Bridge* that is both universal, and transferrable in its value as a transnational television format, and regional and specific to the situated nature of audiences for this kind of crime drama shown on diverse networks. As such, Meyrowitz's situated research of audiences in society takes on a different meaning in todays media environments where a sense of place can be a means to engage roaming audiences for international television drama formats.

References

Athique, Adrain. (2014) Transnational audiences: geocultural approaches, *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 28:1, 4-17.

Moran, Albert and Aveyard, Karina. (2014) The place of television programme formats, *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 28:1, 18-27.
Meyrowitz, Joshua. (1985) *No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behaviour*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Author Biography
Annette Hill is a Professor of Media at Lund University, Sweden, and Visiting Professor at the University of Westminster, UK. Her research focuses on audiences, with interests in media experiences, everyday life, genres and cultures of viewing. Her most recent book is *Paranormal Media* (Routledge 2011). Other books include *Restyling Factual TV* (2007), *Reality TV* (2005), the *Television Studies Reader* (with Robert C Allen), *TV Living:* (with David Gauntlett 1999), and *Shocking Entertainment* (1997). Her next books are *Reality TV: Key Ideas* (Routledge 2014) and *Media Experiences* (Routledge 2016).

Annette Hill & Tina Askanius (2): Production and Audience Research
Production and audience research exist as two distinct sites of analysis, and yet there are points of connection across cultural production and engagement. How can researchers can meet the challenge of exploring the spaces in between production and audience studies? This presentation explores the idea that television producers and audiences co-create media experiences. This idea of co-creative practices suggests there is not one power player moving against another, but people maintaining, reinforcing, testing and challenging the relations between producers and audiences.

Anne Marit Waade: What Makes Danish Television Drama Series Travel? Studying Television Across Cultures
Danish TV drama series travel the globe and challenge basic public understandings of – and theoretical approaches to – national and public service TV drama production (e.g. Agger 2011a, Jensen and Waade 2013, Nielsen 2012c, Bondebjerg and Redvall 2014) as well as methodological approaches to the study of production and reception across countries and continents and how small countries' travelling drama series challenge the centre-periphery dichotomy of the global media industry. On this background, we ask the following research question: **What makes Danish TV drama travel?** Our hypothesis is that specific transformations and value creations are happening at all stages of Danish TV drama production, from idea to production, distribution and reception. Our ambition is to develop theories that can capture this process in detail: a value chain that includes cultural, branding, economic and societal values (Johnson 2012) and *hype* made by different agents, paratexts and processes (Gray 2010). To fully answer the research question, the project encompasses four distinct sub-questions, each of them illuminating significant parts of this process and including a particular set of empirical materials and theoretical approaches:
  1) How can we consider Danish TV drama series as an international brand?
  2) What, from a transnational production perspective, makes Danish TV series travel?
  3) How are the Danish TV drama series interpreted and valued among audiences abroad, in countries like Australia, Brazil, Germany, Turkey and the US?
  4) How are small nations' drama series challenging the centre-periphery complex in global media industry and culture?

In this presentation, I will describe the overall ideas and ambitions of our research project (funded by FKK, 2014-2018), and focus on the theoretical and methodological approaches, as well as the analytical perspectives.

Pia Majbritt Jensen: **The Rise of Denmark's Transnational TV Culture: An Introduction to a Three-Tier Non-Resident Audience Study**

[Abstract] Danish TV drama series have experienced an entirely unprecedented and virtually global boom in exports of late. This project wants to understand the transnational qualities of the Danish series by conducting a study of three types of transnational, 'non-resident', audiences believed to be important to the series' success abroad, i.e. acquisition editors (as gatekeepers), TV critics (as arbiters of taste), and ordinary viewers, in order to elaborate and challenge theories on media geography and media reception, respectively. Ultimately, the aim is to develop a transnational model of media reception that makes room for the ever more complex sense of cultural space and identity of media audiences living in an increasingly de-territorialized world.

[Objectives and overview] As principal theories of the global exchange of media content continue to rest on understandings of media reception from an era where intercultural exchanges were not a main concern, a need exists to address the transnational with an updated configuration of media reception aligned with audiences' current de-territorialized reality.[1] It is this project's main objective to contribute to this update. Therefore, it will not just study the hows and whys behind the Danish series' transnational success in order to gain important knowledge on the qualities of the Danish TV industry and its output (to the benefit of its industry partners). It will also challenge and broaden existing media geography and reception theories on the import/export of audio-visual content and the perceived dominance of national, or 'resident', viewing. Thirdly, the project has as its ambition to develop a theoretical and methodological framework on 'non-resident' audiences and transnational viewing of TV fictions – a transnational model of media reception – and, in so doing, combining the fields of media geography and reception studies. This leads to three research questions.

1. How are the Danish series received, experienced and perceived by non-resident audiences, and which transnational qualities do Danish audio-visual fictions hold?
2. How may the transnational reception of the Danish series elaborate and challenge existing theories on media geography and media reception?
3. How can the answers to the first two questions help develop a transnational model of media reception?

[Originality and innovative aspects] Over the last five years, the near global reach of Danish TV drama has made Denmark the darling of the international TV industry and made Danish broadcasters and producers benefit both financially and status-wise.[2] This is not just unprecedented. It is also interesting from an academic point of view because it challenges existing theories on global media geography, import/export of audio-visual content, transnational media reception and the importance of transnational TV viewing. According to these theories, *non-Anglophone* audio-visual

[1] Athique, A. (2014). Transnational audiences: Geocultural approaches. *Continuum, 28*(1).
[2] Bernth, P. (2013). Talk given by the Head of Fiction at DR, Piv Bernth. DR-Byen, Copenhagen, 19 April; Gabold, I. (2014). Interview with the former Head of Drama at DR, Ingolf Gabold. Copenhagen, 21 March; Waade, A. M., & Jensen, P. M. (2013). Nordic noir production values : The killing and the bridge. *Akademisk Kvarter,* (7).

content rarely exports outside its geo-linguistic region[3] – in Denmark's case the Nordic region – because audiences in other regions would be too far removed culturally and linguistically, and hence feel alienated.[4] Similarly, theories on the consumption of audio-visual content have neglected transnational, 'non-resident', viewing – i.e. when audiences engage with audio-visual content removed from their own (cultural) context as would be the case with Australian audiences engaging with Danish series – and instead emphasised the importance of geo-linguistic, national or 'resident' viewing.[5] Even in cases when transnational viewing has been theorized[6], explanations for audience engagement have been found in the national, ethnic and cultural identities of the audiences; or in the transparency and polysemy of especially *US* media texts and the highly commercialised and competitive structure of *US* broadcasting.[7] Accordingly, Denmark – with its miniscule language, public service broadcasting dominance and no recent history of world colonization or immigration – should remain an entirely insignificant player in the worldwide exchange of audio-visual content, and the case of Denmark's rise to fame internationally is therefore particularly interesting methodologically as well as theoretically.

[Hypotheses] Generally, little attention has been given to non-resident audiences engaging with non-Anglophone content from a context outside their designated geo-linguistic region or ethnic/national/ cultural heritage, notwithstanding that, in much of the world, "it is non-resident experiences of media consumption that are the most common".[8] One could argue that the 'de-territorialization' – i.e. "the loss of the 'natural' relation of culture to geographical and social territories"[9] caused in part by the ever more globalized flow of media[10] – gives rise to an increasingly complex sense of cultural space and identity.[11] Hence, linking audiences' identities and experiences with media content only with locality and/or ethnic and cultural belonging seems problematic[12], which the success and impact of the Danish series outside their immediate cultural and geo-linguistic region certainly evidences.[13] Consequently, another hypothesis is that contemporary audiences are continually zooming in and out between the familiar and the strange and between the local and the global in their

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[3] Sinclair, J. (2009). Latin America's Impact on World Television Markets. In *Television Studies After TV: Understanding Television in the Post-Broadcast Era.* Turner, G & Tay, J. (eds.). London: Routledge; Curtin, M. (2007). *Playing the World's Biggest Audience: The Globalization of chinese Film and TV.* Berkeley: University of California Press; Rinnawi, K. (2006). *Instant nationalism: McArabism, Al Jazeera and Transnational Media in the Arab World.* Lanham: University Press of America; Sinclair, J., Jacka, E., & Cunningham, S. (1996). *New patterns in global television : Peripheral vision.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[4] McFadyen, S., Hoskins, C., Finn, A. (2000). Cultural industries from an economic/business research perspective. *Canadian Journal of Communication, 25*(1).

[5] Athique 2014; Esser, A. (2014)

[6] Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large : Cultural dimensions of globalization.* Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press; Bore, I. K. (2011). Transnational TV comedy audiences. *Television & New Media, 12*(4); Budarick, J. (2013). Localised audiences and transnational media: Media use by iranian-australians. *Media International Australia (8/1/07-Current), (148)*; Cunningham, S., & Sinclair, J. (2000). *Floating lives: Media and Asian diasporas.* Saint Lucia: University of Queensland Press; Iwabuchi, K., (2002). *Recentering globalization : Popular culture and japanese transnationalism.* Durham: Duke University Press; Karim, K. (2006). *The media of diaspora: Mapping the globe.* London: Routledge.

[7] Liebes, T., & Katz, E. (1990). *The export of meaning : Cross-cultural readings of dallas.* New York: Oxford University Press; Olson, S. R. (1999). *Hollywood planet : Global media and the competitive advantage of narrative transparency.* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum; Doyle, G. (2013). *Understanding Media Economics Second Edition.* London: Sage.

[8] Athique 2014: 10.

[9] Canclini, N.G. (1995: 226). *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

[10] Hannerz, U. (1996). *Transnational connections: Culture, people, places.* London: Routledge; Tomlinson, J. (1999). *Globalization and culture.* Oxford: Polity.

[11] Pertierra, A.C. & Turner, G. (2013). *Locating Television: Zones of Consumption.* London: Routledge.

[12] Robins, K. & Aksoy, A. (2000). Thinking Across Spaces: Transnational Television from Turkey. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 3(3).

[13] Jensen, P.M. (2014). Export Patterns and Global Impact of Danish Drama series. Paper presented at the Audience and Producers conference in Lund, 21 March.

engagement with transnational content, and a transnationally oriented model of media reception must be able to accommodate this continuum.

Susanne Eichner: Serial culture: agency as a media experience

Drawing on the argumentation of my book, *Agency and Media Reception* (Springer VS 2014), I want to suggest a way of understanding media reception as 'Doing Media' by highlighting the agentic mode of media reception that has been described in many ways such as interactivity, play, passive control or mind game, literacy, participatory culture or video game agency. I will exemplify my argument by using examples from contemporary popular television series, yet the concept of agency is explicitly designed as an overarching and comprehensive model to understand processes of media reception in general. Agency, thought as a mode of reception that operates on varying degrees of intensity, is constructed neither as solely recipient based nor as solely textually or medially based – it is dependent on the interrelation between the dispositions of the recipients, the mediality and the concrete textuality of a media product.

This implies that by looking at processes of media appropriation strategies we have to consider that media reception is a specific form of social action that holds specific significance for its audience(s). Within social action theory and pragmatist approaches, agency is considered as a crucial and identity constituting capability of performing as influential beings in this world (cf. for example Giddens 1984, Mische/Emirbayer 1998). That individuals perceive the capability of being able to act and to influence as fundamentally positive has also been explicated in psychology (cf. Bandura 2006). This (positive) sense of capability is inherent in every form of social action, also in media agency. Media experiences can induce feelings of omnipotence, control or flow, framing recipients as agents (rather than as being acted upon), implying inherent abilities to project immediate and efficacious responses with our media doing – whether through direct moments of agency (e.g. when playing a video game) or via general sentiments of empowerment after watching a movie.

In this sense media recipients are not conceived as mere receivers but as active actors within a media setting. As individuals perform agency in a societal structure (and at the same time are restricted by these very same structures, see e.g. Bourdieu 2009, Giddens 1984, Foucault 1998), within the situation of media reception viewers actively appropriate media products, integrate them into their world perception and thus make meaning.

In taking the example of fictional serial television I will explicate my model of Doing Media and media agency further. A particular form of serial television thereby enables a particular mode of audience engagement and attachment since it offers a range of textual strategies that enable a more dedicated attachment towards the text. This includes the amount of time television series are able to claim, thus establishing a familiarity, their complexity and contingency in terms of characters, story arcs, narration, intertextuality, cues etc. and trans-/crossmedial elements and paratexts that are open to audience (wikis, blogs, ARGs, etc.). To simplify, the more open a media text is towards audience participation, the more it (potentially) enables the mode of agency. The model of Agency thus serves as a way to explain the success of specific television formats from a recipient- and text/aesthetics-oriented perspective.

References:
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Friday Lecture 26-9-2014, kl 14-16, Store Aud., Incuba:

Catherine Johnson*: **What's at stake in television branding? Service brands, product brands and the case of the BBC**

Drawing on research undertaken for my book, *Branding Television* (Routledge, 2012), this paper will use the BBC as a stepping off point for examining the role of branding within the television industry. Rather than seeing branding as a commercial strategy that aims to satisfy the desires of customers to maximize profits, the case example of the public service broadcaster BBC, offers a more nuanced account of the ways in which branding has been adopted by the television industry since the 1980s. Branding will be revealed as a strategic response to a more competitive broadcasting market; a means through which broadcasters have attempted to communicate their value and identity to viewers and stakeholders. However, television is a complex object to brand – at once a service made up of broadcasters and channels, and a product made up of channels and programmes. As digitalization has increased the range of sites through which we can access television programmes and channels the relationship between television's service and product brands becomes more difficult to manage. An examination of the role of branding within the digital era also raises questions about the study of television and this paper will end with an exploration of the methodological challenges of a research approach that pays particular attention to the ephemeral and interstitial texts of television.

Catherine Johnson is Associated Professor in Film and Television at the University of Nottingham. She is the author of *Branding Television* (Routledge, 2012) and *Telefantasy* (British Film Institute, 2005) and the co-editor of *Transnational Television History* (Routledge, 2012) and *ITV Cultures: Independent Television Over Fifty Years* (Open University Press, 2005). She is currently working on a co-authored book (with Paul Grainge) titled *The Promotional Screen Industries* (Routledge, 2015).