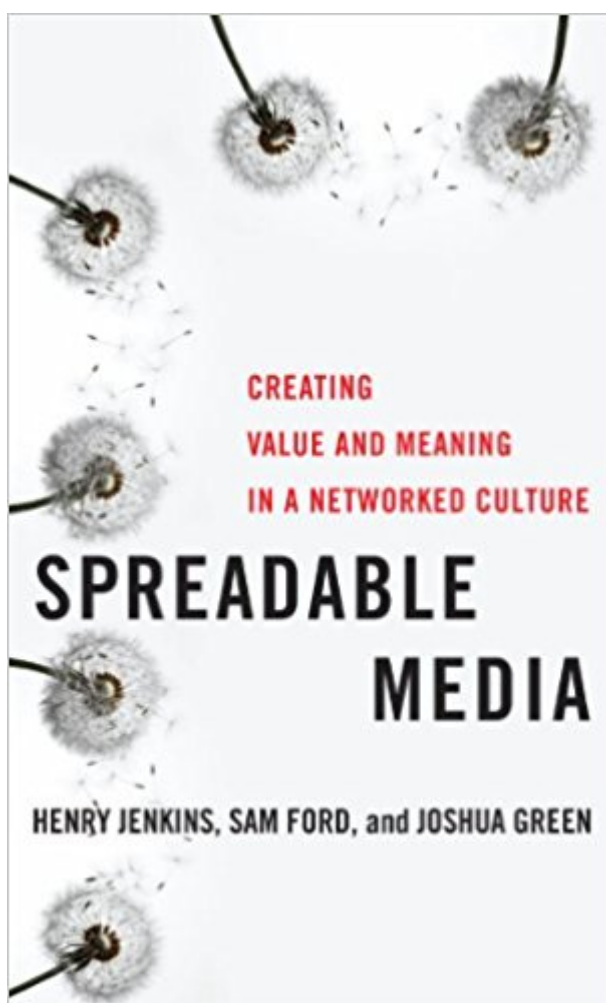


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# Spreadable Media: Creating Value And Meaning In A Networked Culture (Postmillennial Pop)



## Synopsis

Spreadable Media maps fundamental changes taking place in our contemporary media environment, a space where corporations no longer tightly control media distribution and many of us are directly involved in the circulation of content. It contrasts “stickiness” – aggregating attention in centralized places – with “spreadability” – dispersing content widely through both formal and informal networks, some approved, many unauthorized. Stickiness has been the measure of success in the broadcast era (and has been carried over to the online world), but “spreadability” describes the ways content travels through social media. Following up on the hugely influential *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, this book challenges some of the prevailing metaphors and frameworks used to describe contemporary media, from biological metaphors like “memes” and “viral” to the concept of “Web 2.0” and the popular notion of “influencers.” Spreadable Media examines the nature of audience engagement, the environment of participation, the way appraisal creates value, and the transnational flows at the heart of these phenomena. It delineates the elements that make content more spreadable and highlights emerging media business models built for a world of participatory circulation. The book also explores the internal tensions companies face as they adapt to the new communication reality and argues for the need to shift from “hearing” to “listening” in corporate culture. Drawing on examples from film, music, games, comics, television, transmedia storytelling, advertising, and public relations industries, among others – from both the U.S. and around the world – the authors illustrate the contours of our current media environment. They highlight the vexing questions content creators must tackle and the responsibilities we all face as citizens in a world where many of us regularly circulate media content. Written for any and all of us who actively create and share media content, Spreadable Media provides a clear understanding of how people are spreading ideas and the implications these activities have for business, politics, and everyday life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Solid analysis and detailed examples to make it sticky enough for the intended readerships of media scholars, media professionals, and fans."-International Journal of Communication

“Something new is emerging from the collision of traditional entertainment media, Internet-empowered fan cultures, and the norms of sharing that are encouraged and amplified by social media. Spreadable Media is a compelling guide, both entertaining and rigorous, to the new norms, cultures, enterprises, and social phenomena that networked culture is making possible. Read it to understand what your kids are doing, where Hollywood is going, and how online social networks spread cultural productions as a new form of sociality.”-Howard Rheingold, author of Net Smart

"The best analysis to date of the radically new nature of digital social media as a communication channel. Its insights, based on a deep knowledge of the technology and culture embedded in the digital networks of communication, will reshape our understanding of cultural change for years to come."-Manuel Castells, Wallis Annenberg Chair of Communication Technology and Society, University of Southern California

"Content today, the authors suggest, can travel not only from the top down but also from the inside out. It is a remarkably different terrain than what we have been used to, one they effectively and stridently analyze."- Publishers Weekly

"A wide-ranging examination of the contemporary media environment as individuals increasingly control their own creation of content."-Kirkus

"In Spreadable Media, media theorist Henry Jenkins, formerly of MIT and now at USC, and his coauthors, digital strategists Sam Ford and Joshua Green, make a convincing case that fan involvement in the re-creation and circulation of media content is not just an interesting side effect of man-to-many multimedia networks and smartphone video editing apps, but a significant force for empowerment and exploitation in and of itself...If you are in the music, movie, television, or game business, this book is a must read."-Strategy and Business

"It's about time a group of thinkers put the marketing evangelists of the day out to pasture with a thorough look at what makes content move from consumer to consumer, marketer to consumer and

consumer to marketer. Instead of latching on to the notion that you can create viral content, Jenkins, Ford, and Green question the assumptions, test theories and call us all to task. Spreadable Media pushes our thinking. As a result, we'll become smarter marketers. Why wouldn't you read this book?"-Jason Falls, CEO of Social Media Explorer and co-author of No Bullshit Social Media

“Finally, a way of framing modern media creation and consumption that actually reflects reality and allows us to talk about it in a way that makes sense. It's a spreadable world and we are ALL part of it. Useful for anyone who makes media, analyzes it, consumes it, markets it or breathes.”-Jane Espenson, writer-producer of Battlestar Galactica, Once Upon a Time, and Husbands

“By critically interrogating the ways in which media artifacts circulate, Spreadable Media challenges the popular notion that digital content magically goes viral.”

This book brilliantly describes the dynamics that underpin people's engagement with social media in ways that are both theoretically rich and publicly meaningful.”-Danah Boyd, Microsoft Research

"Spreadable Media is an essential read for anyone who wants to understand how media works today."-Deep Media

Henry Jenkins is the Provost's Professor of Communication, Journalism, Cinematic Arts and Education at the University of Southern California. Sam Ford is Director of Digital Strategy with Peppercomm Strategic Communications, an affiliate with the MIT Program in Comparative Media Studies and the Western Kentucky University Popular Culture Studies Program, and a regular contributor to Fast Company. He is co-editor of The Survival of the Soap Opera (2011). Joshua Green is a Strategist at digital strategy firm Undercurrent. With a PhD in Media Studies, he has managed research projects at MIT and the University of California. He is author (with Jean Burgess) of YouTube: Online Video and Participatory Culture (2009, Polity Press).

It's a little bizarre that a popular (at least according to sales figures) book about passing along media or commentary has gone over a month without having a review posted. I think it's because this is an ingenious, yet jam-packed book that looks at online participation and the sharing of information from a unique perspective that just plain forces you to think. This is not a quick read. While there are plenty of social media books out that look at the "new phenomenon" of sharing as an organizational strategy or as platforms of tools as compelling new ways to share, the authors of "Spreadable Media" look more at the material itself that is or isn't being shared. What characteristics of materials make people want to spread them? What's in it for the sharer? When people read, hear or watch something that makes them want to circulate it, what triggers that

decision? The authors point out there's nothing really new about this motivation. The passing down of keepsakes, family heirlooms, newspaper articles, scrapbooks, family trees, etc. has gone on for generations. First the photocopier and now social media platforms have just made it easier and almost instantaneous. The main focus of the book is on the broadcast, mass-media business model of "stickiness" of content vs. the parallel concept of "spreadability." It's becoming increasingly apparent that if media doesn't spread today, it's dead--like a film/song/book/work of art/best practice no one sees/hears/reads/studies/tries. So while there's a loss of control in allowing your audience to manipulate and pass along one's creative effort, there's also an expanded opportunity that it will uncover new audiences and be more widely acclaimed than if you protect it and threaten users for "stealing it." Corporations, institutions, universities and other power structures are starting to recognize that. Perhaps one reason "Spreadable Media" may be slow to generate reviews is in the sheer breadth of their analysis. My personal reason for reading "Spreadable Media" was to create company communities where members will pass along content to co-workers and customers to expand product knowledge and benefits and ultimately to increase sales. Some of the most insightful information I've read about this topic is indeed covered in this book. The authors portray "lurkers" (the bane of online communities where the vast majority of members who only consume others' information without contributing any of their own) as only learning and biding their time until they too understand the rules and start to participate. In Chapter 5 they even describe what makes materials sharable. This will help me to completely rethink the development of content rather than just to focus on why community members are either engaged or not. The density issue comes into play, however, as they go through a variety of entertainment, mass-media examples about how and why we are all moving toward spreadability. These examples are interesting to consider but can be difficult to digest. There are probably few readers who have all these perspectives who can follow these various threads. So if the authors have done anything "wrong" in the book it is just the amount of commentary on how much our culture is changing to address ways that we learn across all aspects of our lifestyles. In summary then, "Spreadable Media" is a great book but prepare yourself for some pretty deep but original thinking as Jenkins, Ford and Green argue for the increasingly networked world we're all living in.

This is an excellent volume that should be required reading for anyone studying the media. While I would have liked to see more discussion of the public sphere and the implications of the media environment for the evolution of political processes and systems, the authors are more interested in culture which is understandable given their collective past work. And while I may disagree with

minor points throughout the book, it is an excellent read that motivates the reader to truly think about the implications of the changing media environment

Jenkins reinforces his thesis of participative and convergence culture, adding now the notion of spreadable media. People take advantage of digital devices to spread their artifacts particularly in social platforms, opening chances to build learning communities, fans activities, globalized movements (grassroots) etc. He tries to maintain highly critical view, avoiding to discover alternative paths where there aren't. Especially he cultivates profoundly critical position in face of capitalism's market forces, since these are determined to monetize all social platforms in the name of private profit. Well documented in empirical cases and media releases, this book reveals great research talent, critical balance, very good theorizing insight, and future vision.

Excellent compilation of case studies and thinking about how messages spread. The authors smartly mix approaches from economics, marketing, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and mass communication to help us understand why messages spread. The discussion of fan issues and participatory culture are especially illuminating. It does tend to focus on video examples and entertainment fan communities, however. As a journalist and mass-comm researcher, I would have appreciated more community-oriented examples (as Clay Shirky uses in "Here Comes Everybody"), but overall, it's a thought-provoking book about today's media environment. And I loved the e-book "extra" essays from other authors.

This book examines the concept of viral media and argues for a different paradigm based on participatory culture and fandom, where people choose to spread ideas and their interests to other people. It's a fascinating book that presents an alternative perspective on marketing, but also on pop culture studies, bringing those studies to the 21st century by focusing on the role of social media within pop culture. If you are interested in pop culture, you'll find this book useful for understanding how pop culture spreads and if you are interested in marketing this book will provide a different perspective to the prevailing wisdom of the time.

One of the better media books I've read. Very accessible.

For Media Studies teachers in particular, this book will not disappoint. A wealth of useful new reception theory for you to digest and introduce into your lessons. Also a must for digital literacy,

media literacy people with whole school roles too.

Enjoyed Jenkins' synthesis of current phenomena as they relate to networked audiences. Would recommend to New Media scholars or to content providers wishing to learn more about navigating their content in a crowded culture.

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