An outline of a typology of media events: Dayan & Katz revisited in the light of digital media

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› A theoretical framework for understanding media events
› A stepping stone for discussing the impact on web archiving
AGENDA

› Events and media events
› Media events 2.0 — extending Dayan & Katz’ typology
› Media events 2.0 — the digital

The book about media and events

What can we use this book for today in relation to understanding digital media and events?
EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

› Everyday life — the backdrop of events

› Everyday life is based on routines and repetition
› Events are whatever breaks with the routines and repetitions

› From individual everyday via family and workplace to a society’s everyday life and routines
› Individual to societal events: birthdays, weddings, national sport or cultural events — or disasters
EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

› Everyday and events have always been embedded in media: spoken word, writing, print, film, radio, television, internet
› Dayan & Katz focus on what they term ‘media events’ — a specific genre of televised events
› Dayan & Katz: not all events in the media are media events
EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

Characteristics of Dayan & Katz’ ‘media events’:
› a **television** phenomenon
› **big** events, 'occasions of state'
› **preplanned**, ceremonial, and highly organized
› **interruptions** of everyday routines of television
› **live** broadcasts
› **media external**, not taking place in a studio, not initiated by the broadcaster
EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

Dayan & Katz: what media events are not—indirectly establish a **typology of events**, in my rephrasing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Live-and-remote</th>
<th>Preplanned</th>
<th>Unplanned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media events</td>
<td>Events in media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made in a studio</td>
<td>Events in media</td>
<td>Events in media</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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NIELS BRÜGGER  
29 NOVEMBER 2016
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ’ TYPOLOGY

1. Media events come in other media than television
2. Fuzzy zones in a continuum:
   › media independant events become made-for-media
   › made-for-media events cause media independant events
   › unplanned events may be partly planned and predictable
   › preplanned events planned at various degrees
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ' TYPOLOGY

3. **Embeddedness** of Preplanned/Unplanned events:
   › unplanned event may **break into** a preplanned event
   › unplanned event may **take place within** a preplanned event

4. Temporal extension, the **length of an event** may be worth considering — short, mezo, long term

5. Spatial extension, events as **regional**, or even **local** (city, parts of a city)
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ’ TYPOLOGY

6. Small **scale** and **semi-publicness**:
   › whatever interrupts the everyday routines of individuals or smaller groups (a family, a workplace…)
   › maybe only **semi-public**, or maybe even **private**
   › for app. one century a number of these small scale events have usually been **transformed into small scale media events** by the use of postcards, photography, and later video
## MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ’ TYPOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preplanned</th>
<th>Unplanned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media independant</td>
<td>Royal wedding Olympics</td>
<td>Political elections Wars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made-for-media</td>
<td>Bib Brother, song contests</td>
<td>Disruption, live transmission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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29 NOVEMBER 2016
In summary:
› Events are not always simply events which are either 'Media independant' or 'Made-for-media' and 'Preplanned' or 'Unplanned'
› They are often a highly complex network of fuzzy continua, embedded events and happennings, embedded temporalities and spatialities, and big as well as small scale events — all of this looping into one another.
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

› How does digital media challenge existing theories of media events? — including the extension of Dayan & Katz
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

1. Media events come in other media than television
   › 'radio', 'television', etc. in their digitised form
   › 'born-digital' media forms, not originate from publishing or broadcasting (most of the web, SOME of all kinds) — easy to use, ‘unauthorized’ reporting, explosion in amount of content, loss of control, user generated content not neglected
   › high degree of **seamless interrelatedness** of media as well as of media content (feeds, embeddings, links)
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

2. Fuzzy zones in a continuum tend to become even more fuzzy and complex:
   › media independant events more rapidly become part of a mediated circuit — everyone reports
   › made-for-media events causing media independant events increases with more users
   › the number of possible producers and the increased speed and complexity of communication in ’Preplanned’ events tend to make such events — and, in fact, all events — unplanned
3. Embeddedness of Preplanned/Unplanned events:
   › new kind of embeddedness, the embeddedness of unplanned small scale events in big unplanned events
   › were also there before digital media, but can now become media events in their own right and as such also embedded in the big media event, and in much greater numbers
4. Temporal extension:
   › adds a new kind of temporality to events because of their **archiving capacity**, combined with easy **search** and **retrieval**
   › seamless, continuous **activation** of a repository of ’digital phenomena’ related to the event adds a **historical dimension during the event**, just as it enables events to last even after they have ’actually’ ended — short-term events may become long-term
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

5. Spatial extension:
   › global interconnectedness adds a new kind of spatiality to events — not necessarily limited to unfolding 'here', where they are actually happening, but also 'there', in principle everywhere with access to a digital network
   › any local event may relate very easily to any other local event, or it may become a regional, national or global event
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

6. Small scale and semi-publicness:
   › transform more small scale events to **small scale media events**
   › **borders** between public and private small scale media events are **challenged even more** than with non-digital media
   › small scale media events may either be **embedded** in big events or they may even **scale up** to become larger events themselves
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

7. New challenges for collecting — examples related to temporality:
   › digital media store their content
   › but in many cases only for a limited period of time, and highly dependant on decisions taken by the service providers
   › calls for proactive action — either by scholar(s) and/or archiving institutions
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

7. New challenges for **collecting** — examples related to temporality:

- **unplanned short-term** event brings well-known matters to a head for web archiving: not much time to think about **archiving strategies, settings, quality assurance**, etc.

- possible solution: be prepared! — make a **contingency plan** taylored to fit specific types of unplanned events, describing the steps to be taken, establish collaborations with research communities
MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

The new characteristics of media events in a digital world add a number of challenges to the preserving of them.

But we have to understand today’s media events before we can start thinking about how to archive them.

Hopefully these theoretical reflections have been a small contribution to such an understanding.
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