

Post-object fandom and the demise of 'The West Wing'



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Aims of paper

- To outline some previous approaches to this issue within audience studies
- Introduce my use of the theories of Anthony Giddens
- Identify the three main discourses these fans used when discussing the end of the show.

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Giddens & ontological security

- Ontological security is crucial in the development of self-identity, but also in wider society, as it presupposes a "shared – but unproven and unprovable – framework of reality" (Giddens, 1991:36) which is shared by others.
- "The routinisation of day-to-day life [...] is the single most important source of ontological security" (Giddens, 1981:37), engendering our "'confidence' in the 'continuity' of self-identity and the 'constancy' of the surrounding, everyday social world" (Giddens, 1990:92).

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The 'reiteration discourse'

- Reiteration of self identity by reasserting their identity as a fan or reiterating self-narratives which discussed how they became a fan and how the show had been important to them throughout key events in their lives

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The 'renegotiation discourse'

- renegotiating of self-identity, acknowledging that whilst *TWW* had been of huge importance to them, this impact would lessen over time and that the show would cease to be so influential in their lives and that eventually the show would no longer have such meaning for them

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The 'rejection discourse'

- rejection via distancing themselves from the show, discursively positioning themselves as critical and non-emotionally involved and suggesting that the programme was past its best period and deserved to end.

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