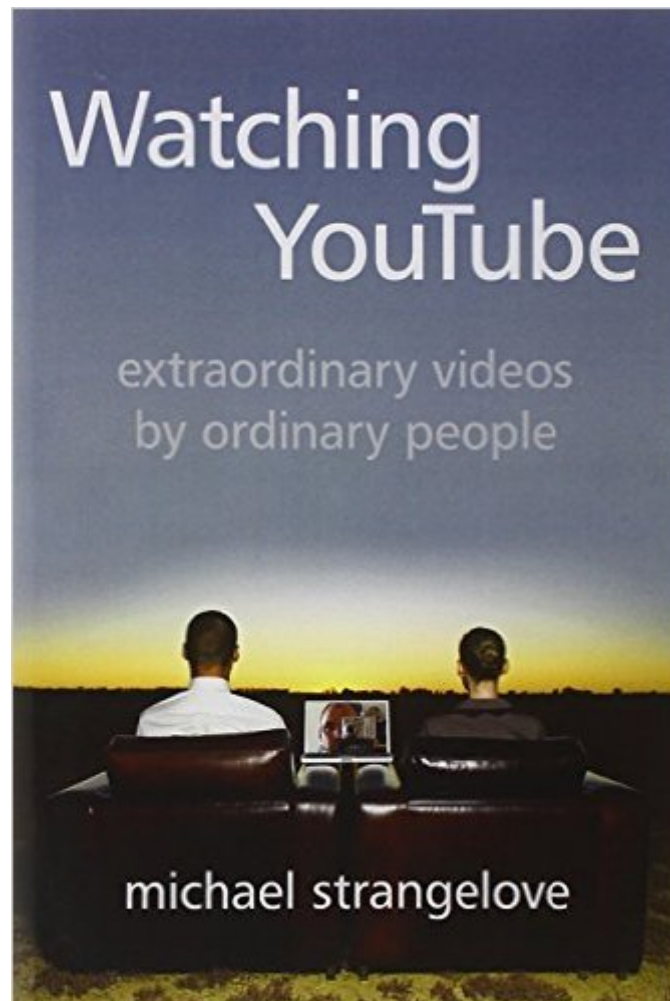


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# Watching YouTube: Extraordinary Videos By Ordinary People



## Synopsis

An anonymous musician plays Pachelbel's Canon on the electric guitar in a clip that has been viewed over sixty million times. The Dramatic Gopher is viewed over sixteen million times, as is a severely inebriated David Hasselhoff attempting to eat a hamburger. Over 800 variations, parodies, and parodies-of-parodies are uploaded of Beyonce Knowles' Single Ladies dance. Tay Zonday sings Chocolate Rain in a video viewed almost forty million times and scores himself a record deal. Obama Girl enters the political arena with contributions such as I Got a Crush on Obama and gets coverage in mainstream news networks. In *Watching YouTube*, Michael Strangelove provides a broad overview of the world of amateur online videos and the people who make them. Dr. Strangelove, the Governor General Literary Award-nominated author that *Wired Magazine* called a 'guru of Internet advertising,' describes how online digital video is both similar to and different from traditional home-movie-making and argues that we are moving into a post-television era characterized by mass participation. Strangelove draws from television, film, cultural, and media studies to help define an entirely new field of research. Online practices of representation, confessional video diaries, gendered uses of amateur video, and debates over elections, religion, and armed conflicts make up the bulk of this groundbreaking study, which is supplemented by an online blog at [strangelove.com/blog](http://strangelove.com/blog). An innovative and timely study, *Watching YouTube* raises questions about the future of cultural memory, identity, politics, warfare, and family life when everyday representational practices are altered by four billion cameras in the hands of ordinary people.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In the May 2010 edition of the Literary Review of Canada Geoff Pevere reviewed *Watching YouTube: Extraordinary Videos by Ordinary People* (University of Toronto Press). The following is a summary of the review with responses by the author, Michael Strangelove. Pevere's review takes the sociological significance of YouTube seriously. Unlike more frivolous commentators, such as Andrew Keen, Pevere treats the subject of *Watching YouTube - amateur videographers* - with the respect that they often deserve. As to the author (myself), he rightly notes that my "palpable excitement over what is happening [on YouTube] is anchored to both a historical awareness of interactive YouTube's antecedents -- like home movies and analogue videotape -- and a weighty methodological rigour." A fine compliment that acknowledges the three years of research that went into the book and the 412 sources and 588 endnotes that make up its scholarly apparatus. Pevere kindly acknowledges that I carefully avoid the often-seen error of proclaiming yet one more Internet revolution. I am "wary of making any over-revolutionary claims for YouTube" while also being "convinced that something sociologically significant has taken place." True enough. Why write a book about something that is of no consequence? Having followed the Internet and related media theory for almost twenty years now, I made every effort in the text to make it clear that I am not cut from the same cloth of techno-utopians or technological determinists. The future of the `Tube and society itself remain unwritten and I have no interest in playing the role of a McLuhanist new media prophet.

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