

I think I'm going to tweet play-by-play today in an overdramatic, overwritten fashion just to keep myself interested.

 Reply  Retweet  Favorite  More

D2.0.3.1

## Live-tweeter – an Empowered TV Viewer

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## Johdon yhteenveto

Vuonna 2010 Time-aikakauslehti lanseerasi termin “twittercooler”, joka viittasi Twitterissä käytävään keskusteluun TV-ohjelmista. Twitter kutsuu tämänkaltaista TV-katselunaikaista, useita viestejä käsittävää kommunikaatiota live-twiittaukseksi (engl. live-tweeting,; Twitter Media, 2011). Live-twiittaus käynnistyi Yhdysvalloissa vuoden 2008 loppupuolella (Shamma, 2012) ja yleistyi voimakkaasti vuoden 2010 aikana (McGirt, 2010).

Tämä kvalitatiivinen tutkimus tarkastelee live-twiittauksia osana TV-katsomiskokemusta. Hankkeen empiirinen materiaali koostuu 45 haastattelusta ja yli 4000 live-twiitistä, jotka kerättiin Yhdysvalloissa vuosien 2011 ja 2012 aikana. Tutkimus keskittyy TV-sarjan ‘Glee’ live-twiittajiin sekä NHL-jääkiekko-otteluiden tv-lähetysten live-twiittajiin.

Tutkimus jakaa haastatellut live-twiittajat neljään ryhmään: *fanaattisiin live-twiittajiin*, jotka live-twiittaavat hyvin paljon ja säännöllisesti, *systemaattisiin live-twiittajiin*, jotka live-twiittaavat säännöllisesti, mutteivät yhtä runsaasti kuin fanaattiset live-twiittajat, *satunnaisiin live-twiittajiin*, jotka live-twiittaavat aina silloin tällöin, ja *aktiivisiin Twitter-käyttäjiin*, jotka eivät varsinaisesti live-twiittaa lainkaan.

Tutkimus esittelee live-twiittauskäytäntöjä aina valmistelusta, kirjoittamisesta, lukemiseen ja Twitterin toiminnallisuuden käyttöön sekä keskustelee niiden motiiveista. Vertaamalla näitä havaintoja aiempaan kirjallisuuteen tutkimus esittelee, kuinka live-twiittaus muuttaa TV-katsomiskokemusta.

TV-live-twiittajille live-twiittauksesta on tullut elimellinen osa TV-katsomiskokemusta. Tälle prosessille on annettu tässä tutkimuksessa nimeksi *kokemuksellistaminen* (eng. experientializing). Live-twiittauksen kokemuksellistaminen osaksi TV-katsomiskokemusta erottaa TV-live-twiittajat muista Twitter-käyttäjistä, jotka sattumanvaraisesti twiittaavat koskien TV-ohjelmia. Kokemuksellistamisen kautta live-twiittajat voivat hallita omaa katsomiskokemustaan paremmin. He voivat valita seuran, jonka kanssa katsovat ohjelmaa, he löytävät samanmielisiä ihmisiä ja ymmärrystä omille ajatuksilleen, he voivat ilmaista itseään ja tällä tavoin voimaantua TV-katsojina.

## Executive Summary

In 2010, Time magazine introduced the term “the Twittercooler” (Poniewozik, 2010) to describe the phenomenon of discussing live television shows online. Twitter calls this sort of continuous engagement that leads to a sequence of focused tweets *live-tweeting* (Twitter Media, 2011). Live-tweeting TV emerged in the U.S. during late 2008 (Shamma, 2012) and gained considerable popularity in 2010 (McGirt, 2010).

This qualitative study investigates live-tweeting as a part of the TV viewing experience. It is based on an empirical material of 45 interviews and on more than 4000 live-tweets collected in the United States during 2011-12. The study focuses on live-tweeters of the musical TV drama show ‘Glee’ and of televised NHL ice hockey.

The study identifies four user groups based on users’ live-tweeting frequency and regularity: *fanatic live-tweeters* who live-tweet very regularly and prolifically, *systematic live-tweeters* who live-tweet regularly but not very often per episode or per game, *sporadic live-tweeters* who live-tweet irregularly, and *active Twitter users* who actually are not live-tweeting at all.

The study presents TV live-tweeting practices from preparation, through writing and reading to the use of various Twitter functionalities and discusses the motivations behind these practices. By comparing these observations to previous studies on TV viewing it shows how live-tweeting changes the TV viewing experience.

For live-tweeters, live-tweeting has become an essential part of their TV viewing experience. In the study this process is labeled *experientializing*. *Experientialization of live-tweeting into TV viewing* is what sets TV live-tweeters apart from Twitter users who occasionally tweet about TV while watching it. Through this process TV live-tweeters gain more control over their TV viewing experience. They can choose their TV viewing company, get validation for their opinions from other live-tweeters, express themselves, and become empowered TV viewers..

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{**NOTE:** In order to automatically generate Table of Tables and Table of Figures you can copy and paste the already made Table 1 and Figure 1 texts - then their numbering changes automatically if there are new ones added in between. Alternatively you can specify every Table and Figure by Insert/Reference/Caption/Table or Figure}

## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations


## 1 Introduction

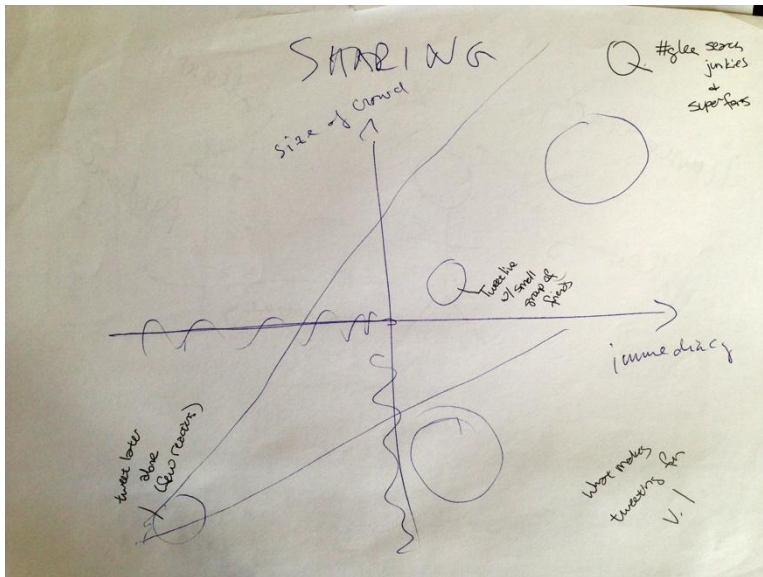
This deliverable is a part of my doctoral dissertation on live-tweeting as a part of TV viewing experience for Hanken School of Economics that I have been preparing while working at Helsinki Institute for Information Technology HIIT. The empirical material was collected between spring 2011 and summer 2012 during my stay as a visiting scholar at University of California Berkeley, School of Information. . The empirical material consists of 45 interviews and of more than 4000 of their live-tweets. The first 21 interviewees were live-tweeters of the musical drama TV series Glee, the next 20 were live-tweeters of NHL ice hockey and the last 4 were concert goers that tweeted during a rock concert.

In this deliverable, I present results that describe the different types of TV live-tweeters, their TV live-tweeting practices and how live-tweeting has changed their TV viewing experience.

## 2 Different types of TV live-tweeters

My attempts to classify TV live-tweeters began after the very first interviews. With my fellow researcher from UC Berkeley, I discussed about the differences the interviewees had with each other. We discussed about the differences between the numbers of followers, the number of sent live-tweets versus the number of read live-tweets and the importance of immediacy to each interviewee. A very early draft from April 2011, presented in Figure 2-1, tries to position live-tweeters on a 2x2 matrix where the y-axis depicts the number of persons participating in live-tweeting a TV program and the x-axis the importance of immediacy to a given TV live-tweeter.

These early attempts proved difficult to elaborate for various reasons. The number of read live-tweets was very hard to measure, as well as perceived number of fellow live-tweeters people wanted to share their tweets. Although, immediacy proved very important for all respondents, it wasn't a quantifiable attribute: people tweeted either live or not. If they tweeted live immediacy was important. If they did not tweet immediately, i.e. while the program was on-going, they were not live-tweeting. The matrix in Figure 2-1 was soon abandoned.



**Figure 2-1: Draft from April, 2011 trying to position live-tweeters on a 2x2 matrix**

Another plausible way to classify live-tweeters would have been through content of the tweets. However, our preliminary class project (McPherson, 2011) had shown on one hand that individual tweets could carry a lot of information. For example,

Sample tweet 1 that was collected during the preliminary class project was attributed three codes: 'Comment about the episode', 'Expression of frustration' and 'Expression of Excitement'.

*What's with all the lyric changes in the rocky horror glee!!!! It's a bit annoying, but it's actually awesome!!!!*

*Sample tweet 1: A tweet sent during Glee on 26<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2010*

On the other hand, some tweets, like Sample tweet 2, were very difficult to classify because they were part of a larger discussion and without knowing the context it was impossible to know their meaning.

*@jennnisterr hahah ohh, well it was just on glee and im in love<3*

*Sample tweet 2: A tweet sent during Glee on 26<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2010*

The most salient way to categorize my respondent started to dawn on me while collecting NHL live-tweeting data in the spring 2012. Previously, during spring 2011, we had identified live-tweeters while Glee was airing simply by looking at the number of tweets they had sent during that particular episode. This worked well in regards to Glee, because Glee watchers were tweeting mainly about Glee. However, this strategy did not work as smoothly with NHL and Pittsburgh Penguins live-tweeters. I stumbled many times to persons that mentioned the official hashtag #pens in their tweets but were not actually live-tweeting the games or sometimes were not even watching the games from television. These persons simply wanted to root for their team on Twitter or made a remark about the Pens fans on the street or were maybe watching the game at the arena.

In order to screen out these accidental tweeters, I scrolled down their Twitter timeline in order to see their tweets from previous days, weeks or months depending upon the frequency they



tweeted. Then I searched for the term “pens” on the timeline. The result of this search function marked all the occurrences of the search term with a small yellow line on the browser window’s scroll bar. The same procedure worked just as well with Glee live-tweets, as demonstrated on Screen capture 2-1.

This illustration provided me with two important pieces of information simultaneously: 1.) the frequency with which the Twitter user was tweeting the program, i.e. how many tweets per episode he or she had sent, and 2.) the regularity with which the Twitter user was tweeting the Glee episodes or ice hockey games.

For example, from the search results marked as yellow lines on the scroll bar on Screen capture 2-1, it is easy to identify clearly distinct groups of tweets that contain the search term “glee”. A closer inspection of these groups reveals that they all have occurred when the Glee was airing.



**Screen capture 2-1: The frequency of the term "glee" on a Twitter user's timeline can be seen from the small yellow line on the scroll bar on right.**

Initially, this combining of live-tweeting frequency and regularity enabled me to more carefully select whom to approach when recruiting new interviewees. Later, when combining this information with the number of tweets sent during one episode and with the interview data I could see patterns emerging from the data, which enabled me to classify the respondent of my study into four groups: 1.) Fanatic live-tweeters, 2.) Systematic live-tweeters, 3.) Sporadic live-tweeters, and 4.) Active twitter users. Finally, after having coded all the tweets, in order to validate this repartition, I made a more elaborate analysis based on the number of coded tweets per episode and the number of live-tweeted episodes.

**Table 2-1: Categorization of participants and the frequency and regularity of their live-tweeting**

Participant	Category	Frequency		Regularity	
		Share of episode/games live-tweeted	Rank from lowest to highest	Live-tweets per episode/game	Rank from lowest to highest
GL_P01	Sporadic live-tweeter	33,33 %	11	11,75	6
GL_P02	Fanatic live-tweeter	66,67 %	19	33,38	14
GL_P03	Systematic live-tweeter	58,33 %	9	8,14	9
GL_P04	Fanatic live-tweeter	83,33 %	17	26,20	11
GL_P05	Systematic live-tweeter	83,33 %	4	6,30	15
GL_P06	Sporadic live-tweeter	28,57 %	12	13,50	5
GL_P07	Fanatic live-tweeter	100,00 %	21	89,00	21
GL_P08	Sporadic live-tweeter	45,45 %	14	15,60	19
GL_P09	Systematic live-tweeter	83,33 %	7	7,80	16
GL_P10	Systematic live-tweeter	55,56 %	10	8,60	12
GL_P11	Active Twitter User	8,33 %	5	7,00	1
GL_P12	Systematic live-tweeter	91,67 %	1	4,91	18
GL_P13	Sporadic live-tweeter	58,33 %	3	5,60	10
GL_P14	Systematic live-tweeter	58,33 %	6	7,13	13
GL_P15	Sporadic live-tweeter	25,00 %	13	14,67	4
GL_P16	Sporadic live-tweeter	50,00 %	15	23,57	8
GL_P17	Sporadic live-tweeter	9,09 %	20	39,00	3
GL_P18	Sporadic live-tweeter	41,67 %	2	5,00	7
GL_P19	Fanatic live-tweeter	91,67 %	16	24,36	17
GL_P20	Fanatic live-tweeter	100,00 %	18	29,71	20
GL_P21	Active Twitter User	8,33 %	8	8,00	2
IHT_P01	Fanatic live-tweeter	66,67 %	16	10,90	16
IHT_P02	Fanatic live-tweeter	60,00 %	19	50,67	15
IHT_P03	Fanatic live-tweeter	100,00 %	20	54,33	20
IHT_P04	Systematic live-tweeter	73,33 %	14	7,55	18
IHT_P05	Systematic live-tweeter	45,45 %	6	5,20	13
IHT_P06	Systematic live-tweeter	73,33 %	11	6,09	17
IHT_P07	Fanatic live-tweeter	100,00 %	18	16,75	19
IHT_P08	Sporadic live-tweeter	32,00 %	13	6,75	8
IHT_P09	Sporadic live-tweeter	18,75 %	12	6,33	5
IHT_P10	Systematic live-tweeter	53,33 %	9	5,79	14
IHT_P11	Sporadic live-tweeter	36,00 %	15	9,89	10
IHT_P12	Active Twitter User	5,56 %	1	2,00	2
IHT_P13	Sporadic live-tweeter	24,00 %	8	5,67	7
IHT_P14	Sporadic live-tweeter	33,33 %	4	3,80	9
IHT_P15	Sporadic live-tweeter	20,00 %	10	6,00	6
IHT_P16	Sporadic live-tweeter	16,00 %	3	3,75	4
IHT_P17	Sporadic live-tweeter	8,00 %	5	4,00	3

The categorization of participants is presented in Table 2-1 alongside with the frequency of their live-tweets and regularity of their live-tweeting tendency. In order to visualize the differences between different user groups, I mapped them on a two-dimensional plane according their rank in frequency and regularity. Figure 2-2 displays the repartition of Glee participants and Figure 2-3 the NHL participants. The participants are placed on the plane according to their rank among the other participants and the axes are divided in quartiles in

order to help the visualization. The participants have been color-coded according to their user category: *Fanatic live-tweeters* in blue, *Systematic live-tweeters* in red, *Sporadic live-tweeters* in green and *Active twitter users* in yellow.

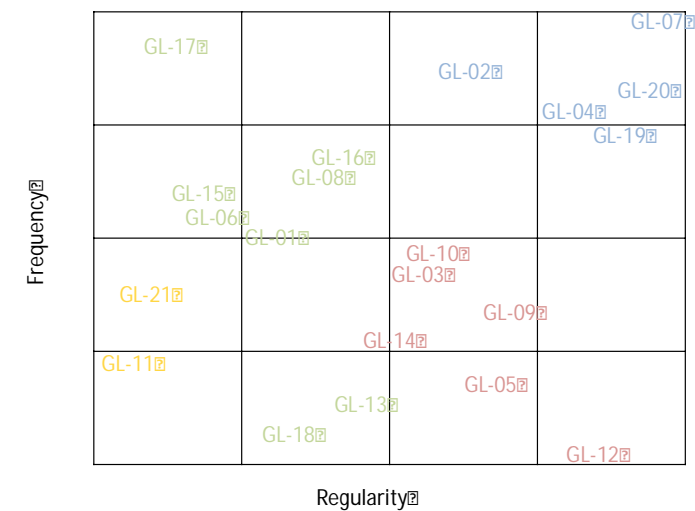


Figure 2-2: Glee participants ranked by their live-tweeting frequency and regularity.

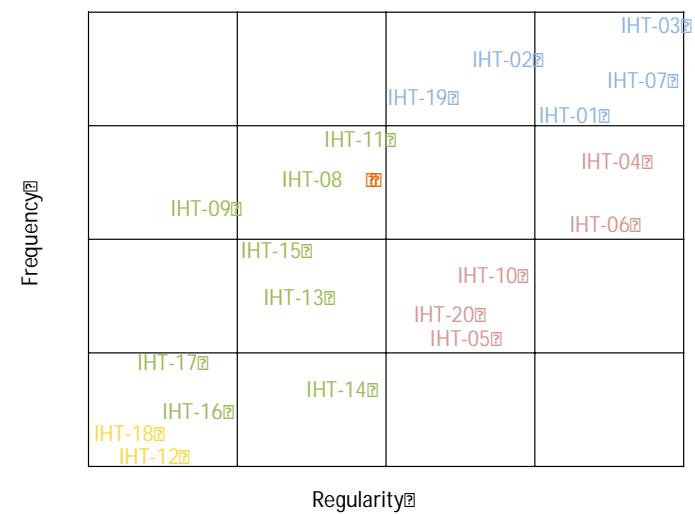
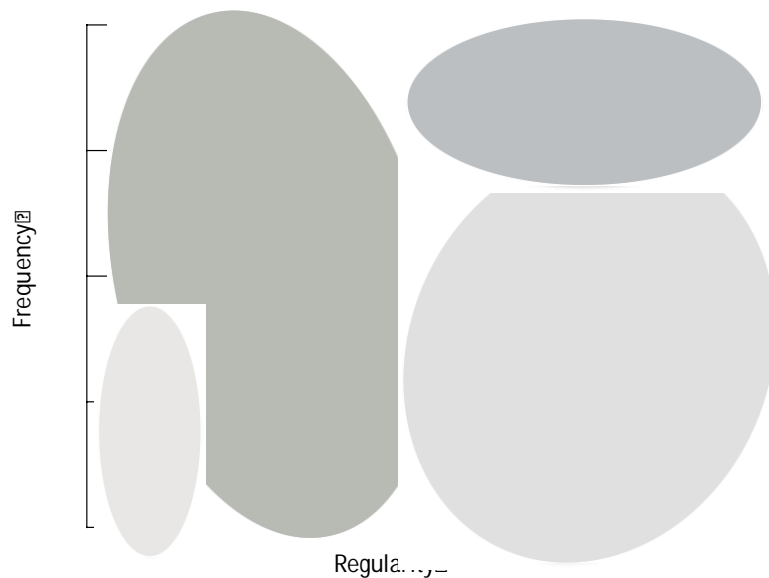


Figure 2-3: NHL participants ranked by their live-tweeting frequency and regularity.

In Figure 2-4, the two participant groups are superimposed. The color-coding reveals a quite evident pattern although some overlap between the groups occur: *Fanatic live-tweeters* are concentrated in the upper right corner; the *Systematic live-tweeters* inhabit the center right. *Sporadic live-tweeters* are dominant on the left side of the matrix and *Active live-tweeters* are concentrated on the low-left corner.



**Figure 2-4: Glee & NHL participants ranked by their live-tweeting frequency and regularity.**

Below, I will present the four user categories and elaborate on the results of the analysis presented above.

### 1.1.1 Fanatic live-tweeters

I have entitled the first group *fanatic live-tweeters*, as their live-tweeting of Glee or NHL is dominated by their fandom. What sets them apart from other live-tweeters is that they tweet a lot, they do it regularly and they have a particularly strong emotional bond with the show or the team. When watching Glee or an ice hockey game from TV *Fanatic live-tweeters* almost always live-tweet. For many in this group, their Twitter usage seems to be almost solely about Glee or ice hockey. Screen capture 2-2 of GL-07's Twitter timeline illustrates this well. Practically, all her tweets contain the word 'Glee' and she tweets about Glee also on days when the show is not aired.



**Screen capture 2-2: Example of the timeline of a "Fanatic live-tweeter" GL-07**

The group is, however, not homogenous. IHT-03 and IHT-07 are hard-core ice hockey fans that tweet enormously without ever missing an episode or game. Both live far away from their hometown so they never get to go to the game in person. For them, live-tweeting - watching their hometown team play and being able to root for it with other fans using Twitter - is a way to add a social dimension to watching hockey that they wouldn't otherwise have. This seems to affect both the frequency as well as the regularity of their live-tweeting.

IHT-01 and GL-04 are also avid fans but they tweet a little less. GL-02, IHT-02 and IHT-19, on the other hand, tweet just as much but less regularly than the other ones in this group. For IHT-02 and IHT-19 the reason is simple. The days they have not live-tweeted the game they have attended the game in person and ice hockey fans tweet a lot less if at all when they attend the game in person.

GL-19 and GL-20 are, then again, part of an interesting three-person sub-group among the Glee live-tweeters. They are all former fans that live-tweeted Glee as fans during the first season of the show. During the second season – i.e. the season during which the tweets of this study were collected – their attitude towards the show turned sour and their tweets snarky. However, they kept tweeting about the show very generously, were very passionate and had strong opinions about Glee. The third person in this group is GL-17, whose live-tweeting is very prolific but a lot less regular than that of GL-19 and GL-20 and therefore he is grouped among *Sporadic live-tweeters*.

### 1.1.2 Systematic live-tweeters

*Systematic live-tweeters* live-tweet almost always when they watch their favorite program or their favorite team play on TV and they very rarely fail to watch an episode or a game. This

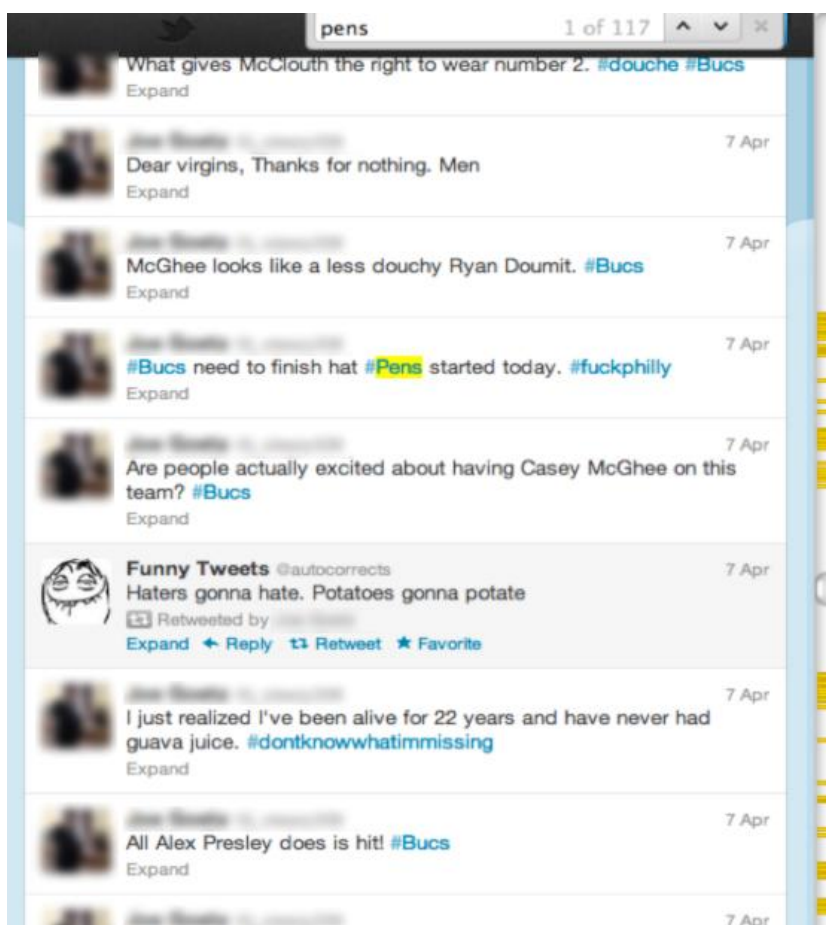
stalwartness of watching habits and regular combining of Twitter with TV watching is well illustrated in the following quote by IHT-04:

*I'll watch the games as much as I can or I'll listen to them. Sometimes again, they'll be background. I may not have the sound up, but I'll be there. Watching a Twitter feed, I'll see what's going on, that kind of thing.*

– IHT-04, male, 56 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

This pattern can be observed also on the timeline of IHT-06 depicted in Screen capture 2-3. The tweets that contain the search term 'Pens' are clustered in tight groups that occur when Pittsburgh Penguins were playing.

When compared to *fanatic live-tweeters*, *systematic live-tweeters* are more or less as regular but on average they tweet considerably less, although some are more prolific than others.



**Screen capture 2-3: Example of the timeline of a "Systematic live-tweeter" IHT-06**

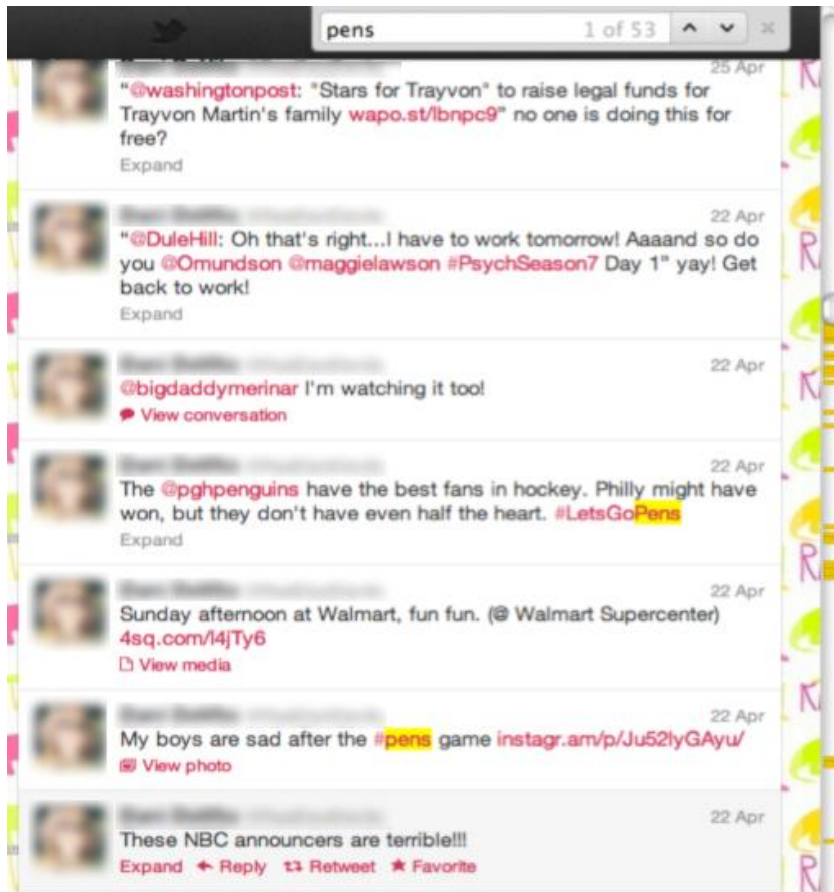
*Systematic live-tweeters'* regularity is primarily due to their previous – i.e. before they live-tweeted – loyal watching habits. However, according to my interview and tweet material it is fair to say that the social interaction that Twitter provides has strengthened this characteristic. Several of the *Systematic Glee live-tweeters* (GL-03, GL-05, GL-09, GL-14) have good friends they are live-tweeting Glee with. Live-tweeting is, thus, like a weekly “rendez-vous” with friends, which undoubtedly increases their regularity. Similar kind of longing of social



interaction can be identified among the *systematic NHL live-tweeters*. IHT-04, IHT-05, IHT-10 and IHT-20 are all only rarely able to attend games because they are either living far away from their hometown or have a restricting medical condition. Live-tweeting ice hockey is for them a way to feel more connected with their peers. In this respect they are much like IHT-03 and IHT-07, except that they are not tweeting as much as them.

### 1.1.3 Sporadic live-tweeters

*Sporadic live-tweeters* live-tweet Glee or ice hockey every now and then. The sporadic pattern is obvious on IHT-09's timeline on Screen capture 2-4.



**Screen capture 2-4: Example of the timeline of a "Sporadic live-tweeter" IHT-09**

*Sporadic live-tweeters* form the largest group in my study and also the most diverse. When looking at the live-tweeting of individual episodes or games some of the *sporadic live-tweeters* resemble *fanatic live-tweeters* (i.e. GL-16 & GL-17) and some *systematic live-tweeters* (i.e. GL-13 & GL-18). And actually, when looking more closely at the data one can observe that the live-tweeting habits of some of the individuals have been changing during the observation period. GL-08 and GL-16 tweeted only very few tweets per episode in the beginning of the season and they discovered TV live-tweeting only in the middle of the season, after which they started tweeting fanatically. IHT-08 and IHT-11, on the other hand, were not watching the Pittsburgh Penguins games before the end of the regular season, after which they started to live-tweet systematically and in April during the play offs even fanatically.

Among both groups (Glee and NHL) there were also *sporadic live-tweeters* that said that their live-tweeting frequency fluctuates from episode or game to another, as the quotes below testify.

*There are a couple of episodes that I've really liked so I've gone on and just tweeted a bunch. There's other times that I tweet a little bit with not really a whole lot. It kinda depends. I don't really have the same frequency per episode.*

– GL-06, male, 21 y., *sporadic Glee live-tweeter*

*While I'm watching it I'm probably tweeting very often, especially if it's more exciting. If it's not as exciting I'm probably gonna say as much. Or if we're not doing as well I might shoot off a couple swear words in the tweets, and try to sort of just go away for the night.*

– IHT-01, male, 26 y., *fanatic NHL live-tweeter*

Finally, some of the *sporadic glee live-tweeters* (GL-01 and GL-18) are actively live-tweeting other TV shows and they live-tweet Glee only occasionally.

Common to all sporadic live-tweeters seems to be, however, that their irregularity of live-tweeting is due to their irregularity of watching the show or the game and that most of the time when they are watching they are also live-tweeting the program,

#### 1.1.4 Active Twitter users

The fourth identifiable group among the participants is *active Twitter users*. They are tweeting all day long about everything they do. When they start to watch a TV series or an ice hockey game they might mention it on Twitter. However, they don't really live-tweet programs sequentially and they don't really seem to consider tweeting as an element in their TV viewing. On the rare occasions that these *active Twitter users* have tweeted multiple times about Glee or NHL while watching TV, it seems to have been due to a discussion with another Twitter user. Screen capture 2-5 illustrates the occurrences of the search term "Pens" on the Twitter timeline of an *active Twitter user*.





**Screen capture 2-5: Example of the timeline of an active Twitter user**

### 1.1.5 Conclusion of different types of live-tweeters

By mapping the live-tweeting frequency and regularity of the 41 Glee and NHL interviewees, I could identify four different types of behavior patterns: *fanatic live-tweeters* who live-tweet very regularly and prolifically, *systematic live-tweeters* who live-tweet regularly but not very often per episode or per game, *sporadic live-tweeters* who live-tweet irregularly, and *active Twitter users* who actually are not live-tweeting at all.

It is important to point out that the classification presented here is context and time dependent. A sporadic live-tweeter of Glee can be a fanatic live-tweeter of another program. And, as I pointed out earlier, with time a fanatic live-tweeter can become a systematic live-tweeter or vice-versa.

In the first three groups, however, live-tweeting has clearly become a part of the TV viewing experience of the participants. I have labeled this phenomenon *experientializing*. I consider that *experientializing* Twitter into TV viewing is what sets TV live-tweeters a part of Twitter users who occasionally tweet about TV while watching it. I will further elaborate the concept of *experientializing* in latter chapters of my dissertation, which are not part of this deliverable.

### 3 TV Live-tweeting practices

In this chapter, I introduce the TV live-tweeting practices as they emerged from the data. I discuss first *the physical environment and the technical equipment* and then go on presenting the different aspects of a TV live-tweeting session: *preparation, writing and reading live-tweets* and *the use of different Twitter functionalities in TV live-tweeting*.

#### 3.1 The physical environment and the technical equipment

TV live-tweeting takes place typically from home. Other reported places were a friend's or a family member's home, a dorm room and a sports bar. The physical environment is often directly linked to the social environment, i.e. how many other people are around and who they are. The devices that the participants in my study used for live-tweeting were smartphones, tablets, laptops and desktops computers. Participants used mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) when they live-tweeted from another place than their home. Other than the fact that all *active Twitter users* were all using laptops as their primary live-tweeting devices, the data didn't reveal any differences in live-tweeting practices related to the device used for live-tweeting.

#### 3.2 TV Live-tweeting session: preparation

As live-tweeting requires that the TV spectators watch the program live, they need to make room for it in advance in their schedule. As the quotes below testify, daily errands are taken care of before the show, live-tweeters make themselves feel comfortable, they prepare their tweeting equipment and sometimes this preparation process is even documented in tweets.

*I try to get certain things out of the way and so I can clear my hour, I don't have to miss anything, like you know beforehand or after.*

– GL-09, female, 27 y., systematic Glee live-tweeter

*I usually have some sort of diet soda sitting next to me on the dresser so I can just reach over and take little sips of that.*

– GL-12, male, 28 y. Systematic Glee live-tweeter

*I'm usually home already when it starts and I'm usually just on my couch in my living room. I have my phone with me, so I use the Twitter app for the iPhone.*

– GL-19, male, 21 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

*Prior to a game, I'll set up whatever device that I'm using, get everything logged in.*

– IHT-02, female, 28 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter

*We'll get up and we eat breakfast and I'll maybe tweet, 'Getting a couple things done around the house before the puck drops at 12:30, #LetsGoPens'*

– IHT-08, male, 27 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter

Although, this tendency goes against the quite recent trend started by proliferation of time shifting devices according to which especially young people would gradually cease to watch real-time TV broadcasts (Bailey, 2003; Watkins, 2009), there is, of course, nothing new about taking time to watch a program when it airs. More characteristic to live-tweeting is probably people's willingness to do it alone. Having other people around is considered problematic at least for two reasons that become evident from the quotes below. First, live-tweeters don't like to be interrupted and they fear that other people talking around them will distract their experience and prevent them from live-tweeting as much as they would otherwise. Secondly, when there are other people around live-tweeters feel obliged to socialize with these people instead of live-tweeting TV.

*Honestly, I would prefer to live tweet Glee alone, and then as soon as the show is over, have people over to discuss it. I like being able to be alone with my own thoughts without people talking around me during the show.*

– GL-13, female, 24 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter

*Actually I'd rather do it by myself, weirdly enough. If I have people around me or friends around me I probably won't tweet that much because they're already there with me and so they're actually knowing how I'm feeling and what's going on. But if I'm by myself and nobody there with me so I like to talk about it or tweet about.*

– GL-02, Male, 25 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

*If I'm at somebody else's house, one I'm visiting, I didn't go over there to watch the game. The game happens to be on, so it'd be rude for me to stare at my phone the whole time and tweet. I'll only pull it out if it's something that moves me. I don't want to be obnoxious and just ignore everybody.*

– IHT-04, male, 56 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

### 3.3 TV Live-tweeting session

#### 3.3.1 Writing TV live-tweets

A TV live-tweeting session starts typically before the actual programs starts. These *pre-live-tweets* anticipate the actual show and start for some live-tweeters already hours before the program but typically only a couple of minutes before airing. In these pre-live-tweets, live-tweeters count the time before the beginning of the show.

*Then basically, a lot of times, I've already watched a lot of spoilers and things, so I'm writing about things that I'm excited about for the episode.*

*– GL-13, female, 24 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter*



14, 71 and 18 back together tonight. Thank God. #Pens

**Sample tweet 3: IHT-02's pre-live-tweet offering background information on the Pittsburgh Penguins line up before the game.**

When the program starts and live-tweeting begins live-tweeters set out to tweet their observations, reflections and comments about the program and to read other peoples' live-tweets.

While writing live-tweets, the most important things seem to be the ability to make interesting observations, to state your opinion, to be funny or to be among the first to tweet about a subject. Quotes from GL-14, IHT-18 and GL-19 below illustrate this well.

*If they say something funny, I'll quickly tweet it and I'll put pound Glee at the end of it so that everyone knows that it came from the episode. That's basically what happens. Like I'll watch the episode and tweet all at the same time. Like if they say something funny, I'll hurry and retweet it.*

*– GL-14, female, 22 y., systematic Glee live-tweeter*

The simultaneity of the communication with the viewing is essential in live-tweeting TV, as GL-19 explains below.

*To watch an episode and then to go back after it's over and then start-sort of review everything I thought about the entire episode through Twitter, I mean I've done that before. I think it's less effective compared to giving my opinion as it happens. I think people are definitely reading the hashtag and the timeline as the show is going on. If I tweet something about a certain part of the show as it happens, people know what I'm talking about. I think it's more effective that way than not tweeting during the episode, then going back and kind of rehashing everything that had happened and giving my play-by-play. I think in that sense, tweeting live is a lot more effective than not tweeting at all and then going back and going over it again.*

*– GL-19, male, 21 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

Although none of the interviewees explicitly stated that they were competing with other live-tweeters, being first to say something is clearly important for some and, as IHT-18 describes in the quote below, there is a social pressure to stay up to date.

*I think live tweeting happens because something has happened that is fresh in everybody's mind and you get to share your feelings and your opinion on that specific either action or moment, right then and there. If I come in late in the conversations in games or during a baseball game or a hockey game or what have you and I feel like I'm late to the party and I don't know what's going on. I don't know what I've missed. I'm almost kind of embarrassed to say hey I wasn't paying attention, can somebody catch up to the current event here. It definitely has its impact while everybody's watching or participating in the same thing at the same time.*

– IHT-18, male, 42 y., active Twitter user

This “competition” has no scoreboard, however, and its rewards come in the form of increased social interaction, i.e. in the number of replies, retweets and followers one gets. Thus, everyone who participates is a winner. This social interaction is so important that live-tweeters are ready to sacrifice parts of the program for it and tweet during the show because of it. If they would wait for the commercial break, someone else would have most probably tweeted already the same observation and the idea would have become “old news”. In addition, as the quote from GL-19 below highlights, new ideas to be tweeted emerge all the time when watching the program and so waiting for a break before setting out to write would result almost certainly in forgetting some of the ideas.

*I would say that I tend to tweet more during the show, rather than, say, during commercials. It's kind of-as soon as I hear something, I have to try and get it out right away, or something happens, I need to say something else. You know what I'm saying? I want to get my phone out based on a certain point of the plot before something else happens in the show and I'll have something else to say. It's kind of a very hit-or-miss, fast-paced live tweeting session I would say.*

– GL-19, male, 21 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

It seems also that sending tweets serves another purpose: having publicly tweeted your thoughts makes you feel more passionate about the idea. You want to see what others think about it and you feel more ready to defend it.

*Well, in my opinion, I think that it doesn't necessarily increase my like for the Penguins, but I think that it really increases the passion of whatever you're live tweeting, because you instantaneously know that there are however many other people having the same*

*thought that you are, if that makes any sense.*

*– IHT-09, female, 27 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter*

### 3.3.2 Reading TV live-tweets

*Reading live-tweets* takes place partially while the program is on-going, partially during the breaks and partially after the show has ended.

*Sure. Sure. The good thing about reading tweets is they're easy because they're like headlines. You can really scan them fast. If they're using hashtags, you can separate them out if you want to, which I'll do at times. Yeah. I will read other people's tweets. It's not a one-sided affair. A lot of times, my tweets are reacting to their tweets. I may reply to them. I may retweet them. That kind of thing. I may see something interesting. I may see a funny comment. A lot of my tweets, if I tweet, may be retweets during the game 'cause I'm not going to duplicate what somebody said if that's the exact same thing I'm going to say.*

*– IHT-04, male, 56 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter*

Immediacy does not seem to be as crucial when reading live-tweets as when writing them.

*Certainly, during commercial breaks too - during commercial breaks I actually -that gives me a chance to go through my Twitter stream and see what maybe I've missed. [...] The time-outs or the commercial breaks give me a moment to go back, and look to see if I've missed or what not.*

*– IHT-11, male, 29 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter*

*You know I generally just like keep paying more attention to what's going on with the screen and I'll look at the Twitter of course like during commercials or while I'm actually typing up the tweet, so I try and pay more attention to like the people, like my friends on my timeline, what they're saying. Then I'll spend more time like I said during the commercials when there's more time, then I'll look maybe through the Hash Tag search.*

*– GL-04, male, 27 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

It is interesting that while several of the interviewees told that they were not actively reading other people's tweets during the show or while the game was on, they still emphasized the importance of having many people live-tweeting at the same time, as the quotes below testify. I wondered how could the live-tweeters be so up-to-date of what had been said if they weren't constantly reading other people's tweets.

*It's almost like you're sitting there with 100 other people at the same television screen in a bar or something. You're all tweeting the same thing or crying over the same fumble or other team scoring or whatever. It's just kind of like that togetherness that you feel while you're tweeting and seeing everybody else's messages posted.*

*[...]*

*Certainly, during commercial breaks too-during commercial breaks I actually-that gives me a chance to go through my Twitter stream and see what maybe I've missed. Because most of the time I'm just actually tweeting something, and not looking what others are writing while the game is going on. The time-outs or the commercial breaks give me a moment to go back, and look to see if I've missed or what not.*

*– IHT-11, male, 29 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter*

This contradiction puzzled me for a long time. After having analyzed all the tweets, I came to the conclusion that live-tweeters underestimate their reading during the show or the game, although they certainly concentrate more on it during the breaks. Apparently reading live-tweets is partially related to writing live-tweets. First, when one sets to write a tweet, one simultaneously sheds glimpses to his or her timeline. These glimpses provide at least the information if the timeline is active or not, i.e. new tweets are coming in. Secondly, when one has sent a live-tweet it seems to raise interest in reading other peoples' live-tweets for similarities. If similarities are found they bring validation for one's own thoughts, which is found rewarding. Thirdly, after having tweeted, live-tweeters are probably checking occasionally their timeline for retweets and replies that their tweets may have provoked. Live-tweeters joy of finding like-minded people among other live-tweeters emerges from the data again and again.

*I think it's just knowing that it's not just you, because there's normally other people who felt the exact same way.*

*– IHT-02, female, 28 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter*

Reading live-tweets provides also an opportunity to learn new things about the program or to learn other people's interpretations of the show. If the reader concurs, he or she can retweet the tweet and comment it.

An interesting aspect related to reading live-tweets is the fact that only very few live-tweeters ever go back and read their own tweets. Many consider live-tweeting to be just like talking: once it gets out, you cannot get it back. Additionally, Twitter is considered to be about living in the moment. Past is not interesting.

*I guess whatever I said, I said. It's there. I don't really have a-any reason to re-read what I said.*

*– IHT-13, male, 30 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter*

After the program, tweeting continues usually for a while. In these post-live-tweets, the program is analyzed and evaluated. For both groups of TV live-tweeters post-live-tweeting served as an opportunity for shared meaning-making.

*It will continue for a little bit after that. There may be discussion of a goal. If it's an exciting game that comes down to the wire, there'll be discussion of that, but there'll also be discussion of the game the next day.*

– IHT-04, male, 56 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

After an ice hockey game ended, some NHL live-tweeters tweeted statistics of the game, others cheered or mourned the result, criticized the referees, the opposing team and its fans, speculated over future games and – especially after a lost game - commiserated with other live-tweeters.

Glee live-tweeters discuss in post-live-tweets the future development of the story line and the characters and review the episode as a whole.



So I heard some Glee spoilers the other day.  
Like Mercedes finally getting a love interest  
in Season 3. #glee

**Sample tweet 4: A Glee post-live-tweet discussing future events in the show.**

### 3.4 The use of Twitter functionalities when live-tweeting TV

Twitter includes many functionalities that permit its users to personalize their tweets, add more information to them or organize their tweets in various ways. The main functionalities that came up during my interviews were *hashtags and mentions, following, and replies and retweets*.

#### 3.4.1 Hashtags and mentions

Hashtags are keywords attached to the # symbol (#keyword). Hashtags are used to mark discussion topics and to categorize them. Thus, hashtags refer to a topic area. *Mentions*, on the other hand, refer to other Twitter users. They are tweets that contain @ symbol followed by a Twitter username (@username). Twitter collects these tweets so that Twitter users can view easily all tweets mentioning them.

New Twitter users don't seem to hashtag very much, but, among seasoned Twitter users, hashtagging tweets seems to have become a Twitter norm, something that they do automatically, as GL-11 explains in the quote below.

*"I don't even think about the fact that I'm hitting shift three anymore because that is something I never do otherwise but when I'm in Tweet deck hitting shift three or using*



*the drop down menu on Tweet deck for the hash tags makes sense. It's just intuitive at that point."*

*– GL-11, female, 26 y., active Twitter user*

In the context of live-tweeting TV, the reasons for using hashtags when writing tweets are numerous. The most obvious one to the interviewees seemed to be live-tweeters' willingness to reach out to a bigger audience, which possibly results in a larger number of *retweets* or *replies*.

*I'd say just to put it to the general population of Twitter, not really just to any Penguin member or Penguin Tweeters, just because that way, I mean, other people who like other teams can see it.*

*– IHT-15, male, 31 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter*

*(I use it) Just to let other people see what I'm saying about what's going in, you know to see if anyone responds to that.*

*– GL-04, male, 27 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

*I try to use the hash tag every single time just because I'm being specific. Usually if I'm Tweeting about a show I want somebody to see it who's watching that show so we can interact. I try to use a hash tag every single time.*

*– GL-10, female, 29 y., systematic Glee live-tweeter*

Having a large number of people live-tweeting the same program simultaneously seemed to play a role for the "funness" and be very important for the interviewees.

*It gave more excitement and more passion into the show itself 'cause you have like other people who are watching it too and then they're hyping the whole thing up for you so it's a better experience I have to say.*

*– GL-02, male, 25 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

And conversely, low number of other people live-tweeting a program led to a worse experience.

*If there's not really anything interesting to read, or especially if the team's doing badly, it'll be a bad experience overall. I think, yeah, like if the only other tweets, now that I start following other fans, if they're not tweeting about it, especially if they're going to the game, they're gonna be less inclined to tweet about it, cuz they're not going to be at a computer or anything. Or at, like, sitting down with a phone. I'd rather see more*

*people tweeting about it, but I'll still probably tweet, I'll tweet like the normal amount, like 15 times maybe. But not, I don't have as many people to respond to, so it won't be as enjoyable.*

*– IHT-07, male, 24 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter*

However, equally important motivation seemed to be the need to give context to one's own tweets. As GL-12 explains, it is considered polite to let one's followers know what the tweets are about so that they can ignore them, in case they are not themselves interested in the program.

*"Yeah. I want people to know what I'm talking about. If I just say something random and if someone who doesn't watch the show reads it they'll probably think what are you talking about. I use the hash tag to let my non-"Gleek" friends know that I'm talking about Glee."*

*– GL-12, male, 28 y. Systematic Glee live-tweeter*

Yet another reason to hashtag is live-tweeters' desire to help their favorite program by tweeting about it and using the official hashtag. As GL-02 explains in the quote below, live-tweeters believe that hashtagging can attract more people to watch the show.

*It's to populate the portion and the trendy words in the area so people get more interested in watching Glee and make people understand like you know Glee is an awesome show or whatever show it is, is awesome so you can check it out. So I guess it's another for you to advertise that show and get people to understand.*

*– GL-02, male, 25 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

Another way to help a show or a team is to help it rank higher in *trending topics*, a ranking held by Twitter that enlists the most tweeted keywords, as the quote below by IHT-20 points out.

*I mean, I never really thought about trending, but the last year people were saying like, "Oh, the Penguins are trending in Pittsburgh," or, "Oh, the Penguins are trending in the United States," like hashtag Penguins or whatever. I try to—I kind of want to help out with that, I guess, to show people how popular the Pittsburgh Penguins are or the Steelers or that kind of thing.*

*– IHT-20, female, 48 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter*

Sample tweet 5 shows a tweet written by GL-07 that tries to get the keyword Glee "trending". Fanatic live-tweeters can send many this kind of messages per day.



**Sample tweet 5: GL-07's tweet filled with '#Glee' in order to get the keyword Glee to rank higher in Trending topics.**

Most of the time, the participants in this study used the official hashtags suggested by the producers or ice hockey organizations such as #Glee, #pens or #letsGOPens, but sometimes fans invented hashtags of their own for example by combining words or combining names.



**Sample tweet 6: Live-tweeters' own language: hashtags that each combine the names of two characters in Glee**

Sample tweet 6 illustrates a typical case of community members' attempt to create their own language that differentiates them from others and build one's own identity that Cohen (1985) has talked about. "Klaine", "Brittana" and "Finchel" are understandable only to Glee fans. They are combinations of names of two Glee characters that go out together: Klaine refers to Kurt and Blaine, Brittana to Brittany and Santana, and Finchel to Finn and Rachel. Thus, hashtags are used to forming fan communities. On the one hand, the live-tweeter using such hashtags places himself or herself inside the fan community by letting the other fans know that he or she is familiar with this language, and on the other hand rules many people outside of the community - by using terminology that is completely incomprehensible to them. The same kind of tendency can be identified also among NHL fans, as Sample tweet 7 shows.



**Sample tweet 7: NHL live-tweeters' own language. GENO and Malkamania refer to Evgeni Malkin, one of the star players of Pittsburgh Penguins**

*Mentions* or *@tweets*, as they are often referred to as well, are often used to targeting tweets to specific persons or accounts. Addressing a tweet in this way to a person makes the tweet more personal and increases its importance in the eyes of the receiver, as the quote below testifies.

... You know unless of course they tweet something at me and then I'll read that.

– GL-04, male, 27 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

However, adding a *mention* to a tweet doesn't make it less public. Others can still read them just like any other tweet. Twitter has another feature, *direct messaging*, for private one-on-one conversations. Thus, *mentions* serve another purpose.

In the context of live-tweeting TV, *mentions* are used in multiple ways. Sometimes *mentions* are meant to trigger a conversation with the mentioned live-tweeter or live-tweeters. Other times *mentions* just want to draw a particular person's attention to a particular tweet. In these two cases, the *@username* is usually placed right in the beginning of the tweet. Yet another way to use *mentions* is pinpointing at a person or at an organization by adding the Twitter account of the person or organization. For example, Pittsburgh Penguins fans refer to the team and players often by using their Twitter accounts when live-tweeting about them. This allows the players and the organization to be aware of the Twitter conversation about them. Sample tweet 7's '@penguins' and '@malkin71\_' are illustrations of this type of use of mentions. Finally, mentions are used to send fan mail to actors and ice hockey players. Twitter's private messages require that both parties *follow* (please see *following functionality* below) each other, and therefore *mentions* is the only way to approach celebrities directly. Often times, these fan posts congratulate the celebrities of their performances (Sample tweet 8) and in the case of ice hockey also cheer the players before the match (**Error! Reference source not found.**).



Wow @msleamichele!!!! That was amazing  
and Wow Wow @MsAmberPRiley you did  
my favorite song justice!!!

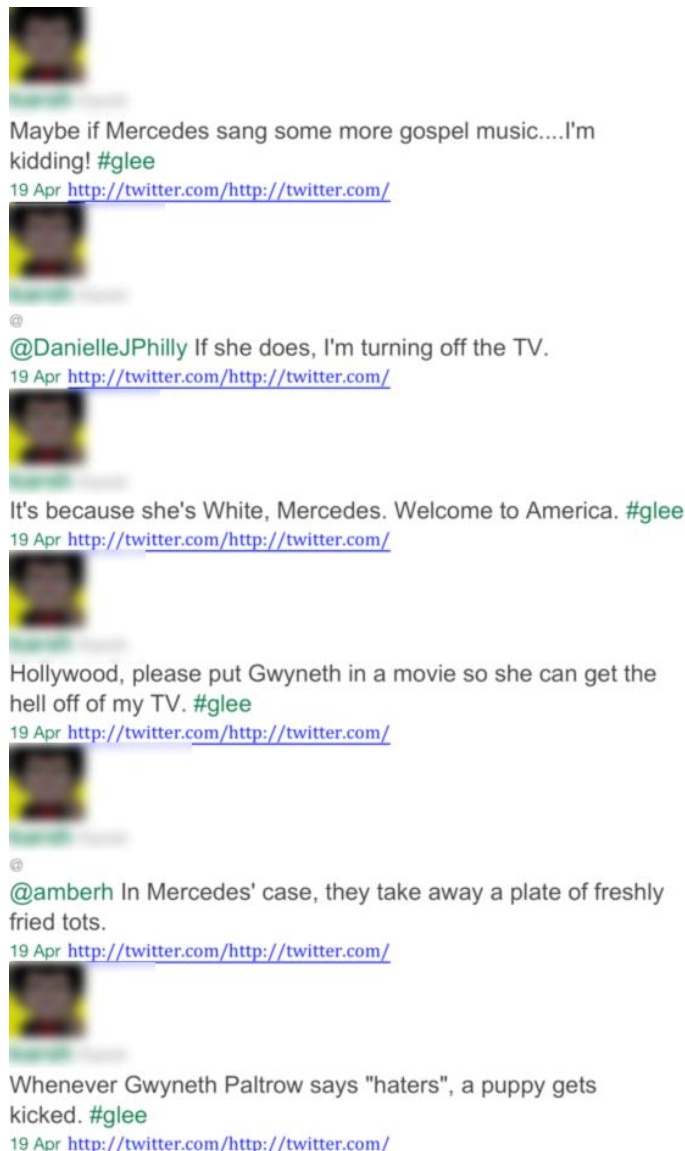
**Sample tweet 8: GL-14's Twitter fan mail to Glee actors**

Sometimes, celebrities reply to these tweets, which is always very memorable to the fans, as GL-08 explains in the quote below.

*That was after I figured out that other people could see my stuff. Then, if I wanted to send them a direct tweet, I would always put them in it. Then they would reply back. I think it's really cool 'cause some tweets that I didn't even include anybody, all I put was the Glee hashtag, then I would get re-tweeted by-I got re-tweeted by Chris Colfer one time. It was right after the Blaine and Chris kiss. I put something that it was so beautiful or something like that. I was like, "This was a step in the right direction for TV." He put something that it meant a lot to him that I liked it and that I supported what they were doing on the show. It was really cool. It's hard to explain how cool that is. The first time you read it, I'm just star struck. He's somebody I watch every week on TV and he's replying back to something I said.*

– GL-08, female, 20 y., Sporadic Glee live-tweeter

Among some seasoned live-tweeter's live-tweeting practices there is a clear correlation between the use of *hashtags* and *mentions*. These live-tweeters hashtag very systematically all their Glee or NHL related tweets except for the tweets that start by mentioning another live-tweeter. There are probably at least two explanations for this. Those live-tweeters that use hashtags primarily in order to provide context for their tweets seem to think that the mention gives enough of context to the tweet. On the other hand the people who use hashtags to reach out for bigger audiences do not do so when they use mentions in their tweets.



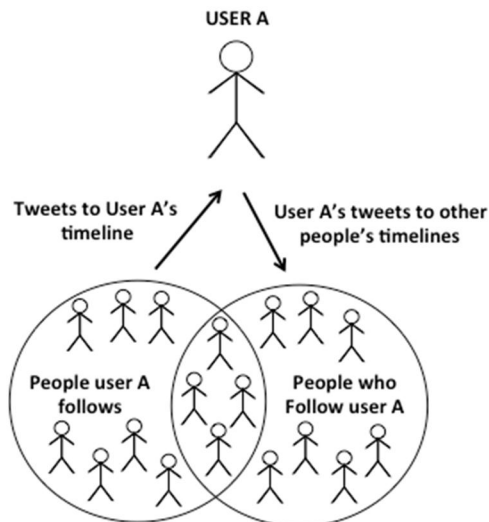
**Sample tweet 9: An example of how mentions do not get hashtagged**

Both *hashtags* and *mentions* are highlighted in a color that sets them apart from the other text of a tweet and conveys to the user that they include a hyperlink. By clicking on a hashtag, a Twitter user can view all the most recent tweets that contain the hashtag in question. By clicking on @username combination, the user gets to see the profile summary of the given Twitter account with its latest tweets. Alternatively, tweets containing a hashtag as well as user accounts can also be found by typing the search terms (hashtag or username) in Twitter's search box.

Beginning live-tweeters search often for hashtags in order to find out what other live-tweeters are tweeting during the program. Once they find live-tweets they like, they can click on them and start to *follow* the senders of those tweets.

### 3.4.2 Following functionality

Twitter's *following* functionality enables Twitter users to subscribe to the tweets of multiple other users and have their tweets appear on their Twitter home page that features a timeline of incoming tweets. As other Twitter users in turn decide independently who to follow, the *following* functionality results in a personalized flow of tweets to and from of a given user. This flow is depicted in Figure 3-1: The personalized tweet flow of a given Twitter user.



**Figure 3-1: The personalized tweet flow of a given Twitter user**

Both sides of the *following functionality* depicted on the Figure 3-1 are important for a TV live-tweeter. The left side of the picture, live-tweeter's ability to choose the persons he or she follows, is essential because it is a means to personalize user's Twitter home page's feed of tweets. In contrast, the right side of the figure illustrates live-tweeter's followers who are the default recipients of the live-tweets that the live-tweeters send. I will now elaborate on both of these sides of the *following functionality* in regards to my data.

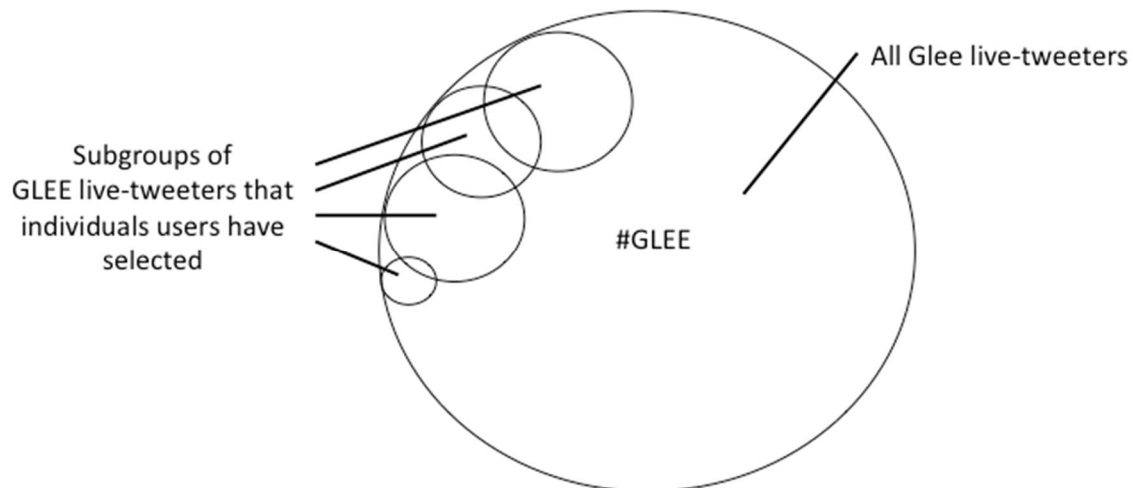
Live-tweeters ability to choose whom to follow was very important for the live-tweeters in my study because it permitted them to follow tweets of other live-tweeters of the same program. This guaranteed them a constant flow of Glee or NHL related tweets when the program was ongoing and more importantly they were able choose to follow only like-minded people, which proved very important to the interviewees, as the quote below testifies.

*That's all good and fine, but it's really nice to talk to other people about it that feel the same way or have the same opinions or like the same things or don't like the same things.*

*– IHT-03, female, 34 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter*

In a sense, by choosing whom to follow the live-tweeters determined the company they were watching the show with. Although the overall number of people that my participants followed

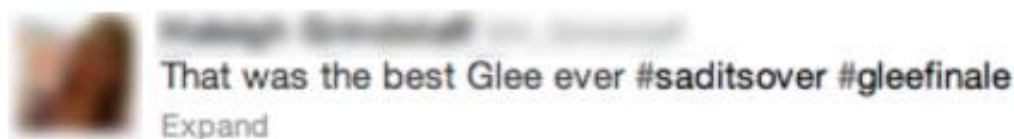
was always over hundred, only a fraction of those people live-tweeted Glee or NHL hockey. Based on the participants estimates, the number of followed live-tweeters ranged from a couple of persons to less than a hundred. Thus, the groups of interconnected individual live-tweeters were always subgroups of all the live-tweeters of the program. Figure 3-2 illustrates the relationships between these groups. The only way to see live-tweets outside of these subgroups was through *hashtags*.



**Figure 3-2: Individual users choose whom to follow among all the live-tweeters**

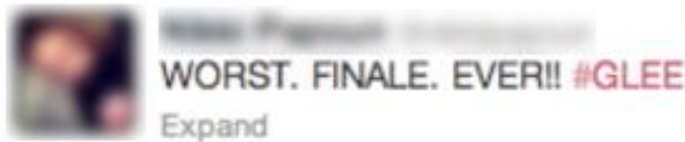
Live-tweeters ability to choose whom to follow also explains why Twitter users do not suffer as much from trolls and flammers - individuals that send deliberately provocative or inflammatory messages in order to cause outrage among other users. On discussion forums, trolls and flammers are a constant nuisance. On Twitter, however, the user himself or herself selects the persons or organizations he or she wants to follow, which does not leave room for trolls and flammers.

This division of live-tweeters into smaller groups thanks to Twitter's *following functionality* also explains the surprisingly low numbers of antagonistic tweets that I found. Live-tweeters primarily communicate with the persons they follow or with the persons that follow them and they remain largely unaware of all the other live-tweets and do not confront the tweets that are in strong contradictions with theirs. It is, for example, highly unlikely that the live-tweeters of Sample tweet 10 and Sample tweet 11 saw each other's tweets. During the interviews, people also explicitly mentioned that they avoided confrontational tweeting. Even hockey fans that liked 'smack talk', i.e. talking bad about the opposing team and its fans, only rarely added the opposing team's hashtag to their tweets criticizing the opposing team. Thus, the smack talk remained primarily within the fan base of the team the live-tweeters supported.



**Sample tweet 10: An example of an opinion tweet after the Glee spring 2011 season finale**





**Sample tweet 11: Another opinion tweet after the Glee spring 2011 season finale**

However, this observation made me wonder do live-tweeters form a community with some shared identity or do they form just small separated groups watching the same television program, and that Twitter becomes a sort of an echo chamber for small groups of like-minded live-tweeters.

The other side of the *following functionality* is composed of followers, depicted on right in Figure 3-1. They are the default recipients of live-tweeters' live-tweets. However, the participants of my study reported that only rarely they actually live-tweeted to the entirety of their followers. My interviewees were very conscious of having followers who were not interested in their live-tweets and, as already mentioned previously and as the quote below highlights, used hashtags actively not only to reach out to a larger number of people but also to let their followers filter out their live-tweets.

*I sometimes think about, oh, my God, my friend who's a gardener, she really doesn't want to see this [laughter] Pittsburgh Penguins stuff or the Steelers stuff, but I say, "Too bad."*

– IHT-20, female, 48 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

*I pretty much hashtag every-when I tweet about Glee, I'll hashtag it with Glee or whatever. I think I have around 60 followers and a little less than half are actual real people I talk to on a regular basis. A few of them watch it, but for the most part, I don't gear it towards them. I just gear it towards whoever wants to read my tweet.*

– GL-06, male, 21 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter

Trying to understand this more profoundly, I asked my interviewees whom did they consider to be their audience when live-tweeting. The question proved surprisingly difficult to answer, as the quotes by GL-18 and IHT-20 below show.

*"That's an interesting question. That is a really good question. I mean I think that's the real interesting question for everybody in the social media. I mean is it the mirror? Is that the real audience, that I'm just talking to myself in an echo? I do not consider my audience when I tweet. I can say that honestly, especially - I mean I can say that in general."*

– GL-18, female, 30 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter



*Mostly I would say that all of my Pittsburgh friends, all of my hockey friends have—are the—I don't consider them audience because I consider it a conversation. I don't consider like me to be up on a stage kind of spreading my gospel as opposed to sitting down on a table and having a conversation.*

– IHT-20, female, 48 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

However, both of these answers gave me new leads. According to GL-18, she could actually be tweeting to herself. Although, very few reported having actually read their own tweets after the fact, the need to express oneself for the sake of it or to have an outlet was consistently expressed by the interviewees.

IHT-20, on the other hand, stated that the term 'audience' was misplaced because he considered live-tweeting more as a conversation rather than a performance. In the same vein, when I asked in the end of each interview to what the interviewees would compare live-tweeting TV to, this conversational element came up very often, as illustrated in the quotes below.

*...it's sort of this collective restaurant that you're all sitting in across the region really, virtually kind of. It's neat because you're interacting with somebody else.*

– IHT-11, male, 29 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter

*... it's like being in a room full of people and talking to all of them at once [laughter], if that makes any sense at all. It really is. It's like being in a room full of people, but you can talk to every single one of them at the same time. You don't have to step up to each individual person. You can respond to everyone at once.*

– IHT-02, female, 28 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter

*It's like being in a room with 100,000 people. You could be by yourself, but it's like you're there with everyone else watching in and you're just connected to everyone. You can know everyone's thoughts without even having to say a word to them. You just have to read their tweet.*

– GL-06, male, 21 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter

Thus, the term "Twittercooler" and the metaphor of Twitter as a virtual living room in which TV viewers gather to share their opinions introduced by Time magazine in March 2010 (Poniewozik, 2010) are quite accurate.

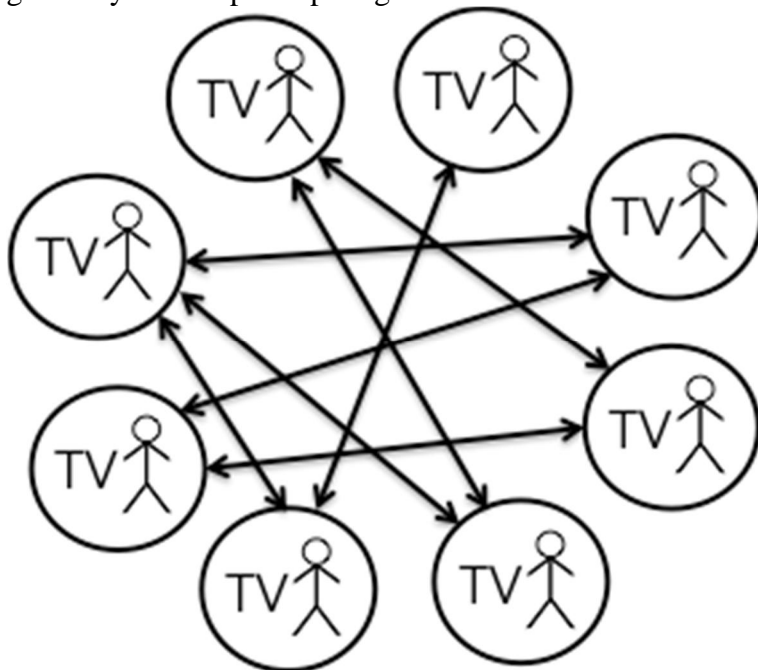
This conversational aspect becomes even more apparent when the testimonies concerning TV live-tweeting are compared to the ones concerning tweeting live-events on the spot, at an ice hockey arena or at a concert venue. The excerpt below from the interview with IHT-17 points out that as the physical setting changes, tweeting changes from conversing with peers to reporting to friends.

*Interviewer:* Okay. Do you tweet different things when you are at the arena?

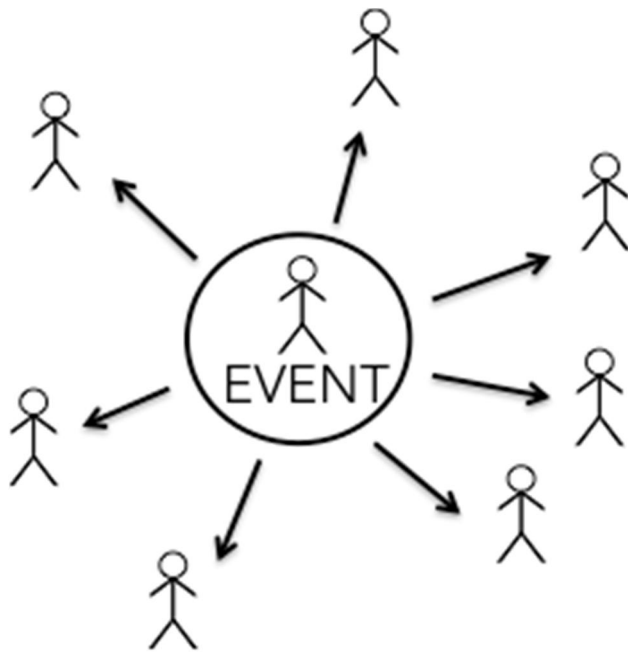
*Interviewee:* Yeah, definitely. I'll probably make it known that I'm at the game. I'll just be like you know I'm in Cleveland or you know I'm in Pittsburgh for this Penguins game or I'm in Cleveland for this Monsters game. I'm not looking to interact in a conversation about the game as much. I would imagine that's because, like I said, I got-I've got people sitting next to me that I know well, and I'm gonna be talking about the game with them.... ... It might be a little bit of a more of a personal tweet then. Because, like I said, got a good chance I'm gonna attach a picture or something to these ones. These ones might be geared a little bit more towards my own personal friends.

– IHT-17, male, 25 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter

Figure 3-3 and Figure 3-4 illustrate the difference of communication flow between these two settings. The communication flow of TV live-tweeting (Figure 3-3) can be pictured as a web of information exchange between live-tweeters whereas the communication flow of tweets sent from the ice hockey arena or from the concert venue (Figure 3-4) looks more like a star where the information flows mainly from the event participant to his or her followers who generally are not participating in the event.



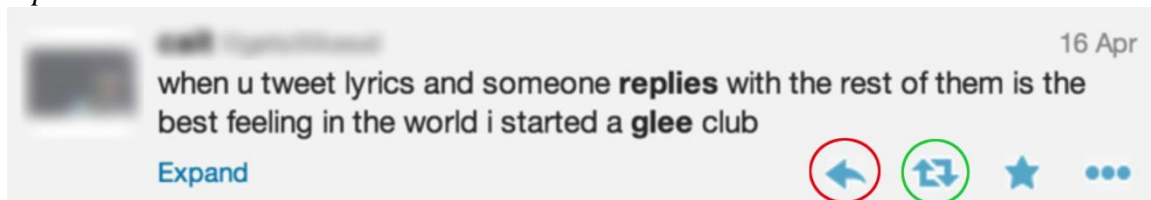
**Figure 3-3: The communication flow when live-tweeting TV**



**Figure 3-4: The communication flow when tweeting an ice hockey game on the spot or from a rock concert.**

### 3.4.3 Replies & retweets

The last Twitter functionalities essential to live-tweeting TV are *replies* and *retweets*. Twitter's user interface enables its users to reply to a tweet and to forward it to one's own followers with a click of a button (see Sample tweet 12). Twitter keeps track of the received *replies* as *mentions* and of the *retweeted* tweets.



**Sample tweet 12: The red and green circles denote the buttons that enable Twitter users to reply to tweets and to retweet them.**

For the sender, *replies* are just like *mentions* (Twitter, 2013). Twitter's *reply* button just makes sending a tweet starting with @username\_of\_previous\_sender very fast. *Retweet* button, then again, makes forwarding other people's tweets very easy. *Retweeting* is a fast way of spreading ideas through Twitter. When live-tweeting TV the speed is important and, therefore, retweeting is a practical way to keep one's own live-tweeting activity high without needing to actually write anything. As IHT-03 explains in the quote below, retweeting is also a way to affirm or validate someone else's thought.

*Usually if they say something and I couldn't have said it better myself. If I look down at the screen and I think, "Oh my gosh. I said that." Then it's like, "Oh no. Wait. I didn't." Or somebody says something particularly funny, I'll retweet that instead of*

*typing something new.*

– IHT-03, female, 34 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter

Receiving *replies* and getting *retweeted* is an essential part of the live-tweeting TV experience. Live-tweeters value being retweeted so much that it is common practice to thank for the retweets one gets, as shown in Sample tweet 13.



Omg I have 89 **retweets!** Thank you so much! Hope you do it on Thursday for all the **Glee** couples;) [twitter.com/gleeisallineed...](https://twitter.com/gleeisallineed...)

[View tweet](#)

**Sample tweet 13: Retweets are so highly values that live-tweeters thank for them.**

Although some interviewees were shy to explicitly admit that getting replies and being retweeted was important to them, all of the participants said they felt rewarded when they received a reply or when their tweet was retweeted.

*“I think live-tweeting is the most fun for me when I get response-when I get a lot of positive responses from people, it almost kind of affirms that me live-tweeting the show, I’m not doing it for absolutely no reason.”*

– GL-06, male, 21 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter

*I mean, it’s like you gettin’ recognition for it. Otherwise, it would be like having a conversation with yourself, I suppose.*

– IHT-16, male, 18 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter

As the quotes from above show, for live-tweeters, retweets and replies are proofs of interaction. They show to the users that somebody is actually noticing their tweets, reading them, replying to them and sending them further. This recognition from the peers of the effort they put in tweeting gives a sense of justification for watching TV in general. In addition, positive replies and retweets that spread the tweets to new audiences give validation to live-tweeters’ opinions and ideas, which is felt as rewarding, as the quotes below testify. This attention can also be addictive.

*I enjoy getting re-tweeted, especially when it comes to the live tweeting of the hockey, or if I get a mention. To start with, it just makes me feel like someone else at least agrees with what I have to say or at least has a similar opinion because they re-tweeted it or they had a mention about it. It’s just kind of cool to see that there’s people that I don’t know out there that agree with what I have to say or agree with my opinion on that particular topic.*

– IHT-06, male, 22 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

*I like it but it's just something that I'm like, "Oh, look somebody else agrees with me." It's kind of like an exciting little moment where somebody else has acknowledged what you said and agrees with it and wants other people to know what you're saying at the same time. It goes to a broader audience and that's exciting.*

– GL-16, female, 21 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter

*I think when I get a reply it's the most fun because I don't think I would describe - I guess tweeting is fun. I mean I think of it more as compulsive than fun, but I mean there's sometimes a fine line between compulsive and fun. I don't wanna completely rule out fun. ... Or yeah, I mean a retweet, again, it's attention so I guess you could say attention is satisfying. Attention is fun. It makes me smile.*

– GL-18, female, 30 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter

Finally, the interaction powered by retweets and replies is so central for live-tweeters that its absence makes the whole experience less fun.

*It's no fun if they're not responding back probably because I do [inaudible 40:31] said this and there's no response and it's like yuck, okay you guys aren't watching now so that's not as much fun.*

– GL-05, female, 25 y., systematic Glee live-tweeter

## 4 The effects of live-tweeting to TV viewing

In this chapter, I first discuss how my interviewees consider that live-tweeting has changed their TV viewing. The interviews revealed several changes that live-tweeting had brought to the TV viewing practices of my respondent as well as in the way they experienced TV viewing. Interviewees mentioned many of the changes when I asked them explicitly how live-tweeting had affected their TV viewing. However, many other changes and especially the reasons behind these changes came apparent to me only through the analysis of the entire interview material. I will first present the changes in TV viewing practices and the changes to the TV viewing experience. In the end, I will compare my findings concerning the TV viewing experience to previous studies in the subject and discuss the implications.

### 4.1 How live-tweeting has changed TV viewing practices

#### 4.1.1 Experientializing live-tweeting to TV viewing

I could identify two major changes in TV viewing practices of my interviewees. The first major shift in the viewing practices was that live-tweeting had become gradually an integral part of their TV watching experience, I call this process *experientializing*. Opening their

computer or smartphone had become as obvious as turning on the TV before the beginning of the program.

*“Whatever would we have done without the Internet during hockey games?” I think I saw that come up tonight. Things like that, that it just becomes so second nature for you to grab your laptop or your iPad or your phone when a game is coming on.”*

*– IHT-03, female, 34 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter*

*... Like putting on shorts in the summer.*

*– IHT-06, male, 22 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter*

For some this change is program specific, these persons live-tweet, only certain programs and for some live-tweeting is attached to all TV viewing.

*Most of the time Twitter and my viewing kind of go hand in hand.*

*– GL-15, male, 19 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter*

*In terms of not tweeting, the only time would probably be-I probably wouldn't tweet as much when I'm not watching it. That's about it. While I'm watching it I'm probably tweeting very often, especially if it's more exciting.*

*– IHT-11, male, 29 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter*

For TV live-tweeters, other people's live-tweets become also a way to find new interesting TV programs to watch, as GL-19 explains below. As Nielsen's Twitter TV ratings reported in October 2013 (Nielsen, 2013) that on average audience for TV live-tweets is 50 times the number of people posting live-tweets about the show, it is understandable that television broadcasters consider Twitter a major medium in influencing TV spectators (Forbes, 2013).

*So if I see someone live-tweeting about something on a network that I've never heard of the show and it just sounds interesting and funny it'll be enough for me to tune in just so I can bear witness to what's going on. So it's certainly changed my viewing habits in that respect. If you're starting to see a popular trend around a show on twitter, it kind of makes you want to tune in. The flipside of that is, I know I have people in my timeline who will say, I don't have to watch, you know, insert show here, whatever show that is, I don't have to watch that show because so many people are tweeting about it, I can follow along and get the general gist of what's going on with the show.*

*– GL-20, male, 29 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

#### 4.1.2 Willingness to watch the program when it airs

The other major change in TV viewing practices was Glee live-tweeters' willingness to watch the program when it airs. In recent years, time shifting technology and Internet viewing has permitted TV viewers to watch TV series when it ever suits them. However, live-tweeting has made Glee live-tweeters to watch the series when it airs. Time shifting has never really gained any ground in with sports, because live sports events have traditionally been broadcasted live nationwide in the U.S.. Thus, for NHL live-tweeters this didn't represent any change.

*I have to watch it when it's live. I have to watch it, like I have to be in the moment and I have to-I think tweeting is part of my ritual of watching Glee itself actually. Like I like to talk to my friends about it at the same time, get their input, it's just living at the moment. I have to live the moment.*

– GL-02, male, 25 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

The obvious reason for watching the program live is that live-tweeting is more fun when there are lots of other spectators live-tweeting at the same time.

*Definitely the interaction that you can have with not just people that you follow or people that are friends of yours, but people you don't know, people that you've never met that could be down the street. They could be somewhere else in the country and you can get an interaction with them based on the 140 characters that you're sending out at the time and to be able to see a large number of opinions, a large number of reactions on something you feel strongly about in a short amount of time.*

– IHT-06, male, 22 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

*The reason I started using it is because I'm a Pittsburgh Penguins fan, and I wanted to commiserate online with everyone else during the game instead of just talking to people afterwards. Twitter seemed a perfect medium.*

– IHT-19, female, 39 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter

#### 4.2 How live-tweeting has changed the TV viewing experience

The changes in TV viewing experience were more numerous. I have enlisted below 8 observations on changes to the TV viewing experience that emerged from the data.

*1. Live-tweeting makes TV viewing more entertaining*

*Time and again the interviewees pointed out that live-tweeting makes watching TV more fun. The reasons emerging from the data are immediate social interaction with people and ability to express oneself at once.*

*I think Glee has like different age groups and it's more entertaining and a lot more fun you know. Plus we like the songs and the acting and the people that's on the show itself, it gives you more, what's the word, not enthusiasm but more-its like on the tip of my tongue, you get more happier when you talk to other people about it. And the show itself is already, it's Glee, you're a happy go lucky kind of person you know. I'm a happy go lucky kind of person and of course I love singing too so it doesn't matter. [...]*Live tweeting, I think it's just living at the moment like you know people are feeling the same feeling that you're feeling and expressing the same thing or people is like, you're thinking one person is thinking another and you have another side of the story, so it's really entertaining. It's like having a conversation in person but it takes a little while for it to process you know.

– GL-02, male, 25 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

*I mean I guess the one thing I would say is that most tweeting I do especially the live tweeting, I think I do it because it's fun for me rather than I'm expecting to get a response. Like I don't hold any crazy notion that people out right there are hanging on my every word and waiting for me to send out a new tweet, but you know I just think its fun. I'm one of those people who could pretty much talk to a brick wall and be fine with it just if it was there and something for me to talk to, so I think that's why I like having Twitter there as an outlet. I don't know. That's the end of that now that I just basically told you that I would talk to a brick wall.*

– GL-03, female, 22 y., systematic Glee live-tweeter

*Anyways, so there's just like a base level of just like joy out of tweeting for me I guess, so things combined.*

– IHT-12, male, 23 y., active Twitter user

*I get attention for stuff that I think that is funny or is how I feel about certain things. It's just instant gratification.*

– RCT-02, female, 18 y., rock concert tweeter

*Sometimes, yeah but generally if I'm not watching it live I won't because that nobody tweeting along, maybe just one or two things really. I guess it's just more fun to do it*



*while it's live, during the live broadcast.*

*– GL-04, male, 27 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

## *2. Live-tweeting gives the TV spectator control over the social TV viewing environment*

Live-tweeting enables people to find like-minded company to watch TV with. The reasons for seeking company may be e.g. loneliness, lack of like-minded people in the proximity, disability to move outside of home (IHT-03) or simply willingness to share emotions with other people watching the same program. On Twitter, spectators can choose whose live-tweets they want to *follow*. They can also choose to use a pseudonym, which lowers the social risk of sending their own live-tweets.

*Well I think when I'm alone-I think I do end up tweeting more. I think mostly because I'm probably looking for some type of social interaction with others who obviously are sharing the same passion for the team I am.*

*– IHT-11, male, 29 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter*

*I was watching it with my mother. My mouth hit the floor. She like couldn't possibly understand what I was talking about or care less. Then I got on Twitter and like they kissed was trending, and people were just so excited to talk about it nonstop. Now they still talk about it nonstop. My real-life friends and family were like two guys kissed, what's the big deal, or they really don't want to see that again, or just completely different opinions of it.*

*– GL-07, female, 21 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

*I'm kind of weird 'cause it's about as social as I get. I have anxiety disorder, so I don't really like crowds. I can't stand bars. I don't like people that smoke. I can't breathe. I'm kind of particular. I guess, for me, this is my kind of social interaction because I can control it, I guess. If I don't feel like talking to people, I just don't have to log on or I don't have to answer. It's not-how do I do this without sounding really awkward. I like using Twitter during the games because I don't have to listen to people. I can concentrate on the game. It makes me sound really like a jerk.*

*– IHT-03, female, 34 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter*

*That's what I like about it. You can be anonymous about things. I'm not a real social person in the sense that I don't to talk to people that I don't know.*

*– GL-06, male, 21 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter*

## *2. Through live-tweeting TV spectators find validation for their interpretations of the TV program*

Through the interaction with other spectators live-tweeters get validation for their own views. First they choose to follow people that they find interesting and are like-minded with them. Secondly, they find rewarding to find on their timeline live-tweets that are in line with their own thinking and thirdly, they find it satisfying to have other live-tweeters reading their own tweets, retweeting them further and replying to them.

*It's just kind of cool to see that there's people that I don't know out there that agree with what I have to say or agree with my opinion on that particular topic.*

*– IHT-06, male, 22 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter*

*I like it but it's just something that I'm like, "Oh, look somebody else agrees with me." It's kind of like an exciting little moment where somebody else has acknowledged what you said and agrees with it and wants other people to know what you're saying at the same time. It goes to a broader audience and that's exciting.*

*– GL-16, female, 21 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter*

*Well when people retweet my tweets it's really kind of cool to think about that someone thought it was cool enough to retweet. I like some of the responses people will say to me.*

*– GL-04, male, 27 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

*I think live tweeting is the most fun for me when I get response-when I get a lot of positive responses from people, it almost kind of affirms that me live tweeting the show, I'm not doing it for absolutely no reason.*

*– GL-19, male, 21 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter*

## *3. Spectators' start to balance their focus between the TV screen and the Twitter screen.*

Live-tweeters have to share their attention between the watching program, listening to the TV announcer's commenting, reading the feed of incoming live-tweets and writing their own live-tweets. This inevitably leads to missing parts of the program, however live-tweeters value higher the social dimensions that live-tweeting brings.

*I will miss things occasionally because of it, but I guess I-it's hard for me to just sit down. I don't know, it's like Twitter generation now. It's hard for me to just sit down and watch something without anything else. I don't know, I just compulsively have my computer while I'm watching TV.*

*– GL-17, female, 25 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter*

### 5. Live-tweeting renders the TV viewing experience more engaging and demanding

Live-tweeting requires TV spectators to share their attention between watching, listening, reading and writing. This makes live-tweeting TV much more active and demanding, but also engaging than regular TV viewing.

*It got me more involved with the games. It made 'em more exciting, like I said, so.*

– IHT-16, male, 18 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter

*I think I generally just pay more attention to what's going on, on the screen and Twitter is just there on the side then I'll just post whatever I'm thinking, when I have the thought to post something.*

– GL-04, male, 27 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

*If it's a, if I'm watching a game that doesn't involve my team, I feel more engaged if I see people tweeting about it, or if I'm tweeting about it also.*

– IHT-07, male, 24 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter

### 6. Live-tweeting adds passion and intensity to the TV viewing experience

Publicizing his or her own opinions about the show through live-tweets and then observing others show their emotions and passion in their live-tweets raises live-tweeters' commitment to the program as well as his or her emotional state.

*You get excited because they're excited. It's just a different type of excitement. It's exciting to kind of not entirely be watching it alone and know that you have like this huge community of people.*

– GL-07, female, 21 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

*Like I said, I pay attention a whole lot more when I know that if something happens I'm gonna send a tweet out and I'm also reading what other people are saying.*

*Yeah, I think that maybe it's made me more passionate.*

– IHT-08, male, 27 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter

*I feel like you get-you feel more strongly about whatever you were feeling before. If you were excited, you feel even more excited because you've got-even if you're sitting on your couch, it's like you almost have that atmosphere that you're at the game and you're with these thousands of people who are also cheering on your team. You get that instantaneous gratification.*

– IHT-09, female, 27 y., sporadic NHL live-tweeter

*It got to where every time I was tweeting while watching, it was just like angry. I guess that was kind of-I stopped watching for a few episodes because I was like I'm getting too bothered by a television show. I guess, in that sense, I think if I wasn't live tweeting and having to talk about it with other people, that wouldn't have happened. I feel like either I would have just stopped watching and it wouldn't have mattered, or I wouldn't have gotten as angry just because-I guess I was obviously trying to get other people to hear my opinion, like this is a terrible story. This is a terrible episode, blah, blah, blah.*

*– GL-17, female, 25 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter*

*Interviewer: Live tweeting a TV show is like, blank. How would you replace the blank?*

*Interviewee: My first thought was that it's like crack. If you hear people joking that something, X is like crack, because it's just a dopamine hit. It's just one of the, it's like no matter if you're in a conversation or you're talking to yourself, it's just this little, not only an ego boost but you're giving in to like any sort of reaction. So yeah, I'll stay with that. Like crack, in the bad sense and the good.*

*– GL-18, female, 30 y., sporadic Glee live-tweeter*

#### *7. Less inclined to change the channel*

Participation in live-tweeting seems to diminish TV spectator's habit to change the channel or to turn off the TV when he or she doesn't like the program anymore. Live-tweeting offers a way to commiserate with other fans when the ice hockey team is losing and criticizing the program together with other live-tweeters seems to give joy to live-tweeters of Glee who do not enjoy the show.

*Interviewer: This is interesting. You said because of live tweeting, you were more inclined to watch even during a losing streak?*

*Interviewee: I would say a little bit more, yeah, because I was still gonna be seeing tweets about it and information about it on my timeline so I felt we didn't have a lot of hope that it was gonna end. We could tell that the losing streak was going to continue, but I still kind of had a little more desire than I would have previously to watch it just so that I could have some knowledge as to what the complaints people had were via Twitter or what the positive arguments or the negative arguments were that they had to be at Twitter.*

*– IHT- 06, systematic NHL live-tweeter*

*I think live tweeting during the show, which I do enjoy, kind of allows me to kind of fill that space where the enjoyment of the show once was. If I was watching like a season two episode of Glee without live tweeting, I would watch the show, but I mean I would get through it and I wouldn't really be enjoying it as much as I would if I wasn't live tweeting [...] Like the show, kind of for me, at least, lessened in quality, so the live tweeting allowed me to still enjoy it as much, even though the show was, in my opinion, of a lesser quality.*

– GL-19, male, 21 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

*Whenever they're losing, people still tweet, but you tend to get-people tend to get very observant and notice every little thing. Like, so-and-so missed a pass. Or, could you believe he didn't block that or he didn't do that. I'd say there's more when it's going well, but like I said, it might be just smiley faces or yay or whatever. Whenever they're losing, people notice and people tweet, but like I said, it's more critical.*

– IHT-03, female, 34 y., fanatic NHL live-tweeter

#### 8. Live-tweeting offers new insight to the program

Through live-tweeting TV spectator learns new information about the program. Live-tweets offer new interpretation, new opinions, analysis and sometimes also background information or spoilers about the program, which brings addition value to the TV viewing experience.

*People may live tweet things about what goes on off the ice, in the locker room, or at practice and things like that. That's information that you wouldn't normally have or wouldn't normally get, so I feel that now, in addition to being a fan and knowing things that fans would know, I get a bit more background knowledge than I would have had before.*

– IHT-06, male, 22 y., systematic NHL live-tweeter

#### 4.2.1 Effects on TV viewing experience – comparing findings with previous literature

In their extensive study “Television and the Quality of Life” Robert Kubey and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi aggregated findings of nine studies over 13 years and based on 45000 self-reports collected from 1200 participants concerning television viewing mainly in the U.S.. The book investigated television viewing from multiple perspectives relevant to this study, e.g. where and when do people watch TV, with whom people watch TV, how family members communicate with each other when watching TV, what else do people do while watching TV, and how TV viewing experience compares to other everyday activities. The study was

published in 1990 and many of the studies it is comprised of date from 1970's and 1980's, i.e. well before emergence of Internet and social media services.

Hereafter, I compare Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi's findings to the observations that I have presented earlier in this chapter. Following the logic of Corbin & Strauss's (2008) *conditional/consequential matrix*, I first compare the *conditions* of social context of TV viewing practices, by using questions *with whom, where, when, and what* to identify the key elements, I then discuss the differences of *interactions* between the elements and finally compare the *consequences*, i.e. the outcomes of the interactions or, in other words, the TV viewing experience described by Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi and the TV viewing experience of a TV live-tweeter, based on the analysis of the data of this study.

### Conditions

*With whom?* Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi found that people tend to view TV with people they know well. Only 1% of the time was TV viewed with work colleagues or strangers, 60% of the time TV was viewed with family members, 6 % with friends and 31% alone.

As stated in 3.2 TV Live-tweeting session: preparation, also live-tweeting seems to be most often carried out when alone at home. Many of my interviewees reported that for them live-tweeting was a substitute for face-to-face interaction. However, multiple interviewees also stated that they preferred live-tweeting TV to watching the TV program with friends or family. The biggest difference, however, lies in TV viewing with strangers. The usage of hashtag, both for reading live-tweets as well as when writing live-tweets is a way to reach out for people that live-tweeters do not know, and this interaction with complete strangers is an essential part of TV live-tweeting's appeal. Therefore, it is fair to say that the social TV watching environment of a TV live-tweeter is considerably different from the one of a TV spectator before Internet. A TV live-tweeter can select his or her company among thousands of other live-tweeters in addition to the offline choices that a TV spectator had twenty years ago.

*Where?* According to Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 92,7% of time TV was watched at home and 6,1% at a friend or relative's home. My interviewees live-tweeted TV mostly from home, sometimes from a friend's place and, especially in regards to NHL, occasionally from a bar. No change is apparent here.

*When?* Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi state that TV is mostly viewed after work and on weekends. However, already then videocassette recorders provided TV viewers the opportunity to record TV programs and to watch them at another, more suitable time. Although time shifting technology has significantly improved since then, live-tweeting requires by definition that it takes place when the program is aired. Thus, a live-tweeter has less control over the viewing time than the TV viewers in Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi's study.

*What?* According to Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 63,5% of television viewing was done while doing something else as well. TV was a secondary activity in 28,3% of all viewing occasions, i.e. TV was on in the background, and a primary activity in 71,7% of cases. The secondary activities to TV viewing were most often (71,6% of the time) "oral activities" meaning eating, smoking or talking. Talking represented by itself 36,7% of secondary activities. Other secondary activities were household chores, like cooking and cleaning.

Live-tweeting TV cannot be considered as a secondary activity to television viewing like eating, cleaning or cooking, as it is so tightly attached to TV viewing. By definition, it is

impossible to do TV live-tweeting without watching TV. Although TV viewers attention shifts momentarily between the TV screen and the Twitter screen while live-tweeting, as explained in 4.2 How live-tweeting has changed the TV viewing experience, TV watching cannot be seen either as a secondary activity to live-tweeting, but rather as an integral part of TV viewing. In addition, my interviewees explained that while they were live-tweeting TV, they could not do house chores, as live-tweeting made the viewing experience so much more intensive and demanding.

The differences regarding the additional activities while watching TV between a TV live-tweeter and a TV spectator in Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi's study are, thus, considerable. A TV live-tweeter is more engulfed in the TV viewing experience and cannot engage in extra activities as easily as a TV viewer twenty years ago.

### Interactions

It is interesting to notice that although there are considerable differences in the practices between offline and online social interaction during TV viewing, some of the effects of the social interaction be it offline or online have many things in common.

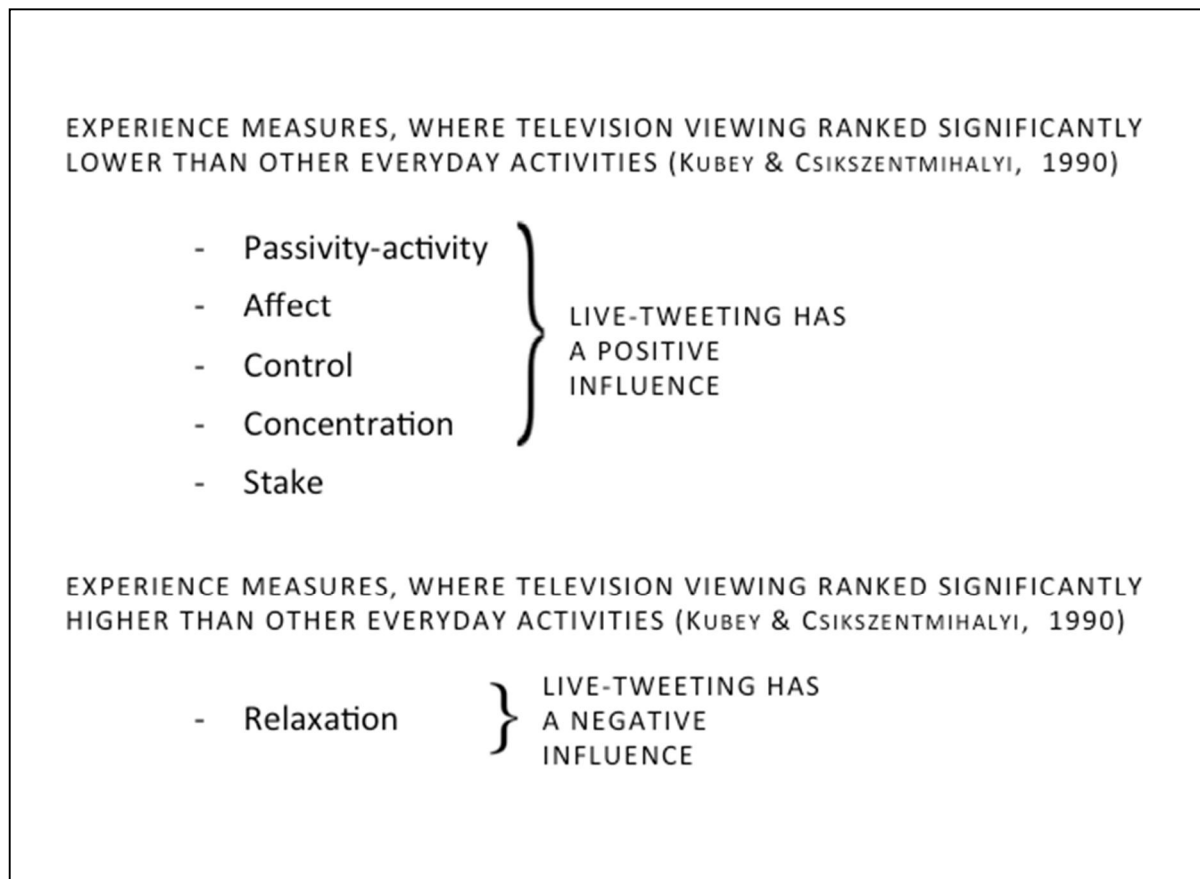
First, Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi state (p. 97) that "People feel better in virtually every activity - including TV viewing - when they are with other people than when alone." The case in point in Kubey et al.'s study was planned TV viewing with family members. The finding emphasizes on one hand TV spectators willingness to have company when watching TV and, on the other hand, that increased control of the viewing situation is important for TV viewers.

This is well aligned with the observations no 1. *Live-tweeting makes TV viewing more entertaining* and no 2. *Live-tweeting gives the TV spectator control over the social TV viewing environment*. Kubey et al.'s finding helps to understand why live-tweeters are willing to search for company in Twitter and shows that being in control of the viewing situation is something that TV viewers value, although they have had to give up control over the viewing moment if they want to live-tweet.

Another result presented by Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi is that TV viewing is found more challenging when watching with family members because the TV viewers need to share their attention between TV and the family members. This finding is in concordance with my observation no 5. *Live-tweeting renders the TV viewing experience more engaging and demanding*.

### Consequences

Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi studied how television viewing compared to other everyday activities. They found that TV viewing ranked lower than e.g. reading, cooking, talking and leisure on the experienced *challenge*, *required concentration*, and *sense of control* of the activity. Television viewing ranked also almost to the bottom also on experienced *activation* and *affect*. To finish, also *stakes* attached to television viewing were experience to be very low. In contrast, television viewing ranked high on *relaxation*.



**Figure 4-1: How live-tweeting TV affects TV viewing experience**

Although my study did not measure any of the 7 measures on the list below and relied purely on qualitative data, my observation presented in 4.2 How live-tweeting has changed the TV viewing experience strongly imply that live-tweeting has a positive impact on the following five dimensions of TV viewing experience: *activation*, *affect*, *control*, *challenge*, and *concentration*; and a negative effect on *relaxation*. I could not find any effect on *Stakes*.

## 5 Conclusions

I identified four types of live-tweeters in my interviewees: fanatic live-tweeters, systematic live-tweeters, sporadic live-tweeters and active Twitter users. The classification was based on their respective live-tweeting frequency and regularity during Glee drama series for one group and during NHL ice hockey games for the other group. The live-tweeter profiles were both context and content dependent. By context dependency I mean that people start to live-tweet partly because of context-related reasons. One might feel him or herself lonely while another one wants to just share emotions of joy and sorrow with other fans. By content dependency I refer to TV viewers preferences in regards to the TV programs. This means that some of the sporadic live-tweeters of Glee can be fanatic live-tweeters of another series and vice versa. TV live-tweeting is TV spectator driven activity. Those who like it experientialize it into their TV viewing. Live-tweeting practices form a continuum that starts well before the program and continues through out the show and sometimes extends also after the show. Live-tweeters are able to read and write live-tweets while watching TV. They want to be fast in order to



maximize the number of retweets, replies and mentions. Live-tweeters manage to receive validation for their own thoughts by reaching out to thousands of other live-tweeters who are mostly complete strangers for them by selecting carefully who to follow. Live-tweeters use Twitter's different functions very elaborately to manage communication between their followers, other live-tweeters and Twitter users in general. Through live-tweets, TV viewers can vent their feelings, make selections of the program, analyze the program and take care of their social network.

Live-tweeting has given TV spectators more control over their TV viewing experience, it has made the experience more social, more active, more challenging and emotional and more engaging. It gives the TV spectator freedom to choose the social context, gives self-confidence through validation of ideas, it offers a friendly environment and power to act. This internal feeling of power can be characterized as empowerment (Siitonen, 1999).

I see a TV live-tweeter as an empowered TV viewer, who using Twitter can personalize and control her/his TV viewing experience better than before, can express herself/himself more fully and can reach a sufficient audience and acceptance for her/his ideas.

*Live tweeting a tv show is like, it's almost like being a heckler at a comedy club. Which is to say that you're not necessarily jeering the show, I mean you may if something stupid happens, but you're giving your unfiltered feedback while it's going on. And there's not really many other avenues where you can do that, you know, particularly not in the workplace because people are following robert's rules of order, etcetera, and you have to let the other person speak before you speak, and that kind of thing. I'd say it's a lot like heckling in that you just spit it out, and if the show goes on, which it will -- no one's tweets in my knowledge have [cut?] down a show in mid-airing -- you're just talking while it's happening. That's what it's best analogous to.*

– GL-20, male, 29 y., fanatic Glee live-tweeter

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