

YouTube explained: ethnographically

 blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2008/08/10/youtube-explained-ethnographically/

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It has produced more content in six months than a major US network has created in the last half century: but what makes YouTube work? and what does it mean for us as societies?

The wonderful [Michael Wesch](#) from Kansas University's [Digital Ethnology Working Group](#) has already produced a great [video](#) on the Internet ([The machine Is Using Us](#)) and the meaning of hypertext which I use regularly for students and anyone else who needs a five minute intro to the power of the web.

Now he has put his [lecture](#) all about YouTube on line. It is the most fascinating 55 minutes you could spend.

It is a magnificent compendium of various YouTube trends. But much more importantly it is an investigation in to what we get out of it and why we put so much effort in to it. It asks what difference will it make? And it's funny.

His enthusiasm for new media is palpable. He exemplifies the best of the Internet. But it's the intellectual insight that makes you think. For example, he talks about how YouTube creates moments of 'aesthetic arrest' when the user is almost overwhelmed by the experience it can create for an individual in connection with a billion other users.

Cool stuff.

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