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I don't watch television anymore. I'm not sure precisely when I stopped, but it was probably within months of November 25, 2001, the day I brought my first DVR home. To be sure, I do presently watch *Friday Night Lights*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Weeds*, and *The Shield*, to name but a few of the television shows that I view. But now I watch shows. Whether recorded or live, my viewing is purposeful and deliberate. I never sit down to watch TV or see what's on, and channel-surfing has been replaced by processes of evaluating my DVR line-up and making painstaking decisions regarding what to delete when I have more shows to watch than time to view.

Certainly, my experience is far from universal. Many still watch television; many others watch "television" at times and "shows" at others. But I believe that these different behaviors suggest meaningfully different relationships with television—as both technology and textual form—that we haven't really grappled with yet. Following from my own experience, I could take a position as a provocateur and argue that most everything we thought we knew about television no longer applies to its study. If we go back to the foundations of why television matters to communication and cultural and media studies scholars, it is typically rooted in the "network" era experience of television as a medium with ubiquitous content that reached a vast and heterogeneous audience. Although the *medium* still does that, any piece of programming decreasingly can make such claims. And the content, industrial norms, and audience reached by television has developed such multiplicity and variation that it is decreasingly possible to make claims about the "medium of television," if it ever was possible.

This "destablization" of assumptions and theories of television as a monolithic mass medium is a critical and largely unconsidered problem for television scholars and requires that we reconsider our theoretical foundations and build new ones. This is a problem that increasingly faces communication scholars at-large given the trend across media is away from the norms of "mass communication" that undergird nearly every premise of the field toward narrowcast, niche, and personalized experiences of media and communication.

Obviously, television still matters, but it is more difficult to articulate why and how, and certainly now requires a much more case dependent explanation. The object seemingly needs to be retheorized and situated in each new work because the justification no longer can be assumed as understood or shared as a given among readers.

Eight years ago I was offered the advice that monographs on a single series (perhaps in the vein of D'Acci's work on *Cagney & Lacey*) were too narrow to be viable—and maybe that was or at least now is frequently the case—but given the changes since that time, I'm left wondering more and more often about questions of scope, scale, and significance. Why *does* something that happens on a single show, on a niche cable channel, viewed by a million people warrant a close textual analysis? How much "television" is enough these days to have a meaningful object of analysis? How much can narrow case studies of programs, genres, or channels tell us? In addition to difficulties I've had in establishing new work that I feel has a meaningful scope, I identify this as a problem most often when doing reviewing and I'm forced to assess the "significance" of scholarship. Flow is an interesting place to ask these questions given that I shall

assume I am among friends and that we can engage in meaningful self-critique without resorting to knee-jerk defenses to justify our existence.

I don't claim to have answers or solutions to my provocations as I find myself struggling in my own work with the same questions I pose to my graduate students and those whose work I review. Because it is *also the case* that the scope required to make claims of "television" are increasingly unmanageable in a single scholarly work. How, then, do we theorize, understand the role of, and design scholarship for a niche medium?

My opening claim regarding watching "shows" illustrates one of many changes in practices of looking that are redefining television, and I point to practices of looking as an area in need of further research, attention, and theory building. From my own use and patterns of viewing, I know that considerable discrepancies exist in the personal meaning of the television that I view on my obscenely large HDTV, that viewed on my more utilitarian set, that viewed on my computer, and that viewed on a portable device. In the same way that I no longer watch television, we can no longer think of content viewed on these screens as interchangeable--even if it arguably is all still "television" and might even be precisely the same show.