

**ADAPTATION IS SURVIVAL:
CURRENT TRENDS IN AMERICAN FILM CRITICISM**

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***Abstract:** The present article employs theoretical frameworks proposed by Henry Jenkins, Charles Leadbeater, and Marshall McLuhan along with his son, Eric McLuhan, and investigates the phenomenon of deconvergence, which results in the fragmentation of film critique pieces and publishing platforms; its aim is to examine in what ways modern film criticism is being democratized. Furthermore, the article presents and analyses the notions of resilient, subsided, and fluid film criticism. The initial two concepts pertain to the impact of the platform on the prevalence of critique, the third concept, scrutinizes the deconvergent methodology utilized by criticism, which employs a variety of styles disseminated across various online platforms.*

***Keywords:** cinephilia, deconvergence, democratization, film criticism, fluid film criticism*

1. Introduction

Throughout history, cinema functioned as a means of personal articulation, as well as an educational and entertaining medium. Ever since the initial screening of a motion picture to audiences, the evaluation and appraisal of such visual media constituted a crucial component of the public's perception. Film critics, generally speaking, are individuals who publicly engage in critical thinking by analysing various cinematic elements, such as plot, editing, cinematography, music, acting, and direction, with the objective to help others understand and appreciate cinema by discussing films and taking into account their cultural and historical context. Hence, the fundamental duty of movie reviewers is to furnish perceptive and logically sound evaluations of cinematographic creations. However, the inception and interpretation of film reviews have undergone intermittent revisions and adjustments throughout time.

The advent of Web 2.0 (an enhanced version of the former World Wide Web) during the beginning of the 21st century, prompted a major transformation by enabling film critics and enthusiasts to generate content online, thereby initiating a real democratization of the film critique domain. Specifically, the emergence of online film blogs and websites enabled instantaneous dissemination of feedback on films, authored not only by critics, but also by anyone, including laypersons, potentially drawing the focus away from previous sources of criticism. Hence, in this regard, democratization denotes a change in public involvement, where the general public is transformed into a mass of active contributors in the generation, circulation, and utilization of critical feedback on movies (or other

visual creations on the net). Therefore, the traditional demarcation between the perspectives of professionals and non-professionals in the realm of film criticism was challenged, leading to the emergence of a novel social paradigm.

This paper employs the theoretical frameworks proposed by Henry Jenkins, Charles Leadbeater, and Marshall McLuhan, alongside an analysis of deconvergence, a phenomenon that results in the fragmentation of film critique pieces and publishing platforms, with the aim to examine the extent of public involvement in current film criticism. The argument posits that contemporary online publishing platforms exert a significant influence on the popularity of criticism, and that the democratization of this process has both advantageous and disadvantageous implications. Furthermore, the paper presents and examines the concepts of what I coined as resilient, subsided, and fluid film criticism. The first two concepts pertain to how the platform dictates the popularity of criticism; moreover, through fluid film criticism (the third term), the paper will discuss how criticism employs a so-called deconvergent approach, by utilizing diverse, mixed styles, disseminated throughout online realms.

2. The survival of the fittest or the film critic today

Contemporary film criticism encompasses a diverse array of mediums, including, but not limited to, short written remarks, auditory commentaries, verbal assessments, thoughtful examinations, and quick judgments — all on various platforms and by a mass of people. Consequently, the identification of the film critic has become progressively challenging. The involvement of the general public in film criticism is often viewed as a potential challenge by professional film critics, who fear that the opinions expressed by non-experts may diminish the credibility of the established critical discourse and the trust involved in it. While it is true that the points of view—expressed by laypersons may not carry the same weight as those by professional critics, the emergence of non-professional film criticism created a rather competitive environment for established critics, which also encourages them to produce more nuanced and insightful evaluations in order to make them stand out from the mass of voices. As noted by Ronan McDonald (2007: viii), “when there are so many critical voices raised, it is not surprising that few are heard above the din.” Hence, the ultimate significance of a film criticism, whether it is presented in the form of a comprehensive analysis or as an instinctive response, is inconsequential, as long as the latter garners greater attention from the audience. In this particular context, although the viewpoints expressed by non-experts on social networking platforms or personal video blogs may not adhere to the standards of a review published, for example, in the prestigious *The New York Times*, the objective is still achieved, if the text manages to attract sufficient attention and thus gain some sort of recognition.

The proliferation of film criticism in contemporary times has led to a re-evaluation of traditional paradigms in this field, prompting a need to expand the scope of the critic’s role. Whilst the traditional function of the film critic remains unchanged, innovative modes of critique have also emerged over the last 20 years. In addition to the perceived credibility of a film critic, the marketing preferences of film studios can also influence the selection of individuals considered trustworthy film critics. In the academic context, a critic is typically regarded as possessing a high degree of credibility and proper expertise in evaluating films, as well as a certain level of familiarity with film theory and issues related to the film industry

and film history as well. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the viewpoints of such individuals may be deemed less significant by film studios or certain directors, who nowadays rely heavily on the positive or negative feedback about their work through social media posts in order to attract audiences. Thus, the contemporary definition of a film critic is multifaceted and encompasses various perspectives and dimensions.

3. Dialogic critical cinephilia

Scholars in the field of film and media, including Henry Jenkins, who is credited with coining the term *convergence culture*, have demonstrated a keen interest in exploring the phenomenon of public engagement in the creation of online content. Although the process of convergence as such has been present since the 1980s, pertaining to the integration of various media functions into a single device, Jenkins (2006b: 2) argues that cultural convergence denotes, “the transmission of content across numerous media platforms, the collaboration among diverse media industries, and the migratory behaviour of media audiences.” Moreover, convergence culture posits that the consumption and production of media have undergone a significant shift, leading to the blurring of traditional distinctions between various forms of media, including television, movies, music, and video games. As such, the blurring of boundaries between various forms of film criticism suggests the emergence of new modes of evaluation, as contemporary critics are able to disseminate their opinions through diverse media, including video essays, podcasts, and social media reviews. In this context, convergence culture also suggests the amalgamation of diverse media cultures, implying the emergence of participatory culture as well.

Jenkins initially introduced the concept of participatory culture in his 1992 book, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, suggesting that fans had already begun to exert an impact on the public’s perception of films and novels. Nevertheless, fan made content was difficult to circulate, as generating information that could inspire others was a formidable undertaking prior to the advent of the Web 2.0. Since fans lacked an appropriate platform, they recognized

that their relationship to the text remains a tentative one, that their pleasures often exist on the margins of the original text and in the face of the producer’s own efforts to regulate its meanings. While fans display a particularly strong attachment to popular narratives, act upon them in ways which make them their own property in some senses, they are also acutely and painfully aware that those fictions do not belong to them and that someone else has the power to do things to those characters that are in direct contradiction to the fans’ own cultural interests. (Jenkins 1992: 24)

In this context, Jenkins also emphasized the impact of the audience on the reception of cinematic works, despite the constraints imposed by the limited number of venues. The development of Web 2.0 provided contemporary enthusiasts with increased accessibility to content that could not be disregarded by filmmakers and film critics alike. Consequently, due to the emergence of novel technical possibilities, contemporary media culture transformed the functions of media producers and viewers into “participants who are expected to interact with each other according to a new set of rules which none of us fully understands” (Jenkins 2006a).

Furthermore, Jenkins also utilizes the concept of “collective intelligence,” a term originally introduced by Pierre Levy in 1997, in conjunction with that of “participatory culture”, in order to characterize contemporary individuals engaged in the production of online culture. According to Jenkins (2006a), collective intelligence in convergence culture “can be viewed as an alternative source of media power” that “creates buzz and accelerates the circulation of media content”, with the Internet serving as a unifying force that brings together individuals from various social, cultural, economic, and political backgrounds across the world. These individuals leverage their newfound online capabilities to generate and participate in various activities.

The practice of free speech is greatly facilitated by participatory culture, resulting in an active inclination to share narratives, viewpoints, and concepts on digital platforms. These are also fundamental components of contemporary film criticism. On the one hand, the phenomenon of convergence culture assisted the dissemination of film critics’ work to a wider audience than was previously possible through the print media (which usually took quite some time to reach audiences). On the other hand, it additionally promoted the involvement of fans in the production of critical discourse, a development that has been met with vehement disapproval on the part of certain scholars. Jenkins (2006b: 23) asserts that, while participatory culture brought about a positive impact in general on the contemporary popular culture, there exists a “participation gap”, which pertains to the restricted accessibility to specific online sources. The concept of ‘participation gap’ of which Jenkins talks can be applied to the democratization of film criticism, suggesting that here lies a potential for a lack of balance, due to the established critics’ reluctance to engage in collaborative content creation with the public. This reluctance may stem from a fear of losing their authoritative position in light of an ever-increasing prevalence of online criticism today.

Charles Leadbeater’s perspective on the internet content creation entails the involvement of the general public, which is comparable to Jenkins’s views described above. In *We-think: Mass Innovation not Mass Production*, Leadbeater (2008: 106) discusses the concept of mass-collaboration, which refers to the active involvement of the public online, through the use of a set of tools that “has made it easier for people to contribute their views and ideas through blogs, photographs, and videos.” The prevalence of Web 2.0 has facilitated the exercise of the fundamental right to freedom of expression as a routine practice in a democratic way. Leadbeater (2008: 55) argues that the proliferation of free speech “seems to produce little more than a babble of raucous argument that rarely turns into the structured and considered debate essential for democracy to thrive.” As such, the Internet not only emancipates its users from their passive role(s), but also introduces an entirely new social paradigm, which has the potential to transform the way journalism as such is perceived. Leadbeater (2008: 57) states that, on the one hand, “the orgy of user-created content the web has attracted might also rob us of high-quality journalism and literature, film and music [...]”, while, on the other hand, he (2008: 466) asserts that, in the world of the Internet, “sharing is the golden goose, and our challenge is to establish order and safety without compromising our capacity for cooperation”, illustrating a persistent hopefulness regarding the prospects of mass-collaboration. Leadbeater maintains that the internet possesses a greater capacity for favourable consequences, provided that its resources are employed judiciously. Regarding the issue of deteriorating the high-caliber web content, it is noteworthy that the World

Wide Web still offers a wide range of material with varying degrees of quality. However, users are required to invest a considerable amount of time (and energy) in exploring different websites to locate their desired content.

Nevertheless, the concepts of participatory culture and mass-collaboration pertain to the public engagement in content creation, facilitated by Web 2.0. However, the impact of this engagement on film critique culture remains unaddressed by both theorists. Therefore, while the two above-mentioned approaches offer a framework for the democratization of film criticism, it is important to note that the democratization process is a more nuanced one. This is because the democratization of film criticism entails the relinquishing of space by established film critics to make room for new critics. Consequently, the demarcation that previously separated film critics from their readers became increasingly indistinguishable with time, given that contemporary cinema enthusiasts are capable of expressing their viewpoints regarding movies through various channels, such as blogs, podcasts, social media, and other analogous platforms.

The emergence of a novel social group, which I call dialogic critical cinephiles, is observed as a consequence of this phenomenon. The notion of active cinephilia has been previously explored in film-related literature, as evidenced by Jackie Clarke's (2012) work, but this concept has yet to be employed in the realm of film criticism. Although the term "cinephilia" or love of cinema was originally coined in France ('cinéphile'), it eventually evolved to describe a subculture in the United States during the 1960s. This subculture regarded film critics as "priests who passed judgment on movies, directors, and filmmaking styles" (Haberski 2001: 2). Yet, individuals with a strong interest in cinema during the twentieth century were frequently subjected to critical scrutiny and seldom afforded the chance to publicly articulate their personal perspective on films. The concept of dialogic critical cinephilia therefore refers, in this context, to a shift in audience practices from the passive role, traditionally associated with the simpler movie lover, to a more active one. This shift is characterized by the development of new modes of engagement with the abundance of cinematic materials that are now widely available through advanced technology (de Valck and Hagener 2005: 13).

In addition, current film enthusiasts maintain an ongoing discourse via various online channels available to them. This process of an intensive ongoing discourse recalls the phenomenon of dialogism, a term coined by Mikhail Bakhtin, who argues that dialogue is inherent to human nature and writes that "any utterance, whether spoken or written, that people use in communication with each other is internally dialogic" (qtd. in Hall et al., 2005: 72). In "Discourse in the Novel" (1934), Bakhtin (qtd. in Renfrew 2015: 188) expands on his ideas concerning dialogues as such, with a particular emphasis on their function in novels, and puts forward that the dialogic nature of discourse is an inherent characteristic of all forms of communication. Bakhtin's discourse on linguistics encompasses also the language and its usage: his proposition regarding the formation of language through its users can be correlated with the concept of dialogic critical cinephilia, wherein its adherents determine their comprehension of language. According to Bakhtin (1934, qtd. in Renfrew 2015: 188), "language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated – overpopulated - with the intentions of others."

In a manner akin to Bakhtin's perspective on discourse and its correlation with language, dialogic critical cinephiles are persistently involved in a continuous discourse or dialogue that is being shaped in accordance with the objectives of the participants. Furthermore, the concept of dialogism in the filmic context posits that the existence of multiple viewpoints hinders the notion of a singular universal truth. As a result, the prominence of the individual's voice increases. As Bakhtin points out,

[the word] encounters an alien word not only in the object itself; every word is directed towards an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates. [...] [it] is directly, blatantly oriented towards a future answer-word; it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction. (1934, qtd. in Renfrew 2015: 190)

In this particular situation, each uttered and transcribed word inherently elicits an unavoidable response and Bakhtin's concept regarding the significance of language can be utilized to counter the authorial position that certain film critics tend to adopt within their field. The prominence of dialogic critical cinephilia and the democratization of film criticism are heightened when considering the notion that all words imply a response. Furthermore, Bakhtin (1934, qtd. in Renfrew 2015: 190) claims that all "rhetorical forms [...] are oriented toward the listener and his answer," which implies that a text lacks significance in the absence of a reader. Dialogic critical cinephilia thus employs discourse not only as a means of addressing an audience, but also as a basis for the ongoing dialogue across multiple mediums, thereby generating a multitude of potential responses. The separation between the roles of the producer and the consumer becomes indistinct, akin to the concept of participatory culture as described by Jenkins.

4. Deconvergence and the democratization of film criticism

While cultural convergence is prominent today, given the fact that the cooperation between multiple media industries argued by Jenkins has become a reality, the abundance of publishing avenues necessitates that audiences consistently exercise awareness in sifting through digital content. Hence, in order to maintain prominence, the digital film critic needs to disseminate texts across multiple platforms and selectively opts for those that elicit the highest level of engagement. Moreover, due to the influence of mass media platforms on the viewership of film reviews, critics have resorted to fragmenting their assessments and disseminating them on several platforms, generally accompanied by a hyperlink leading to the entire article, in a bid to expand their readership. The phenomenon of fragmentation has resulted in a shift in user practices across various devices and platforms, as evidenced by the emergence of deconvergence tendencies (Peil and Sparviero 2017: 11). Deconvergence is a term that denotes the opposite of convergence. Although the term is not as prevalent in academic circles as that of convergence, its concept is highly relevant to the current realm of film criticism. The phenomenon of deconvergence was first introduced by D. Y. Jin and pertains to the fragmentation of media and communications corporations via spin-offs, split-offs, and demergers (Jin 2011, 2013).

The hyperlink issue mentioned above serves as a notable illustration of said phenomenon in relation to film criticism within the online sphere. According to

Lev Manovich (2002: 59), the hyperlink is a distinctive characteristic of digital media, as it enables the user to swiftly navigate from one piece of information to another by simply clicking on it. Hyperlinks therefore establish textual connections that imply a form of convergence, as they create, “a situation where any text can be potentially connected to any other text, in any combination,” (idem: 64) allowing the user “to access the same content through multiple paths” (idem: 78). To clarify, hyperlinks establish associations among disparate textual sources, including certain film critiques, however, authors frequently distribute the aforementioned texts across multiple platforms to expand their readership, resulting in their deconvergence. For instance, many film critics use *Twitter* as a platform that conveys hyperlinks for full texts while they only provide a fragment of the same text on their *Twitter* profile. The term “deconvergence” in this particular context pertains to the occurrence wherein a single film critique article is published on multiple platforms, with or without hyperlinks.

Deconvergence is made evident also in the democratization of criticism through two distinct modalities. One of the instances pertains to the hyperlinks mentioned above. In such instances, the style of evaluation may be modified to conform to the content sharing criteria of the platform or to appeal to diverse audiences. The other type of deconvergence refers to the proliferation of digital platforms that enable individuals to express their opinions regarding motion picture productions. Moreover, one platform has the capability to employ multiple branches to communicate diverse types of information. For instance, *IndieWire*, a website dedicated to the film and television industry, established a blog named *CriticWire*, to provide a platform for critical analysis and to foster a community of critics. This blog was integrated in the main website as a way to facilitate seamless access for users and, despite its closing down in 2016, it remains a great example of the current utilization of the deconvergence concept, still found on many similar websites.

Moreover, the phenomenon of deconvergence can be discerned in the fragmentation that exists among the diverse levels of popularity of the platforms alongside that of the distinct dispositions of the participants involved in the criticism of films. The impact of deconvergence seems to have modified the importance of various publishing platforms, resulting in certain platforms garnering significant attention, while others becoming marginalized. Furthermore, the phenomenon of deconvergence has implications not only for film criticism, but also for public engagement, as not all film critics endorse the democratization of film criticism. This process seems to lead to a fragmentation of critical discourse. As film critics increasingly disassociate themselves from public engagement, the field of film criticism can easily become fragmented into discrete subgroups, characterized by divergent attitudes towards democratization, including proponents, opponents, and those who are ambivalent. The applicability of Jenkins's cultural convergence perspective is consequently limited in the present democratization of film criticism. Moreover, criticism exhibits divergence based on its intended subject matter, namely, series, films exhibited in cinemas or on television, television programs, or short films, leading to a state of deconvergence.

The concept of the platform-centric content is not new, as it was initially introduced by philosopher and media theorist Marshall McLuhan, with illustrator Quentin Fiore, during the 1960s. McLuhan (1967:1) claims that the message is determined by the medium, rather than the reverse. His (idem: 83) assertion is that “the environment that man creates becomes his medium for defining his role in it,”

and this invention is either linear or sequential. McLuhan and his son, Eric McLuhan (1992: 83-88) analysed the societal implications of media through a tetrad of media effects, comprised of four distinct categories: enhancement, reversal, retrieval, and obsolescence, all of which describe the various effects that a medium can have. In contrast to McLuhan's vertical system assertion, the current space of digital film criticism is centred on horizontal platforms. From this standpoint, the concept of deconvergence is framed within McLuhan's framework, however, the horizontal orientation of contemporary cinema criticism impedes its complete reintroduction. The reception of contemporary film criticism is influenced by the medium through which it is presented, as per the tetrad of media impact and, as such, the tetrad theory proposed by the two McLuhans can be applied to contemporary film criticism appearing on various web platforms.

The emergence of Web 2.0 facilitated active engagement in critical writing, thereby supplanting the trend of popular culture's influence on film criticism (in full swing from the 1950s to the present) with the phenomenon of dialogic critical cinephilia. Web 2.0 can thus be regarded as a novel medium that facilitates the involvement of popular culture in influencing the evaluation of films in a new manner. Within this particular context, contemporary film critics are not solely preoccupied with the broad accessibility of films intended for entertainment purposes, but also with the active involvement of cinephiles in the process of critical analysis of these works.

The role of publishing platforms became increasingly intricate in the era of dialogic critical cinephilia, as opposed to traditional film criticism, when cinephiles had a rather passive role as mere consumers of texts. The dichotomy between journalistic and academic film criticism persists even now, with the proliferation of the internet and the coexistence of print mass media platforms potentially leading to a comparatively reduced viewership for academic criticism, compared to journalistic criticism online. The contemporary social dynamics of film criticism are significantly influenced by publishers, thereby rendering McLuhan's concept of the medium as a highly relevant message.

The current paper uses the notion of resilient criticism to denote a form of evaluation that exhibits the ability to generate a substantial degree of involvement from a diverse range of individuals. Resiliency is manifested when a film critique elicits a significant level of engagement from its audience. Furthermore, the name of the author can significantly impact the resilience of criticism, irrespective of the platform of publication. Notably, the names of renowned, canonized American film critics, such as Roger Ebert and Pauline Kael, are illustrative of this phenomenon. Moreover, it is not imperative for a film review to adopt a popular film criticism style or content in order to exhibit resilience; it can be argued that resilience pertains to its ability to captivate the audience (still, a well-crafted critique can increase its resilience). In this specific scenario, it seems that the forums employed by mainstream media exhibit a greater degree of resilient criticism, compared to those employed by academic establishments. The primary focus of the film criticism concerns evaluations that have been disseminated on online platforms that share the peer review mechanism, such as *Springer*, *Routledge*, and *Oxford University Press*, among other similar publishers. The variation in interest can be elucidated by the fact that certain media channels enjoy greater recognition than others. In addition, specific online platforms need recurring payment for access, thereby augmenting the marked discrepancy in the quantity of individuals visiting the said sites. Hence, subsidized criticism may gain resilience if the platform on

which it is disseminated garners further scrutiny. The platforms of *Letterboxd*, *Twitter*, *Rotten Tomatoes*, *Metacritic*, *Buzzfeed*, as well as those of Roger Ebert's website are illustrative of the effective means for disseminating resilient criticism. In January 2023, for example, *Rotten Tomatoes* garnered a total of 96.3 million visitors, which is in a similar range with that of the *BuzzFeed*'s 104.5 million and *Letterboxd*'s 33.9 million visitors. In contrast, *Routledge* received 2.3 million visitors, while *Oxford University Press* only had 44,000 visitors during the same period, according to data put forward by *Similarweb* (2023).

Although *Oxford University Press* does publish valuable, peer-reviewed, academic criticism, the aforementioned publishing outlets illustrate how the readers' attention becomes fragmented. However, the discourse becomes increasingly nuanced when considering the quantity of evaluations furnished by mainstream media platforms, such as *Rotten Tomatoes*, compared to academic publishers, such as *Oxford University Press*, as despite the fact that *Rotten Tomatoes* amasses 96.3 million visitors in a single month, in contrast to *Oxford University Press*'s 44,000 visitors in the same period, it may prove more challenging for an individual to attain recognition on the former than on the latter, as it is difficult to stand out among the multitude of comments and reviews posted there everyday. Hence, while mass media channels typically attract a larger audience, thereby facilitating the recognition and endurance of critical perspectives, it is possible for such appraisals to become subsided on these platforms, in the absence of reader engagement. As a result, as mentioned above, numerous critics employ multiple platforms to disseminate their evaluations to their respective audiences.

The democratization of film criticism has led to a situation where an online platform may serve as an outlet for criticism without any particular stylistic definition. Considering the diverse array of media platforms available in contemporary times, the prospective trajectory of criticism could potentially involve the combination of various modes, culminating in what is commonly referred to as fluidity. The notion of fluidity is a prevalent occurrence in the field of economics, as the extent of economic liberty within a given society is significantly influenced by its level of fluidity (Schramm 2008: 15). Moreover, according to Schramm (2008: 17), fluidity refers to, "the condition of a loose yet stable alignment of institutions, organizations, and individuals that facilitates the exchange and networking of knowledge across boundaries." The term "fluidity," in the context of democratizing film criticism, can refer to the profession's ability to be adaptable and diverse. While resilient and subsided criticism are subject to the regulations of publication platforms, fluid film criticism employs diverse styles disseminated throughout the online sphere, exhibiting a deconvergent approach. Contemporary film critics frequently integrate academic and journalistic approaches in their evaluations, in order to garner sufficient public interest. This versatility is exemplified in the rise in popularity of *YouTube* and *TikTok*, two platforms enhancing further film criticism as a prevalent form of expression, due to their ability to enable critics to deliver their assessments in a captivating and interactive manner. The aforementioned platforms demonstrate the fluidity of film criticism, as critics are able to employ a blend of visual elements, narrative strategies, and widely recognized jargon to articulate their perspectives.

The democratization of film criticism has resulted in the increasing integration of fluid film criticism in the academic publishing platforms through the use of non-academic, popular terminology in the form of citations or references.

Notwithstanding, the field of fluid film criticism is still in an incipient mode, given that the comprehensive integration and fusion of diverse styles has not yet attained widespread prevalence in the realm of academic criticism. Nonetheless, the continuous democratization of film criticism and the growing recognition of flexible methodologies indicate a favourable direction. It is highly probable that the prevalence and impact of fluid film criticism will persist in the future, given the ongoing progression of technology and the evolving expectations and growing participation of audiences. In this context, the incorporation of fluid film criticism into scholarly publishing platforms presents a potential avenue for enhancing its pervasiveness. As the realm of fluid film criticism undergoes further development and attains greater acknowledgement, academic establishments and scholarly periodicals may adopt and integrate it by embracing alternative formats, assimilating colloquial jargon, or establishing novel platforms, exclusively designed for fluid film criticism. The significant growth of fluid film criticism can thus be achieved by establishing a connection between academic and popular discourse.

5. Conclusion

As contemporary popular culture actively participates in criticism, particularly online, the distinction between the public voice and the critic's voice has become less distinct; this is partly the outcome of an ongoing democratization of film criticism, which has grown particularly prominent with the introduction of Web 2.0. This paper has applied ideas based on Henry Jenkins' concept of participatory culture theory and Charles Leadbeater's mass-collaboration theory, in order to examine how democratization affects film criticism today. While neither of the argued theories in this article use film criticism as an example to illustrate their points, both participatory culture and mass-collaboration adequately illustrate how public engagement democratizes film criticism. Owing to these changing cultural dynamics, new film criticism tendencies have arisen in the past two decades.

Despite the increased availability of online scholarly publications and academic film magazines, journalistic criticism is still more commonly disseminated through mass-media platforms. As a result, platforms that generate a significant amount of attention tend to circulate resilient criticism, whereas those that remain less prominent become subsided; however, criticism can still become subsided on mass media platforms, if it lacks adequate attention. The aforementioned classification also provides proof of the deconvergence phenomenon in the domain of democratized film criticism, wherein the proliferation of publication platforms leads to the exclusion of certain outlets, while others garner greater prominence. Although the differentiation between amateur and professional criticism becomes less clear, the differentiation between resilient and subsided criticism endures.

The present paper has analysed the notion of fluid film criticism, which refers to an emerging trend in the realm of criticism. The trend under consideration is distinguished by its dynamic and fast-paced nature, which seeks to challenge the established conventions enforced by diverse publishing platforms. This may suggest a tendency for film criticism to adapt to challenges and avoid becoming subsided. Presently, the field of film criticism is undergoing continuous and profound transformations and is influenced by various emerging technologies that

are not addressed in this article, including artificial intelligence. Therefore, it is very likely that these advancements will further alter the existing landscape of film criticism, perhaps even in the near future.

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