Chapter 2. Description of Categories Used in Analysis of Audience Genre Expectations

Further breakdown of the ten major categories used to analyze audience genre expectations (2015 Users Survey), with a few examples, is instructive for describing the complicated nature of this process. The references to specific TV programs, films, or analogies seems rather straight forward. All types of TV programs make an appearance, from more contemporary programs such as *American Idol* to historical shows such as *Bonanza.* Similarly, films cited included diverse genres, from *Spiderman* to *Monty Python*.

The time frame category includes, for example, historical time frames (feudal era), biographical frames such as youth, references to length of running or airing (long film, late night). The material culture and symbols category includes clothing, food and drugs, hand held objects (glasses, tools), home/office furnishings, body parts (muscles), weapons (chainsaw), media and communication references (cell phones), animals, fish and wildlife—live or imaginary creatures (wildlife, dinosaurs), travel vehicles (planes), sports items (football), and organic/vegetation or elements of weather (flowers, snow).

Settings range from general references to unique locales, lots of sets or locations, as well as landscapes (panorama views), the built environment—buildings and structures (castles, bridges), inside spaces (lab, showers), outdoor environments (mazes), and specific cities (New York City), places (villages), countries (rural Japan), cultures (feudal Japan) or futuristic worlds (another world).

People and roles included references to specific actors, performers or creative people, but also to historical or deceased people. Types of people includes references to life cycle roles (old people), relational identify (girl-friends), to ethnicity and race (Black people), gender, physical characteristics (crazy hair), references to job/career roles (athlete, cop), fantasy roles (angels), film and TV roles (anchors, comedian), genre roles (mob boss, actors) and references that evaluate, assess people (bad guys), types of personalities/characteristics (strong lead, geeks, shy people).

Types of activities range from the romantic (kissing), to the nonviolent physical (chasing, running), routine personal activities (eating, sleeping), aggressive and violent activities (terrorizing, shooting), activities related to war (battles, bombing), entertainment activities (joking, humor, singing, performing, dancing) communication behaviors (talking, screaming, speeches), sports and playing sports.

Personal reactions and feelings are cited for many genre, so this category includes references to laughing in response to seeing a genre, being cheered up, having fun, feeling involved, engrossed, scared, sad, informed, confused, or gratified.

With the popularity of superhero films, many viewers referred to special effects and technical aspects when they decide to watch a film or TV genre. This category included general references to special effects and graphics, often with evaluative words—nice graphics, amazing effects, or unrealistic effects. The category included references to animation (Anime'), cinematography (grainy footage, high resolution), types of shots/camera work (panning shots, slow dissolve),

editing (high impact editing, motion blur), picture/photography (time lapse photography, single camera), language, voice and narration (subtitles, narration, studio audience, canned laughter) sound (moving score, creepy sound effects), music (slow-paced music, classical music), noises (squeaky sounds) stunts (impressive stunts), cartoons and conventions (breaking the fourth wall).

Our category of plot and story-line was expanded to refer to non-fiction structures, especially television programs. It includes the nature of a plot or story that runs across genres---slow plot, fast-paced plot—as well as story themes tied to specific genres (soap opera stories, slice of life stories, group of friends' story, coming of age theme, complex-serious plot). Aspects of plots referenced include twists and turns, cliff hangers, against the odds and comeback story themes, moral lessons, plots with conflict, happy endings and somber plots.

Many references focused on evaluations or assessments of stories, plots---interesting plot, formulaic or repetitive plots. These included references to comedy forms, themes (spoof, parodies), skits and routines (improvisation), spin on news, references to sporting behaviors (underdog team), references to epics (sweeping epic) and historical stories (dramatic interpretation of the past), references to documentaries (documentary footage), to science fiction themes (superhero story), to apocalyptic films (end of world story), horror and supernatural themes (slasher films), dramatic stories (melodrama), good vs evil (good guy wins in end), overcoming obstacles (survival story) quest and journey story themes (a quest of some sort), adventure themes (adventure of lifetime), romantic themes (boy meets girl, damsel in distress), law and order, and mystery themes (fighting crime, gang theme, who done it).

Actuality programming/non-fiction themes include talent competition (winners and losers, audience participation with judges, contestants), reality TV show themes (real people's lives, reality TV, semi scripted), talk and magazine show themes (talk shows, gossip about celebrities), news show themes (good reporting, investigative reporting, real life issues, slanted stories, political jokes, propaganda), nature/science themes (scientific trends, facts about nature), educational content (educational stuff, teaching children ABC's).

The category of evaluations and assessments included both the negative and positive. Some were merely negative comments with no specific reference to the moving image (kitsch, stupid crap, unwatchable), while others were similarly positive (outstanding, smart, well done). This category also included positive references to creativity (skillful artistry, edgy, creative) and negatives ones as well (fake realism, shallow plot, cheesy, amp).

Some evaluated acting or performing, or the actors (great cast, well-acted), the production values (good staging, low budget), the story (predictable scripts) or their own reactions (good viewing experience), or made comments on the audience (adult appropriate, family friendly).

The descriptive contents and abstractions category included, for example, representational issues (poor cultural translation, stereotypes), concepts referring to social or cultural codes (life lessons, honor), describing behaviors (empathy, apathy), and describing relationships (camaraderie) or situations (despair). The miscellaneous category featured such notions as weirdness and subliminal messages.