

An outline of a typology of media events: Dayan & Katz revisited in the light of digital media

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VERSITET

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- › A theoretical framework for understanding media events
 - › A stepping stone for discussing the impact on web archiving

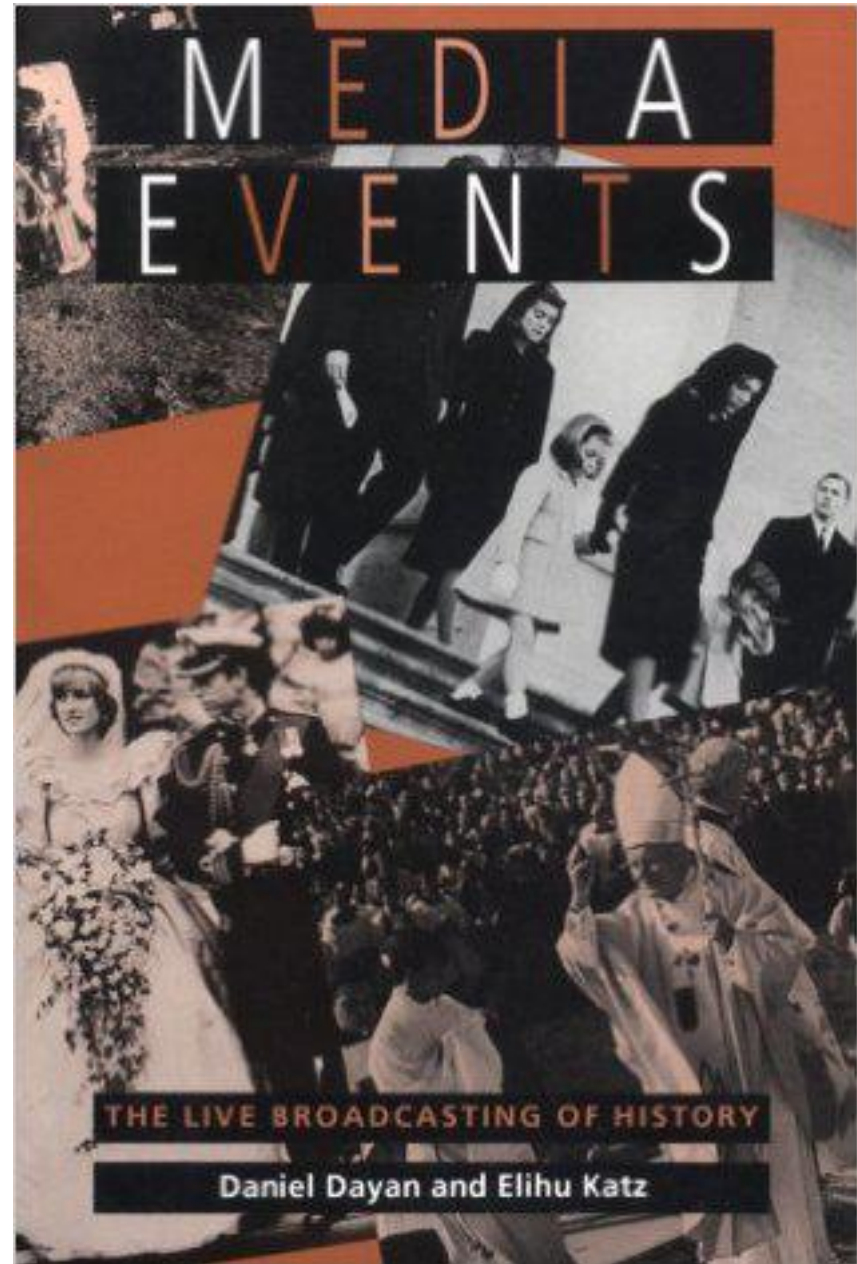
AGENDA

- › Events and media events
- › Media events 2.0 — extending Dayan & Katz' typology
- › Media events 2.0 — the digital

Daniel Dayan & Elihu
Katz: *Media Events —
Live Broadcasting of
History* (1992)

The book about media
and events

What can we use this
book for today in relation
to understanding digital
media and events?



EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

- › Everyday life — the backdrop of events
- › Everyday life is based on **routines and repetition**
- › Events are whatever **breaks** with the routines and repetitions
- › From **individual** everyday via family and workplace to a **society's** everyday life and routines
- › **Individual** to **societal** events: birthdays, weddings, national sport or cultural events — or disasters

EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

- › Everyday and events have always been **embedded in media**: spoken word, writing, print, film, radio, television, internet
- › Dayan & Katz focus on what they term '**media events**' — a specific genre of **televised** events
- › Dayan & Katz: not all events in the media are media events

EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

Characteristics of Dayan & Katz' 'media events':

- › a **television** phenomenon
- › **big** events, 'occasions of state'
- › **preplanned**, ceremonial, and highly organized
- › **interruptions** of everyday routines of television
- › **live** broadcasts
- › **media external**, not taking place in a studio, not initiated by the broadcaster

EVENTS AND MEDIA EVENTS

Dayan & Katz: what media events are not— indirectly establish a **typology of events**, in my rephrasing:

	Preplanned	Unplanned
Live-and-remote	Media events	Events in media
Made in a studio	Events in media	Events in media

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ' TYPOLOGY

1. Media events come in **other media than television**
2. Fuzzy **zones in a continuum**:
 - › media independant events become made-for-media
 - › made-for-media events cause media independant events
 - › unplanned events may be partly planned and predictable
 - › preplanned events planned at various degrees

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ' TYPOLOGY

3. **Embeddedness** of Preplanned/Unplanned events:

- › unplanned event may **break into** a preplanned event
- › unplanned event may **take place within** a preplanned event

4. Temporal extension, the **length of an event** may be worth considering — short, mezo, long term

5. Spatial extension, events as **regional**, or even **local** (city, parts of a city)

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ' TYPOLOGY

6. Small **scale** and **semi-publicness**:

- › whatever interrupts the everyday routines of individuals or smaller groups (a family, a workplace...)
- › maybe only **semi-public**, or maybe even **private**
- › for app. one century a number of these small scale events have usually been **transformed into small scale media events** by the use of postcards, photography, and later video

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ' TYPOLOGY

	Preplanned		Unplanned
Media independant	Royal wedding Olympics	Political elections Wars	Disasters
Made-for-media	Bib Brother, song contests		Disruption, live transmision

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — EXTENDING DAYAN & KATZ' TYPOLOGY

In summary:

- › Events are not always simply events which are either 'Media independant' or 'Made-for-media' and 'Preplanned' or 'Unplanned'
- › They are often a highly **complex network** of fuzzy continua, embedded events and happenings, embedded temporalities and spatialities, and big as well as small scale events — all of this looping into one another.

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

- › How does digital media challenge existing theories of media events? — including the extension of Dayan & Katz

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

1. Media events come in other media than television
 - › **'radio', 'television'**, etc. in their digitised form
 - › **'born-digital' media forms**, not originate from publishing or broadcasting (most of the web, **SOME** of all kinds) — easy to use, 'unauthorized' reporting, explosion in amount of content, loss of control, user generated content not neglected
 - › high degree of **seamless interrelatedness** of media as well as of media content (feeds, embeddings, links)

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

2. Fuzzy zones in a continuum tend to become **even more fuzzy and complex**:
- › media independent events more rapidly become **part of a mediated circuit** — everyone reports
 - › made-for-media events causing media independent events **increases with more users**
 - › the number of possible producers and the increased speed and complexity of communication in 'Preplanned' events tend to make such events — and, in fact, **all events** — **unplanned**

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

3. Embeddedness of Preplanned/Unplanned events:
- › new kind of embeddedness, the embeddedness of **unplanned small scale events in big unplanned events**
 - › were also there before digital media, but can now become **media events in their own right** and as such also embedded in the big media event, and in much greater numbers

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

4. Temporal extension:

- › adds a new kind of temporality to events because of their **archiving capacity**, combined with easy **search** and **retrieval**
- › seamless, continuous **activation** of a repository of 'digital phenomena' related to the event adds a **historical dimension during the event**, just as it enables events **to last** even after they have 'actually' ended — short-term events may become long-term

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

5. Spatial extension:

- › **global interconnectedness** adds a new kind of spatiality to events — not necessarily limited to unfolding 'here', where they are actually happening, but also 'there', in principle everywhere with access to a digital network
- › any local event may **relate very easily** to any other local event, or it may become a regional, national or global event

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

6. Small scale and semi-publicness:

- › transform more small scale events to **small scale media events**
- › **borders** between public and private small scale media events are **challenged even more** than with non-digital media
- › small scale media events may either be **embedded** in big events or they may even **scale up** to become larger events themselves

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

7. New challenges for **collecting** — examples related to temporality:

- › digital media store their content
- › but in many cases only for a **limited period of time**, and highly dependant on decisions taken by the **service providers**
- › calls for **proactive action** — either by scholar(s) and/or archiving institutions

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

7. New challenges for **collecting** — examples related to temporality:

- › **unplanned short-term** event brings well-known matters to a head for web archiving: not much time to think about **archiving strategies, settings, quality assurance**, etc.
- › possible solution: be prepared! — make a **contingency plan** tailored to fit specific types of unplanned events, describing the steps to be taken, establish collaborations with research communities

MEDIA EVENTS 2.0 — THE DIGITAL

The new characteristics of media events in a digital world add a number of challenges to the preserving of them.

But we have to **understand today's media events** before we can start thinking about how to archive them.

Hopefully these theoretical reflections have been a small contribution to such an understanding.

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