

approach and results hold some appeal also to a wider audience of European media and communication researchers. For instance, one can easily see how the methodology she applied could be used in a transnational comparative study of European media discourses.

Pelle Snickars and Patrick Vonderau (eds), *Moving Data: The iPhone and the Future of Media*, Columbia University Press: New York, 2012; 260 pp.: US\$89.50/£62.00 (hbk), US\$29.50/£20.50 (pbk)

Apple has acquired a cult status over the decades that appears to be growing stronger if the queues outside their stores for their new product launches is a reliable indicator. Its enormous success has also attracted critics who point to inhuman labour conditions of the assembly of Apple products in China and to Apple's control over distribution of a variety of previously distinct media via their App Store and iTunes and their excessive profits as a consequence. There is no investigation of the first issue in this book, which is a fundamental flaw and a telling omission. The second is discussed from a variety of perspectives and some interesting insights are offered.

The history of computing is full of unintended consequences and the little mobile computer that Apple and we call the iPhone appears to be another example. Initial marketing in 2007 concentrated on the use of the phone to make calls, answer emails, or surf the internet. You could also listen to and replenish your iTunes collection. This, of course, was hailed by Apple as revolutionary.

The most significant development, however, was the birth of the App Store in 2008, where Apple permitted third parties to develop apps that could be accessed via their store. From that time the attractive mobile computing device becomes a platform for the delivery of media content with Apple controlling the rules of the game and taking a 30% cut as agents. The rise of apps also affects the development of the internet. The hyperlink that is so central to the World Wide Web does not belong in Appleland of walled gardens and non-porous borders. In some respects apps are very conservative, at least in terms of reading or viewing experience as they can deliver traditional media such as newspapers in digital format. They are anti-surfing devices.

At this point it has become commonplace for critics to bemoan Apple's control and dominance and compare it unfavourably to Google, who are more liberal when it comes to developing apps for Android and uploading videos on YouTube. Google offers open while Apple offers closed platforms. Criticism of Apple comes from a variety of perspectives. From an economically liberal perspective Apple's closed system inhibits innovation and it means that Apple will eventually be superseded. As Pelle Snickars points out, however, there is every sign that Apple's 'walled garden' is turning into a 'rainforest' of apps where everything works (the book predates Apple's maps fiasco!) and the user experience easily beats that of Android. In the short run it appears that Apple's niche approach looks like generating sizeable wedges of cash and contented users eager to buy the next product. In the longer run it is more difficult to work out what the mobile world of computing will look like and whether it will be more open or closed.