

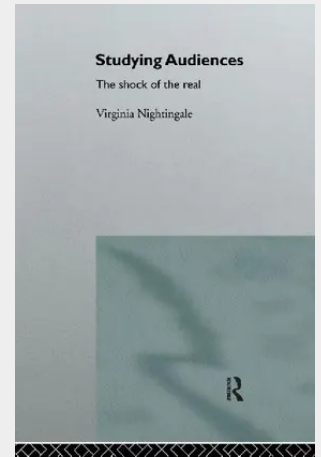
Nightingale

Studying Audiences

The Shock of the Real

Studying Audiences: The Shock of the Real provides a critical overview of cultural studies research into the television audience. With the development of ethnographic research methods, hailed by Stuart Hall as 'a new and exciting phase' in audience research, researchers turned their critical attention to groups of 'ordinary people' watching television, combining interviews and participant observation with textual analysis of television programmes. This early research attempted to document the premises of theories of spectatorship and reception. In a comprehensive analysis of the origins and achievements of the 'cultural studies audience experiment', Virginia Nightingale evaluates five projects which helped to shape the field of television audience research, including Charlotte Brunsdon and David Morley's work on Nationwide, Ien Ang's Watching Dallas and David Buckingham's study of EastEnders and its audience. Nightingale traces how central tenets within audience studies have been challenged by discourses of post-colonialism, fan activism and new theories of writing, arguing that audience research is necessarily a multi-faceted activity.

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