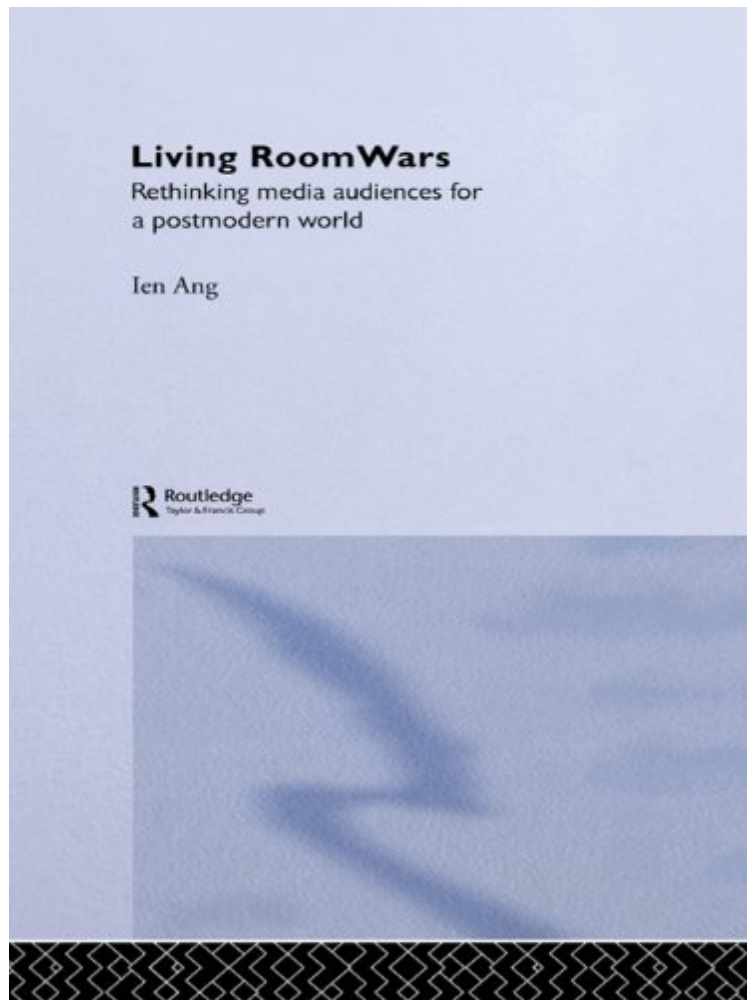


Living Room Wars: Rethinking Media Audiences

Ien Ang

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Ien Ang : Living Room Wars: Rethinking Media Audiences before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Living Room Wars: Rethinking Media Audiences:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Living Room Wars. Rethinking media audiences for a postmoderBy A CustomerWritten within the tradition of cultural and media studies, this book offers a wonderful resource for those interested in critical approaches to ethnographic studies on audiences. The four chapters that constitute the first section present an in depth critical discussion of the assumptions of previous theories, research, and measuring methods used by traditional academic and commercial analysis of audiences. They situate the debate about audiences in the realm of the consumption of TV as a domestic experience and point out the limitation of those traditions which decontextualized the audience from their consumption environment. The second section provides strong evidence of how women negotiate cultural and personal meanings when watching TV. One of the articles, for example, deconstructs the traditional premise that portrays them as passive and alienated viewers of soap operas. This section

intends to offer a solid theoretical basis to understand how gender is related to media consumption by giving actual examples of ethnographic interpretive research. The last section situates media reception in the complex landscapes of globalization systems. It emphasizes how local audiences "localize" global media by re-interpreting those "global" media in their local experiences, challenging the thesis of global cultural homogenization held by some traditions in sociology and media studies. Finally, I want to point out that the value of this book is not only the relevance of the topics that are addressed, but the solid academic base that supports their main thesis. Moreover, among the virtues of it, I can name the clarity of the language, the well organized exposition of complex ideas and, of course, the passion of the discussion that will definitely involve even those readers with no previous expertise in media or cultural studies literature. This book can definitely have a place with important advances in media and cultural studies such as David Morley's *Television, Audiences and Cultural Studies* or Shaun Moores' *Interpreting Audiences*.

Living Room Wars brings together Ien Ang's recent writings on television audiences, and, in response to recent criticisms of cultural studies, argues that it is possible to study audience pleasures and popular television in a way that is not naively populist. Ang examines how the makers and marketers of television attempt to mould their audience and looks at the often unexpected ways in which the viewers actively engage with the programmes they watch. *Living Room Wars* highlights the inherent contradictions of a 'politics of pleasure' of television consumption: Ang moves beyond the traditional focus on textual meanings to explore the structural and historical representations of television audiences as an integral part of modern culture. Her wide-ranging and illuminating discussion takes in the battle between television and its audiences; the politics of empirical audience research; new technologies and the tactics of television consumption; ethnography and radical contextualism in audience studies; television fiction and women's fantasy; feminist desire and female pleasure in media consumption, and the transnational media system.

'This is an excellent collection of essays, bringing together work which has helped establish Ien Ang as one of the leading figures working in cultural studies.' | *The Year's Work 96* About the Author Ien Ang is Senior Lecturer in the School of the Humanities and Director of the Center for Research in Culture and Communication at Murdoch University, Perth Australia. She is the author of *Watching Dallas* and *Desperately Seeking the Audience*, both published by Routledge.