

## The 'Princest Diaries'. A 'Middle-Eastern' Reading of American Popular Culture<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** *The recent overflow of Disney-related online content like pictures, videos, articles, news or quizzes not only justifies the attempt of bowing it to theoretical reflection and structured analysis, but also proves it is needed in order to unfold the actual dimension of Walt Disney Corporation's influence not only upon the juvenile publics, but also upon the adult audiences. What is more, the accessibility and fluidity of such content on websites, blogs, social networks and online platforms create unmatched possibilities of cross-disciplinary research of interest for diverse academic fields such as sociology, arts or communication studies.*

*Developing on Atton's (2002), Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's (2008) and Fuchs (2010) definitions and classifications of alternative media and Fuchs's (2010) concept of 'critical media', the present study employs quantitative and qualitative visual and content analysis and the study of public social documents such as online newspaper articles to determine whether the digital artworks of Middle-Eastern artist, Saint Hoax, is a form of (1) alternative media and (2) critical media.*

**Key Words:** **alternative media • critical media • critical reception • Disney story worlds**

**Once upon a... Click!**

Pursuing Downing's (2001, 52 apud Atton, 2002, 22) advice of studying conjunctively communication, media and arts so I 'do not fall into the trap of segregating information,

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reasoning and cognition from feeling, imagination, and fantasy', the present study relies on Fuchs's (2010) theory of alternative media as critical media, on Atton's (2002) model of radical and alternative media and Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's (2008) classification of alternative media approaches to anatomize artworks designed and posted by Saint Hoax, a declared Middle-Eastern artist, on his or her Instagram account (Instagram 2015). I have also used his or her website (Saint Hoax, 2015) for additional information regarding the artists and the works.

This article advances the results and interpretations of a quantitative and qualitative visual and content analysis using online graphic and textual material posted on Saint Hoax's Instagram account between January 7 2014 and August 9 2015. The date of January 7 2014 marks Saint Hoax's first post on Instagram. The study of written, non-numerical, public social documents such as online newspaper articles is used as a complementary method designed to endorse arguments and interpretations and also offer auxiliary information on the subjects of debate. Not all his or her artworks were included in the present study as my particular research interest refers to alternative media 'poaching' (Jenkins 1992) mainstream characters and 'story worlds' (Ryan 2013) produced by the Walt Disney Company, Walt Disney Pictures and Walt Disney Animation Studios, especially the so-called 'Walt Disney Animated Classics' or 'Disney animated features canon' (1937 - 2014 ; see Disney 2015; DVDizzy.com 2014). Altogether, I have processed more than 100 works of Saint Hoax, but the present analysis will only refer to 44 of them, divided in 2 themes and 11 subthemes. The reason behind this choice lies in the importance of thorough analysis for the sake of determining whether Saint Hoax's works can be considered an account of alternative media.

One operational objective of my research consisted of identifying and systematizing the main themes and subthemes of Saint Hoax's digital artworks based upon taglines and visual content. For that effect, Saint Hoax's Disney-related Instagram posts were organized in a database according to theme, subtheme, tagline, description of the digital image and address where it can be retrieved. The second objective refers to establishing whether Saint Hoax's artworks are 'alternative media' (as Atton (2002), Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's (2008) and Fuchs (2010) conceptualize it) in terms of production, content, form and distribution. A third objective implies determining whether Saint Hoax's pieces of work represent a case of 'critical media' (Fuchs 2010,

181 - 182) in the sense that they contain 'negation of negation at the content level', 'negation of negation at the form level', 'dialectical realism at the content level', 'dialectical realism at the form level' and 'materialistic expression of the interests of the dominated at the content level'.

My option for this artist amongst many others is based upon two criteria. One refers to the online popularity Saint Hoax gained since 2014. Due to the political bearings of his or her (because the artist's identity is still unknown) work, the artist became the subject of several articles in online American and British publications like Huffington Post, The Independent or TIME (Nichols 2014 ;Vagianos 2014 ; Rose 2014 ; Butterly 2014 ; Dearden 2014a, Dearden 2014b ; Dockterman 2014 ; Corviello, 2014 ; Siebert 2015 ; Jamie 2015) and even in the Italian version of Vanity Fair. His or her Instagram account has no less than 63.400 followers. A second motivation revolves around the global and digital context in which the artist's creation emerged and diffused. Saint Hoax is a Middle Eastern artist using Walt Disney animated content and digital tools of production and distribution to raise global public awareness.

One of the obvious limitations of the present study is clearly derived from the nature of the corpus of research: digital anonymity. In this case, the Contact section on the artist's website does not offer personal information like gender or age except for the one detail that interests me most: the Middle Eastern identity. Due to the inconvenience of not being able to check the information I am offered, I could be dealing with four situations based on the genuineness of the artist's affirmation: (1) Saint Hoax is Middle-Eastern, hence, stands for a Middle-Eastern alternative discourse ; (2) Saint Hoax is not Middle-Eastern, yet, illustrates in his or her works what he or she believes to be a Middle-Eastern alternative discourse ; (3) Saint Hoax is not Middle-Eastern, however, he or she represents what he or she thinks a Middle-Eastern alternative discourse should pursue ; (4) Saint Hoax is not Middle-Eastern, but he or she desires to critically engage with he or she believes to be a Middle-Eastern alternative discourse. There probably are even more versions than I identified, yet, I believe the four presented above are sufficient to prove my point: even if Saint Hoax is or isn't indeed Middle-Eastern, his or her works still offer insight about perceived Middle-Eastern alternative standpoints and representations.

### **Alternative media. 'The news that didn't make the news'**

According to McQuail (2010), alternative media are mostly defined by what they antagonize: mainstream media, universal rationality and bureaucratic values. Watson and Hill (2003, 172) also highlight the combative character of alternative media, advancing a rather elusive bearing of the concept: 'essentially counter-hegemonic, that is challenging established, hierarchical, systems of politics, economics, and culture, alternative media take many forms' (apud Fuchs, 174). Fiske (1992b) explains the distinction between mainstream media and alternative media in relation to the process of news selection. Alternative media embed ideological bearings to the 'repression of events', thus, the manner in which they create and disseminate information encourages immediate action towards emerging social matters. Attached to the very core of alternative media, this still is one of their prominent features (Atton, 2002). On these lines, alternative media bear a militant approach to social issues and they are linked to the ascent of new social movements among which he distinguishes feminism. Studies such as Patricia Glass Schuman's (1982 cited by Atton 2002, 12) give proof of the use of alternative media for 'radical or unconventional content'. However, Fiske harbours his doubts concerning the interest of ordinary individuals in the content of alternative press.

Based upon their function as tools of social change, the concepts of 'radical media' and 'alternative media' served for a while as quasi-equivalent terms and still are a source of ambivalence for authors. However, radical media's use seems to be more specific. For instance, Downing (2001), cited by Atton (2002, 21) who employs his theoretical input for constructing a model, argues that radical media serves as the appanage of social movements. Yet, the second notion took roots in practice and, although it proves to be loose, it was preferred as a blanket term because of its capacious meaning (Atton 2002, 9). Nonetheless, there are theorists such as Downing who dismiss the term 'alternative media' for being equivocal, even oxymoronic and opt in favour of more distinguishing concepts like 'radical alternative media'. Such theoretical choices denote that the notions of 'radical' and 'alternative' cannot be fully detached one for another.

Defining alternative media still remains a subject of debate for theorists. Although radical content and calling for social change represent the main dimensions of a constructive definition, Atton argues that radical ideas' circulation does not rely on

alternative media. On these lines, O'Sullivan (1994, 10 cited by Atton 2002, 15) suggests alternative media promote 'radical social change' because they 'avowedly reject or challenge established and institutionalised politics, in the sense that they all advocate change in society, or at least a critical reassessment of traditional values'. They distinguish themselves from mainstream media by involving citizens in the process of production and employing innovative and experimental methods in constructing shape and content (O'Sullivan et al. 1994, 205 apud Atton 2002, 15). Quoted by Atton, Duncombe stresses the idea that social change can be

**Figure 1.** Atton's model of alternative and radical media

1. **Content** (politically radical, socially/culturally radical); newsvalues
2. **Form** - graphics, visual language; varieties of presentation and binding; aesthetics
3. **Reprographic innovations/adaptations** - use of mimeographs, IBM typesetting, offset litho, photocopiers
4. **'Distributive use'** (Atton, 1999b) - alternative sites for distribution, clandestine/invisible distribution networks, anti-copyright
5. **Transformed social relations, roles and responsibilities** - readerwriters, collective organization, de-professionalization of e.g., journalism, printing, publishing
6. **Transformed communication processes** - horizontal linkages, networks

Source: Atton, Chris. 2002. *Alternative Media*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 27. Emphasis added.

accomplished not only by means of content, that is instrumental discourses, but also by the principles of production. As Traber (1985, 3) puts it, alternative media calls for social change in order to accomplish 'a more equitable social, cultural and economic whole in which the individual is not reduced to an object(of the media or the political powers) but is able to find fulfilment as a total human being' (cited in Atton 2002, 16). Ergo, alternative media call into question hegemony. Whether they function on an ideological layer or on everyday life one interfering with routinized attitudes, behaviours, definitions and bearings, they promote a 'counterhegemonic subcultural style' (Hebdige 1979 apud Atton 2002, 19).

Atton finds alternative media as utterly heterogeneous in terms of style, perspective and contribution. They seem to emerge in small-scale, grass-root, community based actions imbued with inter-subjective bearings and relevant for the rights and values of subcultures (McQuail 2010, chap. 7, doc. 158 - 159 ; Silverstone 1999 apud. Atton 2002). Moreover, he makes use of Buckingham and Sefton-Green's concept of 'heteroglossic (multiple voiced) text' (cited in Gauntlett 1996, 91) to define alternative media because they create the premises of finally hearing the voice of a xenogeneic Otherness that

stands for what Foucault (1980, 81 cited in Atton 2002, 9) called the 'insurrection of subjugated knowledge'. Therefore, Atton is concerned with developing a comprising theoretical and methodological model (See Figure 1) which can account for a diverse range of cultural forms. However, his preoccupations get beyond textual boundaries, deep into the practices of production and organization and the social ties which go along with them.

Developing upon a Marxist framework for explaining the relationship between information and communication technologies and society, Fuchs (2010, 174) points out the necessity of elaborating theoretical model such as the Marxist one that conceptualizes alternative media in terms of its political bearings and its critical utterance regarding dominant discourses: 'the contention is that alternative media should not only be understood as alternative media practices, but also as critical media that question dominative society'. Furthermore, he finds Anarchist perspectives upon the study of alternative media such as Atton's to be deficient to that effect because of their extensive focus on small-scale production and self-organized practices as the core of alternative media. However, Atton (2002, 7) openly states his intention of not setting the boundaries of this type of media only within the realm of political media, but rather proceeding towards a more inclusive approach by referring to recent cultural endeavours. He is preoccupied with developing a theoretical and methodological frame which can prove valid when applied to artistic and literary cultural forms and the hybrids which have risen from the array of electronic tools and environments now available to audiences. As he himself states, the author elaborates on Downing (1984), Dickinson (1997) and Duncombe (1997)'s work to set forth 'a model that privileges the transformatory potential of the media as reflexive instruments of communication practices in social networks: there is a focus on process and relation' (Atton 2002, 7; See Figure 1). Nevertheless, Atton acknowledges the fecund ground classic Marxist analytical framework, for example, Gramsci's notion of 'counter-hegemony', represents for conceptualizing the ideological component of alternative media, but he suggests that by itself such an approach would prove to be one-dimensional.

Fuchs (2010, 173) advances a definition of alternative media as 'critical media' in the sense of media content which challenges dominant discourses, gives voice to the oppressed, to the marginal and puts forth creative endeavours with unifying purposes: 'critical media product content shows the suppressed possibilities of existence,

antagonisms of reality, and potentials for change. It questions domination, expresses the standpoints of the oppressed and dominated groups and individuals and argues for the advancement of a co-operative society'. He affirms that such media create the premises of a critical dialogue because they employ innovation and surprise to subvert an established order and make a call to disjunctive insights. Fuchs brilliantly points out that due to their contextual nature, meanings are the fabric of reception. Therefore, from this perspective, reception can be understood as a production process itself. Drawing on Stuart Hall's theory about hegemonic, negotiated and oppositional forms of reception, he puts forth two concepts in addition to the three above: 'critical reception and manipulative reception' (Fuchs 2010, 175). However, it is more probable to find mixed versions of these forms of reception rather than their pure reading which serves more theoretical purposes.

Fuchs passes in review Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's (2008) and Rauch's (2007) typologies of alternative media theories, but labels them as both arbitrary and insufficiently wide-ranged to encompass all existing approaches. Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2008) use Laclau and Mouffe's political identity theory to position approaches on a essentialist - relationist axis. The contention between essentialist and relationist perspectives resides in how they tackle identities. More essentialist theories understand identities 'as stable, independent and possessing a 'true' essence' whilst relationist outlooks dwell on them as contextual, interdependent and fluid constructs (Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier 2008, 5). Albeit elaborating upon both essentialist and relationist premises, identities, as took up from Laclau and Mouffe, are defined as 'relational, contingent and the result of articulatory practices within a discursive framework' (*ibidem*). Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2008) identify four ways of tackling alternative media based on how essentialism and relationism amalgamate in how identities are defined and on their orientation towards media or society.

Consequently, the four models presented by the authors theorize alternative media as (1) serving the community ; (2) alternative to mainstream ; (3) part of civil society ; (4) rhizome.

**Figure 2.** Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's classification of alternative media approaches

	<b>Media - centred</b>	<b>Society - centred</b>
Autonomous identity of community media (essentialist)	<b>Approach I</b> Serving the community	<b>Approach III</b> Part of civil society  <b>Approach IV</b> Rhizome
Identity of community media in relation to other identities (relationist)	<b>Approach II</b> An alternative to mainstream	

Source: Bailey, Olga and Bart Cammaerts, Nico Carpentier. 2008. *Understanding Alternative Media*. Maidenhead and New York: Open University Press, 7

Closer to the essentialist apprehension, the first approach is oriented towards community defined as 'close and concrete human ties, as 'communion', as collective identity, with identifying group relations' (Bailey et al. 2008, 10). Therefore, it exceeds the notion of 'community' in its geographical acceptance whilst also integrating interpretative, imagined or online communities and communities of interest and of practice (*ibidem*). This perspective focuses on two dimensions of participation: in the media and through the media. Participation in the media refers to the involvement of non-professional community members in creating content ('content-related participation') and in the process of media organizing ('structural participation'). Participation through media stands for self-representing in public debate and spaces. Relationist and media-oriented, the second approach (See Figure 2) is concerned with the interaction between mainstream identities, 'large-scale, state-owned or commercial, hierarchical, dominant discourses', and alternative identities, 'small-scale, independent, non-hierarchical, non-dominant discourses' (Fuchs 2010, 177).

Society-centred and emerging at the intersection of both essentialist and relationist insights, the third theoretical perspective understands alternative media as part of civil society. Although its basic assumption refers to the civil society organizations' autonomy, this approach is still preoccupied with relationships between alternative, state and commercial identities: 'alternative media are seen as a supplement to mainstream media, or as a counter-hegemonic critique of the mainstream' (Bailey et al. 2008, 15). Whether we have in mind Stuart Hall's 'counter-hegemonic power bloc' or Atton's (2002, 28) discussion about 'counter-hegemonic strategies of ownership

(ownership of capital and intellectual property), power relations within the media and its audience', this type of media voices interests, beliefs, attitudes, opinions and values of civil society, creating an alternative public sphere. Moreover, notions of ideology, domination or the Gramscian understanding of hegemony seem to be at the core of alternative media (Atton2002 ; Bailey et al. 2008 ; Fuchs, 2010). The forth approach developed by Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2008, 6), a more relationist take on the civil society theory (using Walzer 1998 ; Downing et al. 2001; Rodriguez 2001 ; Caldwell, 2003), elaborates on Deleuze's rhizome metaphor, stressing 'contingency, fluidity and elusiveness in the analysis of alternative media'. The rhizome is emblematic for such approaches because they focus on the local - global, civil society - market - state junctions as well as the ones between different groups and movements. Rauch (2007 cited by Fuchs 2010) distinguishes among theories based upon the component of alternative media they address: values, content, channel and source.

**Figure 3.** Fuchs's classification of alternative media theories based on Giddens's (1984, XX) distinction between objectivism and subjectivism'

Dimensions	Alternative media theories	
Social theory	Subjective	Objective
Approach	Process - oriented	Content - oriented
Central characteristic of alternative media	Media subjects: 'media actors who engage in media production and reception')	Media objects: 'media products, media institutions, the rules, values, norms that shape the media, the economic and ideological features of the media, etc.'

Source: Fuchs, Christian. 2010. "Alternative Media as Critical Media". *European Journal of Social Theory* 13(2), 174 - 178

Fuchs (2010, 174 - 178) uses Giddens's (1984, XX) distinction between objectivism and subjectivism to elaborate a classification of alternative media theories which can integrate all of the identified approaches. According to this principle, he distinguishes subjective media theories, which are process-oriented, and objective media theories, that are content-oriented (See Figure 3). The former focus on community-based processes of production and reception. However, Fuchs argues that this emphasis on communities of non-professionals can prove to be exclusionary to types of media which engage experts, but still meet the requirements to be considered alternative media. Objective media theories are concerned with media products and institutions in terms of

their economic and ideological orientation. The second line of thought is more interested in normative and value structures in media.

**It's all about the alternative. From critique to negotiation**

In the attempt of elaborating a comprising model for studying alternative media, Fuchs (2010, 178) itemises five dimensions, presented in Figure 4: 'journalistic production, media product structures, organizational media structures, distribution structures and reception practices'. The theorist also organizes forms of alternative media in relation to configurations of capitalist mass media. However, he notes that these characteristics are not all compulsory for defining alternative media and highlights those he sees as required: 'journalists and their practices, recipients and their practices (actor - oriented), media product structures, media organizational structures, and media distribution structures (structure - oriented)' (ibidem).

As opposed to elite journalism, citizen journalism is free of the compulsions derived from political and corporate structures. It offers premises for redesigning the flow between production and consumption, but also of the cultural consumer's function, now technologically endowed for the leading role of a 'prosumer' or a 'producer'. Fuchs argues that traditional media are profit - driven and ideologically endowed in content and form in the sense of what stories make it to the news and how they are presented. By contrast, critical media hammers out oppositional form and content: it 'provides alternatives to dominant repressive heteronomous perspectives that reflect the rule of capital, patriarchy, racism, sexism, nationalism' and ' all forms of heteronomy and domination' (Fuchs 2010, 179). By the same token, Silverstone (1999, 103) lays stress upon alternative media's function of speaking for communities, groups or individuals whose interests are not represented in mainstream culture: alternative media 'have created new spaces for alternative voices that provide the focus both for specific community interests as well as for the contrary and the subversive' (apud Atton 2002, 1). Downing (1984, 1988, 1995, 2001 apud Atton 2002, 18) even uses the term 'popular oppositional culture'. However, a sociological approach demands a disambiguation, formulated by Raymond Williams and iterated by McGuigan (1992 apud Atton 2002, 19): 'Alternative culture seeks a place to coexist within the existing hegemony, whereas oppositional culture aims to replace it'.

**Figure 4.** Potential dimensions of traditional and critical media according to Fuchs

Dimension	Capitalist mass media	Alternative media
Journalistic Production	Elite journalism	Citizens' journalism
Media Product Structures	Ideological form and content	Critical form and content
Organizational media Structures	Hierarchical media organizations	Grassroots media organizations
Distribution structures	Marketing and public relations	Alternative distribution
Reception practices	Manipulative reception	Critical reception

Source: Fuchs, Christian. 2010. "Alternative Media as Critical Media". *European Journal of Social Theory* 13(2), 178

grassroots media organizations are often characterized by financial self-management, balanced power distribution and participatory systems, frequently non-structured and non-hierarchical. For the sake of his demonstration, Fuchs is particularly interested in non-commercial media organizations, which do not make use of commodity sale or advertisement, but resort to no-cost or low-cost strategies such as donations, public funds or private sources. In addition, I would mention crowd funding and guerrilla marketing. The fourth dimension concerns distribution structures, which include in traditional media a whole array of high-tech organizational resources like public relations, marketing, advertising and sales departments, experts, methods and techniques. Alternative media are characterized by using no-cost or low-cost, user-friendly technological resources: 'strategies like anticopyright, free access, or open content allow content to be shared, copied, distributed, or changed in an open way' (Fuchs 2010, 180). Quoted by Atton (2002, 23), Duncombe (1996, 123) advances three similar dimensions in the production of zines as opposed to mainstream magazines, amateur cultural production, low - cost strategies of production and distribution and increasingly dim borders between the producer and the consumer: 'emulation - turning your readers into writers - is elemental to the zine world'.

In the case of reception practices, Fuchs distinguishes between manipulative and critical reception. Both forms of reception refer to content interpretations. Manipulative reception engages in false interpretations that substantiate and perpetuate the heteronomous fabric of society. On the other hand, critical reception challenges what is usually taken as granted and puts forth alternative constructs of the world and life, often endowed with transformative finalities. The theoretician puts forward the concepts of critical and manipulative consciousness. However, in default of a operational definition

of consciousness, the term remains fuzzy. Withal, in the ideal social conditions, alternative media would stand for a 'self-managed citizen journalists' production of critical content that is widely available, distributed, and reaches a large audience, that critically receives content and becomes itself active in critical journalistic production' (Fuchs 2010, 180).

**Figure 5.** Five dimensions of critical media according to Fuchs

Dimension	Indicators
Negation of negation at the content level	'Deconstruct ideologies' 'Show potential counter-tendencies and alternative modes of development'
Negation of negation at the form level	Use imagination to illustrate 'suppressed possibilities of development'
Dialectical realism at the content level	'Operate: (1) under the assumption that phenomena are (...) contradictory, open, dynamic, and carry certain development potentials in them; (2) based on the insight that there are (...) contradictory tendencies that pose both positive and negative potentials at the same time that are realized or suppressed by human social practice.
Dialectical realism at the form level	'The form involves rupture, change, non-identity, dynamics, and the unexpected – the form is itself contradictory'
Materialistic expression of the interests of the dominated at the content level	'Take the standpoint of the oppressed or exploited classes' 'Consider that structures of oppression and exploitation benefit certain classes at the expense of others and hence should be transformed'

Source: Fuchs, Christian. 2010. "Alternative Media as Critical Media". *European Journal of Social Theory* 13(2), 181 - 182

### **The 'Prinkest Diaries'. A 'Middle-Eastern' Reading of American Popular Culture**

According to Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's (2008, 5) classification of alternative media approaches, the present study embraces a relationist perspective where identities are 'relational, contingent and the result of articulatory practices within a discursive framework'. In addition, this research coagulates at the intersection of media-centred and society-centred fields of vision as a mixed version of all four approaches because it presents an account of alternative media as 'community media', 'alternative to mainstream' (Bailey et al. 2008) or 'counter-hegemonic' (Fuchs 2010), 'part of civil society' and 'rhizome' structure (Bailey et al. 2008).

In this particular case, we cannot talk about 'participation in the media' (*ibidem*) because community members are not involved in creating content, nor in organizing

media. Although drawing on Walt Disney animated films, the media products employed in this study are the result of the creative process and decision-making of a professional: an artist who uses the pseudonym of Saint Hoax. Therefore, it is not the a case of 'content-related participation', nor of 'structural participation'. However, the creative content is distributed via Instagram, a free and user-friendly online community which congregates the characteristics of Fuchs's account of 'alternative distribution': 'Instagram is a *free* and *simple way* to share your life and keep up with other people. Take a picture or video, then customize it with *filters and creative tools*. *Post it* on Instagram and *share instantly* on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and more—or *send it directly* as a private message. Find people to follow based on things you're into, and be part of *an inspirational community*' (<https://instagram.com//>, emphasis added). Therefore, Instagram's description highlights the core features of alternative distribution in Fuchs's (2010, 180) vision: cheap ('free'), easy to use ('simple way') technologies ('filters and creative tools') which 'allow content to be shared, copied, distributed, or changed in an open way' ('*post it* on Instagram and *share instantly* on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and more—or *send it directly* as a private message').

Furthermore, the artist uses copyright protected content of Walt Disney's animated films and radically altering it. However, all of Saint Hoax are always marked as such which could create debate around what Atton (2002, 28) calls 'counter-hegemonic strategies of ownership'. As long as the artist does not possess a legal agreement with Walt Disney Pictures, Walt Disney Feature Animation or another ramification of Walt Disney company for using its productions, his or her actions could represent a form of protest at the address of 'intellectual property'. Yet, the artist signs his or her artwork, even if it is only for the sake of artistic recognition.

Instagram can be considered a site of 'participation through the media' because it creates a digital space for self-representation and for open dialogue between the members of the online community (Bailey et al. 2008, 11). Although it is not designed specifically to suit collective decision-making, it is a site where all those citizens who are willing and possess a minimum of digital knowledge can freely express their attitudes, opinions, thoughts and feelings towards subjects of their own choice employing user-generated, self-made photographic, audio-video and textual materials or any other material available online no matter its origin.

### **Breaking the Shell: Mainstream Ursula and the Voice of the Unvoiced**

One theme of Saint Hoax's artworks refers to social issues and comprises 31 visual items. Furthermore, it includes 6 subthemes: (1) incest and domestic sexual abuse ; (2) celebrity abuse ; (3) domestic violence against girls and women ; (4) domestic violence against boys and men ; (5) anorexia nervosa and (6) animal cruelty and fur industry. In this theme, the gender representations are balanced. There are 10 visual items only containing female figures, 8 artworks only featuring masculine figures and 10 referring to both feminine and masculine figures. The other 3 bear on animal characters. The material covering social issues can be considered an account of 'unconventional content' (Schuman 1982 cited by Atton 2002, 12) in the sense that it associates mainstream children media products such as Disney Animated Classics characters and harsh everyday social realities such as incest and domestic sexual abuse against minors, domestic violence, eating disorders or animal cruelty. These poster-series are defined by the artist as awareness campaigns designed to 'encourage victims to report their cases' (Saint Hoax 2015, 'Princest Diaries'). Therefore, they can be considered activist in the sense that they identify social problems, embolden action and promote social change.

The campaign regarding incest and domestic sexual abuse, 'The Princest Diaries', features Jasmine from Walt Disney Feature Animation production "Aladdin" (1992), Ariel, main animated character of Walt Disney Pictures production 'The Little Mermaid' (1989), and Princess Aurora, main character of Walt Disney Productions animated music fantasy film 'Sleeping Beauty' (1959) kissing with their fathers: the Sultan, King Triton and King Stefan. The campaign's target-public is specified by Saint Hoax himself or herself on the website: 'An awareness campaign targeting minors who have been subject to sexual abuse by a family member' (Saint Hoax 2015, Gallery, Princest Diaries). It also advances hard data which stands for the alarming rate of minors who experience sexual abuse at home accompanied by the urging to act: '46% of minors who are raped are victims of family members. It's never too late to report your attack' (Instagram 2015, #PrincestDiaries). On these lines, Saint Hoax performs in O'Sullivan's terms (1994,10cited by Atton 2002, 15) 'a critical reassessment of traditional values' or social institutions such as the family understood as a nurturing and protective cell of society. Moreover, the artist interferes with attitudinal, behavioural and emotional routines (Hebdige 1979 apud. Atton 2002, 19) challenging the practice of putting to silence whatever disturbs the sense of normality among the members of a family and

advocating for reporting such abuses. Likewise, Saint Hoax blazes the trail for homosexual domestic abuse by a depiction of Gepetto kissing Pinocchio, main character of eponymous Walt Disney Productions animated musical fantasy film (1940).

On the same lines of sexual abuse, Saint Hoax brings to the online public's attention abuse performed by celebrities. The main focus is the case of American comedian, actor, and author, William Henry Cosby Jr., known as Bill Cosby, who 'has been publicly accused of raping, drugging, coercing or sexually assaulting 40 women since 1965, and many of them have only started to come forward since October 2014' (The Wrap News Inc. 2014; also see Glenza 2015 and Seemayer 2015). Consequently, Saint Hoax illustrates drugging and sexual assault using the metaphor of 'Sleeping Beauty' watched upon by Bill Cosby along with the caption 'Cosby's favourite show' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/44eHvYwYV3/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015). Acting upon one's vulnerability is portrayed by reference to Cinderella, main character of Walt Disney Productions eponymous animated film (1950), crying on Bill Cosby's knees. The Instagram (2015, <https://instagram.com/p/3ZNqyrQYYV/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015) post is followed by the caption 'Monday blues? Bill Cosby will take care of you...!'

The social issue of domestic violence is the theme of two Saint Hoax campaigns designed to fit gender-targeted publics and stated accordingly. 'Happy Never After' is described as 'an awareness campaign targeting any girl / woman who has been subject to domestic violence. The aim of the poster series is to encourage victims to report their cases' (Saint Hoax 2015, Gallery, Happy Never After section). The artist modifies the standard happy-end formula 'And so they lived happily ever after' using the adverb 'never' to obtain the phrase 'Happy Never After' which stands for the life-long consequences of trauma derived from domestic violence. For that purpose, Walt Disney's characters Princess Aurora, Jasmine, Cinderella and Ariel are portrayed as victims of domestic violence. The slogan is also inspired by Disney's princess culture: 'When did he stop treating you like a princess? It's never too late to put an end to it' (Saint Hoax 2015, Gallery, Happy Never After section). 'Prince Charmless' campaign stresses going beyond the emotion of shame associated with being a male victim of domestic violence: 'An awareness campaign targeting any boy / man who has been subject to domestic violence. The poster series encourage victims to shamelessly report their cases' (Saint Hoax 2015, Gallery, Prince Charmless). On these lines, Saint Hoax

created illustrations of Hercules, main character of Disney's eponymous animated musical fantasy production (1997), Captain John Smith, male protagonist of American animated musical film 'Pocahontas' (1995) and Prince Eric, animated character of Walt Disney Pictures' production 'The Little Mermaid' (1989) bearing marks of domestic violence. The tagline of this campaign is focused on the concept of 'hero': 'When did she stop treating you like a hero? Don't be ashamed to ask for help' (Saint Hoax 2015, Gallery, Prince Charmless).

The 'Royal Misfits' campaign revolves around the broader social issue of eating disorders and the particular affection of anorexia nervosa: 'Children as young as five years old are being diagnosed with anorexia nervosa. "The Royal Misfits" raises awareness about that subject and directly speaks to children who have developed or are developing eating disorders' (Saint Hoax 2015, Gallery, Royal Misfits). It uses graphically edited versions of both female and male Disney animated characters to illustrate symptoms characteristic to this eating disorder which include a low weight, pallor and hollow eyes. Ariel and Prince Eric, protagonists of Walt Disney Pictures' production 'The Little Mermaid' (1989), Snow White, heroine of Walt Disney Productions' animated film (1937), Jasmine from Walt Disney Feature Animation's production "Aladdin" (1992), and Hercules, main character of eponymous animated musical fantasy film (1997), all figure in 'Royal Misfits' campaign. Except for alternating between the terms 'princess' and 'hero', the central message of the campaign is similar: 'Fit for a Princess? Don't let anorexia eat you alive' / 'Fit for a Hero? Don't let anorexia eat you alive' (Saint Hoax 2015, Gallery, Royal Misfits).

Another theme of interest for Saint Hoax is the cruel treatment animals are subjected to due to the fur trade industry: 'Animals are beaten, electrocuted, or even skinned alive for their fur' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/wPEe8JwYSu/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015). The 'Fury Tale' campaign images Disney animal characters such as Timon, character of Walt Disney Feature Animation's film, 'The Lion King' (1994), Abu, Aladdin's monkey partner, and Simba, the protagonist of Walt Disney Feature Animation's film, 'The Lion King' (1994), as if they had been skinned by the fur trade industry. Its main objectives are both informational and militant. Saint Hoax edits most popular Disney animal characters and covers them in blood to create awareness around the animal abuses related to the fur trade industry and also to react against such actions. The artist goes even further in this campaign and

openly promotes boycotting fur. He or she also involves the image of a popular fashion icon, Anna Wintour, the well-known editor-in-chief of American Vogue. She is presented as Cruella de Vil, antagonist of Walt Disney Productions' animated adventure film 'One Hundred and One Dalmatians' (1961), wearing a Dalmatian fur. She is surrounded by Roger Radcliffe holding Pongo and the Nanny who look startled. The caption for this Instagram post writes 'My fur lady', a clever adaptation of the notorious Broadway musical 'My Fair Lady' (1956). This campaign's tagline also features the extended title 'Furry Tale Gone Bad', an adapted version of Sunrise Avenue's song, 'Fairytale Gone Bad'.

Saint Hoax's campaigns concerning incest, domestic violence against girls, women, boys and men, anorexia nervosa and animal abuse, 'The Princest Diaries', 'Happy Never After', 'The Royal Misfits' and 'The Furry Tale', all call on immediate action towards social matters. Thus, they fall into line with Atton's (2002) account of alternative media.

### **'Once Upon a War': Global Issues of Public Debate**

Saint Hoax also tackles with contemporary global issues which are the subject of public debate, especially in the American public space. This category includes 13 digital images and explores subthemes such as marriage equality and LGBT, discrimination of Arabic citizens, Middle Eastern conflicts, censorship and Israeli occupation of Palestine. On June 26 2015, when in the United States of America, the Supreme Court gave a favourable ruling in the Obergefell v Hodges case, after a man from Ohio files a law suit against the state for his name to figure in his late husband's death certificate, and 'justices determine right to marriage equality is protected under constitution in decision hailed as 'victory of love'' (Roberts and Siddiqui 2015). This resulted in the legalization of marriage equality in all 50 states. On the occasion of the US supreme court ruling, rainbow lights were projected on the White House (See photo Roberts and Siddiqui 2015). Consequently, Facebook introduced a 'new pride rainbow profile filter app' (Ennis, 2015 ;Facebook Inc. 2015) to enable users to express their support and celebrate the legalization of gay marriages. The next day, on June 27 2015, Saint Hoax posted on his Instagram account a digital image featuring Walt Disney Pictures 1995 - 2006 logo of the '3D CGI castle, with flags flapping on the top' (Closing Logos Group 2015) on which he or she applied a rainbow filter and replaced Walt Disney in Gay Disney.

The artist also tackles with representations of drag queens using photographs of American celebrities such as actor and singer Harris Glenn Milstead, also known as Divine. An example is an Instagram video of Hercules, main character of the eponymous animated musical fantasy film (1997), a Walt Disney Feature Animation production and a Walt Disney Pictures release. The video features the male protagonist turning into an animated character based on the appearance of the drag queen known as Divine. On these lines, the caption is suggestive: 'Divine Intervention #ZeroToHero @divineofficial' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/y98FB-wYdv/?taken-by=sainthoax>, accessed August 1 2015). Saint Hoax enforces his or her messages by making use of emotion or object icons also popularized by the name of 'emojis' or 'emoticons'. For example, Hercules shift's video caption is followed by three such icons depicting a brand muscle, a lipstick and a high-heel shoe.

'Zero to Hero' is the name of the animated musical fantasy film's soundtrack (available on YouTube: [Hercules Soundtrack - Zero to hero \(English\) HD](#)). Saint Hoax squares up to the guidelines of traditional masculinity which implies force, domination and active heterosexuality and also with the Disney representation of the hero. The core characteristics of Disney's hero are described in the 'Zero to Hero' soundtrack: *fame* - 'Herc was on a roll / Person of the week in ev'ry Greek opinion poll', *strength* and *handsomeness* - 'Folks lined up / Just to watch him flex/ And this perfect package / packed a pair of pretty pecs' ; 'a major hunk', *exceptional abilities* - 'What a pro / Herc could stop a show / Point him at a monster and you're talking SRO' (annotation: SRO stands for standing-room-only), 'Now he's a hot shot', *sexually attractiveness* - 'When he smiled/ The girls went wild with/ oohs and aahs', *resourcefulness* - 'From hero's fees and royalties / Our Herc had cash to burn / Now nouveau riche and famous', *bravery* - 'undefeated' ; 'he comes/ He sees, he conquers' and *sensibility* - 'Is he sweet/ Our favoriteflavor/ Hercules, Hercules' (STLyrics 2015). For that matter, the term 'hero' is mentioned no less than 10 times in the song's lyrics. The lyrics of 'Zero to Hero' soundtrack illustrates a three-word definition of the Disney's hero: 'He showed the moxie, brains, and spunk' (STLyrics 2015). As the title of the soundtrack suggests, one is not born a hero, but becomes one: 'Here was a kid with his act down pat/ From zero to hero in no time flat' (STLyrics 2015). In Saint Hoax's artwork, this process of transformation is still central, but Hercules as the archetypal heroic male figure is equivalent with stage 'zero' and the drag queen identity is placed at the other end of this

transformative path, representing 'the hero'. This example illustrates what Fuchs (2010, 181) calls 'negation of negation at the content level' in terms of 'deconstructing ideologies', in this case, the ideology of hegemonic masculinity, and 'show potential counter-tendencies and alternative modes of development' in the sense that accepting one's own queer gender identity and make a public display of it is in fact an act of bravery. The artist also promotes drag queen characters in posts like the one featuring Vanessa, Ursula's alter ego, antagonist of Walt Disney Pictures production 'The Little Mermaid' (1989), looking in the mirror at the reflection of the performer drag queen using the stage name Divine. In the caption, Saint Hoax affirms: 'Divine would have ruled my life if she played Ursula' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/xj2zbbQYac/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last viewed August 1 2015).

Another subtheme Saint Hoax approaches in his works is ethnic discrimination in the case of Arab populations. The digital images on this subtheme feature denied United Kingdom visas of two citizens of the fictional sultanate of Agrabah, Aladdin and Jasmine, animated characters of Walt Disney Feature Animation production 'Aladdin' (1992). The captions refer to terrorist-related suspicions which affect the circulation of Arabic individuals in the United Kingdom: 'DENIED ✈️ #ArabProblems'; 'I'M NOT A TERRORIST #HappyNeverAfter'. The plane and bomb icons clearly refer to the September 11 attacks in the United States. Moreover, Saint Hoax is interested in the Middle Eastern conflicts and also offers particular attention to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. On March 24 and 31 2015, Saint Hoax posted two digital images under the headline 'Middle East Conflict | Happy Never After' referring to demonstrations, protests, civil resistance and riots against authoritarianism in the Middle Eastern area. Both feature CNN News' bulletins. One images 'Prince Aladdin kidnapped by protesters' and the other, Sultan's Palace from Disney's 1992 animated feature film 'Aladdin' set on fire. The second news caption sounds like this: 'Police Dispersing Agrabah Protesters. Many demonstrators call Sultan's govt. authoritarian' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/mNpHjEQYfM/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015; and <https://instagram.com/p/mNoyhFwYew/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015).

In constructing the campaign 'Once Upon a War', which addresses consequences of war amongst children, the artist uses similar techniques involving what Fuchs (2010,

182) defines as 'dialectical realism at the form level' with those used in the campaigns regarding domestic violence, incest and animal cruelty. Saint Hoax illustrates childhood iconic characters from the Disney culture such as Peter Pan from Walt Disney's eponymous animated film (1953), Pinocchio, main character of eponymous Walt Disney Productions' animated musical fantasy film (1940), and Alice, main character of Walt Disney Productions' animated musical fantasy 'Alice in Wonderland' (1951). They all hold or have a Palestinian flag in their proximity and are depicted in a blood bath while being murdered by a man or a woman in a suit. Peter Pan is killed with bare hands while Pinocchio is hammered down and Alice is stabbed. The artist chose once again contradictory hybrid forms associating animated characters and real people, childhood icons and bloodshed to create rupture by appeal to the unexpected. The central message of this campaign is 'Save the Innocence in Palestine', but each digital image is associated with a caption coherent to the story world and the animated character it depicts. Therefore, the tagline of the illustration constructed around Peter Pan is focused on growing up prematurely as the character is commonly associated with carefree innocence and never-ending childhood: 'He Was Forced To Grow Up | Once Upon A War' (Instagram 2015, [https://instagram.com/p/q1qqT\\_QYQ-/?taken-by=sainthoax](https://instagram.com/p/q1qqT_QYQ-/?taken-by=sainthoax), last viewed August 1 2015). The post imaging Alice in Wonderland being attacked by a woman with a knife is build up around the idea of dream: 'She Could Never Dream Again | Once Upon A War' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/qzKF3ZQYXp/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015). The three taglines of Saint Hoax's 'Once upon a War' campaign all contain 'negation of negation at the form level', they illustrate 'suppressed possibilities of development' (Fuchs 2010, 181 - 182) in the case of children victims of the Israeli occupation of Palestine by reference to popular childhood icons in the Disney culture: 'He Never Became A Real Boy | Once Upon A War' (Instagram 2015, Pinocchio Post, <https://instagram.com/p/qwliKPwYcn/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015). Once again Saint Hoax's artworks prove to be gender-sensitive in the sense that they image both men and women in the hypostases of both victims and aggressors.

Saint Hoax also broaches the issue of censorship and expresses his or her personal point of view according to which it is senseless. On October 22 and 23 2014, the artist posts two digital images representing women wearing niqab, a cloth which covers both the hair and the face leaving only a narrow crack for the eyes uncovered, and Mickey

Mouse or Minnie Mouse ears. The taglines are similar and denotive: 'Mickey Muslim #SenselessCensorship' (Instagram 2015 <https://instagram.com/p/ugH-wrwYX1/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015) and 'Minnie Muslim #SenselessCensorship' (<https://instagram.com/p/udiMC3wYQh/?taken-by=sainthoax>, last accessed August 1 2015). Both captions are accompanied by a mouse icon. However, the hand posture illustrated by Saint Hoax is rather common to Hindu and Christian religious practices and consists of putting both of their palms together in front of the chest in prayer. These posts created a negative flow of responses from his or her Muslim fans who judged the two representations as being disrespectful to their religious confession. Furthermore, Saint Hoax gathers under the hash tag #SenselessCensorship several posts associating American popular culture icons such as The Spice Girls or Nicki Minaj and J. Howard Miller's "We Can Do It!" wartime propaganda 'We Can Do It' poster (1943) graphically edited to feature niqabs. The niqab Spice Girls representation is followed by the caption 'The Spices of ISIS 🇸🇦 #SenselessCensorship #SpiceUpYourLife' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/0Qm5JGwYZO/?tagged=senselesscensorship>, last accessed August 1 2015) whilst Miller's poster's slogan is changed for 'We Cant Do it' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/y7gQOKwYaT/?tagged=senselesscensorship>, last accessed August 1 2015). Moreover, the standard image of Miss Universe awarding scene presents three women wearing niqab along with the caption: 'Miss ISIS 2015 #SenselessCensorship' (Instagram 2015, <https://instagram.com/p/yufec0QYeV/?tagged=senselesscensorship> last accessed August 1 2015).

### **And they lived... critically after. Conclusions**

Responding to Fuchs's (2010, 174) observation regarding the need of more empirical studies of alternative media, the present research aimed to test Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's (2008) and Fuchs's (2010) accounts of alternative media in terms of defining characteristics and approaches on digital visual and textual content of an artist who declares himself or herself Middle Eastern and engages critically with Walt Disney's classic animation film characters and story worlds to frame socio-political bearings by means of amalgamation. The media products of Saint Hoax are embed with three types of values, two of them suggested by Fuchs (2010 , 174 - 175): entertainment value and

artistic - aesthetic value, even if in this particular case it is rather about an aesthetic for the anesthetized because, as his or her pseudonym already foreshadows, Hoax uses not only surprise, but also shock for making his or her message memorable. Fuchs also mentions news value, but this does not apply in the analysed case for the artist doesn't present new information, but rather alternative interpretations of subject of public debate. Furthermore, the studied media content makes reference to social issues which are not recent, but are not widely represented as such in mass media, nor in popular culture such as domestic violence towards boys and men or eating disorders. Campaigns like 'Prince Charmless' or 'Royal Misfits' challenge not only the patriarchal ideology, but also the stereotypical account of a reality in which women and girls always have to be the victims and men and boys always end up as attackers.

Saint Hoax's Instagram content is consistent with what Atton (2002) considers to be a central characteristic of alternative media - it is heterogeneous. In terms of content, its heterogeneity comes from the mix of Walt Disney commercial animations such as characters like princesses Ariel, Cinderella, Pocahontas, or Aurora, heroes such as Hercules, John Smith, Prince Phillip or villains such as Jafar, Ursula or Snow White's Evil Queen, photographic material on real people, usually popular culture icons such as Madonna, Beyonce, Lindsay Lohan, Bill Cosby and products such as Nutella. Moreover, hybridity and fluidity are displayed on several pillars from content to form and origin. In this respect, Saint Hoax's artwork demonstrates dialectical realism in terms of form, one of the characteristics considered to be essential to critical media by Christian Fuchs (2010, 182): 'the form involves rupture, change, non-identity, dynamics, and the unexpected – the form is itself contradictory'. Surprise comes along with creating rupture by associating what is incongruous for common sense, for instance, the portrayal of Disney princesses as victims of domestic abuse, Bill Cosby and Sleeping Beauty. Saint Hoax also mixes apparently incompatible media such as fictional characters, objects and environment and real individuals and objects or animation and photography to create contradictions.

The principle Saint Hoax makes use of in the construction of his or her digital images, captions and campaigns is one of the distinguishing characteristics of popular culture products. This founder principle refers to what Monica Spiridon (2013, 100) calls 'reusable ready-made cultural products': symbols, formulas, motifs and patterns poached from the shared cultural capital which ensure the product's success by calling

on common knowledge, a sense of familiarity and emotional resorts. On these lines, Saint Hoax opted for employing the American cultural fund, stressing on the generous Disney culture in terms of characters, formulas and story worlds, popular culture icons such as Madonna, Lady Gaga, Nicki Minaj or Lindsay Lohan and contemporary political figures such as Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, Vladimir Putin or Nicolas Sarkozy.

The pseudonym 'Saint Hoax' is emblematic for the artists logic of creating because it is itself oxymoronic. The term 'hoax' stands for a deliberate deceitful act, a trick or a cheat whilst 'saint' is a canonized word, usually ascribed to the virtuous. His or her first solo show's name is also created by agglutination, standing for the artist's interest for both popular culture and politics: 'The world's most recognized figures become almost unrecognizable once merged with Hoax's vision' (Saint Hoax 2015, Exhibitions). Saint Hoax, therefore, perceives himself or herself as a visionary, who revolutionises by the transformative functions of amalgamation. The description available in the Contact section of his or her website informs visitors that he or she uses artistic instruments to advance satirical content with socio-political activist implications: 'Saint Hoax is a pseudonymous Middle Eastern artist, satirist and socio-political activist. An embedded infatuation with pop culture and politics drove Saint Hoax to embark on his PoPlitical journey. Hoax combines tangible and digital mediums to create beautiful visual lies that tell an ugly truth' (Saint Hoax 2015, Contact). Alongside the lines quoted above, resides the famous cover of Vanity Fair featuring Caitlyn Jenner introducing herself to the world based upon her transgender identity processed by Saint Hoax by adding the title of Selena Gomez pop song 'Call me Maybe'.

Saint Hoax's artworks can be considered in the light of Buckingham and Sefton-Green's concept of 'heteroglossic (multiple voiced) text' (cited in Gauntlett 1996, 91 and presented by Atton) in the sense that the artist expresses standpoints of several groups who are the subject of stereotyping, discrimination, marginalisation and domination. The awareness campaigns available on Saint Hoax's website are illustrative for conveying counter-hegemonic discourses about social issues such as sexual abuse by a family member ('Princest Diaries'), domestic violence towards girls and women ('Happy Never After') and towards boys and men ('Prince Charmless') and eating disorders, specifically anorexia nervosa ('Royal Misfits'). The use of Walt Disney animated content in raising awareness about social problems can be interpreted on the hand as an imaginative disruptive association meant to have a good grip on the audience, and on

the other hand as a critique towards Disney's idealistic discourse about the world, life and love as opposed to the harsh realities of day-to-day life. Saint Hoax also highlights issues which are not represented in popular culture such as domestic abuse towards boys and girls. The artist challenges gender ideologies by arguing that it is not a shame to ask for help as a boy or a man who is a victim of domestic abuse, nor to get stained with menstrual secretions as a girl or woman. Furthermore, he or she advances what Fuchs (2010, 181) defines as 'negation of negation at the content level', meaning that the artist illustrates 'potential counter-tendencies and alternative modes of development' like the campaign empowering women named 'Save Yourself', where Disney Princesses are depicted kissing themselves, which could be a satiric metaphor for Disney's 'true love's kiss'. His taglines call to awareness and action: 'Fit for a princess? / Fit for a hero? Don't let anorexia eat you alive' ; 'When did she stop treating you like a hero? Don't be ashamed to ask for help'. Some can even pass for instigation such as the environmental campaign 'Furry Trade' where the tagline sounds like this: 'Fur trade industry Boycotting fur'.

As applied to digital images produced by an artist and distributed online on a personal website and in the Instagram community, Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier's (2008) classification of approaches according to their essentialist or relationist grasping of identities and to their orientation towards media or society turned out to represent complementary facets of a complex approach rather than different theoretical directions of studies in alternative media. Moreover, visual and textual digital content produced and distributed by the Middle Eastern artist proved to be consistent with Fuch's comparative framework of traditional media and alternative media as well as his accounts of the five central characteristics of critical media. Saint Hoax artworks promote critical assessment of dominant discourses concerning gender roles, representations of femininity and masculinity, family relations and self-respect along with giving voice to the silent, the marginal and the vulnerable, strengthening civic engagement and co-operation within a participatory democracy and stimulating creativity and reasoning by means of exhilarating forms of presentation.

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