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Audience Engagement with the Marvel Studios' Film Black Panther: Analyzing Fan Reactions Posted on an Online Forum

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Audience Engagement with the Marvel Studios' Film *Black Panther*:

Analyzing Fan Reactions Posted on an Online Forum

by

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Abstract

This project examines audience response to the *Black Panther* movie by analyzing fan forums on SuperHeroHype website using a textual analysis approach. Grounded in film adaptation theory, ($N = 200$) comments posted by users were analyzed to identify fan reception of pre-release publicity of the film and post-release reactions. The results show that before the release of the movie, fans were excited about the adaptation of a comic book to a film. The analysis identified six themes in the comments posted on the website. Pre-release comments focused on a) casting, b) narrative arc, and c) music and locations. Post-release comments focused on a) importance given to the characters, b) Computer Generated Imagery including costume/art design and action scenes, and c) race, ethnicity, and gender.

Keywords: adaptation, fan forums, Black Panther, audience

Audience Engagement with the Marvel Studios' Film *Black Panther*:

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The media environment is evolving dramatically due to advances in technology including social networking, mobile computing, augmented reality, and transmedia. Perhaps the main development that has directed attention to transmedia is the explosive growth of the Internet. Frank Rose (2012) suggests that, transmedia narrative has been aided by the expansion of user-created media on the World Wide Web. These changes have built an expectation that there will not only be an expansion to the possibilities for participation, but also there will be many opportunities for the audience to play a meaningful role online. The Hollywood transmedia phenomena have been an interesting subject in the industry, with many participating studios and their social media pages promoting films online. Frank Rose (2012) has also said that the "Internet acts as a chameleon. It is the first medium that can act as all media- it can be text, or audio, or video, or all of the above" (p. 10). Comic books have especially benefited from the transmedia boom. Many Marvel and DC comics have been adapted to film and are currently dominating the box office with new productions (The Numbers, 2018). The Hollywood film industry and the actors are getting a new recognition through such adapted blockbuster movies based on best-selling books, comics, and TV series (Shah, 2013). This trend of transmedia movies has changed the scenario of the movie making industry.

Entering the third month after the release of the Marvel franchise Avengers: Endgame, the movie has made a whopping business of $2,768,820,792 making it a gross record holder (Box Office Mojo, 2018), and also making it the number one movie in terms of market share which is 89.7% (Box Office Mojo, 2018). These numbers are still rising higher because of the maker's decision to re-release the movie with a few more minutes added in the editing section

during its first release. Similarly, all other Marvel movie franchises have made it big at the box office in the past two decades. Along with *Avengers*, *Iron Man*, and *Thor*, *Black Panther* has been one of the most successful Marvel movies within the Marvel Universe. According to a number of websites ranking all 23 Marvel movies until Summer 2019 from top to bottom, *Black Panther* is ranked at the top in terms of the most famously loved movies by the audience. A few top ranked websites, such as cnet.com, esquire.com, and vox.com, have rated *Black Panther* over every other Marvel Universe's superhero movie. *Black Panther* was a box office hit and it was the first of its kind superhero movie. While the last two decades have seen a number of superhero movies, the very first superhero was introduced 80 years ago, and he was called "Superman," which is owned by DC Comics. Superman being the first superhero is also the first one with a comic adapted movie. Since then, there have been several movies made in the name of *Superman 2*, *3*, *4*, *Man of Steel*, and so forth. But these movies have the same selling point and are no differently recognized compared to the story of Tarzan, Lone Ranger, and King Arthur (Forbes, 2018).

Black Panther is one of the Marvel characters created by Stan Lee, who is also called as the father of Marvel comics. This character was introduced in the #52 edition of the *Fantastic Four* comic book in the year 1966 as a bid to offer a character to black crowd to read their comic books to have black readers too (*NY Times Magazine*, 2018). It took more than 50 years for this character to have its own individual movie. The superhero got his name because of the political history surrounding the time of the release of #52 comic edition. Stokely Carmichael gave his famous "black power" speech at the University of California, Berkeley, a few months after the character's debut, and that fall, the Black Panther Party founders Huey Newton and Bobby Seale named their movement the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (History, 2018). Since both the

Black Panther superhero and Black Panther party came out in the same year, it is still a debatable topic to figure out which one was influenced by whom. The controversy surrounding the name also increased the pre-release publicity. Given the controversies around the *Black Panther* and the casting choices, it is important to analyze how the fans responded to the pre-release publicity and how the fans reacted after the film was released.

Background on *Black Panther*

Transmedia stories have often resulted into blockbuster movies. With Hollywood often adapting comic books to film in the entertainment industry (Schauer, 2007), the transmedia storytelling has become a try and repeat formula. The Marvel comic company went through many transformations from the early 1930s until it could form "The Marvel" comic company. The initial years of the comic company saw many changes in the development of their superheroes. Except for Captain America, many of the superheroes which were introduced until the 1960s are not owned by the Marvel company anymore, but they are trying to get back their lost rights to the superheroes which belonged to the Marvel comic company. In the year 2000, *X-Men* was the first movie to adapt the characters from the Marvel comics, followed by the three-part series of Spider-Man. But these were not produced by Marvel Studios. After the Marvel studios production company was formed, starting with Iron-Man in the year 2008, Marvel Studios slowly tried to introduce every Marvel character with other individual superhero movies like Captain America, The Hulk, Thor, Ant-Man, and The Black-Panther. From the first year since the Marvel comic was released in the year 1939, until now in 2019, Marvel has built a very strong fan base around the world. The stories about superheroes resonate with audiences globally whether it is a Marvel comic or a movie. No other language in the world is more universal than superheroes destroying the bad characters from the Marvel comics and movies (Kamine, 2017).

   Black Panther is a Marvel Comic by Stan Lee and a movie by Marvel Studios, with an interesting audience reception to the film adaptation, which is explained further with my research. I believe that *Back Panther* is the best movie for my study on audience response to transmedia storytelling. At the time of the announcement about the release of the *Black Panther* teaser, there were many discussions surrounding the subject of having a black superhero in a main public interest. When a few glimpses of the work had already appeared in the teaser in the year 2017, the fan reaction was instant and diverse. The teaser trailer had recorded a count of 89 million views in a time span of 24 hours (*NYTimes*, 2018). An article section in the *New York Times* also read:

    The black internet was, to put it mildly, exploding. Twitter reported that "Black Panther"

    was one of the most tweeted-about films of 2017, despite not even opening that year.

    There were plans for viewing parties, a fund-raiser to arrange a private screening for the

    Boys & Girls Club of Harlem, hashtags like #BlackPantherSoLit and

    #WelcomeToWakanda. (*NYTimes*, 2018)

To be a little more detailed about the plans for viewing parties, when the *Black Panther* premiere invitations were sent, it clearly read "Royal attire requested," yet no one showed up to the theatre in the Hollywood Boulevard looking like extras from British costume drama. Instead seen were crowns of a different sort ascending head wraps made of various African fabrics, Afrocentric patterns and clothing, dashikis and boubous, a kanzu, the formal tunic of his Ugandan ancestry, and so forth. The film adaptation provided a new glimpse into black culture empowerment because social media and forums were all busy writing and discussing the film.

   The discussion around black culture and superhero movies is complex and timely, providing an excellent opportunity to analyze fan response to the adaptation of the Marvel comic

to a film. The Internet is a free space to write, post, and oppose our views without anyone questioning the views. Fan forums are a part of online social media websites where audiences who are fans of the specific comics or movies post their views and start discussions. As fans use pseudo-names on the forums it is difficult to identify the demographic background of individuals, but the forum allows for analysis of views and perspectives people have about Black culture and identity.

Since the audience is already aware and introduced to the subject through the original works in comics, adapting the content and filming it to make a movie becomes an easy way to bring large audiences to the movies (Liptak, 2017). *Black Panther* being the most popular topic of discussion on social media and gaining more popularity than any other superhero movies, I have analyzed one of the fan forum websites to see why was this movie gaining a lot of popularity on social media and how fans responded to the film adaptation.

Theoretical Framework

The film adaptation theory focuses on multi-directional flow across transmedia made with an emphasis on what is gained through adaptation taking a new form or variation, rather than what has been lost (Cartmell & Whelehan, 2010). The film adaptation has been studied and worked on by many scholars in their own perspective ways. The film adaptation is derived from the theory of adaptations (Hutcheon, 2012), and is defined as an altered version of a text, musical composition, and so forth, that is adapted for filming, broadcasting from a novel or similar literary source is called a film adaptation (Oxford, 2014). Numerous works done on the theory of adaptation have been transferred in a cinematic way of transpositions of literature, but a broader way of theorizing it seems better in relation to the phenomenon's variety and ubiquity. In the last two decades, many scholars have argued and debated about the theory. It started with the study

of the theory of adaptation, which later went through different classifications of adaptation. For instance, it was also known as narrative adaptation within the theory of adaptation. Narrative adaptation, in simple terms is the process of understanding one text for translation into a new text that may or may not be in a different medium.

> "It is also widely believed that narrative adaptations are primarily literature-into-film. We must dispel that belief as well. Adaptations exist in myriad forms, including films into literature, literature into plays/musicals, plays/musicals into film, video games into films, films into video games, films into television series, films into new films, and even individual songs into feature-length films." (McEntee, 2017, n.p.)

Going through such development in the literature, they have tried to broaden this field of theory with regard to its future use and research objects, which also includes comic books, video games, daily soap, and T.V series along with many other imitative practices that include plays, remakes, or sequels (Hutcheon, 2012; Leitch, 2007; Noremore, 2000; Stam, 2005).

The academic studies on the theory of film adaptation have focused primarily on theorizing the practice of relationship between the written texts and films (Joye & Walle, 2015). The movies that were adapted from other media sources in the 20th century have faced much more of the criticism from the audience for being just a copy of someone else's original story, irrespective if the movie is a success. In the years from 2000 to 2013, one of the scholars, James Naremore (2000) had tried to steer up the whole phenomena of fidelity in the film industry by broadening the field of the study of adaptation by introducing the concept of "artistic imitations" (Joye & Walle, 2015). This concept of the study explains that the fidelity in making films is just a form of an art.

Moving away from these findings, Murray (2013) tries to differentiate the adaptation process into a different angle of perspective in her book and encourages advancement of the study of adaptations as it is not just an abstract process, but a material industry which concludes that this field of study needs to be materialized. In other words, the adaptation industry is more of a source of economy for six agents involved in the film business: authors, agents, book prize committees, publishers, scriptwriters, and screen producers and distributors (Murray, 2013). Looking at other scholarly works and claims by Noremore, it is certain that the theory of film adaptation is still understudied by scholars (Noremore, 2000). The film adaptation process is being used every year by the studios and directors in Hollywood and the year 2008, Marvel studios came out with many blockbusters with the help of film adaptation process. These movies not only turned out to be blockbusters solely because of the adaptations, but also because of the hype and promotional talks done by people out of which most of them are fans (Marich, 2013).

This era of Hollywood has seen many comic book adaptations that have given and changed the world of comics and superheroes for the fans. Many comic scholars too have tried giving this area some sustained academic attention. Burke (2015) states that adaptation studies, which have recently widened its scope beyond novel – to – film debate, have only made tentative steps in this area. Leitch (2009) suggests this reluctance may stem from the belief that "adapting texts that are largely visual to begin with seems to be easy, simple, or natural that the process has limited theoretical interest" (p. 4).

The industry has shaped into a post-literary adaptation era, where at times non-narrative and non-literary sources are adapted to produce a storyline for a motion picture and other forms of media (Mark, n.d). For example, video games, comics, true events, even though their sources are different, they fall in the film adaptation theory. Taking financial risks into consideration,

Hollywood is eager to borrow content from the pre-existing works, relying on tested material which can be adapted to excel economically rather than excelling artistic motivations, meaning faithfully honoring the source material.

Adapting Comic to Films

While a large number of comic characters have been adapted to film and television, and many studies like Cartmell and Whelehan (2010), Davis (n.d.), Flanagan, Mckenny, and Livingstone (2016); Joye and Walle (2015), Ioannidou (2013), and others have been done on adaptation, only a few scholarly studies of this phenomenon exist, especially ones focused on the fan forum websites. Although, comic book adaptations had a spectacular international success in the last decade, moviegoers and dedicated fans have always craved the chance to scrutinize the presence of their favorite comics characters onscreen, poring over how the drawn image becomes translated into the corporeal form of an actor frequently enhanced by some form of special effects, CGI, elaborate costuming, etc. (Davis, 2017, p. 4). Furthermore, Davis (2017) explains that while we think of adaptation as a transportation of a narrative from one medium to another, many of the earliest films based on comics function largely as "attractions" rather than as stories. They are made so that we enjoy seeing the character we had previously known only as a static, drawn image become a moving, photorealistic image. Even though the recent comic-based movies involve complex narrative maneuvers, visually seeing a print character that is familiar from the books on screen evokes the same attraction pleasures of the earliest comic adaptations such as *Superman* or *Batman* (Davis, 2017).

Films that are adapted are not only transmedia stories, but also identified as attempts towards restoration of completeness. With respect to this, a question arises, to what extent instances of adaptation can be considered as engagement in such practices? Elisavet Ioannidou

(2013) says that for most common and readily recognizable forms of adaptation, when reworking a plot into a different medium, the answer seems to be a matter of audience involvement. Taking this into consideration, Linda Hutcheon (2012) said that the filmic adaptation of a novel, and keeping in mind that both the novel and the film are complete, self-standing works, an audience ignorant of viewing an adaptation or unfamiliar with the source material will "experience the adaptation as [it] would any other work" (p. 120). However, when the ignorant audience decides to pursue the knowledge of the original material--from where the movie was adapted, the comic, and the novels where the basis for the film where originally present, the audience then becomes recognized to the transmedia storytelling through different sources and they consciously consume the adaptation from the very beginning (Hutcheon, 2012).

Hutcheon (2012) continues by saying that "we inevitably fill in any gaps in the adaptation with information from the adapted text" (p. 121), and thus both media combine to form an enjoyable whole. In other words, we build up a transmedia bridge that connects the novel with the film and facilitates the exchange of information between them so that our watching experience does not result in a feeling of disappointment, interestingly, because an adaptation assumes a "process" of "creative reinterpretation of intertextuality" initiated to conform to "medium-specificity" (Hutcheon, 2012). However, Hutcheon correctly remarks that on all accounts, film is a very imposing medium that has the power to "permanently [colonize]" with its "visual and aural" stimuli the imagination invested in the reception of literature (p. 122). In a way, it says that film shapes a concrete image of characters and places that will constantly occur upon reading a literary work.

This study explains how fans have reacted to the film *Black Panther*, and whether the film producer was faithfully honoring the source material. The Marvel studios have adapted

many comic-based characters and given a new recognition to the term transmedia and they have

slowly realized what stories (if kept true) to the comic will be appreciated by the audience (Joye

& Walle, 2015).

   Audience engagement. Audience response to Marvel comics is an impact element in the

film adaptation, production, and distribution process. Every media has its respective audience,

and their reaction and views to the media they consume depend on their respective source of

media. What makes this more interesting is the influence audience has on such different forms of

media. Considering the movie watching audience, people like watching movies as an

entertainment aspect. Watching a movie that is a hit at the box office is usually referred to as a

blockbuster. There are multiple reasons for a movie to be a blockbuster at the box office, out of

which one of the reasons is audience influence and appreciation of the transmedia movies. While

my study focuses on a comic adapted superhero movie *Black Panther*, studies show that most

blockbusters are created by adapting stories from novels or comics. A total of 85% of Oscar-

winning best pictures and 90% of TV miniseries are novel adaptations (Hutcheon, 2006).

Audience love hearing the stories again, and again after a certain period. This must be

encouraging the producers to make movies out of the texts.

   Fidelity in adaptation. *The Marvel Studios Phenomenon* (Flanagan, Mckenny, &

Livingstone, 2016) tells us about the industrial analysis and history of the fans of Marvel

Cinematic Universe and media studies scholars. They say,

    Film scholars will appreciate the careful attention to a plethora of analytic concepts,

    which the authors carefully explain as they get in broader analysis. One might learn and

    teach the concepts of organizational identity, vertical integration, world-building,

convergence, transmedia storytelling, deal culture/package-unit production, licensing,

Fordist studio models, the event film and more. (p. 205)

Studying and using these models and methods, however, they highlight the challenges faced by

Marvel, such as how it maintains (also lost) its extensive organizational identity, use of

intellectual property and its control such as their characters, its negotiation of switching textual

modes from comics to television, video games, and film and its creation of its own biography.

In a qualitative textual analytic study on Batman movies done by Joye and Walle (2015),

the study examined the fidelity in the face of adaptation. *Batman* has been a very famous

adaptation from the comic books published by DC Comics. The Batman phenomena has grown

out to be a franchise in the Hollywood film industry. Joye and Walle (2015) say that,

when novels or comics such as the Batman series are adapted to the big screen, the film is

often rigorously compared to the original source in terms of a faithful translation. But

then the question is raised: fidelity to what extent? (p. 38)

The studies generally focus on the adaptation of the characters from the comics in the movies

and the way they have been portrayed. The trueness of character from the comics is what the fans

usually look out for in an adapted movie. Joye and Walle (2015) examined the different filmic

interpretation and fan reactions for the *Batman* movie. But, the central question over here is,

what are the different ways fans as an audience accept the film? If the film has been praised, then

what makes the fans have such positive views about the film? And, if the fans do not like the

film then what makes the fans criticize the film?

This study will help to narrow down the efforts made to understand how fans converse

about the movie regarding the comic adapted characters, and how they overall analyze the movie

to be a perfect adaptation. A good business of the adapted movies has influenced the producers

and directors to make more book-based movies, keeping in mind that there is no guarantee of success even if a best-selling book has been adapted without a strategy to market it (The Verge, 2017). Marvel movie is not the case like any other adapted movie since the Marvel Studios has brought in a new reimagined culture of adapting up to the extent of being true to the writer's story (Johnson, 2012).

Social Media Impact on Movies

Many researches have investigated audience analysis in different ways. People like watching movies as an entertainment aspect. Emily Flynn (2018) claims that audiences tend to go to watch movies that are remakes, or films with large fandom and to remain part of an ongoing conversation. Out of the claims she made, my study helps to analyze the latter two reasons for the movie *Black Panther*. At the time when *Black Panther* was released in theatres, there were a number of ongoing conversations about it. All the conversations revolved around one major groundbreaking topic, which was the first major black superhero. This particular transmedia movie had a lot of topics as part of the discussions. The social media was active with discussions and controversies surrounding the movie. In general, social media has modified the landscape for online conversations given the fact that participant or users are able to discuss hot-issues surrounding the subject with large number of audiences in real time. This aspect of social media plays a significant role in the promotion of new films, particularly after a film is released (Flynn, 2018).

Many fans all over the world used their freedom to use the Internet and comment and discuss how they accepted and liked or disliked the *Black Panther* movie. There were a number of Black Panther pages and fan accounts on social media, and those that got famous had controversial threads. People who saw the movie had their own views, and every view on the

sites and fan forums made very sense because the movie audience puts forth their views, which also act as a feedback about the movie to the producers.

Movies are categorized as an experience material, which means whose quality cannot be answered unless a consumer (audience in this case), attends it (Kim, Park, & Park, 2013). When the moviegoers have to decide on a movie to watch, they rely on published reviews and opinions for their consumption of the media. Furthermore, the discussions with regard to the movies today in the era of the internet and social media make it possible for moviegoers to easily find other people's assessment and reviews and exchange information about movie (Kim et al., 2013). Flynn (2018) says that:

> Essentially, since the information is easily accessible online, moviegoers take into account whether people who have previously viewed the movie gave it a positive review. Advertising tends to be the medium that boosts a movie's media presence, and media presence is what subsequently creates conversation in social networks and forums. However, when people talk about a particular movie (regardless of whether or not money has been spent to promote it), the number of people who go to see the movie is affected. (p. 96)

All these studies suggest that even though social media alone is not the only medium for the promotional success of the movies, it is definitely the core medium that raises the large number of conversations, which becomes the highest driving factor for the audience to watch the movies. These studies also suggest that the internet tends to motivate the audience to seek information about the movie rather than getting the information by watching a trailer (Xiaoge, Xigen, & Nelson, 2005). This study focused on one of the independent Marvel character's

movies, *Black Panther*. The analysis of fan reactions will contribute to scholarship on how social media can facilitate promotion of a film.

While there were movies based on novels and comics like DC and Star Wars, the year 2000 could be marked as the transition in the comic book adaptation for the Hollywood industry. Marvel having a vast collection of superheroes, entered the film industry with the movie *X-Men*. With the mutant phenomena all around and the viral buzz about the movie, *X-Men* went on to become a huge franchise in the Hollywood with its sequels and prequels still rolling out to date (The Odd Trajectory, 2018). With a collection of $54 million opening weekend, it ushered an extraordinary record of a comic book adaptation at the time when it was released. This post-2000 trend of comic adaptation has dominated the Hollywood cinema (Burke, 2015).

Film adaptation has not only helped the Hollywood industry but also some dying entertaining shows, comics, or characters, such as the Star Trek case. The Star Trek series, which was first a television program that did not do well on television at the time when it was launched (Brokenshire, n.d.), but later became a franchise after it was adapted into a different form of media in late 20th century. The program survived its extinction through adaptations into animated television, comic books, and novels. Later the franchise entered the Hollywood film industry with a motion picture film. Since the year 1966, the Star Trek franchise has juggled around many media platforms but has managed to reinvent itself for every new age of the audiences (Brokenshire, n.d.). Cartmell, and Whelehan (2010) argue that theories of intertextuality have also become a central element of adaptation theory, as the user compares the adapted text with not only the original, but other adaptations and similar texts in an ongoing dialogical process. Similarly, many stories will be saved if the adaptation with transmedia storytelling becomes a new way to revitalize the old story material in the media spectrum.

Looking back at all these scholarly findings and studies related to the field of film and audience, (Beaty, 2016) research says that Marvel Studios is borrowing the storytelling strategies to grow the audience for all the Marvel film franchise. The strategies include the anticipator sections of the post-credit sequence to build up tension and tease for the audience to expect for more or upcoming new projects from the Marvel Studios.

Most of the Avengers characters got their individual movie and Black Panther was one of them (Beaty, 2016). While the idea of making the film from other adaptations like *The Lord of The Rings*, director Peter Jackson had to go through a lot of troubles and consequences to acquire the rights of the movie (Thompson, 2007). The novel based adapted trilogy did well with the fans and also grabbed many Academy Awards after the three part-based movies were released. This says that adaptation is not as easy as it seems.

This study lets us know that fans as audience are the key to make films successful. The audiences' reviews and perceptions to the film results in the success of the movie. A codebook was used as a guide for coding responses by the fans on the fan forums (see Appendix A).

Research Questions

The success of *Black Panther* can partly be attributed to a digital platform. If enthusiastic fans like the movie, it will be talked about all over the social media, and a strong view and perception from these fans helps other audiences to alter their thinking about the movie. Because when audiences talk about a movie, the number of audiences going for movie is affected (Armelini & Villanueva, 2011). The fan's response on fan forums start from the very first glimpse of the movie that is available in the form of the teaser/poster of the movie. Hence, this study explores how the fans responded on fan forums pre- and post-film release by posing the following research questions.

1) How did fans respond to comic book adaption of the *Black Panther* pre-release?

2) What was the audience reception to the *Black Panther* film post-release?

Methodology

The questions mentioned above were answered by conducting a qualitative textual analysis. "SuperHeroHype," a website dedicated to the fans of comic books and their film adaptation, was used to collect the data. Fan forum websites are dedicated platforms for the fans with all the participants bonded with a common interest. A close reading of written texts to identify thematic patterns across data to understand how they reflect the text, produces response to a media artifact (McKee, 2003). A textual analysis with an aim to explore the Hollywood film industry's concept of film adaptation from Marvel comics and how the fan reaction makes sense in relation to the film will be done. A textual analysis study provides insight of human thoughts through language used in the texts, which simplifies to analyze the context of the fan comments on the forums (McKee, 2003).

Texts as elements of social events have causal effects, which also means that they bring changes (Fairclough, 2003, p. 4). Further, Fairclough explained that texts can bring about differences in our knowledge, our beliefs, our attitudes, values, and so on. Texts have causal effects in the material world, and also contribute to changes in people (beliefs, attitudes, etc.), actions, and social relations (Fairclough, 2003). The texts also speak for the attitude of the person and hence it is appropriate for analyzing fan reactions.

A qualitative textual analysis attempts to determine how the film actually used various cinematic techniques and elements of film or narrative form to make a viewer react in a certain way and why it makes viewers come away with certain opinions about it. In this case, there were many ways in which the audience for *Black Panther* could have ended up leaving the cinema

theatre after watching the movie. It was interesting to know what these fans thought about the movie and how they liked or disliked it. Because the discussions related to this movie had a lot of social media traffic, it was very interesting to know what the audience or fans had to say about the movie before and after it was released in the theatres.

For this study, SuperHeroHype, a website dedicated to the fans of comic books and comic based films, was used to collect the data. Fan forum websites are dedicated platforms for the fans to connect based on a common interest. Using textual analysis approach, the comments posted by the fans were analyzed. The analysis covered both pre-release and post-release comments to understand how well the movie was hyped before the premier on 29th January and a wide release on 16th February, and also, to understand how well the fans received the movie within the first week of its release. The pre-release movie comments were based on the first glimpse of the movie through teasers, trailers, and posters". The comments were posted under a pseudo-name, which could be from a male or a female participant on the forum, along with the date of posting. The parameters for analyzing the fan reaction for post-release and pre-release differed from each other. The analysis only focused on the comments related to the *Black Panther* movie and were organized by positive and negative reactions. Out of several threads discussing about *Black Panther*, comments analyzed were from a thread with the name "Black Panther The Official News and Speculation Thread" which had 11 parts in total. Out of the 11 parts, part 6, part 7, and part 8 were chosen to analyze because these parts started when the movie publicity had begun until the movie was released worldwide. These three parts had a total of 212,155 views from the users and non-users of the forum.

Since the movie is adapted from the comic, more emphasis was given on the fan's expectations from the film in relation to the comic. The comments were divided into a positive

group and a negative group from the pre- and post-release of the movie for open coding of the

comments. These comments were then categorized by using a codebook (see Appendix A),

which was informed by the open coding. The codebook provided a guide for coding responses by

the fans on the fan forums. The codebook was categorized with different topics based on the

visuals, sounds, and race ethnicity that appeared in the comic adapted movie. This codebook

helped to examine how the audience had received the movie on the basis of personal

experiences. These subtopics in the codebook were the subjects that the producers have delivered

through the visuals by showing in the film and the audience reactions on fan forums helped to

know how well the message was received and in what way did the fans accept the film. Every

audience had their own personal way of acceptance for the first ever Black Superhero movie.

This was based on his/her personal background, different social situations they faced, and frames

of interpretation. So, to make the study and results easier to understand this codebook helped as a

main base to categorize the audience response on the fan forum and gave a clear view of whether

the audience had a positive response towards the coded subject or a negative response.

Results

This study analyzed a total of 20 days comments on the fan forum hosted by

SuperHeroHype. The time period for the analysis of fan comments on the website

SuperHeroHype was from 1st January, 2018 – 11th January, 2018 for pre-release comments

which were posted just after the poster, teaser, and trailer releases, and the post-release

comments were analyzed during the period of 17th February -23rd February, 2018. The pre-

release comments and post-release comments were analyzed on different aspects and

components. In the following sections, I present themes identified from the forums and fan

reactions to various components of the film.

Pre-Release

  Comments on casting choices. Like most of the movies, this movie had a controversial topic that was discussed widely on the forums. There were many fans reacting to one of the film's main characters played by Michael B. Jordan as Killmonger. The discussion was on the statement by Jordan who said:

   "Michael B. Jordan is catching **** online because he says he doesn't date black women and people are claiming they're now boycotting."

  The following comments by the users questioned the authenticity of Jordan's statement. But this comment posted by the fans had already done the damage as there were 20 comments discussing the boycotting of the *Black Panther* movie because of this statement. None of the users clearly mentioned that they will be boycotting the movie, but the posts were directed towards it. For instance, one of the posts said, "My post was predicated on if people are boycotting and the fact is the suggestion/proposition of boycotting happened" (Post 995).

  Other comments also suggested that it was not the first time when the discussion of boycotting a movie was brought up because of a black cast. For the movie *Thor* which was again by Marvel fans, had a discussion about boycotting the film because the character of "Heimdell" was played by a black actor. The actual comment on the forum was "If it happened it comes down to being just a few weirdos talking nonsense online. Similar to the weirdos who talked about boycotting Thor because Heimdall was black" (Post 1002).

  This says that the casting of the black people and the comments by them were not well appreciated by the audience and fans. There was a negative reaction to this part of the discussion, which also derailed the topic of discussion out from Marvel view to other political and commercial topics.

Music and locations. On 3rd January a fan with the pseudo-name "King Nomarch"

posted the first studio link for *Black Panther* giving the fans a first visual look of how the movie

was going to be and included some on the set shooting scenes. This led to the discussion about

what type of score will be used for the movie, resulting in 15 posts on the thread. It was official

that a Swedish composer, Ludwig Goranssan, would be composing the score for the movie and

the fans sounded excited about it. In all there were four posts related to the background score,

and three links to the score out of which one was the making of *Black Panther*, and the other two

were the previous works from "Ludwig." The fans discussed and compared between the earlier

scores he had given to movies like *Fruitvale Station* and *Creed* where Michael B. Jordan was the

actor as well. Fans had also started speculating about what kind of score will be given to

different types of scenes. One comment with the username "Melpardus" read that the user was

excited to hear the music from the Djalia scene and assumed that the score will be more towards

action side with emotions and energetic tones to it:

> Regarding music, it probably depends on where the story goes, though it is possible to
>
> have emotional and energetic simultaneously in a piece. It'll probably lean more on the
>
> action side of things, though I'm listening to the Fruitvale Station soundtrack as I'm
>
> writing this (still haven't seen the movie nor heard this before) and I'm feeling lots of
>
> feels, so I cannot wait to see how Goransson scores the Djalia scene. (post 999, part 6)

The later part of discussion on posts was directed to the soundtracks being used for the

Black Panther movie by Kendrick Lamar. When the soundtrack "All the Stars" was released,

fans liked the song and also started discussing which scene in the film will comprise of this song.

The most important element from the comments regarding the soundtrack was the influence of

more African influenced artists and musicians to do justice to the movie as the movie was

themed of Afro culture. For example:

> I'm listening to "All the Stars" now; it's a pretty song for the most part and Kendrick's
>
> lines seem to echo a lot of T'Challa's thoughts. I like it, but it definitely sounds like an
>
> end-credits piece if it's actually in the film. (I am more than ready to hear the OST's main
>
> theme or something else from the score.) Regardless of in-the-film status or not, I hope
>
> the album has more collaborations featuring more African-influenced artists and
>
> musicians, but for what it's worth I'm intrigued as it is. (Post 33, Part 7)

The hype in relation to the music was building up and many fans waited for the release of

official trailer so that they get a sense of what kind of music the movie gives. To fans'

expectations, the music composed for the movie was well appreciated by the fans as there was

African inspired music matching the theme of the movie. For instance, "Really liked the music

they picked for this one. Felt a bit more foreign/African than the American-based hip-hop they

used in the first couple trailers" (post 159, part 7). "That music does sound more African

inspired, especially the drums. Definitely a nice touch IMO. Can't wait to listen to that full

soundtrack" (post 171, part 7).

> I liked it. The music was definitely more atmospheric this time, a lot less in-your-face
>
> than the previous trailers'; a nice combination of Afro-house and some orchestral
>
> elements with Kendrick over it. It's a lot closer to what I was expecting when I heard
>
> about the soundtrack. Also, very nice that we finally got some in-scene soundbites; all the
>
> accents and line deliveries sound so much better and natural than the overdubs. The
>
> colors really pop in this one too; the scene at Warrior Falls where T'Challa's looking up at
>
> his people has so many bright colors. I was worried after the second trailer and its

international spinoffs because that scene kept getting noticeably more washed out with

each spot. (post 188, part 7)

Apart from the music, the next most talked topic was the location of Wakanda, and theme

color used for the movie. The posts and comments talked more about what was the origin of

Black Panther and how the posters and trailers gave them the idea of what overall was going to

be seen in the movie. The poster had a purple background, which was not received well by the

fans, as it did not reflect theme color Marvel chose for the poster; however, there were fans who

had read the comics and had an idea about why purple color was used. For instance, one of the

fans compared the Wakanda at night to a glittering spark by saying:

> Am I the only one reminded of coruscant when looking at nighttime Wakanda? Also
>
> while I like the purple energy in the comics I don't like it as much here I feel like the
>
> yellow or fiery glowing orange would look much better here. (post 45, part 7)

To which one of the users replied, "I think the movie is using the color because it's usually

associated with royalty" (post 48, part 7). The praising of the music in relation to the African

culture and Wakanda group had reached to an extent that a user posted:

> "I'm sure there are probably a few of them that like the music, as there are Africans that

like the genre. But now we're just getting too deep into this ****" (post 214, part 7).

There was also some discussion seen over the origin of the place Wakanda too, to which

a user named Aximili86 replied,

> Right, but Wakanda's not exactly Nigeria or Kenya or wherever with kids consuming &
>
> enjoying American culture. Wakanda's pretty militantly about their history & culture &
>
> ways expressly at the expense of everyone else. They're isolationist, they're North Korea
>
> if they weren't run by crazy tyrants. (Post 221, part I'm just thrilled the first reactions are

so positive—especially the feedback about MBJ's Killmonger.7)

The costumes were also an important part of the discussion as they had to be appealing, relevant and related to the costumes shown in the comic books as fans would expect the same level of fidelity if the character is adapted from the comics. Since the first look of the *Black Panther* poster, there has been a very positive reaction from the fans for the costume that has been designed for the *Black Panther* cast. The fans also praised and applauded the efforts put into designing the costumes and bring out the trueness of the characters. One of the fans appreciated by saying, "Is it me or does this film have the most gorgeous costume design and production design in the entire genre? At least since Batman Returns, imo"(post 78, part 7). Another posted:

> What I love about the costume design in BP is how natural it feels—like, you've got headdresses and magnificent colorful prints, but it all fits the world so well. I think it could influence fashion outside of movies, which would be glorious" (post 85, part 7).

This section of the pre-release had many positive comments and praises in relation to the movie trailer, music, posters, location and soundtracks. The fans have certainly taken this part of the pre-release topic of discussion positively.

Movie's narrative arc. The next aspect that appeared repeatedly in the forum regarding the Black Panther was the run-time of the movie. There were seven posts discussing the run-time of the movie. Fans were expecting to have a decent run time from the movie. There were many speculations about it until the run-time of the movie was officially out. The first comment that confirmed the run time on the forums was "The official running time for the film has been confirmed as... **2 hrs 15 minutes**" (post 924, part 6).

This run-time was appropriate from the Marvel Studios to introduce a new type of movie with its cultural background. If the run-time would have been shorter than what it is, then fans would have been let down due to no proper time given for the introduction to the new world of Wakanda and other new aspects which were different from the other Marvel movies. And apart from the actual movie run time, Marvel usually bring in 1-2 post credit scenes to build up a new Marvel movie. So, considering the post credit scenes, 2hrs 15mins was a positively accepted run-time by the Marvel lovers. The way fans had accepted this run-time positively is justified by one of the comments from the fan which says:

> 2hrs 15 mins would be great. Although I'd be a little bit letdown if this was movie was shorter than Wonder Woman. Movies that to have explain a new world, new characters should get that kind of freedom. Still a great run time if true.
>
> Also Marvel releases so many post credit scenes I'd hate for them to have to cut from the movie just to show some Infinity War stuff. I don't need any more post credit scenes taking away from a movie's run time. Just release some footage on youtube. (post 979, part 6)

Post-Release

Importance given to the characters. When it comes to the superhero, who is also the heart of the movie as the title goes, fan reactions to the involvement and impact of the Black Panther were not very positive. There were 17 posts discussing about the importance given to the characters in the movie. The discussion was more about how T'Challa a.k.a Black Panther was overshadowed by the brilliance of Michael B. Jordan as Killmonger and other supporting cast. The fans were thrilled to see the negative character in the movie doing so well and keeping the audience entertained. Just for example one of the posts said, *"I'm just thrilled, the first reactions*

are so positive—especially the feedback about MBJ's Killmonger" (post 288, part 8). There were

no praises seen for the Black Panther character apart from a few fans mentioning about his acting

skills as an actor. It seems fans expected the Black Panther character to be dominating and steal

the show, just like his debut appearance in the earlier Marvel movie *Captain America: Civil War*.

The following quote is by one of the fans who referred to a movie critic's opinion and said that

unfortunately it was not the Black Panther but the other characters who stole the show. For

instance, one comment said:

> Didn't go in depth, but the one complaint they had was that Black Panther stole the show
>
> in Civil War. In this, other characters kind of steal the movie and you didn't expect that.
>
> They said he was still good though.
>
> I do think people who watched Civil War had such high expectations for the character in
>
> his own movie. (post 578, part 8)

So, the comments were all about how well the character of Killmonger was built and the

character of Black Panther was overshadowed by it. Below is a comment that reflects on how

well M. B Jordan and his character was appreciated by the fans:

> BLACK PANTHER: Michael B. Jordan is so damn good he made a dude named
>
> Killmonger into one of the most fascinating Marvel characters ever. Starts a little slowly
>
> and the action is hit or miss, but it builds to something pretty special. (post 437, part 8)

This analysis about the discussion and importance of the character addresses that the character of

Black Panther who should have been the "heart" of the movie was negatively appreciated as the

other cast especially 'Killmonger' was more on the positive side of the appreciation.

Computer generated imagery (CGI), costume/art design, action. The most anticipated

part of a Marvel movie is the CGI, fights, and costumes used to film the movie. The analyzed

posts were overwhelmed with the discussion of the CGI, fights, and costumes, which were also linked to other Marvel movies for comparisons. Out of all the comments analyzed, 27 posts were found that discussed about the CGI and fight scenes relating directly to *Black Panther* while there were three times more comments discussing the "overall" effects and comparing them to other Marvel movies including a few from the pre-release posts. Considering the direct comments that actually discussed the components in the film showed that the fans expected more in terms of CGI and fights and were not satisfied with what they saw. But that does not mean the actions and appearance of the characters was criticized. One of the fan comments read "Ryan Coogler knocked it out of the park, some great sequences presented in a "single take/shot." If this movie isn't nominated for costume, art and production design awards next year, I would be seriously shocked.*#blackpanther"(post 269, part 8).

This shows how fans want the movie to be nominated for the efforts made to present the art and costume work. The costumes and art were pretty well appreciated by the fans and audience. However, apart from these efforts, the CGI and fight scenes were still criticized. One of the fans was quoted saying, "I don't mind the third act fight, but the idea that the villain has the same powers as the hero is getting old." This says that there had to be more creativity in the fight scene and considerable assigning of superpowers to the main characters in the movie.

The posts also suggested that a user on the forum who was not familiar to Black Panther's mythology was more interested to know how far could the vibranium in the Black Panther costume defend him? Here is the comment by the user:

> Question, I'm not too familiar with Black Panther's mythology but if his costume is made completely of vibranium (the same substance used for Captain America's shield) then does that make him impervious to any and all attacks? And if that is the case, wouldn't

that make him pretty much unbeatable within the MCU since Cap's shield was strong

enough to withstand a blow from Thor's hammer). (post 166, part 8)

The comment helps to illustrate that the fans are still doubtful about how strong Black

Panther is as a superhero and questioned his ability to withstand all kinds of attacks. The reaction

to the armored costume was mixed, as there were approval of the costume while questions were

also raised about the strength of the costume.

The action scenes in the movie were a bit disappointing for the fans as there were

complaints and discussions about the pace of the action scenes. They seemed to be slower to be a

part of the superhero action movie. One of the users suggested that there were "jump cuts" used

in many movies to increase the pace of the action. For instance, "The action too. They seem to

not use jump cuts to make the action seem fast like normal action movies, instead the use Long

takes, but it makes the characters seem slower." And when such fight scenes are criticized, it is

more or less because of the quality of CGI used to film these fight scenes. Poor CGI has always

been a criticism for other Marvel movies too. The fans expect more realistic fights that are done

through CGI. One of the fans referred to the previous Marvel movie and said:

> Yeah especially ragnarok. The Hulk and Thor battle scene and the final battle were some
>
> pretty poor cgi and audiences and critics didn't seem to have much of a problem with that
>
> so won't be looking too much into the cgi complaints. A film that technology plays a vital
>
> role was always going to have some iffy cgi.
>
> At this point I only hope the supposed slow start and pacing probably due to the world-
>
> building doesn't become much of a problem and it doesn't seem to be so for most of the
>
> reactions. (post 775, part 8)

While such comments are valid, the fans also understand that films having superhero with superpowers were always going to have some doubtful CGI shown. The above posts focused on the slow start to introduce the new world of the new superhero. However, there were other fans who did not understand the CGI techniques. One of the users on the forum named, Winterfell said, "I have no idea why they didn't do that fight practically or chose a different approach. It looks like they said screw it and just rendered everything including the actors."

With all said, it is clear that the fans did not accept the CGI, fights positively as there were many criticisms while some were neutral views but none of them were found praising the fights and CGI for what they had seen. However, the costumes and art designs used for the movie earned a lot of positive praise from the fans with a few recommending for award nominations too.

Race/ethnicity and gender. Apart from the discussion about the technical aspects of the film, the issue of race and ethnicity received a lot of attention as well. Race and ethnicity were discussed overall in 48 posts. Many users had an argument about the casting and the target audience for the movie. Since the movie comprises of all black cast there were few groups of people who feared the dominance of one race could overshadow the script, perhaps the success of the film. This could have had an impact over the *Black Panther* movie to fail or miss at the box office. For instance, one of the posts from a fan said:

> Unfortunately, BP will inevitably attract people with negativity who wanted to bring the movie down because they're afraid of its success and what it might do to empower black people. I know it seems absurd, but it's the first black superhero movie with mostly black actors (which Blade cannot claim to have), and it is enough to make it seem threatening to certain group of individuals. (post 612, part 8)

For the ratings of the movie, there were comments that addressed how few people tried to

sabotage the ratings for the movie so that it fails. For example, one post described "True, Now

you got people posting bs reviews to make the rating go down on IMDB. They should only allow

you to post a review if you show proof that you actually saw the movie" (post 620, part 8).

I found one of the users referring to his/her earlier post which was most probably posted

when the film shoot was announced in 2017, and it said:

Human beings deserve respect no matter what their race, gender, culture or orientation

is. Movies don't. Especially not the diseased, cancerous, leprosy-induced, kolera that is a

Snyder exercise in brain death you would call movies.

To equate the struggle for civil rights of black people to DCEU should be grounds for

admittance to a mental institution.

This statement had won over many fans and changed the argument context with more

positivity in the next posts. Later, post film release, a user named DoomRulz quoted the above

post again to make forum participants realize how they were tracking the discussions in a

negative way over race, gender, and ethnicity with an addition of his own opinion which said:

I have no doubt this film will be amazing. That said, I'm wary of those (and there seem to

be plenty of them) who praise the film "because it's black" (and in one case, 'black af').

Isn't it a bit disrespectful to reduce the talent behind the film to their biology like that?

The film will be great because I'm sure it's well-directed, well-cast, well-written, and so

on.

It's like when Wonder Woman was released, everyone went nuts claiming the film was

incredible in part because a woman directed it. My reaction to that was, well, no, Patty

Jenkins is just really good at what she does. That she's female is neither here nor there. (post 700, part 8)

To understand how overjoyed a person from the similar race, gender, or ethnicity feels when they are given equal importance is justified by the post from KevTravels:

I believe we all grew up watching White/American/European films/tv series and we either identified with it or we didn't. But it was pretty much the majority of what we saw. I always loved Batman as a kid and Luke Skywalker and so many others and I never saw them as "white", but it wouldn't have hurt to have someone who looked like me or sounded like me, etc. I saw them as "normal". And whenever I saw a Black character, I felt amazed and overjoyed that he was finally included. Though often, he may have been a sidekick or supporting character.

It's good that people can feel included, without the risk of being token.

A great question is whether the majority can identify with the minority lead/hero/protagonist. Because often at times, studio heads have denied that this is possible.

And we're nowhere near a world where race or gender or sexuality doesn't matter. It does. Maybe it's obvious or not so obvious, but unfortunately it matters. (post 711, part 8)

Bearing this in mind, all these posts show how the world still classifies people on the basis of race and ethnicity. The fan reactions to such arguments were taken positively, as many of the fans tried to explain and enlighten the truth that has been ignored until this movie was released. The discussion was racially charged because the film cast was a major portion of certain group of people belonging to different race and ethnicity. Plus, it was the first superhero film with a strong presence of female cast as well. So, overall there was a negative turned

positive reaction to the argument discussed on the forum regarding the race and ethnicity component.

Discussion

The analysis of the comments by the dedicated Marvel fans gives us an understanding of how fan forums are used to discuss the topics that are in and about the movie. This study has pointed out the most talked about topics on the fan forums for the given time period. Starting with how there was a hype about the cast used in the movie, it addresses how a statement said by an actor of the screen can affect his/her upcoming movie by influencing the crowd to decide on boycotting the movie. The Marvel comic book of *Black Panther*, which was read by several fans, had given the fans the idea and inner view of the superhero's identity and his ability. The comic book is the main source of the superhero's identity. Giving the same identity and having the concept of making the movie Afro-centric was expected by the fans, as it had to match the fidelity level if it has been adapted from the comic. With a lot of discussion on the music and the locations used to introduce the Black Panther's origin, it was clear that fans had appreciated the efforts done by the Marvel Studios to show the comic world in a motion picture. The fan forums are the way to communicate within the groups of people having the same interests and this also helps the forum members to understand about a few truth and myths that they did not know. The hype and the discussions seen on forums can be used as a promotional tool by the movie studios. The fuss generated around by these fans is similar to controversies or critiques that relate to the movie and sources, and materials related to it (e.g., actors, comics, music. locations, etc.).

The study of positive and negative fan comments by the fans is a way of appreciation and criticism that the true comic book and movie fans convey through use of forums. The importance of the characters in the movies was not equal to the importance of the characters shown in the

comic books. The comic books are very traditional where a superhero has all the credit of being the good guy. This new way of making movies, which are also transmedia movies with a critical lens of art and acting, gives no room for discrimination for the characters. The negative reaction for the importance given to the Black Panther character shows that fans had expectations to see a dominating, powerful superhero just like the one they had read about in the comics. But, the positive comments that appreciated the negative role in the movie help us to understand how fans like to see other roles apart from the main superhero who is the "heart" of the movie.

Film adaptation has been used and studied by many scholars (e.g., Cartmell and Whelehan., 2010; Davis, n.d.; Flanagan, Mckenny, and Livingstone, 2016; Joye and Welle, 2015; and Ioannidou, 2013) in their studies but it has rarely been used to study the pre-release publicity reaction and post release reaction of the audience to a comic adapted movie. The study done on fan forum SuperHeroHype is a different way to analyze the audiences' perception towards the *Black Panther* movie that is a very different way compared to the previous studies. Open-coding the positive and negative reactions is a challenging way to analyze the fan comments, knowing that the demographic background of the person posting the comment is unknown. This study supports the value of giving importance to the fidelity with respect to its reception. Apart from that, it also looks at the various outside reactions incorporating arts, design, fights, and controversies surrounding the movie and how fans discuss these on forums. Considering the time period for which these comments were analyzed, many things were discussed in such short time. This makes us realize how diverse discussions can be within a group of people with the same interest. When talking about faithfulness while making a transmedia movie, Geraghty (2008) says, "the perennial question of faithfulness is not a matter for textual analysis but rather for work on reception. Faithfulness matters if it matters to the

viewer" (p. 3). With positive and negative reactions, it is easy to conclude how faithful and to what extent was the faithfulness seen in the movie. The imaginary world from the texts was brought out in a virtual reality through a motion picture. Concluding the results, film adaptation of comic books can be risky, especially when drastic changes are made in casting and story arc. The story fidelity, while preferred, is not mandated by fans. Given the audience consumption of transmedia artifacts, fan reactions to pre-release publicity and post-release criticism on the fan forum shows that audiences are sophisticated consumers of media products, who can both appreciate innovative advances in film adaption while seeking to maintain status quo in certain normative practices privileged by Hollywood.

Limitations

This study employed a qualitative textual analysis, which involved manual analysis of selected posts on a fan forum website. The researcher's background and understanding of the subject guided the textual analysis. The small sample size also limits our understanding of the broader audience reception of the film.

Out of multiple threads discussing about *Black Panther*, only one thread "Black Panther The Official News and Speculation Thread" was used to analyze the fan reactions. Since the sample size of the study was small compared to the 12+ threads related to Marvel comics and *Black Panther*, there is a possibility to miss out on a few important conversations relating to the research components on other threads which were not intended to be discussed within the context of pre-release and post-release reactions of the movie. The fan forum is a platform for the dedicated group of members of certain genre and comic readers who share a common bonded interest; other reactions may vary especially from those not part of the Marvel threads, for

example, DC comics and other anime fans discussions and perception towards *Black Panther* movie.

Future Studies

Thinking about how effective and good as a source these forums are, a future study can be done to show how fans and the fan community help to build a strong base for film promotion. In such a study non-Marvel fans watching Marvel movies would be interviewed to understand how they like the film and why were they watching the film if they do not follow the Marvel comic series thoroughly. Were they inspired or persuaded by any means?

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Appendix A

Codebook

CODE BOOK for the reaction of fans on forums in relation to a Marvel comic adapted movie Black Panther.

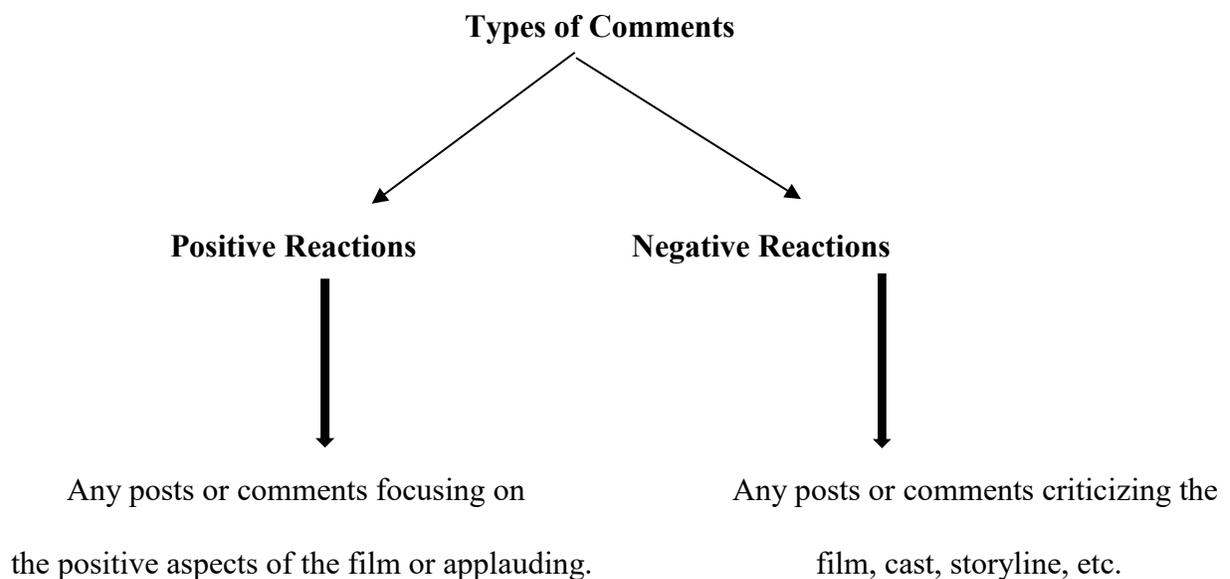**Name of Forum- SuperHeroHype**

Thread: Black Panther the Official News and Speculation

Replies- 779   Views- 56,442

Pre-Release comments period: 2nd January 2018 – 10th January 2018

Post-Release comments period: 2nd February 2018 - 12th February 2018

Types of Comments

Positive Reactions   **Negative Reactions**

Any posts or comments focusing on   Any posts or comments criticizing the

the positive aspects of the film or applauding.   film, cast, storyline, etc.

Open Coded Positive Reaction + Negative Reaction Pre-Release:

Comments on casting choices

Music and locations

Movie's narrative arc

Open Coded Positive Reaction + Negative Reaction Post-Release:

Importance given to the characters

Computer Generated Imagery (CGI), Costume/Art Design, Fight scenes

Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Appendix B

Definition of Terms

Fans- A group of people liking and following the same subject, movie, character, actors etc.

Production House- Budget provider and Distributors for the movies.

Positive- Appreciation or liking for the cast, story. Praising the efforts done by the movie makers.

Negative- Criticism, disliking the content/topic related to the movie on and off screen.

Race- Group of people with differences and similarities in biological traits deemed by society to be socially significant.

Ethnicity- Cultural practices, perceptions, and differences that set apart one group of people from another.

Superhero- A person with superpower usually saves the world from bad people's ill intended doings.

Characters- Part or role played by an individual, pretending to be someone else on screen.

Pre-Release- Days before the official release of the trailers, posters, movie.

Post-Release- Days and weeks after the official release of the trailers, posters, movie.

Thread- A continuous flow of texts messages having discussions pertaining to one topic or question on forums.

Texts- A written material or content that could be used as a proof of claim done by someone.

Adaption- An art of adapting a story from the original medium which could be text, play or TV series.

Promoters- An organization/company that finances or organizes events and theatrical production.