

From Networks to Netflix

A Guide to Changing Channels

Edited by Derek Johnson

First published 2018
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2018 Taylor & Francis

The right of Derek Johnson to be identified as the author of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Johnson, Derek, 1979– editor.

Title: From networks to Netflix : a guide to changing channels / [edited by] Derek Johnson.

Description: New York : Routledge, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references.

Identifiers: LCCN 2017038503 | ISBN 9781138998490 (hardback) | ISBN 9781138998513 (pbk.) | ISBN 9781315658643 (ebk.)

Subjects: LCSH: Television viewers—Effect of technological innovations on. | Television broadcasting—Technological innovations—United States. | Streaming technology (Telecommunications)

Classification: LCC HE8700.66.U6 F76 2018 | DDC 302.23/45—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2017038503>

ISBN: 978-1-138-99849-0 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-138-99851-3 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-65864-3 (ebk)

Typeset in Warnock Pro
by Apex CoVantage, LLC



AwesomenessTV

Talent Management and Merchandising on Multi-channel Networks

Avi Santo

AwesomenessTV (ATV) is not really a television channel or network in the traditional sense; it is not even a digital platform claiming to be producing and distributing “television,” as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon increasingly insist they are doing. Rather, ATV is a multi-channel network (MCN) consisting of over 92,000 distinct yet interwoven YouTube channels that collectively feature more than two billion videos that have been viewed over eight billion times by 112 million subscribers (Cioletti 2015; Hamedy 2015). Through its talent management division, Big Frame, Awesomeness works to identify emerging YouTube influencers, helps them to monetize their channels, and then leverages their popularity across a range of short-format web series—and more recently direct-to-download feature films, digitally distributed music, and exclusive mobile content. In turn, this content supports converging consumer product extensions with and retail endorsements for companies like Kohl’s, Old Navy, Royal Caribbean, and Verizon. Jim Fielding, global head of consumer products for Awesomeness, summed up the company’s strategy as follows: “the great news about our creator talent is that they are extremely diverse and interested in a wide array of subjects, so you really can match them to every product category” (Cioletti 2015). Or, as Amanda Cioletti, writing for *Global License!* explains,

talent is truly the pillar upon which ATV and its supporting product division stand. . . . Because of the fluidity and flexibility of the ATV platform and the talent, many of these stars are not just one thing—not solely an actor, singer, beauty guru or comic. The stars intersect and evolve, often appearing on various different channels simultaneously in all sorts of capacities. . . . And these stars, in whichever capacity they appear, receive ATV support.

(2015)

ATV's consulting firm, Wildness, has claimed that zero out of ten media consumers in Awesomeness' primary demographic of "Generation Z" post-Millennials would choose traditional television if given the option of using only one device ("AwesomenessTV" 2015). Despite this claim of capturing an audience uninterested in television, ATV is very much an outgrowth of the long history of blurred distinctions on radio and television between content and advertising, even as the company's approach intensifies the relationship between branded entertainment and celebrity self-branding for a post-television era. Moreover, even if Generation Z may be uninterested in television, ATV is. Indeed, rhetorical emphasis on the television credentials of many of its top executives frequently validates the company's success and its understanding of what advertisers and audiences want. One need only look to the partnerships ATV built with Nickelodeon, E!, Hulu, and Netflix to see how television offers important leverage for extending Awesomeness' brand reach beyond YouTube. In less than five years since the 2012 launch of its YouTube channel, ATV has grown from a MCN to a multiplatform media company that increasingly treats YouTube as an incubation space for talent and formats as well as an aggregator for mobilizing influencer fan bases to exploit across multiple distribution channels. ATV brand expansion strategies rely upon the rhetorical invocation "TV" and what it might mean in the digital age even as its approach to leveraging talent and subscribers offers potential insights into how television channels might evolve.

Following a brief summary of the company's expansion, this chapter focuses on the career of Lia Marie Johnson, one of Awesomeness' most prolific YouTube celebrities, to demonstrate how the network leveraged her following across genres, formats, platforms, and licensing partnerships to extend both her and Awesomeness' brand into new markets. In particular, I explore Johnson's appearances in three web series: *Terry the Tomboy* (2012–2014), *Life Is So R.A.D.* (2014), and *T@gged* (2016–). I argue that Johnson's work for Awesomeness epitomizes how the network has packaged its channel aggregation capacity, talent management, and merchandising prowess to create what Fielding calls "a new definition of television" for Generation Z consumers looking to access a "content marketplace" that treat them as "culture collaborators" rather than mere shoppers. Her work also captures ATV's strategy of exploiting the social networks cultivated by/around its talent to grow its own brand beyond YouTube.

AWESOME BEGINNINGS

ATV launched its channel on June 12, 2012, as part of YouTube's Original Channel Initiative, which saw Google invest \$100 million in original content production to entice advertisers to spend a portion of their television budgets on YouTube. This initiative funded the creation of 100 YouTube channels, which each received monetary advances against ad sales (Szalai 2012). Among the new channels were Jay-Z's *Life & Times*, *Machinima Prime*, and the *Nerdist*, along with channels by Madonna, Ashton Kutcher, Amy Poehler, Rainn Wilson, and other Hollywood celebrities. Given YouTube's attempt to syphon ad dollars away from television, many of the channels Google invested in were unsurprisingly launched by people with close ties to the television industry, among them Brian Robbins and Joe Davola's ATV.

Robbins and Davola had both served as executive producers on a range of television series targeting teen and tween audiences, including the sketch comedy series *All That* (Nickelodeon, 1994–2005), the sitcom *Kenan & Kel* (Nickelodeon, 1996–2000), and dramas *Smallville* (WB/CW, 2000–2011) and *One Tree Hill* (WB/CW, 2002–2012). ATV's initial programming drew from these familiar genres. *Runaways* (2012–2013) was a drama about a teenage couple who disappear following the murder of one of their parents, leading to endless conflict, rumors, and prep school flashbacks. ATV promoted the series asking potential viewers, “do you love *One Tree Hill*, *Smallville*, *Gossip Girl*, the *OC*, *Pretty Little Liars*, and other teen tv dramas? then check out *RUNAWAYS*” (“Runaways” 2012). *IMO* (2012–2013) was billed as the YouTube equivalent of *The View* (ABC, 1997–) featuring teenaged social media celebrities. Jeffrey Katzenberg, former CEO of DreamWorks Animation (DWA), which would acquire ATV in 2013, lauded Robbins’s “extraordinary track record in creating family content both for traditional and new platforms and his expertise in the TV arena will be invaluable as we grow our presence in that space” (Szalai 2013).

Even as Robbins and Davola leaned on their TV backgrounds, ATV embraced conventions more common to online content like short format video. *Runaways*' 18 episodes add up to a total running time of 87 minutes, or an average of 4 minutes and 56 seconds per episode. Robbins reasoned that short-form content was more in line with tween and teen viewing habits (Guider 2013). ATV also recognized the value of casting YouTube influencers—teens and tweens with significant online followings—in these new series because these performers were already adept at self-promotion and would be able to bring viewers, comments, and shares to ATV programming. More than mere casting decisions, however, ATV looked to fold performers into its network by including their channels under the Awesomeness umbrella.

Simply put, while performers on the ATV network already have sizable online followings, ATV acts as an intermediary that can help them translate that social capital into greater economic gain through the increased exposure its network brand offers. ATV shares with its talent a small percentage of the ad share revenue from commercials that appear before performers' videos; while YouTube takes 45% upfront, ATV takes around 30% beyond that, leaving some performers with a 25% share despite doing most of the work in producing and promoting their videos (Patel 2016; “Help” n.d.) ATV stresses, however, that their MCN cannot “guarantee that your views and subscribers will skyrocket as a result of joining, but if you are willing to put in the time and effort into making your channel excellent, we will be there to help you every step of the way!” (“Help” n.d.). Even as ATV profits both from its cut of the ad revenue and from talent working largely for free to increase its subscriber and viewership numbers, the MCN does offer its performers opportunities to broaden their appeal by casting them in a range of videos that cut across genres and potentially amplify their own channel followings, which in turn might increase the rates that they receive on ads—though ATV is vague on how those rates are determined, instead claiming that these decisions are made by YouTube and its advertisers. The vagueness surrounding payment rates validates ATV's intermediary role by “simplifying” creator roles and placing responsibility for success upon their ability to follow the network's instructions. In answer to the question, “How do I make money on YouTube?” ATV explains: “1. Create an interesting, original video,

2. Upload it to YouTube, 3. Make sure to turn monetization on!” (“Help” n.d.). ATV also offers these performers opportunities to expand their brand beyond YouTube through multiplatform distribution and merchandising opportunities. Big Frame President Larry Shapiro suggests that the company seeks talent with “true voice and . . . the ability to create IP that will transcend and move across platforms” (Jarvey 2014).

While presenting an opportunity for YouTube personalities to strike it rich and achieve celebrity status, ATV’s approach operates within neoliberal ideologies that increasingly stress the constant marketization of self as key to success. Within this framework, YouTube personalities are encouraged to see their creations and interactions—particularly those that produce “authentic” disclosures about their lives—as self-branding opportunities promising career advancement and monetary gain (Banet-Weiser 2012). Of course, this is often contingent on these same personalities—many of whom are between the ages of 12 and 17—contributing a significant amount of (largely free) “affective” labor (Banet-Weiser 2012, 8) that not only promotes their personalities but also ATV and sponsors’ brands as well. When YouTube personalities fail to significantly cash in on their social networks compared to the amount of time dedicated to uploading and promoting content, ATV typically attributes this to a lack of personal desire rather than the intense competitiveness, relentless pace, and dehumanizing aspects of self-branding (though never a lack of talent, which would imply ATV somehow erred in signing them). Responding to a question about helping ATV personalities cope with burnout, Fielding (2016) surmised,

we try to help brand their image and try to brand their logo, and their colors, and the quality of their content, and the lighting, and their production values. But again, it still has to be them. Some of them, you know, don’t want to keep doing it.

Beyond this search for talent, ATV identifies its core audience as members of “Generation Z”: post-Millennials who do not watch much live television and prefer short-form video, who significantly are brand loyal yet platform agnostic when it comes to content consumption. This particular construction of its audience allows ATV to leverage its MCN and in-house talent management firm to position YouTube personalities for omni-platform co-branding extension, moving across traditional television as well as mobile, retail and product merchandizing. Tracing ATV star Lia Marie Johnson’s career offers a close-up glimpse as to how Awesomeness operates.

A TALENT FOR BRANDING

Lia Marie Johnson first emerged as a YouTube personality through her appearances at age 13 on the Fine Brothers’ *Kids React* (2010), a web series that featured precocious children and tweens reacting to a range of social, political, and popular culture occurrences (Gallagher 2012). Her popularity on the series bolstered views of her personal YouTube channel, which had launched under her parent’s supervision in 2007 (Johnson 2012). By 2012, her channel, which mostly featured short personal vlog posts, sketch comedy, and song performances, had received nearly 16 million views (Gallagher 2012).

While Johnson would continue to work with the Fine Brothers on *Teens React* (2011–) and then *YouTubers React* (2014–), her growing popularity caught ATV's attention and in 2012 she joined her channel to its MCN. Big Frame already represented Johnson when ATV acquired the company. Under ATV's umbrella, Johnson has regularly been cast in a series of high profile projects, which in turn has increased the size of her personal following and lead to other roles in new ATV series. In 2014, *Ad Week* profiled Johnson as one of YouTube's "ten biggest young stars" (Stanley 2014). By 2017, Johnson's channel has reached 1.779 million followers and 85 million views ("About" 2017).

ATV's investment in Johnson and its strategic deployment of her brand reveal the network's cross-platform trajectory and its savvy approach to marketing the Awesomeness brand by ways of its talent. Almost immediately after joining Awesomeness' MCN Johnson was cast in the sketch comedy series *Terry the Tomboy* (2012–2014). The short sketches typically featured Johnson as Terry talking directly to the camera offering farcical advice on fashion, makeup, and dating. Significantly, *Terry the Tomboy* was also featured as a regular segment on ATV's *AwesomenessTV* (2013–2014) series on Nickelodeon, which compiled a handful of ATV's YouTube productions into a weekly 30-minute sketch comedy show. ATV regularly aggregates and packages short form content for secondary viewing on television in this way, striking a similar deal with the E! Network to air a compiled version of the musical dramedy web series *Side Effects* (2013) as a 39-minute TV special only weeks before the second season premiered online. While *AwesomenessTV* offered alternate distribution and ancillary revenue for ATV that allowed it to be less reliant on YouTube's ad share structure, it is worth noting that the deal with Nickelodeon also exposed TV viewers to ATV's network of celebrities and was intended to draw Generation Z viewers away from traditional cable as much as extend ATV's reach onto television. In this regard, ATV treated the *AwesomenessTV* series as a form of branded entertainment intended to build interest for other iterations of its brand.

Amanda Lotz (2007) has argued that branded entertainment represents an emerging strategy designed to offset declining television viewership for traditional advertising. Rather than purchasing an ad package during the television upfronts (where the networks preview their fall lineups), some advertisers have chosen instead to invest in producing "event" programming that showcases their brands/products and brings viewers to them rather than placing ads in between programs they hope their demographic is watching. Jim Fielding's identification of ATV content as "activations" that support the company's brand extension, licensing, and merchandising businesses demonstrates the company's embrace of this approach (Cioletti 2015).

If *AwesomenessTV* serves as an example of how ATV is willing to use television to promote its brand, the company also understands the value its stars possess as brand endorsers (Guider 2013). ATV creator Robbins plainly stated, "the next Martha Stewart or Rachel Ray is coming from this world" (Lisanti 2014). Meanwhile, Fielding enabled ATV to become a third party licensing agency for its performers, helping talent serve as "brand ambassadors" for a range of products and services while profiting from facilitating these partnerships (Lisanti 2014). As of 2014, Fielding had signed 11 performers in ATV's "talent portfolio" to this kind of representation, including Amanda Steele,

a then 15-year-old whose YouTube channel, makeupbymandy24, had over 1.8 million subscribers and 115 million views for her makeup tutorials (Lisanti 2014).

ATV paired Steele and Johnson in *Life Is So R.A.D.*, a series produced in partnership with Kohl's to promote the retailer's exclusive new line of juvenile clothing. The first episode debuted on September 19, 2014, three days before the line became available for purchase at Kohl's (Votta 2014). Kohl's covered production costs for the web series and agreed to buy ads on the MCN, sold on the power of ATV's influencers to make the retailer "part of an organic conversation that's already happening in this influential online space" as well as "engage viewers in an authentic social conversation using #sorad on twitter" (Bohannon 2014). More than just an endorsement deal, however, the So R.A.D. line was also based on insights provided by ATV about tween fashion trends, entitling the company to a royalty for every item stocked by Kohl's (Shields 2014). As Fielding explained, "we developed the brand first, found the perfect partner to execute in Kohl's and then created an original series that positions Kohl's as a style destination in a cool way" ("Kohl's" 2014).

To see *Life Is So R.A.D.* as merely a revenue and sales generator for ATV and Kohl's misunderstands the former's focus on brand extension through merchandising and its ability to leverage talent to promote its label. Referring to the emergence of 'Scenes@AwesomenessTV' pop-up shops in Los Angeles and New York City, Fielding proclaimed,

Just as short-form content has captivated Gen Z online, we believe that short-form or pop-up retailing will resonate with them offline. . . . Our goal is to create a physical touchpoint to deepen the relationship with our customers . . . I don't want it to be just a



FIGURE 23.1 ATV's IMO hosts model the MCN's branded merchandise available for purchase at pop-up shop Scenes@AwesomenessTV (screengrab from Tubefilter article published October 9, 2014).

store, but a teen hangout where entertainment, YouTube creators and product all come together.

(Lisanti 2014)

Open for only a handful of weeks, Scenes@AwesomenessTV features merchandise branded with ATV logos alongside products endorsed by its biggest stars. The pop-up shops typically rotate merchandise stock to coincide with stars' in-person appearances while maintaining an array of ATV-branded products. Touting the potential to use the space as a "laboratory" to experiment with different product configurations while collecting data on consumer engagement, Fielding notes the network's goal of identifying merchandisable subbrands that will outlast the talent working to popularize it: "The power of AwesomenessTV as a brand is important because that helps give us longevity, while content and talent that cycles under the network may change and grow" (Lisanti 2014).

Significantly, while Will Setliff, executive vice president of marketing for Kohl's touted Johnson and Steele's creative contributions to its retail line, neither were given the opportunity to develop their own fashion lines independent of ATV through the deal (Bohannon 2014). Instead, the series, which casts Johnson and Steele as themselves, is described as "an imaginative depiction of their involvement" with the fashion line. While the series offers supposedly authentic and intimate glimpses into the two stars' private lives as they show off their wardrobes, shop at vintage clothing stores, and meet with So R.A.D. clothing designers (all suggesting the influence of their personal styles on the collection), Fielding confirms that the line actually "represents an overall AwesomenessTV aesthetic, capturing themes like 'girl creativity' and 'anything is



FIGURE 23.2 *Scenes@AwesomenessTV pop-up shop display, which emphasizes ATV's curatorial role in shaping audience taste cultures (screengrab from Tubefilter article published November 18, 2014).*

possible' rather than building the line around one star or style" (Shields 2014). Johnson and Steele's popularity and marketing for the network on their own channels allowed ATV to use them as surrogates for merchandising its own brand. Neither Johnson nor Steele received any royalties from So R.A.D. sales. Indeed, ATV's strategy for the series was to cast two new influencers for each of the three seasons Kohl's was committed to producing. For season two, Johnson and Steele were replaced by two new ATV MCN personalities, Meghan Rienks and Teala Dunn.

If *Terry the Tomboy*, *AwesomenessTV*, and *Life Is So R.A.D.* gave ATV the opportunity to leverage talent like Johnson's to promote its brand beyond YouTube, *T@gged* offers a culminating example of ATV's development from an MCN to a multiplatform network. In 2015, ATV began producing content featuring its talent exclusively for other platforms beyond YouTube, while promoting these series heavily through its YouTube MCN. Taking advantage of parent company DWA's deal with Netflix to develop and distribute content based its properties, ATV produced *Richie Rich* (2015–). Similarly, ATV partnered with toy manufacturer MGA Entertainment to develop *Project MC²* for Netflix while pushing the STEM-inspired brand on the ATV MCN through videos on how to make homemade skin care products (hosted by Amanda Steele) and behind-the-scenes videos of the cast describing their favorite outfits (which were also available for sale). Meanwhile, series like *Freakish* (2016) and *Foursome* (2016) were developed exclusively for Hulu and YouTube Red. These strategies indicate a shift in ATV's imagining of its function as an MCN from coordinating content and moving subscribers and talent across multiple YouTube channels to channeling its brand outward toward multiple platforms, each rhetorically invested in the concept of "television," but not necessarily looking to traditional TV channels and networks as a supplier of content. Of course, for ATV this shift is a matter of degree not emphasis, as from the outset, it has leveraged its members' channels to generate new outlets for promoting the ATV brand.

T@gged represents the first series developed by ATV as "Mobile-first video product" (Scott 2015). Created for Verizon's ad-supported Internet TV service, go90, *T@gged* is the most-viewed and fastest-growing original scripted drama on the platform (which as of 2016 offered more than 250 hours of original content, including other ATV-produced series *Guidance* and *Top Five*). Evidencing ATV's knack for branded entertainment, the series focuses on a trio of teen girls, Johnson among them, who are repeatedly tagged in grisly photos sent by an unknown killer to their prominently displayed and narratively integrated Verizon phones. Hungry for content for its network, Verizon both funds the ATV production and purchased a stake in the company in 2016; yet *T@gged* has allowed Awesomeness to move not just beyond YouTube, but also importantly onto the mobile platform that most coincides with the viewing habits of its sought-after demographic. According to Robbins, in the four years since ATV launched there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Generation Z viewers using mobile to access its content, from 40% to 80% (Villarreal 2016). Despite Generation Z's supposed platform agnosticism, this significant uptick provided an opening for a partnership with Verizon that might lure ATV viewers away from YouTube toward go90 (and incentivize subscription to Verizon over its mobile competitors). Notably, where *AwesomenessTV* recycled content first made available on YouTube, *T@gged* inverts the process, making content available on YouTube only after it has been released on Verizon's go90.

Though not produced for conventional television, *T@gged* is also without doubt ATV's most high-production value and televisual production. Still short of the 22- to 24-minute typical of "half-hour" television episodes, its 18-minute episodes are significantly longer than the 4- to 7-minute videos ATV otherwise produces; meanwhile, the series uses cinematography, lighting, and editing techniques commonly found in other prime-time dramas. In other words, as ATV seeks to extend its brand beyond YouTube, its programming has begun to resemble the types of television that the network initially claimed Generation Z ignored. To some extent, this trajectory is expressed by Robbins's assertion, "I think in order for us to be successful at Awesomeness, we have to act like a media company" (Villarreal 2016).

As ATV's content becomes more like traditional television—especially programs created for other platforms seeking original, exclusive content—the company's ascent from MCN to "media company" troubles long held understandings of what constitute TV channels and networks. ATV has always approached its MCN as a vehicle for channeling the ATV brand as much as a method for cross-promoting multiple channels. In this regard, it has born a resemblance to traditional TV networks like ABC, CBS, and NBC that similarly extend their brand identities through their affiliate networks. Of course, ATV doesn't supply its channels with content as television networks do, but rather it moves affiliated content and talent across its network (and across platforms); it also relies upon its affiliates to promote ATV content in conjunction with their own self-brands. In some ways, ATV's approach adheres to a distributed peer-to-peer network model more commonly found online than on commercial television networks, wherein each link in the chain is both a spoke and a hub generating more spokes for extending the ATV brand. In turn, this frees ATV to pursue a cross-platform strategy to channel its brand. Without a centralized service, however, ATV may face over time challenges in managing how its brand travels across these many paths.

Johnson's casting in these three series has always been strategic, as ATV has looked to leverage her brand and her fan base to grow and move its own across platforms. The maturation of ATV's productions featuring Johnson—from faux-amateur sketch comedy vlog to faux-unsigned lifestyle branded entertainment to scripted suspense drama—also mirrors Johnson's growing social capital on and off YouTube as well as her preparation to make the leap from YouTube personality to entertainment-industry professional. In September 2016, Johnson uploaded a video to her YouTube channel teasing the release of her new single, "DNA," and excitedly announced that she thought Columbia Records would soon sign her to their label. The potential leap from YouTube to a major record label is presented as a culminating experience that validates everything Johnson has worked to accomplish via her channel, her self-branding, and her partnership with Awesomeness (Johnson 2016). Similarly, ATV's trajectory from multi-channel to multiplatform network is presented as a natural evolution of its popularity and intrinsic understanding of its audience rather than a carefully devised strategy of harnessing talent and promotional partnerships to establish Awesomeness as far more than a YouTube channel. An accompanying claim might also be made about the extension of television channels and networks into online spaces. ATV's relationship to television is far more opaque than its brand name, MCN and YouTube channel

designations imply. Though television clearly has influenced many aspects of its operations, ATV also invites a rethinking of how TV networks channel their brands.

REFERENCES

- "About." 2017. *Lia Marie Johnson YouTube Channel*. Accessed April 30, 2017.
- "AwesomenessTV Launches Consulting Firm." 2015. *Global License!* September 30.
- Banet-Weiser, Sarah. 2012. *Authentic™: The Politics of Ambivalence in a Brand Culture*. New York: New York University Press.
- Bohannon, Caitlyn. 2014. "Kohl's Showcases Junior Fashion Line in YouTube Series." *Mobile Marketer*, September 4.
- Cioletti, Amanda. 2015. "AwesomenessTV Boots Up." *Global License!* June 1.
- Fielding, Jim. 2016. Interview with author.
- Gallagher, Michael Aaron. 2012. "Lia Marie Johnson Always Wears Her Sunshine." *StayFamous.net*, July 10.
- Guider, Elizabeth. 2013. "MIPJUNIOR: AwesomenessTV's Brian Robbins Says Teen Tastes Disrupting Media Landscape." *Hollywood Reporter*, October 6.
- Hamedy, Saba. 2015. "Verizon Orders Original Programming from AwesomenessTV, DreamWorksTV." *Los Angeles Times*, March 11.
- "Help Center." n.d. *AwesomenessTV*. <https://awesomenesstv.zendesk.com/hc/en-us>.
- Jarvey, Natalie. 2014. "Big Frame Signs YouTube Talent Arden Rose, Aspyn Ovard and More." *Hollywood Reporter*, November 14.
- Johnson, Lia Marie. 2012. "YouTube Cutie Lia Marie Johnson Talks Past, Present, & Future." *Fanlala*, August 22. (video).
- Johnson, Lia Marie. 2016. "I Can't Believe It . . ." *YouTube*, September 28. (video).
- "Kohl's Department Stores Partners with AwesomenessTV on Breakthrough New Fashion Line and Original YouTube Series." 2014. *Business Wire*, September 3.
- Lisanti, Tony. 2014. "AwesomenessTV: The New Vibe." *Global License!* December 1.
- Lotz, Amanda. 2007. *The Television Will Be Revolutionized*. New York: New York University Press.
- Patel, Sahil. 2016. "Why YouTube Networks Are No Longer Hot." *Digiday*, February 23. <http://digiday.com/publishers/mcn-not-so-hot/>.
- "Runaways Episode 1, Season 1." 2012. *YouTube*, August 31. (video description).
- Scott, Rob. 2015. "Ad-Sponsored Data to Be Part of Verizon's Internet TV Service." *ET Centric*, June 26.
- Shields, Mike. 2014. "Video Series on YouTube to Highlight New Clothing Line for Teen Girls." *Wall Street Journal*, September 3.
- Stanley, T. L. 2014. "Meet 12 of the Biggest Young Stars on YouTube." *Adweek*. March 9.
- Szalai, Georg. 2012. "YouTube to Cut Less Successful Original Content Channels." *Hollywood Reporter*, August 27.
- Szalai, Georg. 2013. "DreamWorks Animation to Acquire Online Teen Network AwesomenessTV." *Hollywood Reporter*, May 1.
- Villarreal, Yvonne. 2016. "Verizon to Acquire 24.5% Stake in AwesomenessTV and Launch Premium Mobile Video Brand." *Los Angeles Times*, April 6.
- Votta, Rae. 2014. "AwesomenessTV Partners with Kohl's for Clothing Line and New Series." *The Daily Dot*, September 3.