

LIBERAL ARTS

Korean Wave: Cultural Export and the Evolution of Communication Technologies

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Over the past decade a cultural phenomenon has been exported from Korea around the globe. According to *Billboard*, Korean singer Psy's song "Gangnam Style" received two billion views on YouTube. Psy's song, an example of what is called Korean Wave, became popular in the United States. My research investigated what factors were behind the successful export of this specific Korean cultural content. To research the question, both secondary and tertiary data were used to characterize the Korean Wave cultural phenomenon. Then, in examining scholarly journals, newspapers, web sites, and press releases, the focal point of my research became the way Korean cultural content was first introduced in different countries and how it became successful. Preliminary results seem to suggest that the evolution of communication technologies made the export of this new cultural phenomenon possible. For example, the Internet made access to a vast amount of information from around the globe possible, and this, importantly, included user-generated content. The Korean Wave phenomenon, my research seems to suggest, is a good example of how user-generated or user-driven sharing is a significant example of the evolution of communication technologies.

Research advisor Ashley Rose Kelly writes, "Eileen's project examines how new and emerging communication technologies facilitate the sharing of cultural content around the world. Her research specifically examines the export of Korean Wave and investigates how communication technologies enabled sharing of this cultural content. It seems that user-generated and user-driven sharing of the content was very important making this cultural content globally visible."



Al Roker, Natalie Morales, and Savannah Guthrie join South Korean rapper Psy as he performs "Gangnam Style" live at Rockefeller Center as part of NBC's *Today Show* Summer Concert Series in New York City. Photo courtesy of WENN/Newscom.