#FandomsPeloVoto: o ativismo de fãs nas eleições 2022 no Brasil

Gabriela Borges
Universidade do Algarve
E-mail: gabriela.borgesufjf@gmail.com
ORCID: http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0612-9732

Daiana Sigiliano
Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora
E-mail: daianasigiliano@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5163-9926

Cecília Almeida Rodrigues Lima
Universidade Federal de Pernambuco
E-mail: cecilia.lima@ufpe.br
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9771-0396

DOI: 10.26807/rp.v27i116.2007

Resumo
Este artigo tem como objetivo analisar as habilidades da literacia midiática que estão em operação nos conteúdos compartilhados pelos fãs no Twitter durante a campanha #FandomsPeloVoto. De acordo com Mihailidis (2014), no ambiente da cultura da convergência a literacia midiática é pautada por cinco habilidades. São elas: a curadoria, a criação a compreensão crítica, a participação e a colaboração.

Lançada em maio de 2022, a campanha, realizada em parceria com o MidiaNinja, a União Nacional dos Estudantes e a União Brasileira dos Estudantes Secundaristas, reuniu mais de 100 fandoms da cultura pop no Brasil na mobilização de jovens de 16 a 18 anos para tirarem o título de eleitor e estarem aptos a votarem nas eleições de 2022. Conclui-se que o ativismo dos fandoms vai além da transposição das práticas da cultura de fãs para o âmbito da participação política, abarcando também a interpretação crítica das questões sociopolíticas que integraram a ação e a produção criativa de publicações no Twitter.

Deste modo, o #FandomsPeloVoto tem contornos de resistência política por ter como um de seus principais objetivos a retirada do presidente Jair Bolsonaro, líder da extrema-direita no Brasil, do poder.

Palavras-Chaves: Cultura de Fãs, Literacia Midiática, Ativismo, Eleições 2022

Abstract
The objective of this article is to analyze the media literacy skills that are at work in the content shared by fans on Twitter during the #FandomsPeloVoto (#FandomsfortheVote) campaign. According to Mihailidis (2014), in a convergence culture environment, media literacy is characterized by five skills: curation, creation, critical understanding, participation and collaboration.
Launched in May 2022, the campaign—carried out in partnership with MidiaNinja, the National Student Union (União Nacional dos Estudantes - UNE) and the Brazilian Union of Secondary School Students (União Brasileira dos Estudantes Secundaristas - UBES)—brought together more than 100 pop culture fandoms in Brazil to mobilize 16 to 18-year-olds to obtain a voter registration card and be eligible to vote in the 2022 elections. It can be concluded that the activism of fandoms goes beyond transposing fan culture practices into the realm of political participation, also encompassing the critical interpretation of the sociopolitical issues that were part of the action and the creative production of posts on Twitter. Accordingly, #FandomsPeloVoto has aspects of political resistance, as one of its primary objectives is the removal from power of President Jair Bolsonaro, leader of the far right in Brazil.

**Keywords:** Fan Culture, Media Literacy, Activism, 2022 Elections

**Resumen:** Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar las habilidades de alfabetización mediática que están en funcionamiento en los contenidos compartidos por los fans en Twitter durante la campaña #FandomsPeloVoto. Según Mihailidis (2014), en el contexto de la cultura de la convergencia, la alfabetización mediática se guía por cinco habilidades. Ellos son: curaduría, creación, comprensión crítica, participación y colaboración. Lanzada en mayo de 2022, la campaña, realizada en asociación con MidiaNinja, la Unión Nacional de Estudiantes y la Unión Brasileña de Estudiantes Secundarios, reunió a más de 100 fandoms de la cultura pop en Brasil para movilizar a jóvenes de 16 a 18 años a registrarse para votar, y poder votar en las elecciones de 2022.

Se concluye que el activismo fandom va más allá de la transposición de las prácticas de la cultura fan al ámbito de la participación política, abarcando también la interpretación crítica de las cuestiones sociopolíticas que formaron parte de la acción y la producción creativa de publicaciones en Twitter. De esta manera, el #FandomsPeloVoto tiene contornos de resistencia política por tener como uno de sus principales objetivos sacar del poder al presidente Jair Bolsonaro, líder de la extrema derecha en Brasil.

**Palabras clave:** cultura de fans, alfabetización mediática, activismo, elecciones 2022

**Introduction**

Research focused on investigating the relationship between fandom practices and activism became increasingly popular in the 2010s (Brough; Shresthova, 2012; Amaral et al., 2015; Lima; Cavalcanti, 2020), as it was discussed just by few authors, such as Jenkins (1992) and Hills (2002), during the first wave of fan culture studies.
According to Malini and Antoun (2013), a convergence culture and social networks were crucial to the mobilization and dissemination of movements linked to the civic and political participation of fandoms, but as early as the 1990s, fans had already organized themselves on forums and e-mail listservs. As the authors note, fandoms at that time acted in small niches and sporadically, “[...] through actions by non-governmental organizations, activists involved in gender, racial, gay, environmental and anarchist movements, and entertainment aficionados” (2013, p. 24).

In contemporary times, activism has expanded and been incorporated into different fan culture practices. The popularization of different technologies (websites, social networks, free file storage and sharing services, etc.) and a participatory culture environment have allowed mobilizations around sociopolitical causes to spread instantaneously, reaching fans from different parts of the world and contributing to the pluralization of discussions, no longer affecting only specific layers of society (Bennett, 2021). In this respect, Gournelos and Gunkel (2012) consider this to be an era of organization, protest and rapid change facilitated by the development of new tools for media creation, distribution and circulation. Additionally, the authors also perceive it as a new era of surveillance, censorship and monopolies.

According to Lopez (2011) and Guerrero-Pico (2017), media literacy is an integral part of fan activism. The authors argue that the emotional and intellectual involvement of fandoms encourages the development of critical skills. Guerrero-Pico (2017) notes that even indirectly, fans draw a parallel between the universe of the artists and/or the series/film and contemporary times. The bridge established between media content and reality would enable mobilizations around sociopolitical issues, encompassing actions ranging from the creation of content challenging the canon to protests related to women’s rights and gender equality.

Based on this context, this article aims to analyze the #FandomsPeloVoto (#FandomsfortheVote) campaign, carried out in May 2022, following Mihailidis (2014) methodological proposal. According to the author, in a convergence culture environment, media literacy is generally characterized by five skills: 1) curation (ability to organize and systematize multimedia content), 2) creation (ability to produce, remix and share content on online platforms), 3) critical understanding (ability to critically analyze and understand online content), 4) participation (ability to comment on, edit and disseminate posts on platforms) and 5) collaboration (ability to produce content collaboratively).

Fan activism: the intersection between cultural and political participation

Fan activism involves the creative, cultural, social and/or political mobilization of fans and/or fandoms around a common objective (Brough; Shresthova, 2012; Ronsini et al., 2013). For Van Zoonen (2004), groups of fans are social formations that have a structure analogous to that of political affiliations. The engagement around a collective cause can thus unfold in different ways,
such as campaigns calling for the renewal of a series, petitions demanding greater minority representation in the narrative, the removal of actors accused of sexual harassment, the collection of donations for NGOs, etc.

According to Ronsini et al. (2013), fan activism is guided by the intersection between cultural and political resistance. In this context, although some actions organized by fandoms have a purely political focus, the mobilization around a common cause is configured through a cultural product. In other words, the political participation of a fan is based on his or her affective and intellectual involvement with a fictional universe and/or with an artist.

As for instance The Handmaid’s Coalition, created in 2017, that seeks to raise awareness about women’s rights and the importance of gender equality among fans of the US series *The Handmaid’s Tale* (Hulu, 2017 - present). With the slogan “Fight to keep fiction from becoming reality”, The Handmaid’s Coalition blends the fictional universe in Hulu’s narrative with the reality of countries such as the United States, Canada and Brazil. One of the group’s main actions is the protests carried out by the fans: in addition to remaining silent, the activists dress up as June, the protagonist of the show played by the actress Elisabeth Moss (Sigiliano; Borges, 2018).

Ronsini et al. (2013) also note that the mobilizations organized by fans are usually short-lived and targeted. The aspects indicated by the authors can be observed, for example, in some actions taken by the fandom of Limantha, the ship for Lica (Manoela Alipert) and Samantha (Giovanna Grigio), from *Malhação: Viva a Diferença [Young Hearts: Embrace Diversity]* (TV Globo, 2017 - 2018) (Borges; Sigiliano, 2022).

Although political engagement is not the focus of the couple’s fans, support for social causes has been part of discussions among Twitter users on a number of occasions. The posts critically consider issues related to meritocracy, social inequality in Brazil, racism, feminism and the importance of introducing public policies for marginalized young people. However, even while endorsing sociopolitical agendas, fandom mobilizations are targeted to specific media events such as the finale of the reality show *Big Brother Brasil* (TV Globo, 2002 - present), the Women’s World Cup, etc.

Brough and Shresthova (2012) argue that fan activism has four central aspects: interconnections between political and cultural participation; the tension between participation and resistance; the role of affect/taste in mobilizing civic participation; and the impact of mobilizations on the fandom. In this context, the mobilizations organized by fans are initiated by the avid consumption of media products and are characterized by three axes: activism, information and discussion.

According to Bennett (Online, 2012), it is important to mention that different forms of organizing and engaging with fandoms are led by public figures from TV, film and music. The ability of celebrities to mobilize is related to the concept of performative intimacy. According to Marwick and Boyd...
(2011), social networks give fans a sense of closeness and familiarity with their idols, strengthening the impression of belonging and complicity. Campaigns organized by public figures thus spread quickly online, gaining supporters almost instantly, for example, the actions launched on Twitter by Lady Gaga to combat bullying. Since 2012, the singer has been using her reach to give visibility to social causes. Gaga's strategies on the microblogging platform include hashtags to condemn and share cases of bullying, donations to philanthropic institutions in different countries, and projects by the Born This Way Foundation in collaboration with the US National Council for Behavioral Health.

However, “[...] fans are also adopting these social tools without being directly requested by celebrities, to organize and mobilize in these acts” (Bennett, 2012, Online). Platforms enable the engagement of fandoms around specific topics and the rapid spread of ideas. As such, because they are not limited to the initiatives of public figures, actions promoted by fandoms enable mobilization around local issues, which directly involve the reality of a particular group of fans.

Kligler-Vilenchik and Shresthova (2014) recognize three central components for this type of organization: recruitment, mobilization and sustained action—shared media experiences (members gather around cultural objects), a sense of community and a desire to contribute. The latter is an element closer to what we understand as “traditional” civic engagement and can have many motivations (forms of socialization, political vision, faith or inspiration from participating in shared cultural activities). By combining civic objectives with the pleasures of participatory culture, these communities succeed in attracting younger audiences, which often feel excluded or disengaged from the universe of political parties (Kligler-Vilenchik; Shresthova, 2014).

It is exactly this element that we find in the context of the #FandomsPeloVoto campaign in which different Brazilian fan communities carried out joint and coordinated actions to encourage greater political participation among 16 and 17-year-olds. However, unlike many of the activist organizations led by fans, which are engaged with social causes without necessarily expressing an explicit partisan political position (Kligler-Vilenchik; Shresthova, 2014), this action clearly targeted the electoral period, with the objective of seeking the vote of young people who are aligned with progressive causes that have traditionally been closer to the left, including notions of diversity in race, gender and sexuality, to halt the rise of the far right in Brazil.

**Media literacy skills in #FandomsPeloVoto**

According to the Superior Electoral Court (Tribunal Superior Eleitoral - TSE), over the last decade, the number of 16- and 17-year-old adolescents who applied for their first voter registration card has decreased by 82% (CNN, 2022). The TSE suggests that this low participation is related to a lack of interest in politics and a lack of party identification (CNN, 2022). However, recent data indicate that compared to 2018, the Brazilian electorate grew by about 6.21% in 2022 (Agência Senado, 2022). According to research published by the Senate's
news agency, Agência Senado (2022), of the 156 million citizens eligible to vote, one of the largest increases recorded was in the number of 16- and 17-year-olds, for whom voting is optional. In all, there are 2.1 million young people registered, representing an increase equivalent to 51.13% in this age group (Agência Senado, 2022). The TSE (2022) and Agência Senado (2022) indicate that most of the young people who obtained a voter registration card in 2022 did so between January and May. The growth, according to the organizations, is due to awareness campaigns, involving different spheres.

Since the beginning of 2022, a number of artists have created engagement actions to mobilize their respective fandoms to apply for a voter registration card (Oliveira, 2022). According to TSE analyst Diogo Cruvinel, in addition to social networks playing a pivotal role in sharing and accessing information about the electoral process, the participation of public figures such as Anitta, Juliette, Zeca Pagodinho, Whindersson Nunes and Luísa Sonza contributed to the identification of young people, expanding their enrollment in the electoral register (CNN, 2022). As Cruvinel suggests, “They [famous people] understood how important it was for us to have the participation of this audience, which is largely young people, and they spoke to their respective audiences” (CNN, 2022, Online). In other words, by targeting an audience with which they already had a certain proximity, the artists were able to mobilize young people in a way that legal entities such as the TSE would never have been able to do, as for example the tweet posted by Anitta on her Twitter account. Within minutes, the post received more than 244 likes and was retweeted by 16,000 accounts on the microblogging platform. The post was also shared by other artists, such as Mark Ruffalo and Leonardo DiCaprio. The American actors retweeted the content and highlighted the importance of the mobilization of Brazilians, sharing the website Central do Barulhinho.

Launched in May 2022, the campaign—carried out in partnership with MidiaNinja, the National Student Union (União Nacional dos Estudantes - UNE) and the Brazilian Union of Secondary School Students (União Brasileira dos Estudantes Secundaristas - UBES)—brought together more than 100 pop culture fandoms in Brazil. Called #FandomsPeloVoto, the action aimed to mobilize 16- to 18-year-olds to obtain a voter registration card and be eligible to vote in the 2022 elections. The deadline to apply for their first card was May 4th. The material produced and shared by fans on Twitter, Telegram and Instagram included tutorials, infographics and informational videos about the process of obtaining the document. The accounts also published imagery of celebrities encouraging new voter registration and establishing a correlation between the fictional universe and the importance of voter registration.

This mobilization did not occur by chance and was part of a context of reaction to the rise of far-right leaders, parties and movements that have disrupted the norms of party competition and threatened democracy itself (Fukushima; Ferraz, 2021).
The rise of the far right constitutes yet another movement—one that began with the advancement of neoliberal hegemony—toward the complete destruction of the civilizational and democratic conquests of the post-World War II era. The defense of a (neo)liberal and conservative agenda encourages individualism and has led to political polarization and a reaction—sometimes violent—against those calling for a more plural and democratic world (Fukushima; Ferraz, 2021, p.5).

The election of leaders like Donald Trump in 2016 in the United States, as well as the rise of far-right parties in countries such as France, Hungary and Germany are consequences of the combination of populist rhetoric and authoritarian values, resulting in a policy of exclusion, “thereby championing intolerance, racism, homophobia, misogyny and xenophobia. They thus legitimize hate speech and, at the extreme, the death of those who should be excluded, i.e., groups considered to be minorities” (Fukushima; Ferraz, 2021, p.5). In Brazil, the primary representative of far-right politics is Jair Bolsonaro, who became president in 2019. Before that, he was a federal deputy for Rio de Janeiro between 1991 and 2018 and climbed to the highest office in the country using a rhetoric that encourages violence against progressive ideals.

His election is not an isolated event: over the past decade, in the legislature, in the State Assemblies, the National Congress and the Senate, Brazil has conceded space to politicians who are gun owners, religious and/or have ultraconservative discourse. After four years of an administration that dismantled environmental policies, drained resources from education and health, persecuted minorities and continually denied the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2022 general elections represent a moment in which political participation could be decisive for upholding democracy.

To analyze the media literacy skills proposed by Mihailidis (2014), which are at work in the content shared by fans on Twitter during the #FandomsPeloVoto campaign, we adopted the data monitoring, extraction and coding approach developed by the xxxxx (Autor, xxxx). However, before describing the three steps that comprise this protocol, it is important to explain the choice of Twitter as a platform for data collection.

#FandomsPeloVoto included 125 fandoms across many different segments, such as pop music (Ariana Grande, Harry Styles, Beyoncé, etc.), film (The Batman, Black Widow, Avengers, etc.) and TV/streaming (Brooklyn 99, Love, Victor, The Handmaid’s Tale, etc.). The fan communities were organized in groups on Telegram and accounts on Instagram and Twitter. The microblogging platform had the largest number of participants, totaling 110 accounts, while there were 15 groups on Telegram managed by fandoms that were part of the action, and only six accounts on Instagram joined the partnership. In this respect, in addition to the majority of fans being concentrated on the social
network, Twitter also has a data decentralization and recentralization model that facilitates data extraction. That is, issues such as datafication, the business model and the application programming interface (API) governance policy of Telegram and Instagram only allow us to have partial access to user-generated information. The restrictions of these platforms stand in contrast to the easy access to Twitter’s API, even considering the tensions that interfere in this process (Mckinney, 2018; Russell; Klassen, 2019; D’Andrea, 2020; Karsdorp et al., 2021).

**Figure 1:** Systematization of the methodological approach to data monitoring, extraction and coding.

![Systematization of the methodological approach](image1.png)

In the first step, we defined the accounts, the indexing and the period of time that the content would be monitored. Based on information published by MídiaNinja, the monitoring included Twitter accounts managed by fandoms that declared their support for the campaign, totaling 110 accounts. Fans’ posts were monitored on May 2nd, 2022, the period in which the campaign was carried out.

Subsequently, data extraction was performed using Python programming language, and we also utilized modules such as NLTK, Jupyter, Twint and SpaCy and the Pandas and Nest_asyncio libraries to assist in filtering, visualizing and exporting data (Dos Santos, 2019). In the third and final step, with the help of the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti, 14,249 tweets collected were coded according to the media literacy skills defined by Mihailidis (2014).

Mihailidis (2014) argues that a convergence culture offers new modes of media content production and consumption and the development of skills goes beyond the traditional media flows, encompassing the critical interpretation of interactive and multimodal sets, and the integration of different digital platforms. In this context, the author defines five media literacy skills: curation, creation, critical understanding, participation and collaboration.
Importantly, in addition to these skills being developed throughout a person’s life, they are interrelated and are in constant transformation. Thus, individuals exhibit different skills to different degrees based on the media context to which they belong.

According to Mihailidis (2014), the skill of curation is related to the ability to organize, filter, select and systematize content. The author emphasizes that the volume of information and the instantaneousness of social networks make this skill even more crucial in contemporary times. These aspects can be observed in the tutorials published by the fandoms: the images included step-by-step instructions for how to apply for a voter registration card in a didactic way, similar to the fans’ repertoire. The users thus selected the information that was relevant to the process and systematized it for the public using a friendly aesthetic. Such, for example, the tweets posted by the account Beyoncé Access (@beyonceaccess). The thread was comprised of nine posts and used different multimodal resources, such as images and emojis. Posts contained screenshots of TSE website interface and described the process of applying for the document; it was also possible to access a question-and-answer section, with key questions about the voting day.
The tweets shared by Beyoncé Access referenced the career of the US singer Beyoncé, reinforcing the shared repertoire of her fans. Thus, by using expressions such as “Vamos entrar em formação” (“Let’s get in formation”), which alludes to the chorus of the song Formation, the account elicited audience immediate identification, amplifying its ability to be spread on the timeline.

The skill of curation is also at work in posts that correlated the series and movies fictional universes with the importance of obtaining a voter registration card to be eligible to vote in the 2022 elections. In other words, fans selected parts of the narrative that had some connection with young people civic engagement when they registered to vote. The account (@b99bra), managed by the fandom of the US series Brooklyn Nine-Nine (Fox, 2013–2018 / NBC, 2019–2021), for example, shared a plot sequence to mobilize the audience. In the scene, Raymond Holt (Andre Braugher) tells Rosa Diaz (Stephanie Beatriz) that she should be proud of herself as she did the right thing during a difficult moment. Although the narrative context of the show is different, fans re-signdified the scene when they adopted it as part of the engagement actions for #FandomsPeloVoto, establishing a correlation with the current political situation and the importance of young people registering on the TSE website. The selection of extracts from fictional universes was observed in many fandoms, but narratives that already exhibited—even minimally—a parallel with the discussion of sociopolitical issues generated more engagement among users, such as The Handmaid’s Tale (Hulu, 2017 - present) and The Hunger Games saga.

According to Mihailidis (2014), creation includes the ability to produce, remix, share and adapt content on online platforms but this development does not necessarily need to include the content at its source. In other words, the mixture, collage and remix that are common in a convergence environment are
guiding points of this skill. Mihailidis (2014) argues that creation aids in the critical development of the audience viewpoint, which begins to recognize different genres, formats and media strategies. Based on this context, the very creation of the #FandomsPeloVoto campaign activates critical and creative skills in the production of content for different platforms, considering the specificities of informational architectures as well as the multimodal resources adopted in the posts (images, GIFs, videos, emojis, etc.).

Using an eye-catching color palette and stickers, the visual identity of the action dialogue with the target audience and stood out in Twitter uninterrupted flow. Based on the campaign visual identity, the accounts managed by the fandoms adapted the artwork to target their followers and their engagement strategies, for example, the post by the account Army Help The Planet (@ARMY_HTP), which combined the specific indexing (#ArmyPeloVoto) (#ArmyfortheVote) adopted by K-pop fans and asked users to hit the goal of 2,000 tweets with the hashtags of the action. The artwork also included an image of a voter registration card, in which the "voter name," "date of birth," "signature," "registration number," "section," "zone," "municipality/UF" and "date of issue" fields had been personalized.

Figure 4: The visual identity of the campaign reinforces the use of colors and stickers; some fandoms personalized the artwork that was posted on Twitter.

The creation skill can also be observed in the imagery posted by the accounts that participated in #FandomsPeloVoto. One example is a GIF posted by Bridgerton Brasil (@BridgertonBR), which re-signified a scene from the series Bridgerton (Netflix, 2020 - present). Using a scene featuring the character Eloise Bridgerton (Claudia Jessie), fans inserted new captions, bringing the context of the plot closer to the objective of the action. In the GIF, the inquisitive and
rebellious Eloise says: “Vários adolescentes ainda não tiraram o título de eleitor e isso é trágico! Mas eu já corri para tirar o meu, é claro!” [“Many adolescents have not yet obtained their voter registration card, and this is tragic! But I already rushed out to get mine, of course!”] In this respect, by introducing new interpretative layers to the canon, the fandom’s skill of creation ranged from a technical understanding of editing digital formats to the expansion of *Bridgerton*’s fictional universe by inserting the plot into other contexts.

Critical understanding, according to Mihailidis (2014), is related to the ability to analyze content, identifying and distinguishing different formats and genres based on their similarities and specificities. This skill can be observed in the elements adopted by the fandoms in the actions on Twitter. The resources used by the participants are in line with some characteristics of the informational architecture of the microblogging platform, for example, the use of a general hashtag, with the campaign full name, as well as a specific hashtag, targeted at the shared repertoire of a specific group of fans. By adopting the indexing, fandoms enabled conversation generated by the action to be spread and unified, contributing directly to the hashtags reaching Trending Topics. The specific indexing, which varied according to the fandom, also reinforced the communities’ sense of belonging, leading to the identification of the followers and, consequently, participation in #FandomsPeloVoto. The multimodal content was also part of the tweets posted by the monitored accounts. In this respect, as they used GIFs, images, videos and emojis and were not limited to textual language, they stand out in the uninterrupted flow of the timeline. Another strategy adopted by the fans was quizzes. As it is a social network based on the formation of asymmetrical connections, i.e., not based on pre-existing bonds, the users could respond to one another’s posts without necessarily following each other. Thus, by posting a question related to the career of an artist or the fictional universe of a narrative, the accounts encouraged fan conversation around a topic, increasing the number of tweets posted during the action. By adopting some characteristics of Twitter’s informational architecture, fandoms demonstrate an understanding of aspects related to social network materiality, going beyond content production and engagement strategies.

The ability to distinguish media formats and explore different languages is also at work in the production of memes. In the images, guided by humor and irony, fandoms reflected on the current political situation and the importance of different communities coming together for the #FandomsPeloVoto action. Popular in the pop culture realm, Anitta and Ludmilla fans have already been involved in several feuds. The rivalry between the fandoms is a recurrent topic at award shows, in battles over the rankings on music streaming services, the number of music video views on YouTube, etc. However, in #FandomsPeloVoto, the accounts dedicated to the artists posted a meme: the image showed that despite the constant competition between the fanbases, the fandoms were united in mobilizing young people. Other memes also stressed that despite their differences, it was essential for fans to come together to defeat President Jair Bolsonaro in the 2022 elections. By
joking about the rivalry of the fanbases, the fandoms re-signified popular fan culture practices, setting aside the feuds to fight for the citizen participation of young people. Here it is possible to see the partisan nature of the action, which calls for unity against the threat of the far right, represented by Bolsonaro.

**Figure 5:** The fandoms emphasize the importance of different communities coming together for the #FandomsPeloVoto mobilization.

There were also memes produced during #FandomsPeloVoto that declared support for the candidacy of former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Jair Bolsonaro's main competitor in the 2022 elections. The tweets used images of celebrities and characters wearing red, the color of the Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores - PT), and inserted the logo with the name “Lula,” as if the idols were campaigning for the candidate. The photos used in the imagery already have elements (background, the position of the artists, etc.) that facilitate the creation of the meme. For example, the account (@katydailybrasil) managed by fans of the singer Katy Perry used a GIF in which the artist is wearing a red blazer to create a meme in support of Lula. In the meme, the fandom inserted fictitious captions in support of the presidential candidate that approximate the singer’s lip movements in the original GIF as well as the PT logo.

According to Mihailidis (2014), participation is guided by the ability to comment on, edit and disseminate posts on different online platforms (forums, social networks, etc.). The author argues that the user should contribute to the circulation of plural and dynamic information and content. In addition to the #FandomsPeloVoto action itself being based on a collective mobilization, involving the participation of 110 fandoms from different realms of pop culture, this skill is at work in tweets that are based on posts published by fandoms accounts. In this context, the public conversation ranged from messages of support to users who had applied for their voter registration card to tips on bypassing bugs on the TSE portal. Due to the large number of simultaneous visits, the TSE website was down for several minutes, but when fans shared that they were having trouble accessing it, they quickly received support from
accounts that were part of the campaign. The tweets offered shortcuts to circumvent the traffic, tips on how to fill out the registration form more quickly and information on other issues related to the voter registration card, such as change of address and absentee voting.

The fandoms also highlighted information about presidential candidates’ proposals, stressing the importance of young people being informed before deciding who to vote for. The posts had links to the candidates’ websites and data about COVID-19, criticizing the measures taken by President Jair Bolsonaro during the pandemic that killed more than 685,000 Brazilians.

Finally, according to Mihailidis (2014), collaboration involves the ability to jointly produce content in which each user contributes to the whole in some way. The skill is directly linked to cooperation and coordinated, collective effort in a network. Although the accounts that participated in #FandomsPeloVoto were dedicated to a specific artist or fictional universe, they created collaborative actions to engage a larger number of users, not limited only to their respective followers. To this end, the pages retweeted content from other fandoms, bolstering the spread on the timeline. Collaboration can also be observed in engagement strategies that encouraged the posting of tweets with the same indexing (general and/or specific). In this context, the accounts set goals of between 2000 and 5000 tweets within a short period of time. Fans collective effort resulted in the hashtags appearing in Trending Topics in Brazil during the campaign.

Final considerations

The #FandomsPeloVoto campaign reinforces critical and creative abilities through mobilizations around sociopolitical causes. The affective and intellectual relationship of the users thus serves as a starting point, encouraging debate on issues related to the importance of voter registration and voting in the 2022 elections, as part of a movement that ultimately sought to increase the participation of young people and, above all, to halt the rise of the far right in Brazil. The strategies adopted by the 110 accounts that participated in the action encompassed different formats and languages, responding to fans media repertoire.

The media literacy skills proposed by Mihailidis (2014) are at work not only in the objectives of #FandomsPeloVoto but also in the correlation between the fictional universes of the narratives and, most importantly, in the multimodal resources used by fans. Through the fanbase, the accounts activated elements familiar to the users, reinforcing the audience’s sense of community and belonging. The tweets included tutorials with the main questions, memes that joked about common practices within fan culture and videos re-signifying the canon.

However, despite the significance of #FandomsPeloVoto and the support of the campaign among young people, between the period when the campaign was carried out and September 2022, very few accounts continued to raise
awareness and debate about political participation. Thus, even though the action mobilized many fans to apply for a voter registration card and generated buzz on Twitter, the collective organization of the fandoms was isolated and targeted at the voter registration deadline.

Finally, #FandomsPeloVoto shows the commitment of fans to democracy. In addition to helping organize the campaign and promoting the exchange of information, the tweets were created based on a deep knowledge of not only the target audience but also the details of the voter registration process and engagement strategies in digital environment. In this context, activism of fandoms is not merely a simple transposition of fan culture practices into the realm of political participation but also encompasses the critical interpretation of sociopolitical issues related to the action and the creative production of Twitter posts. Notably, the action integrated political resistance, as one of its primary objectives was the removal from power of President Jair Bolsonaro, leader of the far right in Brazil.

References


Autor, xxxx


Autor, xxxx


Notes
4 The period of this study.