



**Fan Studies Network – North America
Virtual Conference 2020
Oct 13–Oct 17**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This has been a strange year, to be sure. And we feel lucky that we've been able to put on a conference even during this trying time. Our thanks to Conline and lithiumdoll for their superb help throughout the process. We're also grateful to all the participants and Salon/Workshop/Poster organizers, who have shown immense enthusiasm for the conference. Although none of us preferred to meet virtually this year, we're happy with a lot of the innovations that the virtual environment has brought to the conference and we hope that you all enjoy the sessions. We are also incredibly moved by the generous donations that came in for our Assistance Fund – we were able to fund everyone that applied and donate the rest of the money to Mutual Aid charities.

DISCORD and CONLINE

As a virtual conference, FSNNA20 is using Discord as our conference 'hub'. While live salons, workshops, and special events will take place on Zoom, Discord is where you will be able to continue the conversation spurred by a given event. We are finalizing details on Conline and detailed information about how to use it will be there. Discord is also where you can find us if you have questions or concerns, where you can meet up with others to chat, and it's where we'll be hosting chats with our Poster presenters as well as participating book publishers. Conversations in Discord are persistent across timezones and are separated by topic, and they will still be available after the conference. You must be a registered attendee (both presenting/non-presenting) in order to access the conference Discord. **More information about Conline and Discord is available on our website, fsn-northamerica.org/**

MEETING ETIQUETTE

Audience members will enter each Zoom session with their microphones and videos off. Feel free to turn your video on if you feel comfortable. Please leave microphones off while the presenters are giving their presentations. At the conclusion of the presentations, the moderator will open up conversation and monitor the chat for additional questions. Feel free to use the Zoom chat during the discussion to pose questions. After the session is concluded, we will save the zoom chat and post it on the discord thread associated with each session to facilitate further conversation (note that private messages are saved in recordings). Please note that meetings will be recorded and available for a limited time after the conference.

PUBLISHERS

We're very pleased to offer special conference discounts through Intellect Publishing, Amsterdam University Press, Bloomsbury, and the University of Iowa Press, as well as special publishing sessions on Saturday with Intellect and AUP. Please see our website for more information on the discounts. In addition, U of Iowa Press is available to meet with interested authors throughout the conference.

FSN North America reaffirms our dedication to advancing and promoting conversations about race and fandom within the field of fan studies. We recommit to uplifting marginalized voices and continuing to decenter the whiteness of fan studies at both our annual conference and through our online presence. We pledge to help make fan studies a welcoming and progressive space for all, and that includes a consistent effort to address critiques, make necessary changes, and do better.

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

Central Time	Panel	Hosts and Speakers (Moderator)
10:00-11:30	Embodied Fan Identities and Practices	Suzanne Scott , Alexandra Harlig, Jessica Hautsch, Liz Laurie, EJ Nielsen, Rebecca Rowe, Ashley Smalls (Lesley Willard)
12:00-13:30	Who Gets to Be a Fan? Identity Politics in Superhero Fandom	Matt Griffin , Nayara Domingos, Laura E. Felschow, Clarice Greco, Rusty Hatchell, Rachel Marks, Christina Schuster (Jacinta Yanders)
14:00-15:30	Fandom and Gaming	Greg Loring-Albright, Jonathon Lundy , Miyoko Conley, Danielle Hart, David Kocik (Paul Booth)
16:00-17:30	Keynote. It's a Thing!	Rebecca Wanzo and Lori Morimoto (Paul Booth)
18:00-19:30	Close Literary Analysis of Fanfiction as Trauma Text	JSA Lowe, Lucy Baker , Maria Alberto, Giovana Santana Carlos, Linda Howell, Dean Leetal, Lauren Rouse, (Effie Sapuridis and Cait Coker)
21:00-22:30	So, This is How Liberty Dies, With Thunderous Applause: Fandom, Politics, Public Discourse and Democracy	CarrieLynn D. Reinhard , Namita Gupta, Stacey Lantagne (Ashley Hinck)

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

Central Time	Panel	Hosts and Speakers (Moderator)
08:00-09:30	Good Fan, Bad Fan? On Politics, Appropriateness, and Toxicity	Simone Driessen, Bethan Jones , Bertha Chin, Renee Ann Drouin, Qian Huang, Sarah Sinwell, Mark Stewart, Christina Wurst (Louisa Stein)
10:00-11:30	Fan-Made Histories	Philipp Dominik Keidl, Abby Waysdorf , Stephen Cass, Lies Lanckman, Kyle Meikle, Taylore Woodhouse (Louisa Stein)
12:00-13:30	The Future of Dis/ability Fan Studies	Olivia Riley, Leah Steuer , Mark Duffett, Brianna Dym, Lauren Rouse (Jacinta Yanders)
14:00-15:30	Archival Research Workshop	Cait Coker, Jeremy W Brett (Paul Booth)
16:00-17:30	Emerging Phenomena in Fan Studies – A Student Perspective	Robert Moses Peaslee , Philippe Chauveau, Ali Kneisel, Hannah Isett, Gabriel Dominguez Partida, Jessie Rogers, Nihar Sreepada, Koji Yoshimura (Paul Booth)

18:00-19:30	Sports Fandemic: The Ethics and Possibilities of Sports Fandom During Times of Crisis	Noah Cohan , Alex Kupfer, Kasey Symons, Elise Vist (Lesley Willard)
20:00-21:30	Chinese Fandoms Panel	Lan Tian, Xiaofei Yang, Zhuo Zeng (Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein)

Thursday, October 15, 2020

Central Time	Panel	Hosts and Speakers (Moderator)
08:00-09:30	The Practice and Politics of Theme Park Fandoms	Kyle Meikle, Rebecca Williams , Jess Gibson, Sabrina Mittermeier, Carter Moulton, Tom Robson (Paul Booth)
10:00-11:30	Online Spaces: The Present and Future of Virtual Fan Conventions	E. Charlotte Stevens , Naomi Jacobs, Melanie E.S. Kohnen, Sebastian F.K. Svegaard (Lesley Willard)
12:00-13:30	Re-Imagining Fan Studies in the Age of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter Workshop	Aya Esther Hayashi (Jacinta Yanders)
14:00-15:30	Bloomsbury Publication Session	Rebecca Barden (Paul Booth)
16:00-17:30	Fandom and American Political Culture	Ashley Hinck , Kyra Hunting, Lucy Miller, Ashika Paramita, U. Bruce Texx (Lori Morimoto)
18:00-19:30	Vid Show: Fan Video Refractions	(Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein)

Friday, October 16, 2020

Central Time	Panel	Hosts and Speakers (Moderator)
07:00-08:30	Adolescents Fans and Material Culture	Pilar Lacasa , Clarice Greco, Matt Griffin, Namita Gupta, Iris Barraón Lara, Enoe Lopes Pontes, Julián de la Fuente Prieto, Alba García Vega (Lori Morimoto)
09:00-10:30	From the Enormous Dunghill to the Garishly Diverse: Shakespeare and Anti-Fandom	Johnathan Pope , Kavita Mudan Finn, Sophie Hanson, Taarini Mookherjee, Edel Semple (Louisa Stein)

11:00-12:30	Teaching Fandom: Fandom, Fanworks and Fan Studies in the Classroom	Jonathan A. Rose , Tvine Donabedian, Kelsey Entrikin, Stacey Lantagne, Regina Yung Lee (Paul Booth)
14:00-15:30	Fandom at Home: How COVID-19 Adjusted Perception and Participation	Kyle A. Hammonds, Caleb George Hubbard , Leah Dajches, Jasmine Proctor, William Staton (Paul Booth)
16:00-17:30	Fandom: The Next Generation	Megan Connor, Bridget Kies , Morgan Bimm, Peter Cullen Bryan, Meredith Dabek, Dan Padua, Laurel Rogers, Dawn Walls-Thumma (Lesley Willard)
19:00-20:30	Plenary. KPop: Fandom, Politics, Digital Influence	Crystal Abidin, Crystal Anderson, Michelle Cho, Candace Epps-Robertson, Miranda Larsen (Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein)

Saturday, October 17, 2020

07:00-08:30	Panels	Hosts and Speakers (Moderator)
08:00-09:30	Fans and Cancel Culture: On How Fans Process Their Idol's Past	Roberto Huertas Gutiérrez , Laura Lea Bourland, Emily Contois, Jenessa Williams, Dina Farouk Abou Zeid (Lesley Willard)
09:00-10:30	Amsterdam University Press Publication Session	Lucia Dove , Dan Hassler-Forest, E. Charlotte Stevens, Rebecca Williams (Paul Booth)
10:00-11:30	Fraught Fandoms: Navigating Aca/Fan Identities and Structural Racism Workshop	Rukmini Pande , Keidra Chaney, Stitch , Miranda Larsen (Louisa Stein)
12:00-13:30	Intellect Publication Session	James Campbell (Paul Booth)

POSTERS (on Discord)

1. Aianne Amado: "Fan Studies History in Brazil"
2. Maria Cindelle Ancajas: "2NE"
3. Bryan Bove: "It's Not a Witch Hunt, It's a Reckoning": Television's Magical Feminine Rage in the #MeToo Era"
4. Bellana Chemello: "The Transnational Revivals of Tove Jansson's *Moomins*"
5. Hannah Dahlberg-Dodd and Lindsey Stirek: "Who Are We Creating For? Fan Works and the Imagined Audience"
6. Vitoria Ferreira Doretto: "The Reviewer's Role in K-drama Fansubs: A Case Study"
8. L.E. Eames: "Is That Perception or Investigation?: Information Behaviour and Research Identity in *The Adventure Zone*"
9. Andrew Elrick: "New York is R's: Soccer Fandom and Participatory Culture in the Digital Age"
10. Emilia Ferreyra: "LGBTQ+ Representation in Fictional Podcast Series"
11. Tatyane Larrubia: "Fan Clubs of Brazilian Pop Singers"
12. Melanie Gaw and Dathan Simpson: "Politicization of Fandom: An Introspective of The Harry Potter Alliance and JK Rowling's Anti-Trans Comments"
13. Mehitabel Glenhaber: "A Delicious History of Platform Affordances: The Pinboard Features Request Document At 10 Years"
14. Steven Greenwood: "Hi-Fi DIY: Broadway YouTubers and the Contradictions of Musical Theatre Fandom"
15. Kimberly Hirsh: "Where'd You Get Those Nightcrawler Hands? The Information Literacy Practices of Cosplayers"
16. Caleb George Hubbard: "'A Whole New World': Disney Parks Reopen During COVID-19"
17. Chera Kee: "Letters to the Dead: Comics Readers and Their Zombies"
18. Anne Korfmacher: "Fan Commentary Podcasts, Scene-by-Scene, Almost Line-by-Line"
19. Li Jia: "Talking to the Air: Interaction between Virtual Idols and Their Fans"
20. Natalie Jonckheere: "Quantifying Fandom? Audience Measurement, Fan Metrics, and the Participatory Continuum"
22. Hejunhao Li: "Chinese Transnational Female Fandom of Japanese Male Idols from Johnny & Associates"
23. Xu Longjie: "Struggling for/in appearance: Dissolving Political Potential in an Anti-fan Community"
24. Andrea Marshall: "Reylo Darkfic Fanfictions as Epistemic Objects"
25. Rick Pulos: "The Madonna Fan Community: A Quasi-Matriarchal Network of Fan Clans"
26. Effie Sapuridis: "Pureblood for a Day: Fetishization of Wealth and the Subversion of Heteronormative Romance Tropes in Harry Potter Fanfiction"
27. Parinita Shetty: "Marginally Fannish: Expressing and Accessing Intersectional Perspectives in Fan Podcasts"
28. Daiana Sigiliano: "The Creative Production of Brazilian Telenovela Fans on Twitter: An Analysis of the Limantha Ship"
29. Elyan Stenel: "'Peter Parker said Trans Rights': Transgender Men in Fanarts"
30. Matthew Hale: "DragonCon"
31. Haocen Sun: "The Gender Switching in Nisu: Contradictory Dissolving and Re-Doing Gender in Chinese Fandom Culture"
32. Kasey Symons and Lee McGowan: "'One of the Lads': An Examination of the Representation of Authenticity of the Female Fan in *Fever Pitch* & Its Films."
33. Janey Umback: "From Teenage Heartthrobs to Proxies of Social Change"
34. Latina Vidolova: "Playing the Celebrity Fan: How Netflix Offers Fans Friendship with Young Adult Stars"
35. Emilie Waggoner: "*Yuri!!! On Ice*: An Analysis of Yuri Katsuki from a Student Development Perspective"
36. Cindy Wang: "Chinese Vlog Fans Online Behavior"
37. Nansong Zhou: "The Gender Gap in Parasocial Interaction"

SPECIAL EVENTS

Tuesday, October 13, 2020 16:00-17:30

Keynote. It's a Thing!

Rebecca Wanzo and Lori Morimoto (Paul Booth)

Thursday, October 15, 2020 14:00-15:30

Bloomsbury Publication Session

Rebecca Barden (Paul Booth)

Thursday, October 15, 2020 18:00-19:30

Vid Show: Fan Video Refractions

(Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein)

Friday, October 16, 2020 19:00-20:30

Plenary. KPop: Fandom, Politics, Digital Influence

Crystal Abidin, Crystal Anderson, Michelle Cho, Candace Epps-Robertson, Miranda Ruth Larsen (Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein)

Saturday, October 17, 2020 09:00-10:30

Amsterdam University Press Publication Session

Lucia Dove, Dan Hassler-Forest, E. Charlotte Stevens, Rebecca Williams (Paul Booth)

Saturday, October 17, 2020 12:00-13:30

Intellect Publication Session

James Campbell (Paul Booth)

DETAILED SCHEDULE AND ABSTRACTS

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

10:00-11:30

Embodied Fan Identities and Practices

Suzanne Scott.

Moderated by Lesley Willard

This salon will explore how we make sense of embodied fan identities in real-world spaces. These analyses of embodied fandom, broadly conceived, should be placed in direct conversation with how lived identity markers such as race, age, ability, size, gender or gender presentation, sexuality, and nationality shape the fan experience and/or interact with hegemonic understandings of “fan identity.” The goal of this salon is to explore to what degree our understanding of the phenomenological or affective experience of “fan identity” manifests in and/or is or performed through various embodied fan performances and practices.

Alexandra Harlig

Every fans’ first technology is their body. This is true broadly, but exemplified strongly in the dance fan, whose history and practices are largely absent in both fan and dance studies literature. In the call for this conference and even this Salon, dance is unnamed as either object or expression of fandom. I want to argue for both fan studies work about dance, and a recognition and utilization of dance studies methods and concerns in looking at embodied fandom. Fan studies has a lot to gain from embracing dance studies-specific methodologies like choreographic analysis, movement analysis, and concerns like adaptation, training, and the interplay between choreographer and dancer authorship.

Reflecting on my dissertation about popular dance on YouTube, I notice a turn towards media object analysis in some cases meant a move away from a focus on the communities of practice where dance was coming from, on its innovators, and on the movement itself. Because of what might get the most circulation, this can often result in a turn away from regional innovation, and away from the originators of movement vocabulary, who are in the US almost exclusively young Black and Latinx dancers. While it’s important to discuss a video or trend as a text, we must also consider what’s entextualized within it, and the larger contexts of the movement and people captured. I contend movement literacy and analysis borrowed from dance studies will benefit all analyses of embodied fandom.

Jessica Hautsch

A little boy’s smile shifts into a sob, his face contorts, and he covers it with his hands. A man, his eyes closed, presses his fingers hard against his temple, grimacing with tears. As I look at each of these gifs, I know what they are communicating, what they mean. I don’t just know it, in fact, I feel it. Drawing on the work of cognitive scientists Shaun Gallagher, Giovanna Colombetti, and Eve Spolski, I will explore the ways in which we experience reactions gifs as embodied communication, not just because they depict human bodies, but because we feel them, we understand them, in and through our own. These images are selected because they offer an evocative expression of emotion through posture, gesture, facial expressions which the viewer understands through simulation and imitation as the image resonates through their body. I argue that when fans use reaction gifs to convey feelings, they do so to communicate and share emotional responses that may defy verbal articulation; I may not be able to define, to fully explain, my feels, but I can use an

animated gif to represent and perform them. The use of emotionally loaded images, I argue, allow fans to communicate and share emotional and embodied responses with other members of their communities, creating a shared network of feels. I also consider issues of digital blackface and whose bodies are being used to perform the emotional labor of fandom.

Liz Laurie

In this paper, I look at how cosplayers use social media to set expectations and standards for the convention space, cosplay fan reactions, and the cosplay community. Cosplayers use social media to do everything from calling on cons to hire less well-known cosplayers as guests and judges to discussing body shaming by fans and members of the cosplay community. Through Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, cosplayers are advocating for the safety of women, non-binary, and transgender people within the convention space; calling for the end to black face (and other forms of race facing) in cosplay; warning one another about exploitive and abusive photographers; and defending women whose cosplay photographs and cosplay might be considered revealing or sexually explicit (what is termed “lewd” photos and cosplay). While cosplayers also use social media for more mundane purposes--to develop networks, build fan bases, make money on crowdfunding sites like Patreon, trade costuming tips and tricks, and commiserate over rushing to complete a cosplay before a convention--such social media campaigns as #28daysofblackcosplay and “Cosplay is for Everyone” are more than just calls for inclusivity online. These and other social media campaigns by cosplayers represent sustained efforts to transform the physical space of the convention through (online) discourse and fan labor.

EJ Nielsen

While flower crowns in various forms date back to ancient Greece, the flower-crown-as-meme first blossomed on Tumblr in 2013. The original iteration involved photoshopping flower crowns onto photos of the band One Direction, but its plasticity led to it quickly spreading to other fandoms, resulting in myriad images of beflowered Doctor Whos, Sherlock Holmes, and characters from the NBC television series, *Hannibal*. For fans of *Hannibal*, (‘fannibals’), the distance between the cheerful flower imagery and *Hannibal*’s dark narrative gave the meme particular resonance, resulting in fannibals’ translating it to material practice by wearing flower crowns at *Hannibal*-related events. However, when showrunner Bryan Fuller donned one fannibal’s flower crown at the *Hannibal* panel discussion at the 2013 San Diego Comic Con, flower crowns went from a comparatively small-scale phenomenon to a clear visual signifier of the *Hannibal* fandom. Since then, the wearing of flower crowns & their creation and idiosyncratic semiotics have become defining practices within and identifiers of *Hannibal* fandom, used to create and denote physical fannibal spaces. Further, fannibal flower crowns’ boundary-blurring legitimization by both *Hannibal* production and commercial manufacturers complicates the largely oppositional paradigm of fan studies scholarship on fan/producer cultures. Instead, it shows a permeability blurring categories such as fan/producer and canon/fanon.

Rebecca Rowe

Fans’ embodied identities affect how they perform characters and how others are asked to interpret those performances. Perhaps the most famous case of this is racebending, but, in this salon, I would like to focus on an identity that is less commonly discussed: age. What does it mean for an adult fan to perform as a child or young adult character? Specifically, I am interested in a recent trend of Harry Potter-themed burlesques in which adults perform as sexualized versions of child and teen characters for an audience of adults. Performing as cutesy and sexy, knowing and naïve, erotic and innocent, these fans combine traits associated with different ages to create a new hybrid identity that merges character and fan as well as child and adult. These performances, which predominantly take place outside “normal” fan spaces such as conventions, demonstrate one way that fans physically embody the intersection between their own fannish identity and their age in burlesque spaces traditionally considered too sexy for nerd culture. Drawing on the work of Judith Butler, I argue that this form of fan embodiment is a type of age drag that reveals the performativity of youth and adulthood.

Ashley Smalls

Comic-Cons aren't just about comic books anymore. They've become annual celebrations of pop culture and the content that fans of diverse backgrounds love. Even in the midst of all this growth, Comic Cons aren't always the most welcoming. It's an unfortunate reality for black fans, but we continue to be woefully underrepresented even in spaces where we all share the same interests.

A major aspect of the comic con experience is the rising interest in active cosplaying from both people who attend to people who watch on social media. Black cosplayers feel pressure to only cosplay as black characters, even though there is a lack of them, to begin with. Black cosplayers are met with criticism when they choose to portray white characters. While there's nothing we can do about the gatekeepers who find their way into cosplay communities and ruin things for others, I'd like to dive in on how Cons can be apart of changing this narrative by giving more opportunities to black cosplayers to showcase their talent. By making more panels and showcases for Black cosplayers, Cons will become more inclusive and Black cosplayers will feel less afraid to cosplay.

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

12:00-13:30

Who Gets to be a Fan? Identity Politics in Superhero Fandom

Matt Griffin

Moderated by Jacinta Yanders

Superhero fandom is often thought of as a predominantly white male space. Because of this, there have been a number of controversies involving diversity and identity in superhero texts. Such incidents include a 2017 interview in which Marvel Comics' vice president of sales David Gabriel said that fans "didn't want any more diversity," as well as the widely circulated false claim that *Captain Marvel* lead actress Brie Larson did not want white men to see the 2019 movie. Recent research suggests both media producers and fans are responsible for creating "a narrow, frequently gendered, vision of fan identity and participation over the past decade" (Scott, 2019, p. 21) in an effort "to homogenize fandom itself" (p. 11). This panel invites interdisciplinary discussion about the role of identity politics (including but not limited to concepts of race, gender, and sexual orientation) in superhero fandom.

"Wonder Woman in Brazil: Fans, Feminism and Social Media Practices"

Nayara Carla Domingos and Clarice Greco

The paper aims to analyze the engagement of online Wonder Woman fans in Brazil. The analysis comes from two communities created by Brazilian fans on Facebook: Wonder Woman Brazil and Wonder Woman Brazil Fans. Based on the content created and shared by fans in these communities, we analyze the circulation of content focused on the superhero character, as well as the interactions within the fandom. We also use some other examples of websites and digital networks that contribute to the analysis of fan behavior in relation to digital interaction, such as content creation (fanfics and fanarts), women empowerment and other types of affection. We use authors like Booth (2010) and Jenkins (2009 and 2015), among others that will help us understand the participatory culture of Wonder Woman fans.

The analysis showed a diversity of practices (fanfics, fanarts, cosplay, shipping, collecting, events), in addition to a nostalgic and generational approach, which are the hallmarks of more traditional fandoms. Cosplay, including mother-daughter costumes, collections of memorabilia and even a Wonder Woman half marathon are some of the elements of these communities. In addition to all these elements of typical fan communities, the Wonder Woman fandom carries the fight for gender equality and female empowerment, which raises its cultural relevance and, therefore, the academic interest in these performances and their diverse meanings. The issue brings a discussion over the weight that the image of a 'modern Wonder Woman' brings when attributed to real women. Whether it may seem to highlight the female empowerment, it can also hide the lack of balance between the social roles that men and women perform.

Laura E. Felschow

The casting of Brie Larson as Carol Danvers in Marvel's 2019 film *Captain Marvel* prompted an uproar from a small but vociferous section of superhero media fandom. Prior to the film's public release, Larson was subject to misogynistic and sexist vitriol in both online and offline spaces, and these criticisms and attacks only increased during the press tour to promote the movie. They still continue today, in late 2020. Online trolls' attempts to sabotage the film's critical and audience scores on Rotten Tomatoes before its release date were so vehement that the website had to change its posting rules and disallow reviews and ratings from the audience until after a film's official release. Many self-identified male comic book "fans" decried the fact that the original, male version of the *Captain Marvel* character was being supplanted on the big screen by the more recent female version. This furor was increased by

hatred for the casting of the outspoken Larson in particular, who publicly embraced feminism and openly called for inclusivity in the media industries.

The Captain Marvel controversy underscores the fact that even if a discontented segment of the audience is comparatively small, their attitudes and behavior are covered by the entertainment media as if they in fact are quite large in number and therefore powerful. Despite the fact that the film opened to mostly positive critical reviews and earned \$1.128 billion at the worldwide box office, public discourse surrounding the film and its proposed sequel still frequently rely upon this narrative of overall fan discontent. What is discussed less often is fan support for the film and for Larson herself.

It is this fan response in support of Larson that I would like to discuss in this salon, as at its core this issue directly challenges dominant constructions of who gets to be a fan of superhero comics, films, and other media. Drawing on Suzanne Scott's *Fake Geek Girls*, I will look at reactions from mostly girls and women that run directly counterpoint to how mainstream media has constructed supposed fan response to Captain Marvel. The coordinated attempts of Captain Marvel and Brie Larson fans on Twitter, Instagram, and most recently on YouTube (specifically in response to the launching of Larson's own channel), demonstrate specific aims of public kindness and support as counterbalance to the current negativity surrounding the Captain Marvel property in the mainstream press. This is significant pushback to not only the dominant narrative that white, straight men comprise the majority of superhero fandom, but also to the perception that superhero fandom must be predicated upon gatekeeping and endless critique.

Rusty Hatchell

In recent months, Facebook has been increasingly scrutinized as private groups supporting white supremacy, anti-semitism, and dangerous conspiracy theories continue to thrive on the social media platform. Indeed, Facebook Groups has become prioritized as a strategy for increasing user engagement, shifting the ways hundreds of millions use the platform. One particular type of group that has emerged in this thriving ecosystem is the shitposting group, which can range from small, niche groups that share specifically-themed, self-deprecating humor - typically in the form of memes - to large groups whose content have real effects in national and international politics as well as major socio-cultural discourses.

The highly-moderated engagement in these private groups stands out from the typically unrestrained public commentary that occurs in widely-seen and publicly-accessible comment sections. The content within these private groups is rarely seen as contributing to larger discourses, particularly when it comes to socio-cultural issues that frequently dominate the trends in social media. Rather, as noted by Whitney Phillips in a 2018 conversation with Henry Jenkins and Ross Garner, willing participants in these groups can mobilize "rhetorical deflection" of any substantial criticism under the guise that shitposting is ironic. Additionally, Phillips cites the cases of Harvard and Yale meme groups rescinding admission offers after finding that these groups also frequently house rape-apologist, pedophilic, racist, and misogynistic content.

Within the niche corner of superhero television fandom, I argue that these niche Facebook shitposting groups have begun to resist cultural discourses by weaponizing the act of shitposting for cultural counter-discourse. Mainly populated by male fans, these groups avert broader conversations that are focused on socio-cultural issues occurring in superhero television. Moderators - also mainly male fans - operate as critical gatekeepers through privacy settings, group-specific rules and guidelines as well as entrance questions allowing subtle and coded criticisms of actors, characters, plot points, and even the broader discourses themselves, despite their insistence that these groups do not tolerate hate speech or discrimination. For example, Candice Patton - and her depiction of Iris-Allen West - is frequently mocked on the Arrowverse Crisisposting group, arguably adding to an existent trolling campaign of Patton and her

character that has been ongoing since the debut of *The Flash* in 2014. Additionally, support for Hartley Sawyer — another actor from *The Flash* — is strong, despite the actor being fired for incredibly racist and sexist tweets in years past. However, not all groups encourage or endorse this kind of —“ironic— behavior. Members of the Titans Starpatrolling group largely laud and —“protect— particular actresses, namely Brec Bessinger of *Stargirl* and Diane Guerrero of *Doom Patrol*. Yet, this same group has frequently shared near-nude images of Guerrero as well as *Stargirl* actress Amy Smart, signalling mixed moderation within these groups.

This abstract identifies Facebook groups and the memberships and behaviors of these groups as potent sites of exploration for identifying not only the overall makeup of superhero fandom but to understand where particular factions of fandoms — in this case, a predominantly male fanbase — congregate and how. Namely, this abstract identifies Facebook not only as a platform for cultural counter-discourse in superhero television but a place that blurs the private and public of social media engagement while also blurring the rhetorical lens of irony to provide a safe space for questionable speech and content.

Rachel Marks

In the popular CW superhero series *Arrow*, vigilante Sara Lance is revealed to be a queer character when she is shown kissing Nyssa al Ghul, her assassin ex-girlfriend. Later in the same episode, Sara is shown kissing Oliver Queen, the show's male protagonist. Throughout her character development in both *“Arrow”* and in her later, central role in *“DC's Legends of Tomorrow,”* Sara has been portrayed as being a sexually fluid character, with a variety of love interests both male and female. During a crossover episode with *“The Flash,”* the character acknowledges her sexuality directly, stating that “I like men, and I like women.” As a representation of bisexuality in modern media and as a central character in a popular superhero television series, Sara Lance has a significant role in larger conversation about queer representation in fan spaces. Overall, this research closely investigates the fan activity surrounding Sara's character in the “Arrowverse” and how Sara, as a representation of bisexuality, has impacted superhero fandom.

This was investigated through an analysis of fan activity on the social media website Tumblr relating to the character and her sexuality, utilizing data collected from selected Tumblr posts to investigate the *“Arrowverse”* fan community surrounding Sara Lance. Through this investigation, it was found that fans have a generally positive reaction to Sara's character and to her as a representation of bisexuality, that fans seem to appreciate the depictions of bi and pan sexuality in *“Legends of Tomorrow”* and enjoy seeing multiple queer characters depicted in the same show, and that fans show appreciation of both Sara's platonic and romantic relationships with other “Arrowverse” characters. Overall, posts reflected that Sara is important as a representation of bisexuality for fans and that this type of representation is important to these members of the superhero fan community.

Christina Schuster

Fanfiction has been understood as fiction of potential - as, quoting Derecho, “open[ing] up possibilities” (76). In response to the proposed salon's focus on identity politics, I want to consider what the fan practice of creating and writing narratives based on pre-existing material can reveal about the intersecting discourses of gender identity, sexualities, and race within one particular fandom.

- Can we view online archives like Archive of Our Own and the writing of fanfiction as “space-offs” for gender and queer theory to use a term adapted by Teresa De Lauretis (1987), in which not only representational space for marginalized groups is created, but discourses surrounding gender, sex, sexuality, and race can be deconstructed.
 - Who and which topics take center stage in fanfiction based on the Marvel Cinematic Universe?
- How is this fanfiction transformational and potentially activist — where does the deconstruction and re-imagining take place, and

which atypical representations can be found?

The aim of my contribution is to highlight the vastness and heterogeneity of the fanon as well as the affective impact of fan engagement on the fandom at large and external perspectives thereof. While this research project delves into one fandom and realm of superheroes only, it will hopefully prove useful for the analysis of fanfiction across a multitude of super-fandoms.

De Lauretis, Teresa. "The Technology of Gender." *Technologies of Gender: Essays of Theory, Film and Fiction*. Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1987. 1-30.

Derecho, Abigail. "Archontic Literature: A Definition, a History, and Several Theories of Fan Fiction." *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet*. Ed. Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse. Jefferson: MacFarland, 2006. 61-78.

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

14:00-15:30

Fandom and Gaming

Jonathan Lundy and Greg Loring-Albright

Moderated by Paul Booth

This salon invites participation from scholars who work within game studies, material culture, transmedia storytelling, and fandom scholarship. As both board and video games have only increased in popularity, this salon seeks to better understand several provisionally theorized ways in which participants and fans engage with the gaming hobby. Scholars have posited the way that gameplay can be a fan practice, while also examining game players as fans themselves. The gameplay-as-fan-practice perspective suggests that players can use gameplay to write alternate histories that obey franchise constraints with non-canonical outcomes. This salon explores games as mutable objects. Modding, reading against the grain, and collecting all “mis-use” game objects by granting agency to the player over and above the game developer. How do these active fan practices, which directly correlate to classic fan studies, inform or challenge other, more affirmational modes of gameplay as fan practice?

Miyoko Conley

In 2011, Japanese illustrator Hato Moa released *Hatoful Boyfriend*, a video game where the player dates pigeons, which rose to unexpected global popularity and commercial success. It was unexpected because the game was a fan-made parody of dating games, a somewhat-maligned genre due to its focus on romance. The goal in dating games is for players to romance different partners, and the gameplay consists of dialogue choices that let players gain “points” with a certain character. Though the genre originated in Japan, *Hatoful Boyfriend*’s success illuminated its dedicated global fanbase and also drew attention to the fact that a significant portion of dating games are made by fans, for fans.

For this salon, I would like to reflect on fan-made dating game parodies and how their creators have turned the genre into a transnational fandom practice that queers normative gender and sexual expectations. Mainstream dating games often promote heteronormative pairings, and much scholarship on these games focuses on narrative representation of gender roles. However, fan-made parodies reveal how game mechanics also participate in the construction of gender and sexuality. In my abstract I would discuss dating game mechanics and build on queer scholarship from Mel Y. Chen (2012) and Bo Ruberg (2019) to show how fans subvert game mechanics and play with gender, sexual intimacy, and Japanese popular culture, due to Japanese pop culture’s presence in the parodies themselves. Dating game parodies demonstrate one form of a transnational fan practice that is inseparable from gaming, where fans enact non-normative desires not available to them in mainstream media.

Danielle Hart

I will explore the connections between fandom and video games with a focus on disability mods, which I argue are a type of fanwork. Disability mods demonstrate the power of fanworks to push back against the ableism of video games. These mods can affect gameplay experience in three distinct ways. The first is modding for accessibility, making a game easier to play for disabled individuals. This can include modding hardware, like controllers, or the software, e.g., by increasing text size. The second is modding for representation, i.e., including more positive depictions of disability in a video game. I will discuss several examples of fan mods that fall into this category for games like *The Sims 4* and *Stardew Valley*. The third is modding for gameplay experience, or “cripping” the game in a similar way to Bonnie Ruberg’s notion of “queering” a game. My example of this is *The Blind Monk’s Society*, a total conversion mod for *Half Life 2*.

that removes all visuals from the game so that the player navigates their surroundings entirely via sound cues. These mods show fans' willingness to envision different ways disability can fit into games and gaming cultures.

David Kocik

Created in 2012, Pokémon Reborn is a fan game made by and for queer fans of the Pokémon franchise. Featuring an LGBTQ+ development team and multiple queer characters, from pansexual Rival Cain to gender non-binary Gym Leader Adrienn, Pokémon Reborn articulates queer desires in a franchise and gaming industry notorious for ignoring and dehumanizing queer individuals. While most research on independent queer game development focuses on how creators subvert heteronormative gameplay elements, Pokémon Reborn challenges dominant industry practices through its queer characters and stories. The fan game incorporates LGBTQ+ lived experiences and queer temporalities in its narrative, queering the traditional storytelling tropes of the Pokémon franchise. The development of Pokémon Reborn queers industry production practices through online collaboration and a vested interest in queer lives and struggles. LGBTQ+ fans of the game use the queer characters of Pokémon Reborn to renegotiate and understand their queer identities. The fan game points to several ways video game industries can meaningfully include and respect LGBTQ+ individuals in production, reception, and games themselves.

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

16:00-17:30

Keynote: It's a Thing!

Rebecca Wanzo and Lori Morimoto

Moderated by Paul Booth

This year's keynote event is a special episode of the fan studies podcast, "It's a Thing!" where host Lori Morimoto will be talking with Dr. Rebecca Wanzo about her transformational 2015 essay, "African American Acafandom and Other Strangers: New Genealogies of Fan Studies," scholarly mentorship, and her future work in the field of fan studies."

Rebecca Wanzo is a professor and chair of the Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She is the author of *The Suffering Will Not Be Televised: African American Women and Sentimental Political Storytelling* (SUNY Press, 2009), which uses African American Women as a case study in exploring the kinds of storytelling conventions of people must adhere to for their suffering to be legible to various institutions in the United States. Her most recent book, *The Content of Our Caricature: African American Comic Art and Political Belonging* (NYU Press, 2020) examines how Black cartoonists have used racialized caricatures to criticize constructions of ideal citizenship, as well as the alienation of African Americans from such imaginaries.

Her research interests include African American literature and culture, critical race theory, fan studies, feminist theory, the history of popular fiction in the United States, cultural studies, theories of affect, and graphic storytelling. She has published in venues such as *American Literature*, *Camera Obscura*, *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, *Signs*, *Women and Performance*, and numerous edited collections. She has also written essays for media outlets such as *CNN*, the *LA Review of Books*, *Huffington Post*, *The Conversation*, and the comic book *Bitch Planet*. For more information, please visit rebeccawanzo.com

Lori (Hitchcock) Morimoto is an independent researcher specializing in transnational and transcultural media and fandoms. Her work can be found in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World, Second Edition*, *A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies*, *The Routledge Companion to Media Fandom*, *Transatlantic Television Drama*, and *Becoming: Genre, Queerness, and Transformation in NBC's Hannibal*, among others. She has also published in *Participations*, *Transformative Works and Cultures*, *East Asian Journal of Popular Culture*, and she has an essay forthcoming in *Mechademia: Second Arc*.

Since 2014, Lori has been active in trying to bridge the gaps between fan studies, fans, and the wider world through such projects as *The Fan Meta Reader*, *Fan Studies for Fans*, and now, "It's a Thing!" She is also Symposium editor of the journal *Transformative Works and Cultures*. Lori is currently a lecturer in the Department of Media Studies at the University of Virginia. You can find Lori on Twitter at @acafanmom

18:00-19:30

Close Literary Analysis of Fanfiction as Trauma Text

JSA Lowe and Lucy Baker

Moderated by Effie Sapuridis and Cait Coker

The Fan Fiction Studies Reader (eds. Busse and Hellekson) from 2014 collected studies of fanfiction as literary artifacts, and 2017's *The Fanfiction Reader* (ed. Coppa) developed this idea further, collecting fanworks as well as a critical introduction to each of its "folk tales." The development of literary techniques as a dominant fan studies method has been inevitably stymied, however, in many ways by the overwhelming body of text—not only of the fanworks themselves, but the source material from which they originate, as well as their subcultural and counterpublic contexts. But fanfiction offers uniquely intimate literary examples of personal writing, and, in the case of "trauma texts"—semi-autobiographical works that combine life writing and memoir with the political, social, and emotional context of characters' trauma—it also creates works that use the extant canon to draw from and elaborate upon writers' personal experiences. Of relevance are contemporary fandom wars over the appropriateness of "darkfic" and other traumatic texts touching on issues of violence and sexuality. As diverse as the authors and instances of these trauma texts may be, they are also policed or silenced according to questions of who gets to write autobiographically, and under what conditions; how do the power relations of race, gender, and disability, for example, matter to the ethics of telling trauma? How do trauma texts reflect their positionality of their authors as much as their characters? What are the advantages and disadvantages of telling trauma via the vehicle of another's story?

Maria Alberto

Trauma literature is not necessarily defined by having trauma as its subject; instead, it also often explores the difficulty, necessity, and repercussions of attempting to confine trauma to the static image or written word after living and/or witnessing it. And although it may attempt similar ends, trauma fanfiction's use of characters and narratives that readers will already recognize opens additional possibilities. To explore, I look to fanfiction featuring three characters from Chinese drama *The Untamed*. In show canon (often more familiar to Western audiences), these three—Xue Yang, Xiao Xingchen, and Song Lan of the "Yi City arc"—variously enact, encounter, and experience physiological, psychological, and supernatural/spiritual trauma. However, unlike other *Untamed* characters who experience comparable levels of trauma, there is no canon happy ending for any of these three, and fic about them *must* deal with their trauma, whether by following it, waving it away, or diving into it. As I'll demonstrate, popular means include the "dead dove: do not eat" tag and the XueXiaoSong ship. Trauma scholar Dori Laub characterizes retellings of trauma as a simultaneous "imperative to tell" and "impossibility of telling." Can this apply to fanfiction, and if so, how, given fic's re-representation of fictional representation(s)?

Giovana Santana Carlos

Romance novels are about love stories, centered on one or more couples and their struggle to be happily together at the end. Some stories deal with crime, violence, abuse, taboos and controversial content. They are known within the fandom as "dark romances." Adaptations from book to movie are very common with this genre. Although there are discussions among fans and separation between the ones who don't see problems with dark romances, because they perceive them as "just fiction," others condemn them as bad examples to women and accuse them of romanticized abuse. *Fifty Shades of Grey* is one famous case and shows how big the fandom may be. This year, another romance adapted to a movie caused a huge response from fans regarding problematic issues: *365 Days* by Blanka Lipińska. The heroine is kidnapped by an Italian mobster who gives her 365 days to fall in love with him. During that time he is

in charge of her life. Through this movie and book, I aim to discuss dark romance fans versus romance fans in Brazil regarding the duality of what is considered acceptable and toxic for women in aspects of love, freedom and sexuality.

Linda Howell

This panel response will examine *Supernatural*'s meta episodes, especially Fan Fiction, as the show's address to its own trauma. By creating its own fantexts, the show reenacts certain textual traumas it has experienced, from shipping to a perceived misreading to a dissolution of its core mission story. The show's meta episodes provide a suitable space to imagine fanart as both salve and sword; to heal the penetration while simultaneously inflicting a reciprocal wound. The response rests on three key trauma theorists: Alexander, Caruth, and Hartman. Building on them this response asks: Does the meta-text of *Supernatural* continually return to an imagined wound, attempting in each return to reframe the experience of this initial violation but in these returns, realizing it can never recover that original separation.

Dean Leetal

This work explores fanfiction written for people with PTSD as a form of disability activism. It suggests that activist strategies are not universal, but instead should be tailored for specific communities' structures, skills and intersectional positionings. It demonstrates ways fanfiction as activism is implemented to promote destigmatization of mental illnesses, and promote the rights, well-being and pleasure of neurodivergent participants. Finally, this paper provides characteristics by which to recognize or create this type of activism, alongside or as an alternative for traditional activism.

Lauren Rouse

I want to present preliminary findings from a research project that I have been working on throughout this summer. The research focuses on works from Archive of Our Own (AO3), a fanfiction website, that have the tag of Covid-19 or quarantine. Initially, these works seem like a way of collective grieving for online communities and a way to band together through the hardships of a global pandemic; however, these works often gloss over the systemic abuses faced by BIPOC during the pandemic in favor of highlighting a white-centered romance. Drawing from historical examples of the J2 Haiti Fic, as well as recent discussions from fan scholars about AO3's inaction against racist literature on the website, this presentation will briefly examine the perpetuating white supremacy and privilege in these fics that is often overlooked by their authors and the ethics of telling trauma.

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

21:00-22:30

“So, this is how liberty dies; with thunderous applause”: Fandom, Politics, Public Discourse and Democracy

CarrieLynn D. Reinhard

Moderated by Ashley Hinck

Western civilizations commonly frame news and politics as informative, to encourage logical public discourse to promote collaborative problem solving. Fandom, however, is primarily affective-based, with motivations to consume influenced by emotional relationships to some object of affection. However, in the 21st century, many journalists, political analysts, and politicians reconceptualize citizens and constituents as fans. For example, politicians talk about their loyal constituents and utilizing grassroots campaigns in ways similar to media producers discuss their fans. Thus, a politician builds a fandom around themselves and persuades it to engage in certain civic activities. This type of political organizing, however, often becomes criticized as populism and is seen as antithetical to democracy. Such framing would see fandom as antithetical to democracy.

It may also be true, however, that such affective organizing exists at the core democratic participation, providing the impetus to become involved, and thus fandom essentially has always been a part of democracy. If citizenship is performance, and fan communities provide a space in which to experience and enact a political identity, then when citizens or politicians bring fandom into politics, they do so based on generating an affective citizenship to encourage political citizenship and help people fulfill their legal-judicial citizenship. Western-style democracies, for example, perhaps cultivate and encourage affective political engagement, at least since the rise of “commoners” voting. This salon tackles the question: “what would happen to political engagement and democracy if we consider citizens as fans, and what are the benefits/drawbacks of this type of framing?”

Namita Gupta

The mass popularity enjoyed by the current Prime Minister and BJP leader Narendra Modi and the politicization of the youth in India in recent years can be seen as the culmination of a democratic political process functioning through the creation of political fandoms.

Rise of the right-wing party BJP from the Opposition to the ruling party under Modi coincides with the rise of mass media (especially television) which further consolidates the para-social relations political fandoms depend on to elicit loyalty amidst citizen-fans. For instance, Modi’s 2014 election campaign utilized an unusual media strategy of using selfie booths where individual fans could meet a virtual avatar of the leader and his political rallies were characterized by masses donning Modi face masks to show their support. Subsequently, voters are not organized around policies, but rather affective ties with the individual leader lead them to align themselves with policies granted by him.

Instead of focusing on his policy decisions, the populist leader is presented as a heroic messiah, a mere chaiwallah (tea-seller) who became the nation’s chawkidar (protector/gatekeeper) through his grit and ability to make hard choices. His self-fashioned heroic narrative becomes doubly powerful (and insidious) through a clever borrowing of a religious language in his often-jingoistic campaign speeches. Modi talks in the third person, presenting himself as the protector of the ‘threatened’ religious values of the Hindu majority and the borders of the nation against foreign forces through a manipulation of personal as well as national history to create a fiction of reviving India’s ‘Hindu’ past at the global stage.

This organization of citizens-as-fans also allows Modi to reclassify supporters of other political parties as ‘anti-fans’ and reduce the multi-party democratic system of Indian politics to a ‘David vs Goliath’ binary narrative’, a man against a range of political parties. Thus, political beliefs and debates are organized around a central figure, Modi while the political leader is able to manipulate religious tensions and nationalist sentiments to his benefit in a way unprecedented in Indian political history.

Stacey Lantagne

The law, like fandom, has a canon text that it seeks to dissect. One of the theories judges use to try to interpret the Constitution is originalism, which, at heart, seeks to determine the intent of either the people who wrote the Constitution or the people who ratified it. I would argue that originalism should be understood as a type of real person fiction (RPF).

Originalism and RPF are both seeking to interpret a common “text,” and they have both settled that the best way to interpret the raw material is to imagine what the unknowable people behind the public statements might think. Further, the danger of “tinhatting” – beginning to believe that the fictional circumstances depicted in the RPF are, in fact, true – looms over both RPF fandoms and originalist judges. Thinking of originalism as tinhatting emphasizes the danger of its insistence that there is only one true interpretation of the minds of the people who wrote the Constitution. Originalists, like all tinhatters, pretend that the unknowable is fact, and that should be challenged.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

08:00-09:30

Good Fan, Bad Fan? Politics, Appropriateness, and Toxicity in Global Pop Culture Fandoms

Simone Driessen and Bethan Jones

Moderated by Louisa Stein

Between K-pop fans interfering with U.S. politics, calls for Disney's *Mulan* to be boycotted because of the lead's support for the Hong Kong police, and Taylor Swift's political revelations, this year has been an eventful one for fandoms worldwide. And although such developments are not new, fans and anti-fans alike seem more vocal about what they consider 'good' or 'bad' fan engagement. This salon explores the various practices, forms of engagement, and processes of the 'politics' of fandom in a global context. We are seeking contributions which ask what is acceptable, or appropriate fan engagement? And when (and who) do we consider these affective investments as good or positive, or harmful, 'bad', or even toxic? Beyond simply 'cancel culture', an overwhelmingly white, Anglo-centric form of boycott, we aim to address these types of engagement in a global context, to explore a worldwide emergence of, and offer a firm context to, this phenomenon. We are particularly interested in interdisciplinary perspectives, allowing scrutiny of these developments with fan studies at their core but also inviting perspectives from other disciplines and a global and/or transcultural context to better understand them.

Bertha Chin

#JYPE_CancelGOT7HKConcerts trended on Twitter in August 2019, initiated by fans of K-pop band, GOT7, due to perform a concert in Hong Kong, over concerns of increasing violence between police and protesters. When one of the band members, Jackson Wang, openly declared support for Beijing (and by extension, police brutality toward protesters) it invoked criticism and ire of pro-democracy protesters (who were also fans of GOT7). Wang's fans rallied to support their idol, calling out protesters as violent rioters, helping spread fake news and modified images of the protests on Twitter. Wang wasn't alone in his support of Beijing, as Disney now grapples with a #BoycottMulan campaign across East Asia prior to the film's release after its star, Liu Yifei posted a message in support of police brutality on Weibo.

The two cases mentioned, in relation to Hong Kong protests, problematises our understanding of fan activism and cancel culture. We accord positivity toward fan activism as it showcases political and social engagement, and we deride cancel culture for its toxicity. However, is our understanding further creating a binary of the good vs bad fan, appropriate vs inappropriate behaviour further structured by a Western-centric understanding of fan cultures and social/political activism?

Renee Ann Drouin

Online harassment, "disparaging, degrading, or threatening internet-based discourse that attempts to silence or otherwise undermine either its intended target and/or bystanders" (Gruswell) is ever present in fan spaces. Research has documented the anti-female GameGate, to abuse from male peers in the workforce against queer folk and women, to threats against minorities, and racism (Antunovic; Jane; Marwick and Caplan; Page). Primarily, scholarship documents how men harass others, especially in regards to gender and sexuality markers (i.e. othering women, queer folk, rape threats, silencing). Yet fan spaces affords a unique opportunity to explore and document how women and/or queer folk harass others, using the identity markers they embody and their positions as super fans to place themselves on a moral high ground, compared to other fans. To analyze how fans use what traits they embody to

abuse others, the *Voltron: Legendary Defender* (2016-2018) fandom was selected as a case study. *Voltron*, “vitriolic to the extent that many are deterred from engaging with the series due to the fandom’s reputation” (Hassch) and ranked among the worst fandoms of all time, across any type of media (Spies) was heavily populated by women and queer identifying fans, many of whom saw themselves in the diverse representation of the show. However, a small minority of fans, called *antis* (anti-fan), began harassing other fans and the creators of the show, falsely accusing them of pedophilia or supporting incest, attempting to dox them, and, in many cases, sending death.

Qian Huang, Simone Driessen, Daniel Trottier

Political engagement is a conscious strategy for some celebrities and their fandoms, but it can also be hijacked and brought in unintended directions, most notably in recent calls for the ‘cancellation’ of pop idols. This research compares two empirical cases of ‘cancel culture’ in idol fandoms in China and the U.S., namely controversies surrounding Xiao Zhan and Taylor Swift. Through close readings of these cases coupled with in-depth semi-structured interviews, the authors compare and contrast the practice of cancel culture against pop idols in China and the West. The research proposes to understand the practice of cancelling idols as a form of everyday political engagement (Flinders & Wood, 2018) and to understand the rise of cancel culture as a demonstration of the clash between neotribalism and traditional political identities. Idols and their fandoms must constantly (re-)negotiate these two types of political identity systems. This negotiation fuels self-policing in fandoms, with cancel culture as an extreme expression of these processes. Such self-policing differs in China and the U.S., reflecting the cultural and political environments that shape these fandoms. The readiness with which either an idol or their fans become the target of cancellation appears to be a key distinction between these environments.

Sarah Sinwell

In 2017, when it was announced that Marvel would be releasing Ryan Coogler’s *Black Panther* in February 2018, fans were excited that two of the titular character’s bodyguards, Ayo and fellow female warrior Okoye would get together as Ayo and Aneka do in the comics. However, when a Marvel spokesperson reached out to clearly state that the nature of that relationship in *Black Panther* would not be romantic, this black lesbian erasure from *Black Panther* sparked outrage among fans of the comic books. Thus, these fans of *Black Panther* turned to Twitter to encourage Marvel to #LetAyoHaveAGirlfriend. This paper maps out the ways in which social movements on Twitter function as a contradictory space for political and social advocacy: both facilitating online activism and cultivating online harassment and bullying. Through these hashtags, *Black Panther* fans participate in (re)producing cultural meaning and (re)creating alternative imaginaries for black queer representation. By (re)defining race, gender, and sexuality within the larger cultural zeitgeist of such franchises as *Black Panther*, this paper will argue that these Twitter campaigns promote political advocacy, rethink the ways in which blackness and queerness are constructed in relation to media franchises, and incorporate a politics of inclusion in contemporary media.

Mark Stewart

The salon’s provocation is clearly timely and apt - as we see fan movements that are more public, more “seen”, that are viewed by outsiders as having tangible action, the ways in which the appropriateness of fan behaviour is gauged by the varying stakeholders demand further analysis. In our early work on appropriate fandom, Bertha Chin and I have been careful to establish that appropriateness is not an external judgement levelled by us as academics (or even as aca-fans), but instead a way of understanding how each individual group establishes their own, often unspoken, understanding of what behaviours and practices are deemed appropriate. This occurs on multiple levels: within fandoms (intra-), between fandoms (inter-), and from external stakeholders, including the creative industries, the media, and the general public (extra-). The ways in which these different positions are shaped are

influenced by hegemonic power structures, including those of race and gender, which have often seen fan practices discursively stripped of political potential on the basis of the identities of their practitioners, or the cultural status of their fan objects. By developing a framework for understanding the application of appropriateness or inappropriateness across intra-, inter-, and extra-fandom communities, we get a step closer to drawing into stark relief the underlying intentions of each group, as well as their ongoing quest for ontological security.

Christina Wurst

Recent years have seen a rise in the visibility of conspiracy theories on social media – ranging from various truthers to QAnon to 5G or military experiments causing the Covid-19 pandemic. To some degree, conspiracies have always played an important role in many popular cultural fandoms:

Deciphering subtext (possibly promising fan-favorite pairings to become “canon”), finding clues in trailers, predicting plot lines based on behind-the-scenes pictures, as well as looking for secret messages (oftentimes about their relationships or fake babies) by celebrities in their songs or social media posts have always been an integral part of fan experiences – the search for the “truth out there” bordering between reasonable and far-fetched.

However, when does this behavior turn toxic and cause fandoms to fragment? What causes fans to turn from expert media analysts into “tinhatters”? How is this related to cancel culture? Why are fans sharing conspiracy theories even when it causes the rest of their communities to reject them and when are they considered “bad” fans? Are these processes similar to those that shape global political discourse? We can find answers to these questions if we look at fandom through the lens of the cultural, psychological and political functions of conspiracy theories.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

10:00-11:30

Fan-Made Histories

Philipp Dominik Keidl and Abby Waysdorf

Moderated by Lousia Stein

Fans demonstrate a broad interest in the past, both of their objects of fandom and of their own communities. They collect, catalog, preserve, restore, and publicly display historical artifacts and information in their own archives and museums. They study archival materials and collections, interview witnesses, and read historical scholarship, developing historical narratives and theses. Their research materializes in the form of analog and digital nonfiction media such as print and online publications, documentaries, podcasts, video tutorials, and pedagogical initiatives. Through their work, fans historicize their own fandom and tie it into broader historical questions, connecting to issues like heritage, race, sexuality, gender, and the nation. While some fans do this as community historians, focused on small and self-financed groups, others work within large and well-known cultural organizations and businesses, bringing this work into the mainstream.

The goal for this salon is to collectively discuss the question of how fans produce knowledge about the past and actively engage with history. Together, participants will explore practices, objects, and networks that have found little attention, such as: the distinct forms of historical media fans produce; community structures and hierarchies with history-making at their center: fan historians' relationship to the media industries; the impact of fan labor on cultural heritage; intersections between fandom and historical societies; discrimination and harassment in fan-made histories.

Stephen Cass

Furry historiography has largely been defined by the fandom's internal debates on sexuality, on fan identity and what constitutes "legitimate" faanish behavior, and on addressing negative stereotypes of furry fans in mass media. Consequentially, there has been little focus on the community's historical connections to fandom at large, including its cultural influences from science fiction and comics fandoms. While fan historians such as Fred Patten have collected and written a wealth of material, furry history-making, or "timebinding", has only been seriously attempted in the last decade. Whether in documentary-style videos and films or in the form of academic articles, furry fan history now seeks to address the roots and actual potential of this unique fan identity.

Lies Lanckman

My interest in this topic is connected to 21st century fandom of classic Hollywood stars; people whose careers have inspired fannish interest since their heyday in the 1930s-50s. Modern-day fans of such stars are essentially encouraged to engage as historians, actively seeking out information and materials using resources such as vintage periodicals, digital and physical archives, and more. Firstly, I am interested in thinking through what it means to "discover" one's star in this atypical way, which prompts a looking backwards through history from the fan object's death and their later and likely more easily accessible work, back to earlier materials and their genesis as a star. Secondly, on this backwards journey of historical discovery, the fan-historian may have to confront unsavoury discoveries: what to do, for example, with stars such as Barbara Stanwyck, who was rumoured to have been bisexual at the time and is now often championed by LGBTQ fans, yet who was also a Reaganite Republican in the 1980s?

Finally, then, I am interested in the way the modern-day fan uses this information, repackaging and remediating it using popular contemporary fannish expressions, such as memes, music videos, playlists, digitally disseminated fanfiction, etc.

Kyle Meikle

This contribution builds on fan studies' growing interest in theme park fandom (Kokai and Robson 2019, Williams 2020) by looking at one of the most significant genres associated with theme park fans: the point-of-view video. These fan-produced videos, which proliferate on YouTube, offer viewers first-person ride-throughs of attractions new and old and sometimes defunct; they both record and recreate those attractions, serving as both archives and as a kind of virtual reality. Needless to say, the significance of such videos has only grown during the COVID-19 pandemic, when they may be the only approximation of the theme park experience available to fans. This contribution approaches that approximation—and fan archival footage more generally—through Diana Taylor's famous distinction between the archive and the repertoire, between documentation and performances thereof.

Taylor Woodhouse

The practice of creating and posting history videos to YouTube has flourished among fans of multiplayer online video games like League of Legends in the past few years. While these videos document how the games have changed over time, they also construct images of fan communities and the ways in which “real” fans interact with games and with each other. Through my research, I have found that the majority of these videos reinforce the “hegemony of play” (Fron et al., 2007), an understanding of video game player communities as overwhelmingly young, white, cis male, and middle class. Rather than ascribing this to malicious intentions on the part of fan historians, I argue that much of the blame can be placed on the audiovisual archives from which fan historians draw. The exclusionary cultures and biased algorithms of sites like Twitch.tv and YouTube, which are vast repositories of archival materials about online games, render invisible the presence of players who do not fit into the hegemony of play, an invisibility that is replicated in fan history videos that use these sites as archives. Because the cost of storing audiovisual materials pushes fans to rely on free platforms like Twitch and YouTube, the case of video game history videos helps reveal the potential dangers of using corporate platforms as archives to preserve and write fan histories.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

12:00-13:30

The Future of Dis/ability Fan Studies

Olivia Riley and Leah Steuer

Moderated by Jacinta Yanders

As critical disability studies evolve, fan and audience studies have begun to engage with conversations around fandom and disability. We have seen a recent increase in scholarship particularly around embodied experiences of dis/ability, focusing around limited or frustrated access to fan spaces and modes of engagement such as cosplay, pilgrimage, and performance. We encourage intersectional approaches, ideally integrating multiple vertices of identity such as gender, race, sexual orientation, class, and more. Further, dis/ability as a material experience and identity operates within a larger ideological framework of ability and ableism—we welcome explorations of how ideologies of dis/ability operate in fan spaces, works, communities, etc. Participants may approach this prompt from interdisciplinary perspectives, including but not limited to sound studies, literary studies, geography, computer science, and/or philosophy. This salon calls for a deepening of those conversations: we ask participants to consider the ways fan studies has historically dealt with the identities and experiences of differently abled audiences, but also to consider how we might extend our theoretical and methodological scope to encompass the diversity of dis/ability within fandom.

Mark Duffett

According to Francesca Coppa, media fandom has a “high percentage of disabled participants.” In the music world, disabled fans have challenged their marginalization from live events through activist organizations such as Access All Areas. On the other hand, fan communities have often operated as more complex spaces of participation. Helen Meekosha and Russell Shuttleworth note, “Many disabled people... prefer to ‘pass’ in an able-bodied world... Or they might even... choose the identity of impaired but not disabled.” This complicates any conceptualization of dis/ability that focuses solely on the politics of inclusion and exclusion, extending attention further afield to consider the agency and representation of specific individuals or groups. One example is Gary Pepper, who had cerebral palsy. From the late 1950s onwards, as leader of the Tankers fan club, he was a central figure in the Elvis fan community. The story of Gary, and fans like him, suggests that a certain kind of ‘passing’ occurs where those with differently abled bodies contribute skills that are unconnected to their areas of impairment. This is not to say that status of such fans is invisible; in fact, it may even, despite wider disadvantages, also facilitate a fandom in specific ways. Rather than seeing dis/ability only as a matter of oppression or resistance, this approach places emphasis on the co-creation of community by participants who are all abled in different ways. Attention to fans like Gary could, if not romanticized, help us to further consider how to formulate fan studies in relation to an evolving critical dis/ability studies paradigm.

Brianna Dym

Dis / ability and fandom is a topic I find to be increasingly important as I continue to study online fan communities. As an information science researcher, I approach fandom as a site of study to observe how an online community serves as a space for resources and support for marginalized groups. Not only do fan communities tend to prioritize accessibility in their platform design (e.g. like with AO3), fandom is also a space where people talk about mental illness, provide support, and share resources in a way that can draw in people seeking support who might not even realize they need it. Because fandom is an affinity space where people gather over their shared love for something, it can intersect with other topics and bring people to discussions that would normally not participate, or not know to seek out those resources. I am interested in examining how fandom currently functions as a support space for people with

disabilities while also examining fandom's shortcomings as a support space. Taken together, these perspectives can help inform conversations toward making communities and platforms more accessible.

Lauren Rouse

The characterization of Shiro in *Voltron: Legendary Defender*, a Paladin who has a prosthetic arm and lives with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), allows for discourse about trauma and disabilities in the show, and sets up avenues for similar discussions in the corresponding fan fiction. However, despite the accurate depictions of Shiro's disability in the show, the fandom does not always follow the same careful handling, turning to disability tropes, "solving" a disability, or ignoring it all together. Developing my argument out of Kafer's (2013) work on crip futurity and McRuer's (2006) scholarship on crip theory, I analyze the ways that fans use disability tropes, such as pity, heroism, and the "noble-crip" (as an extension of the "super-crip"), in their *Voltron: Legendary Defender* slash, and how the reproduction of these tropes often promotes ableist and neoliberal hegemonic narratives. These narratives reinforce hegemonic identity politics and take disabled characters, like Shiro, and subject them to compulsory able-bodiedness and heterosexual domesticity, forcing them back under a "norm." Shiro is often "healed" of his PTSD with the love from another "good" male character, which then allows for the relationship to adopt heteronormative notions of domesticity in the epilogue or following chapter, as that provides the characters with the true "happy ending". In turn, these depictions reinforce normativity, undermine the inclusion that the show initially offers, and establish ableist narratives that permeate this fandom.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

14:00-15:30

Archival Research Workshop

Cait Coker, Jeremy W Brett

Moderated by Paul Booth

This workshop will introduce the basics of archival research for fan studies scholars. Drawing upon the wide variety of materials held at the Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Collection at Texas A&M and at other institutions, we will demonstrate how to locate relevant materials in library collections and how to conduct archival research virtually and in person by working through sample research queries. We will also provide a historical material overview to discuss the challenges of preserving and handling ephemera that truly were not meant to last as long as they have, and what this can mean for researchers going forward. We will also touch briefly on issues of access, copyright, and ethics in looking at these materials, as the custom pre-internet was for people to use their real names as well as pseudonyms, and the difficulties this can present when trying to publish work. If possible, we would like to contact participants ahead of time to share resource worksheets and see if they would be willing to share projects they may need assistance with in the workshop. The general idea is to make this as user-friendly as possible for scholars who want to learn how to do archival work as well as those scholars who may have never considered it a viable option for their projects.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

16:00-17:30

Emerging Phenomena in Fan Studies – A Student Perspective

Robert Moses Peaslee

Moderated by Paul Booth

This salon, populated by students in a Fall 2020 graduate seminar in fandom studies, spotlights research collaborations within the course, each of which explore fannish environments and practices in the context of 2020, a year of considerable upheaval, uncertainty, and cultural change.

“Joker Fans: Exploring Affect, Identity, and Politics in and around Todd Phillips’ *Joker* (2019)”

Gabriel Dominguez Partida and Nihar Sreepada

Cultural identity has become a fluid concept in which several positionalities converge, influenced to a great extent by popular culture and inviting audiences’ negotiation between their real lives and those of fictional characters. In 2019, Todd Phillips’s *Joker* achieved worldwide success not only in the box office but also by critical appraisal. Unlike previous representations of this villain as a disruptive social persona, however, *Joker* deployed the main character as a populist political figure who gives agency and voice to people who are socially excluded, forgotten, or repressed. The impact of this representation transcended Anglo cultures and provided avenues toward symbolizing populism and a growing anti-governmental sentiment in an international context. Here we discuss diverse audiences’ negotiation of the *Joker* text via two problematic ideologies: violence as the only alternative of restoring equality in society and a colorblindness that silences the struggles that cultures face depending on their context.

“Interactivity and Transmedia Fan Practices”

Philippe Chauveau and Koji Yoshimura

Fan practices surrounding transmedia intellectual properties have become increasingly salient along with interactive, paratextual technologies such as video games. For example, the recent Electronic Arts video game *Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order* presented a unique storyline that is considered canonical relative to the broader *Star Wars* Universe. Other recent examples of larger intellectual properties rendered into games include Marvel’s *Avengers* and Marvel’s *Spider-Man*, based on the larger Marvel properties of the same name. Additionally, several games have been adapted (with mixed success) to the big screen, such as *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *World of Warcraft*, and *Assassin’s Creed*. Here we will discuss recent transmedia storytelling ventures in light of extant literature on fannish practices, considering specifically how the interactivity inherent to video games may invite new ways of engaging with fan objects and communities—both from video games to other media, and from other media to video games.

“Streaming Gender and Gendered Streaming”

Jessie Rogers, Hannah Isett & Ali Kneisel

Fan communities can take many forms, one of which is the gaming community, in which players can stream their gameplay and adopt fan (or anti-fan) followings. In this discussion, we examine how the experiences within game streaming communities vary along gendered lines; how do fan interaction experiences around male, female, transgender, and nonbinary gamers differ? Similarly, how does fan-to-fan interaction differ based on gender identity? To explore these questions, we will report on preliminary data (interviews and scholarly articles pertaining to such issues) and compare examples of gendered fan/streamer interaction, particularly that which takes place via social media and streaming sites.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

18:00-19:30

Sports Pandemic: The Ethics and Possibilities of Sports Fandom During Times of Crisis

Noah Cohan

Moderated by Lesley Willard

What does it mean to be a sports fan during a global pandemic? During times of urgency and unrest over social injustice? As fans, what is our responsibility to athletes? To each other? In this salon, we seek discussants who will weigh in on the ethics of sports fandom during a time when athletes' health and well-being—always precarious and subject to the biopolitical control of capitalist enterprises—is further endangered by COVID-19 and the necessary bodily proximity of athletic competitions themselves. Furthermore, at a time when such capitalist enterprises have embraced “Black Lives Matter” as a corporate mantra to be plastered on jerseys, how can we best support athletes working actively for social change? In addition, we seek salon participants who consider the possibilities that this time of crisis presents for reshaping the world of sports and sports fandom. How might we transition to a mode of sports narrative consumption that better empowers athletes to improve their labor conditions, particularly at the collegiate level? How might we reformulate our conversations about looming medical crises like the concussion crisis in football in light of the epidemiological understanding of athletic precarity induced by the pandemic? Can we develop a more ethical way of participating in the sports industrial complex, or might we, in some small way, contribute to tearing it down? Finally, we encourage participation from those interested in the ways in which sports fandom has been fundamentally transformed by the absence of fans physical presence at sports stadiums and arenas. What does it mean to access sporting competition only in mediated spaces? What can this moment tell us about future developments for sports spectatorship and fandom?

Alex Kupfer

Since the murder of George Floyd, college athletes, particularly football players have individually and collectively used social media to address systemic injustice and to push for change at the institutional and societal level. These social media campaigns stand in contrast with earlier protests by Black football players at schools like Wyoming and Syracuse that ultimately ended with the players dismissed from the team. Current athletes have received greater public support from coaches, administrators, and teammates as some of their demands have already been agreed to. The press coverage of the players' efforts has discursively framed their use of social media (and sports more broadly) as a “platform” to advocate for change amidst a pandemic that shut down college campuses in the spring.

Drawing on the work of scholars like Tarleton Gillespie and Michael Oriard, this paper explores the significance of the discursive emphasis on athletes' use of online ‘platforms’ in three different, but interconnected, areas. First, how the term illustrates a marked shift in public discourse compared to earlier efforts to collectively address racial issues. Second, how a ‘platform’ positions athletes as intermediaries, particularly between the concerns of Black players and (predominantly white) coaching staffs or university administration. Finally, this paper considers how the term also helps athletes elide some of the tensions in using social media to push for change, as many advocate for all the major conferences to play football this fall, despite the ongoing risk to college students and fans.

Kasey Symons

Round 1 of the 2020 Australian Football League (AFL) season began with a Thursday night match on March 19. In the lead up to this game, the growing concern of the coronavirus was beginning to reach Australia and the league made the late call to prevent fans from attending, but to still proceed with the season. By Sunday March 22, the league conceded that the season was no longer tenable and announced the Sunday games would be the last for sometime as the season was suspended.

The Sport Innovation Research Group at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne scraped Twitter data from this opening weekend of the AFL to investigate the fan experience while being locked out of the stadium. Thematic analysis was done to investigate how fans connected to the sport, the growing concern from fans that the sport was being played in such precarious circumstances and their grief and mourning for the game after the season was postponed. This sample explores the complicated navigation fans experienced while trying to demonstrate loyalty and support, while also feeling increasingly uncomfortable, unsafe and concerned about the state of the world and will complement this salon's discussion topics with context from an Australian sporting league.

Elise Vist

Although accessing sports fandom only through mediated spaces may be new to some fans, used to enacting their fandom at live games and sports bars, this is not new for fans who have traditionally been excluded from those public spaces. Minority groups seek out alternative sports fandoms online, because normative public fandoms are hostile. Some join activist fandoms, with the goal of remaking public fandom. For example, much of the NHL's recent foray into corporate anti-racism can be traced back to the work of Renée Hess and the Black Girl Hockey Club. However not all ethical fandom must be in the service of direct activism. Not only is that exhausting but it's also an unfair lens that punishes non-normative fans for wanting joy. Instead, fans also form intimate publics (Berlant). These small groups of fans gather in private online spaces and use their own fannish languages in order to accommodate their desires. In NHL fandoms, this might include the understanding that the NHL is bad and in need of reforming, that queer NHLers exist, that Sidney Crosby is autistic, etc. The goal of these fandoms is not to change hockey but to make a space in which it is possible to find joy in it, even if that means "using the raw code" (Munoz) of hockey fandom to make a new one.

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

20:00-21:30

Chinese Fandoms

Lan Tian, Xiaofei Yang, Zhuo Zeng

Moderated by Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein

"Pains and Gains of Fan Laborers: A Case Study of Joker Fandom"

Liang Ying

The communication practice of fandom on social media has become a subdivision issue in the digital labor debate in the 21st century. Instead of arguing whether fans are negatively exploited by the digital capitalists or are positively empowered in participant culture, this paper holds the position that these two mechanisms co-exist in the communication practice of fandom on social media. This dissertation argues that it should be noticed that fans are not only members of fandom but also are users of social media platform, which makes their free labor exploited by kinds of capitals such as the social media platform, the star agency and the advertisement simultaneously. Moreover, the values produced through fandom communication practice contain both the profits of capitalists as well as the meanings and relations of sub-cultural groups.

Therefore, this paper tries to draw a thick description of Joker Xue's (a Chinese singer) fandom communication practice on Microblog(a Chinese social media), especially on how they contribute efforts to promote Joker Xue's career through accumulating network traffic (zuo shu ju) in their everyday life. Based on qualitative data gathered by virtual ethnography and in-depth interviews, this paper will answer the following questions: 1) How do fans perform digital labor? How do they perceive their pains? And how these pains are exploited by different types of capitals? 2) Why do fans perform such digital labor? What difference does it make to these fans? And what are their gains?

It is found that by repeatedly switching accounts, sending likes and sharing blogs, etc., digital works are accomplished by fans in their leisure time wherever they are at home, work or school, thus blurring the boundary between work and play. The space of fandom practice is becoming the social factory of different kinds of capitals such as the social media platform, the star agency as well as the advertisement, and the commercialization of fandom communication practice is thus happened. The commodities produced by fans include the data commodity, the public relation service commodity and the symbol commodity.

On the other hand, fans also utilize the space and technology made by capitals to construct their own meanings and relations as well as accumulation of social capital and money. The communication practice allows fans to find symbolic solutions in real life and achieve their alien way of socialization. Moreover, sub-cultural power can be achieved by fighting for the right of fandom practice. Thus, it is the mutual-embedding between the ideology of commercial and the ideology of sub-culture that produces the 'consent' of fan laborers. Pains and gains coexist in fandom communication practice.

“The Clash of Fandom and Passer-By: How Does Conflict Between Real Person Fandom and Other Netizens Happen” **Zhuo Zeng**

Before the signal given by the government in July this year, the war between Xiao Zhan’s fandom and their opponents in China has lasted for almost five months from the representative event of ‘Banning AO3’. In this long-lasting boycott towards fandom and its ‘totem,’ it is necessary to rethink ‘fandom’ at a new stage, linking with commercial star-building model and the introspection into platformism. By participatory observation, this essay examines crucial points during the period. From the view of Xiao Zhan’s fandom, their love supports them to legally use the rule of the platform to ‘fight’ for Xiao Zhan. Including tip-off dissenting comments till the accounts or topics are sealed, delivering mass-produced positive comments under key words, or purchasing Xiao Zhan’s advertised products in a large amount. In this way, Xiao Zhan’s fandom could protect his ‘commercial value’ so that he would have more chance to show on the screen. While from the other netizens who were accidentally hurt by these organized operations, they voluntarily gather with hate and join the boycott team to counterfire Xiao Zhan’s fandom. Including creating negative tags about Xiao Zhan on the social media platform, resisting commercial products like Xiao Zhan’s TV drama, etc. Still, the war does not seem to end and even escalate to serious cyber violence sometimes. Till now, the official department has announced to firmly strike the extreme behaviors from the fandom side as well as ‘negative’ values from the boycotting side. With the former discussion about fandom leading to open participatory culture, the above anti-fandom activity shows how the entertaining capital could ‘kidnap love’ from fans and invisibly threaten netizens’ right to present their ideas.

“Women’s Engagement with Gay Male Discourse in Chinese New Media” **Xiaofei Yang**

Abstract (200-250 words): The socialist market-economic reform, along with development of the internet have brought about sea changes to Chinese society in the last three decades. In terms of gender, scholars have acknowledged how youths and women, with rising buying power and access to the internet, have contributed to the diversification of gender traits and representations in Chinese society. In this context, BL/slash fandom is considered as a crucial locus for the proliferation of gay male representations. Meanwhile, gay male discourse can also be seen in general new media content, and even in real life, indicating fans’ potentiality in transforming China’s patriarchy. Despite their entwined relationships, there remains a pressing lack of scholarly discussions on the interactions between female slash fans’ initiatives and proliferation of gay male discourse.

In this study I focus particularly on women’s engagement with gay male discourse in slash fan videos and movie narrations on the platform Bilibili. Departing from a constructivist epistemology, I adopt a combined theoretical framework of post-modernist feminism and queer theory. Empirically, semiotics and individual, semi-structured interviews facilitate my interpretations of representations of gay male discourse on the one hand, and female slash audience’s lived experience in relation to these representations on the other. Hence this study builds up connections between the formerly disconnected, yet highly relevant fields, namely female audience’s activities in slash fandom and the circulation of gay male discourse both in and outside fan culture, and explores the positions of female slash fans within Chinese gender culture, in the hope for a future transformation, if not subversion, of the discursive system towards gender equity.

Thursday, October 15, 2020

08:00-09:30

The Practice and Politics of Theme Park Fandoms

Kyle Meikle, Rebecca Williams

Moderated by Paul Booth

This salon invites participants to address the pleasures and politics of theme parks fans in the current moment, when closures related to COVID-19 and widespread protests against racism have fundamentally refigured the practices and politics of those fandoms. In the past several months, theme parks around the world have been forced to close due to the pandemic, while they have also found themselves the focus of political debates linked to the enforcing of wearing masks on-site and, in Disney's case, representation and the Black Lives Matter movement. These developments have had an enormous impact upon fans who have often been ignored or maligned and misunderstood.

Jess Gibson

Over the years Disney has reimagined a number of their theme park attractions - some have been replaced with current IP's whilst others have seen changes from public pressure around representation and challenging outdated depictions. From replacing non-IP's with the latest animated success (Maelstrom and *Frozen*) to announcing the retheming of Splash Mountain after an online petition from fans because of the problematic racial stereotypes in the film *Song of the South*, the parks are always changing. By using critical race theory and critical disability theory we can recognise problematic representations in Disney animated films and identify future changes that could be made in the Disney theme parks. Previous replacements have led to discussions, debates, and even outcries by fans who don't want to lose their favourite attractions from the parks (e.g. The Great Movie Ride in Hollywood Studios, WDW, Universe of Energy and Maelstrom in Epcot, WDW and the Tower of Terror in Disneyland). My salon contribution starts to think about the problematic stereotypes in Disney animated films that can still be found in the parks, and what the potential replacement for these representations could be (for example Gran Fiesta Tour Starring *The Three Caballeros* in the Mexico Pavilion, Epcot could be rethemed to Pixar's 2017 film *Coco* and The Enchanted Tiki Room in Adventureland, Magic Kingdom could be replaced with a *Moana* show). It will also think about the nostalgic connection that many Disney fans have with these attractions and fan discussion around classic attractions and IP's. What are the politics for fans enjoying attractions that are potentially problematic? How do fans negotiate their pleasure and attachment with a reimagined attraction?

Sabrina Mittermeier

When Walt Disney World reopened in July 2020, just as Covid-19 infection rates were rising again in the state of Florida, the company received a huge backlash from both commenters on social media, including fans, as well as journalists. Much of the criticism was heaped on a "Welcome Home" video ad the company had released, which was then edited into a horror-film like trailer. On social media platforms such as Twitter, the clip was spread widely, and many drew comparisons to Jurassic Park and similar dystopian visions of theme parks. It seemed even die-hard Disney theme park fans were disheartened by the company's decision to re-open, especially as the Californian Disneyland remained closed, and Hong Kong's park that had just opened, had to shut its doors again amidst rising numbers in the country. Journalist coverage of these events, such as in the New York Times, echoed these sentiments and seemed to fall into the well-known trap of dismissing fans of the Disney parks fans as brainwashed or childish - especially when they expressed the sentiment that the parks were their safe space or returning to them signaled

normalcy. In my contribution to the workshop, I want to discuss fans' difficult relationship with Walt Disney World amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, the ripple effects it has created in the fandom, as well as its perception in the media.

Carter Moulton

In this uncertain moment for the theme park industry, both Disney and Universal have sought to protect and enhance their experiential offerings by drawing, bolding, and playing with the various geographic and symbolic lines that separate domestic and touristic spheres of life. This has been done by, paradoxically, invoking discourses of home—Disney Parks' much-maligned "Welcome Home" ad that went viral on Twitter—while at the same time bringing bits and pieces of the park experience home and inviting fans to "visit soon and compare your homemade versions to ours!" Whether through the release of secret park recipes and custom Zoom backgrounds or the incorporation of fan works into official promotional campaigns—fans' "sweded" ride recreations on TikTok, for instance—these marketing moves work to reify an idea about "ordinary" recreations and "extraordinary" experiences. Such marketing initiatives are consistent with today's broader network of transmedia tourism sites, which increasingly call on franchise fans to move not only between platforms and screens, but across communities and countries as well—to cross a line as touristic "hunters and gatherers" (Jenkins 2006: 133), seeking authentic experiences "in other 'times' and other 'places' away from that person's everyday life" (Urry & Larsen 2011: 10).

#VoicesFromHome: Disney Fans, Labor, and Pandemic Pleasure

Tom Robson

Following the Spring 2020 shutdown of the Disney theme parks due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Walt Disney Company began releasing a series of videos labeled "Voices from Home," featuring edited ensemble recordings of some favorite in-park performance groups, such as the Dapper Dans, the Voices of Liberty, and Mariachi Cobre, to give fans a touch of Disney magic from afar. Though recorded at the beginning of the shutdown, when Disney continued to pay its employees, most of these recordings were released later. These releases largely occurred during a period when the performers—most of them members of the Actors' Equity union—were furloughed. My salon abstract begins an analysis of Disney fans' responses to these digital, socially distanced performances, intersecting with the questionable labor practices of presenting work as freshly made when it had, in fact, been recorded prior to all of those performers being furloughed. What are the politics of pleasure during a pandemic causing physical, emotional, and economic devastation to the performers? How do fans align their pleasure with their purported commitment to the performers?

Thursday, October 15, 2020

10:00-11:30

Online Spaces: The Present and Future of Virtual Fan Conventions

E. Charlotte Stevens

Moderated by Lesley Willard

Online Spaces: The Present and Future of Virtual Fan Conventions (E. Charlotte Stevens and Sebastian F.K. Svegaard)

Many fan conventions have been postponed and cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. However, some smaller fan-run conventions (e.g. WisCon, VidUKon, CON.txt) translated their in-person programming into virtual forms. The necessity of moving online enacts and potentially redefines 'fan spaces'. For example, this summer VidUKon used the new Conline platform for vidshows and panels, and a Discord server for conversation. This fannish 'space' expanded across time zones and continents; however, while this facilitated broader access (to a con typically held in Wales), the text-based and fast-moving Discord chat raised accessibility issues along multiple axes including physical limitations, mental load, and attention span. In this salon we will discuss online conventions – as fandom studies scholars, con attendees, and organisers – and reflect on what responses to the crisis reveal about how media fandom events are planned and run.

Naomi Jacobs

The first science fiction conventions were held in the 1930, long before the internet existed. Through these events, geographically distributed fans convened and shared their fandom in real-time, in a way that was otherwise impossible. The remit of conventions has since expanded dramatically, and now there can be other key functions such as commerce, or unique live experiences including interactions with celebrities. Conventions have long been hybrid digital/physical spaces. As a convention organiser in the 2000s, extra digital infrastructure had to be negotiated to keep fans online, beyond what non-fan events of a comparable size required. Digital tools can help coordinate events (e.g. Grenadine event planner), or may be used by organisers or participants for broadcast and widening participation, in sanctioned or unsanctioned ways (see Jacobs, 2018). Now, events which are unable to exist in physical spaces due to the pandemic are experimenting with solely online venues. However, the design and affordances of digital spaces can have an impact on the ways that interaction occurs within them. I am interested in examining the wide range of experiences that come under the banner of 'convention', whether digital spaces could or should attempt to replicate them, and how digital form affects function.

Melanie E.S. Kohnen

My salon contribution focuses on SDCC@Home, the virtual version of this year's San Diego Comic-Con. I explore organizers' and fans' investments in replicating the spaces and schedule of the in-person convention, and how these investments aligned with or diverged from the media industry's promotional goals. Comic-Con International created a linear four-day schedule, assembled a virtual map-based exhibit floor for shopping, and shared PDFs of SDCC signage that enabled fans to transform their living rooms into Hall H (the largest panel space in the convention center). From a fan perspective, SDCC@Home was a success; social media chatter enabled communal reminiscing of previous cons and shared frustrations over glitches in online merchandise sales. The largest SDCC fan blog hosted a live four-hour get-together. Some fans even travelled to San Diego to experience cherished spaces like the convention center in person and to host spontaneous meet-ups. The industry response

varied: Hollywood offered carefully edited pre-recorded panels with limited fan interaction, which the trade press deemed disappointing, but many small vendors registered higher sales than usual. I argue that SDCC@Home underlined that SDCC is more than a star-studded Hollywood promotional machine; rather, interstitial moments like waiting in line with friends or chance encounters with celebrities on the street loom large in fans' memories of the convention. Most significantly, it is the in-person experience in San Diego that often brings fans' and industry's interests into alignment. Without that, Hollywood's quantified definition of success (YouTube views, social media reach) fell short of expectations while fans' desire for community, shared memories, and targeted consumption was better met in the online environment. While popular conversations around SDCC often reduce the convention to the most buzzworthy panels by the likes of Marvel Studios, this year's SDCC@Home gave smaller moments a chance to shine, like fan artists hosting live drawings or small panels that would only draw an audience of twenty in person receiving hundreds of views on YouTube. This shift in attention is a good reminder to scholars that even consumption-drive conventions like SDCC contain numerous spaces and experiences and that fans often value small unplanned moments more than meticulously planned spectacles.

“Technology and the Online Con Goer”

Sebastian F.K. Svegaard

The recent sudden and dramatic change in interaction prompted by Covid-19 has had remarkable effects on several levels. Many of us have found ourselves teaching, advising, instructing, learning, meeting and socialising through online platforms, some old, some new. Conventions and conferences have of course not been spared, but provide unique challenges as events move to online only formats. They are large scale events with many participants where one-way communication is perfect for some elements, such as panels, but inadequate for others, such as workshops, and impossible for yet others, such as dealers' rooms. These challenges mean that cons differ from such events as stage performances - and even academic conferences such as this one.

In this environment, it is worth thinking through what affordances online platforms give - and which they take away - and how this impacts different groups of con goers. Using the 2020 VidUKon as my starting point, I will consider the experiences of online cons. Especially VidUKon's use of a unique platform, Conline, created for the purpose of showing vids at cons, and integration of Discord as a social element will form the basis of the discussion, which will also integrate autoethnographic experiences of being a part of the con's different tracks and formats, as a vidder and vid watcher as well as a researcher.

Thursday, October 15, 2020

12:00-13:30

Re-Imagining Fan Studies in the Age of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter Workshop

Aya Esther Hayashi

Moderated by Jacinta Yanders

That fan studies has a whiteness problem is not novel. In the age of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter, the need to address it has become all the more urgent. Yet in a classic case of people in positions of power and privilege misunderstanding the difference between intent and impact, fandom and fan studies are failing to deal with how white supremacy manifests within. There are ways to have this conversation done well, and well, we're not doing it.

I do not claim to be an anti-racism expert. As a Japanese-American with affluent parents who were a shining example of the Model Minority immigrant experience, I have walked through life with privilege and been complicit in white supremacy for most of my life. My own learning has grown significantly since I joined the People's Theatre Project (PTP), an explicitly antiracist nonprofit that creates ensemble-based theatre with and for immigrant and BIPOC communities in New York City. Dismantling racism is a core part of our work. At PTP, we talk frequently about drawing on the "collective genius" of our artists, staff, and leadership to advocate for racial equity in the nonprofit industry and NYC's arts and culture scene.

Drawing on my experiences at the People's Theatre Project and as a scholar of color, I propose a workshop to reimagine fan studies a more equitable, anti-racist discipline. Too long, we've lived a deficit narrative that only serves to reinforce white privilege and the erasure of BIPOC fans and acafans. Drawing on the collective genius of the people who attend, the goal of the workshop will be to disrupt the deficit narrative of academia, create a brave space, and work towards developing a list of actionable items that can set fan studies up as a more equitable space in the short-term and long-term.

N.B., the workshop will require you to have space to move around (though the space does not have to be in view of the camera).

Nadkarni, Samira. "A discipline overrun with whiteness': #FSN2019 and Making a Statement - A Guest Post," Stitch's Media Fix.

May 13, 2019. <https://stitchmediamix.com/2019/05/13/fsn2019-and-making-a-statement/>.

Phillips, Tom. "#FSN2019," February 11, 2019. <https://fanstudies.org/2019/02/11/fsn2019/>.

Yanders, Jacinta. "Workshop: Decolonizing Research and Teaching," Fan Studies Network - North America Conference. October 26, 2019.

Thursday, October 15, 2020
14:00-15:30
Bloomsbury Publication Session
Rebecca Barden
Moderated by Paul Booth

Join Senior Editor Rebecca Barden for this publishing workshop on Writing for the BFI Film Classics series.



Thursday, October 15, 2020

16:00-17:30

Fandom and American Political Culture

Ashley Hinck

Moderated by Lori Morimoto

Writing in the midst of the 2019 Democratic Presidential, New York Times essayist Amanda Hess argued that fandom is “now a dominant mode of experiencing politics.” Indeed, our current political moment is filled with examples. Elizabeth Warren’s supporters call her Hermione Granger, and Harry Potter readers have likened Betsy Devos to Delores Umbridge. The K-pop community has united to troll Trump campaign rallies and raise funds for Black Lives Matter. Harry Styles fans have attempted to mobilize his image as a populist figure, and Bernie Sanders followers have proven themselves devoted Stans through two election cycles. The turn toward popular culture fandom has introduced new practices into political campaigning, created new networks for political action, and offered citizens new ways to think about what it means to be politically engaged. This salon will examine these developments and more, with a focus on the question: how do citizens marshal the incredible resources of fandom to participate in American political culture?

Comforting Masculinity: Constructions of Andy Beshear Using Popular Culture

Kyra Hunting

In one meme Kermit the Frog pats the head of a tiny mouse in bed over the image is written “Andy Beshear” and “the people of Kentucky.” In another he is a muscled superhero holding back a careening bus. These two memes, common in the early days of the Coronavirus pandemic illustrate the dichotomous ways in which popular culture characters were deployed in political memes on the Facebook Page “Andy Beshear Memes for Social Distancing Teens.” The popular Facebook group has over 200,000 members and was created in support of Andy Beshear’s handling of the CoVID-19 pandemic. While its posts are heterogenous, including articles about the virus, notifications about services, and other content its central role was collecting and circulating pro-Andy Beshear memes related to the pandemic.

These memes helped construct an image of Andy Beshear of comfort and strength in a time of acute anxiety. The support for Beshear on this page was, implicitly, about his policies in response to the virus but was explicitly about the man and the way in which he made fans feel safe or that he could trust them. The bulk of these memes constructed two seemingly contradictory images of masculinity: one drawing on children’s media figures like Mr. Rogers and Kermit depicting a nurturing, caretaking masculinity and one drawing heavily on Superhero franchises depicting an aggressive, powerful masculinity. I argue that both sets of memes are seeking to fulfill the same emotional need - to construct a model of Andy Beshear that is comforting by showing him as capable of protecting the “vulnerable” citizens of Kentucky. The page also regularly refers to Beshear as “daddy.” While in American culture there are sexualized dimensions to that term that are sometimes activated, in conjunction with the memes the language often further reinforces visual representations of Beshear that use popular culture to frame him as caretaker and protector; a father figure for the state. This presentation will argue that these memes exploit the greater flexibility accorded to representations of male politicians in public culture memes (Hunting, 2019) to construct two alternate images of Beshear: a compassionate and nurturing caretaker commensurate with newer models of masculinity and a powerful,

aggressive defender commensurate with traditional masculinity that serve the same social and psychological need in times of crisis.

AOC and the Squad: The Intersections of Marginalized Identities and Political Fandom

Lucy Miller

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib, and Ayanna Pressley have been collectively referred to as the Squad since all four were elected to the House of Representatives in 2018. They quickly attracted a lot of fans, but while most fans have been supportive and demonstrate how political fandom transcends typical forms of engagement centered around partisanship and constituencies, their popularity also reveals how political fandom can intersect with marginalized identities, including gender, race, ethnicity, and class, in negative ways. Fan engagement with members of the Squad often resembles that of other angry and resentful fans, such as lashing out at members for not meeting expectations as with any other fan object or trying to capitalize on their popularity by creating alternatives such as the Conservative Squad. My analysis seeks to better understand the challenges to those with marginalized identities that are found in political fandom as a form of political engagement.

Ashika Paramita

Superhero comic books, as cultural texts, are not only shaped by social reality but also, in turn, hold the power to shape social reality itself (Kellner, 1995, 2003). They possess the ability to subvert and resist dominant hegemonic values and practices (Barker, 1989; Duncan, Smith, & Levitz, 2009; Fawaz, 2016; Strömberg, 2010). This paper looks at Marvel Comics' Ms. Marvel in the context of the divisive racialized political discourse used by the Trump administration. The analysis will focus on how Ms. Marvel comics represent the Trumpian Other, as well as the empowering dialogue that opens up between its creators and fans, with a particular attention to the attitudes towards ethnic and racial minorities. In doing this, I seek to explore how the development of the main character, Kamala Khan/Ms. Marvel, and the way fans connect with the comics, position Ms. Marvel as not only a site of social critique but also as a form of public pedagogy that plays a critical role in promoting social transformation and resisting the dominant ideology espoused by the Trump administration.

U. Bruce Texx

Donald Trump slash fic is a sobering example in the survey of American politics and fan work. From Archive Of Our Own's "Donald Trump - Fandom" to inclusion as op-eds in the New York Times, these visceral and contemporary works comprise an anti-fandom that uses the rhetoric of fan culture to stake its claims against him. Many of these claims center and transform his heteromascularity, particularly using humiliation to depower him—as a queer (non-straight) thing (non-man), adopting the more institutional US political practice of using heteronormativity as a measure of patriotism and worthiness of human rights that has become more overt in the post-9/11 era (see Puar and Rai 2002; Cohler 2006). While depictions of the "orange flabby sex monster" do not complete the xenophobic mold of the "monster-terrorist-fag," these fic complicate precedent claims of fan work, queer sex, and queering power (e.g. Busse and Lothian 2018) and affirm the view of a reflective relationship of fan work and cultural narratives (e.g. Callis 2016). From the mainstream to the subcultural level, fan-citizens are creating narratives of resisting Trump while throwing into question the possibilities of fandom in queering either national sexual politics or sexual politics among the refuge of fans.

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Thursday, October 15, 2020

18:00-19:30

Vid Show: Fan Video Refractions

Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein

Our annual vidshow, now held virtually! Hosts Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein curate a series of fun and important fan vids. Pop your own popcorn and bring your own tissues...

The vidshow schedule will be available on our website, Conline, and Discord .

Friday, October 16, 2020

07:00-08:30

Adolescents Fans and Material Culture

Pilar Lacasa

Moderated by Lori Morimoto

Despite their relevance, adolescent fan communities have been a neglected topic in academic studies. However, the Internet and mobile devices, the fact of living in a multiplatform society, define and configure these communities. The question is how they relate to those mediated by analog instruments. To what extent do the traits characterizing the Western youth world of today beget new ways of being a fan? We look for an interdisciplinary and transcultural conversation about fan practices, and their ties to multimodal discourses, material tools, affect, or relationships with cultural industries.

Matt Griffin

Over the past few decades, comic book fans and producers have made efforts to associate the medium with mature, adult-oriented, and often dark superhero storytelling. However, this belies the economic reality that traditional superhero comic book sales pale in comparison to the rising popularity of graphic novels for young children; the largest selling comic book publisher of 2019 was not superhero mainstays DC or Marvel Comics, but instead Scholastic, thanks to its incredibly popular comedy and coming-of-age graphic novels for young readers. Typical comic book fan consumption should possibly be thought of not as a twenty-something in a comic book store, but rather a fourth grader at their academic book fair. Reframing comic book fans as young children leads to a variety of potentially fruitful avenues, including the roles of toxic masculinity, misogyny, and homophobia in the insistence that comic books are dark and serious adult entertainment; the different methods of consuming texts and expressing fandom among different readers; and the potential methodological challenges of applying fan studies techniques to such young people. Questioning such dynamics could disentangle the understanding of comic book fandom from a number of biased social discourses.

Namita Gupta

The immense popularity of BTS, a K-pop idol group, dependent on multimedia content and social media engagement of the idols through carefully constructed personae provides an ideal site for reassessment of the new-age adolescent fan communities and the power that digital technology grants to them. Increased and direct engagement with the idols or the creators of the content, allows fans to become active participants in the meaning-making of their idols' fictional and real storylines. In other words, fans not only create meanings out of BTS Universe, their fictional selves, but also control the way these storylines translate into the real world through the perceived relationships between BTS members and their performance of themselves in 'real' life. In fact, digital fan culture marks the emergence of a new type of literary text – one that truly witnesses the death of a single authorial voice and one which is characterized by infinite play and perpetual incompleteness. The content makers provide certain signifiers across different media content (music albums, photos, videos, and even literary content like 'diary notes') that fans can use to produce infinite storylines which alter with every new release. Furthermore, these new fandoms usher in greater access and democratic possibilities – often paid material is made freely available to fans by other fans along with subtitling, undercutting filters of economic and linguistic privileges that control fandom sizes and produce more inclusive spaces of greater diversity. Any study of digitally-empowered adolescent fandoms need to account for these democratic possibilities, while being cognizant of a flipside: emergence of new forms of gate-keeping where some fans control access to content (and hence 'complete' stories) and can dictate rules for 'good fans' as well as employ significant influence over content producers/idols.

“Between Love and Hate: Disputes between Riverdelians Jugheaders and Anti-Jugheaders on Facebook”

Enoe Lopes Pontes and Clarice Greco

This paper aims to analyze the Facebook community Riverdale Brazil through Participant Observation, seeking to clarify what are its interpretative pluralities and how this element of dispute resonates within the teenage fandom. There are singularities within fan communities that characterizes them as groups that admire a particular product or individual (Jenkins, 1992; Hils, 2002; Booth, 2010, Lopes, 2013; Curi, 2014; Amaral, 2015). In each community the production of content and interaction may differ depending on the type of cultural product, the platform where the community is held or characteristic of its members such as age group, gender or race. Going even further, the same group may have internal disputes among its members. Within this logic, it is possible to notice a subdivision among Brazilian adolescent fans of the CW Network series Riverdale on Facebook. The main dispute is related to the character Jughead Jones, and whether the character is mean or not. The members are divided into Jugheaders and anti-Jughead. The observation of the group ‘Riverdale Brasil’ on Facebook led to the perception of a division among the members of this online community and how this fact is treated as an intrinsic consequence of the group. Although the page administrators make the community rules very clear, mostly about ship wars and intense arguments about the show, there is exasperation and banishment. The disputes come from two types of publication: the ones we call “Innocents” and the ones we call “Provocatives”. The first focuses on events, interpretations of the story or news about the character Jughead Jones and the actor Cole Sprouse who performs the character. On these publications there’s no negative content and some of them reveal the admiration and the affection of fans. The second type concerns publications that have an ironic tone, as if the author of the post intends to provoke disputes. Usually, those publications are related to Jughead Jones’ actions and also his interactions with his romantic partner, Betty Cooper.

The focus of the empirical research was the community Riverdale Brasil due to the number of members (more than 240 thousand), their age (the majority of teenagers was confirmed by responses to a form proposed by us) and the frequency of posts (20 to 40 new posts every day, which may vary depending on whether the show is on air or on hiatus). Another important fact was the unanimous presence of shippers on Riverdale Brasil. The results show that the main disagreement is related to the couple (Jughead and Betty) which some fans approve whereas many do not. The debate over his actions and morals in life and concerning the romantic narrative are suitable to the adolescent fandom in general. At this age, romantic life is a major part of social interaction (Steingel, Moreira e Lima, 2015), and the disputes can be part of the discovery and affirmation of their ideas and hopes about love.

“I’m in SKAM’: Adolescent Fans and Live Transmedia”

Julián de la Fuente Prieto, Iris Barraón Lara, Alba García Vega

The global success of the transmedia phenomenon SKAM (Sudet, 2020) is particularly relevant in Spain, where the Norwegian series has been adapted with its own script. This has caught the attention of Spanish-speaking teenagers, but also fans from other countries due to the originality of this remake. As a result, the adolescent fan communities around SKAM Spain present a complex network of interactions that range from collaboration in the editing of subtitles to the visibility of the GLBT + collective. This assumes that adolescents immersed in these communities live the fandom as a world (Hill, 2017) through which they can reproduce their identity and affections. In this sense, the transmedia strategy of the production company Movistar + has tried to promote this perception by the audience at all times (Stein, 2015), turning SKAM into a phenomenon that is as real as possible. A good example would be discussed in this presentation that involved the audience participation in recording and live broadcast of a chapter of the corresponding series to the third season issued between January and March 2020 event. The attending fans had a total immersion in the transmedia universe of SKAM (Tosca & Klasttrup, 2019) through live interaction with the characters, but also with the rest of the fans through social networks.

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Friday, October 16, 2020

09:00-10:30

From the Enormous Dunghill to the Garishly Diverse: Shakespeare and Anti-Fandom

Johnathan Pope

Moderated by Louisa Stein

In 1623, poet and playwright Ben Jonson famously commemorated Shakespeare as “not of an age, but for all time.” Since that time, Shakespeare’s reputation and central place in the literary canon and as Britain’s national poet has only grown, such that today, Shakespeare enjoys cultural ubiquity in Britain and across the globe. However, from Robert Greene’s annoyance at his peer as an “upstart crow” in 1592, through Voltaire’s dismissal of the “enormous dunghill” of Shakespeare’s works in the eighteenth century, and down to the present, Shakespeare’s value and relevance has been continually challenged. Relatedly, amongst Shakespeare’s advocates, we observe regular debates about the ‘right’ way to perform and interpret his work, debates that can take the form of antagonism and trolling (such as in a recent *Sunday Times* television listing that mocked the 2018 RSC production of *Romeo and Juliet* for being “garishly diverse in casting”). Through the lens of anti-fandom, this salon aims to consider opposition or resistance to and within Shakespeare in a variety of forms and in various historical contexts, ranging from: attacks on the literary/theatrical quality of his works; the various strands of the authorship controversy; questions about his appropriateness for specific audiences or performers; hatewatching or hate-reading Shakespeare; gatekeeping and/or ‘purist’ arguments about Shakespearean ‘authenticity’ that seek to restrict access to his work by marginalized voices and interpretations.

“Our Shakespeare, Ourselves: Fannish Reading and the Problem of the Sonnets”

Kavita Mudan Finn

Nearly every popular depiction of William Shakespeare—from John Madden and Tom Stoppard’s Oscar-winning Shakespeare in Love (1995) to Roland Emmerich’s much-derided Anonymous (2011) and Ben Elton’s All is True (2018), from innumerable novels to “The Shakespeare Code”—makes some attempt, seriously or otherwise, to identify the addressees of Shakespeare’s sonnets, the so-called Dark Lady and Fair Youth. My interest is less in these figures themselves than in the modes of reading that encourage such identifications, namely what Anna Wilson calls “fannish hermeneutics.” This type of affective reading emphasizes an emotional connection to the text, thus operating in contrast to the manner of reading favored by academic institutions, and can tell us far more about the reader than about Shakespeare. While I certainly do not propose to elevate one reading mode over the other—after all, at their worst, one reeks of pedantry and the other gave us the Oxfordians—it is nonetheless worth considering the sonnets in relation to fannish reading practices. The temptation to conflate the “I” of these verses with Shakespeare himself took hold in the eighteenth century and has persisted despite plenty of proof and context that argues the contrary; thus suggesting an affective resonance to that conflation and the potentially useful approach of delineating fanon Shakespeare from canon Shakespeare. We know notoriously little about the latter, and while the desire to create the former makes perfect sense, it is a path fraught with misogynist, classist, and even racist—in the case of the “Dark” Lady—assumptions that Shakespeare studies continues to untangle to this day.

“Redistributing Cultural Capital: The Transformative Power of Shakespop and the Problems with Gatekeeping”

Sophie Hanson

For many, Shakespeare has come to epitomise high culture. Resultantly, popular appropriations of Shakespeare are often deemed improper and illegitimate. Building on the work of Douglas Lanier, this paper interrogates such judgements by investigating the transformative potential of three Shakespop adaptations of Romeo and Juliet: Shakespeare in Love (1998), Gnomeo and Juliet (2011)

and the jukebox musical *& Juliet* (2020). Indebted to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital, this paper argues Shakespeare retains cultural capital which can be accumulated to gain an academic, and thereby social, advantage. It examines how each adaptation redistributes this cultural capital by interweaving high and popular culture, constructing Shakespeare as a character, and using the audiences shared cultural knowledge of Shakespeare to create humour. Finally, it explores how the anti-Shakespop argument and the financial cost of accessing Shakespeare ensure the cultural capital Shakespop seeks to redistribute remains firmly in the bank accounts of the middle-classes. It consequently raises an essential critique of gatekeeping: Shakespop has the potential to increase social mobility, yet not only is there a financial barrier at the point of entry but anti-Shakespop denies these adaptations the cultural space to redistribute cultural capital.

“Shakespeare in Gibberish: Hamlet the Clown Prince”

Taarini Mookherjee

Rajat Kapoor's *Hamlet the Clown Prince* has been a mainstay of the Indian English theatre circuit's repertoire for over a decade. Begun as an experiment melding Shakespeare, clowns, and gibberish, the success of this production went on to pave the way for three other experimental contemporary engagements with Shakespeare—I Don't Like It As You Like It; Nothing Like Lear and What's Done Is Done. Drawing on a shared cultural history and vocabulary from Charlie Chaplin to *The Lion King*, from commedia dell'arte to Samuel Beckett, *Hamlet the Clown Prince* is designed to appeal to the highly educated metropolitan audiences while simultaneously mocking them for an intellectual attachment to Shakespeare. While improvisation is at the core of this approach to Shakespeare, by far the most remarkable and disconcerting element of the production is its use of gibberish, alongside a combination of English, various European languages and a smattering of the vernacular of the particular performance context. This paper will focus specifically on the production's use of gibberish, both as performative mode and as adaptive process.

Gibberish is a term usually associated with incomprehensibility, to speak gibberish is to speak nonsense, both literally and metaphorically. Gibberish, in a less pedestrian sense, is that which belongs to no language, that which is an arbitrary invention. In this sense, gibberish dissolves the link between language and geography—it belongs nowhere and thus, the flip side is that it remains universally unintelligible, something that is apparent in the production's capacity to travel. Over the past ten years, this play has toured the metropolitan centres of India—Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai—and travelled abroad—South Africa, Indonesia, Singapore, and the UK to name a few. However, gibberish is also utilized as a pejorative evaluative term for language; unintelligibility is the term we apply to what we cannot understand, to what is strange and foreign to us. Framing this paper is the question of what gibberish offers in this production except a gesture towards opacity, or rather, the appearance of opacity? More broadly, how might we evaluate and analyze an adaptation or self-proclaimed “interpretation” of *Hamlet* that is premised on breaking down “difficult” Shakespeare into nonsense?

“Anti-Shakespeare Shrews: Feminism and Sexism in Shakespeare Biopics”

Edel Semple

On foot of Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V*, the 1990s saw a raft of Hollywood adaptations of Shakespeare. Since the turn of the 21st century, however, it is the man himself who has dominated the small and big screen. Shakespeare now makes regular cameos, appearing in works such as the BBC's *Doctor Who* (“The Shakespeare Code”, 2007), *Horrible Histories* (2009-2013), *The Lego Movie* (2014), and *Good Omens* (2019). Shakespeare's popularity in the new millennium is such that he has been the protagonist of biofictional films and series as diverse as *Anonymous* (2012), *Bill!* (2015), *Will* (2017), *All Is True* (2018), and *Upstart Crow* (2016-2019). The frequency, prominence, and variety of these depictions implies that Shakespeare's recognisability, cultural cache, and

entertainment value remains strong. Portrayals of Shakespeare have depicted him as a solitary genius – a brilliant but isolated prodigy – but in recent outings, he is more often embedded within a network of familial and socio-economic relations. The 21st century screen Shakespeare is typically likeable and beloved, surrounded by family, friends, and powerful associates who support and aid him in his endeavours. But screen Shakespeares are not lacking in opponents. On film and TV, he frequently encounters and defines himself against challenges and enmity from powerful men: in *Anonymous*, the Cecils covertly plot to manipulate the ‘real’ Shakespeare; in *Upstart Crow* the Master of the Revels Robert Greene is a recurrent thorn in Will’s side; and even in a family adventure comedy like *Bill!*, the hero must overcome a caricatured villain in the form of the Earl of Croydon. Anti-fans can even be found closer to home. As biofictions embed the viewer with the iconic author and introduce us to his immediate social circle, we discover that the women in his life are far from being his greatest admirers. In *Upstart Crow* and *All Is True* in particular, the harshest criticism of Shakespeare, resistance to his ideas, and hostility to his literary idolisation come from his wife and daughters – Anne, Susanna, and Judith – as well as his one female friend (the fictional Kate, a landlady’s daughter, in *Upstart Crow*.) But on what grounds do these Shakespeare haters hate? How are their causes and concerns presented? And are these female anti-fans ultimately defeated, suppressed, or validated? This paper proposes that gender politics currently form a crucial flashpoint for on-screen challenges to Shakespeare. Focusing on *Upstart Crow* and *All Is True*, this paper will explore the imagined disputes between Shakespeare and his female intimates in order to understand the valorisation of and resistance to his legacy in the 21st century.

Friday, October 16, 2020

11:00-12:30

Teaching Fandom: Fandom, Fanworks and Fan Studies in the Classroom

Jonathan A. Rose

Moderated by Paul Booth

The salon discussion is guided by the question of why we teach fandom and fan studies. It not only offers room to think about how fandom can be taught and integrated into educational settings but also allows us to reflect on the issues connected with moving fandom out of its originary setting and on our responsibilities as educators, scholars and fans in this context. Moderator Jonathan Rose has been inviting students to go down the fandom rabbit hole since 2016, looking at Victor/Clerval slash in his *Frankenstein* seminars, using *Harry Potter* fan theories to think about adaptations or literary theories or creating a multi-fandom fanzine together with his students, including those who hadn't heard of fanfiction before. Participants are invited to share teaching experiences, to discuss successes and failures in bringing fandom to the classroom, and to reflect on what fandom and fan studies have to offer in educational settings.

Tvine Donabedian

Incorporating fan studies into university classrooms can be rewarding for both educators and students. As a newer field pioneered by scholarship from various backgrounds, fan studies facilitates a flexible application of theory on an interdisciplinary level and allows students to engage with their personal interests in academic contexts. As a teacher's assistant in communications, I bring fan studies into my tutorials because I believe that students write better when they write about what they love when previously, they never considered academia a compatible space for their interests. A reoccurring issue with integrating fan studies into teaching is the underlying assumption among students that some fandoms are more worthy of study than others, that entertainment is only worth writing about when it engages in social commentary. For example, after encouraging my first-year undergraduate class to write critically about a television show, a significant number of students submitted essays analyzing episodes of *Black Mirror*. There exists a clear discrepancy between academic definitions of "fandom" and what non-academic fans consider fandom. Not all fans refer to their fan communities as "fandoms" and not all fan membership warrants a community approach. Through my own experiences as a fan studies scholar and educator, I aim to highlight the importance of breaching fan studies in classrooms as an avenue of diversification in academic understandings of fandom and the overlooked forms "non-fandom" fan communities can take.

Kelsey Entriakin

The Omegaverse fan fiction genre provides a curious opportunity to use fandom as a lens to discuss complex issues of gender identity and queer theory in literary coursework, but has some similarly curious pitfalls in this regard. As the ABO dynamics and "secondary genders" of the genre are removed from the physical bodies of classroom participants (assuming students have not had their genes spliced with wolves and/or are in possession of knotting penises or self-lubricating anuses), it presents an interesting opportunity to discuss how sex and gender interact and the socially ascribed aspects of both. Additionally, the secondary genders have the unusual purpose of interlacing gender and sex, without interrogating one's "primary" gender identity - leaving some aspects of self-identification unchallenged, while providing a space to question the ramifications of gender roles in society. However, the genre itself is limited by the connections it draws between sex and gender. Male Omegas are often capable of pregnancy and childbirth due to their "feminine" role as an Omega determining the reproductive capabilities of their sex - drawing concrete conclusions as to the role of the feminine gender and how it is determined by reproduction. While this produces interesting points of entry for trans narratives, the

often contradictory roles provided by the ABO dynamics offer freedom from typical gender associations as much as they restrict them to connectivity to sex and police them. Thus, the Omegaverse acts as a microcosm for some of the larger issues of using fan fiction as a lens for literary theory in the classroom. Namely, that the limitations of the fan fiction itself are reflective of the environments which produce them and shift arguments away from the fiction towards the writers. The Omegaverse could present an opportunity to discuss intersections of gender and sex not typically explored by available published fiction; however, the genre often explores these topics through a traditional gender binary suggesting the author experiences the world through this same binary. This suggestion of the commingled authorship and fiction results in a shift from discussing the fan fiction produced to discussing the producers of the fiction. As I have tried, with marginal success, to use the Omegaverse as a lens by which to discuss these very topics, I can assure my fellow salon-goers that discussions about the ABO gender dynamics quickly devolves into a conversation about who is writing about the ABO gender dynamics and speculating as to what their life consists of. While I have no other experience introducing fan studies into literature classrooms, I am curious to see if using fan fiction as a tool in similar contexts offers similar results.

Stacey Lantagne

I have been teaching a seminar on fanfiction to law students for the past six years. I proposed the class because the law has developed with very little acknowledgment of fan creativity, and I wanted to change the narrative on its value and how it should be encouraged. Teaching the course as a long-time fandom participant initially from New England to law students in the South has been a learning experience for all of us. In the beginning, I neglected to explain things that needed to be explained, expecting that the stories I was assigning would stand on their own two feet as valuable creative works. Having existed in fandom for so long, I was startled by my students' confusion about slash pairings – something I didn't even think about when I assigned the works and did not expect to be a part of the discussion of their legality. We have no canon text that is common among all of us, which makes contextualizing the fanfiction challenging. Approaching fanfiction as its own genre independent of the underlying canon texts has given us interesting insights into its impact, purpose, and legal status.

Regina Yung Lee

As detailed in a recent Symposium piece at Transformative Works and Culture (<https://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/1877/2297>), I am in the middle of overhauling my Intro to Fandom and Gender course – again. While the article discusses the stakes and purposes of the rebuild more generally, in this salon, I'd like to focus more specifically on how to account for the affective registers of student labor. Labor, and specifically gendered labor, is a topic with long fan studies history (De Kosnik 2009, Fiske 1991, Stanfill 2014), but building accountability and overt acknowledgment and assessment into evaluation tactics has been slow in coming. But as Data Feminism (D'Ignazio and Klein 2020) would put it, showing who does the work is a crucial part of feminist media pedagogies – especially for something like affective labor (demonstrating or projecting feeling toward others). In both individual and group projects, assessing things like genuine enthusiasm and sharing of fandom experience don't always make it into the summative rubric; I'd like to see that change, or at least find a clearer way of addressing the disparities for my students in the course. What I would bring to the salon is the work poured into making the syllabus a responsive and responsible document, the pedagogical work of helping students experience fandom in a controlled online environment (so as not to replicate events like TheoryofFicGate), and a deep experience of the inherent difficulties of teaching a course about connected online participation in real time. What I'm hoping to emerge with is a sense of best practices for the problem outlined above, and perhaps a collectively created set of evaluative principles, or even a rubric for immediate deployment in fandom classrooms nationally.

Friday, October 16, 2020

14:00-15:30

Fandom at Home: How COVID-19 Adjusted Perception and Participation

Caleb George Hubbard and Kyle A. Hammonds

Moderated by Paul Booth

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated a great deal of change, including forcing large social events (e.g. movies, sports events, concerts) to temporarily close or postpone. Many people self-quarantined in compliance with CDC guidelines. During this time, many digital programs were created for people to enjoy from their own homes. Such programs have facilitated the transitioning of various fandoms from public to private spaces. This salon investigates *fandom at home* and how COVID-19 has influenced the way[s] fandom is perceived and experienced.

Leah Dajches

For some fans, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a blessing in disguise. With increasing business and event location closures delivers the opportunity to increase intimacy with one's chosen fan object, as well as engage in innovative fan practices. Particularly, the Taylor Swift fandom has flourished during such isolation. On July 24, 2020, Taylor Swift released her surprise ninth album, *Folklore*. Due to social distancing guidelines, Swift and the Swiftie community were not able to engage in their normative fan behaviors (e.g., listening parties, fan meet-ups, etc.). Instead, Swift encouraged fans to stay-at-home and seek escapism through the narratives of her new album. As such, fan engagement increased in online spaces including Tumblr, Instagram, and Discord; creating near synchronous servers and message boards for fans to discuss the theories underlying Swift's songs. Ultimately, fostering fan connection with each other and perhaps more importantly, with Taylor Swift. The Harry Potter fandom also prospered online during the pandemic. While Potterheads have previously been studied within the fandom literature, recent fan and content creator behavior is noteworthy. Specifically, the "Harry Potter at Home" activity guides and the book chapter readings. Both practices not only encourage fans to stay safe at-home but also provide unique fan experiences. The online Wizarding World allowed fans to engage in intimate ways with Harry Potter celebrities (e.g., Daniel Radcliffe, Tom Felton) while also providing fans opportunities to participate both online (e.g., the final chapter being read by three Harry Potter fan families) and offline (e.g., downloadable games, puzzles, etc.). Although the above examples highlight only two fan communities, I believe it is important to engage in discourse that celebrates fandom during isolation. The COVID-19 pandemic has created novel approaches to fan engagement and ultimately, encourages fans to stay home; a practice that is not always fostered by political leaders.

Jasmine Proctor

Like many industries, the K-pop world has recently found itself shifting gears in terms of production and connection in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the restrictions in place for in-person gatherings, the industry has been moving towards more accessible means through their newest endeavour--'ontact'. Combining the ideas of "online" and "contact", 'ontact' promotional strategies seek to take the public settings of concerts, fanmeetings, and fansigns and bring them into private realms of domestic and foreign fans alike, blurring the previous boundary that was set in place due to cultural and geographical proximity. 'Ontact' tools have manifested in the form of successful virtual concerts like those held by BTS and SuperM, and even as video call fansigns as seen with Mamamoo's Moonbyul. Through this salon, I aim to probe further into how the success of 'ontact' in moving the public to the private signals the next step in the K-pop process, indicating a move beyond Hallyu 2.0 and a harkening in of a potential 3.0 era, with accessibility for foreign audiences transpiring in new ways. Access to such geographically-locked events as fansigns and fanmeetings has always been a

significant hurdle for international audiences, and the move towards more ‘ontact’ events allows for affective networks of fans to connect to their idols in a more intimate, private setting. But while this access may seem beneficial, it begs the inevitable question of access for whom? How does this access reinforce the hierarchical narratives of the fandom structure, but in the same vein, create new ones for an already polarized fandom of those who have cultural (and literal) capital and those who do not?

William Staton

I would like to discuss how the informative use of humor centered on COVID-19, quarantining, and social distancing has developed over the course of the 2019-2020 Coronavirus Pandemic. Using a discourse analysis of the communication tactics and joke structures used in the Parks and Recreation and Mythic Quest: Raven’s Banquet remotely produced quarantine-themed episodes, as well as the Community and Big Mouth streamed cast table reads, I will look at how information on safe social distancing and quarantining practices is conveyed from people in positions of fannish admiration through a comedic lens. Using Dan O’Shannon’s model of humor outlined in *What Are You Laughing At?: A Comprehensive Guide to the Comedic Event*, I argue that these jokes use an observational comedic tone to create a sense of identification in the audience, one that they can relate to and understand through their own personal experience of the pandemic. These jokes are coming from people in positions of fannish praise, which gives the audience a sense of ease, one that, I argue, opens the door for laughter during a troubling and emotionally distressing time. The humorous intention not only reinforces updated safety practices and the importance of doing one’s part for the health of all, but it also builds a bridge between fan and celebrity, as well as audience member and audience member, during a time of severe isolation and loneliness.

Friday, October 16, 2020

16:00-17:30

Fandom: The Next Generation

Megan Connor and Bridget Kies

Moderated by Lesley Willard

This salon proposes a discussion of reboot culture and long-running franchises as tandem forces that shape fandoms over time. Specifically, how might we consider fandoms as both intergenerational and transgenerational groups? What impact does generational difference create in fandoms, especially it is labelled and culturally defined by those in the industry (e.g. Boomers, Millennials...)? Today's media landscape is a world where no IP is left behind. Media franchises, from sprawling transmedia universes like Star Wars and Marvel's MCU to this summer's sweet update of the children's book series, *The Baby-sitters Club*, are constantly producing new content, being reimagined and rebooted. Additionally, many media franchises now stretch to durations previously unheard of for primetime television series: to date *The Simpsons* has aired 31 seasons, *Grey's Anatomy* recently surpassed *ER* as the longest running medical drama of all-time, and fans of *Supernatural* were meant to tearfully say goodbye after 15 seasons...only to be thwarted by COVID-19 shutdowns. What, then, does it mean for fans of media franchises when content becomes insurmountable in size and spans decades in duration? How do writers and producers of rebooted and long-running media franchises seek to keep material fresh and attract new audiences without alienating core fans? How do longtime fans reconcile with changes, updates, and remakes to their beloved texts? In particular, we are interested in the ways that fan communities grapple with media texts shifting to reflect a desire for greater diversity in representations of gender, race, and sexuality—see, for example, the recent boom of gender-swapped reboots like 2016's *Ghostbusters* and 2018's *Ocean's 8*. How might we understand generation as key component in these critical conversations?

Morgan Bimm

For shows like *The OC* (which half my Twitter feed seems to be rewatching in quarantine), the longevity of the show itself is eclipsed by other factors; namely, Alexandra Patsavas' prolific and culture-defining soundtracks. While the show ran for only four seasons, many of the bands featured therein are still releasing new music, and a new generation of fans turned music supervisors consistently reference the show as their spark of inspiration (Erauw 2020). Drawing on my dissertation research on 2000s girl culture, I look forward to discussing those media texts like *The OC* whose musical moments continue to echo (from SNL's 2007 "The Shooting" skit turned meme, to musical callbacks in 2020's runaway hit *Normal People*), despite the brevity of the show itself. How can music disentangle certain media fandoms from temporal bounds? What does the longevity of fandoms for early 2000s girl culture texts tell us about the cultural staying power of these particular franchises (Wald 2002; Genz and Brabon 2009; MacDowell 2017)? And how can we trouble the ways that these texts are remembered, allowed a certain degree of recuperability on the basis of nostalgia and having 'good music,' while other texts lose credibility if enjoyed in earnest?

Peter Cullen Bryan

The 2016 *Ghostbusters* reboot was a project that had been in development for decades, but became a cultural touchstone in a moment of great political division. The marketing and release of the film was largely covered in the context of the negative backlash (partly an outgrowth of prevailing misogynistic undercurrents within internet culture), being framed as an erasure of the 1984 *Ghostbusters* despite support from much of the original cast (including Executive Producer Dan Ackroyd). What is of specific interest here is not the astroturfed backlash, but rather the arrival of a new generation of fans and cosplayers. Director Paul Feig was heavily engaged on Twitter in the lead-up to the film's release, including giving fans access to schematics for the updated proton packs. The fan

community around the reboot was generally positive, and has remained affectionate towards the film today, with the character Holtzman in particular inspiring a new generation of cosplayers. Despite the film underperforming at the box office, the 2016 *Ghostbusters* nevertheless positioned itself as a beacon for a new generation of engaged fans, particularly among Gen Z.

Meredith Dabek

Ardent Jane Austen fans began producing adaptations of her novels as early as 1895, a practice that has continued with “stunning frequency” (Looser, 2013) into the twenty-first century, such that Austen now commands “greater recognition than any other author writing in England not named William Shakespeare” (Looser, 2017). The ubiquity of Austenesque or Austen-inspired media has led to numerous debates in the Janeite fan community, where fans’ preferences often highlight generational differences (for example, in determining who was the “best” Darcy, answering Olivier, Firth or Macfayden can indicate one’s general age bracket). The last decade (2010-2020) has seen an increase in efforts to “reboot” Austen for younger generations, while also increasing diversity, with adaptations such as *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, a digital web series with social media interaction; the 2011 film *From Prada to Nada* that reimagines *Sense and Sensibility* with Mexican-American heroines in modern-day East Los Angeles; and ITV’s recent *Sanditon* series with its focus on the only character of colour Austen wrote: Ms. Lambe. My research on *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* suggests that some younger generations are first introduced to Austen through digital adaptations like LBD and these new versions can represent interesting opportunities to bridge generational gaps, while also encouraging Austen newbies to return to the source material of the novels.

Dan Padua

The trajectory of triple A video game ‘shooter’ franchises, such as *Call of Duty*, represent an emerging space for developing an understanding of fan-parents’ negotiations between the realities of practicing parental obligations with their own gamer-fan identities, particularly if they share this fandom with their own children. As some gamer-fans have become parents, there is significant value in investigating their experiences and beliefs around discourses of diversity and toxicity in game-related culture, particularly if they are tasked with the moral upbringing and cultural education of their children, who, as Johnson (2019) argues, are often potential recruits for media franchises. Such an investigation would involve questioning the lasting impacts of industrial tendencies to prioritize and privilege young, white, middle-class males (Scott, 2019; Stanfill, 2019), particularly in the games industry. Furthermore, tracking *Call of Duty*’s trajectory and impact on multiple generations within its fan community might reveal how its developers and publisher respond to increasing calls for diversity and curbing of toxic behavior within its player audience. Broadly then, how do parent-fans and games companies both participate in shaping the culture, practices and beliefs of a fan community that grows with each new installment, welcoming new generations of fans?

Laurel Rogers

While scholars like Paul Booth, Lincoln Geraghty, Kathleen Williams, and Lucy Bennet have implicated nostalgia in fan identities and practices more generally, I think nostalgia is particularly key to understanding the way that generations work in fan communities for these long-running and rebooted franchises. This nostalgia can be a positive force, perpetuating fandoms across generational lines – as Derek Johnson has recently discussed, for example, fandoms can be transmitted or “passed down” from one generation to another as bonding activities. Further, the concept of a “reboot” depends on a nostalgic audience, in that it assumes an existing audience that feels strongly enough about the original content that creators can confidently assume a guaranteed audience for the reboot. However, fans’ nostalgic attachments to earlier iterations can be so strong that any reboot that plays “too much” with the original – such as with the gender-swapping 2016 *Ghostbusters* and 2018 *Ocean’s 8* – can be met with vocal resistance. Generational divisions can thus become

boundaries which nostalgic fans deploy to police who is allowed to be a fan, what fan behaviours are acceptable, and even designate appropriate objects of fan attachment.

Dawn Walls-Thumma

The fandom based around the works of J.R.R. Tolkien is one of the longest-running fandoms to continuously produce fanfiction as one of its fannish expressions. Beginning in the 1960s, Tolkien-based fanfiction has evolved significantly from a highly canon-centered, affirmational practice of mostly male fans to a nascent internet fandom, populated mostly by women, where key conflicts were enacted around questions of sexuality and gender. Early online Tolkienfic fandom debated the appropriateness of adding sexuality to books sometimes criticized—and sometimes lauded—for their lack of sex. As Jackson's Lord of the Rings film trilogy generated a burgeoning interest in fanfiction, the fandom—and the cultures and infrastructures it created—often coalesced around the central conflict between fans who enjoyed sexualized stories, including slash, and those who saw these stories as not just incompatible but disrespectful to Tolkien's world. Likewise, writing about female characters was contentious in early online fandom, with women-centric stories often castigated as "Mary Sues." Within the last decade—and especially since Jackson's Hobbit trilogy brought in another influx of new fic-writing Tolkien fans—fans have grown in their acceptance of stories featuring sex and about women, bringing the Tolkien fanfiction fandom more in line with the expectations of a transformational media fandom.

Friday, October 16, 2020

19:00-20:30

Plenary. KPop: Fandom, Politics, Digital Influence

Crystal Abidin, Crystal Anderson, Michelle Cho, Candace Epps-Robertson, Miranda Ruth Larsen

Moderated by Lori Morimoto and Louisa Stein

Crystal Abidin is an anthropologist and ethnographer of internet cultures, focusing especially on influencer cultures, internet celebrity, online visibility, and social media pop cultures, mostly in the Asia Pacific region. She has published extensively in academic and popular media outlets, and her books include *Internet Celebrity* (2018, Emerald Publishing); *Microcelebrity Around the Globe* (2018, Emerald Publishing); *Instagram* (2020, Polity Press); *Mediated Interfaces* (2020, Bloomsbury Academic); and *tumblr* (2021, Polity Press). At present, she is completing two book manuscripts on blogshop cultures and influencer cultures. She has developed several key ideas & concepts in digital cultures, which have been noted in international press coverage and her long-term engagements with industry and consultancy work.

Crystal S. Anderson works within the fields of transnational American Studies and Global Asias, focusing on African American, Asian and Asian American cultures in popular culture, media studies, visual culture, audience reception and literature. Her 2020 book (to be released in September), *Soul in Seoul: African American Music and K-pop*, explores the impact of African American popular music on contemporary Korean pop, R&B and hip-hop and the role of global fans as the music press. Her 2013 book, *Beyond the Chinese Connection: Contemporary Afro-Asian Cultural Production*, uses the films of Bruce Lee to interpret cross-cultural dynamics in post-1990 novels, films and anime. She has published articles on Afro-Asian cultural studies in several journals including *African American Review*, *MELUS*, *Ethnic Studies Review* and *Extrapolation* as well as book chapters on masculinity in K-pop and Afro-Japanese representation in art. Moreover, she also manages several digital humanities projects, including KPK: Kpop Kollektive, the oldest and only aca-fansite for K-pop, and KPOPCULTURE, a digital humanities project that which organizes information about K-pop music, choreography, creative personnel, fandom and media.

Michelle Cho is a Postdoctoral Fellow in International Humanities in the Departments of Modern Culture and Media and East Asian Studies. She received her PhD in Comparative Literature from UC Irvine, with emphases in Visual Studies and Critical Theory. Her research concerns cultural translation via genre transformation in contemporary South Korean and transnational East Asian cinema, documentary film and video, and the affect and temporality of modernization in East Asia. Since 2008, Michelle has taught at Yonsei University's International Summer School in Seoul, South Korea. She has also conducted research, written, and edited film reviews for a number of South Korean film festivals, including the Pucheon Fantastic Film Festival, the largest genre film festival in Asia. Michelle has a forthcoming essay on the generic construction of stars in South Korea in a collection of work on Korean popular culture.

Candace Epps-Robertson is an assistant professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She researches, writes, and teaches about rhetoric, literacy, and composition studies. Her primary research investigates the ways in which communities teach, practice, and understand what it means to be a citizen. She's written and published about the Prince Edward County Free School Association (1963-1964) as a site for literacy and citizenship education. Currently, she is working on several projects that creatively connect her interests in literacy, rhetoric, citizenship, and pedagogy.

Miranda Ruth Larsen is a PhD Candidate at the University of Tokyo in the Information, Technology, and Society in Asia Program. She currently studies K-pop, affect, and fandom, specifically male K-pop idol groups and how they operate in Japan. Her work includes “Fandom and Otaku” in *A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies* (2018), “Fanservice: Gackt” in *Media Keywords: Japan and Beyond* (2020), and “But I’m a Foreigner Too.” -- Otherness, Racial Oversimplification, and Historical Amnesia in Japan’s K-pop Scene” in *Fandom: Now in Color* (forthcoming). She also regularly appears at KCON LA as a Special Guest panelist and has discussed K-pop at Vox's *Reset*, *The Learned Fangirl*, *The Kraze*, *The Atlantic*, and *MIT Technology Review* among others.

Saturday, October 17, 2020

08:00-09:30

Fans and Cancel Culture: On How Fans Process Their Idol's Past

Roberto Huertas Gutiérrez

Moderated by Lesley Willard

This salon wants to deal with the relationship between fans and the creative people behind the texts they love in the context of Cancel Culture. The triggering question in that sense would be: how do fans process discovering that someone they admire has committed a reprehensible act? This issue delves into various topics. First, it talks about a specific feature of being a fan: admiring the people involved in the things you love. These people are real people, not fiction characters, but that doesn't mean that we do not project our own inner desires onto these persons, as Star Studies teaches us. To talk about fans and cancel culture means to reflect on the ways fans get to know their idols and construct and image of them. Following this, this issue makes us think about how the public and the private collide in the narrative around these people (actors/actresses, creators, producers...) and, most importantly, how fans process this information. This salon, in that sense, would welcome submissions regarding the positions (ethical or otherwise) fans take when learning about the dark side of the things they love. Whether they support them or "cancel them," there's certainly a traumatic and a feeling of betrayal that is worth researching. In that sense, potential questions that could start this conversation are: how is the image of an idol constructed by the fan/s? how do fans experience the sudden revelation of a person they admire having committed a reprehensible act? How do they decide to support or "cancel" a person? Is the experience of admiring someone changing due to processes like Cancel Culture?

Laura Lea Bourland

Over the summer, actress Paget Brewster tweeted a message to her followers that she would be leaving social media because "...nothing I can say is good enough, right enough." Her departure follows weeks of public excoriation from some of her followers over a comment about the civil unrest sparked by the death of George Floyd. Though the comment itself was rather innocuous, her subsequent withdrawal from the platform left fans with an assortment of reactions. Some declared themselves as no longer fans, others insisted Brewster was the target of an appropriate scolding, and still others made sure to update their fan-status with a clear delineation between Brewster and her character on Criminal Minds. The one constant was disappointment in all circles followed by a noticeable downward shift in the inclusivity and comradery of the larger Criminal Minds fandom. Disagreements over the issue fed into factionalism, and factionalism created an atmosphere where the once effusive love of a shared experience (in this case, a longrunning television show) could potentially expose a fan to ridicule, shame, and social exclusion from certain online spaces. What seemed to be missing in these conversations, however, was an acknowledgement of differences in how fans and creators use social media, differences which might be largely attributable to age. The semi-anonymity enjoyed by fans -- and not shared by creators -- has revealed a forum wherein not everyone is operating under the same set of expectations and assumptions. Older fans (closer to Brewster's age) and their much younger counterparts might represent two cohorts in the same community in need of an examination of what it means to be a fan at various stages of life, and how those stages provide context for how we interact with publicly-accessible creators and each other.

"Flavortown Fandom: The Ambivalent Practices of Guy Fieri Fans & Anti-Fans"

Emily Contois

Food journalists and cultural critics have flexed their muscles of description to capture the polarizing Food Network star, Guy Fieri. They call him “a supernova of kitsch,” a “rebel, clown, frat boy, chef,” and “a flaming-skull decal brought to life.” For every critique fired at Fieri, there are fervent fans, including those who view *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* as a populist sort of Zagat guide, replicating its recommendations on numerous fan websites and blogs. And yet, another fan segment more ambivalently celebrates Fieri, blending fandom with a degree of anti-fandom. These fans do not defend Fieri or deny the critiques often lodged against him for his fashion choices, culinary exaggeration, and loud-mouth style. Instead, these fans simultaneously celebrate and mock, impersonate and deride Guy Fieri at FieriCon events and through Halloween costumes, fan fiction, memes, and a strange array of Fieri-inspired merchandise. Through such practices—however ironic or ambivalent—Guy Fieri’s persona continues to expand beyond the purview of simply a Food Network celebrity, as Guy Fieri fans transform who and what he is in popular culture.

Jenessa Williams

As feminism enters its fourth-wave, digital natives are negotiating and performing their socio-political identities, beliefs and personas in an online realm. For those who identify both as feminists and hip-hop fans - a genre rapidly becoming the world’s most popular style of music - these chosen identities hold the potential for internal conflict. Often, such fans develop a type of ‘moral dissonance’, ‘poaching’ the elements of hip-hop fandom that most appeal while disregarding more disturbing elements.

By examining the work and public presentation of ‘problematic’ rapper Drake, this case-study research paper explores how millennial female hip-hop fans adopt varying forms of moral dissonance to positively perceive an artist who both challenges and upholds normative gender politics. It explores the concept of performative feminism and ‘wokeness’ as both an artist marketing tool and a fan coping mechanism, questioning the extent to which socio-political righteousness can reconcile with ‘problematic’ musical interests in the Cancel Culture age. This paper acts as an introduction to the applicant’s current PhD research, which seeks to understand how music fans reconcile with a favourite artist in the wake of a sexual assault allegation, examining the role that social media plays in the creation of morally-dissonant music fandoms.

“Egyptian Fans' Love Hate Relationship with Movies' Stars”

Dina Farouk Abou Zeid

Egyptian cinema is very popular not only in Egypt, but also in all the Arab countries. And, due to its success and popularity in the Arab world, it is called Near East Hollywood. Therefore, Egyptian actors and actresses always have a distinguished love relationship with their Arab fans. However, it is noticed in these last years that Arab fans in general and Egyptian fans in particular have love hate relationship with Egyptian movie stars. This relationship is becoming very obvious through social media and was not known in the society in the past. A survey of 500 Egyptian youth was conducted to examine this relationship. The results indicate that fans’ love hate relationship is found by following movie stars pages and accounts on social media, watching their movies, writing positive comments and posts about them, looking for their news, imitating their looks and creating fans’ pages on social media. However, they attack and insult movie stars on social media when the stars’ opinions and behaviors are different from the culture, traditions, religions and socioeconomic status of the majority of the audiences. This relationship is found towards females’ stars more than males.

Saturday, October 17, 2020

09:00-10:30

Amsterdam University Press Publication Session

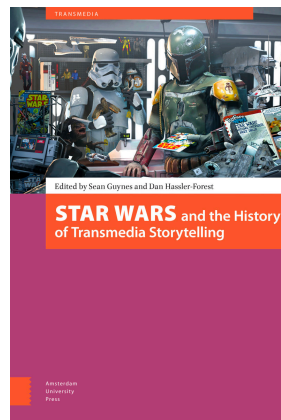
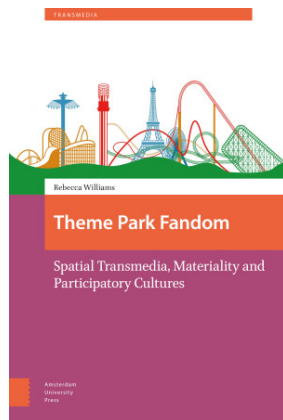
Lucia Dove, Dan Hassler-Forest, E. Charlotte Stevens, Rebecca Williams

Moderated by Paul Booth

Join three authors with the Amsterdam University Press's *Transmedia* series to learn the ins and outs of publishing with UAP.

This series provides a platform for cutting-edge research in the field of media studies, with a strong focus on the impact of digitization, globalization, and fan culture. The series is dedicated to publishing the highest-quality monographs (and exceptional edited collections) on the developing social, cultural, and economic practices surrounding media convergence and audience participation. The term 'media convergence' relates to the complex ways in which the production, distribution, and consumption of contemporary media are affected by digitization, while 'participatory culture' refers to the changing relationship between media producers and their audiences. Both developments have required substantial (and still ongoing) redefinitions of existing media platforms, as the rapid interactions between technological developments and socio-cultural practices continue to pose challenges as well as offer new opportunities for media scholars from a variety of academic disciplines.

Interdisciplinary by its very definition, the series will provide a publishing platform for international scholars doing new and critical research in relevant fields. While the main focus will be on contemporary media culture, the series is also open to research that focuses on the historical forebears of digital convergence culture, including histories of fandom, cross- and transmedia franchises, reception studies and audience ethnographies, and critical approaches to the culture industry and commodity culture.



Saturday, October 17, 2020

10:00-11:30

Fraught Fandoms: Navigating Aca/Fan Identities and Structural Racism Workshop

Rukmini Pande, Keidra Chaney, [REDACTED] Stitch [REDACTED], Miranda Ruth Larsen

Moderated by Louisa Stein

Fandom has a racism problem. Over the last year, multiple flashpoints – from KPop, to My Little Pony, to transformative fandom spaces like the AO3 (Archive of Our Own) – are illustrative of the vital need to interrogate structural racism within them, especially with regard to anti-Blackness. While each of these flashpoints are located within specific national, cultural, linguistic, and geographical contexts, it is also vital to highlight their commonalities, especially in the ways that they operationalize techniques of deflection and disavowal (Wanzo 2015, Pande 2018, Woo 2017). These techniques most often target critical voices, both within and outside specific fandom spaces, seeking to undermine and delegitimize them. The figure of the Aca/Fan is also increasingly enmeshed in these flashpoints.

The identity of the Aca/Fan has long been the subject of debate in fan studies and the binary positioning of the distanced and objective researcher versus the passive fan subject has been vigorously questioned. However, what these larger debates have failed to register is the particular dynamics faced by fan scholars and commentators working on issues of structural racism in fandom spaces. In that, scholars working on these issues are often framed as both too enmeshed in “identity politics” to be objective researchers, as well as too critical of fandom spaces to claim true belonging within them. Also, in the case of non-white scholars working on race/ism, their qualifications and research often work against them in larger fandom discourse, marking them out to be “too elite” to be representative.

This workshop aims to bring Aca/Fans positioned in a range of traditional academic and non-academic spaces together to discuss the ways in which they deal with these dynamics while continuing to highlight systemic racism in fandom. Crucially, it will encapsulate the issues that such scholars face within institutional spaces like academia, as well as in fandom-facing public engagement.

“Fan Studies in Practice: Negotiating Structural Whiteness”

Rukmini Pande

As an aca/fan whose research focusses on race/ism in media fandom spaces, my relationship to both domains remains fraught due to the working of systemic racism and structural whiteness. Indeed, there is a discernable pattern of scholars working on similar issues who have left the field (or never actively enter it) because of its foundational ideas and institutional gatekeeping around maintaining those. While Rebecca Wanzo identified these dynamics at play within Fan Studies in 2015, not much has changed since then. Indeed, whenever a crisis situation occurs, most of the discipline’s energy is spent around defining categories such as “race,” “structural racism,” “institutional whiteness,” and “anti-Blackness,” rather than committing to actual processes of anti-racism.

In this workshop, I will be identifying the ways in which Fan Studies establishes and maintains whiteness as a default, while also working to invisibilise its effects on research. I will be discussing these dynamics in the context of conferencing, publishing, and peer reviewing processes. The aim of this discussion is to equip other scholars working in these areas with the knowledge of how their research may be received and interpreted and strategies to handle instances of pushback or backlash.

Bio: Rukmini Pande is an Assistant Professor in English Literature at O.P Jindal Global University, Haryana. She is currently part of the editorial board of the Journal of Fandom Studies and has been published in multiple edited collections including the Wiley Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies and The Routledge Handbook of Popular Culture Tourism. She has also been published in peer reviewed journals such as Transformative Works and Cultures and The Journal for Feminist Studies. Her monograph, *Squee From The Margins: Race in Fandom*, was published in 2018 by the University of Iowa Press. Her upcoming edited collection, *Fandom, Now In Color: A Collection of Voices*, brings together cutting-edge scholarship on race/ism in fandom. It is projected to be out by 2020

“Reclaiming Our Time: Creating Online Spaces for BIPOC in Fandom/Media Criticism”

Keidra Chaney

The Learned Fangirl (TLF) is an online publication, founded in 2008, committed to providing access and opportunity for BIPOC and other marginalized groups to publish academic and cultural critiques that are often ignored by mainstream media outlets. TLF is dedicated to creating an independent media space for underrepresented writers and critics to publish their work in media studies, fan studies, technology and society.

During a time of increased visibility and harassment of POC fans (particularly Black fans) on social media and in online spaces, TLF’s focus has evolved to include promoting the long-form writing of writers and scholars, several mini-podcast series, and financial assistance of marginalized culture writers through an emergency fund.

As site co-founder, I will talk specifically about TLF’s editorial mission such as a commitment to pay writers/scholars and have them retain copyright in their work. I will also more broadly talk about the work of BIPOC led fandom-focused publications and podcasts that seek to center the voices and scholarship of marginalized fans and critics, and about how such publications can create an infrastructure of support for BIPOC in cultural criticism and fan studies.

Bio: Keidra Chaney is a pop culture critic, essayist, and the co-founder and publisher of The Learned Fangirl, an online publication focused on pop culture critical writing and academic scholarship about fan communities. She has written about pop culture, fan culture and social technology issues for publications including the Chicago Sun Times, Paste, Bitch Media, and Uncanny Magazine.

“The Absence of Clout and the Aca/Fan Existence”

Stitch

This topic will focus on the way that critical Black Aca/fans are treated within transformative fandom spaces, starting from the incorrect assumption that “clout” is something a Black person critical of fandom could ever collect from within these spaces. “Clout” or influence is something that is assumed to drive aca/fans and that sets us apart from wider fandom – however, what happens when the aca/fan in question is a Black woman in a space notable for hostility towards them? Instead of clout, they receive increasingly negative consequences to their reputation within fandom and framing that positions them as enemies of or outside of fandom. For this, I’ll be looking at how hypervisibility and a near universal experience of misogynoir – or hatred of Black women (Bailey and Trudy, 2008) - shapes negative responses to the Black women in fandom who power the “Iris West Defense Squad” (Warner, 2018), were responsible for fandom/social media activism for Abbie Mills in *Sleepy Hollow* (Arcy and Johnson, 2018), and are active in criticism of transformative fandom’s antiblackness (Stitch 2020, 2019, 2017).

Bio: Stitch is an independent researcher and reviewer from Florida with her MA in Literature. Her work focuses on the ways that fandom and media interact with Blackness across the years in both positive and negative ways.

“Aca/fan as Other”

Miranda Ruth Larsen

My own struggle operating as a multiracial aca/fan compounded as I settled into my dissertation work and simultaneously expanded my portfolio in publications, conferences, and public appearances. Conducting the bulk of my fieldwork in Tokyo dealing with male K-pop idols and their fans (myself included) in Japan, I often encountered situations where my position as an unwanted Other included my race, nationality, and academic position. While idols themselves tended to welcome my presence enthusiastically, Japanese fans made it abundantly clear that I was an intrusion of some kind. Simultaneously, I've dealt with academic holdouts who sneer at fan studies and continue to gatekeep academic opportunities for white people, especially white men. A tertiary site of conflict exists at KCON, the world's largest Korean popular culture convention, where my Special Guest status denotes authority to fans but my doctoral candidate status encourages senior academics to contradict me openly. In this workshop I hope to contextualize some of my experiences with other aca/fans to broaden the conversation about structural racism within fandom and fan studies.

Bio: Miranda Ruth Larsen is a PhD Candidate in the Information, Technology, and Society in Asia program at The University of Tokyo. Her areas of research include fan studies, Japanese and Korean popular culture, and horror film. She is the author of "Otaku" in *A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies* (2018) and "'Don't adjust your life to mine.' -- Moon Child, Homoeroticism, and the Vampire as Multifaceted Other" in *The Global Vampire in Popular Culture* (2020) among many other works.

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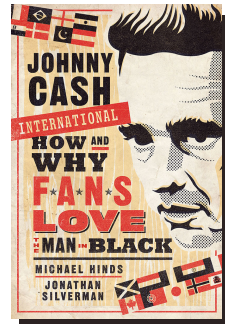
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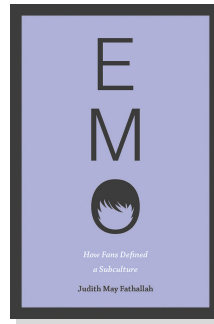
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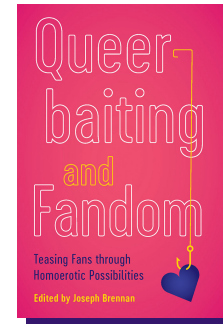
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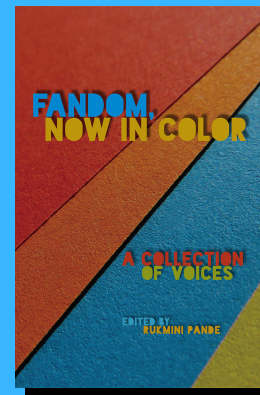
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