

THE 3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE FAN STUDIES NETWORK

FSN 2015

UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA, NORWICH



27th-28th
June

#FSN2015

THE FAN STUDIES NETWORK CONFERENCE

27-28TH JUNE 2015

INTERDISCIPLINARY INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA

UEA

University of East Anglia

PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 26th JUNE

18:00 – 21:00	PRE-CONFERENCE SOCIAL Modern Life Café, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, UEA Campus
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SATURDAY 27th JUNE

09:00 – 09:30	REGISTRATION	TPSC FOYER
09:30 – 10:30	KEYNOTE Suzanne Scott: Check Your Fannish Privilege: (In)Visibility Politics and Fan Culture's War on Women	TPSC LECTURE THEATRE
10:30 – 10:45	BREAK	TPSC FOYER
10:45 – 12:15	PARALLEL PANELS Panel A: Fan Works Panel B: Spaces and Borders	TPSC LECTURE THEATRE TPSC 0.1
12:15 – 13:15	LUNCH	
13:15 – 14:45	PARALLEL PANELS Panel C: Fan-Producer Relationships Panel D: Building Communities	TPSC LECTURE THEATRE TPSC 0.1
14:45 – 15:00	BREAK	TPSC FOYER
15:00 – 16:30	PARALLEL PANELS Panel E: Age and Generations Panel F: Social Issues and Morality	TPSC LECTURE THEATRE TPSC 0.1
16:30 – 16:45	BREAK	TPSC FOYER
16:45 – 18:00	SPEED GEEKING	TPSC FOYER
18:00 – 19:30	WINE RECEPTION Project Launch: The Force Re-Awakens: World Star Wars Audiences SPONSORED IN PART BY BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY QUIZ PRIZES SUPPLIED BY CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS PUBLISHING, BLOOMSBURY, INTELLECT, ROUTLEDGE, & UNIVERSITY OF IOWA PRESS	TPSC FOYER
20:30:	CONFERENCE DINNER The Library Restaurant, 4A Guildhall Hill, Norwich (Pre-booked delegates only)	

SUNDAY 28th JUNE

09:00 – 09:30	REGISTRATION	TPSC FOYER
09:30 – 10:30	<p style="text-align: center;">KEYNOTE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lincoln Geraghty: Passing Through: Identity, History and the Importance of Pilgrimage in Fan Studies</p>	TPSC LECTURE THEATRE
10:30 – 10:45	BREAK	TPSC FOYER
10:45 – 12:15	<p style="text-align: center;">PARALLEL PANELS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Panel G: Fandom and Celebrity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Panel H: Endings and Transitions</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">TPSC LECTURE THEATRE</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TPSC 0.1</p>
12:15 – 13:15	LUNCH	TPSC FOYER
13:15 – 14:45	<p style="text-align: center;">PARALLEL PANELS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Panel I: Activism</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Panel J: Methodologies</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">TPSC LECTURE THEATRE</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TPSC 0.1</p>
14:45 – 15:00	BREAK	TPSC FOYER
15:00 – 16:00	<p style="text-align: center;">WORKSHOP: ETHICS IN FAN STUDIES RESEARCH</p> <p>PANELLISTS: Kristina Busse Ruth Deller Katherine Larsen Natasha Whiteman</p>	TPSC LECTURE THEATRE
16:00 – 16:15	CLOSE	TPSC LECTURE THEATRE

Contact: fsnconference@gmail.com **Twitter:** [@fanstudies/#FSN2015](https://twitter.com/fanstudies/#FSN2015)

Conference Organisers:

Lucy Bennett and Tom Phillips (FSN chairs)

Bertha Chin, Bethan Jones, Richard McCulloch, Rebecca Williams (FSN board)

PANELS

Panel A: Fan Works

Chair: Lori Morimoto

Paul Booth (DePaul University): SuperWhoLock: Crossover Fandom, Crossover Fan Studies

Rodrigo Lessa (University of Hertfordshire): Toward a categorisation of fanfiction: How *True Blood's* fans organise their fanfictions and what we can learn from them

Maria Lindgren Leavenworth (Umeå University): A Truth Universally Acknowledged? *Pride and Prejudice* and Mind-Reading Fans

Eva Wijman (Umeå University): Mary-Sue enters the Arena: Cognitive Reading and Self-Insertion in *The Hunger Games* Fandom

Panel B: Spaces and Borders

Chair: William Proctor

Henrik Linden (London Metropolitan University): Football fans and sense of place – local and international perspectives

Laura MacDonald and Jonathan Evans (University of Portsmouth): Musical Fan Communities: Connected Across Borders

Liza Potts (Michigan State University): Of Participation, Fandom, and Memory

Abby Waysdorf (Erasmus University Rotterdam): Riding the Hogwarts Express: Simulation, Place, and The Wizarding World of Harry Potter

Panel C: Fan-Producer Relationships

Chair: Paul Booth

Gemma Bothe (University of Western Australia): Fan Art Friday and Meme Monday: Content Creators' Reassertion of Control over Fandom

Claire Burdfield (University of Nottingham): My Little Fandom: Navigating the Relationship between Hasbro and Bronies

Helena Dare-Edwards (University of East Anglia): Negotiating a Fangirl Identity: Producers in a Fan Space, Fangirl Hierarchies, and Inter-/Intra-fandom

Josh Jarrett (University of the West of England): Playing with MOBA affect

Panel D: Building Communities

Chair: Nicolle Lamerichs

Lucy Dearn (University of Sheffield): Fandom and 'Unpopular Music': exploring ideas of fan communities in classical music.

Valerie M. Fazel (Arizona State University): "Give Me Your Hands if we be Friends": Collaborative Authority in Shakespeare Fan Fiction

Inger-Lise Kalviknes Bore (Birmingham City University): Fandom and genre: Comic distance and emotional attachment in *Parks and Recreation* fandom

Tanja Välisalo (University of Jyväskylä): Creating Avatars as Making Meaning in Fandom

Panel E: Age and Generations

Chair: Katherine Larsen

Daisy Asquith (University of Sussex): No Larry Shippers were Harmed in the Making of this Documentary

Ruth Deller (Sheffield Hallam University): 'As if the women have been beamed down en masse from Bhs': newspaper representations of mature female fans

Ysabel Gerrard (University of Leeds): 'For a long time, I kept that on the DL. I didn't want to admit that I watched that show': Teen television fandoms and reimagining guilty pleasures

Melanie Williams (University of East Anglia): Aren't we naughty mummies?!: adult women's online fandom and CBeebies' Mr Bloom

Panel F: Social Issues and Morality

Chair: Nele Noppe

Eva Cheuk-Yin Li (King's College London): Entangling Queer and Normal: Fan Culture of Lesbian Singer in Hong Kong

Virginia Crisp (Coventry University): Filesharing as Fan Practice: Reconsidering the Social Side of Digital Piracy

Rukmini Pande (University of Western Australia): Squee from the Margins: Racial dynamics in fandom participation

Panel G: Fandom and Celebrity

Chair: Ruth Deller

Beccy Collings (University of East Anglia): In on the joke: language, belonging, and playing along in online comedy fandom. A case study of the Trailer Park Boys' *Swearnet.com*

Lori Hitchcock Morimoto (Independent): Setting the Stage: The Origins of Modern Foreign 'Boy Booms' in Japan

Giovanna Rampazzo (Dublin Institute of Technology): The Arrival of Bollywood Celebrities in Dublin: Media, Community and Fandom

Hannah Yelin (University of East Anglia): The Ghosted Porn Star Memoir: Appetites for access and the female reader/fan

Panel H: Endings and Transitions

Chair: Bethan Jones

Bridget Kies (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee): Breaking Up Is Hard to Do: The Politics of Loving and Leaving Fandom

Nicolle Lamerichs (HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht): Saying Goodbye Together: Fan Participation in Cartoon Endings

Kee Lundqvist (Uppsala University): Meaningful Stories: The Process and Practices of Sense-Making

Rebecca Williams (University of South Wales): "Princess Elsa and her 13,000 square foot restroom": Theme park fandom, replacement and the Disney brand

Panel I: Activism

Chair: Rebecca Williams

Mark Duffett (University of Chester): On the Knowing Field: Cornel West, Curtis Mayfield and Fan Activism

Allison McCracken and Jen Kelly (DePaul University): "Where the Fangrrls Are": Fan Conventions as Feminist Praxis

Milena Popova (University of the West of England): "Actually non-con": Sexually explicit fanfiction as a form of cultural activism

William Proctor (Bournemouth University): "Hey, maybe DC will replace Bruce Wayne with a rich Mexican guy named El Brucho' de'Wan'ye?": Online Fan Discourses of Racism, Misogyny and "The Toxic Disinhibition Effect."

Panel J: Methodologies

Chair: Inger-Lise Kalviknes Bore

Lies Lanckman (University of Kent): In Search of Lost Fans: Recovering Fan Magazine Readers, 1910-1950

Jo Metivier (University College London, Institute of Education): Less visible "creative" fans, or non-fans? Towards a method for studying creative writing audiences online and offline

Andrea Nevitt (Keele University): Schrödinger's forum: The ethical dilemmas of conducting online ethnographic research into a *Game of Thrones* fan community that is simultaneously public and private, spatial and textual

Tisha Turk (University of Minnesota): Producing Fan Studies: Participation and Process

SPEED GEEKING

Alena Brunner (University of Vienna): Black Hermione – Asian Harry: Ethnic Identity and the Appropriation of the Fanobject *Harry Potter* in Fanart

Robin Elijah Burton (University of Northampton): “this totally is not canon and Does Not Happen. But it’d be nice”: Transgressing the fan/producer boundaries in *Carmilla*

Deborah Castro Mariño (Autonomous University of Barcelona): Social Audience & TV Fandom: The Identity Construction

Jamie Chadd (Birmingham City University): How I (Briefly) Met Your Mother: Television Genre and Fan Ontological Experience

Sam Fleming (University of Wolverhampton): “Everything is about sex except sex. Sex is about power” (Oscar Wilde) – Fifty Shades of Sexuality

Joanna Kucharska (Jagiellonian University): Nothing should happen to the guard captain; Negotiating the narrative, identity and representation in video game fanworks

Camila Monteiro (University of Huddersfield): From YouTube fame to meet & greet in shopping centers: How favela’s new appropriation of funk brought social issues, the change of celebrity fandom and the power of fans to mainstream.

KEYNOTE ABSTRACTS

Lincoln Geraghty (University of Portsmouth): Passing Through: Identity, History and the Importance of Pilgrimage in Fan Studies

It seems 2015 might be a pivotal year for fan studies: a record number of fan papers and panels accepted at SCMS in Montreal, including a workshop which directly addressed the nature of fan studies in and outside the academy; the first round table at PCA in New Orleans organized by the *Journal of Fandom Studies* to discuss the future of fan studies; and the third Fan Studies Network Conference in Norwich, building on the success of the previous two with more submissions, more papers and more attendees. What can we make of this? For certain, judging by the increase in publications and PhD projects just in the past year, fan studies is in a respectfully healthy position – more research, more fan material to study, more media coverage of fans means there has been plenty written to date.

However, I would argue, there is also plenty of interesting work left to be done to move the field forward from where we currently stand. Of particular significance is the need to look beyond the realms of film, media and cultural studies and integrate methods and approaches from other disciplines, while, at the same time, pay closer attention to the importance of history – both personal and institutional – to the understanding of fans and fan practices.

With this in mind, through a study of recent fan tourism to various locations including the Bell Centre (home of the NHL's Montreal Canadiens), *American Horror Story's* Coven House, Elvis's Graceland, and Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame, this paper explores the variety of ways through which we might appreciate what it means to be a fan in contemporary popular culture when embarking on a "pilgrimage". Taking into account the multitude of technologies, networks, texts, practices and venerated sites of pilgrimage with which fans build a sense of self, community and cultural capital I want to interrogate just how important having a fan identity is in the 21st century. In visiting such a diversity of geographic locations, valued by different fan communities – sport, television, music – we are able to appreciate the importance of fan histories and the affective connections offered when passing through those spaces. Furthermore, comparing and contrasting methodological approaches from media and sports studies allows us to form a more intricate picture of how fans relate to their objects of fandom and construct a framework for understanding the relationship between communities and individuals, texts and geographies, memories and emotions.

Suzanne Scott (University of Texas at Austin): Check Your Fannish Privilege: (In)Visibility Politics and Fan Culture's War on Women

From the moment Entertainment Weekly proclaimed 2007 "The Year The Geek Was King" to 2015's wave of articles exploring what the New Statesman has dubbed "nerd entitlement," anxieties surrounding the mainstreaming of fan culture, and its impact on fan identity, have compounded. In particular, concerns around boundary policing within geek and fan culture have accompanied the ascendance of the fan as a desired demographic. In her keynote address, "Check Your Fannish Privilege: (In)Visibility Politics and Fan Culture's War on Women," Scott will consider the gendered tensions underpinning these boundary policing practices, exploring both root causes and specific incidents of spreadable misogyny (fake geek girl memes, #gamergate, etc.). This keynote will also contemplate fan studies' historic privileging of gender as its primary critical axis, at the expense of considering fan culture's "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations." In calling for a more intersectional fan studies, we must check our own privilege as fan scholars, and interrogate how our adoption of disciplinary "boundary policing" shapes the field in this moment of expansion and transition for fans and fan studies alike.

WORKSHOP: ETHICS IN FAN STUDIES RESEARCH

Ethical issues have been a key consideration in fan studies since the field's inception, and with the increasing use of social media in fan communities, as well as increasing media interest in fans, these are becoming more difficult to navigate.

This workshop focuses on ethics in fandom: what should ethics in fan studies look like; do we need a standard ethical framework; how should fan studies scholars approach ethical issues in their work; and what does the future of the field hold?

Kristina Busse, Ruth Deller, Kathy Larsen, and Natasha Whiteman will be discussing these issues as well as how they approach ethical issues in their work, before we open the discussion to delegates. The aim of this workshop is to create a working guideline on how to approach ethics in fan studies.

PANEL ABSTRACTS

Panel A: Fan Works

Paul Booth (DePaul University): SuperWhoLock: Crossover Fandom, Crossover Fan Studies

SuperWhoLock, a uniquely digital fandom (Booth 2010; 2015), is an amalgam of the television series *Supernatural*, *Doctor Who*, and *Sherlock*, using canonical information from these different series to construct a new narrative. In this presentation, I propose to historicize *SuperWhoLock*, argue its relevance to digital fandom, and present it as a transmediated nexus of multiple fandoms, texts, and meanings. Busse and Hellekson (2006) have referred to fan fiction as “works in progress” that foreground the constant process of revision and critical reading that exists in the context of writing and reading fan fiction. But *SuperWhoLock* is more than just a “work in progress”: to assume a work “in progress” presupposes that boundaries exist surrounding the work in the first place. There is no “centre” to *SuperWhoLock*, and the bounds of the text extend beyond the canon ideals of the original three texts (Perez 2013). This presentation will argue, therefore, that *SuperWhoLock*, as a fan-generated fandom object, represents the emergence of transmedia characteristics within a (non)-bounded text.

Through an analysis of *SuperWhoLock*, I will argue that fan identities in the digital age are similarly transmediated, similarly “in progress,” and constantly shifting within and outside the (artificial) boundaries placed on fan context. *SuperWhoLock* relies on a meta-knowledge of fandom, borne from the way the constituent texts parody fans themselves (see Booth 2015). Such constant cross- and meta-references lead to a cultural pastiche of fan activities both through and with *SuperWhoLock* fandom—and fan practices surrounding the originating texts. *SuperWhoLock* is a constructed text, but it is also a constructed fandom. Bringing together text, context, and fan, I argue that *SuperWhoLock* bridges multiple audiences to answer the question, “what is the future of fandom?”

Rodrigo Lessa (University of Hertfordshire): Toward a categorisation of fanfiction: How *True Blood*'s fans organise their fanfictions and what we can learn from them

This paper aims to investigate how the fans of HBO's *True Blood* organise their fanfiction in online platforms, in order to propose a categorisation of fanfictions. Considering the vast amount of fan texts available online, the paper will provide a methodological framework to search fanfictions published on the internet. The work will present analytical categories, developed after a deep scrutinizing of over 4,800

fanfictions found on our search. The paper aims to present analytical categories as tools that allow researchers to conduct qualitative analysis of fanfictions.

This paper will work upon a database gathered in September 2014 as part of the proponent's doctoral research. The previous research indicates that fanfiction can be categorised under four main categories, which unravel into several other categories. The main categories are format, age rating, relationship with the storyworld's canon, and type of content. By empirically exploring a large scope of fanfictions, we believe this paper will be able to address methodological and analytical concerns related to the academic research of fanfictions.

The paper will also address the online platforms in which the fanfics are published, as we have noticed that these sites can provide information regarding the formal organization of fanfictions as texts in broader cultural circulation and distribution. Fiske, Hills, Jamison, Jenkins, Sandvoss, and Sullivan are important references for this paper.

We believe that scholars have not been paying attention to the formal aspects of fanfiction as cultural products – and hence, worth of qualitative analysis. The paper aims to address this issue and provide a methodological framework as a first step into this journey.

Maria Lindgren Leavenworth (Umeå University): A Truth Universally Acknowledged? *Pride and Prejudice* and Mind-Reading Fans

This paper takes a cognitive approach to a selection of fan fictions working from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. At focus is how Theory of Mind, the uniquely human cognitive abilities to identify patterns and to infer implicit information, particularly concerning characters' mental states, can be usefully employed when understanding contemporary forms of interaction with fiction. In contrast to previous cognitive literary studies, where the structure of the source text, or canon, has been in focus, the trajectory is reversed and the starting point is instead fans' written interpretations. Fan fictions analyzed are taken from the fanfic archive "Bits of Ivory" (at the large site *Republic of Pemberley*) and from the site *The Austen Interlude*. At the former, heavily moderated site, fans are instructed to stay close to themes, characterizations and the style of Austen's writing and the analyzed stories conform quite closely to how previous theorists claim readers cognitively engage with the novel. At the less controlled site *The Austen Interlude* resistive example stories rather work to negotiate and 'correct' the canon, for example by inserting sexually explicit scenes or contesting the heteronormative ethos of the canon. These alternative renditions signal that depicted emotions and actions are moved

closer to those of the writing subject and the contemporary context. Yet, the stories clearly demonstrate the individual workings of the fanfic author's Theory of Mind; they are still the result of particular inferences made in the reading process. The contemporary stress on audience participation in meaning making processes necessitates new ways at looking critically at audience/text interaction, and cognitive approaches concretely show how audiences both conform to and contest expected readings. Findings thus illustrate how fans (and their Theory of Mind) engage with fiction in a very particular contemporary context.

Eva Wijman (Umeå University): Mary-Sue enters the Arena: Cognitive Reading and Self-Insertion in *The Hunger Games* Fandom

Mary Sue, the derogative name fandom has given the original character that acts as a stand-in of the fanfiction author and who fulfils her author's deepest storyworld desires, should need no introduction, but deserves a grand entrance nonetheless. She is widely known and usually mocked throughout online fan communities. Fans cite many reasons for exasperation with the character, but seem most offended by Mary Sue's tendency to usurp the story, overshadowing all beloved canon characters. However, Mary Sue has some defenders as well, especially within academia and meta-fan sites. For example, because she tends to be a beautiful, talented and successful young woman, some fans hail her as a feminist icon and an escape from patriarchy. Beth E. Bonnstetter places Mary Sue in a tradition of feminine rewriting (2011) and Ika Willis sees Mary Sue as having the potential to introduce a marginalised, queer subject position into the text (2006).

In addition to this, I suggest that Mary Sue, despite the controversy, is the manifestation of the every-fan, a fully-formed avatar of the implied, affective reader. As readers read and navigate storyworlds, they fill in the gaps and -especially in the case of fans- layer them with affects; thus they inevitably become the all-important original character in their beloved story. Using 'Mary Sue' fanfiction based on *The Hunger Games*, a series that consciously engages with the illusion of intimacy with media personas, this paper investigates how *Hunger Games* fans relate to and interact with their favourite storyworld and its canon inhabitants, through the subject positions they construct within their fanfiction. I will explore how this interaction is complicated both by the tantalising but ambiguous invitations from the source text and policing within fandom.

Panel B: Spaces and Borders

Henrik Linden (London Metropolitan University): Football fans and sense of place – local and international perspectives

This paper will explore the meaning of place and location in relation to football fandom. Many clubs around Europe have moved into new stadiums in recent years, and more are set to follow. A current high profile case in point is the English Premier League Club West Ham United F.C., who in 2016 will be leaving their current home, the Boleyn Ground in Upton Park, for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Stadium in Stratford. Moves of this kind do of course affect fans in many ways, and often there is a concern that the “sense of place” will be lost in such a move. This may be seen as self-evident with regard to local fans, but we must not neglect that there is also a sense of place among non-local and international fans. It is the aim of this paper to, through a discussion based on qualitative research, gain deeper insight into the significance of place in relation to different groups of fans. It is, for example, interesting to see how different levels of emotional attachment to the club and the Boleyn Ground correspond with geographic proximity, and how history and representation of a place – in addition to its actual geographical location – are still important factors in shaping fan identity (or fan identities). The starting point is British and Swedish West Ham fans, but other nationalities – including outside Europe – are also included.

Laura MacDonald and Jonathan Evans (University of Portsmouth): Musical Fan Communities: Connected Across Borders

Fan studies has addressed many popular cultural forms, but has seldom explored these responses across languages or in the genre of the musical. Our paper introduces a larger project, linking fan studies, translation, film and musical theatre, in order to investigate how film and theatrical musicals are received in other cultures where other languages are spoken. How do fans of musicals deal with language difference? What sort of fan organised activity is there in relation to musicals?

We focus, therefore, on how fans translate, literally and metaphorically, foreign musicals for themselves and their peers: both in the form of lyric translation and subtitling, but also the remediation of foreign musicals in the form of reviews and commentary. Framing fans as ‘prosumers’, active textual consumers, who at the same time build communities around texts, we will establish how these communities affect what is staged, released, and distributed, with regard to local production and imports of texts. We will pay particular attention to European and Asian fans' engagement with American musicals, Asian responses to European musicals such as

Elisabeth and *Rebecca*, as well as transnational musical fandom between Korea, China and Japan. Analysing evidence of fan activities such as subtitling and forum discussions on the web will allow us to consider how fans mediate texts in languages other than their own. Drawing on close readings of these materials and theories of consumption and fandom, we will suggest fan practices play a significant role in the musical's success as a global genre.

Liza Potts (Michigan State University): Of Participation, Fandom, and Memory

Across time and space, fans have celebrated and memorialize their fandoms. Sometimes, this work includes attending cons, meetups, or filmings. Other times, participants seek out specific locations that are important to their fandom, leaving behind tumblr tags, Twitter handles, and notes to characters, producers, and each other.

This presentation seeks to discuss participatory memory, a concept based in collective memory and participatory culture. Across both physical and digital spaces, these fans are working to connect, share, and talk to their fandoms and each other. In some physical spaces, this participation is unwelcome. For example, the city of Paris has spent over €60,000 trying to “clean” the location near the fatal car accident of Princess Diana where her fans have memorialized her by posting writing on concrete walls and leaving flowers and other trinkets behind. Elsewhere, fandom is accepted, as with the participation of *Harry Potter* fans at Elephant House in Edinburgh and BBC *Sherlock* fans outside of St. Bartholomew’s hospital in London. One of the strongest examples of this activity is in Cardiff Bay, where fans have built a memorial for a *Torchwood* character that remains there with the support of the local community and the BBC. When this cooperative experience works, fans can create a safe, welcoming space where they can connect and reflect on their communities.

Analyzing this space using methods from visual rhetoric and fan studies, this project looks at how fans engage in these physical spaces, making connections between online and offline communities. This presentation will engage with several questions: What kinds of messages do fans leave behind? How do these fans create a space for community, participation, and agency in these spaces? Why are these spaces significant for these fandoms in ways in which it would behoove local governments and corporations to support participatory memory?

Abby Waysdorf (Erasmus University Rotterdam): Riding the Hogwarts Express: Simulation, Place, and The Wizarding World of Harry Potter

While most discussion of fannish engagement with place focuses on visiting the “actual” sites of filming or setting (Hills 2002, Brooker 2007, Reijnders 2011), for *Harry Potter* fans at least, there is an alternative. *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter*, a section of the Universal Studios theme parks in Orlando, presents itself as the ultimate in fan pilgrimage – a complete and explorable place of the *Harry Potter* narrative world, one that invites the fan to “follow in Harry’s footsteps” and visit what he did, from the Three Broomsticks pub to Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes.

The use of popular characters in theme parks is nothing new, but the scope and style of *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter* brings it closer to the ideal of virtual reality, a fully realized, interactive, and immersive media landscape. Its status as an “authentic” recreation of two important locations in the diegetic world, the village of Hogsmeade and the wizarding London neighborhood of Diagon Alley, gives it an identity of going “beyond” theming into a true physical encounter with the world (albeit one under the supervision of a major media conglomerate, as part of its broader transmedia strategy for a lucrative franchise). It is that experience that I investigate here. Utilizing ethnographic methods, including participant observations and 15 in-depth interviews with *Harry Potter* fan-tourists, I look at how fans experience this simulated environment. I investigate what fans find meaningful about the experience, how they navigate and play with the divisions between fantasy and reality, how their fandom shapes and is shaped by this embodied encounter with the narrative places, and how this balances with the park’s commercial ambitions. In doing so, I present new insights into the experience of immersive media environments as well as what “being there” means to fans today.

Panel C: Fan-Producer Relationships

Gemma Bothe (University of Western Australia): Fan Art Friday and Meme Monday: Content Creators’ Reassertion of Control over Fandom

The concept of the ‘prosumer’ and ‘produsage’ in the digital age is a powerful one (Bruns 2010). Produsage, in many ways, speaks to the original conception of the internet as a democratised collaborative space (Wellman 2008, p. 373). Fan spaces online have embodied this democratic, collaborative notion of the internet, as fans voices are able to communicate and engage with other fans online. Online fan engagement saw the proliferation of fan made remix and ‘prosumption’ as fan art, music, and stories are all collaboratively produced (Lessig 2008, p. 1; Cover 2013). This collaborative production and fan engagement put fans in control of fannish conversations, democratising the interpretation and decoding of media. However,

with the rise of canon content creators' such as producers, directors, authors and actors, on social media comes the reconfiguration of hierarchical power structures over fan interpretation and engagement with media. When celebrities and content producers begin to live Tweet episodes, interact with fans on Facebook, and engage with fannish practices online they are inserting themselves into a space that was traditionally sequestered from the gaze, and control, of media producers. Using Stephen Amell's Facebook page, and his initiatives 'Fan Art Friday' and 'Meme Monday' as a case study, I show how celebrities and content producers' participation in these spaces inadvertently places them as sites of authority and knowledge over the canon content. This results in the canon creators reasserting control over the media product by appropriating fan conversations and spaces.

Claire Burdfield (University of Nottingham): My Little Fandom: Navigating the Relationship between Hasbro and Bronies

The practice of audience segregation, demographic profiling and manufactured viewerships has become common practice in the television industry since the turn towards niche programming and narrowcasting in an increasingly multi-channel environment. While much critical scholarship has been given devoted to the way that media companies undertake extensive market research to target their products to specific demographic segments (Lotz 2007; Steemers 2011), this article concentrates on the way that untargeted and unexpected viewers have coalesced around certain television programmes, and become an 'accidental fandom'. Bronies have become the most well-known accidental fandom in recent years, and are a perfect case-study by which this phenomenon can be examined. The paper explores the way that accidental fandoms can develop, and how they offer both opportunity and threat to the managed selling of media brands. This paper will engage with the issues surrounding identifying and responding to these accidental fandoms, using the Brony fandom of *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* and Hasbro as an example. It is concerned with the strategies utilised by Hasbro to respond to their accidental fandom, and how they have attempted to navigate the tensions that arise as they balance appealing to both the original intended audience of *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* and Bronies.

Helena Louise Dare-Edwards (University of East Anglia): Negotiating a Fangirl Identity: Producers in a Fan Space, Fangirl Hierarchies, and Inter-/Intra-fandom

Characterised as immature, hysterical, and obsessive, fangirls are routinely dismissed in mainstream media coverage (Click 2010; Nash and Lahti 1999) and by fans themselves (Bury 2005; Healey 2009). This paper forms a case study of an *iCarly*

LiveJournal community, exploring the various ways in which young female fans discordantly negotiate, defend, and legitimise their fangirl culture and performance in light of negative cultural constructions of the fangirl.

Initially, fangirling was expressly welcomed, predicated on an assumed, communal understanding to what claiming the term for themselves, and labeling their performance as such, indicated within this space. Fangirling then became a potential source of fan shame, or at least a riskier pleasure, when Schneider, the tween sitcom's creator/producer, later joined the community. While inter-fandom usually refers to disparate fan groups (Busse 2013; Hills 2012; Williams 2013), here I consider an inter-fandom dynamic in terms of fans of the same fan object but in different fan spaces. In the context of Schneider's arrival, I explore the ways in which fans aligned themselves with, invoked, and repurposed fangirl stereotypes as a defence strategy to protect themselves from outside judgement and, as a bid for status, to elevate or distinguish their *iCarly* community from those outside LiveJournal. With a surge of new members following the producer's entrance, this position was then reversed; new internal hierarchies were formed and intra-fandom (Stanfill 2013) distinctions made by existing members seeking to distance themselves from "entitled", unsocialised fangirls, whose performances were left unmarked and were thus at risk of disparagement.

I argue that when claimed for the self, "fangirl" functioned to demonstrate one's belonging and value or status in the community, yet when applied to Others, and invoked in its most derogatory sense, worked as a means to discredit and exclude.

Josh Jarrett (University of the West of England): Playing with MOBA affect

Online fandom encompasses many convergent (Jenkins, 2006) dynamics. As the space between producer and consumer or professional and fan have increasingly blurred, this convergence has been reflected in new modes of monetisation and affective lines of address. These dynamics are particularly pertinent in online games where new models of 'fair' free to play games, valuable bottom up forms of playful innovation and affective lines of address all present themselves in a myriad of influential games genres. One of these genres is the Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) which has recently risen to become one of the most played genres in the world with a thriving e-sports industry and a radical new model of free to play. This paper seeks to critically explore the dynamics of the MOBA space with a particular focus upon the affective lines of address and underlying gift economics that are fundamental to this far reaching cultural activity.

The free to play model for MOBA games are noteworthy as 'fair' due to all of the content being available to any player with no in-game advantages. The model relies upon the sale of purely aesthetic in-game customisations and as this paper argues, a reciprocal relationship between the professional developer and fan. How do professional developers position themselves as fans in paratextual spaces? How do these lines of address de-commoditise their content and enable this 'gift' (Mauss, 1954; Hyde, 1983) orientated free to play model to thrive economically? What is the significance of this affective relationship between fans and producers to wider participatory platforms (Schäfer, 2011; Djick, 2013; Jenkins et al, 2013)? Drawing upon online ethnographic PhD research surrounding the MOBA League of Legends (Riot Games, 2011), which last year raised over one billion dollars (Chalk, 2014) through this model, this paper seeks frame these questions as a symptom of wider 'affective economies' (Bennett et al, 2015) that are increasingly numerous, influential, and paradoxically hidden.

Panel D: Building Communities

Lucy Dearn (University of Sheffield): Fandom and 'Unpopular Music': exploring ideas of fan communities in classical music.

Drawing on longitudinal empirical research conducted at a newly opened arts venue in Doncaster, this paper will explore the nature of the community created around classical music concerts. Live classical music presented at the same venue by a particular arts organisation encourages the development of a regular audience; which over time allows audience members to become familiar with one another and even develop friendships. Often referred to as 'aficionados', the core audience for a classical concert series typically show their admiration for the art form by being loyal to both the arts organisation that provides the series and the resident musicians. They also demonstrate to others in the audience their knowledge of the art form and of the concert culture at a particular venue. I am interested however, in placing the 'aficionados' into a populist sphere by viewing them as 'fans'.

Live classical music typically demands still and silent listening therefore only allowing public and collective displays of emotion, along with conversations, at selected points of the concert experience. With such a radically different listening culture it may not seem natural to view audience members as fans but I propose that this community does emulate fan-like behaviours; such as loyalty, shared tastes or knowledge exchanges and could therefore be functioning as a fan community for its members.

In understanding a classical music audience in this way, I will explore the construction and performance of fandom in this community. I will also question how members mediate between the two types of community that can develop around concert experiences: the short-term, almost spontaneous community that is created by being 'in-audience' at a particular event and a longer-term listening community that develops over time, which may become a sight for fandom.

Valerie M. Fazel (Arizona State University): "Give Me Your Hands if we be Friends": Collaborative Authority in Shakespeare Fan Fiction

The implication in most extant Shakespeare popular culture and performance scholarship is that there exists a divide in the potential hermeneutic density of a study of audience from that of a study of fans. While several recent criticisms on amateur performance have crept into Shakespeare criticism, scant work on the fan as collaborative adaptor of the dramatist's works has emerged within the field. My paper presentation on Shakespeare fanfic situates fan culture in the arena of Shakespeare pop culture studies, bridging the semantic and theoretical gap between audience and fan. (Re)creating narratives constructed by and for a robust, grassroots culture of amateurs, Shakespeare fanfic is a collective endeavor whereby authors and their readers customarily approach the dramatist's works as auteurs, imprinting their ideas and creative vision on Shakespeare's body of work.

Shakespeare fanfic saliently evinces Dericho's theory of the archontic archive, often intersecting the plots, characters, and events from Shakespeare's drama and its seemingly limitless archive of prior adaptations (in the process reshuffling notions of a Shakespeare *ur-text*) with an eclectic array of popular phenomena to create new, one of a kind narratives. Shared via the Internet where the dialogical affordances of online websites often break down traditional boundaries between author (actor) and audience, fanfic engenders a receptive body of readers whose responses often impact future editing, editions, or (re)creations of the adapted work. Shakespeare fanfic, increasingly ubiquitous and visible within the online world of fan created narratives, is an early twenty-first century cultural practice of amateur dramatic adaptation and appropriation heavily influenced not just by Shakespeare's body of work and its archontic archive of prior Shakespeare adaptations, but also (like theatre adaptation) by the expectations and desires of creators and readers.

Inger-Lise Kalviknes Bore (Birmingham City University): Fandom and genre: Comic distance and emotional attachment in *Parks and Recreation* fandom

This paper contributes to our understanding of the relationship between fandom and genre by examining some of the specificities of sitcom fandom. Through a case

study of *Parks and Recreation* (NBC, 2009-2015) fandom on Tumblr, I consider how fans respond to particular textual elements. The recently concluded *Parks and Recreation* can be positioned within a sitcom trend that has abandoned key genre conventions, including the multi-camera shooting style, the laugh track and circular narratives in favour of a mock-documentary format, multiple locations, and long-running storylines. The show is still clearly cued as comedic, however, and employs a range of strategies in attempts to increase and decrease the comic distance that enables us to laugh at characters' mishaps, rather than just feel sorry for them. This paper reflects on the relationship between that comic distance and the emotional attachment fans develop to their fan objects. How can online fan responses to *Parks and Recreation* be seen to negotiate this duality? How might that be linked to the way this sitcom plays with notions of individualism, friendship and citizenship? And how might it be linked to the characteristics of Tumblr as a platform, and to the conventions of Tumblr-based *Parks and Recreation* fandom?

Tanja Välisalo (University of Jyväskylä): Creating Avatars as Making Meaning in Fandom

The aim of this paper is to examine how fans use virtual characters, avatars, in graphical virtual worlds to mediate their relationship with popular cultural products. Virtual worlds have become part of everyday life for millions of people in the last decades. For fandoms they offer environments where fans can recreate, expand and step into the fictional worlds of the stories they are so invested in. The specific focus of this paper is on creating and modifying avatars and how fans create meanings within this process.

The hypothesis of this study is that avatars both reflect the meanings fans create but also shape those meanings. By identifying the aesthetics and narratives fans associate with their avatars, it is possible to understand the process of creating meanings through and attached to those avatars.

In this study the focus is on furry fandom, a fandom based on popular cultural products such as animation, comics and games that focus on anthropomorphic animal characters. Members of the fandom, furies, often have an animal character they identify with called a fursona. In virtual worlds furies have the possibility of embodying their fursonas and there are several furry communities in virtual worlds, most notably in Second Life. (Nast 2006: 303, 316–317.) Furies' interviews and images of their avatars provided by them will be analysed and interpreted in the framework of articulation theory. (Grossberg 1995: 248–265.)

With the rise of participatory culture fan practices have are pervading the audiences in general. (Abercrombie & Longhurst 1998: 122; Jenkins 2006, 134) Studying the role of avatars in fandom offers new insight into the meaning-making process as well as the process of creating and modifying avatars in virtual worlds.

Panel E: Age and Generations

Daisy Asquith (University of Sussex): No Larry Shippers were Harmed in the Making of this Documentary

On 13th August 2013 a disturbing hashtag began to trend worldwide on Twitter. #RIPLarryShippers appeared to report and mourn the deaths of 42 "Larry shippers" - the One Direction fans that enjoy, support and believe in the idea that Harry Styles and his bandmate Louis Tomlinson are in a secret gay relationship. Fans on Twitter were claiming that the shippers had killed themselves due to the inclusion of the Larry concept in a documentary I had made for Channel 4 - 'Crazy About One Direction' which they had ripped and shared globally overnight with astonishing speed. The fandom was furious with me, and sent hundreds of death and bomb threats to my twitter account. #RIPLarryShippers trended for 48 hours. Data analysis by Second Sync revealed the documentary was the most tweeted about programme ever on British television by ten times.

This paper explores the creative, subversive and powerfully networked fans of One Direction, uncovers the queer erotic meanings in their Larry fan art and investigates the subcultural codes that dictate who can enjoy it and share it. It also analyses the factions that divide the fandom and fan the flames of rage when there is a contested representation of either the band or their fans. It explores the ethics of television documentary and the representation of teenage girls in particular. My research in the 18 months since has established that no Larry shippers were in fact driven to suicide, but their reasons for claiming such a thing have become more and more compelling the further I investigate. How did filming, editing and transmitting the story of Larry create a perfect fandom storm?

Ruth Deller (Sheffield Hallam University): 'As if the women have been beamed down en masse from Bhs': newspaper representations of mature female fans

In this paper, I explore the way mature fans are presented in a range of local and national English-speaking newspapers. I focus here specifically on female fans of mature male solo singers (Tom Jones, Barry Manilow, Daniel O'Donnell, Cliff

Richard, Donny Osmond, Rod Stewart, Neil Diamond and Michael Ball), to explore the way gendered fandom is presented when the women are older than the teenage female fans most often associated with male artists.

As fans who grew up in the twentieth century age, it is becoming clear that music fandom is no longer the sole preserve of the young. Indeed, there is a growing body of research into older/long-standing fandoms (e.g. Baker 2014, Bennett 2006, Connell 2011, Harrington and Bielby 2010). However, what is less common is an exploration of the way these older fans are presented in wider media.

Here, I discuss how newspaper narratives place frequently use this fandom as a source of humour (Cavicchi 1998: 6), particularly in regional and local press where they provide a source of feel-good amusement: women queueing for tickets with flasks and chairs; throwing knickers at the stage; receiving greetings on milestone birthdays. Whilst fans are gently mocked, a sympathetic nod is offered to their roles as wives, mothers and, especially, grandmothers – positioning them as seemingly ‘ordinary’ people whose ‘unusual’ devotion to a star allows for a humorous human interest narrative to be constructed around their curious fandom.

Ysabel Gerrard (University of Leeds): ‘For a long time, I kept that on the DL. I didn’t want to admit that I watched that show’: Teen television fandoms and reimagining guilty pleasures

This paper draws on empirical research from my PhD thesis, to explore fans’ online participation in three women’s popular cultures: teen drama series *Pretty Little Liars* (2010-present), *Revenge* (2011-present), and *The Vampire Diaries* (2009-present). In so doing, the research engages with longstanding feminist concerns around guilty pleasures, exploring the conscious and unconscious ways that teen television fans navigate their much-derided fandom through dedicated online spaces. In particular, the study works to interrogate the fraught relationship between shame and pleasure through the lived experiences of teen television fans and their online negotiations. This relationship is deeply complex, and is inherently centred on age, gender, class, race and sexuality.

In engaging with such texts and the online discussions that surround them, this paper also draws on longstanding debates around women’s popular culture (see Radway, 1984; Bacon-Smith, 1992; Baym, 2000; Zubernis and Larsen, 2013) and postfeminism. Postfeminist media cultures are widely attributed to the gradual undermining of existing feminist gains (see McRobbie, 2009), yet fandoms around such texts continue to thrive. Such fandoms are largely enacted online, and I argue

that it is through such spaces that notions of 'guilty pleasure' are currently being reimagined, reproduced and renegotiated.

The paper's focus on teen television series provides a distinctly generational contribution to contentious debates about social media, feminism, postfeminism, identity, fandom, guilty pleasures, and leisure, to name but a few.

Melanie Williams (University of East Anglia): Aren't we naughty mummies?!: adult women's online fandom and CBeebies' Mr Bloom

This paper will explore online female fan cultures surrounding the BBC's children's programme *Mr Bloom's Nursery* (2011-), specifically constructions of the series' lead male character the gardener Mr Bloom (played by series creator Ben Faulks) as an object of secret or forbidden sexual desire. It will track and analyse responses to the show on discussion boards for the two major UK internet fori aimed at mothers, Mumsnet and Netmums, as well as looking at other online fan activity around Faulks.

Following on from the debates about 'mummy porn' instigated by the huge success of *Fifty Shades of Grey*, this paper will examine a distinctly different and ostensibly more light-hearted variant of 'mummy porn' in the unlikeliest (and, for some online discussants, most inappropriate) of places - a television programme aimed at pre-school children - and the ways in which *Mr Bloom's Nursery* is mobilised by online forum users as a means to address the still-troubling notion of maternal sexuality.

Panel F: Social Issues and Morality

Eva Cheuk-Yin Li (King's College London): Entangling Queer and Normal: Fan Culture of Lesbian Singer in Hong Kong

This paper aims to demonstrate the embedment of queer fan culture in specific cultural trajectory and institutional arrangements by studying the fandom of a top lesbian singer, Denise Ho, aka HOCC, in Hong Kong before and after her coming out. I aim to contextualize her queer fan culture by exploring the interplay between fans' experience and sexual cultures in Hong Kong which have been actively shaped by three regulating sites of heteronormativity—the post-colonial government, Chinese family, and religion. Coming out in the Hong Kong Pride Parade 2012, HOCC is the one of the few singers in the entire Chinese entertainment industry who bluntly admitted her sexuality. She has been a top selling singer in Hong Kong since 2006 and was one of the few in both Mando- and Canto-pop who repeatedly produced songs with heavy queer undertones. She was also well-known for gossips

with other top female singers. Data of this paper is collected between 2009 and 2014 by triangulating methods of participant observation, cyber ethnography, and in-depth interviews with 29 self-identified fans. Before coming out, the ambivalence in HOCC's sexuality allowed various play and fan cultural production such as femslash. However, queer pleasure and queer reading had to be closeted in the heteronormative atmosphere in Hong Kong in order not to 'harm' her career. After coming out, the queer fan culture did not dissipate but shifted to new debates. New entanglement with normal in terms of homonormative codes and normalization in local queer politics arose which further complicated the negotiation of queer and normal. In short, by exercising their agency and simultaneously being constrained by multiple macro-structural and micro-political forces, HOCC fans in Hong Kong desired to be queer by transgressing normal, and paradoxically, desired to be normal by tactically negotiating the limits of queer.

Virginia Crisp (Coventry University): Filesharing as Fan Practice: Reconsidering the Social Side of Digital Piracy

Existing popular and academic debates around digital piracy have (perhaps understandably) assumed that the acquisition or distribution of media (whether film, music, software etc.) is the fundamental purpose of such online activities. Furthermore, such discussions have often investigated the potential benefits or damages produced by such activities in distinctly economic terms. While such preoccupations might be understandable, they only reveal part of the picture. By examining media pirates as media fans, this paper will examine how digital piracy is often about much more than just acquiring goods; it is also often a social activity that takes place within communities with rules, rituals and codes (Huang, 2003, p. 42). Thus while giving and receiving media is often central to digital piracy, it is not always so. This is not to suggest that all forms of filesharing are uniquely social (or are particularly motivated by sharing per se), but rather to acknowledge that digital piracy comprises a range of heterogeneous practices that in some instances may have a distinctly social element. Previous research on filesharing that has considered the social side of digital piracy has often considered such practices through the anthropological lens of gift economies (Giesler and Pohlmann, 2003) but such an approach is problematic precisely because it assumes all filesharers go on to 'share' what they download (Andersson Schwarz, 2013). This paper intends to move away from such a perspective by considering filesharers as media 'fans'. Such a strategy will enable an in-depth examination of how media fandom might influence the structure of, and practices within, particular filesharing forums.

Rukmini Pande (University of Western Australia): Squee from the Margins: Racial dynamics in fandom participation

Fan communities are increasingly being theorized as functioning as a highly dynamic interlinked interpretative matrix, constantly reforming internal conventions in response to newer theorisation about norms and practices produced by participants. These theorisations often concern depiction of minority groups (LGBTQ communities in the case of slash fandom). However only very recently has scholarship acknowledged that the community has significant demographic representation of fans from racial and ethnic backgrounds other than white and middle-class Americans.

“Whiteness” as a monolithic category or default has been complicated by numerous theorists (Roediger 1991; Frankenberg 1993; Allen 1994; Ignatiev 1996) and this applies to fandom participants as well. However as Spivak (1990) has theorised, identity positions are often articulated “strategically” by minority groups in order to gain visibility. In the context of fandom, one such identity is that of being a “Fan of Colour” (or FoC). The term evolved out of the commonly used American phrase, “Person Of Colour” (or PoC). This self-identification strategy has also grown out of a need for fans from minority groups to position themselves within a community that has emerged around popular cultural texts, often informed by racial misrepresentation, to which they are more sensitive. I will be examining these engagements and the possibility of resistance and containment they display through fan interviews and case studies.

Panel G: Fandom and Celebrity

Beccy Collings (University of East Anglia): In on the joke: language, belonging, and playing along in online comedy fandom. A case study of the Trailer Park Boys’ *Swearnet.com*

Launched online in March 2013 by the actors associated with the Canadian comedy franchise *Trailer Park Boys*, the website *Swearnet.com* is billed as a platform for the team’s comic output and for fan content and fan interaction. In this paper I argue that the *Swearnet* site has developed into a space where the fans and the actors now interact together to explicitly perform their own idealised fandom; a performance that is characterised by the swearsy articulation of their commitment to behaviour that directly reflects the lifestyle of the *Trailer Park Boys* characters themselves, including recreational drug use, excessive alcohol consumption, law-breaking, and other rebellious and grotesque acts.

By examining fans' comments on Swearnet videos, analysing the actors' interactions with their fans, and drawing on Bakhtinian ideas of the carnivalesque, the paper considers the importance apparently placed by the *Trailer Park Boys* fans (and the 'Boys' themselves) upon this collective performance of fandom through play-acting and participating in behaviour that reflects the ideology of the *Trailer Park Boys* series and Swearnet.

Via the Swearnet case study, the paper ultimately seeks to illuminate how comedy fans' use of 'appropriate' language and anecdotes in their communication within online fan spaces might be seen as a deliberate strategy to demonstrate and validate their fan status through their ability to be in on the jokes inherent in the programmes they follow, and how this language and sharing of anecdotal experiences is overtly cued, encouraged, and modelled by the creators of those shows. The consequence of this in the case of Swearnet is the existence of an unusual online space wherein both fans and actors are literally engaged in an inside joke together.

Lori Hitchcock Morimoto (Independent): Setting the Stage: The Origins of Modern Foreign 'Boy Booms' in Japan

In a pamphlet produced by the Korean Culture and Information Service entitled, *The Korean Wave: A New Pop Culture Phenomenon* (2011), it is observed as a matter of course that the overwhelming popularity in Japan of South Korean actor Bae Yong-joon was "virtually unprecedented in Japanese society" (24); this paper begs to differ. Or, rather, I propose to interrogate the "virtually" of this claim by exploring the broader historical contexts of the Korean Wave, which was in fact the third in a continuing series of foreign male star-centered 'booms' that began in the late 1980s. Beginning with the identification and definition in Japanese mass-market publications of what is today termed the 'first beautiful British boy boom', I trace the trajectory of the 'boy boom' through its Hong Kong, Korean, and present-day (second) British iterations. In particular, I discuss the role of star-centered books and magazines, women's magazines, theater owners and media distributors in generating and sustaining these booms. In so doing, I reveal how long-standing 'bishonen' (beautiful boy) aesthetics and narratives within female-targeted Japanese popular culture are articulated with the structuring absence of both Japanese and Hollywood stars in the formation of a consistent framework for the marketing of foreign stars by these ancillary content producers. In a broader sense, through its alternative point of entry into the twenty-seven year history of foreign star booms in Japan, this paper demonstrates the potential pitfalls of the 'nation' as the sole heuristic for understanding transnational popular cultural phenomena.

Giovanna Rampazzo (Dublin Institute of Technology): The Arrival of Bollywood Celebrities in Dublin: Media, Community and Fandom

Drawing on studies of fandom and participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006; Burgess and Green 2009), this paper demonstrates how the first-ever presence of Bollywood film sets around Dublin allowed Hindi film enthusiasts, including myself in the methodologically dualistic position of both fan and researcher, to connect with wider transcultural communities of fans, providing a compelling theoretical framework within which to examine the reactions and interactions triggered by the filming of the Bollywood blockbuster titled *Ek Tha Tiger* (Once there was a Tiger; Kabir Khan, 2012). Salman Khan, the film's male protagonist, is one of the most prominent stars of Hindi cinema with a considerable fan base. His presence in the Irish capital compelled fans to gather in large numbers at film locations and to share photos and videos of the sets on the internet, thus appropriating the film and its imagery, using it to communicate with other fans across the world. Participant observation on the sets of *Ek Tha Tiger*, together with an analysis of fan-generated media content surrounding the film's production, has enabled me to examine how creating and circulating unofficial material about the film provided fans with the opportunity to complement the event reported by the dominant media and to share their experience with others. Significantly, this paper further draws on the work on Indian film scholar Adrian Athique, who contends that media audiences can be seen as 'imagined communities'. The wider context of this paper is my doctoral thesis on the reception, circulation and consumption of popular Indian cinema in Dublin.

Hannah Yelin (University of East Anglia): The Ghosted Porn Star Memoir: Appetites for access and the female reader/fan

"You'd think that my fans would be the guys who are too drunk to turn the channel after football. But surprisingly, from all the demographic research that people have done on me, we've found out that I have a huge female following. It's a girl-girl type thing." Pamela Anderson, *Esquire Magazine*, 31.12.04

Despite the predominantly female target audience of celebrity autobiography, women made famous by male-targeted soft-core porn modelling and hard-core porn films have 'authored' some of the most commercially successful and widely read contemporary texts within the genre. Taking three such works, Jenna Jameson's *How to Make Love like a Porn Star*, Katie Price's *Being Jordan*, and Pamela Anderson's *Star*, this article investigates the appeal of this sub-genre of celebrity autobiography, the models of femininity offered, and the conflicted processes of self-representation in such a heavily mediated site.

Who these books are for in terms of target audiences for marketing, implied readers, and gaze is a vexed question. Despite the majority female audience for these texts, the specular sexuality presented within them transmits the male gaze of pornography from the visual to the verbal, inviting an investigation of the power dynamics of a performance of eroticised subjectivity.

Combining the intimate revelations that form the appeal of celebrity coverage, autobiography's promise of the enlightenment subject who is capable of self-knowledge and self-disclosure of personal truth, and the visual exposure and sexual availability of pornography, these texts uniquely occupy a nexus of consumer appetites for access.

Panel H: Endings and Transitions

Bridget Kies (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee): Breaking Up Is Hard to Do: The Politics of Loving and Leaving Fandom

Many early studies into fandom and fan activities emphasise, even exaggerate, the extent to which fandoms operate as safe refuges for geeks to come together and as spaces for women to form intense bonds with each other and their chosen canon. Some recent studies have begun to question this utopian vision of fandom. Derek Johnson writes about how producers "strike back" at fans who antagonise them (2007). Zubernis and Larsen study shaming practices, both external (fandom/outside world) and internal to a particular community (2012). Fan activists have also begun to call more attention to cyberbullying practices, even launching dedicated social media accounts to police bullying from outside and inside fan communities (such as @AntiFanbullying on Twitter). However, these efforts to bring shame and bullying to the foreground only reiterate the desire fans feel to achieve a utopia.

Less frequently studied is the process by which fans separate from their fandoms. For some, fandom is not a safe utopia but merely another world in which they are outcasts. Others may decide they no longer share the interests and values of a fandom. The process of leaving a fandom, of abandoning the utopian dream, of absencing oneself of a community and the hours one has devoted to it, is worthy of further investigation. For instance, if one no longer participates in role-playing games or reading fan fiction, is one still a fan of a particular canon? Can one be a fan if one isn't a part of a fan community? In this paper, I investigate the painful process by which fans break up with their chosen fandoms, using a mixture of first-

hand experiences and theory. This paper seeks to shed light on the darker side of the romance fans develop with their chosen text and with each other.

Nicolle Lamerichs (HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht): Saying Goodbye Together: Fan Participation in Cartoon Endings

The ending of a television show often raises heated debates among viewers. This is not surprising. An ending is a process of narrative closure and evokes the 'phenomenological feeling of finality' (Carroll, 2007, p. 1). As an affective process, it is a combination of the audience's investment, the expectations of the narrative and the intensity with which these desires are met at the ending.

This paper particularly focuses on the endings of cartoons. These endings have led to fan participation in many ways. Some cartoons, for instance, never had a finale, which has led to fan protest, fan works and professional spin-offs. The lack of an ending could be for production reasons (e.g. *Hey! Arnold*) or because the format of the cartoon was episodic rather than sequential (e.g. *Ducktales*).

Recent cartoons, however, have validated their fandom during their finales. Outstanding examples of this are *The Legend of Korra* (2012-2014) and *Phineas and Ferb* (2007-2015). The first case ended on a high note by confirming the lesbian fan pairing Korrasami. It also led to debate, since some fans felt that the writers should have been more explicit in representing the bisexuality of the characters. *Phineas and Ferb*, in a similar way, focused on the romantic relationships between its characters and confirmed main pairings in the ending. During the last episode, the creators said goodbye to their viewers by reading fan mail and adopting the character designs of a fan artist.

Informed by fan responses and fan works, I interpret cartoon endings and their storytelling techniques. By playing with the anticipation and expectation of audiences, these shows make the emotions behind a finale visible. I focus on the narrative structure behind these endings. How do they integrate the voice of their audience? Is closure more effective when it explicitly integrates fandom?

Kee Lundqvist (Uppsala University): Meaningful Stories: The Process and Practices of Sense-Making

In the 2013 addendum to *Textual Poachers*, Henry Jenkins notes and regrets the lack of studies of evolving fan reception. In his chapter on fans' of the ill-fated TV show *Beauty and Beast* he examines how fans evaluate the evolving text according to their preferences and perception of the text – and how they 'fall out of love' with the text when it fails to fulfill their expectations. However, and as I aim to

demonstrate in this presentation, 'falling out of love' with a text is not the only – and by far not the most common – response to new installments of a show (or any text) introducing plot developments that does not 'square' with the fan's reading of the show. Indeed, fans are both resourceful and creative when it comes to incorporating new, and potentially jarring, information into a meaningful interpretation.

Building on psychologist Kenneth Paragment's theory of significance and coping. I provide a theoretical framework for understanding the process of fans' sense-making, and demonstrate its practical expressions as it occurs among the fans of *Sherlock* on the website Tumblr. Combining in-depth interviews with fans with data from a three-month participant observation of various *Sherlock*-related tags this study aims both to deepen the understanding of how textual significance is created and how textual significance is maintained and/or transformed in the face of new information or differing interpretations.

Rebecca Williams (University of South Wales): "Princess Elsa and her 13,000 square foot restroom": Theme park fandom, replacement and the Disney brand

There has been a great deal of academic work on theme parks and their rides, with much of this research focusing (perhaps unsurprisingly) on the various Disney theme parks. Koren-Kuik (2014) has recently discussed how 'Disney encourages participatory fandom in its most complex and wide range form, inviting fans not only to watch movies and television shows but also play, sing, learn, and experience.', especially through the theme park which offers 'the consumer/fan a spatial platform which brings 'all the narrative elements together in the experience of walking or riding through narrativized space'' (Koren-Kuik 2014, 147). However, there remains relatively little work on fans of theme parks, and even less on both individual rides and fans of specific attractions.

This paper addresses this by considering one element of theme park fandom; fan responses to the closure of favourite rides. Whilst Rahn (2011) has discussed the upgrade of Disney's Snow White ride, little work in theme park studies, tourism, nor audience studies has explored how fans react when beloved rides are replaced. This paper considers the replacement of a ride at Walt Disney World's EPCOT park which removed the popular Maelstrom ride from the Norway pavilion in the World Showcase section of the park and replaced it with attractions based on the animated film *Frozen*. Considering online reactions to this move, and how fans discuss their opposition in terms of the importance of 'classic attractions' to the park's history and Disney's brand, a desire to remain 'true to' EPCOT's original emphasis upon education and representing real countries in World Showcase, and their own

affective attachments, this chapter considers how fans of theme park rides react when these are replaced or updated.

Panel I: Activism

Mark Duffett (University of Chester): On the Knowing Field: Cornel West, Curtis Mayfield and Fan Activism

Most of the discussion about fan activism so far has been led by concepts from fan studies such as moral participatory culture, moral community and cultural acupuncture (see, for example, Brough and Shrestrova 2012; Jenkins 2012). These otherwise useful notions offer a limited view of individual fans in terms of affective motivations and subjectivity. Instead they portray fan bases as relatively uniform groups that act almost automatically, in relative unison, as if a mobilized as part of an anonymous collective. Discussions about politics in celebrity studies, meanwhile, explore and dispute the value of celebrities as political agents (see Corner and Pels 2003; Street 2004; Wheeler 2013). Neither field has offered much attention cases where celebrities have declared their own media fandom in the public sphere. Cornel West is one of America's leading black intellectuals and a prolific contributor to the US national media. Drawing on my concept of fandom as residency on a shared 'knowing field,' this paper considers the way that West has expressed his passion for the soul singer Curtis Mayfield in pursuit of non-violent civil disobedience in aid of human rights.

Allison McCracken and Jen Kelly (DePaul University): "Where the Fangrrls Are": Fan Conventions as Feminist Praxis

We are proposing a joint paper based on our analyses of several fan conventions in the United States that cater to and attract primarily 12-24 year old female, femme, and queer-identified youth. We attended and interviewed staff personnel and fans at LeakyCon (August, 2014), DashCon (July, 2014), and GeekGirlCon (October, 2014), and we are currently working on a longer project analyzing the way in which these cons serve feminist and queer interests and provide new venues for education currently unserved by traditional institutions. Specifically, we are interested in how these cons connect fan activities very directly with the larger social concerns of their attendees, mirroring the kinds of fandom/social justice content juxtapositions that characterize Tumblr, the primary social media platform for many attendees. Thus, panels at these conventions serve the overlapping, frequently conflated social and affective investments and concerns of attendees, including those of feminist and anti-racist politics and praxis, LGBTQQA education, ability/mental health support, and

professional development within media and technology fields. These fan spaces are defined by their intersectionality, in which attention to social differences among participants, as well as within media texts are openly and directly addressed.

For example, one panel we observed, "Diversity in Young Adult Fiction," was run by young adults who identified –variously—as sexual/gender/class minorities and people of color; in their analysis of young adult fiction, these panelists brought in their own experiences as marginalized audiences and creators, providing a critique not only of the representational content of young adult books but connecting that content with wider institutional and hegemonic practices that marginalize or erase non-normative writers, audiences, and content.

Milena Popova (University of the West of England): "Actually non-con": Sexually explicit fanfiction as a form of cultural activism

In this paper, I analyse fan practices, fandom discourse and fanfiction to show that they form the core of a type of cultural activism centred around issues of sexual consent.

While there has been some recent research into fan activism in the field of fan studies, it has predominantly focused on activities such as philanthropy and fundraising (e.g. Jenkins & Shresthova, 2012). Where fan works themselves have been examined as a form of activism (Leavitt & Horbinski, 2012), the focus has been on issues such as censorship and copyright which threaten the fandom community specifically, rather than wider social issues such as consent.

The sexually explicit nature of a significant proportion of fanfiction, as well as the non-commercial environment in which it is produced, make it particularly well suited for the exploration of sensitive issues around sexuality and consent. Fan interactions, fan practices and discourses further supplement these explorations to create and nurture a space in which fans can challenge dominant discourses around consent and offer possible alternatives to popular myths in an engaging and accessible way.

In my paper, I build on Fraser's (1990) concept of subaltern counterpublics and theories of cultural activism (e.g. Buser & Arthurs, 2012). I show how fanfiction discourses can create safe spaces for the exploration of difficult subjects and the renegotiation of the private-public boundary. I use textual analysis and close readings to examine a small number of fanfiction stories. I show the techniques fan writers and readers use to subvert and recreate traditional narratives of consent and explore feminist models of consent largely absent from popular culture.

William Proctor (Bournemouth University): "Hey, maybe DC will replace Bruce Wayne with a rich Mexican guy named El Bruche' de'Wan'ye?": Online Fan Discourses of Racism, Misogyny and "The Toxic Disinhibition Effect."

In 2014, *Bridesmaids* director, Paul Feig, announced plans to write and direct a third *Ghostbusters* film, not as a continuation, but as a reboot starring an all-female cast (Kristen Wiig, Melissa McCarthy, Kate McKinnon, and Leslie Jones). This led to a fan backlash in cyberspace which promoted discourses of sexism and misogyny, denounced by Feig himself as 'vile, misogynist shit.' Indeed, many commenters prefigured their statements with 'I'm all for equality and all that, but...'

Unfortunately, the *Ghostbusters* backlash is not an isolated incident. The recruiting of Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman resulted in the online fermentation of body-shaming discourses; Marvel Comics' decision to 're-gender' Thor and the emergence of a new Captain America as an African-American superhero led to a proliferation of sexist and racist discourses respectively; the casting of Michael B. Jordan as Johnny Storm in *The Fantastic Four* reboot and John Boyega as a 'black stormtrooper' in *Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens*, both of which provoked an intense reaction on social media.

Not that these discourses are a new phenomenon either – Will Brooker (1999) examined the fan discourses circulating around *Batman and Robin* in 1997, many of which engaged in homophobia -- but that the contemporary mainstreaming of fandom, especially online, has opened up a space which renders these discursive formations visible and accessible to the general public and cultural commentators. Moreover, as John Suler theorises, online performance and behaviour is indicative of an *online disinhibition effect*, that is, 'people say and do things in cyberspace that they wouldn't ordinarily say and do in the face-to-face world' (2004: 321). This disinhibition can be salutary (supportive, cathartic) but these fan discourses in particular exemplify *toxic disinhibition* signified by 'rude language, harsh criticisms, anger, hatred, even threats' (ibid).

What I want to do in this presentation is discuss the ways in which Fan Studies can deal with these online performances, this 'darker side' of fandom, if you will. While I do not intend to excuse these 'flame wars,' as anything but pernicious and hostile, I would like to examine the ways in which this is can be understood in relation to affect, performativity and anxiety about the (threatened) fan-object. As one commenter explains, 'People (fanboys in particular) are tired of this pandering and tampering of our characters for the sake of "diversity"'. In this way, fans seek to discursively police what they see as the corruption of a platonic ideal in relation to

texts and characters but end up constructing race, sex and gender as 'Other' and, in the process, replicating dominant ideologies.

Panel J: Methodologies

Lies Lanckman (University of Kent): In Search of Lost Fans: Recovering Fan Magazine Readers, 1910-1950

Throughout the past five years, fan magazines such as *Photoplay* have become increasingly appreciated by scholars of early Hollywood. While they cannot be used as secondary sources due to the often spurious information they conveyed, they are useful primary sources due to their close collaboration with the Hollywood studios; "the fan magazines [...] published and wrote what the studios determined what they should publish and write" (Slide, 2010: 73). As such, they can give us a glimpse of the types of rhetoric encouraged and publicised by Hollywood in regard to films or stars, across issues, months and even years.

Nonetheless, fan magazines are more controversial in regard to fan studies research; while it is well known that fans consumed these magazines on a colossal scale, these fans' own voices remain relatively silent within research on the magazines. While letters from readers were published (and often responded to) in fan magazines from their very genesis onward, their origin, and thus reliability, remains disputed; were they genuinely written by fans or devised by editors eager to further the magazine's rhetoric?

This paper proposes to demonstrate, through census and newspaper research, how these letters can in fact be analysed and categorised and how particular examples can, with high levels of accuracy, be found to be written by magazine editors or by individual, existing fans. This is an exciting new strand of potential fan magazine research, particularly in terms of tackling the difficult task of resurrecting a now deceased but once highly active fan base – consisting of fans who attempted to establish a dialogue with their fandom and with each other decades before the Internet came along.

Jo Metivier (University College London, Institute of Education): Less visible "creative" fans, or non-fans? Towards a method for studying creative writing audiences online and offline

Fan scholars have frequently noted the significance of fandom as an invisible, solitary pursuit (Hills, 2002; Sandvoss, 2005). An early focus on creative fans as highly visible, discrete and cohesive interpretive communities actively resisting

producers' implied reader positions has largely given way to calls for approaches that can access different experiences of fandom, modes of participation within communities and patterning of relationships with fan objects, thus re-invigorating the field. A problem identified by Williams (2011) is how to gain access to the practices and identities of less visible fans given their isolation. My ethnographic study of creative writing audiences on contrasting sites contributes to work addressing this gap in the literature.

A 2-year period of 'observant participation' on The Sugar Quill, a Harry Potter fan site, involved membership of the site's staff of beta readers and interviews with thirteen fan fiction writers. On a second research site, I observed a graduate creative writing workshop module and interviewed students and tutors.

Analysis of these creative writing audiences revealed participants to be active members of what I am calling "story fandom". Story fandom, I argue, constitutes a globally distributed virtual community of creative readers/writers. The community of is made up of largely invisible, lone fans, non-fans and anti-fans in the sense currently understood. This attribute has, thus far, worked to obscure its existence from scholars in fan studies. One reason for this, I suggest, is that invisible fans do not serve the purposes the media industry wants them to serve.

In the paper, I explore links with previous multi-sited fan ethnographies and describe the methods I used to gain access to these groups. I discuss strategies involved in concealing and revealing alignment with "story" on the two sites, ending with implications for further research on "invisible" fans.

Andrea Nevitt (Keele University): Schrödinger's forum: The ethical dilemmas of conducting online ethnographic research into a *Game of Thrones* fan community that is simultaneously public and private, spatial and textual

The Westeros.org fan forum's membership has increased five-fold since the first *Game of Thrones* episode aired. This, combined with the show's global popularity, makes the text and its fandom irresistible for fan studies scholars.

Theoretical debate on the ethics of online research revolves around two binary oppositions. One defines the Internet as *either* a space where people gather *or* as a text that people co-create, the other comprises arguments that the interaction of people online is *either* public *or* private. With little academic consensus, the ideal online method is situationally designed. Complications arise, however, when that situation (for example the community) undergoes significant change during the

research. It becomes necessary to consider how balance can be found between sensitivity to participants and the level of risk associated with the research topic.

I will begin by analysing Westeros.org forum discussions, which suggest that the community sees itself as simultaneously public *and* private, and simultaneously textual *and* spatial. From there I will describe the three-tiered ethnographic method I designed for researching the ways in which the Westeros.org community, with roots in 1997, has changed since the *A Song of Ice and Fire* novels were adapted to television. The method combines lurking, open and consensual discussions, and private email interviews. I will demonstrate the challenges faced when researching a text with ever-expanding boundaries and a community with an ever-expanding membership.

The object of my research is change; an adolescent dragon that can't be chained and tamed. My paper will highlight that even when online methods have been designed with a particular topic and community in mind, we must be simultaneously flexible *and* rigid, to both accommodate a changing object *and* hold it still long enough to study it.

Tisha Turk (University of Minnesota): Producing Fan Studies: Participation and Process

Many fan studies scholars, beginning with Jenkins, have discussed media fandom as a participatory culture characterized by amateur production, in which even fans who are not themselves producers consume and recirculate other fans' productions. In recent years, however, some scholars (Hills 2002; Gray, Sandvoss, and Harrington 2007) have criticized the narrowness of this definition. Nicolle Lamerichs, in her account of the 2014 Fan Studies Network conference, reminds us that "productive fandom... is certainly not the norm," that for some fans "fandom is more momentary and fleeting, or more related to the industry and affirmation," and that traditions and practices vary with language and location.

In this presentation, I argue that the tension within fan studies between those who emphasize and those who criticize participation-oriented definitions of fandom is itself a productive tension, in two ways. First, participation-based definitions have encouraged scholars who resist those definitions to develop more complex, nuanced, and culturally contextualized theories of fandom. Second, engaging with the emphasis on participation/production, even to critique it, reminds fan studies scholars to keep fans and fan activities at the center of our work. If we're truly studying fans and fandom, as opposed to the music, media, people, events, and objects that fans adore, then we need to stay focused on what fans do, on the

actions, activities, and investments (both emotional and monetary) that characterize fans and fan communities. We need to attend to the processes—affirmational or transformational, fleeting or ongoing—through which individuals and groups define and perform their meanings of fan and fandom.