

FANS & TRANSFORMATIVE WORKS

FLME-491-05

Contact Info:

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About Me:

I am currently earning my Ph. D. in Moving Image Studies in the Communication Department at Georgia State University. My work at GSU has focused on new media and collaborative storytelling, with a particular emphasis on LGBT and Queer self-representations in transmedia narratives. I use a cultural studies approach that leans heavily on audience reception and fan studies in my research, keeping in mind text and industrial constraints.



Course Description

This course looks at fans as authors, and their fan works as transformative contributions to media culture — work that is creative, meaningful, and community building. Fans are no longer the psychologically fraught “fanatic” obsessing about the object(s) of their devotion, but creative producers of media content that critique, expand, and even replace the content which inspires them. When this happens, fans become authors, and their works become transformative and creative contributions of their fandom community, and larger culture. This class is devoted to understanding the relationships between fans and their media texts and the creative works produced as art.

We will examine the conceptualizations of fans within larger culture, and within fandom subculture. We will analyze fan created art, including cosplay, fan fiction, podcasting, fan art, and fan videos. Each week students will read a combination of



Assignments

Autoethnography	25 pts
Closet Cosplay	50 pts
Reflection	50 pts
Fanfic Snippet	50 pts
Reflection	50 pts
FanCast	125 pts
Reflection	75 pts
Fanactivism Poster	100 pts
Reflection	75 pts
Fandom Mood	50 pts
Reflection	50 pts
Final Remix Project	200 pts
Reflection	100 pts

Grade Scale

97-100	A+	80-82	B-
93-96	A	77-79	C+
90-92	A-	70-76	C
87-89	B+	60-69	D
83-86	B	59-0	F

The last day to withdraw and receive a "PW" is **October 10th**. Withdrawals after the semester midpoint are automatically given a grade of "WF."

theoretical work on fan studies and a complimentary fan produced transformative work.

In class discussion will tackle major issues of identity, authorship, copyright, remix culture, fan activism, criticism, world-building, and the boundaries of audience participation. Students will participate in the fandom(s) of their choice throughout the semester by creating transformative works, and reflect critically on the fan works as meaningful (or not) contributions to culture.

Course Goals

By the end of this course you should be able to...

- Identify the different fan practices, yes of creative works
- Discuss the implications of copyright, authorship, and fair use in terms of media fandom's creative works
- Create multimedia fan works of your own that are transformative in nature
- Think critically about the connections between fandom, culture, and media industries

Course Texts

Duffet, Mark. *Understanding Fandom*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

Required readings are available online at the course website, located in the resources section, and linked in the schedule.

Readings will include a mix of theoretical writing on fan studies and creative fan works.

Course Policies

Class Environment

It is in the best interests of you as an individual and us as a classroom to create a positive, inclusive, classroom environment. One of my greatest challenges as an instructor is to provide an engaging, entertaining, and intellectual classroom experience. I need your collaboration to create the best educational experience for all involved. By participating in class discussion, being respectful of others opinions, and preparing for class.

Class Style

My approach to this class will integrate mini-lectures, screenings, and discussion in order to explore principles discussed in the reading.

Attendance & Participation

I will take roll on random days. While this course does not have a separate grade for attendance, repeated absences and/or tardiness can negatively impact your participation grade. You are expected in your seats promptly at 2 PM so we can begin class on time.

Course Site(s)

The public course site (<https://fanstransformativeworks.wordpress.com>) has the most up-to-date version of the syllabus, including course policies, schedule, readings, and assignment guidelines. It also hosts a variety of tutorials guiding you through the technical and creative requirements of the course. We will be using iCollege for all assignment submissions and grades for student protection and privacy.



Late Policy

No assignments will be accepted late unless you have (a) the permission of the instructor; (b) jury duty notice; or (c) permission from the Dean of Students.

Appeals

If you wish to appeal a grade: within a week of getting your assignment back you must hand in, along with the assignment you want re-graded, a typed one page paper explaining why you believe your grade was incorrect and should be regraded. I will respond in writing within a week. Please note, that re-grading does **NOT** guarantee a better grade.

Creative Assignments

There are six creative assignments this semester, where we will learn new technical skills and practice storytelling, parody, criticism in the fannish tradition. For each assignment you will be provided detailed technical instructions, including tutorial videos. For larger projects we will have scheduled production time in class.

Use these assignments to flex your creative production muscles. Fan creative works and authorship is one of the many ways to practice technical and creative skills.

Reflection Assignments

Alongside each creative project is a reflection assignment. This is a traditional writing assignment and you will be expected to use proper grammar, syntax, and structure. Each of these assignments (there are seven) will have specific prompts that you will need to respond to. Additionally, you will find it necessary to leverage course materials and potentially even outside research.

Peer Review

Our last week of classes will be devoted to showcasing our final creative projects in the class. During this time each of you will be assigned a peer to provide useful feedback for improvement to their project. Final projects will be due alongside its reflection on our scheduled examination day, roughly a week later.

Course Schedule

All readings, screenings, and assignments are due by the start of class on the date below.

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1	8/22 - Course Intro	8/24 - What is Fandom? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jenkins, "Get a Life!: Fans, Poachers, Nomads" (PDF)
Week 2	8/29 - Who are Fans? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duffet, "Intro" Spurlock, <i>Comic-Con Episode IV: A Fan's Hope</i> (URL) 	8/31 - Cons & Cosplay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duffet, "Fan Practices" Cosplay Boom (URL)
Week 3	9/5 - Cons & Cosplay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lamerichs, "Stranger than fiction: Fan identity in cosplay" (URL) <p>Closet Cosplay Due!</p>	9/7 - Fan Identities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duffet, "How do people become fans?"
Week 4	9/12 - Copyright & Fandom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebecca Tushnet, "Copyright Law, Fan Practices, and The Rights of the Author" (PDF) Fadden, "A Fair(ly) Use Tale" (URL) 	9/14 - Transformative Works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessig, "How Creativity is Being Strangled by The Law" (URL) Organization for Transformative Works (URL) <p>Autoethnography Due!</p>
Week 5	9/19 - Canon, Headcanon, Fannon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duffet, "Beyond the Text" Search your fandom and #headcanon accepted in Tumblr (URL) 	9/21 - Canon, Headcanon, Fanon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gray, "From canon to fanon and back again" (URL) Duffet, "Myths, Cults, and Places" pp. 209-225
Week 6	9/26 - Fan Fiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coppa, "Five Things that Fan Fiction Is, and One Thing It Isn't" (PDF) Read a fanfiction story of your choice at AO3 or FanFiction.net 	9/28 - Fan Fiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilson, "The Role of Affect in Fan Fiction" (URL) Watch <i>The Dark Crystal</i> (URL) Field Trip to Center for Puppetry Arts on Saturday, Sept. 30 8 pm fan film screening. <p>Fan Fiction Snippet Due!</p>

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 7	10/3 - Queering Fandom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duffet, "Fandom, Gender, and Sexual Orientation" • Kreisinger, "Queer video remix and LGBTQ online communities" (URL) • LexaPledge (URL) 	10/5 - Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duffet, "The Fan Community: online and offline" • Tuszynski, <i>IRL (In Real Life)</i> (URL)
Week 8	10/10 - Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hills, "Fan Cultures between Community and Hierarchy" (PDF) • Nerd Hierarchy (URL) • Geek Hierarchy (URL) • Geek Evolution (URL) 	10/12 - Fantipathies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnson, "Fan-tagonism: Factions, Institutions, and Constitutive Hegemonies of Fandom" (PDF) • Maass, "Flame Wars" (URL)
Week 9	10/17 - Fan Criticism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenkins, "Fan Critics" (PDF) • Listen to a fan podcast of your choice. 	10/19 - Production Day
Week 10	10/24 - Fan Criticism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goodman, "Disappointing Fans" (PDF) Fancast Due!	10/26 - Fan Activism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenkins & Shresthova, "Up, up, and away! The power and potential of fan activism" (URL) • Gilliland, "Racebending fandoms and digital futurism" (URL) • Racebending (URL)
Week 11	10/31 - Production Day	11/2 - Fan Activism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kligler-Vilenchik, et al., "Experiencing fan activism" (URL) Poster Due!
Week 12	11/7 - TBD: Class Choice	11/9 - Fan Economies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Hellekson, "A Fannish Field of Value: Online Fan Gift Culture" (URL)
Week 13	11/14 - Fan Labor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hellekson, "Making Use Of: The Gift, Commerce, and Fans" (URL) • Nightvale FanArt (URL) Mood Assignment Due!	11/16 - Production Day
Thanksgiving Break		
Week 14	11/28 - Final Showcase!	11/30 - Final Showcase!

Final projects and reflections are due by our scheduled exam date and time!