Fan Studies Network Australasia
Conference 2019

11–13 December 2019

Swinburne University of Technology
Melbourne, Australia
Welcome to the 2019 Fan Studies Network Australasia Conference, where we focus on the reciprocal impact of technological, cultural, and media change on shifting fan practices. This conference aims to showcase diverse approaches to a wide range of fan communities and practices across four core areas: screen and digital cultures (such as film, television, videogames, online and other digital media); public leisure cultures (such as sport, theme parks, festivals and conventions, popular culture stores, and concerts); audio cultures (such as podcasts, radio, and music); and material cultures (such as comic books, toys, books, and board games).

This conference is aligned with the international Fan Studies Network and is supported by the Department of Media and Communications, the School of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities, and the Centre for Transformative Media Technologies at Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn campus.

Organising Committee:
Jessica Balanzategui
Liam Burke
Andrew Lynch
Joanna McIntyre
Naja Later
Tara Lomax
Taylor Hardwick
Angela Ndalianis

Acknowledgements

This conference takes place on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations. We wish to pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

We thank our esteemed keynotes, Dr Bertha Chin, Associate Professor Benjamin Woo, Professor Melanie Swalwell, and Dr Suzanne Scott, for their valuable contributions to the conference and to fan studies as a discipline.

This conference is supported by the School of Media and Communication and the Centre for Transformative Media Technologies at Swinburne University of Technology. We thank Professor Robbie Robertson, Dr Carolyn Beasley, Professor Jane Stadler, and Professor Mia Lindgren, and Janet Berwick for their valuable support. We also thank our dedicated postgraduate student volunteers: Isobella Austin, Christopher Barkman, Stephanie Harkin, Daniela Mearns, and Antranig Sarian.

Thank you to the Fan Studies Network, particularly Dr Bertha Chin and Dr Renee Middlemost (co-organiser of the inaugural FSNAU conference and co-founder of FSNAU) for their support, advice, and encouragement.

This program was designed by Tara Lomax and Jessica Balanzategui.
Venue Information

The 2019 FSNAU Conference will take place at Swinburne University of Technology in Hawthorn, Melbourne. Over the course of the 3 days we will be mostly using Levels 3 and 5 of the AMDC Building in the south-east corner of campus, as well as the Level 4 of the EN Building (see map below). Both buildings have accessible bathrooms and lift access.

If you require lift access in the AMDC Building, we recommend entering the AMDC Building from the Burwood Road entry (near William Street); otherwise, proceed to the back of the building. There is also an accessible entry at the corner of John and Macleod Streets, with easy access to an escalator.

The keynotes on Thursday and Friday take place on Level 4 in the EN Building, located near the centre of campus, closer to the Glenferrie train station. See map below for a location guide. This building is equipped with lift access and an accessible entry is located on the east side of the building.

Please do not hesitate to ask our team of post-graduate volunteers if you have questions about the venue, campus, or require accessibility support.
Social Events and Networking

wifi network: eduroam (use your institutional log in credentials)
Twitter hashtag: #FSNAU2019

Trivia Night! 7pm, Wednesday 11th of December
The FSNAU conference organising committee at Swinburne will host a free trivia night for conference delegates. Trivia will cover various realms of popular and leisure culture – from movies and TV, to sport, comics, music, podcasts, and theme parks – in line with the areas of focus highlighted on the CFP. Teams of 4–6 people are welcome, and we will help delegates to organise teams.

Conference Dinner: 7pm, Thursday 12th of December
The conference dinner will take place from 7:00pm on Thursday 12th of December at Fonda Mexican restaurant in Hawthorn, across the road from Swinburne University of Technology.
# Conference Schedule

**Registration Commences at 8:45am each day (Day 1: AMDC Level 3 Sky Lounge; Days 2 and 3: AMDC Level 5 Foyer)**

## DAY 1: Wednesday December 11 AMDC Building

### 9:00 - 9:30
Conference Opening and Welcome to Country AMDC301 Lecture Theatre

### 9:30 - 10:30
**Keynote Presentation | AMDC301 Lecture Theatre**
Dr Bertha Chin  
Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak

### 10:30 - 11:00
Morning Tea: AMDC Level 3 Sky Lounge

### 11:00 - 12:30

#### 1A – Nostalgia (Chair: Tara Lomax) AMDC502
- Stranger Than You Think: False Nostalgia and the New Retro Aesthetic  
  Daniel Binns, RMIT University
- *Star Wars* Fans, Generations, and Ideology  
  Daniel Golding, Swinburne University of Technology
- Missing the Old (British) YouTube(rs): Collective Nostalgia for Platforms Past  
  Rachel Berryman, University of Auckland/Independent

#### 1B – Comics (Chair: Ian Gordon) AMDC506
- Adapting Alternative Comics into Film: When Blue Became the Warmest Colour  
  Victor Araneda Jure, Monash University
- Vestigial Tales: What Are Comics to Screened Superheroes?  
  Martyn Pedler, Swinburne University of Technology
- Harley Quinn and the Fantabulous Emancipation of Comic Book Culture  
  Liam Burke, Swinburne University of Technology

### 12:30 - 1:30
Lunch: AMDC Level 3 Sky Lounge

### 1:30 - 3:00

#### 2A – Authorship (Chair: Joanna McIntyre) AMDC502
- No boundaries for Chester Brown: Creator-Fan Interactions on Patreon.com  
  Frederik Byrn Køhlert, University of East Anglia
- The Author is Not Dead: Queerbaiting and Contemporary Queer Fandom  
  Michael McDermott, La Trobe University
- Roll the Dice: Creator Intent and Fan Authorship  
  Eulalie B Lane, Deakin University

#### 2B – Television (Chair: Jessica Balanzategui) AMDC506
- The *Batman* TV Series (1966-1968) and Comic Book Fans  
  Ian Gordon, National University of Singapore
- Fandom, Podcasting and *Survivor* Lore  
  James Hall, Edith Cowan University
- Postdigital Information Behaviour and *GoT* Fandom  
  Eric Forcier, Swinburne University of Technology

### 3:00 - 3:15
Afternoon Tea:  
AMDC Level 3 Sky Lounge

### 3:15 - 4:15
**Keynote Presentation | AMDC301 Lecture Theatre**
Associate Professor Benjamin Woo  
Carleton University

### 4:15 - 5:30
**Book Launch: | AMDC301 Lecture Theatre**
The Superhero Symbol  
(Liam Burke, Ian Gordon, and Angela Ndalianis, 2019)

### 7:00 - 10:00
**FSNAU Trivia Night:**  
Lido Cinemas Hawthorn  
675 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn
**DAY 2: Thursday December 12 AMDC and EN Buildings**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>3A – Literature (Chair: Jodie McAlister) AMDC502</th>
<th>3B – Music (Chair: Tara Lomax) AMDC506</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Decanonisation and Fan Resistance: The Status of the Novel in Transmedia Hierarchies Julian Novitz, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
<td>Fandom isn’t Free: The Socioeconomic Constraints of Being a Swiftie Georgia Carroll, University of Sydney</td>
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<td>Narrative Interpretations of <em>War and Peace</em> in the Digital Fandom Vladimir Petrov and Anastasia Drozdova, University of Tyumen</td>
<td>The Curious Case of the Vapor Probe: Co-Creating Critical Understandings of Post-Internet Fandom Through Creative Practice-Led Research Adrian Lucas-Healey, RMIT</td>
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<td>Fractured Forms: Consumers Become Creators Julia Prendergast and Darren Fisher, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
<td>Overcoming Dusty Slim Pickings: How Online Record Collecting Adds Meaning to Physical Record Collecting Demetrius Romeo, University of Technology Sydney</td>
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<td>10:30</td>
<td>Morning Tea: AMDC Level 5 Foyer</td>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>4A - FanFiction (Chair: Naja Later) AMDC502</th>
<th>4B – Games (Chair: Stephanie Harkin) AMDC506</th>
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<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Predatory Romance: Biological Imperatives of the Omegaverse Fan Fiction Trope Kelsey Entrikin, University of Strathclyde</td>
<td>Five Nights at Freddy’s: Forensic Fandom Meets the Creepypasta Chris Barkman, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<td>“With Great Power Comes Great Mental Illness”: Examining Mental Health in Marvel Fan Narratives Divya Garg, RMIT University</td>
<td>Constructing, Maintaining and Profiting from Fan Communities on Twitch.tv Mark Johnson, University of Sydney</td>
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<td>“Family Don’t End in Blood”: The Importance of Friendship in Fan Fiction Allanah Hunt, Anglia Ruskin University</td>
<td>Playing the Victim: Toxic Fan Practices, Gaming Capital and Cultural Change within Game Fan Communities Taylor Hardwick, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<th>Time</th>
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<th>5B – Personas (Chair: Daniel Golding) AMDC506</th>
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<td>1:30</td>
<td>The (Digital) Distance Between Us: Investigating Twitter as a Site of Fan Validation Joyleen Christensen, University of Newcastle</td>
<td>Fangirling for Kristen Stewart’s Queerness: A New Dawn of the “Sewing Circle” in Contemporary Celebrity Culture? Joanna McIntyre and Eloise Ross, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<td>Identity: A Curated Brand and the Star Cosplayer’s Pursuit of Instagram Fame Fiona Haborak, New York University</td>
<td>“The Canadians are ice fucking to Moulin Rouge”: Reading Romance into Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games Jodie McAlister, Deakin University</td>
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<td>Celebrities and Performative Fandom: An “Appropriate” Anomaly Mark Stewart, Coventry University</td>
<td>Mark Duplass as Mumblecore/Mumblegore Icon in The Creep series Andrew Lynch, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<td>3:00</td>
<td>6A – Streaming (Chair: Liam Burke) AMDC502</td>
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<td>The Contagion Effect: Fandom and Intergenerational Viewers</td>
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<td>Haunted Nostalgia and The Dark Crystal: Netflix, Intergenerational Fandom,</td>
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<td>and New Paradigms for the “Family” Demographic</td>
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<td>Jessica Balanzategui, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<td>Old Fans, Young Viewers: Lost in Space and the Contagion Effect</td>
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<td>Djoymi Baker, University of Melbourne</td>
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<td>The Darkness of Detective Pikachu: The Need for Safe Containment</td>
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<td>Diana Sandars, University of Melbourne</td>
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<td>6B – Tourism (Chair: Racheal Harris) AMDC506</td>
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<td>Tasmanian Pop Culture, Fandom, and Travel</td>
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<td>Knocking your Knitted Socks Off? ABC TV’s Rosehaven, screen tourism and</td>
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<td>destination-marketing in Tasmania</td>
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<td>Gemma Blackwood, University of Tasmania</td>
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<td>Entering the Darkness: Destination Branding, Fandom and Tasmania On-Scren</td>
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<td>Anna Halipilias, University of Tasmania</td>
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<td>Rites of Passage: Pop Culture Inspired Travel Fantasies as Education and</td>
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<td>Craig Norris, University of Tasmania</td>
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<td>Keynote Presentation</td>
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<td>Professor Melanie Swalwell</td>
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<td>Conference Dinner</td>
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<td>Dr Suzanne Scott</td>
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<td>University of Texas at Austin</td>
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<td><strong>Morning Tea: AMDC Level 5 Foyer</strong></td>
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<td><strong>7A - Transmedia (Chair: Taylor Hardwick) AMDC502</strong></td>
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<td><strong>7B - Sport (Chair: Gemma Blackwood) AMDC506</strong></td>
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<td>Pre-formed Panel Title: Fandom, Sport and Gender: Case Studies from</td>
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<td>Kim Toffoletti, Deakin University and Adele Pavlidis, Griffith</td>
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<td>“The AFLW has given me back something I thought I’d lost”: How the</td>
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<td>AFLW fan space has welcomed back the lost voices from the stands</td>
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<td>Kasey Symons, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<td>“How has this not always been a thing?” #AFLW: Twitter, AFLW</td>
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<td>fandom and protecting the product</td>
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<td>Tim Boots, Deakin University</td>
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<td>An Iconic Photo? Tayla Harris, Sexism, and the Activism of AFLW</td>
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<td>Matthew Klugman, Victoria University</td>
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<td>2:00</td>
<td><strong>8A - Preservation and Practices (Chair: Melanie Swalwell) AMDC502</strong></td>
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<td>2:00</td>
<td>Apps and Back Again: Why Are There So Few Fan Emulators of Mobile</td>
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<td>Platforms?</td>
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<td>Caroline Choong, Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<td>Blogging as Autodidactic Practice: Rogue Archiving in the Service</td>
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<td>John Lenarcic and Pradip Sarkar, RMIT University</td>
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<td>2:00</td>
<td>Curatorial Interference and Online Fandom at Graceland</td>
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<td>Racheal Harris, Deakin University</td>
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<td>Advancing with the Stars: Astrology as Affective Fan Practice</td>
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<td>Gawain Lucian Lax, Monash University</td>
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<td>3:45</td>
<td>Fan Studies Workshop</td>
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<td>EN413 Lecture Theatre</td>
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<td>3:45</td>
<td>Bertha Chin and Mark Stewart</td>
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<td>Conference Closing</td>
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<td>EN413 Lecture Theatre</td>
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Keynotes

The conference will feature four keynote speakers whose innovative research has driven fan studies in new directions across a range of different disciplines.

Dr Bertha Chin (AMDC301 Lecture Theatre, Wednesday 9:30 am)
Lecturer of Social Media and Communication Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak, Malaysia

Editor: *Crowdfunding the Future: Media Industries, Ethics, and Digital Society* (with Lucy Bennett & Bethan Jones, 2015)
Editor: *Crowdfunding Issue of New Media and Society* (with Bennett and Jones, 2015)

Associate Professor Benjamin Woo (AMDC301 Lecture Theatre, Wednesday 3:15pm)
Associate Professor, School of Journalism and Communication Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

Author: *The Greatest Comic Book of All Time: Symbolic Capital and the Field of American Comic Books* (with Bart Beaty, 2016)
Editor: *Scene Thinking: Cultural Studies from the Scenes Perspective* (with Stuart Poyntz and Jamie Rennie, 2016).

Professor Melanie Swalwell (EN413 Lecture Theatre, Thursday 4:45pm)
Professor of Digital Media Heritage Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia

Editor: *Fans and Videogames: Histories, Fandoms, Archives* (with Angela Ndalianis and Helen Stuckey, 2017)
Lead Investigator of the digital heritage project “Play it Again: Creating a Playable History of Australasian Digital Games” in collaboration with the Australian Centre of the Moving Image.

Dr Suzanne Scott (EN413 Lecture Theatre, Friday 9:30 am)
Assistant Professor, Department of Radio-Television-Film, The University of Texas at Austin

Author: *Fake Geek Girls: Fandom, Gender, and the Convergence Culture Industry* (2019)
Editor: *The Routledge Companion to Media Fandom* (with Melissa A. Click, 2018)
Editor: *In Focus: Gender Identity and Representation in the Superhero Genre Issue of Cinema Journal* (with Ellen Kirkpatrick, 2015).
Keynote Presentations

The truth is still out there:
Fan studies, marginalisation, and the acafan identity
Dr Bertha Chin
AMDC301 Lecture Theatre, Wednesday 9:30 am

One of the things fan studies scholars often fail at doing is to define what a fan is; even if we are incredibly adept at studying what fans do. We study the way we, and others, communicate love – and sometimes hate – for a media text. We observe fans’ interactions with one another, with the content creators, and we look at the value assigned to fan transformative works, and to fan discussions. And ever since Henry Jenkins (2006) introduced the concept of convergence culture, we have looked at ways monetisation and the media industry’s attention have affected and influenced fan practices.

The industry’s recent interest in fandom, however, does not immediately translate to acceptance within institutionalised academia. There is still no official “Department of Fan Studies” in universities even as upcoming scholars are becoming increasingly interested in pursuing fan studies. Many fan studies scholars work in areas that complement fan studies itself – disciplines such as media, film, and English – while others (certainly those outside of US/UK/Western Europe) often have to negotiate their acafan identity within institutions which may not necessarily be friendly to fan studies (or even the study of humanities).

In the context of Asia, fan (and media/cultural) studies is usually dismissed for being frivolous and less rigorous than other disciplines. These institutional and cultural tensions can become added pressures to the acafan, especially early career researchers, already disadvantaged in an era of uncertainty as permanent positions become scarce, and the expectation to conform to the norm is thus intensified. As an acafan, the dismissal of fan studies as a legitimate field of study obviously seems excessive, given that fan studies scholars draw on other disciplines such as media and cultural studies in the process of knowledge production.

In the past couple of years, I have been interested in how acafans – or those peripherally interested in fan studies – in Asia navigate these institutional and cultural tensions. Indeed, being able to push back from these expectations also reveals a level of privilege that comes with the possession of the right social, cultural and educational capitals. However, this does not negate the fact that acafans possess critical perspectives that could be useful and translatable to other disciplines that are more common and considered less disruptive. In this talk, I intend to explore the intersections of fan studies, the field’s marginalisation and the acafan identity, focusing on how institutional and cultural tensions are navigated in Asia.

Bertha Chin lectures on social media at Swinburne University of Technology (Sarawak). She has published extensively, is a board member of the Fan Studies Network, and co-editor of Crowdfunding the Future: Media Industries, Ethics and Digital Society (2015, Peter Lang) and the forthcoming Eating Fandom (Routledge). Within fan studies, she has published on fan labour, subcultural celebrity, anti-fandom and fan-producer relationships. Her research interests have also diversified to include coffee culture and Sarawak heritage. She can be found on Twitter @bertha_c and occasionally blogs out of her website: www.coffeeandresearch.com.
This talk takes up the contradictory figure of the exemplary fan, which I suggest has been the crucial point of articulation between fandom studies and audience studies more broadly. The exemplary fan represents a potential latent in us all for an active, critical, and transformative relationship with media (“exemplary” in the sense of being paradigmatic and, therefore, typical) but activates that potential in ways that are relatively rare in the general audience (“exemplary” in the sense of being outstanding or excellent and, therefore, atypical). This tension can be productive, but it’s become slack and undialectical. On the one hand, fan studies has embraced a series of typologies that distance fans from “casual” viewers and risk essentializing and exceptionalizing fan identities. On the other hand, researchers seeking to access online fan communities increasingly focus on digital artefacts and discourse unmoored from the people and contexts that generate them, intertwining fan exceptionalism with the myth of the digital sublime (Mosco 2004).

Fans have enrolled a series of communication technologies, from hectographs and xerox machines to VCRs and social media platforms, into their practices. This is a story of domestication not disruption. Drawing on the theory of media-oriented practices developed in my book, Getting a Life, I argue for a re-engagement with fans’ everyday lives through what Maltby & Thornham (2016) and Wilson & Chivers Yochim (2017) have called, in very different contexts, the digital mundane. As Wilson & Chivers Yochim put it, “the digital mundane is the affective machinery of everyday life. It is where sensibilities are shaped, worked on, intensified, assuaged, and attenuated, where worlds are simultaneously opened up and shut down” (16). Suzanne Scott (2019) has persuasively argued for the continued importance of centering the communities and practices of women media fans; I want to suggest that even these exemplary fans must be understood in the context of a broader and more diverse array of media-oriented practices, which emerge from the digital mundane and are not necessarily practised by people fan studies would traditionally acknowledge as “fans.”

References

Benjamin Woo is Associate Professor in Communication and Media Studies at Carleton University. He researches popular media industries and audiences with a focus on those oriented to the contemporary “geek” or “nerd” subculture. He is the author of Getting a Life: The Social Worlds of Geek Culture, co-author (with Bart Beaty) of The Greatest Comic Book of All Time: Symbolic Capital and the Field of American Comic Books, and co-editor (with Stuart R. Poyntz and Jamie Rennie) of Scene Thinking: Cultural Studies from the Scenes Perspective. Benjamin is president of the Canadian Society for the Study of Comics, Canada’s national scholarly association in the field of comics studies, director of the SSHRC-supported Comic Cons Research Project, and co-investigator on the What Were Comics? project, a large-scale content analysis of American comic books published between 1934 and 2014.
Hardware Hacking in 1980s Australia: 
Hobbyists and the beginnings of vernacular digitality
Professor Melanie Swalwell
EN413 Lecture Theatre, Thursday 4:45pm

This paper approaches the question of microcomputer users’ making, historically. 1980s computer users typically learnt some simple programming, whilst typing games into the computer, for instance. But user invention and experimentation were not confined to software creation. Hardware hacking and user modifications of micros featured prominently in magazines and books of the era, evidencing a strong electronics and engineering ethos in early computer culture, what I have termed a ‘will to mod’. Yet the 1980s user’s involvement with electronics has been all but forgotten. Even amongst computing historians, mentions of early users’ electronics nous and hardware hacking are scarce. That this does not receive more attention is surprising, given that electronics was central to many people’s engagement with computers and games at the time.

This paper interrogates why this branch of the ‘family tree’ of user productivity – tinkering with hardware, electronics and engineering, as opposed to text and other content – has been forgotten. The oversight is due, I argue, to the over-reliance by scholars of media consumption on theoretical frameworks coming out of Television and Fan Studies, which were undergoing their own moments of disciplinary formation in the 1990s and 2000s. Jenkins’ (1992) Textual Poachers, for instance, introduces the figure of poaching to those interested in fan activity, and becomes a pivotal work in television, spectatorship and fan studies. But in the process, whole domains of user making with and around computers are neglected by a screen-based Media Studies not fully cognisant of its debt to spectatorship, and the bias toward the screen that results. Remembering the perspectives of those users who fiddled, tinkered, hacked and modded provides an important corrective and an expanded historical account of use. Recovering the electronics competency – the curiosity, activity and agency – of early users interrupts the too-smooth continuity that can seem to stretch, in some accounts, from engagement with film and television screens to engagement with computers. It also provides specific context for contemporary practices such as overclocking, circuit bending, case modding, repair movements, electronics recycling, ‘tear downs,’ and the like.

Melanie Swalwell is a scholar of digital media arts, cultures, and histories and an advocate for born digital heritage. Her research is concerned with complex digital artefacts such as videogames and media artworks: their creation, use, preservation, and legacy. Melanie is the author of many chapters and articles on the histories of digital games, as well as pieces in non-traditional formats. Melanie recently completed a monograph Homebrew Gaming and the Beginnings of Vernacular Digitality (MIT Press), and is co-editor of The Pleasures of Computer Gaming: Essays on cultural history, theory and aesthetics (with Jason Wilson, McFarland, 2008), and Fans and Videogames: Histories, Fandom, Archives (with Helen Stuckey and Angela Ndalianis, Routledge, 2017). She is Professor of Digital Media Heritage at Swinburne University of Technology.
Despite the ongoing expansion and diversification of contemporary fan cultures and identities, the word “fan” continues to conjure up a limited series of stereotypical images. While there has been ample work addressing how fan representations position the fan as inherently falling short of or exceeding culturally imposed conceptions of normativity, often literally embodying these stereotypes by portraying fans as either scrawny or obese, the fan body as both a space of cultural anxiety and industrial monetization remains under theorized. Thus, only do these images reify conceptions of the fan’s failure or excess, they frequently obscure the lived bodies of fans and entrench a limited understanding of the fan body politic.

This keynote will build on the core concepts and concerns of Fake Geek Girls: Fandom, Gender, and the Convergence Culture Industry (NYU Press, 2019) to explore the fan body as a site to alternately shore up and challenge or nuance longstanding fan pathologies and privilege. Importantly, being mindful of the ways in which the fan body is discursively, representationally, and performatively constructed opens a space for fan scholars to more actively grapple with intersectional fan identities as well as under theorized axes of identity such as age, size, and ability. To begin exploring how the contemporary fan body is imagined and interrogated, performed and pleasured, conditioned and contained, this talk will focus on the connections between the fan body and the aspirational and transformative superhero bodies that often occupy a central place within franchise fan culture, spanning considerations of superhero fan fashion, food, and fitness, as well as fan practices like cosplay.

Ultimately, this keynote contends that as fan identities are normalized and standardized, it is imperative that we contemplate the cultural weight of the fan body and neoliberal efforts to discipline it, in order to better understand the intersecting biases along the lines of gender, race, age, size, ability, and class, that have undergirded fans’ recuperation as a power demographic.

Suzanne Scott is an assistant professor in the Department of Radio-TV-Film at the University of Texas at Austin. She is the author of Fake Geek Girls: Fandom, Gender, and the Convergence Culture Industry (NYU Press, 2019) and the co-editor of The Routledge Companion to Media Fandom (Routledge, 2018). Her work has appeared in the journals Transformative Works and Cultures, Cinema Journal, New Media & Society, Participations, Feminist Media Histories, and Critical Studies in Media Communication as well as numerous anthologies, including Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World (2nd Edition), How to Watch Television, The Participatory Culture Handbook, and Cylons in America: Critical Studies in Battlestar Galactica.
Workshops and Mentoring

Mentorship drop-in session
with Associate Professor Benjamin Woo and Dr Suzanne Scott
Thursday, 12:30 – 1:30pm, AMDC501

During the lunchbreak on Thursday 12th December, two of our international keynotes, A/Prof Benjamin Woo and Dr Suzanne Scott, will provide advice to delegates on their research project designs, scope, aims, and methods. This drop-in session will be particularly valuable to postgraduate students and early career researchers, but all delegates are welcome to join in the discussion. A/Prof Woo and Dr Scott have gained wide recognition for their innovative approaches to the study of fan and audience cultures, media industries, and popular culture, and are well-placed to provide support to researchers working across a range of disciplines within media, screen, and cultural studies.

Decolonisation and Structured Whiteness Workshop
Dr Bertha Chin and Dr Mark Stewart
Friday, 3:45-4:45pm, EN413

As with many research disciplines, the field of fan studies has been struggling with the tension posed by the hegemonic structures of structural whiteness that tend to influence and control our discipline. This can be difficult to confront, as the concept of fandom is built on it being beautiful (Coppa, 2014), where the development of fan studies is a response to fans’ transformative practices. This, however, does not negate the tensions, and with increasing publicity, the toxicity of fandom centred on issues such as gender, sexuality and race. While many fan studies scholars have provided in-depth studies on gender and sexuality, few deal with race.

This workshop, led by Dr Mark Stewart (Coventry University, UK) and Dr Bertha Chin (Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak), aims to explore and articulate the unspoken — the silenced — issues about race and structured whiteness that inform the field of fan studies.
Some adaptations suffer what Robert Stam calls *transmutations*, either in the form of condensation, change, bypassing events, adding/subtracting characters, or amplifying story lines. In that sense, the story is considered by many adaptation theorists the core, or “common denominator” when transporting narrative through different media. Including of course, “the various elements of the story: its themes, events, world, characters, motivations, points of view, consequences, contexts, symbols, imagery, and so on” (Hutcheon 10). Indeed, Linda Seger refers to the process of adapting as a practice of “identifying and focusing the story line within the [adapted medium]” (77). From pages to screen, the adaptation of alternative comics typically shares the same story with the original source. Why? Because “[a] good [story] has direction. It moves toward a climax, with most scenes advancing the action” (Seger 77). It is this flow that places the audience inside the story as it determines what will unfold next.

Kechiche understood the value of this approach in his adaptation of Julie Maroh’s comic book *Blue is the Warmest Colour* (originally published in French in 2010 and English in 2013). The shared story line is a coming of age love story about two French girls who fell in love during the anti-gay politics of the 90’s. A time described by Frank Rich as a “homophobic epidemic” (Journal; Summer of Matthew Shepard). When adapting alternative comics, as with any other medium, the filmmaker must identify the “beginnings, middles, and ends within the original source material” and carefully choose the more adaptable story lines. Hence, the adapter’s task is “to identify, to evaluate, and, if necessary, to add to or to create story lines” (Seger 78). Additionally, an adapter should also consider removing story lines not suitable for the new version of the story. In that way, a filmmaker implements four main strategies to achieve this task—subtraction, expansion, addition, and modification (Stam, *Literature and Film* 34). This is precisely the approach that Tunisian-French filmmaker Abdellatif Kechiche implemented when adapting *Blue is the Warmest Colour* (2013). The film—as with the comic book—tells the love story of two girls in France, however in the film version we are introduced to a loose version of Clementine called Adèle (Adèle Exarchopoulos), and a close interpretation of Emma by Léa Seydoux, a subtle but significant modification employed by Kechiche that I will explore in this paper.

**Victor Araneda Jure** is a PhD candidate whose research explores the specificities of adapting Alternative Comics into Film. He is an Independent Filmmaker who has worked in Chile, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, and as Creative Director in agencies like DDB Chile, BBDO Chile, FCB, and GSL New Zealand. He has also lectured in subjects such as Symbolology, Creative Writing, Scriptwriting and Creative Strategy. In 2016, Victor completed a Master of Film and TV at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, and is now based at Monash where he also works as a tutor.

**Djoymi Baker**, University of Melbourne, bakerd@unimelb.edu.au

Old Fans, Young Viewers: *Lost in Space* and the Contagion Effect

In *Fan Cultures*, Matt Hills reflects upon becoming a fan of Doctor Who through his father’s enthusiasm for the program (2002: 58). He calls this an “associative ‘contagion’ of fandom’s attachments and effects” (2002: 58). The Netflix reboot of the science fiction show *Lost in Space* (2018-) actively courts this type of intergenerational audience, tagging the program “Family Watch Together TV.” Reviews of the new show consistently make reference to its reception by fans of the original 1960s television program, which were “warm but not overwhelming” (Forbes 3 September 2019). While Netflix famously refuses to release its viewing data, in 2017 Nielsen launched its SVOD Content Ratings, and estimated that *Lost in Space* attracted 6.3 million U.S. viewers in the first three days alone and was heavily binged. As Netflix pointed out, these ratings are local to the U.S. and do not include streaming on other devices, encouraging the perception that the real figures across all devices internationally were higher - without actually releasing them. Certainly their internal (and unpublished) metrics were sufficient to green light a second season. This paper analyses reviews and social media posts about *Lost in Space* to examine the notion of “Family Watch Together TV” as a dynamic of older fans and younger viewers.

**Djoymi Baker** is a Lecturer in Screen and Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne. Her research revolves around how concepts of genre and genre hybrids are used and received in screen media and visual culture, particularly across science fiction, children’s television, the epic, and documentary hybrids. Connecting this work is an interest in the way images of the past and the future are harnessed in popular culture texts and paratexts to reconceptualise the present. Published works include the monograph *To Boldly Go: Marketing the Myth of Star Trek* (2018), and the co-authored *Encyclopedia of Epic Films* (2014). Recent work appears in *The Age of Netflix* (2017), *The New Peplum* (2018), and *The Soundtrack* journal (2019). Djoymi is the founder of the Youth and Media Cultures Research Group at the University of Melbourne.
**Christopher Barkman, Swinburne University of Technology, cbarkman@swin.edu.au**

Five Nights at Freddy’s: Forensic Fandom meets the Creepypasta

*Five Nights at Freddy’s (FNaF)* is a popular video game franchise that mixes the gameplay experience of the survival horror genre with a dense and overarching narrative. While each *FNaF* game contains a straightforward ludic narrative that follows the player trying to survive murderous animatronics in an enclosed environment, this surface reading obscures the creation of an obtuse and connective story world that has been created across the franchise’s many iterations. The obscurity of this larger narrative has led to communities on sites such as Reddit and YouTube creating a vast array of fan theories and speculation dedicated to the comprehension of the franchise’s mythology. This presentation will suggest that this discourse can be understood as a combination of the forensic fandom experience of dissecting a complex serialised television show such as *Lost* and *Westworld* with the open-sourced, epistemic play often found in the online creation of creepypastas. Not only does *FNaF* deal with similar subject matter such as its utilisation of nostalgia, temporality and the digital gothic, but the elaborate and abstract nature of its ongoing mythology encourages community members to collectively propose and extrapolate on fan theories and varying interpretations in a similar process of creation to both creepypastas and the speculative experience that follows other serialised narratives. *FNaF* as a case study therefore suggests that a connection can be made between open-source storytelling and the forensic nature of serialised fandoms.

**Christopher Barkman** is currently undertaking a PhD at Swinburne University of Technology in the department of Media and Communications under Prof. Angela Ndalianis and Dr. Dan Golding. While his interests cover a wide range of popular culture, most significantly being contemporary cinema and complex narratology, Christopher has increasingly become invested in video game studies and its relationships with other disciplines such as film and new media studies. After completing an Honours thesis at the University of Melbourne exploring the connection between video game narratives and televisual design, Christopher moved to Swinburne to pursue a PhD exploring the nature of narrative complexity in interactive media.
Stranger Than you Think: False Nostalgia and the New Retro Aesthetic

From the moral morass of Mad Men (2007-2015) in TV-land, through the familiar-but-not echoes of cool jazz in Billie Eilish’s music, to the synth-laden neon wonderland of Drive (2011), it seems that everything old is new again. What does this say about what we want from our media? And why do we want it now?

Pierre Nora wrote: “We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left.” How much of our yearning for the sensations and aesthetics of a time-gone-by is a result of shifts in how media are produced and distributed? What kinds of stories suit such sensations, such aesthetics? And how might we read shifts in popular narratives as emblematic of shifts in how we think about media and its materiality?

Svetlana Boym calls nostalgia “a result of a new understanding of time and space that makes the division into ‘local’ and “universal” possible.” This paper proposes that in the media’s current temporal aesthetic shift, some things are carried forward, and some are left behind. Furthermore, there are some new things altogether that emerge as a result. These ‘things’ are philosophical, they are cultural, and they are material.

While another project may consider the remnants, traces, things left on the cutting-room floor, and those that are perpetuated and made to last even longer, this paper is particularly interested in the new ideas that are pushed outwards into the cultural pool by the New Retro. Considering a few key moments from media such as Duffy Brothers’ Stranger Things (2015–), Anna Biller’s The Love Witch (2016) and Ruben Fleischer’s Gangster Squad (2013), questions are asked of what we might be looking for with this aesthetic, and why we’re looking for it at this moment in time.

Daniel Binns is a screenwriter, producer, and teacher of film and media studies. He makes short-form drama, observational essay and smartphone films, and his theoretical bent is film genre and media philosophy. Daniel has produced documentary and lifestyle television across multiple continents and for several networks including Fox Sports and National Geographic. He is the author of The Hollywood War Film (Intellect, 2017) and is currently exploring the materiality of digital media.

Knocking your Knitted Socks Off? ABC TV’s Rosehaven, screen tourism and destination-marketing in Tasmania

The current ABC television comedy Rosehaven is premised around two close friends who have wound up moving to a small town in southern Tasmania. In this paper, I will examine Tourism Tasmania’s current online cross-promotional destination marketing strategy for the show. I will demonstrate how the State tourism agency has been working to link existing Tasmanian tourism destinations to the fictional settings of the television series, in the hope of creating television-generated tourism from the show’s fans. I also assess the ‘real life’ destinations that are actively promoting Rosehaven as part of local tourism initiatives, and whether these are linked to the State based destination-marketing materials by Tourism Tasmania, where the target market appears to be ‘mainlanders’: especially, visitors from major metropolitan capitals. Rosehaven screen tourism draws into culturally resonant ideas attached to the rural small town. Overall, the show’s ‘quirkly’ personality appears to be a valuable asset for broader Tasmanian branding trends as the State draws connections to its cultural and creative productivity, but also for its ability to dramatise the concept that Tasmania is a unique island destination within the broader Australian market: a place of unusual people and locations. In this way, this case study provides a useful example of the promotion of screen tourism in a regional part of Australia, and it raises bigger questions about how television fandom might be employed to promote real life places.

Gemma Blackwood is a Media Lecturer at The University of Tasmania. She researches screen cultures and digital media with a focus on mediated tourism and travel experiences. She is the editor of the book Motion Pictures: Travel Ideals and Film (Peter Lang 2016) and she is currently researching social media narratives created around the recent Tasmanian bushfires. In 2018, she was a winner of the Top 5 Media Residency at the ABC. You can find her on Twitter at the following handle: @Gemma_Blackwood.
Tim Boots, Deakin University, boots.t@gmail.com
“How has this not always been a thing?” #AFLW: Twitter, AFLW fandom and protecting the product

The inaugural season of the Australian Football League Women’s (AFLW) competition catalysed a number of different discourses both online and in traditional media, ranging from the more obvious, such as hegemonic attitudes to women’s sport, to the less anticipated, such as issues of delocalisation and nostalgia for the game’s semi-professional era. This paper explores the intersection between the AFLW’s Twitter discourse, and mainstream media coverage of certain significant events that occurred during the competition’s first season, looking in particular at whether the conversation amongst fans on Twitter was reflective of a desire to boost the fledgling product and protect it from negative narratives, as evidenced by contrastingly positive affective representations. Thematic analysis of a dataset of over 40,000 tweets collected during the AFLW’s first season, drawn from the competition’s official hashtags, is used to explore whether fan discourses reveal different registers of feeling and affect than those typically associated with both Australian rules football and women’s sport, and whether these are reflective of key mainstream media representations.

Tim Boots is a PhD candidate in the School of Communication & Creative Arts at Deakin University, with a research project focused on social media discourse and the AFLW. His professional background is in media and journalism, having previously worked as a researcher at the ABC, and as a freelance writer for publications including The Sydney Morning Herald, New Matilda and Junkee. He is currently teaching in the contextual studies department at LCI Melbourne.

Liam Burke, Swinburne University of Technology, wburke@swin.edu.au
Harley Quinn and the Fantabulous Emancipation of Comic Book Culture

Anti-hero Harley Quinn was first introduced as the Joker’s “henchwench” in Batman: The Animated Series in 1992. Through fan enthusiasm, and the eventual exploitation of WarnerMedia, Harley has become a cross-platform star appearing in comics, television series, theme park rides, videogames, and movies. In 2019 the fan favourite headlined an animated series on the streaming service DC Universe, while in early 2020 Australian actress Margot Robbie will pick back up Harley’s oversized mallet for feature film Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn).

Although the stereotype of comic book culture as a community populated by maladjusted fanboys persists, recent research points to demographic changes, shifting reading practices, and a general levelling of longstanding community hierarchies (Orme; Scott; Lamerichs). Drawing on audience research carried out at Melbourne-based comic book conventions and stores, as well as interviews with key writers and artists including co-creator Paul Dini, this presentation argues that the transmedia domination of Harley Quinn is not merely reflective of a changing comic book culture, but was active in that process.

Applying Mikhail Bakhtin’s carnivalesque, the presentation will consider how Harley Quinn’s playful destruction of boundaries found her becoming a vehicle for enthusiasts seeking access to a rigid comic book community. Fans and creators alike relied on the anarchic character to colourfully smash boundaries between comic book “fans” and “readers”; indie and mainstream comics; source material and adaptation; and even cosplay and day wear. This paper will also chart how WarnerMedia’s recognition of the character’s popularity found the conglomerate attempting to corral fan activities by positioning Harley at the centre of a number of initiatives to widen comic book fandom, move superhero content across multiple media channels, and narrow the gap between creators and fans, with varying degrees of success.

Liam Burke is Associate Professor and the Cinema and Screen Studies discipline leader at Swinburne University of Technology (Melbourne). Liam has published widely on comic books and adaptation, including the monograph The Comic Book Film Adaptation: Exploring Modern Hollywood’s Leading Genre and the edited collections Fan Phenomena Batman and The Superhero Symbol. Liam is a chief investigator of the Australian Research Council-funded project Superheroes & Me with the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI).
While traditional social media provides fans with direct access to creators, and creators with direct access to fan communities, such access often comes with increased scrutiny due to the public nature of these interactions. This situation can leave creators vulnerable to (often justified) accusations of various insensitivities or cultural tone-deafness, as tweets and Instagram posts are pored over by an international audience potentially consisting of anyone with an internet connection. In this environment, it is no surprise that creators might often censor themselves in public interactions with fan communities. Patreon.com, a website allowing creators to receive small monthly cash contributions in exchange for regular updates consisting of for example videos, images, or blog posts, changes this dynamic by placing updates behind a paywall, allowing only fans with an existing economic investment in a creator to access and comment on posts.

This paper will closely examine a single instance of this type of creator-fan interaction, namely the Patreon page of comics artist Chester Brown. Brown, the author of *Louis Riel*, *Paying for It*, and *Mary Wept Over the Feet of Jesus*, among several other books, is known for his highly idiosyncratic politics and personal beliefs, and his regular Patreon updates are no exception. Behind the Patreon paywall, Brown is free to provide fans with updates ranging from insightful commentary about biblical matters to pictures of his damaged penis after an especially rough masturbation session, without risking public outrage or the censure often associated with social media platforms. Brown’s fans, in turn, tend to respond approvingly to even the more provocative content, and the result is the creation of a tightly-knit community that bridges the gap between the intimacy and relative privacy of old-fashioned fan clubs and the immediacy and direct access of contemporary social media platforms.

*Frederik Byrn Køhlert* is Lecturer in Comics Studies and American Studies at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, United Kingdom. He is the author of *Serial Selves: Identity and Representation in Autobiographical Comics*, the series editor of Routledge Focus on Gender, Sexuality, and Comics Studies, and the course director for a new Master of Arts program in Comics Studies at the University of East Anglia, launching in September 2020.

As a field, fan studies has largely avoided discussions of economic capital and class, despite the significant impact these have on fandom participation. Coming from a sociological perspective and using preliminary data collected as part of an ongoing PhD project, this paper will argue that by not engaging with socioeconomic status in our fan studies work, we are missing a huge part of the conversation regarding who is and isn’t – or rather who can or cannot – participate in fandom communities. A bulk of fandom activity is now taking place on public social media rather than in closed communities, and as such the relationship between visibility and intra-fandom social capital is increasingly significant. The number of followers, likes, retweets, reblogs, and similar visible data an individual possesses contributes to the creation of fandom status and hierarchies, however it does not come without cost. Fans are rewarded for sharing stories and pictures from fandom events, as well as for purchasing merchandise and official fandom content, and regularly updating their social media accounts with relevant fandom news and references. This paper will frame fandom participation as a leisure activity, therefore recentering the role of free time – something which is deeply classed and gendered – in the conversation. Despite the tendency for fan studies to focus on the participatory practices of fans, we cannot ignore that a huge part of fandom participation relies on consumption, and a majority of that consumption comes at a price, whether that be tied to money, time, or both.

Using the Taylor Swift fandom as a primary case study, this paper examines the role of economic, social, and cultural capital within fandom communities and ultimately asks the question: can you be considered a fan if cost prevents you from visibly participating?

*Georgia Carroll* is a second year PhD candidate in the department of sociology and social policy at the University of Sydney. After completing an undergraduate degree in media and communications, her research takes place at an intersection of sociology and media studies, focusing on fandom and celebrity culture. Her PhD project examines the impact of the commodification of fandom communities on the lived experiences of fans, with a particular interest in the relationship between socioeconomic status and social capital within these communities. Georgia also has a significant academic interest in real world fan-celebrity interactions and the ways these interactions are experienced and understood. Her academic work aims to re-centre celebrity in fan studies conversations, moving away from the strong textual emphasis of the field.
Emulators have been integral in digital preservation of video games allowing people to play older games. Several contributors to the *Fans and Videogames* anthology demonstrate the important role of fans in the preservation of games for a variety of platforms. Yet there does not appear to be the same sort of activity surrounding contemporary mobile platforms. A search of Android emulators shows many to be commercially developed and few fan developed emulators. There are no iOS emulators and only official platforms for testing apps exist. There are many fan developed emulators of older systems such as Snes9X and MAME and of newer systems like the Playstation Classic running the emulator PCSX. Why are fans not as involved with emulators for mobile platforms? What does this mean for the future of digital cultural heritage?

In many gaming communities, casual games are often seen as less deserving of preservation because of their simpler gameplay. By not considering apps for preservation, we are ignoring the development of games for mobile phone technology and its impact on digital culture. Examples of popular apps are Fate/Grand Order, Pokémon GO and Candy Crush. The relationship between fans and the cultural legitimacy of video games is changing. With more cultural institutions becoming interested in digital heritage, what could the future look like for fans? Could professional conservators fill the role fans used to play? How could cultural institutions select and preserve our apps? In this paper, I want to explore the opportunities and challenges for cultural institutions involvement in collecting and preserving apps as part of our digital cultural heritage and the possibilities available.

**Caroline Choong** is a current post-graduate research student at Swinburne University, archivist and games enthusiast. She adores plushies and likes playing CRPGs and deck builders.

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**Joyleen Christensen, University of Newcastle, joyleen.christensen@newcastle.edu.au**

The (digital) distance between us: Investigating Twitter as a site of fan validation

This paper provides an investigation of the role of Twitter as a tool for fans to bridge the distance between themselves and their favourite stars. Specifically, I am interested in examining the manner through which Twitter currently acts as a key site of celebrity/fan interaction and how this online interface may be differentiated from more traditional means of contact, such as conventions. For celebrities, the appeal of Twitter is obvious – they can push past media and other interferences to share their perspective with fans, *in their own words*. Also, from star’s point of view, a tweet is far less of an imposition upon their time and privacy than face-to-face encounters. For fans, Twitter provides limitless opportunities to catch the attention of a celebrity and, unlike conventions – which come with a hefty pricetag, demand physical proximity, and have heavy restrictions placed upon acceptable behaviours – Twitter represents a space devoid of the myriad obstacles routinely put in place to distance a star from their fans. In addition, a celebrity’s decision to interact with a fan on Twitter is held up as a particularly compelling form of validation. The celebrity has ‘heard’ the fan’s question above all the other Twitter noise and has chosen to respond. The resulting impression of intimacy – where a direct tweet response acts a digital equivalent to a ‘private conversation’ – is particularly effective at conveying status to both the fan and their statement. Utilising a number of case studies, I will look at the ways through which fans – and media – default to using Tweets as evidence of a celebrity’s stance on a variety of matters. Yet, despite such a strong reliance upon Twitter as the closest approximation to the ‘direct voice’ of a hard-to-reach celebrity, the implied authenticity provided by such a platform remains problematic, to say the least.

**Joyleen Christensen** is a Senior Lecturer in Film and Literature at the University of Newcastle. Joyleen researches popular culture – with an emphasis on celebrity and fan cultures in film, television, and music – and has a special interest in the production and consumption of contemporary celebrity. As 2015 Visiting Scholar with the University of British Colombia’s Centre for Cinema Studies, she researched the reception of Hong Kong superstar, Andy Lau, across national borders and her doctoral thesis examined Lau’s celebrity against significant social and historical movements in regional and transnational cultural relations over thirty years. She has also published a book chapter on the Korean ‘Spaghetti Western’, *The Good, The Bad, The Ugly*. More recently, her research has focused on the reception of MCU’s Captain America, the fandom of boyband, One Direction, and contemporary science fiction and fantasy television series, such as *Supernatural, Shadowhunters, The Magicians*, and *In the Flesh*. 
Tessa Dwyer, Monash University, tessa.dwyer@monash.edu

Fans, Subtitling and Netflix

This paper examines the fansub (fan subtitling) phenomenon in relation to the current worldwide explosion of internet-distributed television, spearheaded by the global rise of Netflix, now available in over 190 countries – everywhere except China, Crimea, Syria and North Korea. Despite this aggressive internationalisation which saw Netflix launch in 130 countries during 2016 alone, over the same period, only four languages were added to the service, bringing the total number of supported languages to 21. Clearly, Netflix’s globalisation strategy has created as many access gaps as it has filled. Meanwhile, the company has identified language diversification as a key priority going forward, introducing the custom-built HERMES translation test and indexing system in March 2017. In addition to sourcing translators via HERMES, Netflix has also dappled with crowdsourced captioning and has even been found, on more than one occasion, to have utilised fansubs that potentially contravene copyright laws, and has subsequently apologised. Add-on services like Subflix and Smartflix provide additional tools for accessing content in unsupported languages. As advertised on its website, Smartflix accesses “the largest online subtitles database” to provide translations of Netflix titles in just a few, easy steps. Fansubs make up a large portion of this online database.

As these examples indicate, Netflix’s future seems bound to large-scale language diversification, localisation and translation – with fansubbing centrally placed within developing strategies and tools. In this paper, I consider fansubbing practices in relation to broader industry shifts relating to internet distribution and the rise of participatory, ‘prosumer’ dynamics and user-generated culture. By thinking about Netflix and fansubbing in tandem and detailing points of intersection and overlap, a picture begins to emerge that points to the key role played by fandoms and multilingual publics within contemporary media globalisation and convergence, and to the continuing complications of online accessibility and inclusion.

Tessa Dwyer is Lecturer in Film and Screen Studies at Monash University, Melbourne and president of Senses of Cinema journal (www.sensesofcinema.com). She has published widely on language practices and politics in screen media, including her monograph Speaking in Subtitles: Revaluing Screen Translation (2017). Tessa belongs to the inter-disciplinary ETMI (Eye Tracking the Moving Image) research group and is co-editor with Claire Perkins, Sean Redmond and Jodi Sita of Seeing Into Screens: Eye Tracking the Moving Image (2018). She is currently co-editing a book on ‘TV Transformations and Female Transgression’ for Peter Lang, and an ‘In Focus’ dossier on ‘Re-Voicing’ for the Journal of Cinema and Media Studies.

Kelsey Entrikin, University of Strathclyde, kelsey.entrkin@strath.ac.uk

Predatory Romance: Biological Imperatives of the Omegaverse Fan Fiction Trope

Many fan fiction tropes share commonalities with the tropified, structured narratives of popular romance genre fiction. Among these shared concepts is that of the fictional exploration of the erotic rape fantasy. While romance novels have historically implemented these fantasies as unquestioned and unproblematic narrative points of fantasy, fan fiction has developed specific tropes to interrogate the popular rape fantasy. The Omegaverse fan fiction trope, named for its strata of biological indicators (Alpha, Beta, and Omega), is especially well suited to the exploration of the erotic rape fantasy with its production of hybridized human-wolf bodies which include the lupine element of “heat”, a mating imperative. The Omegaverse embellishes the typical symptoms of a heat to provide characters with an aggressive insistence on being bred and biological components which ease the immediacy and violence of these mating instincts. As these animal tendencies reproduced in humanoid bodies provide circumstances beyond bodily control which require sexual congress as an antedote to biological imperatives, the trope has become synonomous with rape fantasies. As consent must be informed and uncompromised, the concept is difficult to navigate in Omegaverse fiction. This paper will explore how the use of animal characteristics within the Omegaverse are used to delineate consent as a human construct which is null and void within the context of animalistic mating instincts and how those same instincts can be used to discuss informed consent within a rigid, biologically determined power structure with aggressive mating components. As the Omegaverse trope shares many facets with popular romance genre fiction, this work will compare and contrast the use of rape fantasies in both to determine the particular uses of animality in the Omegaverse.

Kelsey Entrikin is a PhD Candidate at the University of Strathclyde studying English Literature. She holds an MA in English Literature from Swansea University, where her thesis focused on the Arthurian tradition in the works of Tolkien and Lewis. Kelsey is currently engaged with fan studies and the use of the Omegaverse as a fan fiction trope. She is particularly interested in the development of animal tendencies as a mechanism for dialogues of consent within the Omegaverse and how those wolfish characteristics differ from other genre fiction such as the popular romance novel.
In the field of library and information studies, the study of how individuals access, use, share, interact and engage with information is referred to as information behaviour. Information behaviour models and approaches dovetail research in audience and fan studies, and yet few studies have deliberately incorporated elements from both domains in the study of fans (Price & Robinson, 2016). This presentation explores how the study of fans can be framed through the lens of information behaviour, using examples from ongoing research into transmedia fans and fan communities, specifically within the Game of Thrones fandom.

Sandvoss, Lee and Harrington (2017) point out that the more “being a fan” is commonplace, the more it shapes the identities and communities in our mediated world (p. 23). By extension, the practices of fans also influence the ever-evolving ways in which people access, use and share information and how information itself is represented (Floridi, 2016). As such, fans can offer profound insights for researchers. For example, Archive of Our Own’s “tag wranglers” have developed a successful model for fan-based information organization that could be applied to similar digital corpora (McCullough, 2019).

The information behaviours of fans also provide answers around how technology is transforming everyday life (Forcier, 2017). The presentation will examine the Game of Thrones fandom in the context of information behaviour. The Twitter community #FakeWesteros, as a case study, demonstrates how narrative information shapes fan identity through parody and pastiche in the digital space. More broadly, ongoing research explores how fans of storyworlds told across multiple platforms and experienced via multiple media negotiate complex narrative information. The presentation will include specific information behaviours and practices these “transmedia fans” have described in interviews for engaging with and managing their fandoms.

References

Eric Forcier is a doctoral candidate at Swinburne University of Technology and a student member of the Centre for Transformative Media Technologies. His interest lies at the intersection of digital technologies, information and media fandoms. His doctoral research explores the information-related activities of transmedia fans in postdigital everyday life. By examining the ways that fans access and engage with stories across media and platforms, the study also seeks to better understand the relationship between information and entertainment. This research is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Eric resides in Edmonton, Canada.
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“With Great Power Comes Great Mental Illness”: Examining Mental Health in Marvel Fan Narratives

Given the global popularity of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), recently evidenced through the commercial success of *Avengers: Endgame* (2019), the Marvel fandom can be seen as an appropriate site of transcultural and transnational engagement. Superhero narratives provide an ideological lens into the examination of many complex issues including ideas around disability and mental illness. The construction of the superhero figure is almost paradoxical to the condition of disability: superheroes are associated with hyper abilities rather than disability. The genre of superhero comics featuring light-hearted action keeps attention away from the presence and representation of disability. Yet, war and violence, a significant part of superhero narratives, not only result in physical disability, but also in mental disability and trauma. Such delineations are developed in fan narratives allowing for more nuanced representations of disability. With increasing interaction between media creators, actors, and fans, these conversations have the potential to affect the content of mainstream media.

This paper will explore how the Marvel fandom engages with issues of mental illness. Fan narratives provide complex engagement with mental health including representation of neurodivergent conditions, dealing with the aftermath of traumatic situations, arcs of treatment and rehabilitation, among others. In fanfiction, certain genres such as “trauma fic”, “therapy fic”, etc. can be studied as particularly viable sites for the exploration of these issues. The “military fic”, for instance, is one genre that is particularly popular in the *Captain America* fandom that explores the conditions of depression, anxiety, PTSD, etc. in various creative ways.

Through a study of the content of MCU fanfiction and the contextual materialities of its production on internet-mediated fan communities, this paper argues that fandom can serve as an alternative space for representation of mental illness as well as of participation of fans with mental illness, possibly functioning as a socio-therapeutic tool. In the realm of global fandom theorised as a “postcolonial cyberspace” (Pande, 2018), it is interesting to note how mental illness can be conceived of given that it is understood and experienced in different ways in different cultures.


Divya Garg is a PhD candidate in the School of Media and Communication, RMIT University, Melbourne. She is researching on Marvel fandom and experiences of disability for her doctoral thesis. She completed her M.A. in English from Jawaharlal Nehru University, and B.A. (Honours) in English from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi. She has previously contributed to *The Darker Side of Slash Fan Fiction: Essays on Power, Consent and the Body* published by McFarland (2018). Her thought piece on ‘Queerbaiting and Japanese Popular Culture’ is forthcoming (University of Iowa, 2019). She has written and presented papers largely in the field of film and television media, fanfiction, and gender studies.

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*Star Wars* fans, generations, and ideology

The image of the *Star Wars* fan has been discursively constructed and reconstructed by scholars, journalists, the *Star Wars* industry, and fans themselves. Accordingly, the *Star Wars* fan has often fulfilledstartlingly different purposes in different contexts, often split rhetorically across generations. In Robin Wood’s assessment, *Star Wars* fans (in the original trilogy era) were “only comprehensible when one assumes a widespread desire for regression to infantilism, a populace who wants to be constructed as mock children” (1986, emphasis in original). In Will Brooker’s contrasting view, and as the result of speaking to fans while the prequel trilogy was still emerging, the *Star Wars* fan was part of “a community, worldwide and possibly lifelong, grounded in a common heritage” (2002). Most recently, we have seen journalist Matt Miller in *Esquire* label *Star Wars* fans, in 2018, as “synonymous with hate, bigotry, and pervasive assholeness.” He is hardly alone in this contemporary assessment. This paper will accordingly explore the uses of the *Star Wars* fan, and the issues it presents for understanding both the *Star Wars* franchise as text, but also the relationship between fans and industry more broadly. Most directly, this paper will address recent deliberate ideological incursions into the image of the *Star Wars* fan in the post-Lucas era, and its relationship to the historic construction of *Star Wars* fandom.

Dan Golding is a Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication at Swinburne University and the host of *Screen Sounds* on ABC Classic. He is the author of *Star Wars After Lucas* (University of Minnesota Press, 2019), an award-winning writer with over 200 publications (ABC Arts, Crikey, Buzzfeed, Meanjin, Kotaku), and a video essayist with 1 million views on YouTube. In 2018, Dan presented *What Is Music* for ABC iView and Triple J. Dan also co-wrote *Game Changers* (Affirm Press, 2016), made the soundtracks to *Push Me Pull You* (PS4, 2016), and *The Haunted Island* (PC, 2018) and from 2014-2017 was director of the Freplay Independent Games Festival.
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The Batman TV Series (1966-1968) and Comic Book Fans

The *Batman* television series that first aired from January 1966 to August 1968 is renowned for its camp pop aesthetic. This paper addresses the reaction of comic book fans to the television show as expressed in letters to the two main Batman comic book titles: *Detective Comics* and *Batman*. Batman fans may have first heard of the series by a response to a letter in which the editorial staff of the *Batman* comic book confirmed news of a forthcoming show. From 1966-1968 the letters pages of both comics seldom addressed the television version and for the main part nor did the stories in the two comic books. But in the letters that appeared fans positioned a “real” or “true” Batman from the comic books against the television version. During these years the letters pages saw readers develop stronger critiques of stories rather than simply noting minor inconsistencies. Many aspired to a job in comics. Mike Fredrich moved from being a letter writer to a professional comic book writer. Future comics artists Fred Hembeck and Klaus Janson offered critiques of artists’ styles and constant letter writers Guy H. Lillian III and Irene Vartanoff offered thoughtful criticism. The television series attempted to capture a polysemic audience of adults hip to the campy satire, and a younger audience taken more with colourful superheroes and villains. While this broader audience appeal drove DC’s (then a group of associated companies including National Periodicals and the Licensing Corporation of America) licensing efforts and profits it risked alienating the core audience of comic book fans for titles that sold some 600,000 copies a month. Published fan letters from the period then tell us something about how fans felt and how DC tried to shape reaction through its letter publication choices.


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Anne Lee, Japan Foundation

Imagining A Brand’s Biggest Fans: *Sanrio Danshi*, Character Marketing, and Fan Appropriation

This paper examines the creation, ongoing development, and appropriation of fan-identity within by Sanrio, a company which has come to emblematise the cute character merchandising industry through characters such as Hello Kitty and seemingly endless streams of character-branded clothing, stickers, video games, and backpacks. In 2015, Sanrio introduced a new character brand: the five handsome men of *Sanrio danshi* (*Sanrio boys*), who are both fictional iconic characters that appear in Sanrio media and merchandise, yet also positioned as Tokyo-dwelling fans of Sanrio’s character merchandise themselves. In addition to appearing in traditional forms of media marketing, such as manga and anime, the fictional boys of Sanrio danshi uniquely "post" together from a Twitter account run by Sanrio, where illustrated images are shared as though they are photographs taken by the boys themselves in their “real lives”. Presented as “real boys” through a layered materiality that combines real-world events, locations, and products with illustrations and actors portraying the boys, *Sanrio Danshi* provides the ultimate spokesperson brand for the Sanrio corporation: a group who are not only defined by and constantly espouse their love of Sanrio products, but are imagined and wholly controlled by the corporation itself. The brand’s forthright narrative of feeling unconstrained by gender-essentialist visions of consumer behaviour is therefore troubled by the status of the brand as a naked, meta-capitalistic effort by Sanrio. Additionally, in contrast to Sanrio’s previous character brands, *Sanrio Danshi* is overtly marketed through the attractiveness of the boys to their assumed-female audience, pushing through vehicles such as eroticised depictions of the characters, and interactive dating games. As this paper explores, *Sanrio Danshi* thereby presents a contested, intersecting, and cultivated site of fan behaviours, both real and imagined.

Simon Gough received his PhD from Monash University. He currently teaches across multiple universities.

Anne Lee received her PhD from the University of Queensland. She currently works as PR & communications coordinator for the Japan Foundation, Sydney.
In the rise of new media, cosplayers respond to the digital landscape. Cosplay functions as a conduit for the cosplayer; by adorning a costume, the wearer can construct an identity or personality complimentary to the represented character. For some cosplayers influenced by the social media app, Instagram, the nature of cosplay has shifted from a performative expression of fandom appreciation to a desire to achieve viral fame. Supported by Richard Dyer’s star theory, celebrity culture, and social capital, I introduce the term “Star Cosplayer” to refer to how cosplayers may establish an online identity brand for monetary gain.

Focusing on Richard Dyer’s star theory, Erving Goffman’s dramaturgical approach, and Pierre Bourdieu’s theory on class distinction, I assert that cosplay is a performative meaning-making process that displaces or produces multiple identities. This thesis investigates what is meant by an online identity by analyzing the effects of social media fame in the context of the digital cosplay realm.

Dyer’s star theory posits that celebrities or influential figures known as “stars,” are produced for monetary gain as a commodity (Dyer 1979). Application of the star system emphasizes social networking to promote a cosplayer’s fabricated identity to appeal to their target audience. These pseudo-celebrity cosplayers aspire to become Instagram influencers. This project explores why some cosplayers utilize social media to create an identity brand for endorsement through the accrual of social capital. To sustain this observation, a work of art offers a hobbyist cosplayer’s perspective on the viral trend and seeks to explore why some cosplayers utilize social media to create an identity brand for endorsement. A curated Instagram account (@thecuratedidentity) accompanies the installation. In sum, this essay focuses on how the Star Cosplayer commodifies their body to market a social identity through the curatorial process of displaying their craft on Instagram.

As a recent MA graduate from New York University’s department, XE: Experimental Humanities & Social Engagement, Fiona Haborak’s thesis work entitled “Identity: A Curated Brand & the Star Cosplayer’s Pursuit of Instagram Fame” explores one persona of many that a cosplayer may use on social media through the display of a symbolic work of art. In 2015, Haborak graduated from Fairfield University with a BA in Sociology. As a hobbyist cosplayer for the past ten years, she experiences a personal commitment and dedication to understanding cosplay’s performative nature. With a penchant for infusing prose writing into academic research, Haborak fits between Connecticut and New York City seeking to take interdisciplinary interaction by wedding her art to her academic interests. Having contributed to zines and participating in cosplay competitions (Gamer Con ’18 & ’19), future plans include the exhibition of “//wired: TRENDING,” seeking publication, and the contemplation of prospective PhD programs.

Anna Halipilias is a PhD candidate at the University of Tasmania’s Media School in Hobart, Tasmania. Her current field of research is film studies, where she is currently studying the ‘Tasmanian Gothic’ and how it is used to represent Tasmania on-screen and in cultural tourism. Anna also has experience in the cultural studies discipline. She has edited and written for publications like QV Magazine, The Popular Culture Studies Journal, Studies in Popular Culture and The Popular Film and Television Studies Journal. Her latest research can be found in an upcoming book chapter from Cambridge Scholars Publishing’s Gender and Popular Culture: Representations and Embodiment. Anna has also presented her research at the WAACM Gender and Everyday Conference and the Debating Communities and Networks 9th Conference.
**Playing the victim: Toxic fan practices, gaming capital and cultural change within video game fan communities**

In the wake of Gamergate in 2014, video games and fan scholars have been concerned with ‘toxic’ fan practices such as hostility, harassment, and sexism, racism and homophobia within gaming communities (Braithwaite 2016; Consalvo 2012; Gray et al. 2017; Massanari 2017; Shaw 2009). Increased diversity and inclusion within these communities reflect cultural changes that have had tangible impacts on practices of fans who feel threatened by these shifts. Gamergate was purported to be a movement about ethics in games journalism, but was in practice a harassment campaign against women and other marginalised groups in games communities. These toxic activities are often attributed to an attempted reclamation of hegemonic power over games and the gamer identity. Benedict Anderson (1991, p.15) suggests that communities are “distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined”. This paper argues that the gaming community has historically been imagined as a masculine domain, regardless of the presence of marginalised individuals. Furthermore, it answers Hills’ (2018) call for an examination of Gamergate utilising Mia Consalvo’s (2007) ‘gaming capital’ to understand how this imagined community is constructed as male-dominated. Using the notions of imagined communities and gaming capital as a theoretical framework, this paper examines Gamergate through discourse analysis to understand toxic fan practices as a response to male gamers’ anxieties regarding a perceived loss of privilege, power and gaming capital due to cultural and industrial change. This paper argues that during Gamergate, gamers positioned themselves as a victimised group in reaction to the growing presence of women and other marginalised individuals in the wider gaming community, even as the movement took the form of a harassment campaign, in order to defend their gaming capital within a community which has always been imagined by and for men to participate in and enjoy.

**Taylor Hardwick** is a PhD candidate at Swinburne University of Technology. Her thesis is currently titled ‘Marginalisation, Diversity and Inclusion within Participatory Video Game Fan Spaces and Communities’, and it aims to understand the experiences of marginalised groups within co-present spaces for fan engagement and interaction with video games such as conventions and festivals, and the ways in which they are organised and constructed with or without inclusion and diversity in mind. Her other research interests include representations of gender and sexuality in popular culture, online fan communities, and Japanese feminisms.
Racheal Harris, Deakin University, racheal.anne.83@gmail.com
Curatorial Interference and Online Fandom at Graceland

My discussion examines self-guided audio tours at Elvis Presley’s Graceland, with a view towards how these impact on fan encounters with and understandings of the site. I draw on the scholarship of Karal Anne Marling, which discusses the curated version of Elvis that is communicated through the Graceland mansion as tourist attraction and the issues associated to its dubious role as fan commodity and historical site. Marling’s work, written when Graceland was initially opened to the public, is further valuable to an analysis of how the tour experience has changed, while also highlighting the static Elvis image and its role in the fan experience. I consider the subsequent inclusion of the audio tour, which allows guests to experience the site at their own pace and thus to create highly personalised narratives which intimately connect to their individual experience as Elvis fans.

From an online viewpoint, the voyeuristic engagement of fans with the Graceland site through Graceland-cam (a 24/7 live feed from Graceland) creates the ghost of the tourist in the physical space. At times of significance, such as during Elvis week, this technology allows for fan participation without necessitating a physical presence at the site. Graceland-cam provides a very different experience than the immersive act of visiting Graceland in that it allows fans to experience pilgrimage from the comfort of their home as opposed to the more traditional ritual of travelling to the site. Graceland has been chosen for its status as a site of fan pilgrimage along with the fact that it incorporates online and real-life encounters to create a fully immersive experience for fans. Its precarious status as historical site and as setting for a celebrity narrative of Elvis as pop-culture icon also prompts us to question the role of curatorial authority in mediating fan encounters, raising questions around the necessity of creating authenticity in the fan space.

Racheal Harris completed her Bachelor of Historical Inquiry and Practice, Bachelor of Arts (Hons), and Master of Arts at the University of New England (Australia). She is currently undertaking her PhD with Deakin University. Racheal has contributed to several edited collections on popular culture, including chapters on theological concepts in James Cameron’s Terminator franchise and folklore in the CW series Supernatural. Her first single-authored volume will be released on 27 June, 2019 by Emerald Publications as part of the Death & Culture series, published in partnership with the University of York (United Kingdom). Titled Skin, Meaning, and Symbolism in Pet Memorials, it considers contemporary death practices related to mourning and memorializing companion animals. Racheal also has a forthcoming title on the Syfy series 12 Monkeys, to be published in 2019 by McFarland Press.

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Facebook-based Fan Communities and the Affective Fan Economy

This paper examines the Vietnamese ardent fan communities of a South Korean boy band, Big Bang. While the popularity of South Korean popular music (K-Pop) has recently been phenomenal in Vietnam, the enthusiasm of the Vietnamese youngsters about K-Pop idols has been largely neglected in academic discourses. This paper addresses the overlooked relationship between Vietnamese fandom and social media. It particularly looks into the affective fabrics of Facebook-based fan communities to explain frenzy ‘view-increase fights’ where K-Pop fans are highly immersed in streaming YouTube music videos in order to break view records as gifts to idols and as milestones for fan communities. These case studies show how fandom achieves an affective dimension and becomes productive in a way that is only made possible by social media platforms especially Facebook and YouTube.

This paper offers an example of how fandom is being altered under the impact of recent digital developments. New fan practices are produced, and new pleasures are generated. Fandom becomes a fascinating site where we have a further observation of how social media help create a world that increasingly becomes globalised. It then helps explain the transnational success of the so-called Korean Wave that is being led by K-Pop. Moreover, this paper contributes to the growing literature on the affective fabrics of digital realms that unquestionably embraces fandom as an important aspect.

Ha Hoang is a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University. Her current research explores the changes in the everyday life of Vietnamese youngsters in relation to the recent developments of social media and the transnational flow of Korean popular culture. The research delineates distinctive ways in which Korean popular music and television dramas affect the intimate sphere of the fans through a few case studies. Before commencing her postgraduate study in Sydney, Ha taught undergraduate courses in media and communication at Vietnam National University, Hanoi.
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‘Family don’t end in blood’: The Importance of Friendship in Fan Fiction

Timeless works such as Romeo and Juliet have influenced how readers interpret texts, placing importance and emphasis on romantic relationships. However, fan fiction is shifting that emphasis onto a different type of relationship: friendship, known as Gen. Friendship is highly valued in fan fiction and often framed in familial terms. Though categorised as amateurish (Jenkins 1992, p. 17) in the past, academia is now recognising fan fiction for its resistive qualities and originality of interpretations. Fan fiction invites readers to engage with texts differently from how they did previously. In this paper, I will attempt to explore fan fiction’s fascination with friends becoming family and influence on the way readers can frame relationships. This ‘archontic’ (Derecho 2006, pp. 63-64) genre is more known for its slash and femslash, overturning heteronormative representations. However, the value of familial friendship is a unique area of fan fiction not often explored nor is its influence over readers’ interpretations of the text, original and fan-created. In this paper, I wish to examine how fan fiction’s emphasis on familial friendship adds to modern literature and shifts reader engagement as well as expectation.

References

Allanah Hunt is a PhD student in creative writing at Anglia Ruskin University, England. Her PhD involves the production and analysis of fan fiction set in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Her previous writing has concentrated on realistic and literary fiction, exploring sensitive contemporary issues such as Aboriginal deaths in custody. She has had several short stories published and two of her novels placed Highly Commended in a national competition. She has presented papers on her research at NAISA 2016, NIRAKN 2017, Fan Studies Australasia 2017, SHARP 2018, Superheroes and Beyond 2018 and SFRA 2019. She is a winner of a Boundless mentorship. She has won the 2019 Nakata Brophy Fiction Prize and is one of the novella winners for Griffith Review. She currently works as an editor intern through the black&write! project at SLQ.

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Constructing, Maintaining and Profiting from Fan Communities on Twitch.tv

This paper examines how “streamers” on video game live streaming platform Twitch.tv build, maintain, and extract income from, their fan communities. Twitch is now the 30th most-viewed website in the world, bringing in around two hundred million viewers to watch the regularly-broadcast content of two million content creators. Tens of thousands make income from live streaming: but how do fans become “connected” to their preferred live streamers, and how are they persuaded to give money in exchange for what is an entirely free to watch service?

After a brief introduction to the platform, the paper consists of three parts. Firstly, I examine how a live streamer constructs a loyal and interested fan community, looking in particular at conversations between streamers and viewers, building private viewer forums, and selecting appealing content. Secondly, I consider the demands of working hours, commitment, offline work, social media work, creativity, sponsorships, and innovation, required to maintain the interest of a loyal fan community on a platform with so many other sources of content. Thirdly, I outline how fan interest and support is monetised by streamers, and how this affects the experiences of viewers. The paper will therefore shed light on the vital roles of fans in live streaming, how they are “managed” by streamers, and the increasingly central role of monetary exchange in these relationships. Methodologically, this paper draws on interview and ethnographic data collected between 2016 and the present. The author and his co-researcher have conducted over one hundred semi-structured interviews with professional and aspiring-professional Twitch streamers, lasting between ten minutes and two hours; this is coupled with extensive online ethnographic data from observation of hundreds of Twitch channels, and offline observation at almost a dozen major live streaming / gaming events in the United Kingdom, United States, Germany, Poland, and Brazil.

Mark R. Johnson is a Lecturer in Digital Cultures in the Department of Media and Communications at the University of Sydney. His research examines intersections between play and money, such as live streaming, esports, loot boxes, gamification/gamblification, and playbour. He has published in journals including “Information, Communication and Society”, “Media, Culture and Society”, “The Sociological Review”, “Convergence”, and “Games and Culture”. His first monograph, The Unpredictability of Gameplay (Bloomsbury, 2018), offers a new Deleuzean framework for understanding moments of unpredictability in gameplay. Outside academia he is an independent game developer, a regular games blogger and podcaster, and a former professional poker player.
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An Iconic Photo? Tayla Harris, Sexism, and the Activism of AFLW Fans

On 17 March 2019 photographer Michael Wilson took a picture of Carlton AFLW player Tayla Harris kicking for goal. The striking image conveyed both the athleticism and classical style of the Harris’ kicking action, evoking comparisons to the famous style of male players from eras long since past, such as EJ Whitten. Yet when the AFLW broadcaster Channel 7 posted the image on social media accounts, so-called trolls responded with misogynistic abuse. Rather than moderate these responses, Channel 7 deleted the image, an act that in turn galvanised AFLW fans whose protests led the station to apologise and re-post the photo.

In this paper I want to begin thinking through the intervention enacted by these AFLW fans who worked together in online spaces to critique and redress the defensive response of Channel 7, and the AFL establishment more generally. At issue are questions of gendered bodies, mockery, shame, empowerment, and what leads to a sporting image becoming iconic.

Matthew Klugman is a Research Fellow in the Institute for Health and Sport at Victoria University. His research interests include the intersections of sporting passions with notions, practices, and experiences of race, gender, bodies, sexuality, migration, and religion. His most recent book (with Gary Osmond) is *Black and Proud: The Story of an Iconic AFL Image* (2013, NewSouth).

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Roll the Dice: creator intent and fan authorship

Fan spaces will always challenge an author's intentions and the ideas they had when they originally created a text. Unlike other texts which exist in a single medium, podcasts - namely live action roleplaying podcasts - allow for a great deal of character exploration by fan creators. As a recently emerged genre, live action role playing podcasts are focused on the recording of tabletop role playing games, most commonly Dungeons & Dragons, with a cast made up of character actors and a Game Master who runs it. There is minimal editing to construct the podcasts narrative, instead relying on organic storytelling. Any art which might have existed as a canonical paratext falls to the wayside as character descriptions change as the text progresses or as the player changes their mind. Due to the transitory nature of these texts, fandoms gain a form of authorship over depictions of the characters within these texts through their fan labour.

By studying the interactions between the creators of the podcasts Critical Role, and The Adventure Zone: Balance, and fans who cosplay from these texts, I aim to explore how authorship can be layered. These layers create a complicated discourse between the author’s intentions, the responses from fan content creators alike, and how within fan spaces the work of other fans may be prioritised over the canonical text. While other forms of cosplay rarely reach the creators of the series the character is from, the players of live action roleplaying podcasts often seek out cosplayers of their character. This interaction is largely ignored in discussions of cosplay within fan studies as cosplay culture is viewed as being a monolithic entity, though the culture emerging alongside live action role playing podcasts refutes this.

Eulalie B. Lane is an undergraduate studying at Deakin University, majoring in Sociology and minoring in Media Studies, with a keen interest in Culture Studies. They are interested in researching the nature of the communities that form around craft based hobbies and professions, the history of cosplay as a cultural phenomena and the changes that occur as it becomes more mainstream, and the experiences of people within those communities as a result.
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[Muffled Rap Music Playing in the Distance]: Fan-made GIFs and the grammar of captions

This paper analyses the use of captions in fan-made GIFs. Amateur captions demonstrate creative techniques of communicating sound through text: changes to colour, capitals, and italics are used idiosyncratically, often inconsistent with the grammar of professional captioning. For instance, colour is used by fans to highlight key phrases, but in professional captions is used to distinguish different speakers. The deviations from normative caption grammar reveal the inherent subjectivity of the captioning process for both professionals and amateurs.

The common misuse of ‘atmospherics’—square bracket captions used to describe non-speech information—reveals that GIF-makers do not always distinguish between visual and aural information. Atmospherics are used to contextualise superfluous and non-obvious visual information, as well as sound. This suggests an assumption that captions are not to supplement a lack of sound for deaf audiences, but to supply general helpful information. In this sense, GIFs may be called a ‘deaf’ medium akin to Michel Chion’s term ‘deaf cinema’ for silent cinema. GIFs, with their expressive and unusual captions, demonstrate that GIF-making is a transformative practice, with creative and subjective additions by fans to reinterpret both aural and visual information.

This paper speculates whether the popularity of captioned GIFs has helped acclimatise hearing audiences to captioned media. The ubiquity of captioned GIFs as reaction memes on social media may explain the increasing support from hearing communities for captioned cinema, streaming services, and home video. Fan made GIFs are trailblazing in creative interpretation of sound, and normalising accessible cinema for deaf audiences.

Naja Later is an Academic Tutor Swinburne University of Technology. Her work researches intersections between pop culture and politics, focusing on the horror and superhero genres. She is an advocate for deaf accessibility, and organises the All Star Women’s Comic Book Club.

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Blogging as autodidactic practice: Rogue archiving in the service of film music fans

The blogosphere has become more than just a conduit for amateur journalism as a solitary pursuit. This presentation will begin with an outline of the current stage in our ongoing research to explain the nature of the blogging phenomenon through various theoretical lenses. So far in our descriptive analyses we have resorted to theories from anthropology (liminality), economics (the “Long Tail” effect and the “Tragedy of the Commons”) and sociology (the “Third Place”). In an ad hoc, longitudinal qualitative study, we tracked the collective behaviours emerging in a blog devoted to film music fans, which has since become defunct. Preliminary findings indicate that a de facto social network accidentally formed in this blog due in part to the exchange of autodidactic knowledge brought into the online community by individual members. It will be argued that this was facilitated through blogging as rogue archival practice. As De Kosnik (2016: p.2) notes: “Rogue archivists explore the potential of digital technologies to democratize cultural memory. With digital tools and networks, they construct repositories that are accessible by all Internet users, and can choose to preserve either vast quantities of information (they do not have to choose to save some types of content and discard other types because of physical space restrictions) or highly specific materials (such as the documents of subcultures or minority groups) that have been consistently excluded or ignored by traditional memory institutions.” In this way, film music blogs preserve the cultural memory for fans of a niche genre that is often sidelined by the commercial mainstream.

John Lenarcic is a physicist and applied mathematician by training, an IT academic by fortunate accident and an armchair philosopher by conscious choice. He is currently a Lecturer in the School of Business IT and Logistics at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. His research interests include the philosophy of information systems, human-computer interaction and the cyber-anthropology of social networking. Dr Lenarcic is a frequent media commentator on issues dealing with social and ethical aspects of information technology with an emphasis on social media.

Pradip Sarkar is a lecturer in ICT and a DJ and music producer, with an avid interest in the intersection of technology and DIY music cultures. He is currently undertaking a PhD at the School of Media and Communications, RMIT University. His project is aimed at an examination of the media ecology of Hip Hop producers in urban India, with an emphasis on issues of tinkering and workarounds prevalent in their practices.
Vaporwave is a niche microgenre of electronic music that first came to prominence on social media in the early 2010s. The community, which is part of a popular shift in digital culture towards the post Internet, draws its inspiration from the cultural fabric of life online resulting in a highly self-referential audio culture. Vaporwave has since evolved into a thriving participatory economy characterised by a collapsing distinction between content creators and fans that reflects a changing relationship to the platforms through which fan practices are enacted. This paper seeks to explore these changing relationships, employing community art practices which embrace the emergent and discursive nature of digital culture in order to foreground diverse voices and foster a sense of participant agency.

Drawing from design research and archival studies, this paper discusses the potential for practice-led research to harness vernacular creativity (Burgess, 2006), defamiliarise the quotidian and open up spaces for critical reflection. In doing so this work embraces the archive as a living, dynamic and creative context for meaningful engagement which fosters different ways of knowing. It is hoped that this paper might open up discussion of how creative practice-led research could be useful in establishing collaborative partnerships with fan communities to produce art objects which help to make sense of the inherently messy nature of digital culture on its own terms.

Adrian Lucas-Healey is an experimental electronic music producer who’s creative work explores the ephemeral nature of digital culture and the aesthetics of information over-saturation. He has also worked extensively as an educator and community development professional in alternative education and local government settings collaborating with community to co-design and facilitate critical social pedagogy programs. His research exists at the intersection of his creative and professional practices, seeking to understand Vaporwave, an internet music culture in which he is an active participant, as a living example of post-internet culture.

Gawain Lucian Lax

Advancing with the Stars: Astrology as Affective Fan Practice

At first glance, the body of astrological knowledge has very little in common with the kinds of media that usually attract fandoms: it lacks core texts, narratives, and even characters to serve as clear affective entry points. However, on closer inspection, the online communities which have formed around the practice of astrology operate in very similar ways to conventionally-understood fan communities. Not only has the recent surge in astrology’s popularity been led by less traditional audiences, mirroring the demographics of transformative fandom, but astrology as a text is engaged with in similar ways. The internet and social media have made it possible to easily learn about, and form communities around, astrology, and encourage a multitude of different readings of the same material. Most crucially, however, astrology is premised on an affective relationship in the same way as more conventional fannish involvement. Despite the lack of obvious emotional hooks in astrological canon, most astrologers nevertheless have a visceral connection to parts of their natal charts. This is because astrology works as a prism which allows the self to be externalised, with certain personality traits or experiences aligning with the placement of certain planets or signs. In the same way that a fictional character has particular attributes that resonate with particular readers because we empathise with them, the same can be said of sections of our birth charts – and this is a positive relationship which promotes personal growth through self-reflection. Reading engagement with astrology as fan practice, then, strips fandom back to its most basic form in order to illustrate the crux of how it functions: through a visceral, affective relationship with an externalised fictionalisation of the self.

Gawain Lucian Lax is a recent Honours graduate from the University of Melbourne, in Screen and Cultural Studies. His thesis work focused on desire and agency in Japanese dating-simulation games, otome games (featuring female protagonists and male leads) in particular, and the way their mechanics encourage experimentation with desire. His research interests include dating-sim games more broadly, fan studies, Japanese popular media, and the intersection of gender, desire, and affect in games.
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Mark Duplass as mumblecore/mumblegore icon in The Creep series

In the Creep film series, “mumblecore” pioneer and indie film heartthrob Mark Duplass plays a serial killer named Josef who preys on amateur filmmakers. Josef is, unsurprisingly, an insufferable creep whose incessant oversharing means his victims are often more uncomfortable than frightened. Both the killer and his prey are presented as cinephiles/frustrated would-be-auteurs. Duplass portrays Josef as a twisted parody of the oddball protagonists he portrayed in films such as The Puffy Chair (Jay Duplass 2005), Your Sister’s Sister (Lynn Shelton 2011) and Safety Not Guaranteed (Colin Trevorrow 2012). These films lampoon the image of a self-important filmmaker-as-artist while playfully deploying frights and thrills associated with “mumblegore”.

Mumblegore is a popular term used by both fans and critics to describes a number of American indie horror films produced roughly within the last decade. These films are usually directed by or include the participation of filmmakers (like Duplass, who also produced the Creep series) who are also associated with the mumblecore indie drama movement. For example, Creep director Patrick Brice also directed the mumblecore romantic comedy film The Overnight (2015). Geoff King argues mumblecore is defined by a “…shared minimal-budget low-key naturalism… and the vocal hesitancies of non-professional performers” (2013, 122). The mumblecore movement has prompted a number of popular and academic accounts, often focusing on films either directed by or starring Mark Duplass and his brother Jay. However, mumblegore films have received comparatively little inquiry, with both critics and scholars focusing on “breakout” successes like Ti West’s House of the Devil (2009) and Adam Wingard’s You’re Next (2011). Creep and Creep 2 are at once lo-fi indie hangout films and metatextual commentaries on film fandom and so-called “elevated” horror.

Andrew Lynch is a postgraduate student in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne, Australia. His primary research area is Television Studies, and the contemporary mainstreaming of both the “Quality TV” aesthetic and sci-fi, horror, and fantasy genre television. He has recently presented at Game of Thrones: An International Conference, and TRANS TV in the UK.

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“The Canadians are ice fucking to Moulin Rouge”: Reading Romance into Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games

At the 2018 Winter Olympics Games in Pyeongchang, Canadian ice dance pair Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir won two gold medals, making them the most decorated Olympics figure skaters of all time. They also became the locus of a huge amount of attention from media and sparked a kind of instant – and massive – fandom (in addition to their already extant but much smaller fandom). However, it was not Virtue and Moir’s on-ice achievements that were the focus of said attention: rather, it was the possibility that they were in an off-ice romantic relationship.

This paper will explore fan readings of Virtue and Moir as romantic couple, focusing particularly on coverage of their exploits at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. In particular, it will address the reasons why fans shipped Virtue and Moir so relentlessly, seeking to answer three key questions: 1) Why did people think they were a couple? 2) Why did people want to think they were a couple? 3) What does this tell us about how romance is constructed in the contemporary Anglophone cultural imagination? To answer these questions, I will examine the dimensions of Virtue and Moir’s on-ice interactions, as well as the ways in which their twenty-year partnership came to function as a paratext to their performances as fans sought to become more familiar with them.

Ultimately, I will argue that Virtue and Moir were so widely shipped because they embodied two different romantic discourses: the discourses of “romance” and “intimacy”, as outlined by David Shumway, which emphasise passion and emotional closeness respectively. Because of their success in embodying these discourses, Virtue and Moir were read not simply as romantically involved but as “couple goals”, a portrait of an ideal romantic relationship, which highlights pervasive narratives about romantic love in contemporary culture.

Jodi McAlister is a Lecturer in Writing and Literature at Deakin University in Melbourne. Her research focuses on representations of romantic love in popular culture, as well as the operations of the contemporary genre publishing industry. She has published widely in journals including Continuum, Sexualities, Text, and Participations, and her first monograph is currently under review at Palgrave Macmillan. Currently, she is the Chief Investigator on a multi-institutional and international project on English-language romance novels in the Philippines, supported by the Romance Writers of America academic grant. In addition to her scholarly writing, Jodi is also a novelist. Her trilogy of young adult paranormal novels are published by Penguin Teen Australia: Valentine (2017), Ironheart (2018), and Misrule (2019).
'Queerbaiting' is a fan-coined term that refers to the practice of media creators and performers intentionally hinting at the possibility of queerness in order to encourage investments of queer viewers, but ultimately never following through and actualising this subtext. The phenomenon has received increasing attention by mainstream press and academia, with analysis spanning film, television, comic books, video games, and celebrities. Queerbaiting highlights an interesting moment in fandom that provides insights into contemporary politics of queer representation and audience-creator relations. What do accusations and criticisms of queerbaiting say about contemporary conceptualisations of queer visibility? More specifically, how are fans conceptualising the dynamic between audience and creator within the climate of queerbaiting?

This paper utilises data gathered from 24 semi-structured interviews with fans conducted over instant messaging. The interviews ranged from one to two and half hours long, asking participants about their experiences and investments in the phenomenon of queerbaiting, their textual object of fandom and the politics surrounding queer media representation. This paper explores the legitimacy of the authorised author within fan conceptions of queerbaiting. It argues that accusations and criticisms of queerbaiting ultimately rely on the intentions of the creators/performers, and thus, all meaning-making is granted to the authorised authors. This is in stark contrast to queer poststructuralist thought of not only distancing the legitimacy of the author for the meaning or ‘truth’ of a text, but also the potential for pleasure or playfulness in audiences’ queer readings. This paper analyses the politics of representation and victimhood upon which criticisms of queerbaiting rely and ultimately asserts that these politics reinforce notions of authorial intent, highlighting shifts in queer political subjectivity for contemporary fans.

Michael McDermott is a Ph.D. candidate in Gender, Sexuality & Diversity Studies at La Trobe University. He completed his undergraduate degree in Screen and Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne in 2015, writing his Honours thesis on queerbaiting which won the award for Best Thesis by the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives. His doctoral research examines queerbaiting as a wider cultural phenomenon. He has contributed to the Journal of Fandom Studies and an upcoming edited collection on queerbaiting published by University of Iowa Press. He has presented his research at conferences in Australia and the US. His research interests include queer and feminist theory, fandom studies, and queer representation in popular media.
Fangirling for Kristen Stewart’s Queerness: A New Dawn of ‘The Sewing Circle’ in Contemporary Celebrity Culture?

Since entering the public consciousness as the expressly hetero-feminine protagonist Bella in the hit vampire saga *Twilight*, Kristen Stewart’s star persona has transformed considerably; from her fame-making onscreen fictional role as a submissive love interest, Stewart has morphed into a queer icon. Taking Stewart as its focus, this paper identifies parallels and distinctions between Stewart and historical incarnations of queer female film stars, notably Marlene Dietrich (1901–1992). It does to so to evaluate how the positioning and possibilities of queer female celebrities have and have not evolved in the last century, and what this might reveal about contemporary celebrity culture and fandoms. Stewart’s rejection of heteronormativity has become a key feature of her celebrity brand, straddling masculinity and femininity in her gender presentation and having widely-publicised romantic relationships with both men and women. Like Stewart, Dietrich is renowned for her broad appeal but also her unconventional relationship with gender and sexuality. In popular mythology, Dietrich is associated with ‘Marlene’s Sewing Circle’, a fraternity of influential women in 1920s–1940s Hollywood – including Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford and Agnes Moorhead – whose queer sexuality was an ‘open secret’ (McLellan 2001; Madsen 2002). This paper contemplates the extent to which Stewart and her contemporaries such as Lindsay Lohan, Miley Cyrus and Janelle Monae augur a reinvention of ‘the sewing circle’, and what this might mean in this celebritised era of digital media. Acknowledging that media histories of female same-sex desire have long been ‘defanged’ and depoliticised (Brady 2019), we use this transhistorical comparison to identify the significance of the visibility and celebration of queer female icons. Drawing on celebrity studies scholarship and queer theory, this paper examines the impact of Stewart’s film roles on the queerness of her celebrity brand – including the gender ambiguity of Savannah in *JT Leroy* (2018) – and vice versa, such as her reframing of Sabina in *Charlie’s Angels* (2019).

Joanna McIntyre is a Lecturer in Media Studies at Swinburne University, Melbourne. She is the co-editor of the forthcoming collection *Gender and Australian Celebrity Culture* (Routledge, 2019) and the author of the forthcoming monograph *Transgender Celebrity* (Routledge, 2020). Her research focuses on queer and transgender representation, celebrity, film, television, and Australian culture.

Eloise Ross teaches in Film and Television at Swinburne University, Melbourne. Her areas of research and writing include sound studies, film history, and Classical Hollywood cinema. She is co-curator of the Melbourne Cinémathèque.

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Rites of Passage: Pop culture inspired travel fantasies as education and tourism

Since 2014, the Australian Government has provided funding through the New Colombo Plan for Australian undergraduate students to study and gain work experience in Asia and the Indo-pacific. One aim of this program is to “establish study in the Indo-Pacific as a rite of passage for Australian undergraduate students”.

In this paper, I contrast the outbound “rites of passage” narratives of UTAS Media School students conducting field-work in Japan (2014-18) to the inbound “coming of age” narratives of Japanese visitors to Tasmania visiting the Ross Bakery (rumoured to be the basis for the well-known anime *Kiki’s Delivery Service*). In particular, I ask what pop-culture texts enable entry points for these young travellers to identify with, participate in, and transpose their stories of study and travel between Tasmania and Japan.

Craig Norris is a lecturer in The Media School at the University of Tasmania and specialises in emerging media practices and popular culture. His latest publications have explored how tourists and fans expand fictional storytelling across multiple modalities by navigating the flow of fictional worlds and information into real physical geographies.
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All Ears! – Podfic as a Transformative Fandom Artefact

Tracing its routes back to the Zine era of the early fandom communities ("Fanlore," n.d.), ‘podfic’ has since emerged as a genre of fan-production on its own with tags as specific as “Podfic and Podficed Works”, “Audio Format: MP3”, “Podfic Length: 10-20 Minutes” on Archive of Our Own (AO3), and so on and so forth. Often categorized as audio-(fan)fiction, podfics are – as the name suggests – audio recordings of fanfic, read out loud by fan-creators, who may read out either their own fan-works or the fanworks of other fanfiction-writers. Hosted usually on public domains to keep to the gift economy of fandom (Hellekson 2009), podfics have their own literary – or more accurately, transmedia – conventions. Depending on the creator, some podfics might have cover-art, some might have music and yet others might have collaborative voice-acting from more than one podficcer. Podfic therefore becomes an intersectional digital space that allows for the converging of more than one mode of storytelling. By studying the work of some podfics, specifically from the Teen Wolf and the Supernatural ("Archive of Our Own," n.d.) fandoms, I will tease out some of these transmedia conventions of podfic that allows for the podficcer to (re)make the chosen fanfiction-text as a multimodal semiotic narrative play through performance of said text. I will choose podfics based on the number of kudos left on AO3 and the length of podfic as it has been posted/linked to AO3 (and hosted elsewhere). Drawing on theories of performance and multimodality, (Kress and Selander 2012, Van Leeuwen 1999) I would like to study these podfics to see how they – as ‘derivative’ works of an already ‘derivative’ fanfiction-text – become a transformative artefact of fandom and fan-production that allow for the podficcer to (re)make the chosen fanfiction-text as a multimodal semiotic narrative play on behalf of the creators.

References


Shyamala Parthasarathy is a third-year graduate student at the University of British Columbia, working towards her MFA in Creative Writing. She holds an MA in English Literature and Cultural Studies from McMaster University. She is interested in digital and transmedia narratives, feminist/queer theory and critical race studies, and has been writing fanfiction since the age of twelve. She is also currently working on a Young Adult Novel that draws from Hindu mythology and explores the intersections of queerness and family structures affected by systemic Brahmanical patriarchy.
Ten years ago, critic Douglas Wolk called superheroes “the spandex wall”; the monolithic public face of the comic book medium. That hasn’t changed. What has, however, is the superhero blockbuster as epitomised by Marvel’s Cinematic Universe. *Avengers: Endgame*, the 22nd serialised Marvel movie, just cracked $2.7 billion at the global box office. Meanwhile, the monthly *Avengers* comic book struggled to sell 60000 copies through stores as the film was released. The Guardian newspaper ran an article asking, “Why are comics shops closing as superheroes make a mint?” Where does this cinematic superhero boom leave comic books today? Are they research and development, generating characters for movies and TV? Content farms designed to produce stories then “harvested” by other media? Wolk suggested that comic books intrinsically lend themselves to these kinds of stories – but, despite that, will comics be a forgotten stage in the evolution of the superhero?

Comics, however, can do things that movies can’t (or won’t). They’re fast and cheap, comparatively speaking, whereas blockbusters are slow and expensive. They can make decisions deemed too risky for blockbusters and their audiences, whether regarding narrative, genre, or diversity. And they offer up alternative takes on characters rather than a uniform “house style”, allowing more creative mutation. As artist Phillip Hester recently tweeted: “Comics is the raging star, and cinema the pinhole camera by which its movements may be safely observed.” Movies may have found success adapting superhero stories, but in doing so they can shacktle their source material in ways expensive CGI can’t quite disguise.

**Martyn Pedler** is a PhD candidate at Swinburne University, writing an interdisciplinary thesis on superhero stories. He was the literary site *Bookslut*’s comic book commentator for many years, and now regularly writes for *The Comics Journal*. He was a film critic for outlets such as *Time Out* and *Triple J Magazine* before turning his attention to screenwriting and the independent feature film *EXIT*. He now has several screenplays in development in the US.

Fanfiction as a reading game is reproduced by fans in condition of various confines: boundaries of a fandom, genre and limits of the original source (Stein, Busse). In our research we suggest that in a digital space the object of ‘high culture’ (Tulloch) can determine its own changeable characteristics (in terms of Lev Manovich’s ‘variability’) that can be investigated by fan authors in the process of creative reading-writing. We use the theory of *modèle actantiel* (Greimas) to clarify the relationship between fans’ imagination and potential narrative lines implied in a classical text. In the article, we study the strategy of fan interpretation of Tolstoy’s novel *War and Peace* (313 texts on the English website archiveofourown.org, 248 texts on the Russian resource ficbook.org).

Firstly, fan authors combine the roles of original novel’s ‘subject’ and ‘villain’. Ficwriters ignore the plot of real historical rivalry between European countries and embody the game plot about love rivalry between beloveds (Napoleon/Alexander), especially in ‘slash’ versions of the novel. Secondly, ficwriters swap an ‘object’ of desire with ‘sender’ and create the plot about potential dialogue between characters and their author (Tolstoy). Thirdly, fan authors parody and invert the original plot: an object becomes a villain, a villain or helper turns into the object of sexual desire. Thus, fan transformations of classics have the characteristic of amateur research. However, this research is possible only in condition of increased variability as a feature of the narration of the ‘high’ original source, like, for example, the free search of identity by the hero and free game of fate in *War and Peace*. The enjoyment of life, which the heroes of the novel seek, is projected onto ficwriters as readers who not only look for possible variable lines of the plot, but also enjoy reading and writing process.

**Vladimir Petrov** and **Anastasia Drozdova** are graduate students at the University of Tyumen (Russia), Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, faculty ‘Russian and Foreign Literature’. Vladimir’s research work is devoted to the fandom of modern classics, digital literature and intersemantic translations of classical literature in web environment. Vladimir is currently studying the features of narrative modeling in the texts of fanfiction based on Russian and European literature. The object of Anastasia’s research is the intermediality of V. Nabokov’s prose. Anastasia is the author of scientific articles on visual poetics and the technique of perspective images in Nabokov’s novels. Research interests are comparative literature, narratology, intermedial studies. Anastasia is a research leader of the grant project ‘Narrative interpretations research of Russian classics in fanfiction communities’ (2018-2020), Russian Foundation for Basic Research.
What are the tools and techniques required to become a creator of content? This presentation outlines a forthcoming series of workshops that utilises autobiographical experience as a seed for narrative and illustrative practices. The workshops will be conducted in partnership with a Melbourne-based health organisation. Participants in the initial workshop groups will include adults taking part in Alcohol and Other Drug Programs, as well as both adult and youth participants suffering from mental health issues, more broadly. Participants will gain tools and techniques for plotting their own multi-faceted narratives. Through the iterative workshop model, participants will recognise their role as both collectors and (re)inventors: “storying” the past, acting as creators rather than consumers of their personal stories.

Workshop participants will work with remembered events, writing and drawing from multiple perspectives to create a short narrative piece. Through the production of a narrative artefact, workshop participants are encouraged to explore identity as a composite picture, a fractured and shifting plurality. As participants work through cumulative exercises, they reflect on the past from an alternate temporal frame, a different point of view.

Drawing exercises will explore concepts of inner plurality, visualising various states of emotion and identity through automatic drawing practice. Fiction-writing techniques will facilitate processes of ideasthetic imagining, sensing concepts through attention to thought as embodied experience. As a form of embodied cognition, ideasthetic imagining is a generative process, producing narrative ideas by “writing back” to an event in the past. The concepts of Inner Plurality and Ideasthetic Imagining will be delivered via an iterative workshop model. The aim is to produce a narrative artefact that showcases the fractured, pluralistic nature of identity.

Julia Prendergast’s novel, The Earth Does Not Get Fat was published in 2018 (UWA Publishing: Australia). Recent short stories feature in Australian Short Stories 66 (Pascoe Publishing 2018). Other stories have been recognised and published: Lightship Anthology 2 (UK), Glimmer Train (US), TEXT (AU) Séan Ó Faoláin Competition, (IE), Review of Australian Fiction, Australian Book Review Elizabeth Jolley Prize, Josephine Ulrick Prize (AU). Julia’s research has appeared in various publications including: New Writing (UK), TEXT (AU), Testimony Witness Authority: The Politics and Poetics of Experience (UK). Julia is a Lecturer in Writing and Literature at Swinburne University, Melbourne, and Deputy Chair of the Australasian Association of Writing Programs (AAWP), the peak academic body representing the discipline of Creative Writing in Australasia.

Darren C Fisher’s research, practice and teaching focuses on identity and truth across sequential art, pre production art and design, classical figure drawing, screen-based history and theory, and storytelling. Darren has been selected as a 2019 Top 5 Humanities and Social Sciences Scholar from more than 150 Early Career Researchers nationally. Darren’s latest outputs and research include:

- A communication psychology comic for The Conversation
- A superhero romance comic about fate, choice, Aztec gods and birth control
- Writing on creative and practice-based processes within traditional academic research paradigms
- Collaborations with Swinburne University’s Centre for Social impact Research
- Workshops to facilitate the creation and dissemination of visual-based personal storytelling across diverse community groups.
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Overcoming Dusty Slim Pickings: How online record collecting adds meaning to physical record collecting

This paper was inspired by a bellletristic essay concerned with the cover art of a number of Slim Dusty records – or rather, the research for the essay. The essay itself was inspired by a handful of albums legitimately purchased by the author, a record collector more interested in the art and song selection than the actual music by the artist Slim Dusty. The research process revealed that, as with fan taxonomies [Shuker, 2005; Duits, Zwaan & Reijnders, 2014; Sandvoss & Kears, 2014], record collections defy the broad categories usually attributed to them even by the academics who are also fans [Cavicchi, 1998; Shukar, 2005; Jenkins, 2013]. Thus, this paper considers differences in modes of record collecting: the acquisition of hard copies of analogue sound recordings versus an online catalogue of the same. In so doing, it explores concepts of value and meaning ascribed to such collections and their elements. That music fans continue valuing physical artefacts above or at least apart from digital files suggests that a different ‘aura’, meaning or understanding of legitimacy is ascribed to one over the other. Yet, aspects of the physical artefact, like the music itself, are frequently more easily obtained digitally. While specific apps and websites exist to enable some fans to collectively maintain aspects of their music collections online (such as <discogs.com> and <45.com>) other fans create online catalogues as iterations of their own personal fandom, maintenance of which may continue to be part of their mode of collecting (such as <waynecountry.net>) or come to involve communities (such as <globaldogproductions.info>). By demonstrating that the collation of a detailed collection of digital data records nowadays plays an essential role in the curation of a record collection, this paper concludes that sound data records add meaning to sound recordings.

Demetrios Romeo, a dedicated “comedy nerd,” has been intent on devising a unified field theory of comedy for some years. In addition to documenting significant periods of the local comedy scene for the street press, he has actively contributed to the industry as a Melbourne International Comedy Festival Barry judge, Helpmann Comedy Award panellist and “hanging judge” for the national Raw Comedy competition. He has also written and broadcast extensively about music for various publications and stations. He returned to academia after a couple of decades “out in the wilderness,” recently completing an Honours degree in Communications at the University of Technology Sydney (Thesis: Do fans create canon? Observing online behaviour of Frank Zappa fans regarding rock canon and canon creation) in the hope of proceeding to a PhD degree.

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‘Aw….Baby Yoda is so Cute!’ Cultivating the Intergenerational Fandom of Disney+’s ‘Watch Together Family TV’

Disney commenced its streaming service, Disney+ on 12 November 2019, using The Mandalorian (Jon Favreau 2019-), a stand-alone prequel to the Star Wars films, as its flagship series. Three weeks after its release, its audience has tripled and The Mandalorian has topped Netflix’s cross-generational hit series, Stranger Things (Duffer brothers 2016) as the most-watched show on a streaming service (Abdulbak 2019). By ‘using the force’ of Baby Yoda, Disney has claimed Netflix’s mantle as home of “Watch Together Family TV.” This paper will argue that The Mandalorian provides a viewing experience designed to amplify intergenerational fan engagement and practices through its mode of delivery as much as its visual appearance and contents. The Mandalorian is a complex amalgam of Star Wars; Disney and MCU visual effects technologies, iconic references, sounds and images. The introduction of Baby Yoda’s character evokes E.T. , Stitch from Lilo and Stitch (Dean Deblois, Chris Sanders 2002) and sounds like Pixar’s baby’s Boo from Monsters Inc (Pete Docter 2001). The Mandalorian himself is constructed as a Disney-Pixar-like caregiver to an alien-child on a rite of passage journey. Further consolidating this appeal to intergenerational fandom, The Mandalorian’s weekly release of 29 to 38 minute-long episodes replicates the exhibition practices of the Hollywood sound serials of the 1930s and 1940s. The Hollywood serials were primarily targeted at a children’s audience but aimed to appeal to both children and adults (Barefoot 2011: 181). Children would watch these serials each week and then act them out in their backyards at home, using household objects as props in their shared fantasy-based play. The Mandalorian incorporates the visual aesthetics of these serials in a nod to Star Wars lore, but further aligns with the serials by employing their same excitement-building weekly delivery. The fan practices of the 1940s serials are updated as studio-directed digital play with the video game Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order (2019) and fan-led play in the circulation of memes. As the preserved domain of fannish play, the space in between each episode is thereby as significant as the episode itself (Jonathan Gray (2010: 42-3). The Mandalorian redefines the intergenerational audience of Netflix’s “must see Intergenerational TV” as a family of fans that must watch, wait and play, rather than just binge their family TV.

Diana Sandars is a Lecturer in Screen and Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne. Diana has published chapters on: Ally McBeal, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, SheZow, Mad Max Fury Road, The Daughter, Looking for Grace, and Lilo and Stitch, and contributed to journals: Australian Screen Education, Deletions, Idiom, M/C Journal, Metro, Participations: International Journal of Audience Research, The Refractory, Screening the Past and Senses of Cinema. Diana’s current research focus is on the child in screen media.
Mark Stewart, Coventry University, ad1216@coventry.ac.uk
Celebrities And Performative Fandom: An “Appropriate” Anomaly

Previous Fan Studies and Media Studies conferences have seen papers delivered that address the way that the media industries and fans themselves consciously and subconsciously work to develop the image of the idealised fan, the “appropriate” fan. This model establishes four modes of appropriate fandom: intra-fandom, inter-fandom, top-down, and outside-in. However, this seemingly complete model still leaves one outstanding anomaly, that of the way in which we conceive celebrities performing their own personal fandoms. These moments are made more tangible and visible as they become performed on social media, as celebrities gush over their favourite stars, artists, or texts, live-tweet television episodes, or share their reaction videos. These performances of fandom continue to play into discourses of “appropriate” fandom; while the specific nature of what is considerate “appropriate” may differ from that of the industry and that of intra-fan groups, there are still normative behaviours governing what is seen as appropriate versus inappropriate. These celebrities also occupy a complex dual role: as fans, a position traditionally depicted as disempowered; but also as celebrities, with the privileged levels of access that accompany that. As such, the idealised form of fandom performed becomes one that can be read as aspirational, but outside the reach of "normal" fans.

Mark Stewart is a Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication at Coventry University, UK. His work tends to draw on hybridised approaches to Fan and Audience Studies, Media Industries, and Media Distribution, frequently drawing his case studies from Television Studies more broadly. His work has been published in Television & New Media, International Journal of Cultural Studies, and Flow, and his book 21st Century Television: Realities of Change is forthcoming from University of Amsterdam Press.

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Aggressive Negotiations: An examination of fight directors as fans and the increasing impact of fight sequences in contemporary Hollywood Cinema

From the muscled, hypermasculine action heroes of the early 90s to the perceptively trained and skilled martial artists of modern films, contemporary Hollywood cinema have undergone a significant change in how they choreograph fight sequences. This changing approach to how combat sequences are choreographed has caused some audiences, critics, and fans to have a growing appreciation or acknowledgement of the impact that fight sequences play in a film’s narrative.

Along with this increased appreciation of fight sequences in films, the fight directors themselves are also beginning to receive recognition for their work. Numerous fight directors, before their careers began, admit that they themselves were fans of cinema and it’s fight scenes. A love of these fight sequences drove them to pursue careers in the film industry and continues to inspire them today.

This paper will examine fight directors as also being fans of cinema, and the complementary/reciprocal nature in how fight directors use their own fandom to shape their choreography and what influence it has on their storytelling. Additionally, the growing recognition of the fight industry and the fight director in contemporary Hollywood cinema will be analysed. How has Hollywood reacted to this increasing interest that audiences and fans appear to have.

Thomas Stockdale is a 3rd year PhD candidate at Swinburne University of Technology. His thesis project is on the narrative structures and movements of fight choreography in contemporary Hollywood cinema. Thomas comes from over a decade of experience in the film industry working as a professional fight choreographer. He draws upon this experience and knowledge to his research project to with the aim to bring more scholarly attention to the frequently overlooked and misunderstood topic of film fight choreography.
“The AFLW has given me back something I thought I’d lost” - How the AFLW fan space has welcomed back the lost voices from the stands

Kasey Symons

2019 marked the third season of the national Australian Rules women’s competition (AFLW). During the 2019 season, journalist and academic Kate O’Halloran hosted a one-hour AFLW themed radio show, *Kick Like a Girl* on Melbourne's independent radio station, *Triple R*. The show included a segment titled, *Voices from the Stands* which was presented by writer and award-winning documentary maker, Kirby Fenwick. Fenwick interviewed fans at various AFLW matches during the season, asking what it was about the AFLW competition and women’s football that they loved. The answers provided by a number of fans and attendees at the games gave interesting insights not just to how the game was perceived, but pointed to intriguing ideas of self-identity in the elite sports fan space. Recurring themes of fans highlighting feelings of now been considered welcome or safe at the game as well as sharing stories of having ‘come back’ to football after being disillusioned or excluded by the culture of the men’s competition were common. These fan narratives highlight an immerging fan space in professional, women’s Australian Rules football that is counter to the male game. This is a space where those who felt previously marginalised by the hegemony of the traditional fan culture now feel welcome, included and even celebrated in this alternative space. This paper seeks to analyse the narratives collected by Fenwick as well as additional fan writing that has emerged since the inception of the AFLW. These narratives challenge previous research on females of elite men’s sports that demands some women to perform a fan version of themselves that will see them become more accepted in the space.

Kasey Symons is a Research Fellow at Swinburne University of Technology working in the space of sport and social impact. She recently completed her PhD at Victoria University, producing a creative thesis titled, ‘One of the Boys: The (Gendered) Performance of my Football Career’. Her thesis focussed on how notions of gender performance and negotiation can complicate the fan experience for female fans of elite male sports, Australian Rules football in particular, in various ways.

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Adèle Pavlidis, Deakin University, a.pavlidis@griffith.edu.au

Fans, Facebook and Networked Affect: The Rules of Australian Football League Women’s

The 2017 launch of the inaugural Australian Football League Women’s (AFLW) competition was widely lauded as a positive development for women’s sport in Australia, yet it was not without controversy. This paper focuses on fan responses to the AFL’s official rules amendments developed for the women’s game. Taking a feminist affective approach to analysing posts related to rule changes on the AFL Women’s Facebook page, our aim is to draw attention to the entanglements of bodies, states of feeling and discourses of meaning making about gender and sport.

Social media is a site of affective flows whereby fans and others, as prosumers of media content, can participate in the co-creation of knowledge and meaning about sport. In this presentation we consider how these new rules of sport are a force which influences the ways bodies can move on the field, yet they are also sometimes a site of discussion and frustration among fans. In the context of women’s sport, capacities for social action and feeling are entangled with an investment of hope for gender progress in ways that produce emotional affects (anger, excitement, disappointment) that influence support for the AFLW and fan reactions.

It is at the level of public feeling that we contemplate the force of affect to give rise to connections, attachments and sentiments across the social worlds of the AFLW (virtual/material; organisational/informal, economic/cultural, on-field/off-field). We argue that attending to fan affect in AFLW opens up fields of possibility to reimagine the capacities of gendered sporting bodies -- individual and collective -- rather than closing or fixing meaning.

Kim Toffoletti is an Associate Professor in Sociology at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia. She has published widely in the area of women’s sport participation. She is the author of *Women Sport Fans: Identification, Participation, Representation* (2017, Routledge) and the co-editor of *Sport and Its Female Fans* (2012, Routledge). Her current projects include a study of women’s use of social media for sport and fitness.

Adèle Pavlidis is an ARC Fellow in the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, having been awarded a prestigious Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) (2018 - 2020). She is co-author of *Sport, Gender and Power: The Rise of Roller Derby* (2014, Routledge) and *Feminism and a Vital Politics of Depression and Recovery* (2019, Palgrave). She has authored over 20 peer-reviewed journal articles in Australian and International Journals, and has been invited by esteemed scholars to contribute to 10 edited book collections.
Recently, shared universes in media have gained traction in both the academic and critic sphere. From the Marvel Cinematic Universe to the Conjuring Universe to Game of Thrones or the Arrowverse, the popularity of the narrative device has seen investigation into its form and construction. Often this research focuses on the role of an authorial figure and how they’ve shaped a shared universe. However, very little research exists on the relationship between the creation of shared universes and fandom. Indeed, in regards specifically to shared universes, fans are often reduced to passive recipients, a marker of whether a shared universe has been an economic success or failure. This paper aims to analyse how fans and audiences contribute to the creation of shared universes. It will examine two relationships: how fans have shaped shared universes proper from an official standpoint and how fans will often create shared universes through fan practices. To do so, this paper will analyse a range of shared universes from different media. From examples such as H.P. Lovecraft’s Cthulhu Mythos, Isaac Asimov’s Foundation Universe and The Tommy Westphall Universe, this paper aims to show how fan practices of creativity will bridge together texts within shared universes or add new texts to shared universes. This paper will argue that the creation of shared universes involves a reciprocal relationship between text, author and fan wherein reception will breed creativity. Whether these practices are embraced by official sources or resisted will often become the site of how shared universes are consumed. This paper will show that through this, certain fan practices blur the notions of continuity and canonicity in the method of how they are consumed often resulting in a curation process that leads to the fan’s shared universe.

Vincent Tran is a PhD candidate at Swinburne University of Technology. He completed his Honours thesis at the University of Melbourne researching the construction of The CW’s Arrowverse, examining the translation of the shared universe from comic book to television. His doctoral research focuses on the history, rise, and proliferation of the shared universe from 19th century literature to the current day. His investigation looks into the strategies in which shared universes have been developed throughout modern history and texts, as well as building a framework to classify the shared universe and its many different permutations.
Instructions for Presenters and Chairs

Presenters

All delegates have a maximum of 20 minutes to deliver their paper. Questions and discussion will take place after all delegates in a session have presented, and there will be between 15–30 minutes for questions.

Presenters are advised to bring their slides on a USB so that they can be loaded on to the desktop computers (iMacs compatible with Microsoft Office) in the room. It is important that presenters load the slides on to the computers and check they are functioning properly prior to the start of each session. Along with session chairs, members of the organising committee Andy Lynch and Tara Lomax can provide support with this.

Chairs

Chairs are responsible for introducing the presenters, keeping presentations to time, and fielding questions at the end of each session. It is very important that presentations do not go longer than 20 minutes to ensure there is plenty of time for questions and discussion. Chairs will be provided with 5 Minute Warning, 1 Minute Warning, and Please Finish signs to aid timekeeping. In addition, chairs should assist the presenters with loading their presentation slides on to the desktop computers prior to the start of each session.

Food, Drinks and Coffee around Campus

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<tr>
<th>Fonda</th>
<th>Vaporetto</th>
<th>Zen Japanese</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>651 Glenferrie Rd</td>
<td>Shop 7 / 681 Glenferrie Rd</td>
<td>388 Burwood Rd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuisine: Mexican</td>
<td>Cuisine: Italian</td>
<td>Cuisine: Japanese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours: 12:00-late (lunch and dinner)</td>
<td>Hours: 5pm-10pm</td>
<td>Hours: 11:30am-2:30pm, 6pm-10pm</td>
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<tr>
<th>Continental Deli</th>
<th>Spud Bar</th>
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<tr>
<td>676-680 Glenferrie Rd, Cuisine: Lunch rolls</td>
<td>717 Glenferrie Rd Cuisine: Loaded Potatoes</td>
<td>669 Glenferrie Rd Cuisine: Fish and Chips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours: 8am-7pm, but if you’re after lunch get there before 1pm to be sure</td>
<td>Hours: 11am-9:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Price: $5-$9</td>
<td>Price: $12</td>
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<tr>
<th>Oscar Mike</th>
<th>Axil</th>
<th>Methodist Coffee</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shop 9/672 Glenferrie Rd, Cuisine: Café (great coffee)</td>
<td>322 Burwood Rd Cuisine: Café (great coffee)</td>
<td>408 Burwood Rd Cuisine: Café (great coffee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Price: $3.90+</td>
<td>Price: $4.00+</td>
<td>Price: $3.70+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours: 7am-5pm</td>
<td>Hours: 8am-4pm</td>
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