COMM 577 Special Topics: Fandom, Participatory Culture and Web 2.0
Spring 2017
3-5:50pm Wednesdays
ASC 231
Prof. Henry Jenkins

Sites like YouTube, Flickr, Second Life, and Wikipedia have made visible a set of cultural practices and logics that had been taking root within fandom over the past hundred-plus years, expanding their cultural influence by broadening and diversifying participation. In many ways, these practices have been encoded into the business models shaping so-called Web 2.0 companies, which have in turn made them far more mainstream, have increased their visibility, and have incorporated them into commercial production and marketing practices. The result has been a blurring between the grassroots practices I call participatory culture and the commercial practices being called Web 2.0.

Fans have become some of the sharpest critics of Web 2.0, asking a series of important questions about how these companies operate, how they generate value for their participants, and what expectations participants should have around the content they provide and the social networks they entrust to these companies. Given this trajectory, a familiarity with fandom may provide an important key for understanding many new forms of cultural production and participation and, more generally, the logic through which social networks operate.

So, to define our three terms (at least provisionally): fandom refers to the social structures and cultural practices created by the most passionately engaged consumers of mass media properties; participatory culture refers more broadly to any kind of cultural production which starts at the grassroots level and which is open to broad participation; and Web 2.0 is a business model that sustains many web-based projects that rely on principles such as user creation and moderation, social networking, and "crowdsourcing."

That said, the debates about Web 2.0 are only the most recent set of issues in cultural and media studies which have been shaped by the emergence of a field of research focused on fans and fandom. Fan studies:

- emerged from the Birmingham School's investigations of subcultures and resistance
- became quickly entwined with debates in Third Wave Feminism and queer studies
- has been a key space for understanding how taste and cultural discrimination operate
- has increasingly been a site of investigation for researchers trying to understand informal learning or emergent conceptions of the citizen/consumer
- has shaped legal discussions around appropriation, transformative work, and remix culture
- has become increasingly central to discussions of racial representation, diversity, and inclusion within the entertainment industry.

- has become a useful window for understanding how globalization is reshaping our everyday lives.

This course will be structured around an investigation of the contribution of fan studies to cultural theory, framing each class session around a key debate and mixing writing explicitly about fans with other work asking questions about cultural change and the politics of everyday life.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- trace the history of fandom from the amateur press associations of the 19th Century to its modern manifestations
- describe the evolution of fan studies from the Birmingham School work on subcultures and media audiences to contemporary work on digital media
- discuss a range of theoretical framings and methodologies which have been used to explain the cultural, social, political, legal, and economic impact of fandom
- arbitrate the most common critiques surrounding the Web 2.0 business model
- situate fan practices in relation to broader trends toward social networks, online communities, and remix culture
- develop their own distinctive contribution to the field of fan studies, one which reflects their own theoretical and methodological commitments

Assignments:

- Students will be expected to post regular weekly comments reacting to the readings on the Blackboard site for the class. (20 percent)

- Students will write a short five-page auto-ethnography describing their own history as a fan of popular entertainment. They will explore whether or not they think of themselves as a fan, what kinds of fan practices they engage with, how they define themselves a fan, how they became invested in the media franchises that have been part of their life, and how their feelings about being a fan might have adjusted over time. (15 percent) **(Due Jan. 25th)**

- Students will develop an annotated bibliography exploring one of the theoretical debates that have been central to the field of fan studies. These might include those which we've identified for the class, or they might include other topics more relevant to the student's own research. What are the key contributions of fan studies literature to this larger field of inquiry? What models from these theoretical traditions have informed work in fan studies? (20 Percent) **(Due Feb. 22)**

- Students will read Tim O'Reilly, "What is Web 2.0"
  [http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html]
  and Tim O'Reilly and John Battelle, "Web Squared: Web 2.0 Five Years On"
  [http://assets.en.oreilly.com/1/event/28/web2009_websquared-whitepaper.pdf]

and write a five-page response which discusses what you see as the most significant similarities and differences between fan practice (as we've read about it in the class) and the business models associated with Web 2.0. (15 percent) **(Due April 1st)**

- Students will write a 15-20 page essay on a topic of their own choosing (in consultation with the instructor) which they feel grows out of the subjects and issues we've been exploring throughout the class. The paper will ideally build on the annotated bibliography created for the earlier assignment. Students will do a a short 10 minute presentation of their findings during the final week of class. (30 percent) **(Due May 7)**

Books:
Mark Duffet, *Understanding Fandom: An Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Cultures* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green, *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus,* the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

DAY 1: Wednesday, January 11th
Defining Terms

Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington, "Why Study Fans?" in
　　　Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington, *Fandom:*
　　　Identities and Communities in a Mediated World (New York: New York
　　　UP, 2007)
Aaron Delwiche and Jennifer Henderson, "What is Participatory Culture?,"
　　　Routledge Handbook of Participatory Culture (New York: Routledge,
　　　2012)
danah boyd, Henry Jenkins, and Mimi Ito, "Defining Participatory Culture," and "Gaps
　　　and Genres in Participation," *Participatory Culture in a Networked Era* (London:
　　　Polity, 2014)
Mark Duffet, "Fan Stereotypes and Representations"
　　　Understanding Fandom: An Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Cultures
　　　(London: Bloomsbury, 2013)
(Rec.) Angela McRobbie, "Settling Accounts with Subcultures: A Feminist Account"
　　　http://www.hu.mtu.edu/~jdslack/readings/CSReadings/McRobbie_Settling_Acco
　　　unts_with_Subcultures.pdf

DAY 2: Wednesday, January 18th
Fan Studies and Cultural Resistance
Henry Jenkins, "Why John Fiske (Still) Matters," in John Fiske, *Understanding*
　　　Popular Culture Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 2011)
John Fiske, "The Cultural Economy of Fandom," in Lisa A. Lewis (ed.) *The*
　　　Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media (New York: Routledge,
　　　1992)
Camille Bacon-Smith, "Identity and Risk," *Enterprising Women: Television*
　　　Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth (Philadelphia: University of
　　　Pennsylvania Press, 1992)
Constance Penley, "Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Study of Popular
　　　Culture" in Lawrence Grosberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler
　　　(eds.), *Cultural Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991)
Henry Jenkins, "*Star Trek* Rerun, Reread, Rewritten," *Fans, Bloggers and*
　　　Gamers (New York: New York University Press, 2006)

DAY 3: Wednesday, January 25th
From Engagement to Participation (Guest talks: Erin Reilly, Annenberg
Innovation Lab; Meredith Levine, Troika; Eric Von Hippel, MIT Sloan)
Mark Duffet, "How Do People Become Fans?" *Understanding Fandom: An*
　　　Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Cultures (London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green, "The Value of Media Engagement,"
 Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture (New
 York: New York University Press, 2013).
Eric von Hippel, "Overview of Free Innovation" *Free Innovation* (Cambridge: MIT
 Press, 2017).
Ioana Literat, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mediated Participation:
 Crowdsourced Art and Collective Creativity," *International Journal of
 Communication*, 6, 2012.
Henry Jenkins and Nico Carpentier, "Theorizing Participatory Intensities: A
 Conversation about Participation and Politics," *Convergence*, 2013
Auto-Ethnography Assignment Due

DAY 4: Wednesday, February 1ˢᵗ
Tracing the History of Participatory Culture
Robert Darnton, "Readers Respond to Rousseau: The Fabrication of Romantic
 Sensibility," *The Great Cat Massacre And Other Episodes in French
 Cultural History* (New York: Basic, 2009)
Michael Saler, "Living in the Imagination" and "Delight Without Delusion," *As If:
 Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality* (Oxford:
 Oxford University Press, 2012)
Paula Petrik. "The Youngest Fourth Estate: The Novelty Toy Printing Press and
 Adolescence, 1870-1886," in Elliot West and Paula Petrik (eds.) *Small
 Worlds: Children and Adolescents in America, 1850-1950* (Kansas City:
 University of Kansas Press, 1992)
Andrew Ross, "Getting Out of the Gernsback Continuum," *Strange Weather:
 Culture, Science and Technology in the Age of Limits* (New York: Verso,
 1991)
Aaron Delwiche, "The New Left and the Computer Underground: Recovering
 Political Antecedents of Participatory Culture," *The Routledge Handbook of
 Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2012)

DAY 5: Wednesday, February 8ᵗʰ
Logics of Fan Production
Abigail Derecho, "Archontic Literature: A Definition, a History and Several
 Theories of Fan Fiction," in Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse (eds.),
 Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet (Jefferson,
 NC: McFarland, 2006)
Francesca Coppa, "Writing Bodies in Space: Media Fan Fiction as Theatrical
 Performance" in Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse (eds.), *Fan Fiction
 and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* (Jefferson, NC:
 McFarland, 2006)
Kristina Busse, "Fandom's Ephemeral Traces: Intertextuality, Performativity and
 Intimacy in Fan Fiction Communities," *Framing Fan Fiction: Literary and Social
 Practices in Fan Communities* (Forthcoming).
Turk, Tisha and Joshua Johnson. 2012. "Toward an Ecology of Vidding." In "Fan/Remix
 Video," edited by Francesca Coppa and Julie Levin Russo, special

issue, *Transformative Works and Cultures,* no.
9. http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/326

Bob Rehak, "Materializing Monsters: Aurora Models, Garage Kits, and the Object
Practices of Horror Fandom," *Journal of Fandom Studies* 1(1), November 2012

DAY 6: Wednesday February 15th
Fan Identities (Gender and Sexuality)

Janice Radway, "The Readers and Their Romances," *Reading the Romance:*
Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature (Durham, NC: Duke University Press,
1984)

Laurie Oullette and Jennifer Wilson "Women's Work," *Cultural Studies*
25(4-5), 2011, 548-565

Richard Dyer, "Judy Garland and Gay Men," *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and*
Society (London: McMillian, 1986

Samantha Close**, "**Fannish masculinities in transition in anime music video fandom,"
Transformative Works and Cultures, 2016
http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/713

Henry Jenkins, "Out of the Closet and Into the Universe: Queers and Star Trek,"
Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers (New York: New York University Press, 2006)

DAY 7: Wednesday, February 22nd
Fandom and Race

Rebecca Wanzo, "African American acafandom and other strangers: New genealogies of
fan studies," *Transformative Works and Culture*, 2015,
http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/699

Elizabeth Gilliland, "Racebending fandoms and digital futurism," *Transformative*
Works and Cultures, 2016,
http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/702/651

Lopez, Lori Kido. 2012. "Fan Activists and the Politics of Race in *The Last*
Airbender."*International Journal of Cultural Studies* 15 (5): 431–
45.http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1367877911422862.

Abigail De Kosnik, "Repetoi**re Fills the Archive: Race, Sexuality and Social Justice**
in Fandom," *Rogue Archives: Digital Cultural Memory and Media Fandom*
(Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016).

Henry Jenkins, "Negotiating Fandom" (Forthcoming).

Benjamin Woo, "The Invisible Bag of Holding: Whiteness and Media Fandom"
(Forthcoming)

Annotated Bibliography Assignment Due

DAY 8: Wednesday, March 1st
Fandom and Authorship

Alan Wexelblat, "An Auteur in the Age of the Internet: JMS, *Babylon 5,* and the Net," in Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson and Jane Shattuc (eds.), *Hop on Pop: The Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002)

Will Brooker, "A Sort of Homecoming: Fan Viewing and Symbolic Pilgrimage," in Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington (eds.), *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World* (New York: New York University Press, 2007)

Suzanne Scott, "Who's Steering the Mothership?: The Role of the Fanboy Auteur in Transmedia Storytelling," and Henry Jenkins, "The Guiding Spirit and the Powers That Be: A Response to Suzanne Scott," in Aaron Delwiche and Jennifer Jacobs Henderson (eds.) *The Participatory Cultures Handbook* (New York: Routledge, 2012)

Derek Johnson, "Participation is Magic: Collaboration, Authorial Legitimacy, and the Audience Function," in Derek Johnson and Jonathan Gray (eds.), *A Companion to Media Authorship*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell Press, 2013

DAY 9: Wednesday, March 8th
Collectors, Archives, and Popular Memory (Guest Speaker: Mark Williams)
John Bloom, "Cardboard Patriarchy: Adult Baseball Card Collecting and the Nostalgia for a Presexual Past," in Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson and Jane Shattuc (eds.) *Hop on Pop: The Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002)

Jason Sperb, "Reassuring Convergence: Online Fandom, Race, and Disney's Notorious *Song of the South*." *Cinema Journal* 49(4), 2010

Benjamin Woo, **"**A pragmatics of things: Materiality and constraint in fan practices," *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 2014, http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/495/437

Matt Hills, **"**From Dalek half balls to Daft Punk helmets: Mimetic fandom and the crafting of replicas," *Transformative Works and Culture*, 2014, http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/531

Henry Jenkins, Excerpts from *Comics and Stuff* (Work in Progress).

Abigail De Kosnik, "Queer and Feminist Archival Cultures: The Politics of Preserving Fan Works," *Rogue Archives: Digital Cultural Memory and Media Fandom* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016).

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS MARCH 15TH.

DAY 10: Wednesday, March 22nd
Produsers and Lead Users
John Banks and Mark Deuze, "Co-Creative Labor," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12(5), 2009

Darren Brabham, "Crowdsourcing: A Model for Leveraging Online Communities," *Routledge Handbook of Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2012)

Axel Bruns, "The Key Characteristics of Produsage," *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond: From Production to Produsage* (London: Peter Lang, 2008)

Ana Domb, "Tecnobrega's Productive Audiences," Spreadable Media website, http://spreadablemedia.org/essays/domb/

Kevin Driscoll, "Soulja Boy and Dance Crazes," Spreadable Media website, http://spreadablemedia.org/essays/driscoll/

John Banks, "Co-Creative Expertise in Gaming Cultures," Spreadable Media website, http://spreadablemedia.org/essays/banks/

Nancy K. Baym, "The Swedish Model", Spreadable Media website, http://spreadablemedia.org/essays/baym/

DAY 11: Wednesday, March 29th –
NO CLASS

DAY 12: Tuesday, April 1st
Fan Labor, Moral Economy, and the Gift Economy
Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green, "What Went Wrong with Web 2.0," *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2013)

Tiziana Terranova, "Free Labor," *Producing Culture for the Digital Economy* (London: Pluto Press, 2004)

Mark Andrejevic, "Exploiting YouTube: Contradictions of User-Generated Labor," in Pelle Snickars and Patrick Vonderau (eds.), *The YouTube Reader* (Stockholm: National Library of Sweden, 2009)

Abigail De Kosnik, "Interrogating 'Free' Fan Labor," Spreadable Media Website, http://spreadablemedia.org/essays/kosnik/

Tisha Turk, "Fan Work: Labor, Worth, and Participation in Fandom's Gift Economy," *Transformative Works and Cultures*, no. 15. http://dx.doi.org/10.3983/twc.2014.0518.

John Campbell, "Whistle While You Work: Alienation, Exploitation, and the Immaterial Labor of Disney Fans," (Work in Progress)
Web 2.0 Assignment Due

DAY 13: Wednesday, April 5th
Fan Expertise, Taste and Mastery
Jonathan Gray, "Anti-Fandom and the Moral Text: Television Without Pity and Textual Dislike," *American Behavioral Scientist* 48(7), 2005

Alan McKee, "Which is the Best *Doctor Who* Story? A Case Study in Value Judgment Outside the Academies," *Intensities* 1, 2001

Henry Jenkins, "Spoiling *Survivor*," *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006)

Pierre Levy, "The Creative Conversation of Collective Intelligence," *Routledge Handbook of Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2012)

Jason Mittell, "Forensic Fandom and the Drillable Text," Spreadable Media website, http://spreadablemedia.org/essays/mittell/

Lynn Zubernis and Katherine Larsen, " Only Love Can Break Your Heart: Fandom Wank and Policing the Safe Space," *Fandom at the Crossroads: Celebration, Shame and the Fan/Producer Relationship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

DAY 14: Wednesday, April 12th
Fan Activism
Henry Jenkins, "'From Culture Jamming to Cultural Acupuncture," forthcoming

Elizabeth Kramer, "Batmobama *and* ObaMarx: The Meanings of the Material and Visual Culture of Obama Mania," *Journal of Digital History*, https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/1574eeee4ef426fb?projector=1

Neta Kligler Vilenchik, "'Decreasing World Suck': Harnessing Popular Culture for Fan Activism," in Henry Jenkins et al., *By Any Media Necessary: The New Youth Activism* (New York: New York University Press, 2016).

Henry Jenkins, Sangita Shresthova, Liana Gamber-Thompson and Neta Kligler Vilenchik, "Superpowers to the People: How Young Activists are Tapping the Civic Imagination," in Eric Gordon and Paul Mihailidis (eds.) *Civic Media: Technology, Design, Practice* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016).

Suzanne Scott, "The Hawkeye Initiative: Pinning Down Transformative Feminisms in Comic-Book Culture through Superhero Crossplay Fandom," *Cinema Journal*, Fall 2015.

DAY 15: Wednesday, April 19th
Fandoms in National and Transnational Contexts
Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green, "Thinking Transnationally," *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2013)

Aswin Punathambekar, "On the Ordinariness of Participatory Culture," *Transformative Works and Culture* 10, 2012, http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/378/267

Bertha Chin and Lori Hitchcock Morimoto, "Towards a Theory of Transcultural Fandom," *Participations*, May 2013, http://www.participations.org/Volume%2010/Issue%201/7%20Chin%20&%20M orimoto%2010.1.pdf

Mizuko Ito, "Contributors Versus Leechers: Fansubbing Ethics and a Hybrid Public Space," in Mizuko Ito, Daisuke Okabe and Izumi Tsuji (eds.) *Fandom Unbound: Otaku Culture in a Connected World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012)

DAY 16: Wednesday, April 26th

Student Presentations

Final Essay Due on May 7