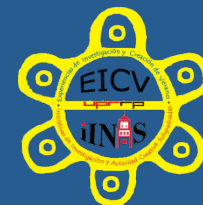


Narratives of Participatory Culture

Reading: fan written fiction as literature

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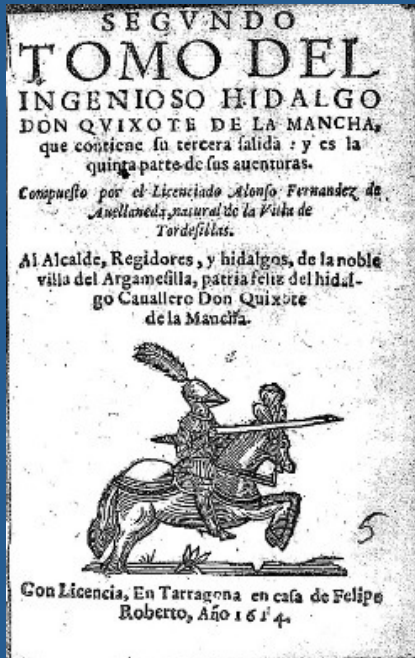


Objectives

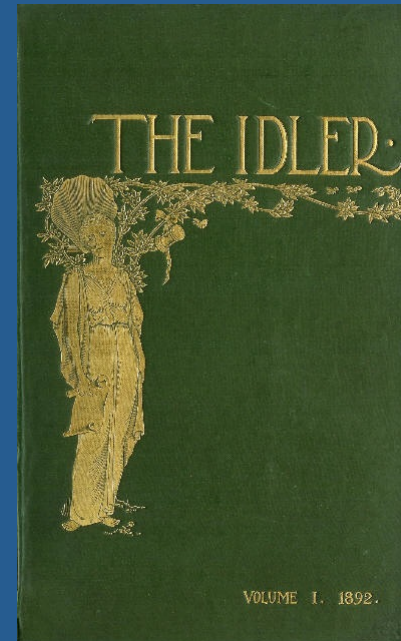
- To give an understanding of fan writing history.
- To tell the story of our exploration of fanfiction through a literary lens

What is fanfiction (fic)?

- Works of fictitious prose written by fans that transform pre-existing stories and their characters to create new narratives.



Don Quijote
sequel
written by
Alfonso
Fernández
de
Avellaneda

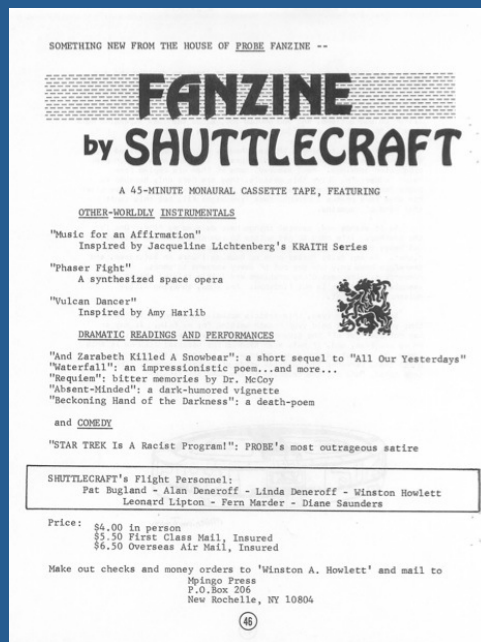


The Idler
magazine,
which featured
works by JM
Barrie and
Arthur Conan
Doyle

Historical Background

The tradition of borrowing and playing with pre-existing stories goes far back. However, fanfiction as we know it only came to be known as fanfiction as recently as 1970.

Printed
Star Trek
fanzine



Historical Background

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Archive of Our Own (AO3) website. The browser address bar displays 'archiveofourown.org'. The site's logo, a stylized red 'A' with a pair of scissors, is in the top left, followed by the text 'Archive of Our Own' and a 'beta' badge. A navigation bar contains links for 'Fandoms', 'Browse', 'Search', and 'About', along with a search input field and a 'Log In' button. The main content area features a large grey box with a welcome message and two buttons: 'Log in' and 'Get an Invite'. To the right, there are sections for 'News' and 'Tweets'. The 'News' section lists articles such as 'Troubleshooting: Common Problems When Logging In' and 'Release 0.9.20: Improvements to our search index code!'. The 'Tweets' section shows a tweet from @OTW_News about fan diversity.

Home | Archive of Our Own

archiveofourown.org

Archive of Our Own ^{beta} Log In

Fandoms Browse Search About

Search

Welcome to the Archive of Our Own!

We're a fan-created, fan-run, non-profit, non-commercial archive for transformative fanworks, like fanfiction, fanart, fan videos, and podfic. We currently have **16121** fandoms, **398688** registered users, and **1286836** works.

While the site is in beta, you can get an invitation from another user or from our automated invite queue. All fans and fanworks are welcome!

The Archive of Our Own is a project of the [Organization for Transformative Works](#).

[Log in](#) or [Get an Invite](#)

News


[Troubleshooting: Common Problems When Logging In](#)

[Release 0.9.20: Improvements to our search index code!](#)

[OTW Supports Net Neutrality](#)

[More news...](#)

Tweets

OTW Tweets 

Tweets from a list by otw_status

The latest tweets from the Archive, Tag Wranglers, Fanlore, Fanhackers, and the OTW.

 **OTW_News** @OTW_News 5h

#Fans come in every #race & #gender and go by many names & labels: bit.ly/1s3BAq6

#OTWFannews #hockey

Expand

 **OTW_News** 14 Sep

archiveofourown.net

Participatory Culture

- The negotiation that occurs over the meaning of the *text*, and the terms of the relationship between *producers and consumers*. This involves a reciprocal *relationship* between spectator and source material (Henry Jenkins – 2012- “sociological view of participatory culture”).

Original research question

Can fanfiction be studied as literature and if so, how?

Methodology

- Literary theory
- Mixed methods survey on fanfiction practices

22 questions

Distributed through Tumblr.com

During 1 month

Received 2,246 responses

Methodology (cont.)

The image shows a screenshot of a Tumblr blog post. The browser address bar shows the URL: nopc-upr.tumblr.com/post/89781009617/dalekanim-hi-there-do-you-love-fanfiction. The page title is "Narratives of Participatory Culture".

The main content of the post is a survey announcement titled "SURVEY ON FANFICTION PRACTICES" in large, pink, stylized letters. Below the title, the author "dalekanim:" writes: "Hi there! Do you love fanfiction? Yes? Good!. We're passionate about it too. We want to understand it better, in a literary sort of way. If you have about 10-15 minutes to spare, speak English, are at least 13 years old, and want to help us do just that, go ahead and click [here](#) to answer a survey about reading and/or writing fanfiction. We'd be super duper grateful (but are legally required to say you won't get paid)."

Below the text, there are instructions: "Make picking a gender optional and I'll do it." and "The question is about sex and, as per our Informed Consent Form and our FAQ, it is optional and always has been." The source is cited as "(Source: [nopc-upr](#))".

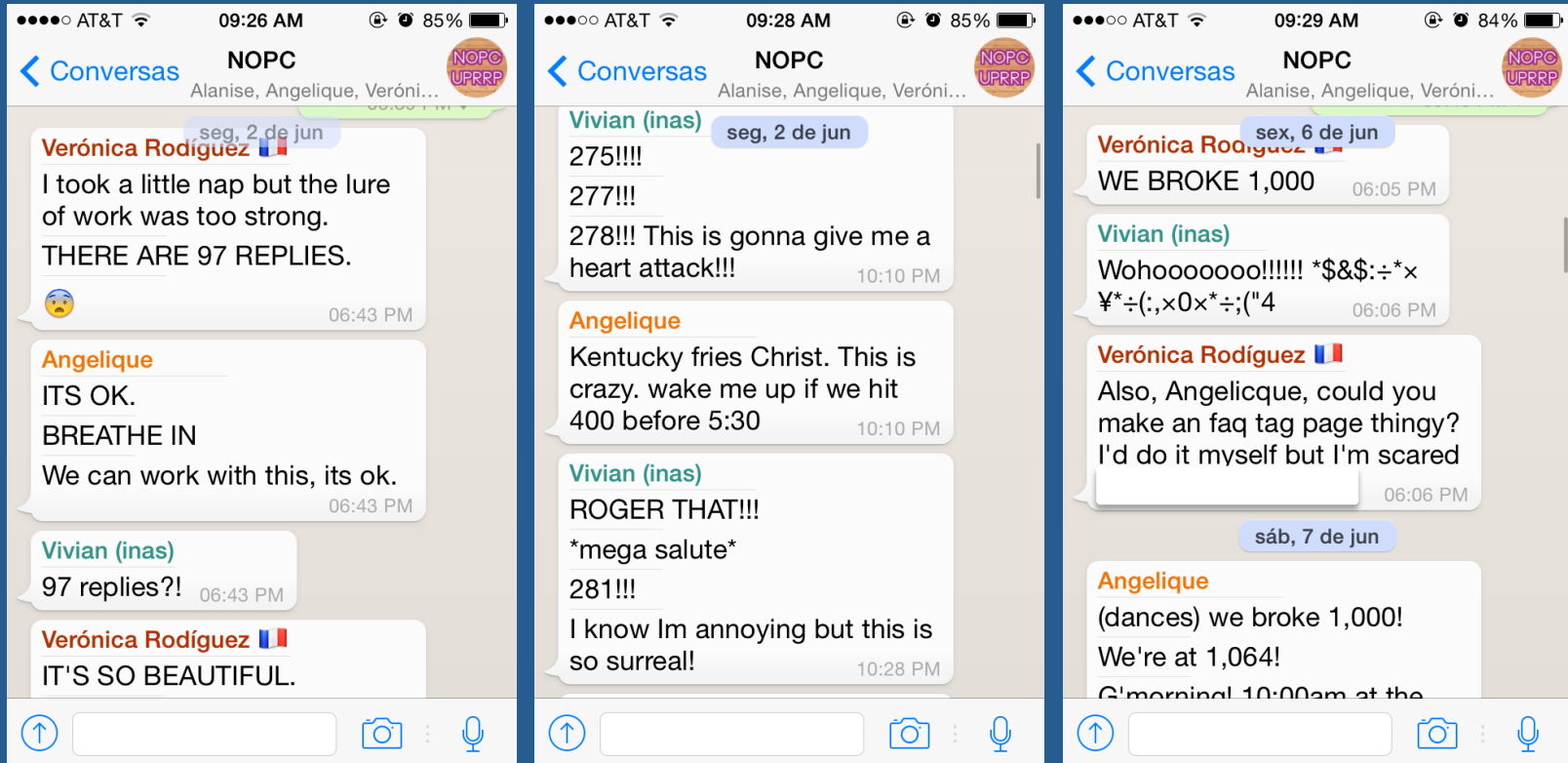
At the bottom of the post, it says "2 months ago 351 notes reblog" and "TAGGED: #NOPC-UPR".

On the left side of the page, there is a sidebar with a navigation menu: "ABOUT THE SURVEY", "QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?", "THE SURVEY", and "F.A.Q.". Below this is a section titled "NARRATIVES OF PARTICIPATORY CULTURE" with a sub-heading "Reading fan written fiction as literature." and a paragraph: "Hover over the square at the left to learn more about this survey, the investigators and the study." Below that is a paragraph: "Should you have any comments or queries please feel free to contact us via email at: ffuprrp@gmail.com. We thank you for your participation in this study." and a link "[1 fan reading] [391 fans]". At the bottom of the sidebar are links for "home", "ask", "archive", and "credit".

At the bottom right of the page, there is a red circular logo with the letters "im".

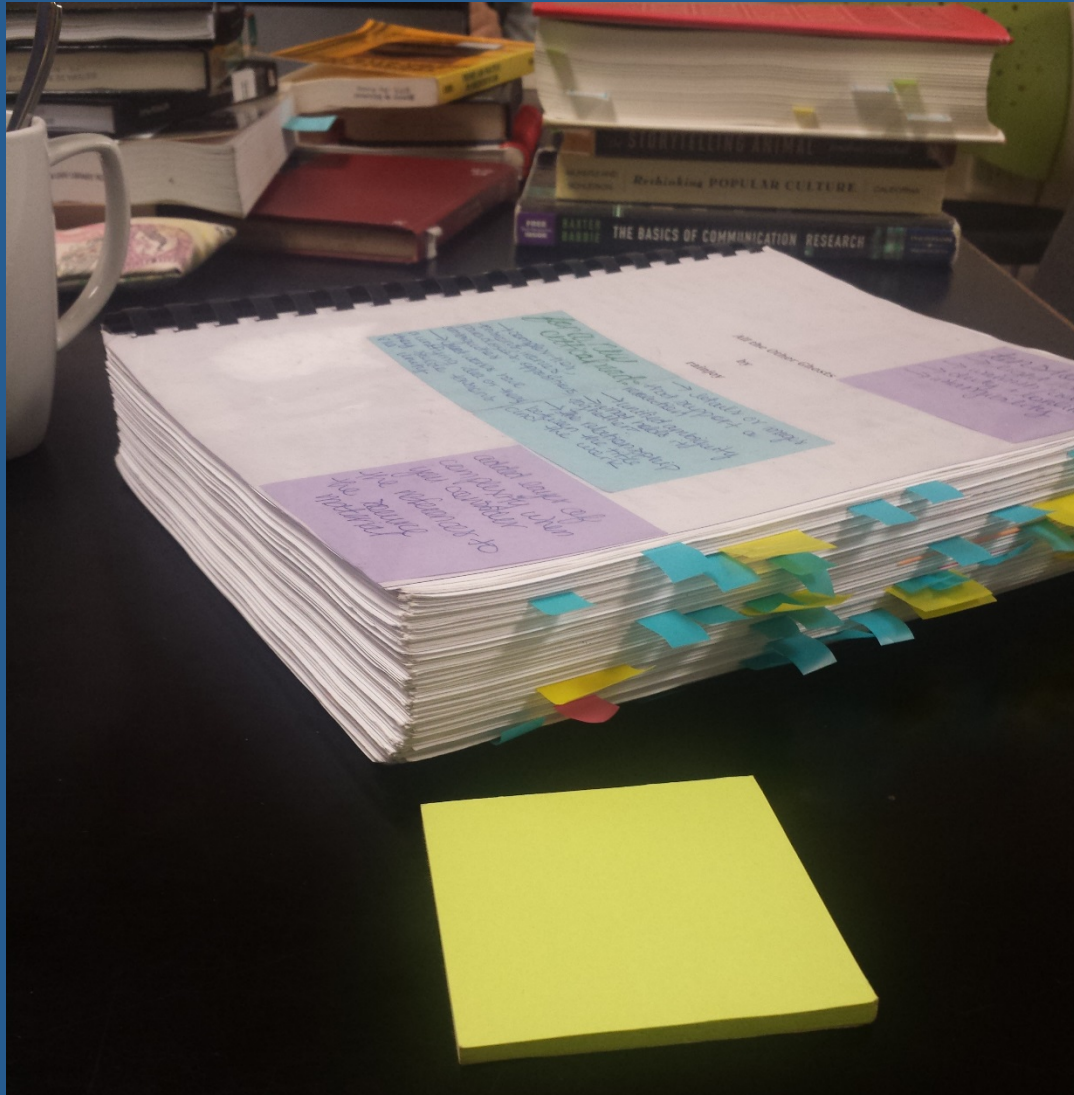
Survey announcement on our tumblr.com blog.

Methodology (cont.)



Text message reactions to the number of survey responses.

Methodology (cont.)



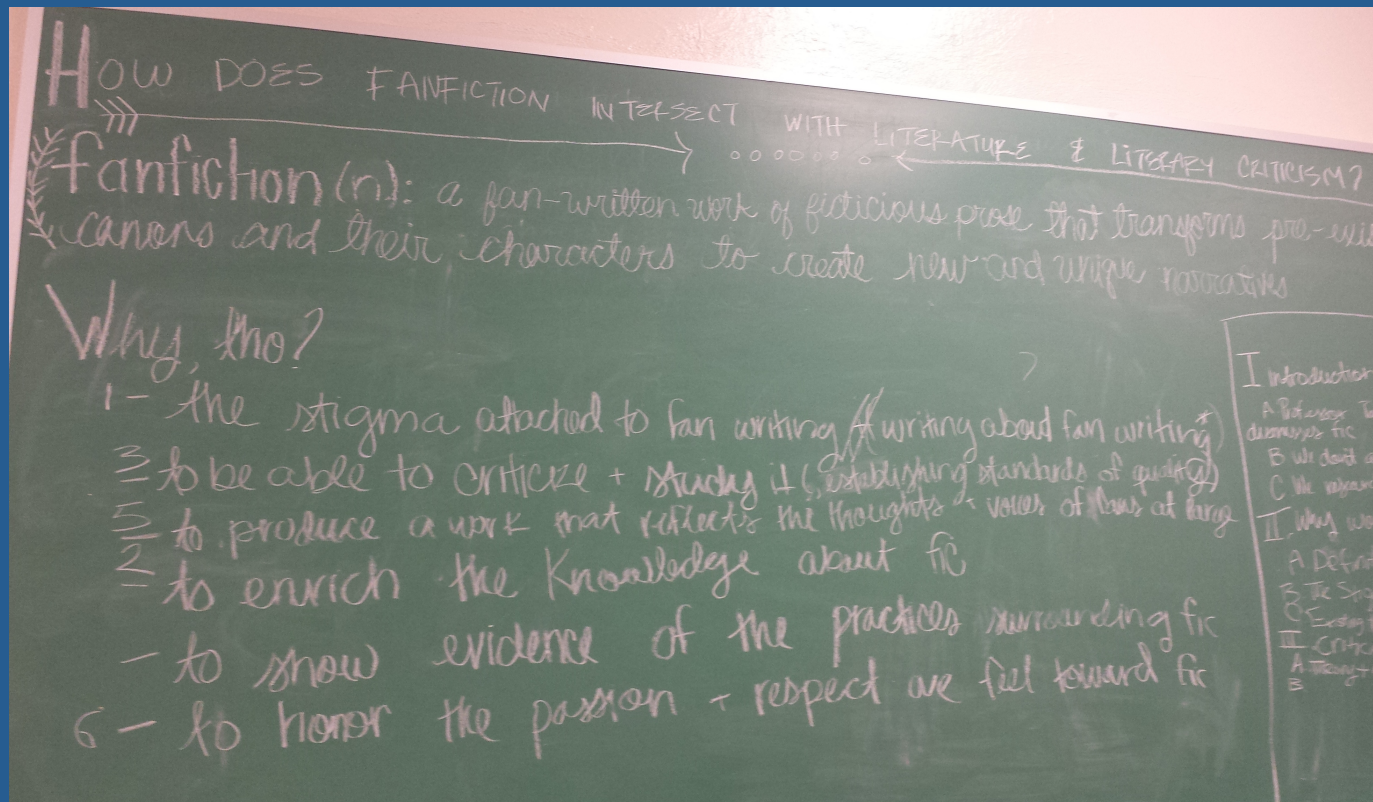
Printed and annotated pdf of *All the Other Ghosts*

Methodology (cont.)

- Selection of most work with best qualities of fanfiction – All the Other Ghosts (AtOG)
- Analysis of AtOG following theories and approaches
 - New Criticism (Eliot)
 - Reader Response (Rosenblatt)
 - New Historicism (Greenblatt)
 - Psychoanalysis (Jung)
 - Feminist Theory (Beauvoir)

Revised research question

- How do fanfiction and literature intersect?



Results

- The theories used were limited in their scope and depth of AtOG. The participatory nature of fanfiction was lost to the limited focus demanded by these theories and approaches.

Conclusions

Need to create a theory for analyzing fanfiction in a way that encompasses all of its participatory complexities.

Future inquiries

- Analysis and presentation of the survey results
- Application of Fanfiction Theory to other fanwritten works

Acknowledgments

- Dr. Janet MacLennan
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- iINAS
- Our families