

Title: Fanfiction in Shaping Writer and Reader: Inside a Community

Presenter: Gabriella Martinez, Los Angeles Harbor College

The realm of fanfiction is a niche in the literary world, at times widely recognized and at others unacknowledged. At its core, fanfiction revolves around the idea of taking the characters, world, and story another author has built and reimagining them. The act has drawn its fair share of contention from readers and authors of popular series alike, who accuse it of being a blatant act of plagiarism and question its legitimacy in being of use on a larger scale. This work explores the notion of interdependence between writer and reader in fanfiction and how these developments foster community, encourage self-expression, and eventually aid in constructing one's self-concept. In reading texts discussing the effect of fanfiction on participating individuals and conducting interviews with members of the community, I've found that fanfiction has a positive effect overall. Fanfiction has persisted as a transformative art form that embraces creativity and community and serves interpersonal purpose beyond sharing stories: providing "informal mentoring processes" (Evans et al. 12) and improving communication competence through media relations. Similarly, it facilitates self-acceptance, allowing minorities the ability to "[write] their mirrors into popular cultural narratives" (Duggan 1) where they are otherwise sidelined or white-washed. Fanfiction is an influential and relevant medium that has the power to create life wherever its community decides to take it. Not only does it improve interpersonal communication, it also has prevalence in larger social circles and, in time, may be integrated into classrooms to improve proficiency and encourage enthusiasm to learn (Schattenherz 57).

Works Cited

- Black, Rebecca W., Language, Culture, and Identity in Online Fanfiction. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2006, pp. 170-184,
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2304/elea.2006.3.2.170>. Accessed 14 Dec. 2019.
- Campbell, Julie et al. Thousands of Positive Reviews: Distributed Mentoring in Online Fan Communities. *Proceedings of the 19th ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing*, 2016, pp. 691-704.
<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1510/1510.01425.pdf>. Accessed 15 Dec. 2019.
- Duggan, Jennifer. Fanfiction: Remixing race, sexuality and gender. *Making culture: Children's and young people's leisure cultures*, pp. 47-50, https://kulturanalysnorden.se/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/antologi_making_culture.pdf. Accessed 17 Dec. 2019.
- Evans, Sarah et al. More than Peer Production: Fanfiction Communities as Sites of Distributed Mentoring. *CSCW '17 Proceedings of the 2017 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing*, 2017, pp. 259-272.
<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1611/1611.01549.pdf>. Accessed 11 Dec. 2019.
- Schattenherz, Lena. Can fanfiction be used in the norwegian ESL-classroom to promote creative writing?. 2016. Østfold University, Masters dissertation. SemanticScholar,
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3c2e/fb6ee7f6a185eaa360a9da6ccce831f4590c.pdf?_ga=2.98550105.736447180.1576735184-1468465362.1575218608.