Changing Relations Between Fan Cultures and Industry: The Legitimation Paradox

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The ways that fans engage with media are changing via digital culture and accessible communities

- Fanfiction
- Fan art
- Cosplay and roleplaying games
- Talk forums
- Parody
- Memes
- Musicmaking
• Contemporary fan culture dates to the 1960s (Jenkins, Bacon Smith 1991)

• Contemporary visibility attracts academic attention and study

• Attention of media owners, authors corporations
• Fanfiction and the Author: How Fanfic Changes Popular Cultural Texts (AUP 2017)

• First large scale discourse analysis to address fanfic

• Original qualitative/quantitative methodology

• Concerned with processes of change: how discourse/social ideology is changed and/or solidified

• Focused on concept of authorship
Discourse Analysis

- A way of analysing text (usually language)

- More concerned with what text *does* than what it *means*

- Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language (Hall 1992, 291)

- CDA regards `language as a form of social practice' (Fairclough 1989, 20)

- Particular interest in the relation between *language* and *power*

- Considers institutional, political, gender and media discourses (in the broadest sense) which testify to more or less overt relations of struggle and conflict.
Methodology as flowchart

1. ***START: Is this site exhausted?***
   - Yes: Go to next site in websphere.
   - No: Find fic pertaining to discursive formation: filter, search or tag.

2. List results. Discard irrelevancies.

3. Code fic for governing, peripheral and transformative statements. Note number and content of reviews. Close literary/linguistic analysis if warranted. Are there links to other relevant fic?
   - No: Is the list of results exhausted?
   - Yes: Search Google, Yahoo and Bing for title and author in quotation marks. Is the fic recommended, criticised, or posted and reviewed elsewhere? Note results.
   - No: Code linked fic, N.B. context/place.
Legitimation paradox.

- the legitimation and revaluation of the Other, be it racial; sexual; or gendered, is enabled and enacted through the cultural capital of the White male.
- The formations selected for analysis build upon each other to demonstrate this construction: first, (White) masculinity in *Sherlock*; second, authority in *Game of Thrones*; and finally authorship in *Supernatural*.
- In this clearest example, the fan’s writing is legitimated by the TV-auteur, simultaneously empowered and contained as showrunners grant metatextual acknowledgment of and paratextual permission for fanfic. Derivative writing which changes popular culture is legitimated and empowered - *because and so far as the author says so*. By the final chapter, however, we will begin to see the deconstruction of the legitimation paradox at work, as the legitimacy of *authorship itself* begins to be questioned.
Beyond Fanfic: Multimedia Discourse Analysis (Fathallah 2018)

- Tumblr as key site of fan engagement
- Site structure and programming as framing and forming discourse
- Polyvocality
- ‘pastiches as critique without authority—as a polyphonic surface that undermines both claims to discursive dominance and the dominance of mass media cultural icons’. 
Brand responses: considerations

- Schaefer’s 3 tactics: confrontation, implementation, integration (2011)

- Impact on profits

- Brand image

- Communal goodwill

- Labour, exploitation and employability