



Call for Papers

Transformative Works and Cultures

<http://journal.transformativeworks.org/>
editor@transformativeworks.org

Special Issue Editors

Nancy Reagin, Pace
University

Anne Rubenstein, York
University

Materials

Please send an abstract of no more than 500 words, along with a 1-page CV and contact information.

Due Dates

Abstracts should arrive via e-mail no later than **May 15, 2009**. Notifications of accepted proposals will go out by **June 15, 2009**. Final submissions will due **May 15, 2010**, and will undergo peer review before publication.

Contact Information

Nancy Reagin

Professor, Department of
History, Pace University, New
York, NY 10038, USA; (212)
346-1676; nreagin@pace.edu

Anne Rubenstein

Associate Professor, History
Department, York University,
4700 Keele Street, Toronto,
ON M3J 1P3, Canada; (416)
736-5123;
Arubenst@yorku.ca

Fan Works and Fan Communities in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

Transformative Works and Cultures, an online-only, peer-reviewed journal focusing on media and fan studies, broadly conceived, invites contributions for a special historical issue to be published in spring 2011.

Scholars of literature and popular culture, along with ethnographers and sociologists, have produced a rich and sophisticated body of literature about fan communities and creativity over the last twenty years, but most of this work has focused on groups of fans who have been active since the 1960s, and very little of it has been produced by historians. This special issue will focus on the rich history of fans and their engagement with a variety of objects of fandom. We seek to expand the range of topics and methodologies available to studies of fans and their communities, and we hope to understand fans better by studying them in their historical contexts.

We invite contributions that focus on fan works and/or fan communities from any place and time since the late eighteenth century. This periodization is informed by Walter Benjamin's idea that—thanks to the invention of lithography—the original artwork, with its unique aura, came into being at that point precisely because of the availability of cheap copies. He argued that the distinctions between original and mass-produced commercial art and media created the boundary between high and popular art, and between mass and bourgeois tastes. We wonder whether the historical study of fans and fan works might modify Benjamin's formulation of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. Does the long-standing existence of fan fiction, fan art, and other forms of community-generated fan works clarify or muddy his argument?

The special issue will be divided between scholarly contributions of 4,000 to 7,000 words, and oral histories of older fans. We will seek to include scholarly articles and oral histories that can be read against or with each other. For example, an interview of a present-day cosplayer might be juxtaposed with an article on nineteenth-century amateur drama.

We especially encourage historians and those in cognate fields whose usual research would not include anything relevant to this topic to consider contributing an oral history.
