

Contact:
Kristina Busse
Karen Hellekson
editor@transformativeworks.org

For Release: February 1, 2008

NEW ONLINE JOURNAL COVERING FAN CULTURE DEBUTS

Transformative Works and Culture (TWC; <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/>) a new Gold Open Access international peer-reviewed online journal, debuts today when its Web site goes live, ready to accept interdisciplinary articles on popular media and the fan communities and fan practices that surround them. In addition to articles, the journal will also invite concise, thematic essays for its symposium section and reviews of items of interest in the fields of fan and media studies, including books, new journals, and Web sites.

TWC's Web site can be found at <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/>. The journal's inaugural issue is slated for September 2008.

Transformative Works and Culture is being sponsored by the Organization for Transformative Works (OTW), a nonprofit organization established by fans to serve the interests of the fan community by providing access to, and preserving the history of, fan works and fan culture in its many forms. OTW defines "transformative works" as creative works about characters or settings created by fans of the original work, rather than by the original creators. Such works include, but are not limited to, fan fiction, fan vids, mashups, and machinima.

Heading the journal's editorial team are Kristina Busse and Karen Hellekson, who collaborated previously as coeditors of *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet*, published in 2006 by McFarland. Joining them are symposium editors Cole J. Banning, Alexis Lothian, and Julie Levin Russo, and review editors Deborah Kaplan, Mafalda Stasi, and Cynthia W. Walker.

According to Hellekson, TWC is being established to provide a publishing outlet that welcomes fan-related topics, and to promote dialogue between the academic community and the fan community. "The journal," she notes, "fits into OTW's broader plan to create fan-run forums. TWC is the academic space of that project."

Hellekson also points out that one important aspect of the journal is its approach to copyright. "The articles will be copyrighted under Creative Commons, which will permit the authors much more flexibility in reuse. In addition, we are interested in close readings of fan texts, including fan fiction, vids, and avatars and icons, and so we'll permit quotation of primary media sources as well as reproduction of transformed source material, such as altered screen caps." TWC is publishing under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License.

-more-

TWC's editorial advisory board includes 32 international scholars well known in the fields of media studies and cultural studies. Among them are Henry Jenkins, director of the Comparative Media Studies Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and author of *Convergence Culture*; Nancy Baym, associate professor of communication studies at the University of Kansas and author of *Tune In, Log On: Soaps, Fandom, and Online Community*; Matt Hills, senior lecturer at Cardiff University and author of *Fan Cultures*; Judith Halberstam, professor of English and gender studies at the University of Southern California (USC) and author of *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*; and Farah Mendelsohn, features editor for the British academic science fiction journal *Foundation* and coauthor (with Edward James) of *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction*.

"One big part of creating a successful new journal in an underserved field is getting a stellar advisory board," says Hellekson. "We had an extraordinarily high rate of acceptances, which confirmed our belief that there's a demand for a journal in the field of fan studies, as opposed to media studies or audience studies in general."

As an online academic journal, observes Hellekson, TWC can provide immediate open access to its content, thus making research freely available to the public and contributing to a greater global exchange of knowledge. "Since our target authorship and readership are online, we want to ensure the broadest possible dissemination of work in this field. Immediate online publication best fits our ethos and our audience."

Kristina Busse, Hellekson's coeditor, has great hopes for the project. "TWC is an exciting step in fan studies," she says. "The journal will be directed toward fan studies specifically, which will create a hub for theoretical and critical work that's previously been dispersed. It's also affiliated with a fan organization even as it's committed to solid scholarship, thus bridging some of the fan/academic boundaries. And, finally, it's committed to fair use all the way, taking a proactive stance on academic media scholarship and its ability to cite the works we're studying."

Other scholars in the field are similarly enthusiastic. "TWC promises to be an amazing resource for professional academics, amateur scholars and interested parties, journalists, students, fans, industry folk, and any-and-all hybrids of the above," says Matt Hills of Cardiff University, while Henry Jenkins of MIT enthuses, "It's a dream come true: an exciting chance to consolidate this field and, at the same time, bridge the gap between fans and fan scholars."

#