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(course administered on Blackboard; contact me for more information, including readings, videos, assignments, and discussion prompts)

Course description:

ENGL 329 Topics in Forms and Genres: Fanfiction. Instr. Conrad. Online. In *Fanfiction Reader* (2017), Francesca Coppa writes that “fanfiction is made for free, but not ‘for nothing.’” If fanfiction is not “for nothing,” what is it for? What does it do? And why is it, as critic Anne Jamison puts it in the subtitle of her book *Fic* (2013), “taking over the world”? We will examine some of the definitions and characteristics of the genre, the history and controversies that have surrounded it, and the critical work that it does and that it has in turn inspired, particularly (but by no means exclusively) around gender, sexuality, and storytelling. Students will be encouraged to think and write critically about fanfic in general and about published fanfic in the fandoms in which they are most interested, although there will be a few selected examples of fanfiction provided. Students will participate regularly in a course discussion blog as well as produce some written responses to readings, craft two critical essays, and write a (short) piece of fanfiction based on a selection of prompts.

ENGL 329: Fanfiction Fall 2020 Schedule

- **Lesson One: Introduction to the course 24-28 August**

In our first week, we'll be getting acquainted with the scope of and resources for the course, reviewing the syllabus and expectations for the course, and introducing ourselves and our interests in fandom.

For future reference, the **ground rules blog** lives here.

- **Lesson Two: What is fanfiction? 31 August-4 Sept**

What *is* fanfiction? We'll begin exploring--and possibly contesting--definitions and terms this week.

- **Lesson Three: Early Fanfic history & criticism 7 Sept-11 Sept**

This week, we'll be engaging with the work of early fanfic critic Henry Jenkins, and applying some of his formulations to fic of your choosing.

- **Lesson Four: Fanfic history & crit cont: slash fiction 14 Sept-18 Sept**

This week, we'll continue to explore some more of the foundational texts of fanfic criticism, with a focus on a popular genre: slash. Note: this week will involve some heavier reading. **Ten Ways response essay due this week.**

- **Lesson Five: More fanfic genres & tropes 21 Sept-25 Sept**

Last week, we looked at one very popular genre and some of its attendant tropes (e.g., hurt/comfort). This week, we'll explore some more popular tropes in fanfic, and think about genre in fanfic more generally and how it may differ from genre in mainstream published literature.

- **Lesson Six: Genres and tropes, cont: the Mary Sue 28 Sept-2 Oct**

This week, we'll read and talk more about the controversial and oft-derided figure, the "Mary Sue."

- **Lesson Seven: Fanfic, affect, and "legitimacy" 5 Oct-9 Oct**

Continuing some of our conversation about affect, this week we'll discuss the "legitimacy" of fanfic, the reasons it is often scorned, and the shame that does (and doesn't) emerge from writing and circulating fanfic. Note: readings are heavier this week and next.

- **Lesson Eight: Fanfic and identity 12 Oct-16 Oct**

This week, we straddle the line between thinking about fanfic as (cultural) critique and thinking about critiques of and challenges to fanfic as we think about the relationship between fanfic and identity.

Note: Fanfic + Notes due this week.

- **Lesson Nine: Fanfic and legal battles 19 Oct-23 Oct**

This week, we'll look at some of the legal conflicts that emerged in the early years of fanfic publication, including cease and desist orders, and one contemporary and slightly unusual legal battle that has emerged out of the fanfic "omegaverse."

- **Lesson Ten: Fanfic, labor, infrastructure, & exploitation 26 Oct-30 Oct**

If fanfic isn't part of the usual publishing economy, does it fit into any economy? Does the infrastructure that houses fanfic really matter? Are fanfic writers exploitative--or are they exploited? We'll explore these questions this week.

- **Lesson Eleven: Fanfic and ethics: RPFs 2 Nov-6 Nov**

We'll dig into some of the ethical controversies that have emerged out of fandom with an exploration of the ethics of RPF, or Real Person Fiction.

- **Lesson Twelve: Fanfic and ethics pt. 2: content & trigger warnings, censorship 9 Nov-13 Nov**

This week, we'll read and discuss the ethics of about warnings, tagging, and censorship in and of fanfic.

Note: Meta due this week.

- **Lesson Thirteen: Fanfic & fandom trends 16 Nov-20 Nov**

This week, we'll probe some of the changes and trends within fanfic as well as how fanfic fits into fandom culture more broadly.

- **Lesson Fourteen: Fanfiction as/in pedagogy & the academy 23 Nov-25 Nov**

This week, we'll be doing a different kind of "meta": we'll be exploring the ways that fanfic might be used in classes *other* than in a class on fanfic.

- **Week Fifteen: Study Week & Course Evaluation 30 Nov-4 Dec**

I would be happy to meet with folks this week to discuss final revisions. As per University policy, there are no new assignments or course material this week. Use this week to work on any revisions you'd like to make to your assignments. If you have missed any short assignments, you can get partial credit as per the rubrics if you submit by the end of this week.

- **Week Sixteen (Finals Week): Revision 6 Dec-11 Dec**

This week, you'll submit any paper revisions you have (due by Friday, December 11 at 11:59 pm).