

PRODUCING LOCALITY:  
PRACTICES IN A SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSNATIONAL  
PARTICIPATORY FANDOM

CATHERINE DUNCAN

9505643F



A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University  
of the Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisor: Dr. Mehita Iqani

August 2018

## DECLARATION

---

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work, except where otherwise acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

*Johannesburg, August 2018*

---

Catherine Duncan



## ABSTRACT

---

Media fandom in South Africa is an under-researched area. This thesis is one of the first South African contributions to the study of media fans and their fan cultures. It uses a creative and participatory research design and, in collaboration with a small group of self-identifying South African fans, tests the relationships between media products and their contexts of consumption – particularly where those contexts are culturally or geographically distinct from the point of production. By means of interviews and researcher-absent data collection methods I have asked: What are the everyday media practices of South African fans of global popular culture? How do these fan practices make visible the material complexities and tensions of access, participation, belonging and place central to local fandom? How is South African participatory fandom curtailed and enabled by the global cultural industries in which they are embedded? How do South African fans imagine themselves in relation to their counterparts elsewhere in the world?

Three key themes emerged from the data as findings. The first is that the domestic space of home and the intimate familial relationships with children, parents and partners constitute a major site for fandom. In turn, being a fan has a significant impact on home and family life. The second theme is the diversity of labour that is undertaken as part of fan practices. From free and voluntary labour in the service of the local community to paid commissions and work as cultural intermediaries, South African fans are labouring to produce local fandom. Thirdly, South African fans see themselves as peripheral in relation to a non-local other – an imagined “centre” that lies elsewhere. If the previous two aspects of the “produced locality” are largely produced in space and through labour, then

the relationship between this imagined centre and the periphery is a question of access: not only to commodities and texts but to proximity and authenticity.

Positioned within a theoretical framework of transnational, transcultural or globalised media flows and relationships, this thesis claims that South African fans of global popular culture can be actors in the production of locality. This “produced locality” is neither neutral nor universal, but is inflected in particular ways given the South African context for this research. In so doing, this thesis argues that it is necessary to revisit the concept of locality in a time of mediation in order to understand locality as an accomplishment – something that is made and re-made constantly.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

This research has been completed thanks to the financial support of a Doctoral Completion Grant from the National Research Foundation and a Research Promotion Grant from the University of the Witwatersrand.

While they cannot be named here, the most important acknowledgment goes to the eleven participants who volunteered their time, stories, humour, experiences and creativity. Without them this thesis would not exist.

Thank you to my supervisor, Mehita Iqani for her direction, insight and generous support over the last five years.

Thank you to my colleagues in the Wits School of Arts for their encouragement, especially Haseenah Ebrahim, Benita de Robillard and Kate Bernberg who have made space and time for me to write in the last few months of this PhD process. Thanks also to Nicola Cloete and Donato Somma for being my cheerleading section, to Victoria Hume who did such an excellent job proofreading the manuscript and to Feeya Asmal for her help as a research assistant.

Thank you to my family for their patience and understanding. Beryllyn and John Duncan, June and Vincent Coetzee, Rhyan, Emma and Alice Matthews – you kept up my enthusiasm when it was waning. To my sister Caroline Matthews, thank you for all this as well as the sanity (and spelling) checks.

Finally, to Anton Coetzee. Thank you doesn't even begin to cover it – I am so grateful for your help, guidance and fortitude.

## CONTENTS

---

|       |                                                                                          |    |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1     | INTRODUCTION                                                                             | 1  |
| 1.1   | South African Fandom: Global Popular Culture and Local Practices . . . . .               | 3  |
| 1.2   | Defining Locality . . . . .                                                              | 7  |
| 1.3   | Overview of the Chapter Structure . . . . .                                              | 13 |
| 2     | LOCATING SOUTH AFRICAN FANS WITHIN A GLOBAL THEORY OF MEDIA FANDOM                       | 15 |
| 2.1   | The Problem of the “Global” in Global Fandom . . . . .                                   | 17 |
| 2.2   | Popular Culture, Race and Entertainment in South Africa                                  | 25 |
| 2.3   | Making the Case for a Theory of Practice . . . . .                                       | 31 |
| 2.4   | Operationalising Locality through Practice . . . . .                                     | 38 |
| 2.4.1 | Locality as Concrete, Immediate and Intimate . . .                                       | 43 |
| 2.4.2 | Locality as the Product of Labour . . . . .                                              | 47 |
| 2.4.3 | Locality as Imagined and Imaginary . . . . .                                             | 51 |
| 2.5   | Summary of the Chapter . . . . .                                                         | 55 |
| 3     | METHOD AND PARTICIPANTS                                                                  | 57 |
| 3.1   | Researching Fans in Everyday Life . . . . .                                              | 58 |
| 3.2   | Participant Recruitment and Selection . . . . .                                          | 60 |
| 3.3   | The Elusive Black Fan and the White Centre of South African fandom . . . . .             | 62 |
| 3.3.1 | First findings: The Impact of Race on Fandom, Access and Audience Segmentation . . . . . | 66 |
| 3.4   | Ethical Considerations . . . . .                                                         | 71 |
| 3.5   | Research Design and Data Collection . . . . .                                            | 74 |
| 3.6   | Summary of Collected Data . . . . .                                                      | 81 |
| 3.6.1 | Analytic Strategies . . . . .                                                            | 82 |
| 3.7   | Profiles of the Participants . . . . .                                                   | 83 |
| 3.7.1 | Captain Unobservant . . . . .                                                            | 84 |

|        |                                                                             |     |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 3.7.2  | Norvie . . . . .                                                            | 85  |
| 3.7.3  | TheFabricWhisperer . . . . .                                                | 86  |
| 3.7.4  | EssieJayne . . . . .                                                        | 87  |
| 3.7.5  | Kelga . . . . .                                                             | 88  |
| 3.7.6  | CityBug . . . . .                                                           | 89  |
| 3.7.7  | Idril . . . . .                                                             | 90  |
| 3.7.8  | KimberlyHart . . . . .                                                      | 91  |
| 3.7.9  | Commissioner Smirnov . . . . .                                              | 92  |
| 3.7.10 | Chronos . . . . .                                                           | 93  |
| 3.7.11 | Gumi . . . . .                                                              | 94  |
| 3.8    | Participatory and Creative Research Methods . . . . .                       | 95  |
| 3.9    | Summary of the Chapter . . . . .                                            | 99  |
| 4      | LOCALITY AND THE INTIMACY OF HOME . . . . .                                 | 100 |
| 4.1    | Shared and Domestic Spaces . . . . .                                        | 103 |
| 4.2    | Liking things together: Intimacy and Fandom . . . . .                       | 110 |
| 4.3    | The Work of Reproduction in the Age of Mechanical Art . . . . .             | 114 |
| 4.4    | Feeling at Home: Practices and Community . . . . .                          | 123 |
| 4.5    | Home is a Place in a Narrative World . . . . .                              | 126 |
| 4.6    | Summary of the Chapter . . . . .                                            | 132 |
| 5      | FAN LABOUR AND FANS AT WORK . . . . .                                       | 135 |
| 5.1    | Fan Labour Makes the Community . . . . .                                    | 137 |
| 5.2    | Fan Work: Apprenticing and Prospecting in Cultural Industries. . . . .      | 145 |
| 5.3    | Labouring at Leisure: Workplaces as Sites of Fan Practices . . . . .        | 152 |
| 5.4    | Policing the Borders of Labour and Leisure . . . . .                        | 160 |
| 5.5    | Summary of the Chapter . . . . .                                            | 170 |
| 6      | FANDOM AND THE PERIPHERY: BEING HERE AND IMAGIN-<br>ING ELSEWHERE . . . . . | 173 |
| 6.1    | Local Access and Degrees of Peripherality . . . . .                         | 175 |
| 6.2    | My Hair and Eyes are in the Post . . . . .                                  | 179 |
| 6.3    | Piracy and the Economy of Waiting . . . . .                                 | 183 |
| 6.4    | Imagining Fandom Here . . . . .                                             | 187 |

|     |                                                           |     |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 6.5 | Imagining Fandom Elsewhere . . . . .                      | 194 |
| 6.6 | Immediacy, Liveness and Proximity . . . . .               | 196 |
| 6.7 | Disembedded Heterotopias . . . . .                        | 201 |
| 6.8 | Summary of the Chapter . . . . .                          | 207 |
| 7   | CONCLUSION                                                | 209 |
| 7.1 | Summary of Key Findings . . . . .                         | 210 |
| 7.2 | Methodological Innovations . . . . .                      | 214 |
| 7.3 | Theoretical Contributions . . . . .                       | 215 |
| 7.4 | Limitations of the Study and Avenues for Future Research  | 217 |
|     | REFERENCES                                                | 220 |
|     | CREATIVE WORKS CITED                                      | 236 |
| A   | APPENDICES                                                | 242 |
| A.1 | Tabulated Activity Diary entries . . . . .                | 242 |
| A.2 | Tabulated Prompt Card responses . . . . .                 | 278 |
| A.3 | Selected participants' photographs . . . . .              | 283 |
| A.4 | Ethical Clearance and Consent forms . . . . .             | 295 |
| A.5 | Schedule of semi-structured interview questions . . . . . | 302 |

## LIST OF FIGURES

---

|            |                                                                                                                          |     |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Figure 3.1 | Image by EssieJayne as part of her self-documented fan activities. . . . .                                               | 68  |
| Figure 3.2 | An example of a participants' instructions and permissions about how her images should and could be used. . . . .        | 73  |
| Figure 3.3 | The contents of the packs given to the participants                                                                      | 76  |
| Figure 3.4 | Detail of the maps in the packs given to the participants. . . . .                                                       | 80  |
| Figure 3.5 | Summary of input provided by participants . . . .                                                                        | 82  |
| Figure 3.6 | The design of the pack was intended to evoke the aesthetics of some popular fandoms . . . . .                            | 96  |
| Figure 3.7 | The data-collection method produced layers of reflexivity and levels of unanticipated complexity .                       | 98  |
| Figure 4.1 | EssieJayne's documentation of her family preparing costumes and make-up for their outing on Free Comic Book Day. . . . . | 104 |
| Figure 4.2 | Homes as workspaces: Cosplay construction documentation submitted by Norvie and Gumi . . . .                             | 106 |
| Figure 4.3 | EssieJayne's daughter watching <i>Adventure Time</i> .                                                                   | 114 |
| Figure 4.4 | Self-portrait: Excited to get her comic book . . . .                                                                     | 115 |
| Figure a.1 | Sample prompt responses from participant <i>Idril</i> .                                                                  | 284 |
| Figure a.2 | (cont.) Sample prompt responses from participant <i>Idril</i> . . . . .                                                  | 285 |
| Figure a.3 | Sample of photographs from participant <i>CityBug</i> .                                                                  | 286 |
| Figure a.4 | Sample of photographs from participant <i>Commissioner Smirnov</i> . . . . .                                             | 287 |
| Figure a.5 | Sample of photographs from participant <i>Commissioner Smirnov</i> . . . . .                                             | 288 |
| Figure a.6 | Sample of photographs from participant <i>EssieJane</i>                                                                  | 289 |

|             |                                                                         |     |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Figure a.7  | Sample of photographs from participant <i>FabricWhisperer</i> . . . . . | 290 |
| Figure a.8  | Sample of photographs from participant <i>FabricWhisperer</i> . . . . . | 291 |
| Figure a.9  | Sample of photographs from participant <i>FabricWhisperer</i> . . . . . | 292 |
| Figure a.10 | Sample of photographs from participant <i>Gumi</i> . . .                | 293 |
| Figure a.11 | Sample of photographs from participant <i>Idril</i> . . .               | 294 |



## INTRODUCTION

---

I remember the first episode of David Lynch's *Twin Peaks* broadcast on South Africa's national broadcaster, SABC. I sat on the couch mesmerised. Right from the start, the thought of waiting a whole week between episodes was excruciating. By the second week I had made a plan and was ready. We didn't have a VCR so I had the next best thing: my tape recorder set up by the TV so I could record the theme tune – Julee Cruise's haunting *Falling*. It was 1991 in an East Rand suburb near Johannesburg in the last days of Apartheid. *Twin Peaks* was like nothing I'd ever seen before, a revelation sandwiched between the tedious dross of Monday night television and the frightening, hopeful, paranoid news broadcasts. I was instantly enamoured. Later, once I had started university, I found that there were plenty of people like me, and they showed up at the late-night screenings of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* or at the film festivals showing *A Clockwork Orange*. Mostly white, mostly privileged and mostly revelling in the frisson of the illicit and recently unbanned films, books and music. For me, my obsessions with video nasties, trashy TV and lowbrow film were never in lieu of, or an escape from the reality of time and place. Far from it: part of what drove my fandom was experiencing these things in counterpoint with the world I was living in. I remain fascinated by the rhythm of *here and now* juxtaposed against *there and then*; text and context.

This research results from years of watching and teaching popular culture (horror film, soap opera, Japanese animation) and teaching students enthused by films, games, comic books and TV shows. Watching students' responses to new material, or new ways of seeing old material,

or new collectives of people just like them has kept the questions of affect and identity, community and creativity at the forefront of my mind. In so many ways the fan practices, discourses and objects are the same as those you might find anywhere in the world. I have wondered what might lie below the seemingly superficial reproduction of an imported media culture. I remember that my own fandoms and practices were complicated and entangled with the politics of place, time and belonging, and they were of great significance, comfort and meaning to me. Likewise, the students that I teach are, for the most part, thoughtful and politically astute. Before starting this thesis, I suspected that for South African fans their fandom was not escapist false consciousness, frivolous imported amusement or an exercise in superficial cultural homogeneity. So then, what *are* the textures of the phenomenon?

As Matt Hills writes, on a superficial level “everyone knows what ‘a fan’ is” (Hills 2002a) or, alternatively, “everybody has got to be a fan of something” (Hills 2005). Used in this sense fandom is simply an intense interest in some sport team, media product, celebrity, band or brand and is more often associated with popular culture than high culture<sup>1</sup> Certainly this is no different in South Africa. In particular there has been a South African tradition of sports and music fandom. Music fandoms have included jazz cultures and appreciation clubs (Mapaya and Mabaca Malinga and Thobejane 2014) and the hype that surrounded performances at *The Empire* and *The Colosseum* cinemas.<sup>2</sup> Also music-focused, there were local fanzines (amateur, low-cost and fan-made magazines) produced during the eighties and nineties – the most successful being the punk fanzine *The Palladium* (1980-1985) produced in Springs.<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Although this distinction is increasingly contested - see (Gray and Sandvoss and Harrington 2007a) for examples.

2. *The Colosseum* was the site of gatherings of besotted fans of Cliff Richard and the Shadows and where they recorded the 1961 album *Live at the Colosseum*

3. See also *Anarchy in the archive again: an account of a South African punk rock music collection* (Jongh 2013)

Practices and collectives based on popular culture had a slower start. Around the same time as local music fanzines were being produced, fanzines from the USA and UK arrived in South Africa. First amongst these were *K/S* collections of art and fanfiction centring on the relationship between Captain Kirk and Mr Spock of *Star Trek: The Original Series* – which can still be found in private collections. These fanzines, imported and circulated via private networks, were in direct contravention of Apartheid-era legislation under the rubric of Christian Nationalism and formalised in the Immorality Act (1957, with amendments including harsher punishments for sexual crimes in 1988). However, as white South African citizens who were otherwise not under the scrutiny of the state, this contraband was an acceptable risk. The Science Fiction Association of South Africa<sup>4</sup> was founded in 1969 and is still very active. Since then the mainstreaming of fandom and fan identities has (as in most other countries) seen a shift towards the normalisation of fannish consumption. The local fan communities and events have benefited from an injection of interest in the form of new members and commercialisation. This has been met with an ambivalent response since previously fan events were small non-commercial fan-organised meetings in school halls, university campuses and recreation centres. In the eyes of a number of fans, the trend towards commercially driven fandom may have professionalised fannish events and activities; however, the resources available to the corporate marketing teams working for sponsors and promoters has marginalised those community members who had previously invested time and affective labour.

### 1.1 SOUTH AFRICAN FANDOM: GLOBAL POPULAR CULTURE AND LOCAL PRACTICES

Mark Duffett (2013) offers a comprehensive discussion on the various points of fracture and lines of convergence in the definition of “the fan”

---

4. See <http://www.sfsa.org.za> for the Association’s website.

and his or her “fandom”. What differentiates the fan from the non-fan is not just degree of intensity but also the quality of interest. This can include: emotional conviction; expression through style or creativity; the drive to participate in practices; and the construction and performances of identity based on the pleasures of popular culture and, as he goes on to add, “[e]ach of these definitions of fandom has its own implied explanations, exclusions, consequences and counter-arguments” (Duffett 2013, p. 18). Lee Harrington and Denise Bielby recommend understanding fandom as a four-part operation: “a mode of reception, shared practice of interpretation, an ‘art world’ of cultural activities, and an ‘alternative social community’ ” (in Duffett 2013, p. 31). These definitions present fandom as more than a pastime or hobby. It is a way of performing a social identity on the basis of a “different sensibility” towards media texts and products (Duffett 2013, p. 31).

For Henry Jenkins, the social dimension of fandom is the distinguishing characteristic of the fan,

This ability to transform personal reaction into social interaction, spectatorial culture into participatory culture, is one of the central characteristics of fandom. One becomes a “fan” not by being a regular viewer of a particular program but by translating that viewing into some kind of cultural activity, by sharing feelings and thoughts about a program content with friends, by joining a “community” of other fans who share common interests. (Jenkins in Duffett 2013, p. 26)

Not all fan scholars support this claim and some argue that there are fans who are largely solitary and not motivated by the collective sharing of fan enthusiasms. However, most agree that it is unproductive to consider fans and fandoms as “a coherent object” and reject the utility of talking about a “typical fan” (Duffett 2013, p. 3). Rather, one should look to fandom as a “functional operation enacted by each individual” (Duffett 2013, p. 18). Or as Daniel Cavicchi writes, “It might be useful to think about the work rather than the worth of fandom, what it does, not

what it is, for various people in particular historical and social moments” (Cavicchi 1998, p. 9). Cavicchi’s observation has been an important starting point for this research.

However, taking Cavicchi’s advice gives rise to a problem. The fan, driven as she or he is by aesthetic and narrative preference, interpretive and creative practices and shared social interaction, seldom discriminates along neat taxonomic lines. Media fandom is held in orbit around a centre of gravity that is the media product: the film, the television show, the book or game and increasingly the franchise that houses all of these. While the media product and its modes of reception may vary, they remain the nexus for the activities and the collective in the first place. So what is this “global popular culture” that is the basis for fandom?

Seen from the fan’s point of view, Japanese animation sits alongside Bollywood<sup>5</sup> film. French graphic novels are as much a part of the fan’s repertoire as Hollywood blockbusters. A British television series like *Wallander*, for example, is made in English with English actors, based on Swedish novels, shot on location in Sweden and distributed simultaneously to fans worldwide. Fans are consuming media products not local to their context and originating from all across the globe – products generally termed “global media”. Furthermore, seen from the position of the South African fan, the term “popular culture” is compromised: a label rather than a critical concept. In this light, I use the term “global popular culture” here to signify media content, created primarily for entertainment purposes that is widely consumed both in the local context and around the world, and that originates from outside South Africa.

This thesis is exploratory research based in a grounded theory approach to the phenomenon of South African fans of global popular culture. The research was initiated by a series of questions: What are the everyday media practices of South African fans of global popular culture? How do these fan practices make visible the material complexities and tensions

---

5. Hindi Cinema, a portmanteau of Bombay and Hollywood.

of access, participation, belonging and place central to local fandom? How is South African participatory fandom curtailed and enabled by the global cultural industries in which they are embedded? How do South African fans imagine themselves in relation to their counterparts elsewhere in the world?

Media fandom in South Africa is an under-researched area. There has been some important work done in the related field of sports fandom, such as Marc Fletcher's work on discourses of race in soccer fandom (2012; 2010) and Sean Jacobs' autobiographical reflections on soccer fandom and the media history of Apartheid South Africa (2010).<sup>6</sup> Another, arguably more productive avenue of enquiry, is the seminal work done in South African audience studies on the reception of global popular culture by local audiences. Larry Strelitz's research on student audiences and their responses to American media has been formative (2001; 2002; 2003; 2004). He contests the reduction of this consumption to cultural imperialism and calls for "the need to consider the interplay of text and context when trying to understand what particular texts mean for particular audiences" (Strelitz 2001, p. 56). However, there is a growing awareness of local fandom. Recent publications explore the phenomenon in terms of radio fans (Bosch 2014), a tradition of watching martial arts films (van Staden 2017) and postgraduate research on South African fans of Japanese animation (Ramrathen 2015). This study will contribute to and extend this area of research.

Beyond the local context, in the broader field of fan studies the concept of "global fandom" (Harrington and Bielby 2005) has gained traction. What *global fandom* is and how it differs from other articulations of fandom tests the relationships between media products and their contexts of consumption, particularly where those contexts are culturally or geographically distinct from the point of production (Morimoto and Chin 2017; Chin and Morimoto 2013). Arguments can be made for and

---

6. Although as Schimmel *et al.* note, the relationship between sports and popular media fandoms has seldom been explored and the theoretical frameworks of these two fields remain largely unintegrated and the overlaps unconsidered (2007).

against the various theories that explain transnational, transcultural or globalised media flows and relationships. This thesis joins this conversation and finds that fandom can be considered a resource that is mobilised to produce locality.

## 1.2 DEFINING LOCALITY

What then constitutes the local, or more precisely, locality in this study? While the participants are “local” in the sense that they live and work in the Gauteng province in South Africa, this, at first glance, has very little impact on what they consume or how they participate in their fandoms. To speak of the “local fan” as distinctive because of their localness presumes a reductive relationship between place and practice – that somehow place confers an intrinsic or innate quality and acquires connotations of authenticity and difference. On the other hand, the concept of translocality with its implications and limitations proved to be productive for this thesis. One of the contributions that this research makes is to motivate for the turn to translocality (in its fullest sense) in discussions of fandom. Neither entirely global nor local, the practices of fans can be read via the sites, labours and imaginations that make possible and constantly re-make the tenuous and fragile conditions of locality. This locality is simultaneously shifting and grounded, embodied and disembedded, deterritorialised and located (Appadurai 1995).

The stable relationship between locality, belonging and a singular territorial reference point was surrendered some time ago; however, the link is a persistent one, even though we can no longer assume that identity, community or participation is attached to a particular, territorially bounded locality. While diaspora, transnational community and dispersed networks of people are neither new nor products of modernity (Parkin 2005, p. x), rapid transport systems, globe-spanning instantaneous electronic communication and common consumer goods, brands and styles have worked to sever the link between place and locality.

Rather, as David Parkin says, “What is really new is the awareness among many communities that there are innumerable other such populations”, as well as an understanding of “how groups... set up collective memories of themselves against a view of what is happening elsewhere in the world” (Parkin 2005, p. x).

Nadia Lovell (2005) outlines why location, locality and the local have become problematic terms for epistemological reasons. Firstly, labelling something “local” has the potential to mark discourses and practices as isolated or alienated from a broader context. Secondly, the “local” can be invoked as an “other” and thereby set up in opposition to the researcher, who retains the capacity to be deterritorialised and “sited in between cultures and locations” (Lovell 2005, p. 4), and fetishised – treated as though it has some essential quality or characteristic. Location can be too easily reduced to geographical area, as opposed to being thought of as a site within a network of power relations. Pertinent to this research, Lovell cautions against reading culture as tied to place since this obscures the fact that it is “created at the interstices between people in their interaction with one another in everyday discourses” (Lovell 2005, p. 5). The same can be said for identity and belonging.

One possible modification is to see locality in terms of Raymond Williams’s “structure of feeling” (Williams 1977), which emphasises the situated nature of routines and practices, connected to and part of an ensemble of social relations that affect the individual in the present, in the way they make sense of their past, and in their aspirations for the future. The concept embraces “meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations between these and formal or systematic beliefs” (Williams 1977, p. 132) – beliefs that are historically variable, span the public and the private and are responses of assent and dissent. However, under conditions of modern globalisation, how does this structure of feeling, grounded as it is in lived experience in social context, make sense of the interconnectivity of networks and flows of commodities, texts and people?



The premise of Joshua Meyrowitz's notion that electronic media would undermine and erase the relationship between physical and social space – i.e. of place as meaning-maker (Meyrowitz 1985) – has proven with time to have been somewhat overstated. Physical space does not do this work on its own and it only makes meaning as part of the semantic and symbolic web. Meyrowitz's premature declaration of the end of locality was based on the prediction that individuals would use the resources of global media as the primary source for their social selves while abandoning the practices and meanings of space-based locality.

Meyrowitz's predictions were among the first of a number of technologically deterministic views (both pessimistic and utopian) that subordinated the local to the global or the virtual and left it unconsidered for some time. However in anticipating the erasure of locality, theorists developed valuable nuances necessary for an adequately complex understanding of locality in a digitally convergent world. For instance, Manuel Castells' insights on narrowcasting and increasing segmentation and diversification ended the persistent fiction that audiences could be considered homogeneous or emplaced any longer. His assertion that "we are not living in a global village, but in customized cottages globally produced and locally distributed" (Castells 2010, p. 370) is an important precaution against returning to the naive sense of locality. In addition, Castells (2010) points to the implication for the stratification of, and access to, multimedia that results in exclusions and uneven distribution. Rather than virtual reality we should think of "real virtuality" as a re-configuration of place and time – not a rupture but a convergence of the virtual and the reality of lived experience (Castells 2010).

While the previous certainties of locality may be destabilised, a straightforward alternative has proved elusive. In its place there are a series of modifiers for locality: translocality, glocality, virtual locality, distributed locality and so on.

The glocal, glocality or glocalisation indicates a splicing of the global and local and a turn away from binary understandings of globalisation. Samu Kytölä argues,

[W]e can see “culture(s)” as partly territorial, tied to a (habitable or occupiable) space, and partly de-territorial, finding dimensions and meanings from spaces and locales beyond our daily habitats. This is at the heart of the idea of translocality. Cultures have an almost infinite capacity for hybridisation; considering the cultural transformations of the present day, this capacity is greatly enhanced by the exponential growth of digital communication. (Kytölä 2016, p. 372).

Kytölä takes the translocal to emphasise the potential for culture to be rooted in both habitable, physical space and de-territorial spaces simultaneously – where both are central to daily habits, meaning-making and community. The networks of media, trade, travel and transport are critical to the connections that link physical and “cultural” or “social” spaces.

The advantage of the term “translocality” is that it brings together the materiality of space and place as well the relational quality of social space that Couldry and Hepp (citing Lefebvre) call “‘not a thing among things’, but ‘a relation between things’, something that ‘encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity’ ” and that “is crucial to our possibility of social experience in and between particular places” (Lefebvre in Couldry and Hepp 2016, p. 85). The relational aspect of locality is particularly important for this research as it positions locality as an achievement by actors within that translocality. Locality is manifest by the action of their practices. Actors build the material, communicative, imaginative, affective connections between localities that embed them into their contexts.

Kytölä’s working definition of translocality (2016) is marked by a move away from understanding media cultures as “national-territorial”. Translo-

cal media cultures are produced outside of a fixed or contained national or cultural context. In addition, they are not necessarily intended to be consumed by an audience imagined as a national or local community, but rather via other configurations of identity and affiliation. He argues that translocality embraces the idea that all three factors – the local, the global *and* the connections between them – are socially and culturally meaningful. Translocality is effectively “outward-looking or exogenous, characterised by hybridity, translation, and identification” (Kytölä 2016, p. 371) and is bidirectional between consumer and producer. All three factors (global, local and connective) are mutually informing and co-constructive.

Translocality as the cumulative effect of a network of localities, their interplay, and the reference to other localities is the basis of this exploration of fandom and fan practice. In these terms, translocality is both an attribute and an achievement: a thread that runs through the activities, attitudes and values of South African fans.

Locality, arising as it does from everyday life, in the South African context (and no doubt in other contexts even if the nuances are somewhat different) is inflected by race. Localities can co-exist in the same place and time with minimal interpenetration of practices or exchange between participants even while they share material, geopolitical and infrastructural terrain. In much the same way as one would talk of multiple South African fandoms or communities of fans, these fandoms then constitute multiple localities, and these localities can operate as adjacent loops or neighbourhoods: open and porous in some ways, yet closed and bounded in other directions. This research suggests a departure from the tradition that sees fandom as a cohesive factor and looks to the particular dynamics of labour and intimacies that arise from differing terms of reference, positionalities and affinities. As a result, this thesis does not claim to represent all fandoms in South Africa, nor even all the communities of fans within the same fandom. As will become evident, the practices of fandom explored here are instrumental in producing a locality that is notable in both the racial whiteness of the participants as well

as the un-marked (and often un-remarked) hegemonic whiteness that is coded into language, text preferences, access and peer networks.

It is worth noting explicitly that there are many black South African fans and diverse fandoms. However, fandom is informed by - and in turn informs - identity through shared sensibility or shared cultural activity, context and history. This then drives the production of localities and their specific translocal appeals which cannot be read outside of time or place. As a consequence, even in their apparent similarity, fandoms as manufactured localities (in both their material and affective dimensions) can slide past each other because of the same factors that cause them to coagulate and cohere. There is no question that future research into South African fandom requires that one cut across these currents, but for this project at least, to a large extent my focus on locality and affinity tracks and traces precisely these currents.

This tracing arises from an epistemological underpinning that fans and fan communities are usefully understood by their practices and particularly these practices as they are anchored in everyday life (Bird 2003; Couldry 2010). The inquiry is inverted; rather than asking which texts fans engage with and how this is involved in performing identity or constructing community, the focus is on how the practices of fandom bridge the scales of local and global. How does being a fan of global popular culture make locality? In this sense locality is an achievement, not a *fait accompli* of place. Nevertheless, this achievement is constrained by context, always situated, conditional and emergent rather than stable or complete. Investigating fan practices in South Africa makes visible the threads that stitch together the local and global and contributes to understanding the complexities and entanglements of cultural and media globalisation.

### 1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER STRUCTURE

The chapters that follow respond to these conceptual and empirical questions by means of a thematic analysis of the multimodal material generated by a small group of self-identifying fans. A focus on media-practice was at the forefront of the research process and guided the methodological choices. This approach centred on the routine, repeated everyday practices of fans and looked to the sites, labour, relationships and imaginaries that fuelled the participants. By considering the “work rather than worth of fans” (Cavicchi 1998) the research decentred the media products or the specificities of a single fandom. This thesis understands fans and their fandoms as “a complex figuration of figurations that links up different local groups in a range of interdependent activities” (Couldry and Hepp 2016, p. 171).

**Chapter 2**, the literature review, has three priorities: to locate the study in the field of fan studies and the work that has been done on global fandom, including various arguments against the utility of the global as an analytical category; to motivate for the epistemological focus on practice as a productive lens to discover the intersections of fandom and locality; and to offer a nuanced definition of this locality and to argue for its relevance to fan studies more generally. The chapter also considers the implications for the emerging area of South African fan studies that comes with the recent turn towards a critical theory of race in fandom studies as a corrective to the assumed and invisible whiteness of fans.

**Chapter 3** describes and documents the research design in terms of the information collection and elicitation devices deployed, the participant recruitment strategies used, and the process of working with participants through the various stages of the fieldwork process. It details the sampling method and the observations and consequences that stemmed from these decisions, the ethical considerations in this process and the approaches to analysis used. The latter part of the chapter includes a profile for each of the participants’ whose lives are by no means limited

to being fans, but whose biographies as fans provide the background to the practices and insights that are so critical in shaping the claims, observations and discussions in the chapters to follow.

Next come three findings chapters. Each focuses on one of the three key themes that emerged from the thematic analysis. All three findings chapters orientate towards the thesis' central claim that fan practices can be read as a means of negotiating, engaging with, producing and even disavowing locality. Therefore, even though each thematic chapter stands alone, with its own priorities for discussion, all three offer insights into the faceted, sometimes contradictory phenomenon of locality. There are connections that recall previous points or anticipate more extensive arguments to come. **Chapter 4** deals with locality at the most concrete and intimate scale: the home and the family, including the affective experience of belonging or "feeling at home". **Chapter 5** expands to the social and collective aspects of fandom and the various kinds of labour, discourse and exchange that make this possible. In **Chapter 6**, the role of imagination in producing locality and the relationships of space, time, place and proximity are considered. This chapter explores the tension between the between the here-and-now and the imaginary or the *elsewheres* of fandom.

## LOCATING SOUTH AFRICAN FANS WITHIN A GLOBAL THEORY OF MEDIA FANDOM

---

One of the difficulties of talking about global fandom in South African is that, while not of “the west” South African fan practices and textual orientations certainly are. In the literature on global fandom the terms “the west” and the “global north” are both used more or less interchangeably. Neither are well-suited to the purposes of this discussion but the idea of “the west” is particularly unhelpful given South Africa’s history as a former settler colony and subsequent – and uneasy – language and cultural proximity to Europe. The “global north” – and South Africa’s position as “global south” – is less problematic but still not without its contradictions. For the purposes of this discussion, I will use the terms global north and global south with its overt economic division of rich and poor regions, power relations and historical experiences while acknowledging the persistence of the overly-simplistic connotations of southern peripherality and subordination to western dominance (Hollington et al. 2015).

It is necessary to confront the binaries intrinsic to this framing, as well as other dualisms that persist within the fan studies tradition. A more useful framework is provided by Marwan Kraidy’s concept of critical transculturalism (2005). Transcultural media fandom is a model gaining traction in fan studies and the literature review follows the arguments of Bertha Chin and Lori Morimoto (Chin and Morimoto 2013; Morimoto and Chin 2017), who have applied these principles to their studies of fans. The literature review then considers the contextual setting for the study and argues that the consumption of film and television in South

Africa and the segmentation of the audiences for these texts are underpinned by our particular history.

Next, the literature review presents the epistemological reasons for a focus on media practice as a way into understanding the phenomenon of popular culture. This starts from the idea that fandom is embedded in a complex life-world of nationhood, class, race, family, culture and professionalism. Rather than look to the fans of a given text, celebrity, genre or specific fan activity, media practice theory foregrounds situated and contextualised practices by reading media texts as one resource amongst many that informs and inflects, but does not exclusively shape, everyday life. Media practice is seminal to the claim that these mediated fan practices are a resource and means to achieving locality. Locality does not make the practice but rather the inverse is the case: practice produces locality. To elaborate on this claim, the literature review segues to a definition of locality and its particular contours. This is the critical theoretical framework for this thesis. The starting point for this definition and demarcation of locality stems from Arjun Appadurai's arguments that locality is relational and contextual rather than absolute or objective and is socially and structurally bounded as much as it is the work of the imagination (1995; 1996). It is multi-scalar and, most importantly for this research, it is operationalised at the level of everyday practice. These core ideas are developed by exploring three key ways in which locality is produced and reproduced in relation to fan practices.

For Appadurai (1995; 1996), locality is produced and reproduced through a process of enculturation or habitus that takes place in the home or family (among other sites). However, while locality may be realised through concrete and intimate practices, the literature on media fandom is rather thin on material that considers how fandom intersects with the intimacies of everyday life. This idea of the domestic and familial in media fandom is integrated with David Morley's argument that the home is a central (although porous) aggregation point for the experience of locality (Morley 2002). This allows for consideration of the ways in which locality is produced, starting from Appadurai's contention that locality



is fragile and difficult to achieve, but when it is achieved, it is through the labour of its participants. This discussion of labour connects with the work of fan scholars on media fandom and the larger political economy of the industry and interests of global entertainment cultures.

The third and final factor considered in the literature review is the role of the imagination. In this, the argument follows Appadurai's conceptualisation and in particular his use of Benedict Anderson's term "imagined community" (1991). Unlike the two previous sections of the literature review, imagined communities are a frequently explored concept in fan studies. The literature review revisits the work on media fandoms as imagined communities and proposes some additional ways of thinking about the relationship between imagination and community.

## 2.1 THE PROBLEM OF THE "GLOBAL" IN GLOBAL FANDOM

The literature on global fandom resists simple definitions or the explanatory power of a single theoretical framework. This is especially true for researchers working in the diverse contexts that make up the local circuit of fan cultures. The term "global fandom" is made to do double or even triple duty. Sometimes global fandom is used to indicate any practices and communities of fans who live somewhere other than the USA or the UK, irrespective of the text or media product at the centre of their fandom (such as *Harry Potter* fans in the Philippines). Sometimes it designates those who are invested participants in globe-spanning transcultural consumption (such as Russian fans of Bollywood star Shahrukh Khan (Rajagopalan 2011)). And sometimes it refers to fans of local texts imbued with their own logics, traditions and discourses (Dolby 2006). The term global fandom catches up all these ways of understanding the entanglement of the places of production and consumption. Once called imported media, they are now referred to as global media products. The question now is not so much what the local audience does with

the global text but rather how they facilitate “the construction of a new sense of the ‘global’” (Harrington and Bielby 2007, p. 181).

In the past, fan studies tended to work from the assumption that the fans and practices studied were based in the USA, even if the texts and their circulation trouble this parochialism. For Lee Harrington and Denise Bielby (2007), global fandom is fandom that takes place outside the English-speaking western world. Likewise, Liesbet Van Zoonen and Jeroen de Kloet (2007) note that fan scholarship shows an Anglophone bias suggesting a language dimension to fan studies rather than a geographic one. The consequence is studies of fan cultures “by and large fail to reflect upon the locality of fandom, running the danger of producing a homogenising discourse in which ‘fan’ is turned into a universal label” (Chow and Kloet 2008, p. 334). Kristina Busse and Jonathan Gray (2011) suggest re-framing fan studies with a more diverse perspective to destabilise the white, middle-class bias in the fan studies literature written in English. Anne Kustritz points out global fandom is an “ongoing discussion within the field of fan studies about how international audiences all co-construct global fandom” (Kustritz 2015, para. 3.2). However, no fandom, “global” or not, is separate from the fan and the practices that constitute it. These practices are indivisible from the specificities of their context. Any instance of a global fandom is being co-constructed by various factors including uneven media franchising, socio-political affiliations or boycotts of media products or particular titles, piracy, convergence or divergence of media platforms and access. For this reason, trying to establish a stable or singular definition is counterproductive.

The various attempts to define fans and their practices have not travelled well outside the English-speaking context of the USA and Britain. Xiaochang Li argues that a fixed definition of the fan risks reifying an “unspoken configuration of geographies” (Stein et al. 2014, para. 2.58). For Li, these definitions hold implicit assumptions about the opportunities, configurations and variety of fan activities and motivations and pleasures fans find in them. These assumptions do not necessarily hold when contexts change, especially in the case of border-crossing transna-

tional flows. As an illustration, Li points out that while piracy can be read as signalling a critical politics rooted in an anti-capitalist, anti-commercialist position, the same practices “take on a different tenor in places where ‘piracy’ necessarily constitutes a logic of everyday media engagement” (Stein et al. 2014, para. 2.58).

Despite Li’s valid point, there is value in the label “fan” from the participant’s perspective rather than the scholar’s need for a definition or classification. Kustritz observes that there are many languages and culture specific terms for (or adjacent to) the concept of the fan, and therefore, claiming the term is a deliberate act of self-identification: “[T]he word fan still connects to a participatory way of interacting with media and forming communities, made increasingly global by digital technologies. The term fan thus mediates between local and international media and audiences” (Kustritz 2015, para. 3.1). Aside from definitions, the concept of a global fan studies is not only pragmatically fraught, it is politically freighted with questions of power and privilege implicated in broader debates about cultural globalisation (Harrington and Bielby 2007). An emphasis on socio-political context, race and class means that fan practices must be read in dialogue with, reproducing or contesting theories of globalisation, cosmopolitanism, neoliberalism and network society. The phenomenon of worldwide consumption of mass culture originating from the USA has been understood as the product of not only cultural and media corporations and market factors but also the political, ideological and “cultural hegemony of the English language” (Lee 2014, p. 197).

Here lies the knotty tension at the intersection of fan studies and globalised culture. Investigations of cultural globalisation, and particularly media imperialism sometimes proceed from the assumption that globalisation inherently involves a cultural flow that moves from the west (and the USA especially) outward to the rest of the world, who are the recipients of the one-way flow of texts, images and other mediated commodities. An understanding of globalisation premised on the model of a stronger versus weaker culture problematically assumes a vast imbal-

ance in influence on the side of a “dominant globalizing culture [that] will be successfully injected into the weaker ‘local’ culture. That is, it is assumed that people are the passive consumers of the cultural meanings that supposedly flow directly and straightforwardly from the commodities they consume” (Storey 2009, p. 205). This argument seems to replicate the exact hypodermic needle model that early audience and fan studies strove to overturn: the hypothesis that audiences are cultural dupes who are injected with the message preferred by producers. On the contrary, the first wave of fan studies was premised on the argument that fans are tactical meaning-makers who negotiate, appropriate and move nomadically across the resources offered to them (Jenkins 1992). Does this suggest audiences in the west are able to assume this resistant ironic distance from the texts they consume, while non-western audiences are interpellated differently and not afforded this agency? A number of studies have focused on the flow of from the west towards audiences in other places and cultures (most notably, the work by Tamar Liebes and Elihu Katz on non-American audiences of the soap opera *Dallas* (1993)). The principle of active meaning-making by transnational audiences of western texts is tested in the South African context by Larry Strelitz, who uses ethnographic methods to explore how young South African media consumers put transnational texts to work in meaning-making about culture and identity (2002; 2003; 2004). Likewise, Michelle Tager’s work on local consumers of the American soap opera *The Bold and The Beautiful* focused on these texts as resources with diverse interpretations (1997).

Adam Haupt takes the relationship between global text and local audience into the realm of fannish production by exploring these ideas in relation to South African youth and hip hop culture. He argues for resisting “a tidy binary between the global and local or the northern and southern hemispheres” considering these rather as “opportunities for agency on a local level through the appropriation of certain kinds of hip-hop” (Haupt 2010, p. xvii). Haupt provides empirical grounds for reading the South African hip-hop movement as a way to speak back to the centre or “empire” from a position of marginality, as well as to

enact micro-resistances in the form of piracy, file sharing and remix culture. However, this does not entirely resolve the matter. What Haupt describes are practices premised on acts of defiance and resistance that align with a tradition in fan studies of reading culture as a “site of struggle between the ‘resistance’ of subordinate groups and the forces of ‘incorporation’ operating in the interests of dominant groups” (Storey 2009, p. 10). Like Jenkins’ textual poachers who conduct “impertinent raid[s] on the literary preserve [and take] away only those things that are useful or pleasurable to the reader” (Jenkins 1992, p. 24), Haupt’s hip-hop fans see global culture as a resource that should be (if it can be) resisted and subverted by “stealing empire”. But what of the fan who demonstrates no textual poaching, no tactics of resistance or reading against the grain?

This question is especially relevant for the fans and fan practices in this study and recurs in various different ways. One is that a binary model of fandom only offers two possible strategies for interpreting the practices of fans: they are either resistant or co-opted. The fan who is engaged in remix, piracy and appropriation and localisation is active, resistant and productive. The fan who collects, consumes and preserves that canon is co-opted and compliant. The risk is that it compounds an already problematic tendency in fan studies scholarship to reduce practices to binaries coded with certain moral or political values. Matt Hills calls these “decisionist” narratives that “hinge on making political decisions as to the ‘goodness’ or ‘badness’ of fan cultures” and he says “[t]his scenario produces a type of endemic ‘moral dualism’ within the academy in which singular definitions are constructed not only of objects of study, but also of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ instances of popular culture” (Hills 2002a, p. xi). These categories within the scholarship on fans tend to present transformative practices (such as adaption, mash-up, fan fiction, fan art or fan vids) as preferred while consumption or mimetic practices (such as model or replica building) are less positively perceived (Hills 2014). Hills proposes a “suspensionist” narrative instead, which entails holding focus on the contradictions and slippages while resisting certainties

in analysis and interpretation. This principle underpins the theoretical framework of this thesis.

The local fan who embraces uncritically or too enthusiastically appropriates global media can be too easily positioned on the negative side of this duality. Koichi Iwabuschi characterises the Japanese fans of Hong Kong stars as: “unreflexive”, “deluded” and “inauthentic”, saying that these fans could not experience an authentic engagement with the culture and context the stars they were claiming to be fans of came from. Bertha Chin and Lori Morimoto take him to task for these assertions (Chin and Morimoto 2013, p. 95); however, as will become apparent, these views persist quite strongly amongst fans themselves and, I argue, are significant in the ways fans imagine themselves in relation to a global fandom.

The inverse of Iwabuschi’s cynical view of global fandom is Henry Jenkins’ concept of “pop cosmopolitanism” (2006). He holds a positive view of global fandom as a force for good and mutual understanding between different cultures and national groupings. This account of cosmopolitanism, as Jinni Pradhan points out (2010), emphasises the positive while discounting cosmopolitanism as a means of escape from locality (or as Jenkins puts it, “parochialism”). This version of the “social good” of cosmopolitanism is seen from the centre of production and distribution where the asymmetrical flows of culture significantly favour the outward movement. It reflects Anike Imre’s concern that, for those fans on the periphery (in her case, Eastern Europe), this view of fandom is “inspired, but perhaps a bit overly optimistic”. She is sceptical of Jenkins’ view that online fan communities will diminish the power of the state over its citizens (Imre 2009, p. 15).

Refuting the utility of dualistic paradigms for fan studies, Chin and Morimoto advocate for a shift towards a model of transcultural fandom, arguing that the concept of the nation, central to both earlier models, “(over-)determines fan appropriation and engagement, with the effect of both severely limiting the kinds of questions that are asked, and effectively ghettoising (or even exoticising) cross-border fandoms”. Instead

they call for an “interrogation of border-crossing fandoms in which the nation is but one in a constellation of contexts that inflect and influence their rise and spread” (Chin and Morimoto 2013, p. 93). Chin and Morimoto note that a framework that prioritises the transcultural over the transnational does not side-step the necessity for contextualisation that takes into account the socio-historical, political and economic factors that inform the popular culture consumption and consumerism of fandoms. That being said, transcultural fan scholarship is growing from a small base. Moreover, few of the existing studies focus on texts that either cross borders (either geographic, linguistic or cultural) between the point of production and the point of consumption, or are consumed outside the USA/UK. Until recently, much of the work has been limited to the perspectives of fans of anime<sup>1</sup> and manga<sup>2</sup> in the USA and the UK – the fans Hills refers to as the “transcultural Otaku”<sup>3</sup> (2002b).

This argument shares Marwan Kraidy’s call for a critical transculturalism as an alternative to the unsatisfactory globalisation theses of cultural imperialism on the one hand and hybrid multiculturalism on the other (2005). He argues that, if cultural imperialism views globalisation as being characterised by an overwhelming “imbalance” in favour of the dominant culture, then hybrid multiculturalism holds that globalisation is a benign process that brings about “cultural diversity” and “cross-cultural fusion” and where the local is a site of resistance. If cultural imperialism is marked by a dialectical relationship emphasising structure, then hybrid multiculturalism sees globalisation as cultivating a dialogic relationship emphasising the agency of individuals and communities. Kraidy’s alternative is an integration of these in “a lopsided articulation: dialogical aspects of communication must be analysed concurrently with its

- 
1. Japanese animation. May be hand-drawn or computer generated animation. Unlike western animation that tends to be orientated to youth audiences, anime encompasses a wide range of genres and target audiences.
  2. Japanese comics. Like anime, manga is enjoyed by all ages and spans a range of genres.
  3. Originally a Japanese word for intense, even obsessive interest in a topic with negative, pathological connotations. It has come to be used as a less stigmatised term, particularly in the west, to designate a fan, especially of Japanese media cultures.

dialectical dimensions” (Kraidy 2005, p. 149). This would then be manifest in social practices that are the site of agency even while they are enacted in translocal and inter-contextual structures. Kraidy observes that the cultural imperialism thesis focuses on the production and distribution of media texts, while hybrid multiculturalism looks to the text or the message and the context of reception. His model of critical transculturalism tries to link considerations of production, text and reception in the moment of cultural reproduction.

Like Chin and Morimoto, Hills looks at the articulation between the appropriation and participation by fans of transcultural texts as significant and not simply premised on fans’ engaging in fetishistic exoticisation, appropriation or the banal cosmopolitanism of textual consumption. Hills argues “that fandom and national identity might have a more complex relationship, one that does not simply locate fan cultures ‘in’ a given national context, ‘against’ other national contexts, or as ‘appropriating’ transcultural products in a global economy/culture” (Hills 2002b, p. 2). The fan can therefore be both the resistant reader and the uncritical consumer. The fan can read the text against the grain by writing fanfiction while being co-opted by commercial interests and, presumably, can celebrate and identify with fandoms flowing from the USA while being aware of and reactive to the tensions and complexities of their position in concrete and everyday life. In framing fan cultures as “global” one can become caught in an ideological dualism: on the one hand, the audience passivity of a culturally imperialist position, on the other a romanticised construction of local fandom as a form of resistance to global culture.

If the literature review has framed the debate circulating around the global fan in fan studies, the next section shifts focus away from the general and towards the media and mediated landscape of South Africa. These policies and practices cannot be separated out from the anxieties of cultural imperialism and globalisation: and South Africa’s history of colonisation and the ongoing project of nation-building and decolonisation, make these concerns about distant influence even more pressing.



## 2.2 POPULAR CULTURE, RACE AND ENTERTAINMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Broadcast television was constrained by the policies and practices of Apartheid and has continued to be shaped by the legacy of these ideological underpinnings. South Africa was one of the last countries to introduce television. This late start in 1975 is attributed to the National Party's concern that television as a medium and, presumably, the ideas flowing into the country from abroad would constitute a "corrupting influence" (Cowling 2006, p. 117). The delay was rooted in a variety of fears – including those of unduly advantaging English speakers; disadvantaging the state-aligned Afrikaans press; creating a conduit for communist ideology and western-style capitalism simultaneously; and showing an alternative to racial segregation. These fears were coded as moral and coincided with a shift in Apartheid policy. As Kirsten Orgeret writes,

After a decade of adaptation and transition from old-style segregation, the nationalists began to enforce a harsher, more doctrinal form of Apartheid. It was in the context under the control of Prime Minister Hendrik F. Verwoerd, that television became the antagonist of Afrikaner interests and nationalist politics. The NP government feared that television represented a threat from both within and without the national society. It thus conducted a forceful campaign to "protect" South Africans from "the devil in the Black Box". (Orgeret 2014, p. 188)

Once television was introduced, it was a single channel geared entirely towards white audiences speaking English or Afrikaans. While there was significant investment in quality Afrikaans content-development, Cowling argues that "English-speaking Whites were less well served. The prevailing view of the powers at the SABC was that they were not really South African, but immigrants from the United Kingdom and elsewhere, and therefore would be satisfied with imported English-language

programs" (Cowling 2006, p. 123). In 1982 the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) introduced two additional channels where programming was broadcast in the vernacular languages of isiXhosa, isiZulu and seSotho. A central tenet of Apartheid ideology was that the different races making up South Africa's population were "distinct and separate groups, which needed to be served with different programming in different languages" (Cowling 2006, p. 117). Consequently, entertainment television was divided along linguistic lines, which in South Africa was crudely equivalent to race. As Alexia Smit writes, "While apartheid media may have worked toward creating a sense of unity for its white, Afrikaans-speaking television viewers, South Africa at large, has arguably never basked in [an] uncomplicated sense of a 'common culture'" (Smit 2016, p. 3).

Against this backdrop, in 1986 an alternative to the SABC began broadcasting as M-Net. Given the continued state control of news and actuality programmes, however, M-Net's licence was limited to entertainment content only. Most of this content was imported material from the USA and UK in English and had a bias towards western popular culture. The channel operated on a subscription model and as a result the audience was (at the time) predominantly white and affluent. In time it would expand to a subscription satellite service – DSTV – that continues to offer an ever-increasing list of diverse content for subscribers to choose from. However the subscription and infrastructure costs are considerable. These developments set up some implicit, and perhaps persistent, presumptions regarding popular culture consumption in South Africa. Foreign content, mainly in English from the USA and to a lesser extent the UK, was geared towards a white and a relatively wealthy audience. It was declaratively apolitical and beamed material into living rooms that were sequestered from the bitter and contested context of the closing years of Apartheid. Later, e-tv would be launched as a free-to-air commercial channel.

With the end of Apartheid, local content quotas for television were introduced, intending to promote South African identity – developing the

local content market, protecting minority cultures, promoting access to marginalised languages and growing the local production industry. The regulations for local content articulated by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) are governed by the aim “to develop, protect and promote a national and provincial identity, culture and character; and to create vibrant, dynamic, creative and economically productive local industries” (ICASA 2002, February). By 2002 the quotas were 35% local content for drama and 55% local content for children’s programming. These quotas were achieved and exceeded overall, even though the ratio of local content differs between channels (Org-eret 2004, p. 158). If the Apartheid-era broadcasting policy’s reservations about global content was about protecting impressionable citizens from the contamination of the devil in the black box, then in the post-Apartheid era this turned to a “nationalist-reconstructionist” project and an “expansionist-capitalist” agenda (Banda 2006, np).

More than twenty years after the end of Apartheid, David Schieferdecker (2017) asks “to what degree South Africans from different racialised and socio-economic backgrounds differ in their media consumption habits”, given the history of race-based segregations of audiences. Focusing on university students, and drawing on an important but limited history of research in the same area (see Strelitz 2004), Schieferdecker’s study confirms the findings from previous research into student audience segmentations. Particularly interesting for this thesis are his findings in relation to what he calls “globally-orientated” English content. In summary, researchers found persistent differences in media consumption for students from different race groups. Furthermore, the preference for either global or local media was marked by earlier media socialisation and social positioning such that “associations of consumption preferences with racialised groups were so codified that tastes became synonymous with racialised groups and deviants were socially regulated” (Schieferdecker 2017, p. 133). While race-group differences were notable, these were less pronounced for respondents with similar economic, rural or urban backgrounds; and he suggests furthermore that schools have been a critical

site for establishing media tastes and preferences. Schieferdecker's meta-analysis of previous studies' conclusions is confirmed through his own empirical research. He concludes:

[A]lmost no White student had a South African-oriented consumption pattern, Black students from higher socio-economic backgrounds had both South African-oriented and globally-oriented patterns. Having said this, differences in media consumption flattened, but did not level, when students came from different racialised groups but had similar socio-economic backgrounds. Black students who came from upper-income households and/or attended (semi-)private schools were more likely to have globally-oriented consumption habits. Less pronounced, White students from lower-income backgrounds were more likely to make use of outlets that featured content depicting South African lived realities. (Schieferdecker 2017, p. 148)

He accounts for this by isolating four contributing factors but points out that these must be seen in articulation. Firstly, language skills: students with only basic skills in a South African language were likely to have a "globally-oriented, English-only pattern", while fluent or native speakers "can draw positive gratifications for their ethno-linguistic identity" (Schieferdecker 2017, p. 144). Secondly, socio-economic background, which impacts on access to media (such as paid television channels, subscription services and broadband) that determine exposure and facilitate consumption. Thirdly, students' are shaped by their "perception of cultural proximity towards the lived 'realities' that are depicted in local and global entertainment media respectively" (Schieferdecker 2017, p. 145). Here he finds that the wealthier the consumer, the more relatable are the "individualist, consumerist, and cosmopolitan lifestyles portrayed in global, especially US-American media" (Schieferdecker 2017, p. 145), along with the opportunities for international travel, privately owned vehicles and personal media devices like laptops or smartphones. However, Schieferdecker, echoing Strelitz (2005) points out that "the neglect of South African entertainment productions does not necessarily

imply a general escapism from South African realities by users with globally-oriented patterns [and] globally-oriented students consumed local news too" (Schieferdecker 2017, p. 145). The fourth and final factor influencing these patterns of consumption is peer group dynamics, where "Black students whose social networks included more White students were more likely to have a globally-oriented pattern (irrespective of schooling, income, etc.)" (Schieferdecker 2017, p. 146).

The next section of the literature review turns to consider the case for media practice theory as the basis for exploring fan phenomena, but this is not to turn away from the structural considerations at play in the leisure activities of fans. As Schieferdecker points out in a later paper: "Media selection is not an individualistic behavior that solely depends on a person's psychological dispositions. . . Media selection happens in social contexts, and peer groups and personal networks can be considered a structural factor in media choice" (Schieferdecker and Wessler 2017, pp. 996-997).

It would be remiss to consider media consumption, and indeed fandom, exclusively on the basis of the individual's agency. Rather, they should be read "within the specific power geometry or map of power identified by the coordinates of commodification, spatialization, and structuration" (Mosco 2009, p. 126). Daniel Biltereyst and Philippe Meers (2011) argue for audience ethnography to be seen in relation to political economy even as the ethnographic focus considers "how these. . . conditions are encountered, worked through, and challenged 'on the ground'" (Murdoch in Biltereyst and Meers 2011, p. 420).

It is a foundational assumption of this research that fans are exemplary rather than exceptional. Rejecting a romanticised view of fans as disruptive or their practices as resistant and transgressive, my argument centres around the principle that fans are exemplars of broader media practices. That the dynamics of fandom are shaped by South Africa's racialised history of access and segregation is born out in the findings of this research, but this demands more than a simple assertion of material-

ities. The "structuring structures" of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus and practice provides a mechanism to understand the ways that the various types of social, economic and symbolic capitals accrue and function as a currency within a given field.

Bourdieu's theory of practice is already familiar to the scholarship on fans. For instance, fan studies has made use of these ideas to frame the tastes of fans in resistance to the dominant versus dominated fractions of society (see Fiske 1992; Hills 2002a). Jancovich (2002) has taken a different approach in using Bourdieu's ideas to explore a specific aspect of distinction and hierarchies within the field of fandom. However, fan studies have tended to look to these principles of taste and distinction in the abstract rather than considering what this might look like given the specifics of the everyday and the particularities of lived experience.

For Bourdieu, practice can be expressed as resulting from "the relations between one's dispositions (habitus) and one's position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field)" (Maton 2014, p. 47). Bourdieu's notion of practice is that it is the interplay of habitus and various types of capital that the individual brings with them to a given "field". Here, "field" is equivalent to a specialist domain of knowledge (like fandom for instance) that has its own logics of capital and distinction. Despite this articulation between habitus and field, one can only observe these operationalised as practice (in that we can describe the field but we cannot observe habitus), so we look to practice as the realisation of this articulation (Bourdieu 1977). However, Bourdieu emphasises that habitus (subjective, individual) and field (objective, contextual) "should be seen as being inseparable, mutually constituted and always inter-penetrating" (Maton 2014, p. 47). The time, spaces and places that constitute the context that the phenomenon plays out in are structured, as are the lives of the social agents who occupy these spaces. The structuring structures that shape affiliation, media consumption and access and give rise to segmented and separated audiences (as discussed in the previous section) set up the terms of reference in the research of fans in South Africa.

### 2.3 MAKING THE CASE FOR A THEORY OF PRACTICE

I have argued that the premise of a “global” fan studies is promising but problematic for this investigation because of existing definitions or typologies in the critical tradition of fan studies. The specificity of the South African context underpins my rationale to refuse ready-made definitions of the fan or the explanatory power of a single theoretical framework. In the first case, these definitions tend to be embedded in their origins, and in the latter, the concept of “the global” is too entangled in the debates around the globalisation of culture and the uneven flows of different types of capital and commodities. As if these two factors were not enough, there is also the persistent meta-disciplinary matter of the dualism that has inflected the work in fan scholarship where certain practices or types of fans are coded as positive or negative along a variety of axes. The tendency has been to romanticise tactics of resistance and downplay or vilify those practices that demonstrate co-option, consumption and collaboration with commercial interests and/or those of global hegemony.

Transcultural fandom offers an alternative that works against the too emphatic dualisms that continue to emerge in fan studies where distinction is constructed in terms of global/local, physical/virtual, production/consumption and mimetic/transformational fandoms. Morimoto and Chin (2017) have recently built on their prior work on transcultural fandom to suggest that, rather than relying on these dualisms, we should ask the question “what happens when...?” They propose several fruitful avenues of exploration that exceed the limits of a dualistic view: for example:

[W]hat happens when non-native English speakers participate in Anglo-American dominated English language fandom? What happens when non-white fans, regardless of geographical location, voice their concerns over racial representation within predominantly white online media fandoms? What

happens when the walls separating fans and producers (or fan-scholars) begin to crumble, thrusting us all into yet another kind of contact zone? (Morimoto and Chin 2017, p. 186)

Placing an emphasis on fan practices signals a move away from earlier frameworks for understanding fans. Because fan studies emerged from a literary studies tradition, this gave rise to an early text-centric preoccupation. This trajectory has an influence on fan research in its emphasis on a text and the fan practices and interpretations orbiting these texts – for example, *Supernatural* (Zubernis and Larsen 2014) or *Star Trek* (Drushel 2013). A different, but similarly constrained view of fandom arose from the understanding of fan practices as being connected to specific platforms or as particular performances of fannish behaviour. A number of studies have looked to a single articulation of fan identity through a given practice, for example authoring fan fiction (Hellekson and Busse 2006; Hodges and Richmond 2011), cosplay<sup>4</sup> (Lamerichs 2010), vidding<sup>5</sup> (Ito 2010), fan subbing<sup>6</sup> (Lee 2011) and so on. Jenkins bypasses the specifics of text or platform for fandom in favour of talking about “epistemophilia”: the type of fannish pleasure found in exchanging knowledge, demonstrating understanding, insight or mastery of trivia and appearing across fandoms or communities (Jenkins 2006).

There is a problem with these typologies. In principle, a fan’s intensity and involvement with a text is linked to a social identity. However, in real terms, how does one determine what intensity or investment is the marker of the fan rather than a consumer or audience member. And, even if one could determine this point, to consider only those fans who

---

4. Portmanteau of costume and play or player. A widely-practiced fan activity, participants dress and perform in character. Cosplayers assemble, make, commission or buy costumes, which are of varying degrees of elaborateness and complexity.

5. The fan practice of creating music videos from edited footage and set to music. Fanvids within anime fandom are called AMV (Anime Music Videos). Despite the overlaps between vidding and AMV, these groups are regarded as separate communities.

6. Short for fan-subtitled, it is the fan practice of creating the subtitles for a film in a language other than the original film. Fansubs are non-official and are often the result of free or voluntary labour. Fansubs are done by fansubbers.



meet the criteria of “one hundred percenters” (Duffett 2013, p. 281) results in a lacuna in fan studies scholarship that bypasses the many fans (and their practices) who lack this singular dedication. Furthermore, a process that proceeds from a specific fan club or community that revolves around a given text, fails to capture how multiple fandoms and texts make up the everyday experience of fans. If we only consider fans’ singular subjectivity, we miss this larger pattern of fandom.

This focus on the everyday lives of fans is a developing trajectory in the literature and one to which this research seeks to contribute. Various scholars embrace the everyday as a means of unsettling the personal and the political (see Théberge 2006; Stein 2015), but as Nedim Hassan (working in the adjacent area of music fandoms) points out, fan studies has generally looked to public or semi-public events (Hassan 2013). He cites Cavicchi’s (1998) seminal work on Bruce Springsteen fans to argue that fandom can function as a site of bonding and can facilitate relationships in families or the domestic sphere. He notes, however, that “Despite such work, there remains a dearth of studies that explore how music fandom is integrated with everyday domestic life [and there] are still few explorations of the extent to which music fandom connects everyday routines and social interactions” (Hassan 2013, p. 61). The same can be said for popular media fandoms.

A second and significant shift in fan studies research is that, initially considered *exceptional* audience members, fans now are useful as *exemplary* audiences. The first wave of fan studies looked to those qualities and practices that distinguished the fan from the casual viewer or interested follower, but latterly fans’ behaviours are used to exemplify interpretive meaning-making by audiences in general. This is not to suggest that the fans’ practices changed, but rather that the scholarship shifted in focus. The persistence of fans’ participation and investment of time and resources, and the construction of community became interesting as exemplary of audiences. Christina Busse frames this new emphasis: “[F]ans and fan communities exist on a spectrum of media consumption that more generally includes all audiences [and therefore] findings about

fans stand to tell us a great deal about audiences as a whole” (Busse and Gray 2011, p. 426).

Increasingly, the default setting for the audience is to be positioned as fans, potential fans or future fans. This “mainstreaming” of audiences as fans holds different implications for scholars. Gray, Sandvoss and Harrington hold that mainstreaming is tantamount to co-option of resistant practices by the interests of capital: “Rather than ridiculed, fan audiences are now wooed and championed by cultural industries, at least as long as their activities do not divert from principles of capitalist exchange and recognize industries’ legal ownership of the object of fandom” (Gray and Sandvoss and Harrington 2007b, p. 4). For others, this positions fans at the leading edge of future media trends. For instance Paul Booth (2010) argues that fans are the quintessential early adopters of media (he is specifically referring to technological affordances and transmediality rather than content per se) and that by studying fan practices we gain insight into far more than the specifics of particular communities and their drives. We also glimpse the future of media use as the categories of market and gift economy, authorship and text, producer and consumer become less and less stable. Similarly, Elana Shefrin concludes that fandom not only heralds “a paradigmatic shift in producer-consumer affiliations” but that “fans can be seen as mapping new articulations of participatory democracy within the fields of artistic production, power, and class relations” (Shefrin 2004, p. 297). Despite these apparent differences, the authors share the overriding view that the fan is the product of a modern, industrialised society, and that fan practices are inextricably tied to the ways in which contemporary society and culture organises itself (Gray and Sandvoss and Harrington 2007b).

In this thesis, fans are positioned as exemplary of broader media practices and as forerunners of those practices and fan practices as seen in terms of habit or routine rather than as subcultural or exotic. Therefore, fans and their practices tell us something about audiences for transcultural media texts and those who engage in media practices that share the contours of these fannish ways of participating. As fan studies turned

towards the notion of fans as audiences rather than subcultures, there was a shift away from an a priori definition of what constitutes a fan or fandoms, in favour of an investigation of practices in context. This approach sees fandom as a sociological phenomenon that focuses on “the ways that fans often use their ingenuity to fulfil their structural position” (Duffett 2013, p. 278) by investigating the lives of fans and how they are organised around or orientated towards their fandoms.

A workable theory of fan practices must consider these practices within the leaky, situated, media-saturated lives of fans. As ubiquitous as the use of the term practice is in fan studies, it is often used without a clear definition, set of parameters or theoretical framework. This is not particular to studies of fans and is evident in media and cultural studies more broadly. As John Postill notes, the term “practices” is used a great number of times and with “a great variety of single qualifiers (‘media practices’, ‘cultural practices’, ‘social practices’, ‘symbolic practices’) and double qualifiers (‘minority media practices’ or ‘media consumption practices’) being employed” (Postill 2010, p. 4). In other words, the term “fan practices”, like “practice” more generally, is often used as shorthand to cover broadly *the things fans do*. In this research I am using a more specific understanding of the concept of practice.

Nick Couldry proposes media practice as a paradigm that does not exclusively rely on either the political economy model, or that of media effects, nor textual semiotics, and does not default to privileging text, production, or audience. For Couldry, media practice “redirects [the focus] onto the study of the open-ended range of practices focused directly or indirectly on media” (Couldry 2010, p. 36). This open-ended view of practice can be elicited by asking:

- What types of things people do in relation to media?
- What types of things people say in relation to media?
- What practices are out there?

- How do some practices anchor, control, or organise others?

Elizabeth Bird (2010) parses this principle into three types of mediated practices in a media-saturated world. The first is what Bird would term “direct mediation”. Fans and their practices are often used to explain and illustrate this first type, which is marked by active practices that draw from, and explicitly engage with, texts, other fans, and the entertainment industry directly. However, although fans exemplify and illustrate these first types of practices, this is not to suggest that there is not more to learn about indirect practices. These include ritual and routine (like parties, dressing up, screenings and book launches) and diffuse or integrated practices (like using fan texts in managing difficult relationships or establishing family traditions). This thesis argues that these diffuse media practices should be viewed in the context of the quotidian rhythm of the individual and as “an integral part of the routines and rituals of everyday life [which is] constantly interrelated with other activities such as talking, eating or doing housework” (Ang 1996, p. 107). These practices are: habitual in that they are repetitive behaviour linked to time and place; banal in that they are “routinised, or largely taken-for-granted, character of life in society, in most contexts of time and place, which gives meaning to the phrases ‘daily life’ or ‘day-to-day life’ as a regular round of activities” (Giddens in Moores 2005, p. 10); and porous, in that they cannot be read as discrete moments of consumption or production; and moreover “[w]e cannot really isolate the role of media in culture, because the media are firmly anchored into the web of culture, although articulated by individuals in different ways. . . [t]he ‘audience’ is everywhere and nowhere” (Bird 2003, p. 3).

To talk of practice is to rely on a social frame of reference. I have started out by framing the participants and their practices as “interpretive communities of fandom (as well as individual acts of fan consumption) [that] are embedded in the existing economic, social, and cultural status quo” (Gray and Sandvoss and Harrington 2007b, p. 6). Gray, Sandvoss and Harrington point out that this sets up a different understanding of fans where they “are seen not as a counterforce to existing social hierarchies

and structures but, in sharp contrast, as agents of maintaining social and cultural systems of classification and thus existing hierarchies" (Gray and Sandvoss and Harrington 2007b, p. 6). The structural position of the fans in this account is important. While practice can be understood as a property of an individual, Pierre Bourdieu emphasises that while the social agent may be an individual (and therefore with unique life events) this must be read in conjunction with what they share with other individual members of the same social class [who] "share structurally similar positions within society that engender structurally similar experiences of social relations, processes and structures" (Maton 2014, p. 53).

The arguments in Arjun Appadurai's work *Modernity at Large* (1996) lie at the centre of the theoretical framework for this thesis. Namely that media texts, whether fantasy or actuality, fuel and anchor everyday lives. These include the domestic cycle of dinner and bed times; the separation of leisure and work; and the self-making work of identities and communities, online and imaginary.

Always carrying the sense of distance between viewer and event, these media nevertheless compel the transformation of everyday discourse. At the same time, they are resources for experiments with self-making in all sorts of societies, for all sorts of persons. They allow scripts for possible lives to be imbricated with the glamour of film stars and fantastic film plots and yet also to be tied to the plausibility of news shows, documentaries, and other black-and-white forms of telemediation and printed text. Because of the sheer multiplicity of the forms in which they appear (cinema, television, computers, and telephones) and because of the rapid way in which they move through daily life routines, electronic media provide resources for self-imagining as an everyday social project (Appadurai 1996, pp. 3-4)

This empirical and exploratory study of fans foregrounds situated and contextualised practices that position media texts as a resource that infiltrate the banal and quotidian rhythms of everyday life.

However, this media-saturated everyday, for all its familiar banality of routine and habit is ambiguous and multi-scalar which makes it difficult to know and trace. Its familiarity and interpenetration with other lives, other practices, and other contexts at vastly different scales presents a methodological difficulty. Couldry, drawing on Lefebvre, explains this as

The ambiguity that comes from the way the private space of everyday life is already crossed by countless trajectories of power (the economy, political order, media narratives)... we cannot separate out our hopes, our myths, our moments of togetherness or conflict, from the mediated social forms which they now, almost always, take. Those forms in turn cannot be separated from the uneven landscape of power on which the media process is founded. (Couldry 2003b, p. 19)

## 2.4 OPERATIONALISING LOCALITY THROUGH PRACTICE

Locality is the theoretical underpinning of the thesis and in constant articulation with practice. In response to the complexities of scale and the entanglements of globalisation, mediation, practice and the everyday an expanded understanding of locality is the lynchpin in understanding the South African circuit of transcultural media fandom. Following Appadurai, locality is a vital attribute of meaning-making in the life of the individual and the collective. It is the prerequisite for community while itself being produced by community, and is fragile and requires constant construction, tending and renewal through practice.

Appadurai touches on a series of qualities intrinsic to his use of the term locality (many of which share common ground with the ideas that underpin this research) when he describes it as:

Primarily relational and contextual rather than as scalar or spatial... a complex phenomenological quality, constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of contexts. This phenomenological quality, which expresses itself in certain kinds of agency, sociality, and reproducibility, is the main predicate of locality as a category (or subject) (Appadurai 1996, p. 178)

First, he emphasises that locality demands an exploration of the relational and contextual rather than the absolute or objective measure of the phenomena in question. In this way he echoes the central tenets of Bourdieu's theory of habitus and field as contextual, relational, positional and where the only access we have to observe these abstractions is when they are operationalised as practice (Maton 2014). Appadurai's locality may be driven by social immediacy, technology and the particularities of place and history, but it is realised and visible through choices made, social relations between people, and the spread and persistence of these attitudes between actors and generations. However, unlike Bourdieu, Appadurai does not limit practices to accounting only for cultural reproduction and economic or class fractions. He extends practice to include collective social visions or desires and the work of the imagination as a social practice in the construction of locality.

Second, in the contemporary conditions of globalisation and media saturation, locality is mediated, and this mediation is premised not on mutually exclusive categories of the here-and-now versus the not-here/not-now. Instead locality is a site where distance and proximity can be simultaneous. This account of the local resists overly optimistic discourses of a "global sphere" but likewise refuses recurrent anxieties about cultural imperialism and homogenisation. Appadurai (1996) makes a place for

the complexity of intertextual pleasures that flow in and out of everyday life via a multiplicity of formats, platforms and devices. This renders the model of a predictable audience impossible by suggesting that audience is not simply washed over by the flow but also intervenes in the flow. The implication is a difference in how flow is experienced by the individual and how this is realised in her practices. More than pleasure, aesthetics and entertainment, these texts are used towards the ends of constructing identity, distinction and difference found at the level of routine, everyday practices. Appadurai critically positions this work of “self-making” and “self-imagining” as a social project that is linked to affinity and belonging in the form of sodalities and imagined (and concrete) communities.

Third, producing locality is no “large-scale project of social engineering... but is the everyday cultural practice through which the work of the imagination is transformed” (1996, p. 9). In other words, the way to understand the local is via scrutiny of the intimate micro-scale of everyday life. Having abandoned the premise of the local and the global as being opposed or even that the local is found within or isometric to the global, Appadurai’s argument suggests that everyday practices are the operating mechanism that makes it possible for global content to be present at the local level (although these operations take place in a variety of ways). To think about locality demands a balance between the affective dimension and the conditions and effects of context. Locality cannot be reduced to a singular physical or geographic quality, nor is it simply equivalent to co-presence or membership within a virtual or on-line aggregation point; it is not abstracted from the specificity of social life and “cannot be separated from the actual settings in and through which social life is reproduced” (Appadurai 1996, p. 182).

Fourth, Appadurai (1996) makes the point that locality is not an intrinsic quality but results from active production through the labour, traditions and practices of individuals in concert, in context, and by means of imagination. The production of locality, much like practice, is an agglomeration of other processes. In the same way that practice arises from the interaction of habitus, capital and field (Bourdieu 1977), locality is



produced through the articulation and intersection of multiple elements. Appadurai looks at these vast and impossibly complex systems at the level at which they touch the local, lived everyday, embodied experience of the individual. Like practice, locality is evidenced through banal routines, rituals and practices and is “a fragile social achievement” (Appadurai 1995, p. 206) that cannot be taken for granted. In concert with these concrete labours, the production of locality is a product of imagination as much as it is of social practice and mediation.

Appadurai (1996) proposes that, under modernity, locality is a product of the imagination where mediation and mobility work together to re-configure subjectivity. He argues that these twin drivers of modernity result in us needing to rethink the explanatory power of the nation state in accounts of social phenomena.

Electronic mediation and mass migration mark the world of the present not as technically new forces but as ones that seem to impel (and sometimes compel) the work of the imagination. Together, they create specific irregularities because both viewers and images are in simultaneous circulation. Neither images nor viewers fit into circuits or audiences that are easily bound within local, national, or regional spaces. (Appadurai 1996, p. 4)

In effect, Appadurai’s dilemma returns us to the Commaroffs’ problem of scale in the lack of isomorphic relationships between “spatial localisation, quotidian interaction and social scale” (Appadurai 1995, p. 208). One way that this dilemma has been re-imagined is by means of the concept of the translocal. The translocal is not the opposite of the local, nor is it synonymous with the global. The translocal is emergent. It is the moment when the local is stretched beyond its borders while still remaining situated. As Carpentier puts it:

[I]t is the moment where the local merges with a part of its outside context, without transforming itself into this context.

It is the moment where the local simultaneously incorporates its context and transgresses into it. It is the moment where the local reaches out to a familiar unknown. (Carpentier 2012, p. 246)

In this way, a translocality can be place-based yet populated by temporary or mobile participants in the way of airports, border posts or refugee camps. But translocality can just as likely emerge in communication, financial exchange or points in a journey where travelling members of a community act as a link between those at home and a distant “elsewhere”. Deirdre McKay describes translocality as “a space where ‘economic’ transactions and affective relations structure locality off the ground” and a “network of absent members and flows of information and value in which they are embedded” (McKay 2006, p. 4).

Fans tend to be early adopters of media technologies and platforms. Increasingly affordable internet access and digital tools have driven changes in fandoms and fan practices in terms of unprecedented ease of access, participation and use of the technological tools of DIY media-making (see Jenkins 2006; Andrejevic 2008; Booth 2010; Bennett 2013). In particular, the possibilities for participation and access afforded by the internet have opened up fandoms to fans outside the immediate target market for popular culture’s texts and commodities. Fan studies provide some of the earliest and seminal instances of virtual or online ethnographies. Nancy Baym’s work on soap opera fans using Usenet groups for their discussion (see Baym 1993; Baym 1999) first articulated the idea that online fandom was characterised by exchanges that marked this virtual space and its participants as a community, and that a modified understanding of ethnography was an appropriate method of investigation. However, research on digital fandom can tend towards an overemphasis on the virtual, with a concomitant loss of focus on the contextual, embodied and material aspects. In thinking through the problems of ethnographies of online worlds, Christine Hine suggests, “Spatiality, in a sociological sense, refers to more than physical proximity and distance. Spatiality, via locality and ideas of place, becomes a way of thinking

through the mutual availability and shared coherence of situated practices, interpretations and accounts” (Hine 2000, pp. 103-104).

South African fans of transcultural popular media are not only engaged in virtual practices: fans participate locally in events and organise, promote and network locally while participating online with a much larger and more dispersed community. Fandom functions as an instance of producing locality, fan practices incorporate the individual’s participation in the mundane activities of everyday life, including acts of imagining, spending time, labour and financial resources and, finally, collapses the possibility of discrete categories of on and offline, here-and-now or there-and-then.

#### 2.4.1 *Locality as Concrete, Immediate and Intimate*

Fan studies research seldom considers how fandom intersects with the intimacies of everyday life. We do not, of course, assume that every waking hour consists of fannish practices, but often they are foregrounded to the extent that the background is lost. In some ways this reproduces one of the common narratives constructed and perpetuated about fans’ lives. The fan characterised in the popular press and imagination in the cliché of the *Star Trek* fan, or Trekkie, is a constructed other relative to normative ideas of gender, sexuality and class. Fans are frequently portrayed as unattractive social misfits hiding from “real life” via over-involvement in fantasy worlds based on lowbrow, aesthetically and intellectually suspect television and literature.

In 1986 on *Saturday Night Live*, William Shatner infamously told his fervent *Star Trek* fans to “get a life” (SNL, 20 Dec, 1986), which in turn provoked anger and hurt on the part of the fans whose adoration had fuelled his success. However, in retorting to Shatner’s erasure of fans’ lives, the precise contours of what might constitute the everyday life of a fan was surfaced as a counterpoint to the stereotypes. Jenkins uses the

following response from an indignant fan as the starting point for his seminal book.

I resent having those assumptions made about me. I have “got a life”. I have a husband and children. I do volunteer work and have opinions on a wide variety of matters, both political and religious. I do shopping, vote in elections and change diapers. I do live in a real world, with all of its tensions and stress. (Jenkins 1992, pp. 21-22)

Since then, the refrain that fans need to “get a life” has been countered and contested in significant contributions to the field. Despite this, for many fan studies scholars, the monocular view of the fan persists unintentionally when all activities, except those direct fan practices, are excised from accounts of fans’ lives. When you start with the assumptions that fans do “have a life” instead of mounting a defence of the idea, it becomes plain that fan practices are entangled with busy, fulfilling and demanding lives where fandom is an integral, but not exclusive, component of social engagement, relaxation, creativity and self expression.

A focus foregrounding fans’ experiences and statements about their domestic and intimate lives draws on a de-centred approach to media studies (see Couldry 2003b; Couldry 2003a; Couldry 2005; Hepp 2010), which proposes that understanding the media depends on our ability to recognise how media “coexist in symbiotic forms and also how to better grasp how we live with them as parts of our personal or household ‘media ensemble’” (Morley 2007, p. 200). Elizabeth Bird argues for a non-media-centric approach that, while seeing our lives as inextricably linked with media and communication, is reluctant to privilege the media over the range of other factors that constitute people’s worldviews. Bird points out that while media inform the practices of everyday life and suffuse moments of actual media consumption, media’s primacy is not absolute and “at any given moment, another type of practice – for example, religious, political – might be considered the prime ‘anchor’” (2010, p. 90). Fan practices are multi-centred depending on the individ-

ual circumstances of the fan, and this centre itself may shift throughout the cycle of the day (as the fan traverses work, leisure, family and fannish responsibilities and locations) as well as the cycle of the year's festivals and events.

While the intimacies of domestic life are evident in those studies of fans that take an ethnographically informed approach, fan studies, with its central focus on the text's production, distribution and reception has tended towards a media-centric view rather than otherwise. However, there is precedent in the adjacent and allied work in audience studies rooted in a feminist perspective of the domestic, intimate and familial qualities of home-life and everyday-life. Ien Ang's emphasis on the necessity for radical contextualisation and the domestic space in audience studies "underscor[es] the thoroughly situated, always context-bound ways in which people encounter, use, interpret, enjoy, think and talk about television and other media in everyday life" (1996, p. 60). Ang makes the point that media consumption "is a thoroughly precarious practice, structured not by psychological or sociological predispositions of individual audience members but by the dynamic and contradictory goings-on of everyday life" (Ang 1996, p. 92). Ang argues that the domestic and intimate space of the home has a powerful structuring effect on the practices of media consumption, the making of meaning and the reproduction of cultural forms.

Nevertheless, research on the television audience in its domestic context has not found its equivalent in the literature on fans. While it is not unusual to see the fan literature mentioning the home, romantic partners, parents and friends, these intimacies are not necessarily foregrounded as significant when thinking about the phenomenon of fandom. However, there is a small but growing literature. Camille Bacon-Smith returns to an ethnographic exploration of fans in her book *Science Fiction Culture*, where she looks to "the institutional practices that have structured the daily 'home' life of the science fiction fan community [and] how it operates to create the concrete landscape of the lived community" (Bacon-Smith 2000, p. 3). In so doing, she recounts anecdotes of second and third

generation fans having experienced a childhood of being enmeshed and involved in their parents' fandoms. Interestingly, she includes a focus on food, families and the mechanics of everyday life on the convention circuit.

In Booth and Kelly's article on *Doctor Who* fandom, they note that it tends to span multiple generations, with fans inducted into the fandom by parents, older relatives and siblings. Fans use *Doctor Who* as a way to build friendships and "as a means of getting closer to friends, family members, or colleagues" and "solidify familial relations and catalyze memory-making processes" (Booth and Kelly 2013, pp. 67-68). Harrington and Bielby make a similar observation about soap opera audiences, who tend to be cultivated by mothers introducing daughters to the characters and narratives of long-running soaps such that they "become bound together (through cross-generational viewing) with larger familial narratives" (Harrington and Bielby 2010a, par 4.1).

In other instances in the literature, family is used as a simile for the community of fans. Catching references, laughing at jokes and intertextual competency are markers of affiliation and reinforce "the sense of belonging, of 'family', of shared culture" (Jenkins 1992, p. 266). Fans describe convention attendance as being like a family reunion and that this is premised on a "common bond" or a "familial sense of recognition", and many of these qualities are realised as most meaningful when fan practices move offline and into in-person meetings at conventions or events. In Booth and Kelly's study, it was "the in person community that seems to matter much more. Like a family meeting for holidays or birthdays, being online helps organize but does not replace the sense of belonging" (Booth and Kelly 2013, p. 68).

Families, familiarity and home are often linked, and the home is the physical site of most fan practices. It is the place where materials are kept and curated, texts are sourced and consumed, creative practices take place, contact with other members of the community is made, and resources are accessed. The idea of the home invites considerations of

gender, class and culture in fandom. This collocation of fandom and home can be read in a variety of ways. One of which is, as David Morley argues, as a counterpoint to an age of “supposedly de-territorialised culture of ‘homelessness’: images of exile, diaspora, time-space compression, migrancy and ‘nomadology’ [where] home often remains as the uninterrogated anchor or alter ego” (Morley 2002, p. 3).

For Morley, “home” is a critical trope in understanding locality. In the contemporary mediated context, home is a site of porous boundaries that media and communication technologies transgress, “bringing the public world into the private – and simultaneously producing the coherence of broader social experience” (Morley 2002, p. 3). If home is synonymous with proximity, domesticity and the routines and intimacies of the everyday, then the corollary is the distant elsewhere. Williams’ phrase “mobile privatisation” is used to articulate not just changing the here and now of the home, but blurring the boundary between it and distant places. Unlike cinema, television afforded audiences possibility to “‘visit’ faraway locations (via sound and image) without leaving the comfort and security of their homes” (Morley 2002, p. 9). In effect, these technologies have increased the potential for the home to be a translocal site, and, if broadcast television started this process then this potential has increased exponentially with the access, variety, customisability and participatory affordances of the internet.

#### 2.4.2 *Locality as the Product of Labour*

Like the home, community can be considered as being translocal and porous. Whether termed community or neighbourhood, this attribute of the local requires looking at “the situated communities characterised by their actuality, whether spatial or virtual, and their potential for social reproduction” (Appadurai 1995, p. 208). Appadurai argues that mapping and negotiating locality does not exclusively, or even necessarily, entail spatial considerations, but it is always “fragile” and “difficult” to achieve.

Locality requires constant maintenance and regulation through activities and labour that are characterised as “incessant, often humdrum preoccupations” (Appadurai 1996, p. 180).

When locality is bound by spatiality, the production of that locality is realised through the work of house-building, clearing fields and gardens and establishing fences, as well as maintaining and repairing them. However, the outcomes of this labour (for example houses, fences, fields and paths) are not ends in themselves – rather, they are indicators of the impulse that lies behind them: the organisation and realisation of belonging and identification with the social through the formation of community (Appadurai 1996). This includes their activities as they contribute to and contest ways of participation; as they expend resources on sustaining and shaping the community and derive rewards and capitals from these activities; and also as they shape their own lives with reference to these communities’ expectations, obligations, norms and values.

Fandoms are seldom bound spatially or geographically, however; despite this virtuality or the technological affordances of mobility, these localities “off the ground” are nonetheless grounded, shaped and constrained by the material conditions of the here-and-now that participants find themselves in – for example, the cost of a broadband data connection; a sudden job retrenchment; the demands of raising children. Translocalities thus belong to specific cartographic sites, but are also ungrounded or “virtual”, or extend along complex nodes and pathways. Transactions and affective relations may be non-physical, but these transactions influence people’s activities, social interdependence, and environmental sustainability in particular material contexts. Analysing communities as translocalities shifts the focus from the existing neighbourhood infrastructure, economy and apparent livelihood strategies of the people present in a community to the network (McKay 2004, p. 4). All of this is an achievement realised by labour.

The invisible and affective labour required to produce locality (even when the locality does not map geographically or spatially) recalls the



keen interest fan scholars have in tracking and tracing the affective labour that goes into fan work and how this interfaces with the larger political economy of the industry and interests of global entertainment cultures. However, where the literature has developed a well-established body of work that considers affective labour in fandoms, it has not considered this labour from the point of view that it may be vital to the production of locality. For the most part, the literature understands fan work as a specific labour of production that yields an object (a story, a video, a costume) and is therefore of value for commercial interests. The increasingly available and affordable internet has allowed for the usual fan practices with their emphasis on remix to become more sophisticated and sharable. In addition, fans have been recognised by actors within the cultural industries as being critical to the success or failure of new releases or franchised titles.

In so doing, fan studies returns to questions of fan resistance and defiance. However, rather than providing a hegemonic resistance, fan works are set up as challenging the status quo of the corporate media industry and, in particular, copyright laws (Lessig 2004). However, fan scholars are as sceptical of the return of the romanticised construction of the fan as “pirate” as they were of the fan as “poacher”. Elizabeth Bird (2011) argues that the kinds of participation highly visible because of Web 2.0’s social, networked and DIY potentials are not ubiquitous to all fan cultures, and she problematises constructions of fan cultures as transparently creative, resistant and active manifestations of participation. She cautions that not every act of online communication counts as an act of creativity, nor are “produsers” exempt from co-option and disciplining by capital and corporate interests (see also Banks and Deuze 2009). Bird’s call for an increasing sensitivity to the material conditions for participation and the distribution of the resources governing these kinds of participations (2011) resonates with my need to see these theoretical arguments in the context of South Africa’s structuring and particular socio-political and economic conditions.

Perhaps more interestingly for the production of locality, for those who are not producing fan art or who do not have professional-level skills, there is still the “humdrum” labour of sharing information, reading and commenting on fan sites and promoting texts and events to networks. Tisha Turk elaborates on this distinction between types of fan labours:

Media fandom runs on the engine of production, but much of what we produce is not art but information, discussion, architecture, access, resources, metadata. . . Such activities and their outcomes tend to be less discussed and commended. . . even though in many cases these activities facilitate the creation of art objects or provide the infrastructure that enables the dissemination and discussion of those objects. (Turk 2013, par 2.3–2.4)

Fan scholars generally read this labour within the framework of the gift economy, pointing out that these gifts of free and affective labour ultimately result in the accrual of value and benefit to some third party. However, as Abigail De Kosnik points out, free labour “is not necessarily exploited labor” and under the rubric of the gift economy of an affinity group, fans have been seen to be willing participants, trading labour “for the pleasures of communication and exchange” (De Kosnik 2012, p. 136). While these points are both made with reference to online fan communities in particular, it holds true for tasks like manning stalls, serving lunches, running first aid tables, judging competitions, picking up people from the airport and so on.

The view of fan labour in terms of value production, and the view that positions fan labour as yielding non-commercial rewards of social capital, skills and experience (see Ito 2010; Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016) offer the possibility to explore this free labour in a third way: as a means of the production of locality.

### 2.4.3 *Locality as Imagined and Imaginary*

Appadurai calls imagination a social practice, saying that the emphasis in global culture on the image, the imagined, and the imaginary are markers of a new way of conceptualising our subjectivity:

No longer mere fantasy (opium for the masses whose real work is elsewhere), no longer simple escape (from a world defined principally by more concrete purposes and structures), no longer elite pastime (thus not relevant to the lives of ordinary people), and no longer mere contemplation (irrelevant for new forms of desire and subjectivity), the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (in the sense of both labor and culturally organized practice), and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility. (Appadurai 1996, p. 31)

This quote surfaces many of the thematic concerns for this thesis, not least of which being the variety of ways that the concept of imagination functions. Firstly, so much of fandom is wrapped up in the cinematic and fictional pleasures of fantasy and the fantastic. Fan practices are explicitly linked to the imagination in the sense of fiction, creativity, inventiveness or originality, in that they are orientated to works of the imagination by the author (the canon) and then frequently the practices by the fan are works of imagination in turn (colloquially known in fandoms as “the fanon<sup>7</sup>” (Chaney and Leibler 2007)).

Secondly, in film theory, the power of the imaginary signifier is its ability to render present something that is perceptually absent. Unlike in fine art or live performance, the signifiers (set, costume, actors and orchestra)

---

7. When fan-created works of fanfic or fan theories reach a point of influence in the fandom, they themselves take on a degree of authority. The portmanteau of fandom and canon results in the term fanon.

are absent in film: all that the film presents is the play of light, shadow and recorded sound (Metz 1975). Moreover, the ultimate silver screen magic act is not merely making present through absence, it is the spectator's imaginative projection of self into the elsewhere on the screen. The imaginary in spectatorship depends on the Lacanian understanding of the term and links the cinema screen to the encounters with the mirror in early childhood, thereby encoding screens as sites of pleasure and fascination through mis/recognition and identification (Metz 1975). However, Appadurai distinguishes between fantasy and imagination in his definition of the term. For him, fantasy evokes "thought divorced from projects and actions" and that it is "private, even individualistic", whereas the imagination is "projective" or a staging place for action (Appadurai 1996, p. 5).

While the implications suggested by these intersections of the imagined and the imaginary are fascinating food for thought, for the purposes of this analysis I follow Appadurai's conceptualisation of the imaginary. In this configuration, media texts are "resources for experiments with self-making"; they "allow scripts for possible lives to be imbricated with the glamour of film stars and fantastic film plots"; and because of the ubiquity of media texts and the saturation of our lives, they "provide resources for self-imagining as an everyday social project" (Appadurai 1996, pp. 3-4). In this way, the glamour and wish-fulfilment of fantasies find purchase in the world of material constraints and lived reality of everyday and mundane concerns. Rather than the rarified creative or leisure practices of the elite, Appadurai positions the imaginary in relation to work, the labour of the cultural intermediary, and the field of practice more generally. Finally, for Appadurai, the imaginary is a practice that negotiates or mediates between the structuring structures of transnational media flows and the agency of the individual. The imaginary is the lynchpin for how the transnational media text is operationalised in the everyday life of the fan.

This articulation between mediation, imagination and community is one that Appadurai borrows from Benedict Anderson's (1991) seminal ar-

ticle, in which he identified the newspaper's central role of "imagined community" in the constitution of the modern nation state. Even though the nation as a community is too large for the individual to be familiar with all its other members, Anderson argues that the newspaper mediates feelings of affiliation and belonging between citizens and compensates for the disembedding of community from the anchors of time and place. For Anderson, an imagined community has both physical and material as well as symbolic qualities and is often, but not necessarily, geographically defined. More importantly, imagined communities provide members with a rubric for collective imagining.

Abstracted from the discourses of modernity and the nation state, Anderson's "imagined community" has been used as a theoretical framework to explain the practices and affiliations of fans and the experience of community inseparable from the processes of mediation. For instance Jenkins writes: "Fan communities have long defined their memberships through affinities" and that "fandoms were virtual communities, 'imagined' and 'imagining' communities, long before the introduction of networked computers" (Jenkins 2006, p. 137). However, Paul Théberge cautions against a too easy conflation of fandom with community. He follows de Certeau (de Certeau 1984) in arguing that communities are not singular coherent entities. Instead they are porous assemblages and a network of relations with an emphasis on the everyday, the micro, the familiar and familial and that it should be "understood as resulting from a series of consistent, sustained engagements in specific communal practices over time" (Théberge 2006, para 6).

In other words, one should be cautious of suggesting that imagined community is placeless and deterritorialised, or that fandoms are automatically conferred with the status of community. Research on fandoms as virtual communities that sees them as an elaboration on Anderson's "imagined" communities emerged relatively early in the fan studies literature. This arose from the conflation of the imagined community as abstracted from the specificities of immediate geography by means of mass media and the idea that cyberspace is somehow placeless and de-

territorialised. Meyrowitz (1985) holds that the pessimistic view that virtual communities are dangerous because they are empty substitutes for the “real” community of geographic locality, and erode relationships of solidarity and collectivity. In contrast, Rheingold’s (2008) view offers an overly optimistic view of the potential of online communities to liberate users from the limitations of race, gender, class and geography. Despite these differences, what both these positions have in common is a view of cyberspace marked by a loss of geographic location and a kind of community severed from either a sense of or the materialities of place.

However, Homi Bhabha (1990) counters this view of the virtual community existing in placeless neutrality. He argues to the contrary that they are not detached from the politics of place and the ways in which people imagine, use rhetoric and discourse and shape the manifested contours of their locality by means of these practices. In this articulation, Anderson’s imagined community, far from being deterritorialised or post-geographic, is explicitly bound by the concept of place and the ontology of nation: the collective is produced by and productive of locality even though, or perhaps especially, because this production is one of imagination.

Chin and Morimoto’s take on the link between modern fandoms and “imagined communities” is “fostered by technologies that enable geographically dispersed people to overcome time and distance in forging virtual communities of affect... [this creates] a sense of simultaneous, shared popular cultural experience” (Morimoto and Chin 2017, p. 175). However, they argue this mobilisation of the concept frequently occludes “disparities and disjunctures” in its tendency to normalise transcultural fandom to a generic understanding strongly premised on a default imagining of English-speaking American’s experiences of fandom. This, they consider to be naively depoliticised and reduced to “untroubled (and often idealistic) geo-temporal convergence [that] elides the critique inherent in imagined communities as a way of thinking about how and why communities of affect and belonging are constituted” (Morimoto and Chin 2017, p. 175). Instead they propose that there is much to be

gained from “how fans and fan scholars closer to home imagine the communities of English language media fandom” (Morimoto and Chin 2017, p. 177). As transcultural fans themselves, what they mean by “closer to home” is the experience of being a fan further away from the imagined centre: on the periphery either geographically, culturally or politically.

In summary, imaginative practices are the acts of individuals in situated contexts shaped by the specificities of social position. Sometimes these acts are intangible and ephemeral, and sometimes they are concrete in terms of their materiality, labour and costs. These practices may be the work of a collective or they may be private. They may be progressive, creative, transformative, transgressive or subversive, and they may be rooted in consumption, escapism or the conservative or retrogressive fantasies of gender or race. Nevertheless, they are the realisation of communal attachments and affinity and, in the case of fans of transcultural popular culture, they utilise texts that are in ubiquitous circulation as resources in the production of locality. As Weiss notes, “imaginative practice is not intractably ‘local’ ” and “fantasy is never the mere appropriation of external signs according to the strictures of a set of transcendent, *sui generis* categories”. Rather “the horizon of an imagined here and now, a situated ‘present’, is made to incorporate dispersed and distant persons, values and events, and... this remote horizon is also made to encompass the here and now” (Weiss 2002, p. 94).

## 2.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter introduced the idea of the global fan. It located the discussion in a review of some problems in this construction and how the positions as to globalisation and cultural imperialism can be read in the light of what is a geographically local community of fans. Local even though consuming, celebrating and constructing affiliations with primarily English language texts generated and originating from the USA (and to a lesser extent UK sources). Aligning the research with the position emerg-

ing from recent work into transcultural fandom, I refute the various mobilisations of dualistic thinking around fans and theories of globalisation more generally. There has little work that considers the South African fan of global popular culture. Consequently the next section of the literature review sketched the contextual landscape for these fannish practices by deploying the small, but significant body of work that has been done on the segmentation of youth audiences and how this articulates with our political history and ongoing socio-economic conditions.

The chapter then moved to introduce the theoretical framework driven by media practice as the point of entry into the everyday experience of mediated life. Here I presented these practices as being in articulation with locality, the second core concept around which the thesis is structured. What followed was a discussion of the literature informing, and informed by, Arjun Appadurai's conception of locality as a contingent, adaptable and malleable quality of globalised post-modernity. The latter part of the chapter was premised on a three-pronged review of ways in which this locality can be realised, sustained, produced and reproduced in ways that are not contained, but often are informed by material, mediated and everyday practices and how these intersect with the existing work on fans and their communities. In most cases the principle of locality is tangential to the fan scholarship and therefore the literature review teases out and ties together these themes in an attempt to make explicit some implications of this research.



## METHOD AND PARTICIPANTS

---

This research design is underpinned by the principles of qualitative ethnographic inquiry. The object of analysis was the everyday practices, and reflections on these practices, of a small group of self-identifying fans of global media entertainment in Gauteng, South Africa. The chapter discusses the research design and the data collection tools necessitated by a researcher-absent method, since it was not feasible to follow the participants into and through their everyday lives. This chapter also describes the criteria, limitations and unforeseen consequences of the snowball sampling method used for participant selection. I elaborate on the ethical considerations for the research and their impact on how the findings are presented and participants are represented in the chapters to follow. The chapter then summarises the rich, and sometimes overwhelming, material generated by this method and the generous participants. It also presents an opportunity to point to some avenues for future research that fell outside the scope and scale of this project. I then outline the strategy for integrating the diverse materials in a thematic analysis. This was a challenge, given the multimodal data made up of interview transcripts, photographs, digital image and audiovisual collections, maps, original fan art, activity diaries and self-reflexive writing. Brief profiles for each of the participants are presented under their selected or assigned pseudonyms.

### 3.1 RESEARCHING FANS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

The objective of this research is to trace and discover the ways in which media (broadly imagined as the relationship between content, technology and format) function in everyday lives. However, in so doing, it had to incorporate media fans' multi-sited, often private and frequently on-line or digital practices. Patrick Murphy suggests that ethnographic studies of media practices would be better served by the concept of a "representational bricolage". A bricolage can account for the change from the "classical notion of 'being there' in the field (singular and over time) to a less fixed, temporally emergent 'multisited ethnography'" (Murphy 2011, p. 4), where the emphasis is less on fidelity or completeness and pays greater attention to the network of linkages connecting the site. The research required a design that could account for heterogeneity and complexity without attempting to create taxonomies or hierarchies. What had to be avoided was thinking about fan practices in a way that simply reproduced the familiar binaries that already plague fan studies: global-local, embodied-virtual, producer-consumer or mediated-live.

Mark Duffett articulates a similar shift in fan studies, towards "real fans living everyday lives in actual times and places" rather than what he calls "a theoretical aggregate of the actions and experiences" of fans (Duffett 2013, p. 282). In so doing he proposes that attention should be paid to the empirical qualities of the phenomenon of fandom rather than simply refining or revising extant typologies. Following Duffett's lead, I have taken a grounded approach to the research by considering fandom as a phenomenon embedded in a complex lifeworld of nationhood, class, race, family culture and professionalism. In some ways the academic construction of the fan sets up an artificial criteria for 'what counts' as fan practice and 'who counts' as a fan. This construct is circulated and mediates what a fan looks like in a self-fulfilling prophecy. The idea of fandom as a material, lived, everyday, situated experience is underdeveloped. Studies seldom track the engaged, knowledgeable

commentator from one fan forum to the next. Nor do they follow the cosplayer home after the convention or the fanfic writer to their desk at work. This continues the academic tradition of constructing fandom as something exceptional and distinct from the more mundane experiences of the world.

The South African fan community is not large enough to sustain research that only looks at a single fandom or fan practice. The affective pleasures of individual fans are eclectic and unpredictable and what drives a fan towards a particular text is idiosyncratic. To predetermine participants on the basis of a specific fandom would mean only capturing a portion of the range of complexities of practices. This kind of specialisation would be at odds with the questions and contributions this research makes. Instead, a theoretical framework that foregrounds everyday practices makes it possible to account for what Gray *et al.* call “the increasing entanglement of territorial place and virtual space” (2007b, p. 13). A theory of media practice bypasses the problem of taxonomies and a priori definitions of what constitutes a fan or fandom. It grounds the empirical process in discovery of rich observable phenomena and reported experiences. This theoretical framework informed the choice of a research method that looked to the habitual, fluid and quotidian rhythms of the participants’ lives as fans.

This focus on practice required an adjustable focal length that can take in the full range of the untidy, leaky and porous nature of mediated practices in everyday lives. The fans in this account are simultaneously: virtual participants acutely aware of their concrete realities; international travellers attached to a sense of home; local actors in imaginary communities; pirates on the seas of supranational commerce; and entrepreneurs plying and protecting their own trade. As Nick Couldry and Anna McCarthy tell us: “There are... no easy symmetries. The spatial orders that media systems construct and enforce are highly complicated, unevenly developed and multi-scaled” (Couldry and McCarthy 2004, p. 1). This problem of scale has become a common refrain in ethnographic enquiries, as Jean and John Comaroff (1999) map out:

The processes involved in the rise of novel forms of planetary integration and compression – especially in the electronic economy, in mass communications, in flexitime flows of labor and capital, in the instantaneous circulation of signs and images, in the translocal commodification of culture, in the diasporic politics of identity – challenge us by re-presenting the most fundamental question of our craft: how do human beings construct their intimate, everyday life-worlds at the shifting intersections of here, there, elsewhere, everywhere? This, finally, is a problem of scale: of determining, in respect of any given ethnography – contemporary, historical, or both – the stretch of relations, concrete processes, imaginings, spatial planes commensurate to its realization. (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, p. 4)

My focus on practice threads together the concrete and the virtual, the distant and the proximal, the macro supra-national circuits of distribution and production and the domestic demands of childcare and family obligations. Nevertheless, the practices are experienced locally in the lives of fans in ways that demand a coherent and comprehensive framing of this idea of locality.

### 3.2 PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

A process of snowball sampling was used for recruiting participants. Word-of-mouth recommendations activated via the local network of fans and their channels was by far the most efficient and productive method of contacting potential participants. The criteria for participants included the following considerations:

- should self-identify as a fan and be familiar with “geek” or fan cultures;

- must be over eighteen years old;
- must be willing to have face-to-face interviews either in person or via Skype;
- must have some form of regular internet access (home, work, tertiary education, internet café, mobile);
- must be willing to respond to the prompts in the pack and spend some time working independently with these resources outside of the interview sessions.

There were no restrictions on the number or type of fandoms with which participants engaged; however, at least one of their fandoms needed to refer to a transnational film or television text.

Since this research was framed as exploratory it was necessary to leave the criteria as open as possible. Participants were therefore selected based on their self-identification as fans rather than a fixed schema for fandom.

There were a number of offers from participants that I was not able to accept. These included fans of international sports teams (like Barcelona or Manchester United), fans primarily focused on the celebrity lives of stars but not necessarily their work, fans of local musicians working in what were perceived as international styles (hip-hop, techno or alternative rock), and so on. While these did not meet my criteria for global popular media cultures, it demonstrates that there are many parallel (and sometimes intersecting) fandoms of many kinds thriving in South Africa. Another reason for turning away participants was a number of people under the age of 18. Local popular culture fans in their late teens and who are of school-going age were well-represented in this segment. This is a promising avenue for future research but would need to be scoped and framed with this category of younger fans in South Africa in mind. Over thirty fans responded either to the first round of calls for participants, or positively to their nomination by friends and colleagues

as part of the snowball sampling method. This suggests a well connected fan community (or communities) in Gauteng.

The sampling process, however, was complicated by two main factors: one that is quite broadly noted in the literature on fandom, the other perhaps more specific to the South African context. In the first case I noted the impact of mainstream commercial media increasingly addressing and positioning their ideal audience as affectively and performatively “fannish”. In other words, gone are the days where fans and geeks were the overly enthusiastic outsiders; instead the audience-text relationship has been reconfigured making the fan the “new normal”. As discussed in the previous chapter, there is some reason to read this shift as a result of increasing co-option of what were once marginal fan practices by the mainstream. In 2007 Bob Rehak and Susanna Scott, in a debate hosted by Jenkins’ blog, coined the term “fanification”. In a later post, Rehak suggests that fanification describes “a kind of adaptive mimicry, [where] the center pretends that it is the fringe” and audiences “complete the ideological circuit by acting as fans”. In this new mode “to not be a fan is to risk social censure — a striking inversion of the cultural coordinates by which geekiness was once measured (and, according to the values of the time, censured)” (Rehak 2007, np).

However, it was the second factor arising from the sampling method and the decision to make self-selection a major criteria that was to have a marked effect on how the research unfolded. In particular it limited the scope of investigation in ways that require an extended discussion.

### 3.3 THE ELUSIVE BLACK FAN AND THE WHITE CENTRE OF SOUTH AFRICAN FANDOM

I was adamant in rejecting a text-centric or even practice-centric criteria for fandom. As such, the call for participants was based on their self-identification as fans rather than an external, projected schema of

what constitutes a fan. In this way I had hoped to prioritise a grounded emergence for what constitutes fan practice and fandom by attempting to circumvent the pre-established frames of reference of what and who counts as a fan. This arose from a sensitivity to precisely the kinds of audience segmentation and contextual factors such as access, peer network and affinity that have been discussed. Rather than a study of audiences for particular texts or practitioners of certain kinds of leisure activities, the act of recognising and naming oneself as "fan" was a key starting point for tracking and tracing the formation and maintenance of these networks of affinity and collectivity.

Initially the process of setting up and seeding interviews within the fan communities gathered momentum slowly. I left messages on Facebook pages for fan groups, approached local comic book and gaming speciality shops and contacted event organisers. I also shared the call for participants amongst students at the university of the Witwatersrand. The sampling process started to yield potential participants which was then followed by a first round of interviews. As per the snowball sampling approach, these then lead to further referrals. However, these initial contacts were almost exclusively with fans who identified as white and either English or Afrikaans first language speakers. At the same time, my invitations and preliminary introductions to black South African fans did not go beyond the initial exchange of emails or a voice message left on a phone. Once I realised that this pattern was persisting, I became more direct in my targeting of black participants.

One strategy was to directly ask the black, self-professed fans in my courses and classes for referrals. Obviously it would have been ethically problematic to draw participants from the students that I have taught or might teach in the future and so this group was automatically excluded from participation. However, this direct approach was still a sensitive matter to ensure that their felt neither obliged nor implicated in the research. Again, while this approach yielded a number of leads and two of the eventual participants in the study, in both instances these were white South Africans.

My second strategy for recruiting participants from outside the pool of white fans was to add an explicit question to the end of each preliminary interview as we were wrapping up. Often in these moments of post-interview chat the interviewee would ask me how the research was going or who else I was speaking to. It was an organic transition to ask for suggestions of people they felt could give me a perspective on local fan communities. This would generally yield a few contacts either immediately or in the following few days (participants were often sensitive about checking first with their prospective nominees for permission to share their details). Since, by the end of the first interview the matter of race had generally been raised at least once, as the interviews went on I started asking deliberately if their recommendations included fans from across South Africa's race spectrum. In instances where this was not the case I would comment that I had had very few non-white participants and would appreciate some more diverse referrals. In most cases this prompt was sufficient to elicit additional input. I was reasonably sure that these steps would bring in the, hitherto, elusive black fan. However, the same dynamic persisted: email exchanges went nowhere, voice messages remained unreturned and even in the instance where there was some initial interest, this did not translate into actual interviews.

Perhaps it should have been self-evident that a snowball sampling method in a context like South Africa would be likely to result in precisely the sort of raced and classed silos where white participants refer others from within their social and affinity networks. However, this does not entirely account for the lack of black participants who, by this logic, would have been seeded via other routes of recruitment. I was left with a decision. Either I reframed the terms of the study or I accepted that the research had delivered its first findings: that fandom in South Africa is shaped by race despite fan studies' arguments about the potentials for shared textual imaginaries and interpretive communities. My hypothesis is that my position as a white middle-aged female fan, compounding my role as academic researcher, was interpellating white participants and black participants in very different ways. My own whiteness was closing a circuit



of affinity and recognition for some, while leaving others unconvinced, uncertain or uninterested. In effect, the research process produced its own temporary micro-locality. I would argue that embedded within this are even further complexities for local fandoms that orbit considerations of race, research and subjectivity.

For instance, it might be that the terms of reference that underpinned the study and participant selection in the first place were at odds with the aim of encouraging a more diverse group of participants. Perhaps the act of self-identifying as a fan has resonances of self-othering that are inhibiting and problematic. However, I am cautious of too simple a mapping of the principle of fans and their self-selected alterity to the South African context. Firstly, as Rebecca Wanzo and others have pointed out, from the outset fans were understood to have chosen their outsider status in that "fan culture stands as an open challenge to the 'naturalness' and desirability of dominant cultural hierarchies" (Jenkins in Wanzo 2015, par 2.1). As Wanzo says, this downplays that being a fan is an increasingly (and industry manufactured) normative way of seeing audiences and their consumption practices.

Audiences from the global South responding to texts and consumption practices from the so-called global North can often take up a position of resistance that precludes easy identification with and celebration of these texts. The fan texts that may well be denigrated as marginal in one context have a different currency in a different setting. Access to these same popular texts that are the centre of gravity for fannish behaviour can be reframed as the consumption practices of a transnational elite. In some cases, to self-identify as a black South African fan as defined in relation to transnational fandom might be an unacceptable subjectivity. Far from operating from a position "of cultural and social weakness" (Jenkins in Wanzo 2015, par 2.9), what does it mean if being a fan signals a different configuration of affinities and privileges? In these instances self-identifying as a fan is more than simply normative, it comes with an entirely new raft of considerations many of which are potentially alienating. Perhaps by insisting that self-identification was the foremost

selection criteria, the study reproduced and perpetuated "a narrowness of what constitutes a fan and performs a profound set of historical erasures of fandom" (Wanzo 2015, par 2.3) which made participation in the study an untenable or undesirable experience.

Compounding this consideration is the tension between the visible and invisible whiteness of fandom in South Africa. Fandom as a category of leisure or audience engagement, defined as it has been primarily by a western academic tradition, is encoded as a white activity. Here, whiteness is understood as emerging from Dyer's (1997) seminal argument as "a particular, hegemonic but invisible power relation that privileges (and normalizes) the culture and position of white people" (Spracklen 2013, p. 5). However, as both Sarah Nuttal (2001) and later Nicky Falkof (2015) point out, point out, Dyer's ideas, while crucial, do not have the same implications in all contexts. For instance, it is difficult to claim white invisibility in South Africa where whiteness is the exception to the norm, but moreover, marking race was a key objective of Apartheid legislation and culture. Their observations point to the frustratingly complex tension at the centre of the sampling method here. It simultaneously speaks to the presence of the structural and invisible epistemological whiteness of fan studies and the physical embodiment of my own highly visible racial whiteness as a researcher. How the above considerations were instrumental in the self-exclusion of black participants from the study is hard to assess and without evidence to support or elaborate these hypotheses they must remain unresolved for the present.

### 3.3.1 *First findings: The Impact of Race on Fandom, Access and Audience Segmentation*

As has been recounted above, it was evident that the fieldwork was primarily yielding references and introductions to fans who were white. At first it was not especially surprising to find that the referrals tended to be within the same race and class, given South Africa's historical divisions

along racial lines. Nevertheless, the fact that ten out of the eleven participants identify as white South Africans points to a relationship between whiteness and fandom that is significant. The question of race, and the particular configuration of whiteness and privilege in a South African context, is significant.

It soon became evident that the fieldwork was primarily yielding references and introductions to fans who were white. At first it was not especially surprising to find that the referrals tended to be within the same race and class, given South Africa's historical divisions along racial lines. However, there are certainly fans who are part of the local global popular culture fan scene who are not white. I have met enthusiastic fans at conventions, at events, and in my classroom where, for several years, students have written accounts of the impact race and class have had on their participation and fandoms. Nevertheless, the fact that ten out of the eleven participants identify as white South Africans points to a relationship between whiteness and fandom that is significant. The question of race, and the particular configuration of whiteness and privilege in a South African context, is significant. It underpins many other findings and is therefore critical when considering the participants, their practices and their histories of participation. This factor was not lost on most of the participants. In particular it was emphasised by EssieJayne, who found it worth documenting. In our follow-up interview she selected an image that she had taken that she wanted to talk about. The context for the photograph was *Free Comic Book Day*<sup>1</sup> (the first Saturday in May), an initiative to promote comic books and local comic-book shops. Fans enthusiastically take part, often standing in long queues. EssieJayne's extended family of children, cousins and their spouses, nieces and nephews visited the various comic stores in costume. While she was standing in the queue, it occurred to her that this illustrated something very particular about the experience. So she took a photograph and included it in her pack. In our interview she commented, "This was

---

1. Held on the first Saturday of May, Free Comic Book Day is a promotional event initiated by the North American comic book industry. It has extended to the South African comic book community, but is more widely regarded as a fan event.

for you, purely so you could see the demographics... All white, men mostly and boys"



*Figure 3.1: The image taken by EssieJayne as part of her self-documented fan activities. She brought the image up in our follow up interview in order to frame her thoughts about fandom in South Africa in terms of race and gender. Her comment was that she felt this image accurately represented her experience of the predominance of white men and boys in the fan community.*

Sarah Gatson and Robin Reid's editorial for the special issue of *Transformative Works and Culture* calls for

a focus particularly on the racialized flow of cultures, historical marginalizations of specific populations based on race/ethnicity, class, and gender/sexuality in media, education, and scholarship, and the implications of how particular forms of culture flow more easily than others.(Gatson and Reid 2011, p. 1.1)

Gatson and Reid identify several key mechanisms that work to encode the flow of culture and the uptake and participation in ways that are explicitly marked by race. First amongst these is access. Despite the affordances of new media tools for production and dissemination, the distribution of these resources remains uneven and unexamined.

In general, South Africa is regarded as well-connected and resourced in terms of the digital and internet technologies critical for participation in global fandoms. A connection to the internet is estimated to be available to nearly 54% of the population (Mothobi and Chair and Rademan 2017). Unsurprisingly, Elirea Bornman (2016) points to a correlation between higher income levels, higher levels of education and the sophistication of ICT skills. Not only is this distribution unequal, but simply looking at penetration as an average is not particularly useful. More tellingly, fixed broadband penetration reaches only 2.2% of people. Mobile broadband usage is significantly higher, at 26%. However, the cost of mobile data in South Africa is disproportionately high for lower-income users. Therefore, while technically there may be reasonable levels of connectivity, the intensive data requirements of fan practices may make them unaffordable to most.

Furthermore, while fibre broadband costs have dropped, only 25.5% of households have an internet subscription (Bornman 2016, p. 268). This low proportion of households with internet access is significant for participation in fandoms. Frequent, heavy users of digital resources require a personal device that can be connected to a cheap, largely unlimited and unpoliced broadband internet connection. Aside from a private broadband connection, these types of resources are common to university campuses in ways that are seldom found in other public or semi-public places in South Africa. Toks Oyedemi's study of internet usage patterns (2012) amongst students finds that home users (or those with their own device: laptop, tablet, phone etc.) have the possibility of flexible and regular use with no requirement to wait for a turn or make way for the next user, unlike those using public computers. Likewise, those using shared devices may feel embarrassed at their lack of proficiency and for fans, there is the stigma of using shared resources for personal or leisure pursuits that in the context of a computer laboratory at school or university may be seen as frivolous and invite censure.

In South Africa this uneven distribution of, and access to, resources traces the socio-economic history of the Apartheid's system of racial

ordering and exclusion. This has resulted in a country that “remains deeply racialised, in cultural and social terms, as well as deeply unequal, in terms of the distribution of income and opportunities” (Seekings 2008, p. 1). One way that this is realised is the relationship between whiteness and fan or geek culture marked by what Daniel Schieferdecker (2017) would say is “globally-orientated”. To apply the earlier (and more detailed) discussion of Schieferdecker’s argument in the literature review, it is possible that fandoms that look to global popular culture tend to be shaped by four factors: the white fan’s lack of local language skills that drives consumers to English-only texts; the socio-economic advantages that determine exposure and facilitate access; a feeling of “cultural proximity” to the lives and representations in texts that are orientated towards individualism and consumer culture; and a social network and peer-group dynamic that reinforce global texts as part of taste-making and shared conversation (Schieferdecker 2017) .

Certainly the participants in this study were similar in their facility and fluency in spoken and written English. In nearly every case, the texts that the participants have referred to in the fieldwork were originally produced in English, or have been dubbed or subtitled in English. With a few notable exceptions, the celebrated texts of the participants originated in the USA or UK. The global fan sites and the social media platforms (both local and transnational) referred to in the interviews and diaries are English-language. Not all the participants had English as a mother tongue, but for all of them, the lingua franca of fandom was English, irrespective of what their home language might be.

Secondly, all of the participants were long-term residents of the Gauteng area – the commercial, urban heart of the country. Geographic location is more than simply proximity to events and shops and high-speed broadband connectivity. In South Africa, being in an urban centre has other structural implications for the types of capital available and that accrue with compounding effect. For affluent residents of Gauteng, the resources of time, leisure and disposable income are resources conjoined with education, training and employment opportunities. In South Africa,

the matter of place intersects not only with that of class, but with those of language and race in ways that are not deterministic, but are certainly framed and constrained by what Seekings calls the “continuing salience of race” (2008). In this instance, employment, geographic place and language may well be the mechanisms that facilitate participation in fandom.

The questions raised by the observable correlation between race and fandom are critical for exploring fandom in South Africa. They are potentially an artefact of the sampling method and the smallness of the group, but even so, they point to an important area of future study.

### 3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

University ethical clearance was granted before the fieldwork portion of the research commenced (see appendix a.4). The ethical considerations encompassed usual requirements for informed consent and non-disclosure of participant identity and research material (see appendix a.4). Participants were reassured they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, that the raw data in the form of written responses, transcriptions and artefacts would be secured and that care would be taken to screen out information that could lead to the identification of the participants. Many fans take part in the consumption and distribution of material through channels that may not comply with copyright law. Despite being widespread, these practices are illegal and carry penalties, thus heightening the need for care and attention to best practice in terms of the confidential treatment of research participant identities.

Sometimes the participants selected their own pseudonyms and in other instances they left it to me to decide for them. In these cases I have selected a character from one of their fandoms. I have elected to quote from the interviews but have not included the full transcripts in the

appendices, even with redactions to protect identities. Firstly, because the snowball sampling method means that many of these participants are known to each other. Secondly, because the focus on the everyday practices of fans means a high level of personal detail has been shared and would make identification possible. These transcripts are available for review on request by examiners.

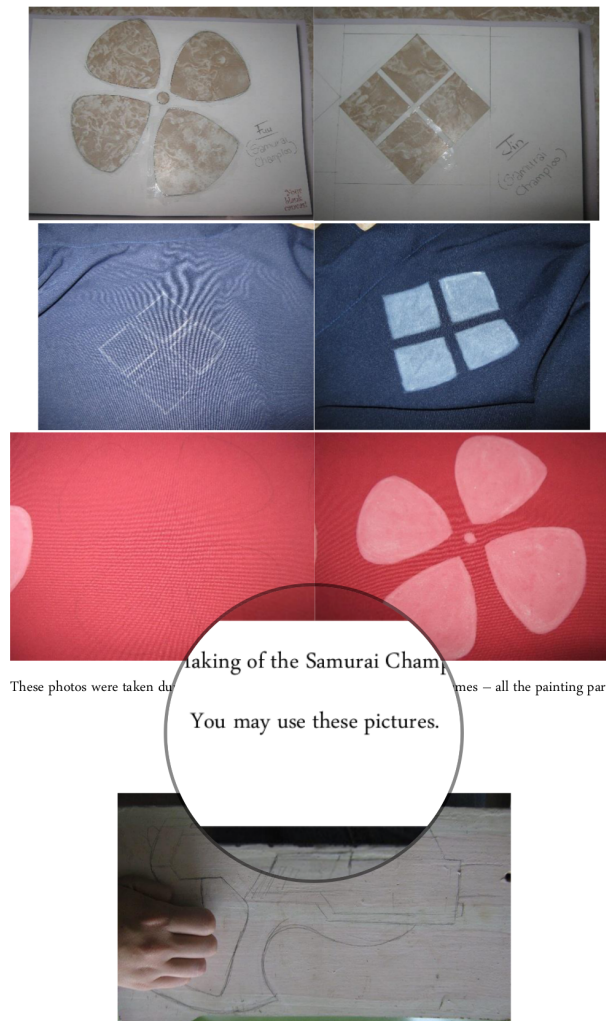
The instructions to participants included a request for them to document day-to-day aspects of fannish practice, and therefore non-participants may be included in photographs or discussions. This area of concern was addressed in the participant information sheet and alerted participants to the ethical implications of photographing other people. Secondly, it assured them that they were invited to label all photographic material as either: acceptable for reproduction, requiring modification, or to remain as raw data as part of the study and not to be reproduced as an image. Participants exercised these options and where necessary, these images have been omitted from the appendices at the end of the thesis.

The participants in this study granted me an astonishing degree of access through their self-documentation and frank reflection on their lives as fans who are parents, partners, sons and daughters, reluctant employees and dedicated volunteers, pirates, consumers and creators of content. They trusted that care would be taken with the images of their children, their identities and the intellectual property that is their fiction and art. It is possible that this willingness to share is reflecting a growing tendency by users of social media towards self-documentation and self-representation. Social media invites technologically-skilled and media-orientated people into self-representation, documentation and the sharing of this content. Perhaps this meant that the request to participants to keep diaries or document their lives was shaped by other kinds of practices. That being said, the participants were aware and critical of the practices of self-representation or representing others and how this extends to the politics of their practices. The choices of what was shared, why it was shared and what they were willing to share for off-the-record purposes only (especially images) indicates that this seemingly open



## Photos

### Workshops and Items in the Making



This was the sketch made on the wood to start with the Mass Effect Heavy Pistol, the M-11 Suppressor.

*Figure 3.2: An example of a participants' instructions and permissions about how her images should and could be used.*

practice is underpinned by thoughtful, reflexive and responsible choices. I have taken this trust by the participants seriously. Therefore in some instances, and after careful consideration, I have elected to be conservative, reserving materials even where permission was granted for them to be used.

Eleven participants were recruited for the initial round of interviews. Attrition of participants can usually be expected at points during data collection, especially since this was a multi-stage process spanning sev-

eral weeks. Accounting for this, a second round of recruitment and interviews should have been necessary to reach the original target of between eight and ten participants for this small group study. However, not a single participant withdrew from the study or did not complete all three stages of the fieldwork process. This was despite one participant being a new mother just returning to work after maternity leave, while another was hospitalised for a week during the process. This level of engagement and commitment to a rather demanding level of participation in the study was unexpected. Participants all found time to be interviewed twice. They all contributed substantial time to completing the fan activity diary, mapping their online engagements and responding to questions and prompts. They looked through their photographic archives for treasures to share and to help me better understand the places and routines of their fan practices. The participants had several opportunities to interact with the research as described below.

I am very grateful for the labour, time and effort expended by every one of the eleven contributors to this study.

### 3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The research design relied on a combination of three different types of data collection.

- Phase 1: A traditional face-to-face semi-structured interview.
- Phase 2: Participants were provided with a pack containing a collection of data gathering tools (detailed and pictured below), with which the participants worked independently for a period of a week or two. This pack was collected and reviewed before stage three.

- Phase 3: In the final portion of the fieldwork process the materials the participants had generated were used as prompts in follow-up elicitation interviews.

All interviews in both stages of the data collection were recorded and transcribed. The configuration of these three stages and the resources and materials generated offered the opportunity of checking back with participants as the process unfolded. These were opportunities for the participants to amend, correct or elaborate on ideas they had shared in earlier stages. The final interview also provided an opportunity to clarify statements from either the earlier interview or the material generated and returned in the pack. The participants used this iterative process to interrogate the research and our respective roles and responsibilities. The final thesis will be shared with participants.

### **Phase 1: Initial semi-structured interviews**

In the initial semi-structured interviews, participants were encouraged to tell the story of how they became involved in fandom, what kinds of texts they liked, and – equally importantly – those that they were *not* fans of. The first round of interviews allowed for questions about access and participation in their fandoms, what kinds of activities they valued and what connections, friendships and pleasures they found in fandom (see appendix [a.5](#) for the schedule of questions). For the most part, the fans recruited and interviewed in this study could be termed experts driven by affect. They were voluble on the subject of their fandoms, passionate in their opinions about other fans and fandoms and knowledgeable and insightful about the mechanics and politics of the industry that framed their fandoms. The interviews were rich in detail but also frequently departed from the structured questions into longer narratives, anecdotes and analogies drawn from texts, real events and niche fan cultures. There was only one interview that lasted for forty-five minutes (my initial estimate for the preliminary round of interviews); the rest stretched to an hour-and-a-half or more.

## Phase 2: Participant's package for self-recorded data gathering

Elizabeth Bird (2003) introduces the term “researcher-absent” methods to argue for the value of data collection strategies that rethink the necessity of “being there”. She holds that this is not always the optimal way to perform ethnographic work and especially in instances where researcher presence would disrupt precisely the flow of daily activity that is the focus of the study. The packs for self-recorded data were an attempt to trace and track some of these qualities while fully acknowledging that the media audience is not an “objective, concrete aggregate” and that “people play many roles in their lives and being an audience is only one (probably not that important) role” (Bird 1992, p. 250).



Figure 3.3: The contents of the packs given to the participants as part of a research-absent data collection process. The pack included an activity diary, prompt cards, a map and a USB drive for digital material.

**The media activity diary:** The media activity diary is an established means of recording activities with immediacy (close to the time of the event), duration (over a sustained term period) and in situations that are implausible for a researcher to observe or where the impact of the observer would render any findings invalid. Markham and Couldry (Markham and Couldry 2007) suggest that the diary is a subjective, qual-

itative ethnographic tool, which generates detailed information that can be used productively to refine questions to ask participants at a later stage in the same project. They propose a model of diary recordings bracketed by two in-depth interviews. Ethnographic diary methods encourage participant narratives and reflection. These are enhanced by interviews where complex interrelations between interview and diary data can be teased out, “generating a subtle and multiperspectival account” that takes “seriously respondents’ status as thinking individuals” (Markham and Couldry 2007, p. 691).

Fan practices, such as writing fan fiction or editing a video, take place over days and weeks and often late after work when family or study obligations are complete. On the other hand, forum discussions take place online and are continually read or commented on throughout the day via Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook and the comment sections of websites. The participants used their diaries in a variety of different ways and adapted the intentionally loose requirements of how often and when they should be used as a log. For instance, some participants logged a separate page for each activity. Others realised their fan activities are routinised within the framework of formal employment and each day adhered to a template. Others happened to be involved in a particular project that consumed hours of labour and attention every day as the deadline came closer. These diaries are rich in detail about the intersection of fandom and the rest of everyday life: work, family-life, health and even the stakes for friendly competition within the fan community.

**Photographic and digital collections:** The pack contained an invitation to participants to take photographs with the intention that, when we met for the second interview, there would be an opportunity for them to explain their photos. When the interview was completed, the photos and interview text remained as data to be looked at together and independently, and subjected to different analytical approaches.

The participants were prompted to document:

- Places – e.g. workspaces at home, events and gatherings, a favourite spot in an internet café or computer lab at university
- People – e.g. friends who took part in their gatherings for screenings, game-evenings, sessions of costume-making etc.
- Objects - costumes or props, artworks, gaming rigs (custom-built gaming PCs), collections (posters, films, books, comics etc.), newly acquired prized objects or self-curated collections

The mix of participant-generated photographs was eclectic. It ranged from goofy family pictures of pets and friends, to professional workspaces and documentation of costume and prop construction, to the edited output of a semi-professional photographer at a major fan event. In the interviews, the photographs were extremely productive. As Bettina Kolb (2008) says, the photo “influences the impulse to speak” and certainly it was a generative tool. What was evident and very influential in the analysis and determination of the central themes was what Kolb describes as “the decoding phase”, which allows for a different interaction between researcher and participant as they drive and initiate observations. The photographs open a window onto the participants’ world where they are the expert; their intention for taking the photograph is given precedence, as is their explanation of what it means or why it may be significant to the topic. The advantage of photo elicitation is that:

Participants describe their photos in their own words, in a non scientific language and the researcher encourages them to speak about their personal values. This phase establishes dialogue and trust, and the researcher encourages participants to argue for their viewpoint. Ideally, the photo interview promotes mutual learning. . . in a conversation between equals. (Kolb 2008, para 6)

Initially the participants were offered a disposable camera with which to document their lives as fans. I eliminated this question from the initial re-



cruitment process after several incredulous responses that a disposable camera would not be necessary. One particular participant said, with barely disguised condescension, that he thought a disposable camera was a “cute” idea. This bears out the observation by scholars that fans are often early adopters of technology with a high level of technical expertise. However, the consequence of not insisting on the limitations of a camera with a limited number of exposures was to open the floodgates to the participants’ prolific, enthusiastic and transmedial nomadism and poaching practices. Not only did the participants record their lives as fans in photographs, but they granted me access to: their photo albums; their collections of vintage poster art; their self-selected and curated collections of fan art; screen grabs of online interactions; copies of fan produced video; favourite films; references for costumes; fan mixes (music); fan fiction and so on. The total collection of digital files shared numbers in the hundreds (see the data summary in table 3.5).

**Prompt Cards:** The pack also included postcards with prompt questions on one side, and space for either a written or visual response on the other. Shanthi Robertson (2008) offers a rationale for the use of postcards used in her research into transnational migration. She issued a pack of postcards to her participants with an image and the beginning of a sentence to act as a prompt for reflection. She proposes the postcards as a means to circumvent the awkwardness of answering personal or emotional questions and suggests that the prompt card allows respondents to take time to choose their mode of response, reflect on or even avoid specific prompts or questions.

In this study, the prompt cards were intended to give participants an opportunity to respond to the meta aspects of being involved in the study. For a couple of the participants, these prompts spun off into substantial personal projects (see for instance Idril’s inclusions in appendix a.1). Moving far beyond my expectations as the researcher, participants wrote responses to the prompt questions and illustrated them with photographs and diagrams. These documents opened intimate windows onto family life, special places and events like weddings and cherished

holiday memories. They also included the anxieties and hurts incurred in the daily frustrations and politics of interactions within fan communities or family dynamics. These aspects did not surface initially in the first round of interviews but precipitated rich and informative discussions in the follow-up elicitation interviews.

### Mattering Maps

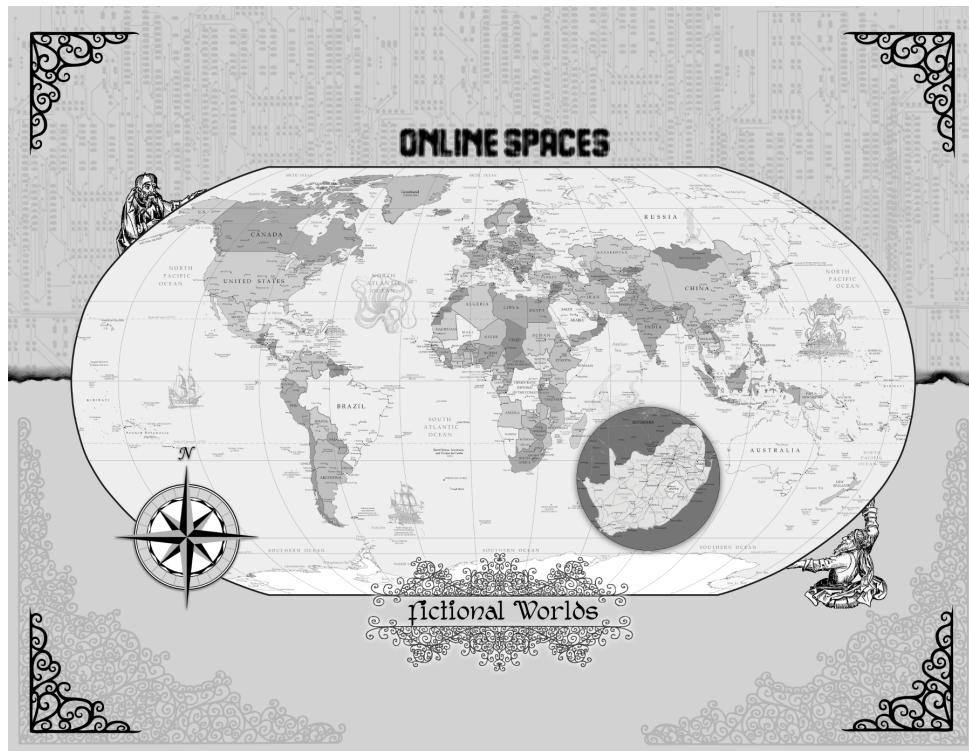


Figure 3.4: Detail of the maps in the packs given to the participants. Participants then placed stickers on the places they associated with their activities during the self-recording period of data collection.

Joke Hermes coins the phrase “mattering maps” in her call for a different way of understanding audiences. In her terms, these maps are a way to “follow affective energy to understand how and where it – temporarily – creates identity, (cultural or even social) authority or indeed disinterest and uncritical laissez-aller” (Hermes 2009, p. 6). Participants used the map to trace the flow of their participation and interactions and make visible and tangible the geographic questions of proximity, locality and transnational flow of text, participation and consumption. This element of the packs was generative in the follow-up interviews. It provided the



participants with an object to look at and via which to discuss travel and imagined “elsewheres”.

### **Phase 3: Elicitation Interviews**

The elicitation interviews were premised on the principle of active interview strategies (Holstein and Gubrium 1995) and unlike the semi-structured interviews of Phase 1, they went ahead without a specific schedule of questions. Instead these were framed as an opportunity for the participant to explain, elaborate on and reflect using the materials made, recorded or gathered during the previous phase as prompts or starting points for discussion. Carter and Mankoff (2005) observe that using photographs (and in this case a wider range of artefacts) facilitates a more detailed elaboration from participants. This phase of the fieldwork process bore out this claim. On average the second interview lasted at least a third longer than the first. In addition, the participants contributed a much greater portion of the speaking time, and largely determined the direction, pace and focus for discussion. Working from the premise of the active interview, this functioned as “a social encounter in which knowledge is constructed suggest[ing] the possibility that the interview is not merely a neutral conduit or source of distortion, but is instead a site of, and occasion for, producing reportable knowledge itself” (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, p. 114). In other words, the interview is not a means of accessing a “truth” or “authentic self” that depends on the right question or set of circumstances. The interview is simply a text among others, “a site where meaning is created and performed” (Denzin 2001, p. 25).

### **3.6 SUMMARY OF COLLECTED DATA**

Fans use a number of terms and are constantly engaged in intertextual games; a web of references, characters, places and events is present in the

| Handle               | Preliminary interview | Elicitation Interview | Diary Entries | Prompt Cards Responses | Personal photographs | Other digital materials |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Captain Unobservant  | Yes                   | Yes                   | 23            | 5                      | 0                    | 0                       |
| Norvie               | Yes                   | Yes                   | 25            | 3                      | 51                   | 5                       |
| TheFabricWhisperer   | Yes                   | Yes                   | 29            | 5                      | 155                  | 4                       |
| EssieJayne           | Yes                   | Yes                   | 18            | 6                      | 33                   | 6                       |
| Kelga                | Yes                   | Yes                   | 6             | 5                      | 515                  | 19                      |
| CityBug              | Yes                   | Yes                   | 12            | 3                      | 14                   | 1                       |
| Idril                | Yes                   | Yes                   | 12            | 8                      | 27                   | 0                       |
| KimberlyHart         | Yes                   | Yes                   | 9             | 6                      | 0                    | 0                       |
| Commissioner Smirnov | Yes                   | Yes                   | 12            | 1                      | 33                   | 4                       |
| Chronos              | Yes                   | Yes                   | 30            | 5                      | 7                    | 442                     |
| Gumi                 | Yes                   | Yes                   | 9             | 5                      | 36                   | 0                       |
|                      |                       |                       | 185           | 52                     | 871                  | 481                     |

Figure 3.5: Summary of the sources for the information and input provided by the participants in the study.

narrative of daily life in a way that is simultaneously charming, a test for the uninitiated and completely bewildering. Key terms and references are explained in a footnote when used for the first time. A more detailed catalogue of the materials referred to in the interview, diary and prompt card excerpts can be found in the appendix.

### 3.6.1 Analytic Strategies

The research design sets out to trace the practices and interactions of fans via a combination of data collection methods. This approach relied on interpretive and inductive processes to build up knowledge about local fans practices, values and habits embedded in everyday life. Thematic analysis was the approach best suited to the research aim of documenting and describing the fan practices of South African fans of global popular culture. The materials were considered in an iterative and recursive process informed by grounded theory's emphasis on the discovery of emergent themes.

The research material that is returned by multimodal methods is fragmentary and it is a challenge to find an analytical strategy for integrating material that includes images, texts, transcripts and creative work

(Dicks and Soyinka and Coffey 2006; Pink 2011). The interviews were transcribed and the documents and digital files submitted as part of the packs were logged. All these materials were uploaded to Atlas.ti 7 Visual QDA (Qualitative Data Analysis) software. One of the advantages of Atlas.ti 7 for this research was that it allows unstructured data such as text, images, audio and audio-visual content to be reviewed and coded as part of a contiguous process that is modality agnostic. As the researcher, interviewer and transcriber I developed a keen sense of the patterns and repetitions from early on and began preliminary annotations of the material. Once the data was collated, Atlas.ti's facility for open coding across the entire collection of data was particularly productive. After repeated passes through the materials, consolidation and integration of codes clusters, three themes related to particular foci emerged and are addressed in turn in the findings chapters 4, 5 and 6.

### 3.7 PROFILES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

What follows below is a brief profile of each of the participants who contributed to this study. As the findings unfold in the chapters to follow, more information will be offered to contextualise their statements and experiences. Here, however, the profiles are limited to simple biographical information. Since participants self-selected and identified as fans, it is important not to assume that there is some automatically shared sense of what it means to be a fan.

The participants' definition of what it means to be a fan is included in their own words below. Using their own words is important to the qualitative and participatory underpinnings of this research and to present as full a portrait of the participants as possible. This is an attempt to make space for them to speak directly as co-producers of this research (as much as this is possible given its scope and purpose). Using direct quotations is partly a matter of presenting evidence, but it is also intended to illustrate the nuances or shading of ideas and opinions and to comple-

ment my reporting of their responses. Finally, these fans are themselves writers, interpreters, artists and meaning-makers. I found their choice of words to be considered, careful and often poetic.

### 3.7.1 *Captain Unobservant*

**Age at time of interview:** Late 20s/early 30s

**Occupation:** Educator

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Comic books, comic-book films, animation, Japanese anime. Cosplayer and cosplay competition organiser.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** Captain Unobservant has been a passionate fan of comic books for most of his life. Buying comics at the corner café is one of his very first childhood memories.

**Position in fan community:** A recognised illustrator with his own fan following, Captain Unobservant bridged the producer/consumer divide more than any of the other participants. At the time of the interviews he had received a commission to work on a comic in one of the major commercial stables. Captain Unobservant had a significant profile as an organiser of community events as well as promoting the emerging South African comic-book industry locally and internationally and encouraging the growth of the local market for comic books and merchandise. He was also an occasional cosplayer. He initiated one of the first major cosplay competitions and is frequently called on to judge cosplay competitions at smaller community events.

**What does being a fan mean to you?** "It is something that you are just truly passionate about. I mean a person can be a fan of anything. To be a fan is someone who dedicates their life to something and wants to pursue it and enjoys it and wants to share it with others. The comic book guy just wants to share his universe with you and tell you why

it is special and why it is so important to him."

### 3.7.2 *Norvie*

**Age at time of interview:** Late 20s/early 30s

**Occupation:** Publisher

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Norvie was a dedicated gamer, live-action role-player (LARPer)<sup>2</sup> and cosplayer. Aside from table-top<sup>3</sup> and computer games, Norvie was a transmedia science-fiction and horror fan, following film, TV, books, games and graphic novels. Norvie's cosplay costumes were an opportunity for her to work on her crafting skills and she made her own costumes where possible.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** Norvie could not recall a time that she was not dressing up, lost in a book or escaping to an imaginary elsewhere. However, when she went to university she realised that there were a lot of other people just like her.

**Position in fan community:** Norvie joined and then later chaired her university's games/gamer society. From there she organised a large annual non-profit gamer convention as a volunteer for a number of years. Norvie had extensive experience of the local fan scene both as a participant and as an organiser.

**What does being a fan mean to you?** "What I don't like about 'fan' is its original definition from fanatic. I am not a 'fanatic'. This is a hobby. I like the term 'geek' because I am interested in many different things, but it is a hobby. You have an appreciation of something and an enthusiasm for it. Sometimes [you have] so much enthusiasm that

---

2. Live Action Role Play or Live Action Role Players. LARPs are organised collective games where players portray characters in a fictional setting, and the games are played out according to in-game rules, scripts and playbooks. These games can be historical, futuristic, and fantastic.

3. Can include card or board games, dice or war games.

you express it as admiration, in cosplay for example. But it doesn't rule my entire life."

### 3.7.3 *TheFabricWhisperer*

**Age at time of interview:** Late 20s/early 30s

**Occupation:** Self-employed seamstress

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** TheFabricWhisperer was a cosplayer, on-line gamer and anime fan. She was a seamstress who accepted commissions for any work but preferred to work on items for the cosplay community.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** TheFabricWhisperer said that she was only in primary school when she started being interested in weapons and swords in particular. When she saw her first example of Japanese samurai anime around 2005 she knew she was hooked.

**Position in fan community:** TheFabricWhisperer had organised some anime orientated picnics and events. At the time of our interviews she seemed to have fallen out of the cosplay community. At this time her fannish network was mostly limited to her clients, attendance at *rAge*<sup>4</sup> and other self-planned events with her friends and partner, such as a full-costume murder-mystery dinner for Halloween.

**What does being a fan mean to you?** "I think you need to be in love with a thing. You want to hear about it at least three times a day. When people start talking and they are almost a mile away you want to go and stand next to them and you want to talk to them about it. It is just this amazing thing. My whole world revolves around games and anime and costumes, so when I hear somebody talking and they say

---

4. South Africa's biggest exhibition aimed at video gaming, technology and geek culture. *rAge* has become a key event in the local fan calendar, with fan art on sale and a cosplay competition being held. Held since 2002.

I like femShep<sup>5</sup> because she did this and that’, then I say [she transforms so that her face and body language becomes rigid with attention] ‘Renegade or Paragon? I NEED to know!’

#### 3.7.4 *EssieJayne*

**Age at time of interview:** Mid-30s

**Occupation:** Educator

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Game of Thrones*, *Sherlock* on the BBC, but especially *Harry Potter*. In most cases EssieJayne’s fandoms started with the books and spread to the film and TV versions of the texts.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** EssieJayne was later than most in her introduction to fandom. She was working in a book store as a student when the *Harry Potter* books were released. While the rest of her workmates were annoyed at the late hours and extra work, EssieJayne recalled her reaction as being, ‘I have to do it! You have to choose me! Choose me! Choose me!’ At the time I thought maybe this isn’t normal.”

**Position in fan community:** For EssieJayne, being a fan was an almost entirely private practice. She shared her fannish enthusiasms with her family but seldom beyond this intimate group made up of her husband, children, siblings and cousins. However, within this group they had a busy and established schedule of quiz nights, movie marathons and dressing-up parties.

**What does being a fan mean to you?** “I think there is a sort of an idea [of] calling yourself a geek and identifying yourself as a nerd and I’ve never done that until now. But I suppose there is something quite nice

---

5. FemShep is the female version of the Commander Shepard character in *Mass Effect 3* (2012, BioWare). The character can be played in one of two “morality” modes, Renegade or Paragon, which impact on dialogue choice and character appearance.

about losing those layers and going ‘I am quite geeky and I do get quite excited’. You often feel like you are not the hardest core of the hard core fans. There is this territory – if you know all of the literature that JRR Tolkien wrote and you’ve read all his stuff then you are a real Tolkien fan. But if you just quite like the Peter Jackson movies then you are not really a fan. So it is hard. I think there is a lot of snobbery in fandom”.

### 3.7.5 *Kelga*

**Age at time of interview:** Late 20s

**Occupation:** Graphic and interface designer

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Kelga was originally a fan of anime but has expanded his interests to live action film and television and maintained a lifelong commitment to *Nintendo* games. At the point of interviewing Kelga, he was fairly new to participating in cosplay competitions.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** For Kelga growing up in Taiwan under the influence of Japanese children’s media, he was never aware of being a fan or consuming media in a way different from any of his peers. It was only when he came to South Africa where these texts were more “exotic” that he thought of himself as part of fandoms.

**Position in fan community:** Kelga was an amateur photographer who had volunteered his services to the cosplay community as a way to gain experience as a photographer. He was also willing to contribute his design skills to his circle of fan friends.

**What does being a fan mean to you?** “For me... it means that you are not just absorbing. It is not just a one-way street where you are just absorbing all this information coming to you, but it is to process that information and to apply it. So I watch one anime where there is a saying ‘equivalent trade’, meaning in order to gain something you have to



sacrifice something of equal value. I take that saying into my everyday life. So if I want to gain some benefit then I need to work hard. So that is what it means for me to be a fan. You don't just absorb things. You process it and there is output, and hopefully you influence other people as well."

### 3.7.6 *CityBug*

**Age at time of interview:** early 20s

**Occupation:** Student

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Anime, digital games that involve world-building. CityBug saw himself as a consumer only.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** Despite volunteering for the study and attending both interviews and completing the data collection pack, CityBug maintained an ambivalent air. He started by disavowing his first experience of anime fandom as a teenager saying that, in retrospect, his interest in anime was an attempt to differentiate himself from his peers in high school. "I thought that I was a fan, and that I had an interest and I identified with that, but it wasn't really why. It was to be different. It wasn't because I was obsessed with something".

**Position in fan community:** None: CityBug did not seek any connection with other fans either online or in real life.

**What does being a fan mean to you?** "Well I think that it means to be very very outspoken, to talk about it all the time. But I reckon that. . . I think being a fan can be something very anti-social really. So I think I can be completely apathetic and still be a fan – I think I am the real fan! If someone makes the effort to get all dressed up as *Naruto* and learn Japanese then maybe they should be doing other things with their life".

### 3.7.7 Idril

**Age at time of interview:** Mid-30s

**Occupation:** Healthcare

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Idril's primary fandom was anything Tolkien-related. She started with reading, collecting and rereading the works while she was still in high school and then moved on to making her own full and complete transcription of *Lord of the Rings*. This took her around three years of sustained work. In the years since then she has studied Tolkien continuously: mastering the languages and lore and reading extensively into the Nordic mythologies that underpin the fiction as well as the linguistics that Tolkien used to inform his languages. Idril has a secondary fandom in *Harry Potter* but this is primarily a lighthearted and easy fannish relationship.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** Idril was first introduced to Tolkien's work in high school. When she got to university she realised "There was this whole community of people that behaved just like me that called themselves fans, therefore I must be a fan".

**Position in fan community:** In the online fora for translations and lore to which Idril contributed, she was known by one of her usernames and she refused to disclose any personal information in these discussions. There were no online friendships for her, and her fandom was an intellectual exchange. However, in real life her fandom was widely acknowledged and celebrated by family and loved ones.

**What does being a fan mean to you?** "It means that my husband gets to call me a geek. I get ragged a lot about the fact that I speak elvish and that I want to run around with a bow and arrow. So, whilst for me it is a very academic task and a very academic exercise, I think it is perceived very much as the kind of geek on *Big Bang Theory*. Which I kind of own and I think that is ok. [Being a geek] means expertise, depth of knowledge, immersing yourself in something that people outside would see as a superfluous task. There is an element of excess and

I think that people kind of look in [on] and go ‘Really?’ ”

### 3.7.8 *KimberlyHart*

**Age at time of interview:** Mid-20s

**Occupation:** Film and television industry

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** KimberlyHart’s fan practices were mainly fanfiction orientated: reading, writing and reviewing fan fiction based on her shows – shows that she followed in as close to real-time release as possible. This required waking up at midnight to torrent new episodes and following live-tweeted viewings of episodes in time zones on the other side of the world.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** KimberlyHart could not recall when she was not obsessed with a television programme or character. She counted amongst her favourite fan fictions *Dark Angel*, the Australian soap opera *Neighbours*, and *Twilight* (where she was avowedly “Team Jacob”)<sup>6</sup>.

**Position in fan community:** KimberlyHart was active in the online fanfic sites, spending several hours a day on these interactions. These relationships had been established over years and extended beyond the fanfic sites to email, Skype and WhatsApp sharing of family photos, birthday messages and personal news with a number of friends.

**What does being a fan mean for you?** “It means that I am totally invested in something – like my heart and soul is in it. Like if you destroy my show or cancel it I am going to cry. I’ll feel like a piece of myself

---

6. A term used for fans of the novels and films in the *Twilight* series by Stephenie Meyer, who prefer (and argue for) a relationship between Bella (a human) and Jacob (a werewolf) rather than the canon, which resolves the love triangle in favour of Bella and Edward (a vampire). Supporters of Jacob as a preferred hero to the story (Team Jacob), pitch themselves against fans of Edward (Team Edward).

has been torn apart because I really get into it. [Also] it is nice if you are online and you are talking to people; then you are all part of the same thing.”

### 3.7.9 *Commissioner Smirnov*

**Age at time of interview:** Mid- to late 20s

**Occupation:** Film and television industry

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Commissioner Smirnov identified as a Furry<sup>7</sup> (a fan of anthropomorphic art and animation). He had long-term, ongoing personal projects in this art style, as well as accepted commissions. As an artist he was also interested in illustrating weapons and science fiction themes. He was driven by his own practice rather than the text per se, saying he became a fan when “something motivates or inspires me to do my own thing to get me animating or to get me drawing or sculpting or woodworking”.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** For Commissioner Smirnov, his art practice was what gave rise to his status as a fan. In order to keep improving his art he started posting his work to the fanart site *DeviantArt*.<sup>8</sup> He started drawing his first comic, which exposed him to comments and suggestions from members of the community, which then lead him to explore the animation and graphic novels loosely categorised as anthropomorphic.

---

7. Furry fandom is a subculture built around the appreciation and celebration of anthropomorphic works that feature animals that exhibit human emotions and facial features (both real and fantasy). While all Furry art is anthropomorphic, not all anthropomorphic art is Furry. So, for example, while Thomas the Tank Engine is anthropomorphic, it is not Furry.

8. An online art community where members can share, comment and commission art. There are multiple different categories, but the Fan Art category is a frequently-used hub for fans of varying skill levels and fandoms, whose practices involve the visual arts including photography, animations, illustrations and so on.

**Position in fan community:** Commissioner Smirnov had his own following of fans who commissioned and followed his work.

**What does being a fan mean for you?** For Commissioner Smirnov, like many other participants, the geek and the fan were closely associated but distinguished by a difference of intensity. In his understanding, a geek is a fan with an intensity and a desire for knowledge in addition to affect and pleasure. “I suppose for me a geek is just fully immersed in a fandom... they just know everything about something specific. For me I definitely know that I will geek out about some things more than others. I’ll know more about some things; then there will be other things that I am just a fan of”.

#### 3.7.10 *Chronos*

**Age at time of interview:** Early 40s

**Occupation:** Web designer

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Chronos did not subscribe to the identity of a gamer, but one of his primary fan practices was as a collector of old arcade games, including the promotional art, screen shots of game play, release notes, etc. He was also invested in the house music and techno scene as a DJ and critic.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** Chronos had an exhaustive knowledge and appreciation of retro arcade-type video games. He called this his “primary fandom” and said that he had been a fan since he was a child. These games had inspired his own aesthetic as a designer and producer of games.

**Position in fan community:** Chronos was enthusiastically involved in the local community of game-makers but was not involved with fan communities; nor does he consider himself to have the kind of encyclopaedic knowledge that fans often have.

What does being a fan mean for you? “I call myself a fan of something if it is something that has had an influence on my life and if I have a greater than usual admiration for it. And particularly I would describe myself as a fan of those parts of culture that have been formative to my personality”.

### 3.7.11 *Gumi*

**Age at time of interview:** Early 20s

**Occupation:** Student

**Fandoms and Fan practices:** Gumi was a gamer, anime fan (in particular, “slice of life” anime)<sup>9</sup> and cosplayer. She was learning to sew and craft so that she could make her own costumes. Inspired by her love of anime and a desire to travel to Japan when she finished her studies, Gumi was learning Japanese through an extra-curricular course at her university.

**Becoming-a-fan story:** In Gumi’s account, it was in high school that she realised she was different from her classmates and started thinking of herself as a gamer; she then later became a fan of anime. Gumi said she did not consider herself a fan until she started cosplaying. Her first cosplay experience was a “zombie apocalypse picnic”.

**Position in fan community:** For Gumi, cosplay was a social activity. The pleasure was in the shared planning, making and discussion phases before a cosplay event and the social interaction at the event.

**What does being a fan mean for you?** “It means you have an interest in something and I think it is something that that you can interact with”. Gumi also pointed out that exposure precedes deep fannish interest for

---

9. Ordinary, mundane, everyday happenings that make up events and narratives, especially in anime and manga. Can be construed as having connotations of melodrama or soap opera themes.

her: for example, exposure to anime gave rise to her deep interest in Japanese culture and language. Cosplay had inspired her to learn how to sew.

### 3.8 PARTICIPATORY AND CREATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

From the outset I was acutely aware that my requests for self-documentation went beyond the normal expectations for a participant (e.g. a single interview). As a result, my solution was to set up the method as playful, creative and embedded in the intertextuality that is the bread-and-butter of media fandoms. The oversized envelopes that contained the diary, maps and instructions were meant to evoke the invitations to characters to attend Hogwarts<sup>10</sup> in the Harry Potter novels and films. The Celtic inspired wax seals on the envelopes were a nod to the aesthetics of swords and sorcery fantasy novels and games. The map was meant as a visual call to adventure in the tradition of treasure maps, monsters and uncharted territories. This strategy worked well.

The study had excellent retention, with 100% of the participants completing the interviews and providing varying combinations of self-documentation of their fan practices, resulting in a multi-modal data set. These participants responded in typically fannish ways: enthusiastic, creative and productive. However, welcome though this was, it also serves to highlight the complex shifting layers of mediation and co-production of meaning in the research process. No research is a neutral and transparent process of meaning and knowledge-production. All research, and perhaps especially research tending towards the ethnographic, is inflected by various optics and politics of the researcher's own position, that of the disci-

---

<sup>10</sup>. Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The fictional school in the Harry Potter universe.

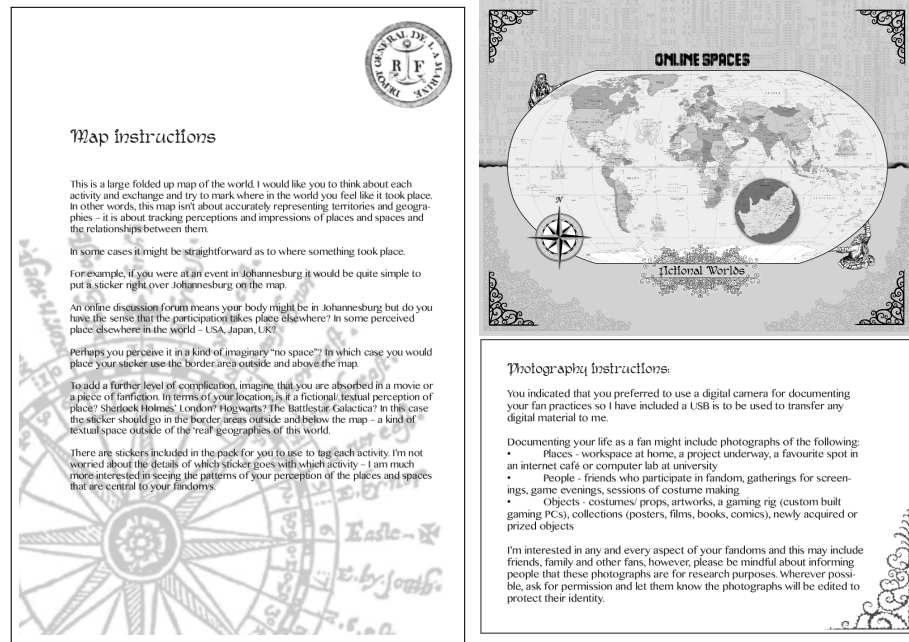


Figure 3.6: The design of the pack was intended to evoke the aesthetics of some popular fandoms through wax seals, oversized envelopes, and the ornate decorative treasure map.

plinary field, and that of the intellectual and institutional climate where the research is being carried out.

The implications of the research design choices and how these elicited participation that went beyond keeping the participants engaged and



amused are more than superficial observations. Invoking the aesthetics of fandom as well as the *habitus*, or rules of the game, that are implicit in “being a fan” has shaped the fieldwork process and the information and material that was generated. Future research that investigates participation and methods may be rooted in precisely the affective labour and gift economy that fandoms thrive and survive on.

While creative and visual methods allow participants to apply “playful or creative attention to the act of making something symbolic or metaphorical, and then reflecting on it” (Gauntlett 2007, p. 3) they are also part of the filtering, mediating and reframing process of academic research. Buckingham regards visual and creative methods as being particularly apt for research into audio-visual media and Gauntlett argues such methods offer “participants an opportunity to produce a mediated account of their own perceptions of the social world [and therefore] it represents an adequately authentic way of gathering the knowledge of social actors” (Gauntlett 2007, p. 96). That being said, there are several considerations that should not be downplayed. These include,

the formative role (and indeed the responsibility) of the researcher; the generic and formal characteristics of the media that participants are asked to employ; and the participants’ understanding both of the context and aims of the research itself, and of the media that are used. (Buckingham 2009, p. 635)

It is important to exercise caution regarding the valorising rhetoric of “participation” that may suggest methods that engage participants in these ways are somehow empowering or benign in themselves. These methods are socially and contextually driven and all output is still subject to analysis that is driven by a given research agenda and determined by someone other than the participants.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Activity<br>The return.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Time of day<br>Afternoon.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Time taken<br>Brief.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Where were you?<br>[Redacted]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Description & comments<br>I hand back this partially completed journal (stupid time) to you.<br> Lazy @#!%<br>Shut up, Dead pool.<br>Pssh. I'm just a bad drawing, you're the one talking to yourself. |

Figure 3.7: The data-collection method produced layers of reflexivity and levels of unanticipated complexity. Here for example Captain Unobservant has Deadpool, a comic book anti-hero and character that he cosplays regularly, castigate him on the second to last page of his activity diary. He responds telling Deadpool to “Shut-up!” to which Deadpool replies, to the artist that drew him, that he is only a badly executed drawing. Deadpool is a character known for his caustic wit and breaking of the fourth wall on both the page and screen. This moment offers an instance of the complex and layering and recursion that was an astonishing outcome of the method.

### 3.9 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This method and participants chapter has reviewed the rationale and methodological considerations that underpinned the choice of research design and analytic strategies. It went on to detail these data collection tools, some of their limitations as well as the ethical considerations. It includes a summary of the corpus of material generated during the field-work process as well as a brief introduction to each of the participants whose lives and insights inform the findings of the chapters to follow. Two potentially productive avenues for future research were outlined as arising from the limitations of this study. Firstly, because of the racial bias that was a consequence of the snowball sampling method, further study using the same research design but with fans of different race groups may yield findings that point to different experiences and textures of fandom. Secondly, that the creative and participatory method, while productive in terms of data collection, invites closer consideration of its ethics and implications. In particular, the ways in which the free fan labour that has fuelled this thesis can be seen as the production of value for the researcher and the academy.

Three thematic areas emerged from the analysis, and the chapters that follow present these findings and discussions. These three empirical chapters are organised with the problem of scale in mind and emphasise three inflection points along a continuum. These span a preoccupation with the intimacies of home and family (Chapter 4), ongoing concerns about resources, labour and the rewards and anxieties of maintaining the local fan community (Chapter 5), and finally, negotiating the distance or proximity to an imagined and shifting centre of the fandom or community (Chapter 6).

## LOCALITY AND THE INTIMACY OF HOME

---

The emphasis on the concept of the home as a centre of fandom is more than an organising principle. It places fans' own experiences and statements about their domestic and intimate lives at the centre of the analysis. The responses from the participants in this chapter show that to think of fandoms or fan practices as having a singular media-centric or media-anchored focal point would be limited. Fan practices are multi-centred. A single practice or fandom may well have different centres depending on the individual life circumstances of the fan. This centre itself may shift throughout the cycle of the day as the fan traverses work, leisure, family and fannish responsibilities and locations. It also changes through the cycle of the year, since festivals and events are seasonal and fans report shifting focus, mounting pressure and anticipation, and afterwards, event-fatigue and saturation. Furthermore, media practices rooted in fandoms are entangled with the most intimate and personal parts of everyday life and are part of the ebb and flow of family and domestic life. As practices they are informed by gender, enculturation, class and aspiration.

It is unusual for research into fan studies to start from a focus on the everyday practices of fans. Predictably, this approach picks up on the mundane preoccupations of daily routines. Perhaps this is one reason research on fans seldom includes accounts of families, intimate relationships and places and spaces away from convention centres, specialist shops or other sites associated with fans. But when the focus does turn to the everyday practices of fans, one observation that emerges is the recurrent theme of "home". Can home then be considered a key site of

fannish practice? How is the concept of home being used by these participants to indicate an important part of the mediated routine, pleasure and practices of being a fan?

In following the everyday practices of fans in the home, a focus on locality means surfacing the concrete contextual constraints of place and time. Meals, bedtimes and contested spaces are interlaced with the incoming flows of goods, images and ideas and outgoing flow of money, communications and affective labour. These flows come from around the world via shipping, in a matter of seconds via fibre-optic cable and subscription broadcast channels. They constitute the everyday life of a home as much as the goods arriving via the supermarket supply chain. Additionally, the home is made up of imagined connections to other homes, real and idealised (and even metaphoric or fictional) and yet no less central to the participants' accounts of home.

In the interview and analysis process it became apparent that the theme of home was being mobilised in accounts of fannish practices in complicated and multivalent ways. It meant a literal dwelling space. It acted as a synonym for the intimacies of domestic everyday life of cohabitation and family. It stood in as a metaphor for ideas of homeland and origin. It was used as a shorthand evocation of comfort, safety, privacy, leisure and belonging. Often it appeared as combinations of all of these. It was also a hub or node within a network of intersections operating on different scales. Far from being the epitome of the local end of a dualistic model of global versus local, in this framework home is better understood as a junction of a massively complex interchange. Home was a recurrent term that emerged from the analysis and appeared across the full range of materials collected from and shared by participants. In the successive passes through the interviews, diary entries, prompts and photographs, this became an aggregation point: an analytical theme with sub-themes.

Under the general theme of home I trace four intersecting ways in which the participants mobilise this concept to characterise their experience of being a fan of global popular culture. First, home is a material site for

fandom: a place where resources are kept and time is spent on leisure activities. It is also a porous space that opens out via ICT infrastructure and digital devices. Second, the theme of home is loaded with connotations of particular kinds of family and relationship structures. Third, the thematic analysis shows that the phrase “feeling at home” is used by fans to signal an association with belonging, affinity and community. Finally, there was a surprisingly divergent use of the term. In a few, cases home was strongly associated with imaginative projections rooted in well-loved texts. Taken separately, these facets of home offer rich descriptive insights into the lived experiences of South African fans. Taken together, they support this thesis’s overarching claim that global popular culture fandom can function as a resource for producing locality. This produced locality that is produced is neither neutral nor universal, but rather is inflected in particular ways given the South African context for this research.

But before beginning, it is worth noting that the idea of home as a physical site in fandom is neither neutral nor necessarily benign in fan studies. The idea of house or home features prominently in the stereotypes and representations of fans. The representation of the western fan is as the infantile basement-dweller, living with his parents and symbolically exiled in these living arrangements to the subterranean margins of the home (Duffett 2013). Alternatively, the movie shorthand for the fan as obsessive or hysteric is signalled by the *mise en scène* of a room cluttered with the artefacts and images of fandom and imbued with the quality of shrine-like devotion (Busse 2013). In manga or anime subculture the term “otaku” is derived from the honorific “your” or “your house” (Shen 2015). The figure of the otaku in Japan originally was one “who failed to conform, communicate with others, and connect consumption and play to productive roles at home, school, and work” (Galbraith 2010, p. 210). For non-Japanese fans this term has been diluted and means roughly the equivalent to geek or nerd. Nevertheless, in its original usage, as with the stereotype of the western fan, the figure of the otaku brings together

the idea of the house or home and the anxiety of a socially maladjusted, isolated individual.

#### 4.1 SHARED AND DOMESTIC SPACES

The activity diary entries showed that home, as a location, was by far the most common sites for fannish activities. This is predictable when one takes into consideration the time commitment to the watching, reading, writing and sewing or drawing that make up fan practices. Aside from the main finding that home is the key site of fan practice, the particularities of place and the kinds of interactions were textured slightly differently: they are overlapping, interrelated, collocated. “Home” for any of the participants was an assemblage of several aspects.

Fan practices often involved other members of the household in a joint fannish activity. For instance, EssieJayne reported a marathon session of viewing ahead of Free Comic Book Day. Her extended family of cousins, nephews and nieces had established a tradition of a collective cosplay to celebrate and take part in events such as this.

EssieJayne’s husband and children had picked one of their family favourites as their theme – the animated series *Adventure Time*. Each member of the family had picked their character. Then, in the days leading up to *Free Comic Book Day*, they had been re-watching the series together, planning outfits and strategising as to where to source cheap materials. The intention was for the whole family to meet up at the comic-book shops in costume. After this, they would spend the afternoon together having a meal and watching films. This was an entry from EssieJayne’s activity diary for the weekend:

Activity: Watching *Adventure Time*

Time: Afternoon, morning and night

Duration: (all weekend) 22 minutes, (11 minutes each) we must have



*Figure 4.1: EssieJayne's documentation of her family preparing costumes and make-up for their outing on Free Comic Book Day.*

watched 6 episodes on Saturday, 3 on Sunday (4 on Thursday)

Location: Home

Description: So many episodes for research purposes!!! We're mad about these crazy things. Totally weird and quite awesome. We've decided to go as Marceline the Vampire, Fin, Jake the Dog (that's me me – yup!) and The Ice-King. We're going to buy stuff this week from China Mart!

(EssieJayne)

In a very different style of activity, TheFabricWhisperer documented an afternoon of gaming with her partner. Like EssieJayne, the pleasure was only partly the fannish activity; far more important was the domestic leisure time. *World of Warcraft* is a competitive online multiplayer game and one in which TheFabricWhisper's partner was apparently much more proficient. Despite the game being virtual and globally dispersed, the immediacy of a relaxing afternoon at home in each other's presence was the key feature of this anecdote, rather than the exhilaration or connection to a wider network of fans and players. Despite the virtual



presence of many other players on the server, in this description, the cooperative experience located at home takes preference.

Activity: Play *World of Warcraft* on a private server with my boyfriend

Time: Noon

Duration: 3 hours

Location: Home

Description: We created two new characters, both paladin<sup>1</sup> class and both blood elf race.<sup>2</sup> We levelled the characters to level 20. It is a new class, and I am somewhat new to it, but it was super fun taking on higher level creatures without dying.

(TheFabricWhisperer)

Idril completed her activity diary in the last week before the end of her maternity leave. In her account of fan activities, the comforts and responsibilities of home intertwine. She relished the opportunity for an uninterrupted marathon re-watching of some of her favourite films while spending time with her child.

Activity: Watching HP movies [*Harry Potter*]

Time: 06:00 - 13:30

Duration: 7½hours

Location: At home

Description: At home with baby, husband sick in bed so I had living room to myself. Put on HP movies “marathon” style whilst seeing to little one’s needs. I ended with *Prisoner of Azkaban* and decided to re-read *Goblet of Fire*.

(Idril)

The fannish home in these accounts is one of shared pleasures. They are as much a part of the cycle of fan practices as the more commonly

---

1. A holy warrior class in *World of Warcraft*.

2. One of the races in *World of Warcraft*, a massive, multiplayer, online role-playing game (MMORPG). Players select and control an avatar in the game world. The race that one’s avatar belongs to determines one’s faction in the war.

studied events and activities. However, for some other participants home is a site for solitary and uninterrupted fannish work. Kelga reported several hours spent working on the graphic design for the banner for his cosplay group's Facebook page, while Captain Unobservant listed a late-night work session dedicated to finishing a commissioned article for a magazine. In the lead up to *rAge*, several activity diaries were filled with the accounts of sewing and crafting after classes or work. Participants Norvie and Gumi included pictures of their work-stations cluttered with fabric, wigs and contact lenses, glue, spray paint and props, with sewing machines taking centre stage. Norvie commented: "Physically, I like my home. It's my base of operations". Home is a place of action, planning and production.



Figure 4.2: Homes as workspaces: Cosplay construction documentation submitted by Norvie and Gumi

For these cosplayers who craft their own costumes, space was a critical concern and the physical space of home can become contested terrain. In several cases, participants spoke about the difficulties of sharing living space with non-fans. In some instances this meant curtailed space, making it difficult to work efficiently, organise resources or leave incomplete projects in shared living areas. At the time of her interviews, The-FabricWhisperer was the only participant who did not have at least a semi-permanent living space. She described herself as a travelling seamstress and bemoaned the difficulties of having to pack up her fabric,

sewing equipment and machine every few weeks as she moved between family homes in Pretoria and Johannesburg depending on a variety of personal circumstances. The difficulties of undertaking making and delivering commissions to her customers while using dining room tables and living room floors in other people's homes was a source of some frustration and tension.

Commissioner Smirnov had recently married and he and his wife had newly combined households. In this excerpt from his interview he explained how he had accumulated a personal and carefully curated collection of graphic art and objects for display and a collection of books both of and about this art. As a self-identifying Furry, he described his new home as a fannish space involving aesthetic and interpersonal compromise. Although his wife shared a number of his fandoms, he cautioned that fans can sometimes be overwhelming in their enthusiasms, which can crowd a home, especially a shared home.

I'll have *Blacksad*<sup>3</sup> [on display] and it is art and beautiful art. People can appreciate it and it is not full-on furry. It is not on everything I own. [Some Furies] have got the throw cushions with the art that they have bought from Fur Affinity<sup>4</sup> and they have got the posters and every other wall has got a wolf on it. I think you get the same in other fandoms. I mean I think you get the anime guys who everything they own must have an anime character on it and the Fur Affinity guys must have every figure on the walls. I like to reflect that I have it. I have my art and I have got my figurines, even though [my wife] has tried her best to hide some of them. It is a trade-off – I don't have to have everything on show. I'll have a nice flat and I have a touch of Master Chief<sup>5</sup> over there.

- 
3. A series of French noir detective graphic novels by Juan D'íaz Canales and Juanjo Guarnido that features anthropomorphic characters including detective John Blacksad, a black cat. The series has received several awards.
  4. A furry fandom and lifestyle website that includes fora, galleries for fan art and merchandise. See also Twitter *@furaffinity*.
  5. MCPON John-117 also known as Master Chief, is the protagonist from the Halo (2001 - 2010, Bungie) digital game. Master Chief is a playable character in a science fiction first-person shooter game.

(Commissioner Smirnov)

Objects and activities of fannish practices are central to the construction of a sense of belonging in demarcating and negotiating space in material terms, in aesthetic terms and in affective terms as a sense of comfort, refuge and retreat. This labelling or coding was common and humorously intended. Captain Unobservant, with the intentional hyperbole of a comic book fan, calls the space where he works on his art “The Desk of Creation”. Fandom and its practices are, in this case, domestically and spatially fixed in the form of his desk, although this was metonymic for his computer workstation and internet connection. In a similar way, KimberlyHart explicitly (and hyperbolically) referenced comic book tropes in her activity diary location, by naming her bedroom “The Fortress of Solitude” after Superman’s unassailable retreat. In the same way that Captain Unobservant made the mundane space of a desk and internet connection reverberate with drama, KimberlyHart’s ironic description of lying in bed and downloading episodes on a laptop intentionally conjured Superman’s brooding refuge in the icy tundra.

Activity: Nightly catchup sesh [session] and some *IMDB*<sup>6</sup>

Time: 10pm - Bed

Duration: 3 hours

Location: Fortress of Solitude!

Description: Same nightly routine – laptop on – Utorrent open, PirateBay<sup>7</sup> open. Download any movie or show of the day. Already had *Chicago PD* finished and downloaded. Now to continue with *The 100* my newest fav [favourite] show. Watched *Chicago PD* followed by *The 100* 10th episode of 13. Then decided to do some searching on actors on IMDB. Read up, blog etc. Watched some fanvids. (KimberlyHart)

---

6. Internet Movie Database.

7. Online, free and searchable index of media made available through peer-to-peer sharing between users.

KimberlyHart explained “I feel at home when I am comfy. On a couch, in my car, in my office and just sitting back in isolation and able to lose myself in alternate worlds”. While not as emphatically expressed, several other participants made similar explicit connections between their fan practice and spaces of familiarity and comfort. CityBug felt “at home when I am in my house, in my bed”. Here, home designated physical space, leisure time and lack of distraction. It was also linked to a device or platform facilitating his consumption of texts and connection to his fandoms. For CityBug, his laptop was the centre of his fandom – all things derived from this device and its internet connection and the flow of material was almost entirely towards him. It was an interface or portal through which texts, film and materials can be brought. CityBug remains fixed: a still point in the flow with his laptop as his centre. He points out that its lack of social obligations are its chief appeal.

That is my desk, my bed's over here and that is where I watch TV.  
I have a laptop so I don't require any other. I don't have to get into clubs or whatever to watch web videos or series or anything like that.  
(CityBug)

EssieJayne explained that her home as a site of fandom was a conscious act of construction. She responded that she felt at home as a fan when she was “at home”:

I feel at home when I'm at home (not sarcasm). We've created a home that is nicely suited to our nerdiness. Laptop set up as TV, books, mags and ADSL. With two kids who are aware enough to share things but not yet old enough to create conflict. It's a sweet spot.  
(EssieJayne)

Home as a fannish space was also a “base of operations” for crafting, reveries and fantasies, and a safe and comfortable refuge. While home was marked as belonging to the domestic sphere, it also operated as a

metaphor for a centre or hub: a place from which to go forth or a familiar place to return to. Often this was technologically mediated to the point that home became synonymous with the technology itself in the form of a device, a laptop or phone.

#### 4.2 LIKING THINGS TOGETHER: INTIMACY AND FANDOM

The previous section has shown how tracing the everyday practices of fans surfaced home as a physical domestic space. Besides the fan practices that took place in the home, habits of leisure and time spent with family, partners and intimate friendships were far more significant in the daily accounts of practices than other fans or activities in fannish spaces or events. An account of an activity would often involve a cousin, or girlfriend, or children. It became apparent that mapping fan practices also meant mapping parenting, sharing, kinship, courtship and the relationships between parents, partners, children and childhood friendships. For these participants, fandom was not a category of practice in some discreet elsewhere; nor was it about joining a group organised and extant “out there”. Rather, being a fan was about the interplay of media texts in the here-and-now of immediate and intimate connections. In asking about fannish practices, what I gleaned was actually a detailed impression of the participants’ intimate and familial relationships. The information they shared was interwoven with threads of everyday life that were mundane, domestic, homely, material. Fandom was bound up with the struggle with insomnia, midnight-baby feeds, illness and hospitalisation, losing a beloved pet and so on.

Fannish practices and romantic relationships were also linked. In these accounts, exposure to fan activities, texts and communities often came about via a spouse or partner, were integral to forming and maintaining bonds, and were often tied to key moments of relationships. EssieJayne described the role of fandom in her courtship and relationship with her husband as the practice of “liking things together”.

We met in a bookshop; one of our first points of connection was giving each other books that we liked. You know, books are important to us. My husband is a really big influence on what I like – really he is! We like things together. We try to like things together so we are interested in what we like of each other's.

(EssieJayne)

EssieJayne's phrase encapsulated a recurrent trend in the interviews pointing to a desire to share and adopt the fannish practices of partners. For Captain Unobservant, this "liking things together" marked a significant moment in his relationship with his girlfriend (now wife).

I think one of the most amazing experiences was [when] I went to watch *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* with my girlfriend. She had never heard of the character the *Winter Soldier*. She obviously knows about *Captain America* but she is not as much of a comic fan as I am. I swear by the time the end credits rolled, she had fallen in love with the *Winter Soldier*.

(Captain Unobservant)

At the time of our first interview KimberlyHart told me she had recently started dating someone. Because she had told me her fan practices were mainly online and took place in her "Fortress of Solitude", when the follow-up interview took place a few weeks later I asked her how this new relationship had impacted on her activities as a fan.

At least now I tell him what I am reading. In the beginning he was like "Are you reading fan fiction?" [reprovingly] and I was like "Umm. . ." [hesitantly]. Then the other day I tried to share some of it with him. I said, "Do you want to see what I am reading? Well I am reading *Arrow*". And I was telling him all about it. I am also trying to read comics lately because he is into that kind of stuff so I've just started. I never gave it much thought before.

(KimberlyHart)

This is hardly extraordinary or particular to being a fan. On the contrary, these comments are fairly typical of any relationship built on, or establishing, common ground or shared interests. What was notable was that they are a substantial part of what fans think about or what fans do with the texts that they love. They use them to establish connections with non-fans, to build memories and common references. “Liking things together” is a way of fostering intimacy and locality, of performing fandom in the everyday. If one reads between the lines of academic and auto-ethnographic accounts of fandom, these moments are present, but they have not been explicitly explored as part of the repertoire of fan practices.

Henry Jenkins’ comments about his experience as an academic and fan (or in his terms an “acafan”) articulate this principle. In the introduction to his blog, he explains: “I never can keep my personal life separated from my professional life”. He says that much of his work “reflects the tastes and interests of my son, Charlie (now in his thirties) and my wife, Cynthia, who helped get me into fan culture in the first place” (Jenkins [n.d.](#), nd). Like Jenkins, Cavicchi ([1998](#)), in his seminal ethnographic account of Springsteen fans, attributed his relationship with his wife to their shared fandom, and she is present throughout the book as a fan and the person who introduced him to “Bruce fandom”.<sup>8</sup> A decade later, Nick Couldry’s first-person account of being on the set of *The Sopranos* started by invoking his domestic and personal self with his wife, saying: “I am a fan of The Sopranos, a fandom I share with family and friends. With my wife Louise, I have cooked meals from The Sopranos cookbook for evenings of Sopranos video watching with friends!” (Couldry [2007](#), p. 141). However, aside from these few examples, intimate relationships are generally relegated to acknowledgements or contextualisations and largely sidelined in the scholarship on fans or their practices rather than brought forwards as a critical and recurrent feature.

---

8. The term used by fans of Bruce Springsteen for their collective fandom.



To return to the present study, if the small practices outlined above – of sharing books, introducing loved ones to beloved texts and characters or outing oneself as a fan fiction reader or writer are the minute acts of weaving locality, then there are also moments of grand gestures and binding being a fan with a different kind of identity. As an unwavering fan of *Lord of the Rings* and Tolkien's Middle-earth<sup>9</sup> for over twenty years, Idril, for example, incorporated this vital part of her identity into her wedding ceremony.

My invitation was Celtic, but it didn't say a *Lord of the Rings*-themed wedding, but anybody who knows me knew it would probably be along those lines. I used old parchment for my invitations and all of that kind of stuff and I kept it very authentic. They got a proper party invitation in the post. So that is my little *Hobbiton*<sup>10</sup> wedding and you can see that it is homemade, it doesn't look like it came from Bride&Co... I see *Lord of the Rings* when I see my wedding photos but I believe that you would see it as well. It doesn't need that much of an explanation.

(Idril)

Jessica Johnston, one of the few writers on the practice of the fan wedding, asserts that they combine memories the fan associates with a text. In so doing they construct a "meaningful performance narrative that extends beyond fandom and into other corners that make up their lives", and thereby, celebrate and maintain an identity that "encases their lives both inside and outside of fandom" since "fan identity encompasses more than just fandom" (Johnston 2015, para. 5.1). For Idril, her wedding reception was a way of honouring her fandom and its place in her life, and differentiating herself from what she perceived to be a generic or inauthentic wedding.

---

9. The setting for Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*.

10. A village in the Shire, a region in Tolkien's Middle-earth settled by Hobbits. Bag End was the home of Bilbo (and later Frodo) and the starting point for the adventures in both *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*.

### 4.3 THE WORK OF REPRODUCTION IN THE AGE OF MECHANICAL ART

Just as significant as the role that fandom plays “at home” – in building routine and domestic comfort and as a resource in the personal and private lives of fans beyond fandom – was how these practices are cultivated in the traditions of family life. As we have already seen, for EssieJayne her fan practices were inseparable from home life – both the domestic space and the domestic sphere. EssieJayne shared a photograph that she characterised as capturing the epitome of her fandom: her daughter curled up in a chair watching an episode of *Adventure Time*.



Figure 4.3: EssieJayne's daughter watching *Adventure Time*

Named for a character in a book beloved by both EssieJayne and her husband, their daughter cosplayed Marceline for *Free Comic Book Day*. In the picture below she sits ensconced in, as EssieJayne phrased it, “a home suited to our nerdiness”, re-watching *Adventure Time* in anticipation of the next day's family outing. Wanting to be involved with her mother's project of documenting her fan practices, she drew a picture of herself. EssieJayne included and captioned the picture in the materials she submitted.

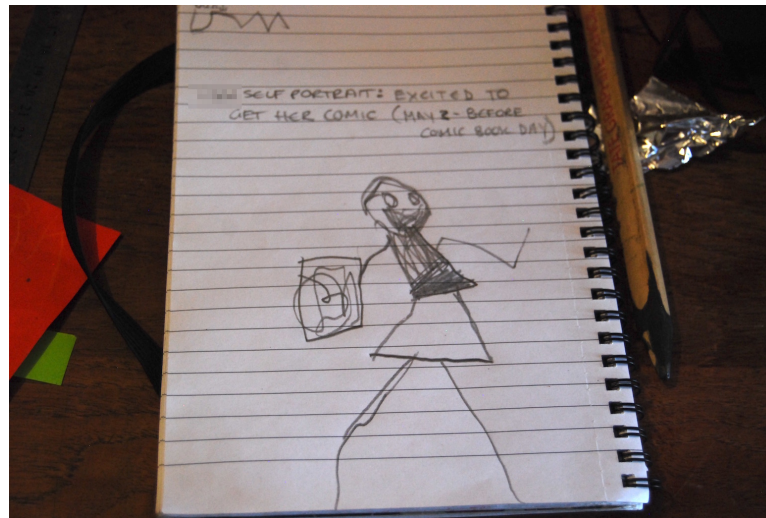


Figure 4.4: Self-portrait: Excited to get her comic book (May 2 - Before Comic Book Day)

For EssieJayne it was not possible to talk about the practices of her fandom without reference to the domestic space and her role as a mother and a wife.

I went and read back over this [diary] and I realised that “Ja, it is true, everything happens in my family!” It is reinforcing of the sort of stuff that [my husband] and I like. That we “like” to each other the whole time. It is quite incestuous, as families are. You start making your own culture because that is why you have children – to make them [just] like you. [She laughs, indicating that she is exaggerating, joking] Why else would you have them except to inflict things on them? Then you can go as a family and say “this is what we do, this is our tradition”.

(EssieJayne)

Here EssieJayne reflected on the degree to which her fan practices were becoming the practices of their household and children. The data-gathering process surfaced this as something she had found intriguing, and she returned to the point several times in our interviews. For EssieJayne, parenting and fandom are co-constructive or reciprocal. She commented that not only did she want her children to love the things she loved, but she worked hard to be interested in the things that they themselves

were interested in. Being a fan mediated her parenting, being a parent modified her fannish behaviours and pleasures. She said:

I am not quite the *Harry Potter* nerd I was because now I've got kids. I am very interested in what they are interested in but I also want them to be interested in stuff that is good. I am very interested in how [my daughter] is now accessing books and stuff in the world.  
(EssieJayne)

For EssieJayne, her origin story of becoming a fan was preceded and underpinned by a happy familial connection and memory-making. I asked EssieJayne what had cemented her lasting commitment to *Harry Potter*, while other fandoms came and went as passing enthusiasms. She recalled that it had started as a way of connecting with a much younger brother after he gave her the book to read. She said

It meant that he and I could have something to talk about. We'd phone each other on the days of the releases and I'd be like, "Are you dressing up?" and he'd say, "I'm a Muggle!"<sup>11</sup> He came to the last release of the book dressed as a wizard trying to be a Muggle. So he wore flippers and wings and a cape. And my mother was dressed as Mrs Weasley<sup>12</sup> (she even had her clock with all her family on it). [My husband] was Snape<sup>13</sup> and my whole family was there. We were all complete and total nerds waiting at [the shopping centre] for the book to be released.  
(EssieJayne)

---

11. A term from the *Harry Potter* universe indicating a person who has no magical ability. The muggle world is the ordinary, everyday, non-magical world.

12. A character in the *Harry Potter* universe, Mrs Weasley is the mother of the Weasley children, including Ron and Ginny. She is considered the key maternal, and even matriarchal figure, in the novels and films.

13. A character and professor at Hogwarts in the *Harry Potter* universe. Snape is an antihero, although this only becomes clear towards the end of the series. For much of the story he is sinister and sarcastic.

For both Idril and EssieJayne, the connection between fandom and family was strong, and both make the link between fannish practices and ideas of habitus, enculturation, the construction of memory and traditions, and the cementing of kinship ties of belonging within a family unit. For both these participants, fan practice was a home and kin-making practice. Idril is a mother of two and to some extent her narrative assumed that her daughter would be a fan and that this identity would be important to her too.

I went to [the shopping centre] at midnight, dressed up as Professor Trelawny<sup>14</sup> and won my little pack for the best dressed. Then after that we went as a family all dressed up. My daughter's origin's story is definitely going to be, "I thought my loser of a mother would be the only one dressed up. Then she won the competition and we all got our books free!"

(Idril)

For Idril, being a mother and being a fan had become inseparable activities. They co-exist in the following extracts from three successive days in her activity diary:

- Annotating Kindle edition of the *Silmarillion* 03:00am. In bed with baby. C won't sleep so have him playing with toys on bed while I make notes.
- Reading essays by Tolkien 03:00am 45 min Feeding baby Read *On Fairy Stories* out-loud to C to get him to sleep.
- Read *The Hobbit* to baby 18:30 - 19:00 ½hour. He seems to enjoy story time already!

(Idril)

---

14. The professor of Divination at Hogwarts in the *Harry Potter* universe. She wears a shawl and thick glasses, bangles and rings.

For Idril, however, unlike EssieJayne it was not simply the fact of “liking things together”. Her different levels of commitment to her two fandoms therefore marked different roles in her relationship with her children. She saw her involvement in *Harry Potter* fandom as “just messing around” and that it was “a nice way of engaging with my teenager”. It does not have the same life-course significance and gravitas as *Lord of the Rings*, which was the persistent and ever-present thread that wound its way through her self-narrative as a source of abiding strength, sustenance and biographical way-marking. Idril presented her well-worn copy of the book, saying:

[It is marked with] the tears before I got married and the time I spent in hospital with my daughter. You know this thing has come along with me which is why it looks the way it does. When I was in labour with my daughter I got my sister to read the *Council of Elrond*<sup>15</sup> to me during contractions because that was the happy place. And so when I go through that chapter in this book I remember being in labour. It has travelled with me.

(Idril)

For KimberlyHart, her accounts of “becoming a fan” were rooted in early childhood and were the centrepieces of cherished memories spent in the company of older cousins. According to her account, her first experience of fandom was indistinguishable from childhood play:

**Catherine:** When was the first time that you thought about yourself as a fan of something?

**KimberlyHart:** *Power Rangers*! Or *Ninja Turtles*! I don’t know which one though. I remember me and my cousins would act like turtles. They had these turtle beds that turned into couches and you did

---

15. Elrond’s council held in the elven realm, Rivendell, a place of outstanding beauty, safety and refuge. Here the characters decide on how to rid the world of the One Ring. The meeting takes place in Book II, in the first of the three volumes that make up Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*.

somersaults. My favourite character was Leonardo<sup>16</sup> because I just liked the fact that he had a sword, you know!

Catherine: How old were you?

KimberlyHart: I think I was 4?

Catherine: Ok. So you have been a fan of something your whole life?

KimberlyHart: Yeah and *Power Rangers* was the best! And *Biker Mice from Mars*! Ok, yeah! Now we are getting it! *Power Rangers* was amazing! I even had a Morpher.<sup>17</sup> I learned the... [words fail her and so she performs an elaborate gesture routine from *Power Rangers*]. Up until I was 12 I was watching *Power Rangers* and I watched every single one. Me and my cousin role-played like crazy!

(KimberlyHart)

In this excerpt from our first interview, KimberlyHart went from being a laconic interviewee accommodating me on her lunch break to a charmingly enthused, animated characterisation of her childhood self. This change in register included slippages where adult vocabulary failed, and in its place she supplied a demonstration of embodied memory in the form of the *Power Rangers* gestural routine.

These fan origin stories were often framed as having early roots, and were tied to remembered pasts populated by family. A key finding of this research is that the discursive framework for fandom was intimate, familial, domestic and inward-facing rather than outward, community, aspirational or public-facing. Harrington and Beilby write that “the presence of familial others is central to their becoming-a-fan narratives... As such, for these fans, text, self, and family are inextricably bound together

---

16. Leader of the four *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, Leonardo is a human-sized fighting turtle who is armed with two katana swords.

17. A wrist device that enables the Power Ranger's transformation in the TV series, *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*. It is activated with a series of hand gestures.

in the meaning-making process of growing up and growing old” (Harrington and Bielby 2010b). Booth and Kelly’s study (2013) highlights the phenomenon of induction into fandom by family members. In the same way, many of the interviews with participants emphasised not only that their current domestic, intimate and familial relationships are entangled with their fan practices, but that in fact their own original induction into fandom was often connected to family relationships. Once again suggesting that primary site of fandom is often found close to home.

However, what emerged from the interviews was that not all parental or familial relationships were framed in the light of positive traditions and shared memories of belonging. In Gumi’s story (as a student she lived at home with her parents at the time of her interviews) her costume-crafting and cosplay activities had become a source of conflict and disapproval:

They just seem to have no interest in it whatsoever. They don’t seem to understand it. They always seem weirded out when I do things. I mean like the last reaction I got from my father was the first time I put contact lenses in. They freaked him out and he didn’t even try to hide his disgust. It really hurt my feelings, so I don’t really show them that kind of stuff any more.

(Gumi)

TheFabricWhisper had a nomadic life that alternated between two of Gauteng’s major metropolitan areas where she stayed with family members for a period of weeks until something triggered her next move. Both of the interviews I conducted with The FabricWhisper took place at these parental homes. I was greeted with warm hospitality but the idea that my research was on fans and fandom was met with curious bafflement. This was eventually explained by The FabricWhisper’s statement:

TheFabricWhisperer: My parents, they do not understand me. They are like, “You are wasting your life away!” I am like, “No, I am not



wasting it I am enjoying my life. I'll worry about the end of my life when I get there. I am enjoying it now."

**Catherine:** You feel they can't see the value of what you do?

**TheFabricWhisperer:** Yeah, they think I am playing my life away. But I am enjoying my life. I am making money. Not a lot, just enough to get by but I am making money.

(**TheFabricWhisperer**)

In these cases, the discrepancy between parental ideas of what is important, appropriate, aesthetically pleasing, or a priority were tied to principles of taste and habitus rather than something intrinsic to fandom. TheFabricWhisper was as baffled by her father's habit of going outside to watch and identify planes that pass overhead, as he was by her peripatetic life of taking commissions to sew werewolf costumes.

Enculturation is a commonly used term in fandom generally taken to mean "learning the ropes", "moving beyond being a noob" or perhaps being inducted into the community of practice. It is a socialisation process. This kind of induction into fandom by other fans could be termed "horizontal enculturation" in contrast to the vertical, intergenerational enculturation within the family or home. Fan studies tends to focus on horizontal enculturation as a crucial form of cultural reproduction that sustains fandoms as fields of interaction with their rules of play. However, the findings in this chapter point to Harrington and Beilby (2010b) and Booth and Kelly's (2013) observations that fan practices are integrated into the life of the family. Fandom incorporates home, family and domesticity and is pivotal to tradition, routine and even potential confrontations.

The intersection of family and fandom (sometimes referred to as intergenerational fandom) recalls Appadurai's inversion of Walter Benjamin's better-known title *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Appadurai's reworking resulted in "The Work of Reproduction

in an Age of Mechanical Art”, which he points to as the “classic human problem that will not disappear however much global cultural processes might change their dynamics” (1996, p. 43). Appadurai goes on to say, “In traditional anthropological terms, this could be phrased as the problem of enculturation in a period of rapid culture change” (1996, p. 43). Appadurai argues this entanglement between the domestic or the familial and the rapidly evolving, novelty-driven global flows of texts and practices constitutes a new dimension of a very old dynamic. Despite certain commonalities (such as family clashes as to contesting or sharing of value, legitimacy, beauty and suitability) I am cautious of too direct a link between middle-class leisure activities and Appadurai’s use of the phrase in the context of migrants far from home acquiring the habitus of a new social setting. Nevertheless, these fan practices demonstrate the production and reproduction of locality through valuing and incorporating (or repudiating) influences, texts, activities and traditions.

Morley points out that “while new communication technologies are producing new definitions of time, space and community, these are not necessarily erasing but rather overlaying our old understandings”, inviting the more relevant question of “how physical and symbolic networks become entwined around each other” (Morley 2002, p. 176). I therefore argue that the accounts of how families construct traditions, values and memories out of fannish texts and practices can be considered (amongst the many others that pattern everyday life) instances of the reproduction and transmission of culture at what is the most local level. This focus on the home suggests that fan practices can be listed among those other practices that, while rooted in global media culture, are utilised as a resource to produce locality. This view of locality is premised on the idea that it is not simply a pre-existing quality of place or modernity but is something that actors cultivate, actively produce and have a stake in reproducing by means of the habitus of fandom.

Beyond a physical space, home is a critical site for fandom because it is here that intimate, familial and domestic relationships play out. The findings show that fandom is a significant contributor to these relation-

ships, and in corollary, that cultivating these relationships with children, partners and family is an important rather than incidental fan practice. The importance of family, sharing and intimacy in fandom suggests that many fan practices are not necessarily about other fans. These practices speak to habitus and the cultural reproduction of attitudes and values, memories and shared experiences. “Making a home” is shorthand for discourses of belonging. Participants used their fandom to negotiate what they considered a “good life”, an ethical life but also an aesthetic for life. In many cases the participants are reproducing the habitus of cosmopolitan consumers of global pop culture.

#### 4.4 FEELING AT HOME: PRACTICES AND COMMUNITY

If the previous categories linking fan practices and the theme of home were constrained by quite concrete parameters of domestic arrangements or familial connection, this next aspect of the recurrent theme of home is less direct. Summarised in the idiom of “feeling at home”, it speaks to the affective experience of belonging and comfort. Several responses emphasised a combination of co-presence and shared activity as criteria for “feeling at home”. Gumi notes that she feels at home “around similar people” or as she said, “If I’m in cosplay and I’m around others who are in cosplay”. Likewise for TheFabricWhisperer, this feeling is a result of practice and participation rather than place. She commented that she felt at home when “Cosplaying the characters I love or just dressing up in a costume for fun. [Or ] when I’m surrounded by people who share the same interests”. Kelga concurred noting that he felt at home with like-minded friends that shared his hobbies.

Kelga, Gumi and TheFabricWhisperer identified as active cosplayers and members of the local cosplaying community. Perhaps of all the fannish practices this one is the most embodied, performative and immediate. In their accounts the participants outlined how there is a period of weeks and even months of planning and preparation for a cosplay event. This

often involves intensive consultation and sharing of long evenings of sewing and building together. This is especially true as the events draw close and extra hands are needed for tricky techniques and finishing touches. For the larger, multi-day events a cosplayer will develop several costumes. This will often include a cosplay that is part of a group of friends or a collective who play a selection of characters or a scene. All these practices go towards “feeling at home” in community events where there is an emphasis on co-presence.

In the descriptions of the lead-up to events like *rAge* or *ICON*<sup>18</sup>, home-making language was used. The participants emphasised the labour of coordination and correspondence, organising meals, planning travel and making arrangements for accommodation. There was also a keen sense of non-commercial and reciprocal generosity: sharing lifts; offering sleeping space on floors or couches; paying attention to food preferences for meal planning. These were couched in the language of tradition and reciprocity. For example one participant reported taking particular pleasure in a celebratory meal in a certain style or format that she had wanted to repeat. Another noted an event ending with a cosplayer’s ball that was a departure from tradition. For a third it was a matter of pride that he had hosted several fans from elsewhere in the country in reciprocation for an earlier visit. A fourth had modified a long-planned costume since she was the designated driver to an event. She felt it was her responsibility to be sure she could transport her friends safely even if it was at the cost to her own costume design. All of these are banal practices of accommodation, friendship and solidarity that realise the production of a local network characterised by care, belonging and familiarity.

That being said, one of the main disruptors of this sense of being comfortable with co-presence or “feeling at home” in the community was attributed to the tendency of community members to have romantic re-

---

18. South Africa’s longest running game event, featuring board games, war gaming, card games, role-play and cosplay. The event has grown from being hosted in a recreation centre, to its most recent venue at a large local casino conference facility. Held since 1992.

relationships with other fans. In these instances participants blamed this on the “incestuous” quality of fandom, thus evoking the doubling of “fans as family” and fan practices as being domestic and intimate. Gumi complained:

Two people will date and then they break up and then it makes it awkward for everyone in the community. You are like, “Well now I have to take a side because they hate each other and can’t be in the same room together”.

(Gumi)

Captain Unobservant explained this as applying to a range of interpersonal disagreements, not just romantic ones, saying that a not insignificant amount of his energy went into managing “broken hearts and bruised egos”:

It is such a small and close-knit community. A person will go off on someone. Then when we have a physical meet up, those people won’t want to come because they don’t want to meet this person. Suddenly we need to balance these sorts of things because of personality clashes and issues and because it is such a small community. It is a very niche-y very incestuous thing. We all know each other and romantically we tend to date each other within the community because it is so small and we have the most in common with the people in our communities. So relationships going wrong end up fracturing and factionalising.

(Captain Unobservant)

The feeling of being at home (affinity and belonging through co-presence) did not find the equivalent expression in a virtual or online setting. There were no accounts of this experience of feeling at home in discus-

sion forums, social-media platforms or sub-reddits<sup>19</sup> for example. For some participants, checking in with these resources was an integral part of the rhythm and routine of the day. As KimberlyHart explained, it was more like buying the newspaper every morning. The environment for these updates, exchanges and interactions were an important fan practice and critical to remaining current and informed, but for these participants was not synonymous with feeling at home.

This section has focused on how mutual engagement and fannish involvement has an important embodied quality encapsulated in the feeling of being at home that comes about by being in the physical or immediate company of these like-minded and mutually engaged others. There is pleasure in co-presence and co-production in these practices. Feeling “at home” was used for a different kind of belonging – one that translated to affinity and community. In this sense, home was where there are “people like me”: other cosplayers, gamers or comic book fans. Home was an affective quality generated by actions and associations synonymous with the fandom, and quite often had qualities of domestic arrangement: meals, transport, a bed for the night, opportunities to spend time together outside of (and sometimes on the margins of) formal events.

#### 4.5 HOME IS A PLACE IN A NARRATIVE WORLD

This chapter started with the concrete and physical structure of the home as a house and domicile. It became more abstract, traversing the intimacy of relationships, parenting and kinship in that home, and then moved on to the “feeling of home” as the focus of the previous section. However, one of the less common articulations of home was one that is perhaps the most particular to fans and fandom: home as a place in a

---

19. Reddit.com is a social and news aggregation site. The site is organised by themed sub-reddits that are moderated by users. There are many fan-orientated sub-reddits.

narrative world. In some of these excerpts, home was a known place in a narrative or diegetic world; sometimes it was textual, in the form of a familiar passage; while in other instances it was an internalised, personal and entirely imaginary place constructed from familiar and loved texts. This mobilisation of home was briefly surfaced in this research and was characteristic of only Norvie's and Idril's experiences, however it is an exciting avenue for future, more narrowly focused exploration.

For both Norvie and Idril the home-base or centre of their fandom was an internal and imaginative one. Norvie was an omnivorous and voracious fan of literature, film and television. She explained that she appropriated key texts to use as resources for the imaginative work of immersing or transporting herself into the text. Norvie drew on characters, settings and scenarios that generated unfolding imaginative interactions that she used to ameliorate the irritation, boredom, loneliness and frustration of everyday life. Interestingly, in the excerpt below she uses the term "hoarding" redolent with connotations of the domestic space.

I'm fond of living in my head. I take the parts of things I like and stash them in my memory. Really, it's a kind of hoarding. And it's great when new materials make friends with other, existing residents. So in some ways, my curiosity is at the centre.

(Norvi)

Despite her text-centric fan practices, Idril also identified her imagination as the centre of her fandom. As for Norvi, for Idril, internalising and occupying the text or narrative was a pleasure and a means of transforming the rote and routine of everyday. The extended extract below came from Idril's long-form written response:

I have reflected on this for some time and have to say the most honest answer is simply "inside my own head". During "dead" time such as sitting in traffic, waiting-rooms, in the middle of the night when I am feeding my baby, I find myself drifting into Middle-earth or visiting Hogwarts. I reflect on a certain character, or list objects,

characters and places in alphabetical order to keep inventories fresh in my mind. I have watched the movies so many times that I am able to close my eyes and “play-back” by memory scenes and dialogue from the movies for my enjoyment. I find this most useful when in stressful situations like at the dentist or when I can’t fall asleep at night... Everywhere that I am... I have all the books in hard copy and digital format for both *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* at home and at work. I have all the soundtracks for both *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* on my phone and computer and play these frequently for my relaxation and enjoyment. If I am bored, I play games with myself such as locating the piece of music in the film... “ahh, this is when Frodo is on Arwen’s horse escaping the Nine<sup>20</sup> before entering into Rivendell” or ... “this is when Harry meets Hagrid for the first time at the cabin in the sea”<sup>21</sup> (Idril).

These transformations and transportations result from sophisticated imaginative work and a deep familiarity with the texts. Idril developed her thoughts on this idea of home.

The term “home” has always referred more to an emotion than a geographical location in my vocabulary. Home is where I can let my guard down and be completely myself. It is familiar, nurturing and safe. Home is where I am allowed to seek pleasure and fulfil my personal needs. By this definition home is at Hogwarts, in the Gryffindor Tower<sup>22</sup> listening to Harry, Ron and Hermione argue in front of the

---

20. A suspense-filled action scene titled “The Flight to the Ford” from *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (film), where Frodo, a hobbit and the Ring Bearer, is fleeing the Ringwraiths (also known as Nazgûl or the Nine) and is saved when Arwen, a half-elf, conjures the river Bruinen to rise and sweep the Ringwraiths away.

21. In this scene, Harry Potter meets the character Hagrid. Harry is with his abusive, cruel and neglectful relatives in a broken-down cabin in a storm. Hagrid brings him a birthday cake.

22. The tower at Hogwarts that houses the common room and dormitories for Gryffindor House students. There is a fireplace and comfortable armchairs, bulletin boards and place to do homework in the common room.



fire. It is in the House under the Hill<sup>23</sup> with Tom Bombadil and his Lady Goldberry listening to Tom's tales of the Old Forest. It is in Rivendell in the Hall of Fire<sup>24</sup> or in Lothlorien under the Mellyrn trees.<sup>25</sup>

(Idril)

Idril's account of home invoked her intense immersive and imaginative experience of inhabiting particular places drawn in loving detail from the canon of her fandoms. It displayed an interleaving of a fluid idea of home as domesticity, as a familiar place, as comfort and security, all the while operating relative to a vividly conceived textual centre. However, Idril then explained that she performed an additional transformation and transportation. Not content with being transported imaginatively into the narrative, she pursues a different, more concrete manifestation of these fannish and imaginative homelands.

---

23. The House of Tom Bombadil is where Tom, apparently the oldest being in Tolkien's Middle-earth, lives in the Old Forest. This modest house is a place of refuge and restoration for the hobbits on their journey.

24. A large hall in Elrond's house in Rivendell, where a fire was always kept burning, and tales were told and songs sung at night.

25. Trees of immense size in which the elves would build platforms (or even buildings) for shelter. Frodo and the fellowship spend the night in Lothlorien in Caras Galadhon, a city built in the branches of a Mallorn tree.



(a) *The Central Drakensburg has always felt like “home” because it is the embodiment of the Misty Mountains<sup>a</sup> for me. I have never seen the Alps where Tolkien went wandering in his lifetime, and therefore the Drakensburg are “my” Misty Mountains, and Monk’s Cowl my Caradhras.<sup>b</sup> I have hiked up to the foothills of Monk’s Cowl a few times through the natural rain forest and it always takes me “home” to Lord of the Rings and Harry Potter when I do. (Idril)*

---

a. A key landmark in Tolkien’s Middle-earth.

b. The highest peak in Tolkien’s Middle-earth and part of the Mountains of Moria.

As is picked up on later in Chapter 6, fans are increasingly travelling and making pilgrimages (Brooker 2005; Brooker 2007) to fannish sites such as shooting locations or narrative places referenced in the textual canon of a fandom. In a similar celebration of fannish place, Idril overlaid her knowledge of Tolkien's "real world" life and inspiration, the fictitious spaces of his Middle-earth, and a third accessible and embodied substitution. In the absence of access to either the Alps or the Misty Mountains she has transferred these to a local resource in a conscious act of imaginative transportation. Norvie and Idril articulate the centre of their practice as remote from the here-and-now and easily and pleasurably slip into a permanently extant centre that is a textually informed elsewhere. These excerpts illustrate an ongoing shuttling between text and experience of place and time.

Victor Nell (Nell 1988) calls this "ludic reading" and associates the experience of being transported or "lost in a book" with a changed quality of consciousness akin to dreaming. Building on this concept, Transportation Theory – also called engagement, immersion, engrossment, or absorption – holds that readers or viewers are able to be "transported into a narrative, whereby their thoughts and attention are focused on the events occurring in it. In this transportation process, audience members enter the world presented in the narrative" (Tal-Or and Cohen 2010, p. 405). More recently, Lisa Glebatis Perks (2015), when writing about television binge-watching<sup>26</sup> or "marathoning", as she prefers to term it, has returned to Nell's description of ludic reading. She argues that one of the affordances of marathon watching or reading is that it is easier to give oneself over to the fictive world in a way that causes reality to retreat.

Note the return of the metaphor of "home". Perks picks up Nell's (1988) use of the metaphor of a house, a dwelling place in the narrative world

---

26. Defined by a Netflix-commissioned study, binge-watching is watching two to six episodes of the same show in a single sitting (Perks, 2015, p. x). Perks makes an argument for the term "media-marathoning" rather than "binge-watching" with its negative connotations.

to describe the phenomenon of the “world-creating power of books” that the reader erects and sustains through their absorption in the text. However, Nell finds this house very fragile: “a bamboo and paper house among earthquakes” (cited in Perks 2015, p. 8). It is Perk’s contention that media marathoning, on the other hand, produces a more robust dwelling for the imagination:

The commonly marathoned texts create engaging worlds that more completely absorb readers. The marathon version of Nell’s delicate house would be an entire world made of narrative bricks and reader mortar to create the stronghold in which readers blissfully play. . . [And] marathoners commonly become residents who get to know the geography, laws and other citizens of the fictive world. (Perks 2015, p. 8)

Perks makes the point that in these ways media marathoning audiences are, in effect, temporarily adopting fan practices. If the sustained and immersive quality of sequentially consuming a large number texts from a single narrative universe suffices to facilitate transportation and consolidate a viewer’s sense of place, then how much more so where fans have invested consistent and ongoing attention to narrative worlds. As Idril’s comments illustrate, going home to Middle-earth for her was no mere paper and bamboo shelter and, being so familiar with the text, she could conjure imaginative transportation almost at will.

#### 4.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Homes are important, one might even claim primary, sites of fan practices. They are physical places where the fan has a greater degree of control over when, and what and how texts are consumed. The domestic space of fandom should not be mistaken for a closed or cloistered space. This version of home, for all its concrete location in place, is made porous through its connections both technological and transactional. If

the mediascape involves flows that are the globe-spanning movements of text, image and ideas, then the fannish home is a channel, a mill-race of sorts, that diverts a fraction of the flow and is subject to its own micro-politics and hyper-local structuring practices.

These various collocations of fandom and home can be read as the counterpoint to the homogenised, globalised, virtual and decentred view of the subject in late modernity. For Morley, home is a site of porous boundaries that media and communication technologies transgress. He holds that television allowed viewers to “‘visit’ faraway locations (via sound and image) without leaving the comfort and security of their homes. They are thus enabled simultaneously to stay home and ‘go places’, to remain in the realm of familiar ontological security and yet to experience the vicarious thrill of exhibited difference or exotica of one sort or another” (Morley 2002, p. 9). If broadcast television ushered in mobile privatisation of the home, then this phenomenon has increased exponentially with the access, variety, customisability and participatory potential of the internet. Rather than seeing home either as the simple or rarified and authentic embodiment of the local pole of a hypothetical global–local binary, it can be read as a translocal nexus.

Exploring the tension between everyday practice, place and local fandom surfaces that the physical site of home is enmeshed in the produced locality, identity, affect and imagination of fandom. The chapter points to how the everyday actions of individuals are both structured by and are, in turn, the structuring forces that produce and reproduce these categories. This chapter has traced how prevalent the notion of home is in fan practices and how the connotation of home is mobilised. Manifest in the idiomatic expressions of “feeling at home”, “making a home”, experiencing “a home away from home” and “going home”, global popular fandom, as the evidence in this chapter suggests, works to achieve the production of locality. The starting point for this produced locality is the routine of fan practices in everyday life, and as the literature review outlines, one of the overlooked aspects of fan studies is the quotidian quality of a media practice. In response to the pathologisation inherent

in the injunction that fans “Get a Life!”, this thesis takes as its assumption that fans have busy, fulfilling and demanding lives where fandom functions as a meaningful part of income-generation, social engagement, relaxation, creative outlet and self-expression.

The constellation of ideas in this chapter suggests the multiple roles of fandom in everyday domestic life, the practices of family and kinship, cultivating amity and intimacy, and refuge and retreat. I argue that these practices are ways of producing locality that is both mediated by and mediating of flows of media messages. That fan practices are mediated is an obvious assertion, but here I argue that fan practices in turn mediate many things that are part of the unfolding of lives. Fan practices mediate family values and traditions, romantic relationships and memories and the principles of taste and aesthetics, ethics and legitimacy. “Liking things together” functions as instances where fannish practices mediate intimacy and bonding. They are key drivers of producing what Appadurai calls “local subjects” who are “actors who properly belong to a situated community of kin, neighbours, friends and enemies” (Appadurai 1996, p. 179). This calls to mind Hannerz’s “habitats of meaning” (1996) or Brah’s concept of a “homing desire” which is the production of locality through habit, tradition, memory and self-narrative (Brah 1996).

## FAN LABOUR AND FANS AT WORK

---

The process of coding and analysis revealed an accumulation of practices, statements and recorded material loosely agglomerated around the theme of work. For instance, participants often tagged the places and spaces in their activity diaries as “at work” or “before work”. In this theme I included statements about work responsibilities that were keeping the participants from fan events as well as complaints about “having to work” rather than do more exciting fannish activities. The discourse of work was even more frequently used in concert *with* fan practices in the sense of “working late on a costume” or being exhausted from “working at a convention” or on a new piece of fanfiction. A third sub-theme emerged that pointed towards a different kind of fan work: the hours of labour involved in petty production or the “side hustle” of importing and selling t-shirts to other fans; an artist taking on commissioned work; or a photographer shooting and editing the photographs from a fan event. A fourth dimension to this repeated concern with work and labour in different guises was discursive rather than concrete and found its form in a widespread and recurrent anxiety about the relationship between work and leisure.

As the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 shows, for some time the scholarship on fandom has turned its attention to the complexities of labour within cultural industries that rely on free labour. This fan labour is frequently (but not exclusively), free or affective, as will be discussed below, this has been seen by some scholars as evidence for the exploitation of free work for the production of value while others have contested this view, arguing that while value may well be produced and accrued by



parties other than the fan, this does not negate the non-commercial rewards that continue to drive fan labour. But this is not the only way in which labour features in the findings of this chapter. It became evident that a major site for fan practices is the formal (and informal) workplace and we can read this as integral to the workday routine. In several cases the demands of regular paid employment are in articulation (or even competition) with the compensations and rewards of fannish practices. The “daily grind” as a site of fandom demonstrates the permeability of the categories of labour and leisure. What this shows is that both paid work and fan practices are framed by the participants as parts of the same daily rituals or routine.

This chapter starts by presenting evidence that one of the important non-commercial rewards of fan labour is the construction and maintenance of the local collective or community. This principle has been covered extensively in the work on fandom and the gift economy that sustains it. For the most part, the more recent work has focused on digital fandom (Baym and Burnett 2009; Gregg 2009; Turk 2013), but the fans in this research show that a large proportion of this labour remains concrete and very tangible. It is not simply a feeling of belonging or community that is being generated: in many cases this labour involves the real requirements of a group of people gathering as a collective. Next I consider the porous boundary between the free labour undertaken by fans and the labour of the cultural intermediary. These intermediaries shape and act as gatekeepers for their communities through their involvement (Woo 2012) and derive benefit from this work in the form of remuneration, often as petty producers (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998). Even when financial reward is not the result of their labour, the kinds of rewards are more aligned to the goals of the apprentice or the prospector than the fan or the hobbyist (Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016).

Moving away from the question of labour, the chapter considers the work that fans do and their work places as sites of fan practices. Much like the home in the previous chapter, the workplace as a fan site has not been considered in the literature on fans. Unlike the home, I am not sug-



gesting that the workplace is a significant site for fan practices. Rather it is indicative of micro-practices that happen in the gaps of the day. Small interstitial routines and everyday practices that are about boredom, relief, compensation, self-soothing, subterfuge and defiance. On their own, no one of these practices is noteworthy, but together they are a trail of breadcrumbs that show how pleasures of fandom are held in tension with the duties of paid work and the stresses of the workplace.

However, the ease with which this labour and leisure intersect and interpenetrate does have its downside. The final sub-theme I found was a language of low-level anxiety that ran throughout the interviews and the activity diaries. Many of the participants expressed concern that centred on the need to police and limit the excesses of labour or time spent on fan practices. Too much effort, time or work spent on these tasks was disavowed as waste or addiction, fruitless and even disordered. I argue that this anxiety was heightened for the fans in this study, many of whom found that their free labour as a fan, their work as petty producers or cultural intermediaries, and their paid work – often within the cultural or creative industries – coincide or overlapped. This meant that they were seldom completely disconnected from work, even in their moments of leisure.

## 5.1 FAN LABOUR MAKES THE COMMUNITY

Both Norvie and Captain Unobservant were fans whose work was critical to constituting and maintaining the local fan community in Gauteng. Both were important figures in the local fan scene. Both had reputations as organisers and leaders of collectives and events that were high points on the fan calendar and, in their leadership positions, they were often at the centre of contestation and disputes in the community. Ultimately, both spent hundreds of hours planning, budgeting and organising. Neither were paid and did this work voluntarily in the interests of cultivating and maintaining the community of local fans.

Captain Unobservant was a founder member of a small group of like-minded artists in Johannesburg that over a number of years had sustained itself, grown and developed into a non-profit organisation with considerable local influence. He explained that in the beginning its motivation was two-fold. Firstly, as an informal community of practice for the (then) largely unrecognised work of South African comic-book artists and illustrators. Secondly, as a social grouping to compensate for the real or perceived stigma of social awkwardness amongst comic-book fans. He explained:

I started [the organisation] with my friends because we felt that there wasn't enough representation of South African creatives at all, especially the younger ones, the ones that don't have the money to do so or the ability to do so. We wanted to create a platform where people could get together in a cool place and talk about what they do, and get advice from experienced guys, and get the experienced guys to show their stuff and all of that sort of thing. And also create a social thing because a lot of us tend to be very antisocial, which is a problem. And so we wanted to make it a bit more viable as a network so people could actually get out of their dark and dingy rooms and sit in the sunlight and play board games with each other or just even have a conversation with another human because a lot of us tend to forget about it.

(Captain Unobservant)

In the years since its inception the group shifted its aims. No longer an informal meet-up for comic-book artists, it had become a gatekeeper and cultural intermediary. In addition to its early aims, the organisation was now registered as a non-profit that used its collective influence and resources to buy space at conventions and trade shows so that its members could access the high-cost commercial events. This labour on Captain Unobservant's part facilitated participation for members as part of a cooperative in a way that would have been impossible for individuals. He continued:

And now [the organisation] is actually a registered non-profit and we are trying to be much more involved in all the communities. That is why we are doing all the convention stuff. We try to provide a platform for people to go to the big stuff like *rAge* where normally you could never afford a stand there and we charge a fraction of the price. We bear the financial burden. We are not there to make money we are there to get the artists to make money. And so we've seen lots of passionate and new artists come every year because of that. And the Artists Alley at *rAge* has become so prestigious and so renowned that we were given a giant stand this year... well not given, we had to pay for it. But the stand was phenomenal, we were put in front of a main entrance, the space was beautiful, everything we could have asked for was right there and it worked. The artists' [stalls] were constantly packed and all of them made a fairly decent amount of money over the weekend and that is all we could ask for.

(Captain Unobservant)

With this growth, the workload for Captain Unobservant multiplied exponentially. However, much of this voluntary labour went unseen or unappreciated by the community. Captain Unobservant offered an anecdote that summed up an attitude he said was fairly common. Here it related to the annual cosplay competition that his collective had introduced. It was intended to give cosplayers a platform for their fandom within a major commercial event. The venue costs were recouped from entrance fees, prizes were donated and the labour was entirely voluntary.<sup>1</sup> The fan event was community driven, staffed by fan labour. The participants in the competition themselves had laboured on their costumes and in some cases made substantial financial investments. As a result there was a high level of resistance to paying for their participation even within the context of an event that had a ticket price of R120 per day or R300 for the three-day weekend pass. Captain Unobservant recounted what he considered a typical interaction with a critical fan:

---

1. Subsequently the cosplay competition has been taken over by the same commercial sponsors for the main event, taking it out of the fan community's hands.

One of the complaints that we always get is: why do we charge for a cosplay competition? I say, “Listen, how much do you think it costs to do something like this?” And they say, “Surely it can’t cost that much”. We say, “Just take a guess how much it would take to do a cosplay competition at something like *rAge*”. And they go: “Like, a thousand, two thousand bucks maybe”. So we laugh first, and then reply: “It costs more like R20 000”. Firstly, you have to rent stage space. You have to pay for stage time. You have to pay for renting a booth. You have to hire judges. All those things that people don’t see in the background and the amount of time and hours that you have to invest in something like that. A convention like *rAge* for us just as an exhibitor takes upward of eight months to organise. We have to do all the planning and all the different kinds of layouts and selling stall space and getting all of that organised over and above the publicity, managing the social networking side of things, trying to get everything happening.

(Captain Unobservant)

In much of the scholarship about free fan labour the discussions look at labour in the context of digital or online fandom. Even within this narrow band of practices, as Tisha Turk notes, “not all labors are equally appreciated or even acknowledged” (Turk 2013, para. 2.2), and fan work has traditionally been linked to the labour involved in creating fanfiction or fanart. These fixed, singular and authored objects, tend to be most easily assigned value but, she points out, there are other kinds of fan work that do not give rise to objects (physical or digital). She notes that these kinds of activities are discussed less frequently than the production of art and objects even if this neglected labour is the architecture or infrastructure that fandoms rely on for their existence. Turk argues that “community” is not just an abstract byproduct of these practices and that the free labour that fandoms are founded on should be understood within a gift economy. In the instance of convention organisation, newsletter creation, database maintenance etc., the gifting tends to be one-to-many or even many-to-many, “either because the work is done by a team or

because the full effect of the gift depends on the aggregated labor of many individuals. Many large-scale fandom endeavors involve multiple types of gift" (Turk 2013, para. 3.3-3.4).

The voluntary labour Captain Unobservant describes is in the service of constructing or maintaining a community, whether that is an imagined, virtual or physical community or spans all of these forms. Certain kinds of fan practices amount to the labour that produces the community of a fandom. This is an accomplishment or achievement that does not happen organically or spontaneously. It is produced by means of labour and resources and it has to be made and paid for in either labour, time, money or all of the above. This labour done in leisure time is part of "a complex system of costs, rewards and relational interpretations that motivate their continued engagement in voluntary practices that provide economic value for others" (Baym and Burnett 2009, p. 445). Furthermore, it is buttressed by the less extensive work of many other fans who navigate across multiple platforms both online and offline – building connections, commenting, offering advice, time and other resources. While this point is often made in relation to the internet and virtual fan communities in particular, it holds true for analogue labours as well. This includes such tasks as manning stalls, serving lunches, running first-aid tables, judging competitions, picking up people from the airport and so on.

Many of the sentiments expressed by Captain Unobservant are confirmed by Norvie. At the time of her interview, Norvie had recently finished a large annual event. She offered her account of being a volunteer. It involved high-pressure deadlines, financial stress, demanding participants and attendees, long days and nights on site and innumerable post-event administrative tasks. She included the caveat that for several months after an event, all organisers swear that it will be the very last year that they run the event. They go into a state of seclusion and refuse to engage with the larger community. But with time and distance this resolve weakens and as the year turns they find themselves convening committees and setting schedules. She described herself as

being deep in this post-event period and noted that her comments (if they sounded too negative) should be interpreted in this light.

What they [the fans and attendees of events] really don't understand is that the cons I ran for years are completely volunteer-based. We don't get paid. I think the crowd has changed so people don't know me and don't know I don't make money as the organiser. In fact every year it costs us money to run the thing because we try to plough back any profit to make it bigger. So I end up having phone bills and petrol bills and very often I pay out of my own pocket. It costs me money, and this year was disastrous.

(Norvie)

When I asked why she continued to subject herself to the financial stress and emotional pressure, she answered simply: "For me to be a fan is also to organise". In this Norvie, is an exemplar of the fan as a source of affective labour. Melissa Gregg explains this affective labour as "meaningful and productive human activity that does not result in a direct financial profit or exchange value, but rather produces a sense of community, esteem, and/or belonging for those who share a common interest" (Gregg 2009, p. 209). For Norvie, the affective component to this work was a critical motivator but came at an emotional cost.

It is passion that keeps me going. But, because everyone volunteers, when someone is being absolutely useless you can lose your temper at them but you can't fire them. If you go around doing the whole "Exterminate! Exterminate" thing [she does an excellent impression of the Daleks<sup>2</sup> from *Dr Who*], you can't work with people again. So you smile and you eat it up and try to make people feel good about themselves.

(Norvie)

---

2. An extraterrestrial mutant race from *Dr Who*, their only existing emotion is hate. Their signature phrase is a strident and repeated "Exterminate!".

Here Norvie describes another type of affective or immaterial labour involved in the construction and maintenance of the community: emotional labour. David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker define emotional labour following Hochschild as requiring the worker “to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others” (Hochschild in Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2008, p. 108).

Norvie and Captain Unobservant are, moreover, excellent examples of the “Volunteer” in Fast *et al.*’s typology of unpaid work in the media sector. Karin Fast, Henrik Örnebring and Michael Karlsson (2016) developed a typology that puts paid to the idea that even when one moonlights in the cultural sphere without payment, that this free labour is homogenous. Instead they argue that within the media sector, “free labor is performed by different actors at either end of increasingly complex and temporally stretched out value chains [which] necessitates a more fine-grained and historicized use of the concept of free labor” (Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016, p. 963). Key amongst their typology is the Volunteer, who they describe as one who works entirely through their own choice, often taking on unpleasant or onerous tasks for an altruistic goal, often in the service of the collective. Just as Norvie articulates the ways in which her passion as a fan are realised through organisation, Fast *et al.* write that “the passion for an object of fandom (and for the fan community) is potentially strong enough for people to work for ‘the good cause’”. However, as can be seen from the work that Norvie and Captain Unobservant do, the Volunteer’s labour gives rise to benefits that accrue to corporate interests. One should not lose sight of the fact that while free, affective and emotional fan labour builds community, it simultaneously “may also be capitalized and generate exchange value for media organizations” (Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016, p. 972).

Volunteers in particular are a type of cultural intermediary. Negus defines the cultural intermediary as “workers who come in-between creative artists and consumers (or, more generally, production and con-

sumption)” (Negus 2002, p. 503). Adopting the term outside of the context of formal employment, Benjamin Woo (2012) points out that fans as cultural intermediaries serve, and through their provisions of service, shape and even constitute their communities. Woo expands this definition of fans’ work as cultural intermediaries by saying they “are not simply economic agents but also social actors, and their mediating labour may seem less like work and more like a calling” (2012, p. 673). Woo continues:

[It] would be a mistake to treat this in economically reductionist terms, for the lesson drawn from subcultural intermediaries is that personal, affective identification with the field and love for its practices are part of what doing such work is all about. On this view, mediation is not located ‘between’ production and consumption; rather, both production and mediation are embedded in a culture without which they would be unintelligible. (Woo 2012, p. 673)

As Peaslee *et al.* (2013) point out, despite the increase in “on-ground” events such as the festival, the convention or the technology expo, they are under-researched as sites of fan labour, while one should remain alert to the collocation of online and on-ground practices. On-ground practices, they assert, are the source of different types of capital that can be accrued by the fan volunteer. Many of these straddle the collective good (for example community construction and maintenance) and the personal or individual advantage. Peaslee *et al.* categorise the benefits of fan volunteering as “the accrual of cultural capital; the establishment and maintenance of communities; the attainment of social capital in the form of friendships; overt attempts at professional advancement; achievement of proximity to ritually significant people and practices; hedonism; and altruism” (Peaslee and El-Khoury and Liles 2013, para. 6.2). In the next section of this chapter, some of these more individualistic drivers of free fan labour are considered, as well as the point that this labour transitions into the labour of the petty producer.



## 5.2 FAN WORK: APPRENTICING AND PROSPECTING IN CULTURAL INDUSTRIES.

In Abercrombie and Longhurst's classic taxonomy of audiences (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998) they construct a "continuum" with the consumer at one end of the scale and the petty producer at the other. The petty producer is the fan who moves their fan activity from leisure to "full-time occupation" whereby they "produce material professionally which can then be marketed back to their own fan culture" (Hills 2002a, p. 29). Over the years, various critics have taken issue with the model for a variety of reasons. From the perspective of this study my concern would be that it offers too neat a segregation between fan and petty producer. As is evident from the findings discussed here, this overlap is much more porous and shaded than a simple conversion from fan (who labours for free) to monetised fandom through petty production. Firstly, as much as some of the participants may dream of their fandom becoming their "full-time occupation", there is simply not a large enough fan community locally to viably sustain this as a sole source of income. Much more frequently, petty production takes place alongside formal employment as a second or supplementary income or "side hustle". Secondly, the free labour of fans is often a stepping-stone towards a personal goal, exposure or professional advancement. The typology posited by Fast *et al.* offers an alternative to Abercrombie and Longhurst's continuum. And they do not only look at fan labour. However, the fan or hobbyist has been synonymous with production through free labour in the media sector since Jenkins pointed out that "Media fans are consumers who also produce, readers who also write, spectators who also participate" (1992, p. 208). Once considered the standard model of engagement for fans, in various ways all the participants demonstrated the qualities of the hobbyist. That being said, of the participants in this study, only Idril, CityBug and EssieJayne demonstrate Hobbyist-only practices and seemed content with roles where their labour was affective in the sense that the "feeling of ease, wellbeing, satisfaction, excitement, or passion"

(Hardt and Negri in Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016, p. 970) was an acceptable return on their investment of time and money.

In John Fiske's seminal article "The Cultural Economy of Fandom", he writes that fan culture "may be thought of as a sort of 'moonlighting' in the cultural rather than the economic sphere, a form of cultural labor to fill the gaps left by legitimate culture" (Fiske 1992, p. 33). He goes on to explain that this fan work "is not typically convertible into economic capital" and, barring exceptional circumstances, it would not "enhance one's career, nor will it produce upward class mobility as its investment payoffs. Its dividends lie in the pleasures and esteem of one's peers in a community of taste rather than those of one's social betters" (Fiske 1992, p. 34). Perhaps it is a marker of how readily available, digitally distributed tools and networked resources have changed the landscape of fandoms and fan practices in the intervening twenty-five years. Fiske's view stands in stark contrast to Captain Unobservant's hard-headed, pragmatic assertion that "it takes more than just being a fan to enjoy something. Because you have to do a little bit of both. Love doesn't make money and you have to have money to make these sort of things happen".

Fiske's concept of moonlighting aptly describes the practices of several participants. They were certainly moonlighting in the cultural sphere, holding down second jobs directly related to their fandoms that took place in the spaces between and after formal work. Sometimes these were well remunerated, sometimes they were hopeful precursors to future employment, and sometimes they were frustrating, financial-/time-sinks that never took off. Contrary to Fiske's assertion, economic capital featured prominently in their calculations and in a number of circumstances fan work was undertaken precisely in the hope of career enhancement and upward mobility.

As Fast *et al.* point out, "not all hobbyists are fans, nor are all fans hobbyists" (Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016, p. 971). Fast *et al.* have therefore developed a range of other roles that are more useful

for analysing the labour of the participants in this study. Chronos, for instance, has dedicated years of labour, enormous resources of skills, and his encyclopaedic knowledge of early digital games to developing a game that could potentially earn him far more than community accolades and social capital. Captain Unobservant and Commissioner Smirnov both worked in the evenings and on weekends developing, refining and elaborating on their graphic novels with the goal of attracting commercial interest. In all three cases, these fans' work would fall into Fast *et al.*'s category of the "Prospector" who accepts "high risks, puts in long hours with no guaranteed reward, is likely to be exploited, but can also find nuggets so big they will never have to perform labor again" (Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016, p. 969).

Captain Unobservant illustrates this point: he volunteered his labour but also received paid commissions as a columnist and commentator on the fan scene. In the week just preceding our second interview he had heard that the exposure that came with his leadership role had led to a major commission. In this instance, Captain Unobservant's work elided the border between fan and Prospector.

We got some really great exposure this year and a lot of international notice. A lot of our guys are being picked up by the international guys. Even I got picked up. I am going to be drawing [for a major commercial stable] – I am so excited. I couldn't believe it when they asked me. It is something I have always dreamed of doing. I've watched the films about a hundred times. We had it on VHS and my brother and I would sit and watch them over and over again when we were kids.

(Captain Unobservant)

This significant professional achievement and international recognition carried cultural capital, was deeply linked to his affective experience and gratification as a lifelong fan and was coupled with financial reward. For Captain Unobservant may have started as a fan moonlighting in the

cultural economy but, after years of work, this had been parlayed into commercial reward.

The Prospector in this model performs free labour not only for affective pleasure but as a “strategic means to reach some higher goal” (Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016, p. 970). This is in contrast to the “Apprentice”, who much like the Prospector, is engaged in “hope labour” and working for free “out of self-interest or self-realization”; but in the Apprentice’s case the rewards are “short-term experience or exposure, and in the long-term possible future employment” (Fast and Örnebring and Karlsson 2016, p. 969).

Commissioner Smirnov was somewhere between the Hobbyist, the Prospector and the Apprentice and his work as an illustrator blurred the lines between fan and producer. While several of his practices were simply for his own relaxation and enjoyment, participating in the Furry fandom had allowed him to monetise the practice of his craft. He saw the work he did during his leisure time as a way to both advance within his career through constant practice and improvement, and to make progress on his own major ongoing project, which would hopefully one day come to fruition. In the meantime he accepted commissions for specialist anthropomorphic illustrations for paying clients who had seen his work online. He said he was motivated partly by the pleasure of exercising his own signature style (something that, in his work-life as a small cog in a larger industrial system, is often impossible), but also by the financial reward. This negotiation between his role as a fan and as a petty producer was further inflected by the tension between personal principle, reputation and financial reward.

I enjoy drawing and I get a lot of my commissions from people who approach me and say, “I love your work in your comic, can you draw my character in your style?” But then, Furry fandom has a heavy connotation of being quite R-rated. I mean that is where the money is and so it is very tempting to draw that sort of stuff. But, personally I am like, “Ah, maybe not too much of it”. That gets a bit weird and

then if people find that online in your style or under your name then people are like, “What are you drawing now?! [in a horrified tone]”. Every once in a while when I open for commission someone will ask me for something that I am just really not comfortable drawing. So then I’ll say, “No I can’t draw that, it is just too out there. But can I draw something like this maybe instead?” And then we see how it goes from there.

(Commissioner Smirnov)

Kelga, on the other hand, fully embraced the Apprentice model in his free labour. Kelga was a graphic designer who works for a large corporate organisation in one of the most formal and traditional employment structures out of all of the participants. However he was an aspiring amateur photographer and saw his labour at conventions as a low-stakes way of practicing his skills, with benefits for his standing within the community but also relating directly to his professional skill sets and employability. His interviews took place shortly after *rAge* which he had attended and had competed in the cosplay competition (after weeks of painstaking preparation and costume building), but more importantly to do free photo shoots of the cosplayers as a way to practice his skills as a photographer. Constant improvement was an important driver for Kelga and ran through many of his comments. His attendance at *rAge* was no different:

This year I went free, I went completely solo and the photo shoot was my main focus... It was time consuming. It wasn’t just like I’ll stop you and say “Hey let me get a photo”. So sometimes I’ll take thirty minutes just to shoot a group of people. I will try and grab a group of people so that once I am done with that person or group or team they can go on and I will keep on going to the next location to shoot... [T]his was a good experience for next year. I am more aware of the different areas that I can use within the venue and I know I can have better time-management.

(Kelga)

Kelga attended and shot photographs for the duration of the event and then set about editing the images before he uploaded and shared the entire batch on social-media sites, carefully linking to everyone he had photographed. For him this free and shared labour as an apprentice photographer was something he took as seriously as his formal employment, and he saw his cosplay peers as clients.

I will work until 9 o'clock just to get [the editing of the photographs] done. I mean there are photographers who are very casual and they will just load up everything. . . there is a lack of refinement, of process. Whereas for me, I will pick the best one. I only want to show the best. I would rather have thirty good photos rather than 300 all similar. And obviously when I pick I also need to edit and I need to think how I am going to describe this photo. . . I want to create this journey that when you look at the photo, it is not just the photo itself, there is also the description; the comments add to the richness of the experience.

(Kelga)

For Kelga the roles of fan and photographer informed each other and made his work better and distinctive. He said, cosplayers “may have fun with selfies or a [mobile] phone but they don’t have a professional understanding. And photographers don’t really understand cosplayers. So for me again it is a bridge between the two parties”. While he worked for free, his plan was to build on his experience and the trust the cosplayer community had in him and to approach online and hard-copy publications with his portfolio to work as a commissioned photographer in future years.

Fan labour as free labour is complicated in terms of how this labour realises value. Critics consider labour by the audience as having different facets that span actions from the act of watching TV to the unpaid work of fans. In Shimpach’s view, this free labour includes everything from the normal actions of audiences spending time watching and discussing television shows to the activities of fans such as fanfiction, fanart, fan ed-

its, cosplay, fan subtitling and translations etc., which he holds is “maintaining a steady supply of workers willing to discount the price of their labor for love of their craft” (Ross in Shimpach 2005, p. 352). However, David Hesmondhalgh (2010) is reluctant to adopt the view that all these types of free labour are tantamount to exploitation, and calls for greater nuance in how these practices are framed. Mizuko Ito contests the view that strategies that rely on the labour, time and skills of volunteers are necessarily exploitative digital-era versions of “sharecropping”. She argues instead that “the ability to contribute to a collectively meaningful endeavour can be itself a source of value and efficacy that often requires no other rewards” (Ito 2017, p. 351), and is tied to recognition within the community of practice and value-creation.

The participants in this study confirm that fans are not the “cultural dupes” suggested by the dualist framing of fandom discussed previously. They are not being taken advantage of but neither is the labour of volunteers is exclusively orientated towards community-building. There are often blurred lines between the fan labour that produces and maintains community, the fan labour that is work done in the service of some future employment or ambition, and labour geared towards short-term financial reward as a petty producer of art work or services to the community. Abigail De Kosnik points out that free labour “is not necessarily exploited labor”, but, even when “groups do not regard what they voluntarily do as work does not make it less value-producing” (De Kosnik 2012, p. 106). These overlapping and complex examples trace some of the ways in which fan labour both does and does not fulfil the criteria of free labour. Much of the labour is free, affective and volunteered in the service of the collective, community building and non-commercial rewards. However this is not always the case. Sometimes free fan labour is also simultaneously a self-appointed apprenticeship or a form of prospecting. Work is done now in anticipation, preparation or hope of future opportunities. Sometimes the fan labour is compensated and the fan community is the source for both audience and producers of texts. The participants’ level of self-awareness and critical insight into the social and economic

dynamics of fandom suggest that they are making a series of strategic decisions about their time and labour and to what extent their efforts are rewarded or their ambitions advanced.

In the next section of this chapter I consider how the skills and specialisations of fans in the role of cultural intermediaries often overlap with their professional or workday lives. Thus these practices are embedded in those other identities or roles and connect their “experiences as participants with the routine activities that they perform as part of their occupational careers” (Woo 2012, p. 667).

### 5.3 LABOURING AT LEISURE: WORKPLACES AS SITES OF FAN PRACTICES

The participants reported fan practices as important parts of their workdays, which are all at white-collar, skilled, professional desk-jobs. These fan practices often take place in gaps and breaks and are framed as resistance or refusal, relief or reward from the work required of them in their jobs. Moreover, in these gaps and breaks the participants are often trading one kind of paid labour for free fan work as they bring their presence, effort, talent and professional training to tasks that are in the service of their fandom and fan community. These findings demonstrate that fan practices are interwoven with the roles and responsibilities of paid employment, the workplace and the exercise of individual agency. But the fact that these fans have work, and the kind of work that they have, indicates their social position. The resources of time and money are expended willingly, productively and enthusiastically by fans. At the same time, access to these resources is constituted by, and constitutive of, the social dynamics of a contemporary South African context and the dynamics of globalised creative and cultural industries. These socio-economic and historic dimensions shape fan practices along the fault lines of race and class and are woven into the fabric of the daily routines of work and leisure.



Most of the participants were employed as workers in the so-called creative class, “whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology, and new creative content” (Florida 2014, p. 8). Only three participants were not working in media or creative industries at the time. Of these, one worked as a healthcare professional and two were still full-time students, although their studies seemed likely to lead them towards associated fields within the loosely framed creative class. A few participants were in full-time and long-term positions, the majority were self-employed, on short-term fixed contracts, part time, freelance or between contracts. TheFabricWhisperer was underemployed at the time and waiting for a new part-time job to start. In KimberlyHart’s case, our interviews spanned the period between wrapping up one freelance contract and anxiously searching for another.

Captain Unobservant’s teaching practice and specialist knowledge-base as a teacher lie in his skills as an illustrator: the subject and purpose of his activities may be segregated between work hours (teaching) and home time (fan practices, fan community, and moonlighting in the cultural sphere) – he is a paid worker, a Prospector and a Volunteer in the cultural sphere. An educator by day, Captain Unobservant was strict about his demarcation of work and play and seldom engaged in fan practices during the workday. He saw it as unethical and unfeasible to mix this fandom with his responsibilities as an employee. His activity diary showed his fan practices as reserved for weekends and evenings where there were multi-hour stretches of work on a task.

Commissioner Smirnov’s work as a fan and work as an employee were also related. He documented a baseline routine of milestones in a typical workday. His fan practices, including checking social media and news feeds, were interwoven with the everyday practices of commutes and lunch breaks. This idea of a fannish routine threaded throughout the working day was a common idea for several participants. Stolen moments of consumption or participation were described as a source of relief from work tedium and were framed as an incentive or reward for sustained work or task completion. Sometimes, participants reported that

their preference for reading, commenting on or consuming fan-related content over their work duties required disciplining or controlling via a range of interventions from internet-blocking tools to leaving mobile phones in a locked desk.

KimberlyHart was an art school graduate who worked as a freelance video editor. She had a demanding “just-in-time” fannish routine in that she participated in fandoms in the same time frame as the USA. She was active on Twitter and the Facebook sites of her favourite shows, which meant that she needed to keep as current as possible with the episodes that were aired in the US or risk being exposed to spoilers<sup>3</sup> anytime she engaged with her online community. The differences in time zone and distribution cycle for episodes between the USA and South Africa meant that she had a gruelling schedule tracking and tracing pirated downloads which came online immediately after airing in the USA during the middle of the South African night. KimberlyHart explained that her day typically started at 5am with a one-hour slot to download the latest episodes of the shows that she followed. As soon as she had set up the episode to download, she would play whatever multiplayer online game she was participating in at the time for a little while. It was critical that she got these downloads done before she left for work every morning because she would watch the show when she was at work either during her lunch break or while she was waiting for her edited footage to render.

KimberlyHart had a long commute to work, often in very congested traffic, which she would solve by an extremely early departure; but this then meant a long wait outside her offices before the workday could begin. She then would steal moments throughout the day to return to her fan fiction, enjoying times when, alone in the office, she could prioritise her reading.

---

3. Any revelation shared about a film, TV series, book or comic that reveals crucial information about the climax or resolution of a story arc to those who have not reached the same point in the plot.

**KimberlyHart:** Then I go to work and while I am in the car I'll see what emails I've got and what fanfic updates are happening. Then I go through the ones I don't want to read... Anyway, I get to work and I sit down and then I start my computer and I read something while my computer is starting.

**Catherine:** So that is on your phone? Your phone is the primary source of your fandom during the day?

**KimberlyHart:** Yup, [she shows me her phone] See! Six tabs open on fanfiction. I am mostly reading through out the day whenever I can. Like yesterday was great. I'm reading, reading, reading... Then, oops someone arrives! So I have to carry on with work and then it is time to render. Which means I can start reading, reading, reading again while I wait. Sometimes I render on purpose just to get a break to read.

(KimberlyHart)

At this point during the interview, KimberlyHart's phone pinged loudly. We were close to going over time and, thinking it was an alert, I asked her whether she needed to take the message or go back to the office, since her lunch break was nearly over. She laughed and said, "It's just my war. Its cool. I was in a war". Thinking that perhaps there was a conflict at work I suggested she should go if she needed to. Instead she sheepishly said, "I mean that I am playing *Clash of Clans*<sup>4</sup> so it's just letting me know my troops are ready". She had taken a moment earlier in our interview as an opportunity to set her troops to train so they would be ready to continue her game afterwards – a perfectly timed illustration of fannish practices taking place in the gaps and margins of the day's ongoing demands and activities.

---

4. A mobile game set in a fantasy world where the player is the chief of a clan. The player builds up their own resources, villagers and troops and can form alliances with other players to take on enemies in Clan Wars.

The centrality of KimberlyHart's phone to her everyday routines and rituals was echoed in a comment by Idril as to the fitness of the technology that affords these surreptitious moments of fan practices during the day. Idril's fan practices were mostly text-bound and required the large multiple volumes by JRR Tolkien and JK Rowling.

The technology has allowed this huge volume that I stroll around with to be hideable, invisible so I can sit on my Kindle and nobody can know what I am reading. I had a funny moment with my boss many years ago. She said, "What is this big green book that you walk around with? You are always walking around with it". And then I'd have to go into a bit of an explanation of what this big green book is. But now I get to hide it on my Kindle and I get to have all my texts in a very compact way. It does take away the romance with the hard copy but it makes my fandom portable.

(Idril)

However, not all the participants felt the need to hide their fandoms, or keep them to the margins or stolen moments of the day. Commissioner Smirnov pointed out, working in a field aligned with his fandoms, his fannish practices were not simply accepted but were expected as part of his professional practice. He said "I suppose being in the industry I am in, it is easier to tell everyone that I need to stop what I am doing and look at something different to keep inspired. No-one thinks twice about it". This condoning or encouragement of fannish practices in the creative industries is realised in his physical workspace as well

Even in this field with broad acceptance and familiarity of fan practices there are boundaries that must be maintained. Because of the assumptions and stereotypes attached to the Furry fandom, Commissioner Smirnov reported having created a separation between this particular aspect of his fandom and his work identity by only checking for updates and new material on *Fur Affinity* on his phone rather than having it in his work browser. Commissioner Smirnov had his fan practices and



*Figure 5.1: This is my workspace at work. That is my tablet and these are all the toys across the table. So McFarlane's Military<sup>5</sup> is on this side and Dom from Gears of War - without the Headcrab<sup>6</sup> this time. My office mate's desk is even more full of stuff than mine. She has got a couple of Batmans and I think she has got the Vogons<sup>7</sup> from Hitchhikers. (Commissioner Smirnov)*

work practices down to a well synchronised routine. He characterised it as ongoing and consistent engagement that was habitual, sustainable and had a positive impact on his productivity as an employee.

I try get to work before 9am and I'll sit on the internet until 9 on the dot. Then during the day I'll spend about twenty minutes trying to catch up with the previous day's posts before I carry on working. I will actually battle to get working if I haven't gone through my ritual of the new Tumblr feed. Once I have sated that desire I will work for a little while. Then a couple hours later until I am just like, "No, I really can't animate this right now!" Then, I refresh Tumblr and scroll through. Update Facebook and see if anyone said anything there. I update myself with everything then it is, "Ok, I am in that good place again, lets work". And then repeat until the end of the day.

(Comissioner Smirnov)

This idea of fan practices as a way to relax, destress or navigate a difficult workday was a common refrain. Norvie was a freelance editor working from home. This meant work and fandom were entangled more than for many other fans. When she was especially annoyed, frustrated or stuck with a task she engaged in what she called “therapeutic crafting” of costumes which was different to her usual “happy crafting”. At the time of our interview Norvie had been struggling with a particularly difficult job for a troublesome client. She recounted her experience: “They finally sent the last bits [of the text she is editing] in and I nearly cried and said ‘I don’t understand what you want me to do’ and that fuelled a lot of the crafting”. She offered an example of what her internal monologue sounds like during this therapeutic crafting: “Look at the pretty stitch, look at the alignment. Ah, look how great the seam is. This is something I can control. I can control the stitch”.

Idril used her fan practices every day to bolster her flagging spirits as well as to bridge the fraught situations her work in healthcare brings her into contact with. Sometimes she would put the *Harry Potter* films on repeat in the background when she had an onerous administrative task to perform. When a day had been particularly taxing, she said a high score on a *Lord of the Rings* online quiz would give her a boost. When working with clients in a clinical setting she often made small talk about her fandom and love of books and reading as a way to diffuse the intense moments of waiting for test results. However she differentiated between fan practices as self-soothing routine and those instances when fan practice as a coping mechanism was deployed more seriously.

I will say that in times of stress my fandom increases. When everything is going smoothly, I’ll read a little *Lord of the Rings* at the end of every evening or flip through one of my other texts and respond online on my phone to discussions that are going on and have my five cents worth. You know, bash *The Hobbit* movie a little bit, that kind of thing. But when I am under extreme duress. . . Like, I went

into labour at 3 o'clock in the morning and my natural reaction was to grab *Lord of the Rings* and start reading. Perhaps it is very much a psychological coping mechanism that whenever I feel depressed or feel overwhelmed, that is my shutdown and distancing method. I'll type out another passage or I'll read my favourite chapters. So I wouldn't say that kind of thing was an everyday kind of activity but I'd say it is a constant theme rather over many years.

(Idril)

In these accounts, fan practices are associated with particular uses and gratifications that span the typical day of a worker: boredom alleviation, stress mitigation, entertainment during a long commute and the engrained ritual and routine of habit. In these instances we see the fan at work, and work as a site for fandom. Where home was often associated with a particular spatial and emotional configuration, work was linked to time. For example, work might well take place at home but it would be framed in terms related to time: time of day, duration, deadlines or wasted time. Secondly, there was an association between the work of paid employment and the work to be done as a fan. These blurred boundaries, slippages and porous categories of work and leisure manifested in diverse ways. The divergent career trajectories and working lives of the participants brought different inflections to the workday routine. It was interesting to note that in asking about routines regarding the leisure activities of fandom, in fact, what the participants reported on was their working lives. In several cases the participants described their working lives in the same terms that Rosalind Gill and Andy Pratt (Gill and Pratt 2008) outline as the working conditions for media and cultural labourers who form part of the new "precariat".

Labour for the precariat is marked by what they call "bulimic patterns of working", or irregular patterns of intense overwork followed by periods of intermittent or temporary employment. Gill and Pratt also point to the same "collapse or erasure of the boundaries between work and play" (Gill and Pratt 2008, p. 14) evidenced in the accounts in the previous sec-

tion. To this they add the driver of the worker having an affective attachment to both the work and the identity that is associated with the work: something that is strongly correlated with the passionate attachment of the fan to the work they do (whether Volunteer, Apprentice, Prospector or Petty Producer). Gill and Pratt also cite “an attitudinal mindset that is a blend of bohemianism and entrepreneurialism” (Gill and Pratt 2008, p. 14), and note that work for the precariat is generally associated with informal work environments and is underpinned by anxieties about financial stability. While the authors are not specifically talking about fans, a number of these criteria are evident in the participants’ experiences in their working lives and careers.

What was especially notable were the porous boundaries between paid work and play, and in particular how easily the work that fans do shades into fan work. Mark Banks (2009) notes in his critique of Richard Florida’s *Rise of the Creative Class* that this slippage between work and leisure is significant. It marks a shift from an earlier understanding that saw leisure time as antithetical to work and the activities of the workplace. Banks notes that not only has what he calls “non-instrumental leisure” disappeared, this is actually endorsed by the workers of the creative class. He comments that these workers in the creative classes “contrary to tradition, appear to be enthusiastically embracing (rather than resisting) the administration of leisure by instrumental rationality” (2009, p. 669).

#### 5.4 POLICING THE BORDERS OF LABOUR AND LEISURE

These blurred boundaries between work and leisure, career and hobby are not without their costs. I noted that throughout the interviews and activity diaries the participants oscillated between extremes in describing their attitudes and practices. One polarity was characterised as healthful, balanced, pleasurable and positive but there was equally the ever-present spectre of the negative valence of the “bad fan” or the “disordered fan”, often framed in terms of addiction or obsession with a text,



excess and lack of control in terms of emotional regulation and waste of time and money. The speaker often constructed themselves as a member of a community where moderation and balance were maintained in comparison with the imagined “other” (either fans or fandoms) where this was not the case. A significant portion of the discussion, however, focused on an anxiety regarding these borderlands between excess and self-discipline: wasted time versus time well-spent; work and leisure; moderate or justified spending versus excess and irresponsible spending; admirable effort and emotional engagement versus obsession and dysfunction.

The tension between the “good fan” and her “bad other” is not unusual. Like most subcultures or interpretive communities, fans have had a long history of pathologisation. Also, as with any community, the construction and maintenance of that community relies in some part on the existence of an imagined other against which one can differentiate the insider. What is interesting is the particular discourse used in this distancing and differentiation of the other, and at times the discourse used to discipline and disavow unseemly or unsuitable behaviour. It is significant that, for the most part, the imagined “other” for the participants was not the hostile or judgemental non-fan but rather the toxic or the excessive fan. The ways in which fans talk about their own practices shows that they are acutely aware of the popular perception of fans as excessive and untethered from the “real world” or “real life”.

To talk of the “good fan” versus the pathological fan is never innocent of agenda or implications, as the discussion in the literature review has already outlined. The figure of the fan is overburdened with value judgements. These are often imposed from outside of fandom and include the popular perception of the fan as stalker, hysteric, obsessive. The examples of Mark David Chapman’s assassination of John Lennon and John Hinckley’s attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan to impress Jodie Foster have contemporary equivalents in new and salacious examples, and popular culture like Eminem’s track “Stan”, Steven King’s *Misery* or Tony Scott’s *The Fan*. Acts of violence, frenzy and madness

have been linked directly to fan practices, suggesting that these actions are an outgrowth of fandom: a deviant, deranged behaviour on the part of socially alienated individuals (Jenson 1992). In response, early fan studies explicitly took up the view that fan practices were legitimate cultural practices indicative of an active, resistant audience and worked to “redeem [these practices] as creative, thoughtful, and productive” (Gray and Sandvoss and Harrington 2007b). However, one of the consequences of this shift in discourse was a tendency to romanticise the fan as a resistant and subversive actor, which has tended to re-position rather than necessarily deconstruct the the notion of the “good” and therefore, by implication, “bad” fan.’

Not only does popular culture and opinion work to construct a moral dualism for fans, but fan scholarship tends to as well. Furthermore, the participants themselves subscribed to some clearly articulated rules as to what constituted acceptable participation. Fandom was not uncritically celebrated by the participants –only a particular type of practice was welcomed.

The borders and boundaries around this “good” practice, for all that they are tacit and implied, are diligently monitored and self-imposed. These make up what Bourdieu would call the “doxa”, or the rules of play that govern any field: for instance the field of local popular culture fandoms. According to Bourdieu’s theory of practice (Bourdieu 1977), society is composed of intersecting fields such as institutions, spaces like work or home, and local communities. When participating in a field, an actor brings with her the embodied habitus and forms of capital that are a product of her experience and social position. She then enters a given field, which will have a set of rules – doxa. These determine what is thinkable and sayable, and adherence to these doxa is the route to a legitimate position in the field for the actor. Contravening these unspoken rules results in illegitimacy, rejection and even ejection from the field. Bourdieu argues that doxa are the reason “we accept many things without knowing them” (Eagleton and Bourdieu 1992, p. 113) and that they are pervasive rather than explicit, “it is something you absorb like air,

something you don't feel pressured by; it is everywhere and nowhere, and to escape from that is very difficult" (Eagleton and Bourdieu 1992, p. 115).

There are any number of tactics and normative expectations that work to outline the discursive contours of what constitutes "the good fan" in South African fan practices. I am especially interested in the "rules of the game" that moderate the local expression of global popular culture fandom and practices. Within this category I noted a recurrent and widely expressed theme marked by anxieties centring on excess and waste. The kinds of limitations that are placed on practice and affect are telling in terms of how the community demarcates its priorities, polices its borders and marks its boundaries. These are imaginary terms of legitimisation or delegitimisation and, while there are no arbiters of membership or exclusion, there is sufficient coherence and consistency between the participants to suggest that these doxa pertaining to excess and waste are important ways in which the community of fans is produced and maintained.

Given the blurred and porous boundaries between the types of labour that fans perform and the entanglement of paid work and fandom in practice, it was interesting to note that it is precisely these borders that are central to the discourses of legitimisation. The discourses fell into three broad categories. Firstly, the tension between fandom and work and how fandom has to be disciplined to give way to the responsibilities and duties of paid employment. Secondly, the threat of addiction or uncontrolled investment or involvement. Finally, the notion that excessive consumption and time spent on practices associated with fandom should be considered a moral question within the South African context.

One of the most commonly recurring refrains was guilt and shame associated with time spent in a way that is not consistent with an imagined work ethic or level of productivity at work. Participants variously said: "It is not nice for my work ethic – I spend huge amounts of time in *Skyrim* and I used to play *World of Warcraft* – it was a massive waste of

time". Or "It would be depressing to map out how much of my life has gone into this". And even "I've had to put LeechBlock<sup>8</sup> on the bloody computer at work. And I just go, 'I can't do this! I've got to do some work!' 'This is revolting!' ". Sometimes the language is confessional, as when Norvie said, regretfully, "I am horrified as to how much time goes into the hobby and watching things". On the other hand, it can be defiant or defensive. For example Gumi was adamant that she did not engage in fan practices during the term because of school-work. However, this declaration was somewhat undermined when she met me on her campus between classes in costume – a wig, contact lenses, ears and canine fangs – was attending extra-curricular Japanese language classes as an extension of her interest in anime and Japanese culture.

These comments created a sense that too much time spent on fan practices must be disciplined and curtailed and that excessive time spent of fannish pursuits is not seemly, is depressing or embarrassing. I noted at the time that these discourses of discipline and disavowal around work and anxieties about wasted time occasionally overshadowed the discourses of creative and leisure practices. As Banaji, Burn and Buckingham argue, the rhetorics of "creativity as economic imperative" can tend to "annex... the concept of creativity in the service of a neo-liberal economic programme and discourse" (Banaji and Burn and Buckingham 2010, p. 71).

However, to compensate for this discomfort, there was still recourse to "other fans" who, in opposition to the South African fan, tended to come from the imaginary elsewhere, and in particular the USA. These were hypothetical cautionary tales for the most part, but they are also served as self-discipline to ensure legitimacy and legitimation as a fan. Captain Unobservant, for example, said:

Honestly it doesn't matter how bad a geek you are here, there is someone much worse in the US. And there are some scary people

---

8. A productivity tool application used to prevent a user from accessing user-specified sites at specified times.

in the US. And that was what I found interesting, how much of a difference there was at an international level as opposed to at a local level.

(Captain Unobservant)

Kelga was at pains to explain his view that, despite his many hours of free work as a photographer, fandom was a hobby, a leisure-time activity and had to stay on the leisure activity side of the balance sheet. Commitment to one's fan practices may be indicative of dedication and hard work but it must be curtailed so that it does not replace responsibilities to work and family.

A hobby is just a hobby... Let's say I see a cosplayer who works hard on their cosplay. It will tell me that they are a hard worker and they are passionate about their idea. I can see there is a person who is hands-on and dedicated. But then again, that dedication, is it a good thing or a bad thing? If you do that cosplay over your responsibilities or your relationship with your friends and family then that dedication is poisonous.

(Kelga)

Norvie was more concerned with identity and identification. This is something she said she kept a keen eye on amongst younger fans in the groups that she worked with. She cautioned that too close an identification as a fan bypassed the crucial requirement that fandom must be framed as leisure. Failure to do so, in Norvie's terms, was pathological.

I try to really explain that it is a hobby! It is a hobby! It is a hobby! Because, if your whole identity is wrapped up in the tenth Doctor or the eleventh Doctor, or if the fact that someone hasn't watched the series as far as you means that you don't want to be their friend, then that means you are not a complete person. That defeats the entire point of having something special.

(Norvie)

Both Kelga and Norvie saw fandom as having the capacity to overwhelm or overcome the individual's other duties to family, friends, self and career. This perception of losing oneself in fandom is persistent. Abigail De Kosnik writes that the "connotations of madness, social marginalization, and abnormality" that have been attributed to fandom are rooted in the ideas of possession and that fans are "psychologically and emotionally enslaved" (De Kosnik 2012, p. 139). Despite the work done to contest and complicate this view there is still a strongly moral tone to some of the discourses of control, excess and waste, which the participants reject and embrace in turn.

Idril, argued against absolutes in asserting what is or is not acceptable. She said, for example, that there was a fine line between her practices as a fan and those of the academic. She asserted that the very same practices that are seen as excessive in a fan would have a positive connotation for the scholar. Similarly, she argued for considering fan practices from the point of view of functionality rather than pathology.

My fan behaviour helps me to be a more functional person, therefore it is healthy behaviour. If my fandom was in any way impeding my ability to be a better functioning person, maybe you could start to look at pathology. I think it is a pleasure pursuit and I think it should be viewed as such and only be viewed as pathological if it impacts the person's ability to function in their lives. I think that fandom enhances our ability to function in our lives and therefore is a very adaptive self-actualising behaviour rather than the opposite.  
(Idril)

Nevertheless, the language of addiction and compulsion, including metaphors of pushers and direct analogies with addictive substances surfaced frequently in the conversations with participants. Sometimes the usage was humorous hyperbole – "I realised that, like heroin, I craved sitting down and reading" or eye-rolling self-deprecation – "And then I realised I was

a bit of a pusher” or “The comic store guys are evil, they are like crack dealers”. Sometimes these were discourses of concern. For instance, Captain Unobservant, a veritable grey-beard in a community that skews towards the youthful, said that novice or over-committed fans were often hurt by not carefully guarding these boundaries. He cautioned: “It becomes an addiction. . . I think it is because a lot of people really do invest themselves [and then feel] ‘This is my identity. This is my humanity. This is my expression’ ”.

Norvie, who maintained that fans should be hobbyists rather than fanatics, said: “I think in South Africa we have more fans than fanatics simply because we face very hard realities the entire time. . . some people feel ‘but you could have been helping society or building something or being useful’”. Idril, thorough and thoughtful as ever, explained:

I would not know where to begin to explain my behaviour to the “average South African”, for whom the struggle for food, shelter, clothes, childcare etc. consumes most if not all of their available resources. It is a reflection of my “privilege” that I am able to spend a considerable amount of time, money and energy perusing an imaginary world, just for the fun of it. In this light it actually seems a little obscene and therefore often feels like a guilty pleasure.

(Idril)

She goes on to make the point that the matter of context is critical in how South African fandom is imagined

[T]he “frivolity” of expertise in an area that for the outsider may seem “pointless” in a developed country [and] is often a topic of satirical humour [whereas] in a country where we have so many “real issues”, behaviour which so extravagantly speaks to “privilege” may be a little embarrassing.

(Idril)

There was one more key sanction that arose amongst fans: the dismissal of the “weeaboo”. The weeaboo is reviled in global fandom generally. Weeaboo is a made-up word to replace the offensive portmanteau term “wapanese” (for white/ wannabe-Japanese), designating those fans of Japanese media who are guilty (in the eyes of their fellow fans) of having transgressed some normative line slipping from appreciation into cultural appropriation or who, through their fandom, have become disorientated from their lived reality.<sup>9</sup> In the words of one participant, there is a hierarchy of fans: starting with “huge anime fans” but they are out ranked by “otakus”. After the otaku, fandom goes beyond the pale to the “weeaboos”. In this participants’ words, weeaboos “are the ones pretending to be Japanese and have the fake Japanese names and all of that stuff, and you’ll be like: ‘You live in Hammanskraal<sup>10</sup> – why do you think this Japanese name has any cultural significance to you?’ ”.

Jennifer McGee offers the following in lieu of a formal definition: “In short, a weeaboo is a specific type of overzealous fan, one who values Japanese media over Western media in ways that are considered excessive by other fans. That final clause is essential to understanding the argumentative strategies being used in the labelling of people as ‘weeaboos’ ” (McGee 2012, p. 49). The definition holds in its local usage in South Africa, but there is an additional inflection. Going further than irritation or contempt, the participants who complained about the South African weeaboo expressed their disapproval of excessive appropriation of the superficial trappings of Japanese culture. This disapproval critiqued a lack of sensitivity and awareness in South African fans who should “know better”. While they can admire and study other cultures, South African fans should be especially sensitive about adopting languages, traditions and cultural practices without consideration of what

---

9. Since these interviews I have noted from fan forums and discussions that the term has mutated into “Wehraboo” (a fan of alternative or revisionist history centring on a positive reading of Nazi Germany’s Wehrmacht) and the less toxic “teaboo” – a derogatory phrase for fans whose superficial knowledge of the British culture, history and politics is circumscribed by BBC hits *Dr Who* and *Sherlock* and the JK Rowlings’ *Harry Potter* universe.

10. A small, semi-rural town in Northern Gauteng Province, South Africa.



they mean, what context they are drawn from and how they intersect with one's own identity – and racial identity in particular.

These ideas are complex in the way that they straddle the principles of authenticity. It seems that fidelity is desirable when it is to an event, a product or text. Immersion and accuracy is positive when it comes to the geography of imagined worlds, such as the layout of Hogwarts (*Harry Potter Universe*), the blueprints of the USS Enterprise<sup>11</sup> (*Star Trek*) or speaking Quenya<sup>12</sup> (*Lord of the Rings*) or Klingon<sup>13</sup> (*Star Trek*), but is disreputable when applied to an actual culture or place. And of course, this accusation of the unbalanced fan brings one full circle to the objection Bertha Chin and Lori Morimoto voice regarding Koichi Iwabuchi's comments on female Japanese fans who are, in his words, "unreflexive", "deluded" and "inauthentic" (Chin and Morimoto 2013, p. 95), and who could not have an authentic admiration for an actor from a context and culture remote from their own.

From these comments it is possible to glean a view of South African fandom that imagines itself as rational, empathetic, culturally sensitive and moderate rather than in terms of intensity, fidelity, achievement or accrual. This is not the same as saying that this is what fandom or fan practices are in reality. Rather these are the ideological, ethical or social terms that are held up as principles. They foreground the virtues of friendship and mutual support and frown upon wastage, excess or a loss of control. Fandom is a social good when it is a leisure activity, balanced against financial, work and family responsibilities and conscious that it is a privilege of those who have time and resources to spend on non-essential needs. Seen in these terms, the local community of fans is imagined in a landscape of ethical behaviour and a language of morality.

---

11. The spaceship that is the main setting for episodes in the *Star Trek* television series.

12. The language used by the elves in Tolkien's universe, including *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*.

13. Extraterrestrial species from the *Star Trek* universe. Recurring characters throughout the *Star Trek* television series and films.

## 5.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has suggested that, like the home, the workplace is an under-considered site of fan practices. The first significance of this finding is not simply that fan practices extend and intersect with paid work, but that when the research object is “everyday practice in context” we can trace fan activities along micro-circuits through time and place. Understanding fans and their practices from the vantage point of these taken-for-granted habitual activities that make up “the vast bulk of daily activity... [as] individuals move through definite ‘stations’ in time-space” (Giddens 1981, p. 38) is an unusual perspective in fan studies, where the fandom or site is usually predetermined and foregrounded as exceptional or different from other kinds of mediated practices. Nick Couldry and Andreas Hepp point out that “the spectrum of possible collectivities has increased fundamentally” (Couldry and Hepp 2016). Fandoms, fan communities and fan cultures are examples of how relatively stable collectivities accumulate around media content, but they are no longer unique. On the contrary, they are useful models for how other collectivities such as families, groups of scholars, collaborators or peers might appropriate and interact with, and via, media in constructing their moralities, rules, boundaries and joint experiences. Fandoms and fan practices are an instance of how collectivities remain a meaningful part of human life and how, in times of “deep mediatization” they are doubly framed by media: “first, [to] define the relevance-frames for such figurations; second... as means for keeping these collectivities together (Couldry and Hepp 2016, p. 171).

Secondly, the fandom that happens at work is interesting because of the high degree of entanglement between paid work and leisure activities of fandom. Moreover, this is not a guilt-free or uncomplicated entanglement, and is exacerbated by the fact that, in this study at least, a number of the participants were employed in the cultural industry or are members of the creative class. Of course this may not necessarily be the case

for all fans and further exploration of this nexus between fandom and the local cultural industries promises to be productive. However, at least for several of the participants in this study, it was evident that there is an overlap between the labour performed by fans and members of the “new precariat” labouring in the media-related field (Gill and Pratt 2008). The overlaps between the labour of the precariat and the labour of fans are significant. Fan labour and the new precariat both take place within a system that obscures the relationship between labour and leisure with its focus on immaterial labour that takes place in the “factory without walls” (Gill and Pratt 2008). Not all of the participants see the free labour invested into the construction, maintenance and contributions to the fan community as not purely altruistic or in service of the collective. These participants tended to use their fandoms to further their personal ambitions through practice and exposure. This diverges from Fiske’s idea of the fan who labours for the non-commercial rewards of symbolic or social capital (Fiske 1992).

Leaving aside the nuances of labour, the chapter also points to a more general principle: that this community of fans involves the collocation of online and “on-ground” activities, especially when it comes to events like conventions or festivals, meet-ups or trade shows. If we talk about fandoms and fan scenes as culturally constituted fields of practice, then the labour of those fans who act as cultural intermediaries results in the production of a community or neighbourhood, even if that community is only temporarily constituted while the event is being organised or attended. For Appadurai, the term “neighbourhood” is a metaphor for locality in the state of globalised modernity. It is concurrently concrete and virtual, it is metonymic for community, is always in articulation with the greater ethnoscape of “not-here” and it is constantly being produced and reproduced through the routine of the everyday. The production of locality is an act of “incessant, often humdrum preoccupations” (Appadurai 1996, p. 180). When we think about fannish practices as constituting locality, this locality is not just in dialogue with the flows of global popular culture but is also made up of the expectations and rigours of

paid work and time, place and kinds of labour. The chapter shows that these practices of labour and leisure are leaky, uneasy and multivalent.

The production of communities both temporary and persistent, embodied and imagined is the major theme of the following chapter.

## FANDOM AND THE PERIPHERY: BEING HERE AND IMAGINING ELSEWHERE

---

How do fans imagine the other nodal points on their map of fandom and how do they see themselves in relation to these “elsewheres”? This question foregrounds perception and subjectivity rather than the concrete places, practices, constraints and routines that have been the focus for the previous two chapters. Yet, these imagined landscapes are just as situated as those practices that revolve around the intimacies of home, family or work lives. The imagination may be liberated from the quotidian rhythms of work and the material considerations of exchange rates and import duties, broadcast schedules and download speeds but it is a critical link that holds the global and the local in close articulation. So how do the participants characterise the “other” spaces of their fandoms? Are they reified, vilified, idealised, aspirational? Seen as competition, dissolution, dissipation? What are the dominant discourses that circulate or construct these representations: “the elsewheres of fandom”? Where or what are these spaces demarcated as “not-here”? Looking outwards rather than at physically located and temporally situated fan practices, nevertheless, the nature of globally circulating popular culture begs the question: How does this idea of “not-here” help articulate the qualities of here? How do fans experience the relational quality of the global in tension with the local?

One of the ways of understanding locality is by an analysis of the spaces and routines of everyday fan practices within the local social, economic and historical context. The imaginary complements this and brings in an entirely different optic for analysis. The imaginary is not subordi-

nate to these factors, but neither can the material conditions or context be exceeded by acts of imagination. This tension between structure and agency, situated constraints and the potential of imagination is a potent one. Appadurai argues that imagination is “central to all forms of agency, [as] itself a social fact, and [as] the key component of the new global order” (Appadurai 1996, p. 31) while still being subject to global cultural flows. To explain this idea of flow, he uses the language of “scapes”, borrowed from the concept of landscape to convey the sense of an outlook over terrain, a matter of perspective configured dependant on one’s position and point of view. In this formulation, the ground may be real, present and quantifiable but the configuration and experience of it is subjective and shifting relative to the subject’s position.

This chapter considers the socio-economic factors that constrain and shape access and participation in fandom. The impact of South Africa’s history and the continuing salience of race and class for affinity, taste and identity practices is a crucial consideration. This chapter continues the central claim of this thesis by presenting evidence that fans of global popular culture are involved in the production of locality by means of the practices, routines and resources integral to their fan practices. Fandom is often a private, elective, leisure pursuit where the basic barrier to participation is access. The chapter uses access, and the nuances of access to surface the overlapping structural considerations of class and race in South Africa. It considers the degree to which they inform and govern this participation, especially as the resources that afford this participation are forms of capital (social, economic, cultural) (Biltereyst and Meers 2011).

The chapter then moves from its focus on access, resources and the possibilities of participation towards the role of the imagination in the way that fandom is constructed as a community – as well as the participants’ perception of the tension between locality and globality as it plays out within fandom. To achieve this, the lens is reversed to consider how fans imagine that they are looked at, and in turn, how they imagine themselves as an imagined, and imagining, community.

## 6.1 LOCAL ACCESS AND DEGREES OF PERIPHERALITY

For the participants in this study, being a South African fan of global popular culture meant being on the edges of action, remote and parochial in relation to the imagined centre of fandom. Captain Unobservant called South Africa “this tiny little country at the bottom of the world”. Idril saw Tolkien fans in South Africa as “isolated” and her fandom as “a lonely experience”. EssieJayne said, “the worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is feeling like you are far away from everything”. For those fans with niche interests (for example, Commissioner Smirnov’s Furry fandom, Idril’s focus on the linguistics of Middle-earth, or Gumi’s preference for yaoi<sup>1</sup> manga and anime), online fora were their only points of engagement and they felt there was no “real world” equivalent in local spaces. As all three pointed out, this is not necessarily because there are none of these kind of fans in South Africa, but rather because they are dispersed, disconnected and often unidentifiable as South African even when they may cross paths online. All three fandoms (for different reasons) are unlikely to generate a big enough interest group to attract a sponsor with a commercial imperative, and without significant numbers and a group of voluntary organisers willing to do the free labour of building and networking the community, they are likely to remain under-served.

Kelga noted that even with a popular and accessible fan practice like cosplay, you can count South African cosplayers by the handful rather than by the hundreds, and that local fan practices compared to the rest of the world were in their “infancy”. Others lamented the fact that South Africa is thousands of kilometres and tens of thousands of Rands in air-ticket costs away from the real centres of fan activities. As Gumi said:

We are all the way down here and a lot of what happens is at the top  
– Asia and Europe and especially America. There are cons through-

---

1. Genre of anime and manga that features romantic or sexual relationships between male characters. Normally consumed by, and targeted at, a female audience.

out the year. I follow people from all over America and I'll hear about this con<sup>2</sup> this weekend and there is pretty much a con every weekend throughout the world. And I want to interact. I want to go to these things but it is so far and travel is so expensive.

(Gumi)

Most of the participants wanted to attend a major event. It is a matter of aspiration, a dream-come-true “one day”. TheFabricWhisperer commented that she would “really love to go overseas and go to one of their conventions just to meet their voice actors or just see their models and stuff. Awesome!” Captain Unobservant, the only participant who had attended the San Diego <sup>3</sup>*Comic-Con*, called it “almost an unattainable dream” because of the costs and distances. KimberlyHart said that she hoped one day to share in any of the numerous cons that her favourite characters, contributors and stars went to. She was adamant, “I will go to a con one day. Front row seats to ask my questions and meet the people that consume my life”. EssieJayne wistfully emphasised the allure of a particular destination in her comment “I really want to go to *Leaky Con*.<sup>4</sup> I can't tell you how much I want to go to *Leaky Con*. I thought if we'd won the lottery, we could have gone to *Leaky Con*”. Commissioner Smirnov recited a list of fan events with a fluency that suggested this daydream had been the subject of considerable thought:

---

2. Commonly used contraction for Convention.

3. Over the last four decades, San Diego Comic Con has grown to host an attendance of over 130 000 people. It brings together comic creators, science fiction and fantasy authors, film and television directors, producers and writers. Held since 1970.

4. The Leaky Cauldron, named after the pub in the Harry Potter universe, is a Harry Potter website that hosted LeakyCon, and targeting the fans of Doctor Who, Supernatural, Glee, Marvel Universe and Disney. Held since 2009.



I would love to do a trip through the States and just convention hop. Go to *Comic-Con*, go to *BronyCon*,<sup>5</sup> *Dragon Con*.<sup>6</sup> Just try see how many you can do. . . I mean you could probably trawl from one side of the States to the other just doing cons and it would be a different one each time. Like *San Diego Comic-Con*, *New York Comic-Con*<sup>7</sup>, *Emerald City Comic-Con*.<sup>8</sup>.. Argh! [he mock rages with clenched fists and upturned eyes]. We have *rAge*. It kind of doesn't count.

(Commissioner Smirnov)

This sense of South Africa being peripheral and far from the centre of fandom is reproduced at the local level. All the interviewees claimed Gauteng (or more precisely the urban centres of Johannesburg and Pretoria) as the South African epicentre of fandom. This may be a product of their own biased parochialism, however, Gauteng does have the distinction of several long-running, well-established fan events. South Africa's best marketed and attended "geek culture" event is *rAge*. As an expo aimed at the computer gaming market, one of the main reasons to attend *rAge* is the opportunity to preview and buy the latest game releases and equipment. While the main commercial thrust of the event is towards gamers, peripheral activities such as the cosplay competition and the work on sale in the Artist Alley caters to a wider spectrum of fans. It has become an aggregation point for fannish activities that include card game tournaments, film screenings, competitions, display and sale of fan artworks.

- 
5. BronyCon is the world's largest convention for, and by, fans of the animated TV series, *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*. BronyCon is a non-profit event run entirely by volunteer staff. Held since 2011.
  6. Held in Atlanta Georgia, *Dragon Con* (also *Dragon\*Con* or *DragonCon*) was attended by more than 80 000 people in 2017. It is run annually with the help of over 1500 volunteers. Held since 1987.
  7. Dedicated to fans of comics, graphic novels, anime, manga, games etc. *New York Comic Con* is attended by over 180 000 guests. It is not associated with *San Diego Comic Con*. Held since 2006.
  8. A *Comic Con* event aimed at fans in the Pacific Northwest and held in Seattle, Washington. Attendance in 2017 was over 91 000. It is not associated with the *San Diego Comic Con*. Held since 2003.

Less corporate community-organised events take place several times a year and often include stands and stalls by small retailers and crafters. These include *UPCON*<sup>9</sup>; *GeekFest*;<sup>10</sup> *ICON*<sup>11</sup>; and the more recently arrived *KINCON* (geared towards anime and cosplay fans).

Captain Unobservant pointed out that:

The Capetonians<sup>12</sup> very much begrudge us [fans in Gauteng] because we have so many more conventions up here. The Durban guys have nothing so they either drive up to Jo'burg<sup>13</sup> or they get sad because they can't. For most Durbanites,<sup>14</sup> the one thing they will come to is *rAge* because it is the most worth it for them but it is expensive.  
(Captain Unobservant)

In 2017 Cape Town added its own major fan event *FanCon*<sup>15</sup> to the national calendar. Hosted at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, it bills itself as the South African equivalent of the *Comic-Con* franchise. This event points to the continued expansion and appetite in South Africa for these types of fannish events, and provides a rich site for ongoing research into South African fan cultures.

Ultimately, the feeling of being on the periphery comes down to questions of access, immediacy and proximity. Access is a prerequisite to participating in fan communities. The local permutations of licensing

---

9. UPCon is the University of Pretoria Convention hosted by the Anime and Gaming society. The event has been on hiatus for several years, but the student association has recently attempted to reignite the convention.

10. Local fan and geek event. Held since 2012.

11. South Africa's longest running game event, featuring board games, war gaming, card games, role-play and cosplay. The event has grown from being hosted in a recreation centre, to its most recent venue at a large local casino conference facility. Held since 1992

12. Commonly used term for people from Cape Town, South Africa.

13. Commonly used term for Johannesburg, Gauteng.

14. Commonly used term for people from Durban, South Africa.

15. Held in Cape Town South Africa, billed as South Africa's must-attend fan event. Held since 2016.

and distribution results in fans' sourcing practices that are a bricolage of sanctioned means of consumption (direct imports, specialist shops, mainstream distribution channels and streaming service subscriptions like Netflix<sup>16</sup>) and those that are less so. For fans whose practices include a temporal dimension (such as live-tweeting episodes or forum discussions that include spoilers), the assurances that selected hit shows will be aired on streaming subscription channels in South Africa "very close" to their first airing on TV is just as frustrating as those shows that are only screened months after the initial release. What is crucial is not simply access to content. Rather, what fans want is access to the *right* content, at a cost that is not prohibitive and in time to make participation in the broader fan communities possible and meaningful. Access to imported books and comics, films and collectables, art and crafting materials and costumes and specialist services is predominantly in the large urban centres. Smaller provincial towns are likely to have a mall with bookshops, stationers or haberdashers, but no specialist texts or resources. Small towns in rural areas are unlikely to have even these retail outlets. Even piracy, that mechanism to circumvent the formal economy of imported or local commercial avenues, requires a reliable broadband internet connection and access to a computer – resources that become more scarce the further away one is from the metropolitan centres in South Africa.

## 6.2 MY HAIR AND EYES ARE IN THE POST

The participants differentiated between digital resources and material commodities. Even though the participants felt as though they on the periphery in terms of being far away and out of sync with the rest of the fandom. If one was prepared to wait, then, they felt that South African fans experience no barriers to access in terms of digital resources, film,

---

16. A paid subscription service providing streaming video on demand. Netflix became available in South Africa in 2016.

TV series, books and games that could be bought or downloaded. However, this was not uniformly the case. Gumi is a fan of yaoi, the subgenre of anime and manga that features romantic or sexual relationships between male characters. She commented that accessing material is a challenge.

Things are not always accessible here. Like manga is really hard to come by. There are book stores that stock it but they will have *Naruto* and a couple of obscure ones and even then they will only have like issue 3, 17 and 24. And you'll be like "sigh" I want to start at the beginning!... Anime as well is pretty hard to come by. There are stores I know that definitely sell it. They bring in stuff regularly and they have quite a variety. But, we have to wait for it to be licensed and then translated or dubbed. That takes a long time and even then, not all of it gets brought here. They see what people are interested in and they bring that here. I like yaoi but it is unlikely they'll import it because there is not a big fan base for it.

(Gumi)

In Gumi's experience this limitation on yaoi had very little to do with censorious attitudes to the implied or explicit sexuality in the content. Rather, in her view, it was because the audience for yaoi tends to be women: there is such a small community of female anime or manga fans and therefore an even smaller segment of the market to exert pressure on importers to prioritise this genre.

Captain Unobservant pointed out that obtaining these material goods can be frustrating – but that this can be circumvented by sufficient financial resources: "It is hard to get all the cool stuff all the time but that is not the end of the world. There are always ways and means, you just have to spend a bit of extra money". For many cosplayers, like Norvie, even when you live in the city and sew your own costumes, the specialist finishing touches like wigs, contact lenses and props needed to be self-imported or shipped by a local intermediate. She explained saying: "When I [say] my hair and eyes are in the post I mean the wigs and the

contact lenses". However, as Idril explained, simply importing goods is not quite so straightforward.

Using the Rand as currency as well as the difficulties with our postal system means that a collector has far more difficulty functioning in South Africa than in the rest of the world. While I always try to avoid piracy myself, international intellectual property laws, a weak Rand and very poor postal services means that SA fans may resort to piracy. Because we have to, rather than because we want to. For me, as a collector of books, I find that I am able to download any script that is available in Kindle edition however I have a need to keep hard copies on my bookshelf. While I have been reading and enjoying *The Monsters and the Critics* on my kindle I really miss having a pencil in hand and scribbling in the margins. You cannot unfortunately source a hard copy of this text in SA without great expense. Untrustworthy delivery means that you are also taking a serious risk that after paying you will never get your goods.

(Idril)

Idril saw the question of access and participation as bifurcated:

Being a South African fan is divided into two experiences: the first is being bodily in a location not particularly well-equipped to satisfy the appetites of a fan, but at the same time we stand on an equal footing to any global citizen with access to a computer and decent bandwidth. (Idril)

The participants consistently and outright rejected broadcast television as a viable source for their content. Instead, material was sourced via file-sharing (using BitTorrent sites or swapping hard drives with friends). As a result, a significant portion of their time, effort and resources were spent circumventing the limitations of access. 'Here we return to the question of being on the periphery of the global circulation of popular media.' Captain Unobservant explained:

Film and TV will generally be pirated because we have a very strange broadcasting schedule and policy in this country. So MNET<sup>17</sup> will generally show the series almost concurrently with the overseas guys but very few people are privileged enough to own MNET or DSTV<sup>18</sup>. So instead, we have a whole bunch of people who are really interested in watching something like *Hannibal* or *Game of Thrones* or whatever, and don't have access because you can't afford the R600 or R700 a month that you are paying for DSTV. SABC<sup>19</sup> doesn't show it so what choice do you have? The offerings are very small and very specific and very repeated and so people will generally, unfortunately, opt to pirate because it is so easy to get hold of a torrent.

(Captain Unobservant)

Even worse, when local broadcasters do attempt to cater to a fan base they seem to misread this market-segment's needs. Captain Unobservant was scathing about the local paid subscription TV services' brief foray into anime.

[They] didn't understand their audience at all. That was very silly! And the fact that they repeated the same shows over and over was very poorly done. I don't know why they had to have dubbed versions when you can have subtitled – it is not a problem, people would have watched it. But it was silly, and they made very bad decisions on their schedules, especially what shows they showed and when. So their failure was inevitable unfortunately.

(Captain Unobservant)

His answer points towards the difference between the casual viewer of anime and the fan's minimum requirements. The fan requires correct episodic order and for the series to be as complete as possible (for exam-

---

17. Paid satellite television subscription service in South Africa.

18. Digital Satellite Television. A Sub-Saharan African satellite subscription service. In 2017, the DStv subscriber base was estimated at 11.9 million, as per the Naspers Group.

19. South Africa's public broadcaster.

ple not to start midway through the seasons). He also pointed out that the programmers did not seem to be familiar with show content, since anime, unlike much western animation, is not automatically suitable for younger viewers. There was understandable criticism of the anime service, which juxtaposed widely varying content at times of day when younger audiences could be expected to be watching. Finally, crucially for the anime fan, the shows were dubbed rather than subtitled – a practice that distinguishes the casual viewer from the fan.

### 6.3 PIRACY AND THE ECONOMY OF WAITING

These South African fans' felt they were left without a choice when it came to piracy. They were generally ruefully regretful about this necessity. Most of the participants also used various approaches to circumventing the geoblocking<sup>20</sup> mechanisms put in place by services like Netflix and Hulu<sup>21</sup> to prevent access to content by paying consumers from outside the territorial borders of a given licensing agreement. These practices are likely to evolve with an increasing number of video-on-demand services like Naspers' ShowMax<sup>22</sup> and Netflix. While these offerings provide South African consumers almost equivalent international content and at a reasonable subscription price point, the infrastructure costs associated with broadband internet connectivity and data costs still restrict this option available to the relatively affluent. While these changes are being heralded as a boon for South African audiences generally, fans are less convinced that it will serve their narrow and quite specialist interests.

---

20. Technological restrictions of internet content based on geographical location. Geoblocking is frequently circumvented in South Africa by using a virtual private network or VPN. Hulu, Netflix and BBC content is frequently the reason for South African geoblocking circumvention by VPN.

21. Video on demand service that accumulates television series from multiple networks.

22. Online subscription video on demand service, launched in South Africa in 2015.

For the participants, the financial implications of access and participation were felt in real terms. As has been detailed previously, a number of the participants worked in the creative industries or on the peripheries of these industries, and only three of the eleven were in permanent employment, with the rest in various degrees of precarious, temporary or fixed-term contract positions. Norvie, who was self-employed comments:

I think to myself: I could have a full tank of petrol or I could have a box set. That is where the pirating comes in. Also you feel you want to be part of the fandom but you can't access certain things because you can't stream films because South Africa doesn't allow you to stream films. Or you want something and the price goes up a lot because you are doing rand-dollar conversions plus import, plus, plus, plus!

(Norvie)

KimberlyHart, who at the time of the comment below was between employment contracts and homes, was feeling the impact on her access and participation in her regular fandom:

I am downloading all my shows because it is fall season and everything is coming out. Even on my phone. And that is the problem. Not living at home I don't have uncapped internet and so I have spent a freak-load of money on data on my phone to download stuff. A good R600, and I am jobless!

(KimberlyHart)

Piracy, from the point of view of intellectual property holders, is theft. Ramon Lobato offers alternatives to this reading of piracy, exploring how it operates as a mechanism for global media distribution outside the formal circuits of commercial exchange. These include reading piracy as free enterprise that bypasses “restrictive legislation and monopolistic market structures. . . catering directly to market needs” (Lobato 2008,



p. 22); as an alternative view of authorship that contests “those forms of cultural production in which Western cultural industries specialize” (Lobato 2008, p. 22); and as free speech – an important corrective to the disproportionate power that commercial and free market interests hold over technological innovation, expression and creativity. Within fan studies, with its roots in critical theory and cultural studies, the model of piracy as resistance and subversion of the multinational capitalist imperative has had considerable traction.

Lobato’s final argument is that piracy is, in some cases, underpinned by a desire for access. He argues for “piracy’s capacity to disseminate culture, knowledge and capital” (Lobato 2008, p. 29) outside of the western frame of reference. He points out that beyond the narrow context of the industrialised “west”, the categories of working or creative classes do not have the same contours (if indeed they exist in these terms at all). Lawrence Liang writes that piracy as access is less likely to be “self-conscious acts of resistance, but may instead be understood in terms of ways through which people ordinarily left out of the imagination of modernity, technology and the global economy find ways of inserting themselves into these networks” (Liang 2005, p. 12). In his article for the *Alternative Law Forum*, Liang compares the relative price of three sample books in the USA, South Africa and India, taking into account actual price versus their cost as a percentage of average income. He finds that not only is the actual cost of books higher in South Africa, but they also represent a much greater proportion of an average income. But perhaps, more importantly in terms of the participants in this study, who are relatively economically privileged, Liang also considers the temporal and spatial dimensions of media commodity circulation. He sees this circulation as part of the shift from “monetary economies” to “psychic economies”, calling it “a transaction between imaginary capital confronting the world of imagination and desire” (Liang 2009, p. 23).

This idea was confirmed by Idril’s description of the dual experience of fandom in South Africa. Here the economic considerations of access and expenditure were part of the driver towards piracy, but there was an

equally strong frustration at being left out of the anticipatory and temporally constrained hype and celebration of texts and franchises. Idril saw this frustration as a case of consumer desire being stimulated by exposure and then thwarted by the particularities of context.

In South Africa, with a computer and decent bandwidth, it allows you the same access to on-line communities as being in London, New York or Beijing. With the power of the internet, locality is just not as important as it once was. The net result of this, as I see it, is similar to other socio-economic dynamics in the country. The infrastructure and technology available to South Africans makes us “hungry” for commodities available in the developed world, but the challenges of living in a developing country affects access. This I believe makes for passionate, but frustrated South African fans.

(Idril)

Liang articulates this same frustration as a product of “an economy of waiting” saying

At the heart of the temporal logic of film is also a culture of aspiration, fulfilment of desire or deferred pleasure. The windowing system of distribution unequally distributes the share of waiting, with the wait getting longer as you move away from the northern hemisphere and move towards different parts of the global south, or from the metropolises to small towns and villages. (Liang 2009, p. 23)

These dynamics of digital consumption and piracy central to fannish participation are overlaid by the structural conditions of a South African context. Nothing in the interviews suggests that this group of participants, while not pirating for profit, saw themselves as crusaders for piracy as free speech, resistance or subversion of the status quo. South Africa is certainly a developing economy and therefore on the face of it meets Liang criteria for an “economy of waiting” or Lobato’s point that outside the western frame of reference piracy is often driven by the

desire for access. However, it is important to reiterate the intersections of race and class in this group of participants which means that the political economy is nuanced. For instance, this research did not gather data either implicitly or explicitly from the participants on their financial standing, but as has already been established, as White South African's they can be anticipated as living in households with an income roughly four-and-a-half times higher than Black African households and three times larger than the average national income (Statistics South Africa 2017, p. 15).

#### 6.4 IMAGINING FANDOM HERE

Participants were fairly consistent in their concern that South Africa is seen by the larger fan community as marginal, exotic and subject to stereotyped views of Africa and the developing world – if it was considered at all. But while this perception may have been shared by the participants, the responses to it were not uniform. While some were dismayed and disheartened, several of the participants who operated in the role of petty producers and cultural intermediaries saw this as an opportunity for education and for the differentiation of their work.

For some of the participants in the study, being a South African fan raised complicated ideas about belonging and affiliation. EssieJayne and CityBug both said that although they consumed quite a lot of South African-produced content, they considered themselves only as casual audiences for this at best and that their fandoms did not extend to this material. For them, rather than local content being a source of pride or celebration, it was a source of embarrassment. City Bug puts it bluntly: "I consume a fair bit of South African media, I just don't do it for fun". EssieJayne said that her response to South African film and television was a "cultural cringe". She pointed out the circular logic at the heart of fandom and locality in her experience: "I just have a huge big problem with what my identity is as a South African and that is why I have never

equated it with the things I like, because the things I like are not actually South African”.

This feeling that South African entertainment and cultural products are parochial and inferior was a persistent one. The slogan “local is lekker” has been traced by Gary Baines back as far as the 1960s. Originally the phrase was an attempt to push back against the dismissive attitudes of white South African youth that “most forms of local culture were pale imitations of British and American originals” (Baines 1998, p. 75). This initiative should be read against the growing international cultural boycott of South Africa at the time; in this light, it was an attempt to make a virtue out of a necessity. However, post-1994 the “local is lekker” slogan experienced a revival and since then it has been frequently deployed by a range of actors and platforms – but none so much as the state’s Proudly South African Campaign that promotes the consumption of local goods and services.<sup>23</sup>

While the “local is lekker” celebration of locality has not necessarily been straightforward and purely about local pride, its corollary is the phrase used by EssieJayne: “cultural cringe”. Originally coined to explain the feelings of embarrassment experienced by Australians at the output of their creative and cultural industries, it is described by Ashcroft *et al.* as a “special post-colonial crisis of identity”. The cringe arises from a lack of an “effective identifying relationship between self and place” (Ashcroft and Griffiths and Tiffin 2002, p. 8) and is a result of dislocation and cultural denigration. Of course, the history of Australia’s settlement is different to the story of South Africa’s colonisation, but the term is useful. It foregrounds the pervasive idea of the centre and margin, where the former colony remains persistently and perpetually peripheral and its output is considered second-rate in comparison to the global north as the source of the best and most authentic culture.

---

23. [[http://www.proudlysa.co.za/business-site/about\\_us.htm](http://www.proudlysa.co.za/business-site/about_us.htm)]

For one participant, this “cringe” was associated with her anxieties about how the rest of a global fan community perceived white South Africans in general. She offered a few instances of hostility and acrimonious exchange as the reason her South Africanness was incompatible with fandom: “For me, South Africanness is so hard. I try and deny it in so many ways”. She then later explained that in many online fora, which are often antagonistic and devolve into personalised attacks, revealing her identity as a white South African female had set her up as a target for abuse. “I can’t identify as a South African online, I just can’t do it. People just hate you. So you try [identify] in as many other ways as possible”. Several of the other female participants shared that they had usernames or handles that were deliberately gender-neutral for use in particular online communities in anticipation of online misogyny. Gumi had adopted a masculine name for online gaming and Idril used handles that were completely scrubbed of any connotations related to her real-life identity and origins. Ongoing research into online trolling has found that online global popular culture fandoms appear to punish non-normative identities (see Phillips 2015). It is hard to tell whether the participants’ reception was due to an antipathy towards South Africans, or white South Africans in particular, or whether these attributes made them targets simply because of their difference.

Nor was this antipathy necessarily perceived by all the participants. In contrast, for KimberlyHart being South African was something she promoted as a way to distinguish and differentiate herself:

I tell [other fans online] all the time that I am from South Africa because it makes it cool. I want them to be like: “South Africa, yeah that’s cool!” because you know it is different compared to them and it makes you feel a little bit special. Just a little bit. It is like a recognition of sorts.

(KimberlyHart)

For Idril, her main irritation with how South African fans were perceived was at the level of ignorance within Tolkien fandom. Given that South African fans of Tolkien have unique perspectives to offer, Idril wrote:

I find that the on-line community of fans, especially Tolkien fans, assume that Africans are illiterate and therefore not eligible as a part of the global Tolkien following. The fact that J. R. R. Tolkien has roots in South Africa seems to have gone largely unnoticed by the global Tolkien fan community, which is a shame as there are many references in Tolkien's work to both the language and landscape of his country of birth.

(Idril)

Like KimberlyHart and Idril, those cultural intermediaries and producers of fannish content amongst the participants said that it was a balancing act to weigh the advantages and experiences of being a fan in South Africa against some of the expectations of a global audience. Captain Unobservant pointed out that as a working artist there was a commercial imperative to fit in with the expectations and parameters of international brands. He explained that if you are good enough to have received a commission, then that comes with its own constraints. Artists are constantly balancing the need to stand out while keeping within the range of what is recognisable or saleable in a market ultimately dominated by US production houses. He explained:

A lot of the guys feel that they have to be more nondescript in terms of the way the characters are designed. But not everyone does. Like the *Cotton Star*<sup>24</sup> guys are very much South African. My stuff, when I am not doing the brands is... very much South African. People speak Afrikaans, Zulu, Tswana that sort of stuff.

(Captain Unobservant)

---

24. <http://cotton-star.com>

“Deodorisation”, a term originally coined by Koichi Iwabuchi in relation to Japanese texts, is the practice of removing of any characteristics marking a cultural product (but especially games and television programmes) as too local or as too “fragrant” of its origins to be acceptable to an international market routed via the tastes and expectations of American publishers (Iwabuchi 2002). In the original usage by Iwabuchi this was largely Japanese manga and anime. Over time this necessity has declined, as American audiences, and the audiences that flow from primarily western markets, have acquired a taste for distinctively Japanese popular culture. However, South African aesthetics, mythologies and narratives that enter the counterflow of mainstream transnational circulation are limited. While there are any number of South African texts that go beyond stereotypes, within global popular culture the dominant representations still tend to be limited to clichéd settings or characters. That being said, some participants report that there is scope to their South African status as a resource to differentiate or distinguish their work for the international market.

Recognising a South African aesthetic, style, or reference became part of a coded recognition of compatriots out in the wider world of online fandoms. Commissioner Smirnov recounted messaging an artist on the fanart site Deviantart whose work he admired. He wrote to him saying: “I don’t know what it is but there is something about your style that just says South Africa to me. I love it and I can see where it comes from”. The reply came: “Hah! that is like the nicest thing anyone has ever said to me!”. In his own work Commissioner Smirnov valued South Africa is a resource for his works of imagination. For instance, he used the complexities of South African history to inform the contextual backstory for his science fiction where, he said, it was important to sketch the nuances of colonisation and independence even though his work was set in a fictitious place and future. This was a conscious choice.

I want people to almost identify with my locations like that. So my latest version of the story is a fictional world but I want it to feel South African. Like it has come out of this troubled background and

that it is a very strong influence on the current story. There is a lot of that coming into it and I definitely think that is something that comes from living in South Africa. I want my world to feel like something I am comfortable with. I can go, this is my experience, this is what I know and I can write about it.

(Commissioner Smirnov)

While the section above details how the participants read the global or external perception of South African fandom and creativity, their own experiences from inside the fan community privileges a different reading of the local phenomenon. While South African fandom may be peripheral, this comes with advantages. For instance, several of the participants maintain that, while niche and insular, there really was the possibility of experiencing the advantages of small communities grounded in place. Kelga said “our community is tightly-knit and you can become friends and you can actually bond with those people beyond that hobby, you can actually know them on a personal level”. Commissioner Smirnov echoed this when he said that what is different between international and local fandoms is that the size of the community means various communities of cosplayers, gamers and comic book fans “all overlap so tightly you always end up bumping into the same people everywhere. . . It is a very small community [in] that everyone gets to know each other”.

The local practices of fandom tend to be self-organised. TheFabricWhisperer explained that “We’d rather start our own little communities and organise and host meet ups”. Because the events were “close-knit and family style” it meant that “exhibitors know the attendees by name”. She continued: “Since no famous people attend conventions, the cosplayers get a chance to be treated like very important people [because of] the characters they portray”. The members of the community are already well known to each other. They may have attended college or university together, they are friends of friends, they are connected on Facebook and meet up frequently during the year. The experience of community seems to make up for this lack of celebrity glamour for participants.



Connections between fans are described as “personal and rich”, the relationships between consumers and store owners are framed in terms of “support and engagement”. The community is small and the general consensus is that it is accepting of people. KimberlyHart described the reward for searching out other fans in real life:

There are a few HUGE fans – not many – so that when you do find someone it’s like discovering a majestic unicorn! You marvel and share stuff. . . a cooler connection one could never have! You are part of a secret society [whereas] overseas it’s become saturated with people.

(KimberlyHart)

This rather rosy view of local fandom is maintained by the collectively held rules discussed in the previous chapter. These discursive rules, as well as the projected and internalised imagining of self in relation to both a proximal and distant other, are key to the creation and maintenance of community as a means of producing locality.

Can imagination be thought of as part of the production of locality? Appadurai argues that imagination is a *prerequisite* for locality, saying that: “The production of locality requires the continuous construction, both practical and discursive, of an ethnoscape (necessarily non-local) against which local practices and projects are imagined to take place” (Appadurai 1995, p. 209). On the surface then, to be a local fan one needs a global fandom. In this configuration, like all binaries, the local and the non-local are co-productive. To be local in the first place requires an explicitly non-local “other” for the purposes of distinction and differentiation. However, binaries are never neutral, the positive pole is regarded as normative, the default, while the negative pole is lesser, limited or inadequate in some way. To be positioned at the positive pole means not having to question the “natural order” and assumptions of superiority. To be found at the negative pole is to engage in a far more complicated set of negotiations and compensations.

## 6.5 IMAGINING FANDOM ELSEWHERE

Appadurai is not the first to emphasise the co-productive relationship between place and imagination. He calls on Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined community" (1991) to argue that imagination is central to the "multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe" (Appadurai 1996, p. 33). Like Anderson, Appadurai holds that it is the work of the imagination to realise the principle of the collective, belonging and community when the number and dispersion of members exceeds the ability of the individual to communicate with or even properly understand the scope and scale of the group. Moreover, this work of collective imagination is only possible because of mediation. Without media-distributed texts (in Anderson's case it was the newspaper) for which the collective is the intended audience and which are interpreted within a broadly similar framework, the imagination would not be able to conceive of the collective. The imagined community is such a powerful tool that in the service of nationhood it is able to bind together the diversity and complexity of great numbers of people who will never meet and are remote from each other .

The imagined community has subsequently become a useful theory to explain a number of different types of configurations of collectives, not grounded in physical locality and connected by media messages of various types. Fan studies is one of the fields that has leant heavily on the idea of the imagined community. However, despite the utility of the term, the association between fandoms and imagined communities is not a straightforward one. Anderson's term specifically addresses the modern concept of the nation as an ideologically constructed collective shaped by the routinised consumption of mass media. In this model, the individual identifies with the collective by means of an image (held in mind only) of what she imagines to be the collective's values, attitudes and qualities. She then positions and imagines her own relationship in respect to

that collective. For Anderson, the point of the imagined community is not “their falsity/genuineness, but the *style in which they are imagined*” (Anderson 1991, 6, my italics) but also, critically, that it is “imagined *as a community*” (Anderson 1991, 7, my italics). In Anderson’s original conception, the imagined community, while vital, is not synonymous with the shared work, routine and locality that makes up actual community. In other words, the imagination drives imagined communities, has real world impacts, and is more than internal or individualistic reverie or fantasy – but alone this is not enough to constitute a community. I argue that the imagination is critical in understanding global popular culture and fandom, but it must be read in relation to containing and contextual factors. The texts, platforms, fora and events that form the terrain of this type of fandom may be fundamentally the same, but as a landscape it is the product of situated vantage point and perspective.

Within the fan studies scholarship, Matt Hills is cautious of using the metaphor too freely regarding online fandom in particular. He sees its use as a “postmodern simulation of solidarity which is fundamentally asocial” (Hills 2001, p. 151), suggesting that it gained traction because of a too simplistic transfer of Anderson’s concept. Hills proposes a shift in emphasis to a “community of imagination” instead, one which “constitutes itself precisely through a common affective engagement, and thereby through a common respect for a popular cultural representational space” (Hills 2001, p. 154). Hills draws on Winnicott’s conception of imaginative activity as fundamental to cultural experience. Like Appadurai, Hills points out that the imagination is not merely fantasising or day-dreaming but occupies “a distinctive ‘third area’ between subjectivity and objectivity [and that it] is this imaginative third area or space which provides the location for cultural activity” (Hills 2001, p. 154). This “imaginative third space” is wedged between the subjective experiences of fandom (affect and identity) and the objective context (history, place and political economy). The imagination is an instrument of individual pleasure but similarly necessary for generating and sustaining

community and a shared reciprocity from one's position relative to this collective.

## 6.6 IMMEDIACY, LIVENESS AND PROXIMITY

In the packs prepared for the participants, each person received a map designed to evoke a sense of the treasure map, a fantastic cartography of imagination overlaid on geographic space. The invitation to the participants was to mark the map for each exchange or practice during their week of self-recorded data collection based on where they imagined or perceived the focus of the activity to have taken place. The maps caused quite a lot of excitement when they were unfolded, but ultimately confusion when it came time to distinguish and record quite where to designate something as having taken place. As a tool that map has considerable potential in a different configuration for future research on the cartographies of imagined worlds, the construction of “mattering maps” (Hermes 2009) and for visualising affective and relational configurations. In this instance it was of limited utility as a mapping tool but it was a successful intervention in the way it encouraged the participants to think and talk about space and place in the elicitation interviews.

Global fandom is imagined in respect to the locality experienced by the participants in two ways. The first was explored earlier in this chapter: the conviction that there is a centre and periphery and that South African fans are on the periphery. The second is that the activity at this centre is marked by “immediacy”, “liveness” and “proximity”. As Kimberly Hart said, the key is to be as close as possible, to be “in the front row”, to meet the actors and creators first-hand. Commissioner Smirnov, who had attended a major convention, concurred:

You hear about all the conventions online and people saying, “We had such a great time! We had such a great time!” And then you actually see for yourself behind the scenes... It was just interesting

to see the lifestyle from a more first-hand perspective rather than listening to guys tell me, “Oh I went to *Brony Con* and this happened and it was so much fun. That happened and it was great”.

(Commissioner Smirnov)

Commissioner Smirnov reiterated this difference between the mediated and the first-hand live experience. Recounting his impression of attending a live event familiar from his online research and perusal, he describes it as being “like walking through the internet”. In this he is not simply suggesting the live, embodied experience of presence and proximity is better than the mediated experience of watching documentaries, looking at footage posted online, scrolling through photographs or reading interviews. In his description the *live event* is described as being “behind the scenes”, which is an odd but telling reversal. Traditionally, in “making of” documentaries or fan-recorded and bootlegged footage, the live event is the spectacle and the additional media material is used to offer the non-present audience (or the post-spectacle audience) a glimpse “behind the scenes”. In the normal configuration, these are merely supplementary to the principal, and live, event.

Here, Commissioner Smirnov reverses a phrase normally used by theatre staff, organisers, performers or the workers who produce but are not the intended recipients of the spectacle. This suggests that, in his experience at least, fan events are normally viewed or consumed at a remove and in the form of recorded footage, photographs or reported narrative. Therefore to be co-present at an event in both place and time is a different order of authenticity. One that goes beyond the product manufactured for the consumer. To be there is to be in the role of a participant insider. Had this been a single instance of this articulation of the particular configuration of liveness and mediation, I might not have made anything of it. However, in another moment in the interviews, Commissioner Smirnov talked about attending the live event as being like “walking through the internet”. Here again, he set up a complexly recursive relationship where the mediated form of the event (the

recorded material posted online) is the primary referent and the live event that was the source for the footage, interviews and information is subordinate to its own copy and therefore is more real than real.

Tempting though it is to pursue a postmodern analysis of this dynamic as the operation of the simulacrum, I follow Phillip Auslander, who grounds his observations about liveness, intimacy and proximity in Walter Benjamin's discussion of mass culture's drive to overcome distance. Auslander states that the driver for audiences' desire for both proximity and reproduction of objects is the desire "to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly, which is just as ardent as their bent toward overcoming the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction" (Auslander 2008, p. 38). Auslander adds that the mediated reproduction of performances has "led to the depreciation of live presence" which, ironically, must be "compensated for by making the perceptual experience of the live as much as possible like that of the mediatized, even in cases where the live event provides its own brand of proximity" (Auslander 2008, p. 40). In other words, the frequency, diversity and detail with which fan events in particular have been recorded, reproduced and distributed has resulted in these events being lauded and sought after as pinnacle fan experiences to have up close and in person by "being there". However the event itself is preceded by its mediated version and is evaluated on how close it comes to being "as seen on TV". As the discussion earlier in this chapter of local fans ambitions to attend large, internationally recognised fan events showed, the participants in this study emphasise these events as very important for those fans who feel themselves to be remote and peripheral from these moments and sites of significance.

It also explains one of the recurrent complaints from the participants – that the local versions of the cons and options for consumption did not measure up to mediated and generated expectations. Several participants read *rAge* as a dilute version of its original, or rather, of their schema of expectations drawn from their mediated impression of *Comic-Con*. One participant cuttingly commented that, "It is trying to be *Comic-*

*Con*, but it is just not! *rAge* is just isn't at that level yet". In a similar vein, Captain Unobservant commented:

I mean *rAge* looks like *Comic-Con*, it is just a much much smaller version but it is still the same thing. And it is still the same kind of people, the same kind of stands, all of that. It is just that the scale is so different. You always have an expectation when you go in, you almost know what it is going to look like.

(Captain Unobservant)

This is a common attitude that infuriated Norvie as an event organiser:

This is the scary thing for me. They want it to be exactly like the convention in Germany, for example. Like the photos that you see. . . Overseas there are all these other kinds of restrictions but what people want is the picture that they saw there, they want here.

(Norvie)

Norvie railed against the tendency to see liveness and proximity as an experience that exists a priori and is there to be acquired and consumed (or not), rather than an opportunity for participation that recognises and respects the limitations of community size and its financial resources. She illustrated this with an example of what she said is an all too familiar experience:

Panel discussions! You know what happens if you organise a workshop or a panel discussion? You get fifty people. No, no that is optimistic. Twenty people say they are interested. Then you get some people in the community who are willing to do things for free and you go, "Wow! Ok!" So you organise coffee, you organise the people and on the day one person pitches. . . I think the most natural way of doing this would be for everyone to grab a chair and we go and have the discussion under a tree where we can hear ourselves think. But no, they want a conference venue. It is this funny thing of wanting it to be like it is seen elsewhere.

(Norvie)

Auslander calls these “incursion of mediatization into live events” and argues that this can “be understood as a means of making those events respond to the need for televisual intimacy, thus fulfilling desires and expectations shaped by mediatized representations” (Auslander 2008, p. 184). One reading of these findings might suggest this is evidence of the globalised and media-fuelled cultural homogenisation. In this view, fan culture could be read as simply a vector for the worst excesses of “cultural imperialism, in the form of consumerist universalism or global media influence” (Pieterse 2009, p. 51). However, as Jan Pieterse points out, when one moves beyond the general declarations of globalisation, ethnography tends to show that these fears are “inaccurate on every score” and scrutiny of even the most ostensibly homogenising forces of capitalism “should rather be understood along the lines of global localization” (Pieterse 2009, p. 52).

Similarly, as became apparent through discussion with the participants, it is not that they seek a simulation of “Americanness” or even some version of homogenised “Westernness”. It did not seem as though the desire was to make the local more like some ideological or national ideal from elsewhere; rather it is the very narrowly confined space of the con itself that is aspirational. It is a circumscribed and finite period of time or, in the case of Commissioner Smirnov who wants to “con hop” across the USA, a series of events out of time and place. In the fan imaginary, cons are abstracted and cauterised from their context.

In her follow-up interview, EssieJayne, as she often did, articulated an attitude that came across in several interviews. Namely that fan attention is like a searchlight. Wherever it alighted resulted in intense scrutiny. The particular text, place or person of interest would be spotlighted, highlighted, fleshed out and made three dimensional. But this attention was isolated and did not really extend to a fully contextual understanding. While she was speaking I imagined her attention like a box set or shoot-



ing location – highly detailed but encapsulated or amputated from a larger context. A shift to the left or the right and there was nothing there. The London of *Sherlock* is as imaginary as Hogwarts and places, even when real, are mediated rather than geographic; textual rather than territorial. For instance, in her interview she pointed out two places on the map that she had tagged as important and that coincided with her fannish practices for the week. This included 1940s Morocco (she had been watching *Casablanca*) and Florida (where *Leaky Con* was being held that year). I asked, what about other places? Did she feel any meaningful attachment to place or people or culture in these areas? She dismissed this idea with a vague gesture to the map of the USA saying “This? No, this is just representing the whole of America – blah! Generica!”. This image of “Generica” as a grey, flat, catch-all backdrop from which a particular place like a convention, a shooting location, or even a fictional landscape is excised from, and then returns to, recurs in different ways in other interviews.

## 6.7 DISEMBEDDED HETEROTOPIAS

This final section of the chapter argues that, for all that so many fan practices are digital or distributed, proximity and liveness are qualities that are all the more important precisely because of these highly mediated practices, and especially for communities who feel themselves to be peripheral. Like the texts around which fandoms orbit, certain places under certain conditions exert a similar gravitational pull. It is beyond the scope of this study to account comprehensively for the full range of criteria that produce this effect on the phenomenon of fandom at the periphery, but this appears to be another avenue for future and focused exploration. South African fans of global popular culture strongly suggest, in their discourse and actions, that they are driven to pursue an experience of authenticity in certain types of location, such as a convention, theme park or shooting location. But these locations are framed –

for all their material physicality – as, imaginary and as places out of time and space.

Giddens calls space under the conditions of modernity “phantasmagoric”, and in this sense fandoms can be seen as a “disembedding mechanism”, a strategy or resource that provide a means of lifting social relations out of their “situatedness” (Giddens 1990). Disembedded space is not synonymous with homogenisation, the erasure of community or annihilation of locality. Rather, Giddens says, it is “a double-layered, or ambivalent, experience” where it “is not simply that localised influences drain away into the more impersonalised relations of abstract systems. Instead, the very tissue of spatial experience alters, conjoining proximity and distance” (Giddens 1990, p. 140). In this way the imagination sutures together the distant and the proximal into a third space, or perhaps hybrid space that plaits together these co-occurring possibilities that cannot be reduced to the global as inserted into the local, nor yet a simple localisation of the global.

Certain fannish spaces under certain conditions, produce localities that are temporary, ambivalent, complex and disembedded in a way that invokes Michel Foucault’s concept of the heterotopia. In Foucault’s usage, the heterotopia is a space apart from, but not disconnected from, its context (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986). Studies of fans have used the heterotopia as a theoretical framework to describe the workings of online fan sites (Bury 2005), fan fiction (Wilkinson 2011) and slash pairings<sup>25</sup> in fan work (Rambukkana 2007) but these tend to be textual or linguistic heterotopic spaces. Lincoln Geraghty (2014a) is one of the few scholars who makes an argument for the physical spaces of fan practices – in this case fan convention – to be considered heterotopic. He is primarily interested in the objects that fans flock to conventions to acquire and finds that it is in this process of acquisition the convention becomes the

---

25. Slash fan fiction involves fan written stories involving same-sex romantic and erotic scenarios that take place between characters and in settings that are part of the canon, even if the relationship is not.

heterotopia. The objects themselves are the means of accessing different spaces and different interconnections of community.

There are six key criteria that Foucault offers to describe heterotopias. These include the fairly general terms that firstly, all cultures construct heterotopias and that second, these are culturally specific or situated. After these rather easily met criteria, his third indicator starts to become more specific. The “heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real space several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible” (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986, p. 25). Foucault gives the example of the garden as functioning as a microcosm of other spaces brought together artificially in a single space. In the same vein, the trade fair, expo or convention brings together commodities and people from disparate geographic spaces in the tradition of the market place. The fan convention, seen from a certain perspective, is nothing more than a marketplace for fan commodities and texts, and draws in consumers and products from diverse places. In the case of the fan convention, this can include the temporary bringing together of fictional as well as real spaces. Cosplay, a major practice at fan conventions, involves participants visiting the convention in costumes, immersed in their roles and thereby doubly inhabiting the spaces. They attend as characters who are visitors from textual worlds, as well as their more prosaic real-world selves.

The fourth criterion is that the heterotopia constitutes a break with time. This break with time can happen in two ways. The first is in “all time” stacking up and being made present in the way that the museum or the library’s holdings can make present “other times” at the same time. The second is in the mode of the festival – and for these purposes the fan convention is a style of festival or fair – wherein heterotopic time is “time in its most fleeting, transitory, precarious aspect” (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986, p. 26). Foucault cites the example of the fair, a temporary happening in an otherwise empty space that teems with the exotic and intriguing before it packs up and moves along and returns cyclically. The convention, like the fair is a temporary point on the calendar. There is the anticipation, a flurry of activity for a set-up and an intensity of

activity that lasts a few days, before the visitors go home, the stalls and stands are packed away and the space reverts to neutral, empty, malleable, awaiting.

Foucault's fifth criterion is that the heterotopia is governed by principles of opening and closing. Sometimes, he argues, access only applies under certain conditions, such as rites of purification (the bathhouse or hammam) or compulsion (the prison) (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986). Perhaps a better description for the fan convention is Foucault's alternative model of access for those heterotopias where all may enter but only to a limited extent. True access is reserved for the intimate or the initiate. Certainly, anyone can attend a convention for the price of the ticket. The availability of a ticket and the proximity to the venue are better understood as limitations rather than exclusions. But, beneath this surface, there is also a system of symbolic and social capital at play. Fandom can be simultaneously a commercial transaction and a subcultural economy. Much like the fairground, there is a distinction between the "punter" and the "carny", the outsider and the initiate, those who are the audience for the spectacle and those who produce or have knowledge of what goes on behind the scenes. In several interviews with the participants, this transition from audience towards insider is important, and the convention is a key space where social capital rather than economic capital buys one access behind the scenes. Gumi was excited to be volunteering for the first time to staff a stall for a friend in the Artist's Alley section. Kelga was attending in his capacity as a photographer. Captain Unobservant was anticipating it being a working weekend where he would work constantly to keep members of his collective happy while also trying to sell some of his own work to attendees. Norvie, fresh from her own experience as a key insider, was relishing the novelty of attending an event purely as a visitor with no responsibilities to attendees, stallholders or sponsors.

The sixth and final trait of the heterotopia is that "either their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space... as still more illusory" or "to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect,

as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled” (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986, p. 26). The fan convention is of the latter type. Like the ship, that most perfect illustration of the heterotopia in Foucault’s view, the convention is not of the place where it is hosted. It is more like “a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea” (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986, p. 26). Geraghty says of the convention that it provides a familiar space for fans to meet and communicate. However, perhaps this would be better phrased as a familiar *configuration* of space, since the actual convention centre or stadium is forgettable and replaceable by any other similar space (and is designed to be precisely so). The conventions centre at fan con time is “a location for the emotional connection with, and consumption of, their favourite texts” and should be thought of as being more than simply a commodified and generic space but rather a temporary space that is “transformative and unique” (Geraghty 2014a, p. 94).

Will Brooker says heterotopic fan spaces invite “a game of let’s pretend” that is a “performance, a creation, a making-new of the familiar and quotidian” and that fans approaching locations “are able to transform ‘flatscape’ into a place of wonder. They bring their own urban imaginary, their own maps of fiction and their own angles on the everyday” (Brooker 2007, p. 443). While Brooker is talking specifically about the city as a shooting location, the assertion is equally true for heterotopic places like the fan convention that have a chameleon-like propensity to adapt not to the background but to the one looking. Most public sites of fandom are “multiply coded” – they are not tied to place per se, they float free from location. Brooker writes that it is the work of imagination by fans brought “to sites that are often by definition unremarkable, generic and flat [that] enriches them through ‘other-directed’ acts of textual communion, making them special and transforming them into sites of play and carnival, poetry and magic” (Brooker 2007, p. 429).

This magic and poetry of a major fan event, like San Diego *Comic-Con*, clings like an aura and has a degree of transferability and a talismanic

property that recalls the pilgrimage – an emerging theme in the research of fan cultures (see Porter 2004; Brooker 2005; Brooker 2007; Goh 2014; Erdely and Breede 2017). Captain Unobservant told the following story that centres on a bag, the standard convention “swag”, that he was given at *Comic-Con* some months before and, back home in South Africa, was using to transport a costume to a local event.

I'll never forget my friend, he likes comics and that sort of stuff but he is more a casual fan. But he went to [a local event] and he was actually bringing one of my costumes for me in my *Comic-Con* bag. There was a girl that saw the bag and ran up to him. She started freaking out going, “Oh my word, it's a *Comic-Con* bag! You've been to *Comic-Con*! What!!!” and she freaked out at him and he was so overwhelmed he didn't know what to do. It was just a bag with the logo on it. He was a bit freaked out.

(Captain Unobservant)

In Captain Unobservant's account, the bag (“just a bag with a logo”) was perceived as having a talismanic quality, a souvenir but one that has been imbued with an unquantifiable quality simply through its proximity to the heterotopic site. Captain Unobservant told this story to illustrate what he saw as a problematic quality in some fans. In so doing, he used the term “zealot”, with its connotations of religious excess, and recalled that the origin of the term fan in the word “fanatic”. These terms themselves circle back to the pilgrim, the badge of the pilgrim and the shrine destination.

As Geraghty writes elsewhere about fan collectors, “the heterotopia is realized in the object itself” (Geraghty 2014b) and the *Comic-Con* bag is a talismanic proxy sanctified by its former proximity to the centre. Markers of proximity operate as symbolic capital. Auslander argues that proximity has hierarchical values that can be “quantified, relatively even if not absolutely” (Auslander 2008, p. 68). This informal hierarchy takes into consideration “the symbolic value of attendance at live perfor-

mances, rarity, distance in time, and proximity to an imagined originary moment [that] are determining factors” (Auslander 2008, p. 68). We are able to rank and value the symbolic capital of “being there” given the appropriate cultural contexts. *Comic-Con* is the “dream-come-true” destination and ambition of local fans of global popular culture, it is the very epicentre of several fandoms and because of distance and expense is a largely unattainable goal. Captain Unobservant’s flatmate, not fully appreciating the cultural context of the event he was bringing the bag to, could not parse the symbolic capital that suddenly accrued to him as he walked into the venue with an object that was the realisation of this heterotopia.

## 6.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter the principle of imagination has been foregrounded. Here the question is of how the local fan perceives their own practices (whether or not this self-perception is accurate) in relation to an imagined elsewhere, and in relation to an imagined community of which they are a member. Central to this discussion is Benedict Anderson’s concept of an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991) and its reworking by fan scholar Matt Hills as a “community of imagination” which “constitutes itself precisely through a common affective engagement, and thereby through a common respect for a popular cultural representational space” (Hills 2001, p. 154). The premise of this chapter is that the imagination is the source of individual subjectivity but similarly necessary for generating and sustaining community and a shared reciprocity.

The chapter then turns to consider the corollary; the imagined and imagining community here-and-now. This is not simply the inverse of the global. It is a more fragmented and complex set of ideas marked by ambiguity and ambivalence but which, together, offer a nuanced understanding of the way locality is evoked and may be made manifest. In the first instance, the participants present a variety of ways in which they

believe they are perceived. For some, South Africanness is a source of discomfort and must be disavowed, while for others it is a marker of distinction and exotic difference that they play to as a strength. Likewise, for those who are producers of fan art or fan work it can be a narrative or aesthetic advantage or something to be downplayed.

The chapter goes on to outline that for the fans there is a distinction between the way the global fan community is imagined and the local fan community. By comparison, fandom at an imagined central elsewhere is characterised as authentic (it is the real deal in contrast to the dilute imitation that is the parochial local equivalent), live and immediate (things happen in real time and in real life) and aspirational. But perhaps most interestingly, while it is remote, it does not have a fixed locality itself. Fandom, manifest in the participants' imagination in the site of the convention, is cut free from place and floats detached from geography or geopolitics. A quality that, I argue, suggests it can be read in the light of Michel Foucault's model of the heterotopia (1986).



## CONCLUSION

---

The impetus behind this research was my own experience as a South African fan and my more recent work in an academic setting. As a lecturer in a School of Arts, I have observed and worked with students who were fans themselves of various texts, actors, genres and media formats. From this vantage point I have watched the ebb and flow of enthusiasms, the rise of new fandoms and practices and the changing dynamics of accessibility thanks to increasingly ubiquitous broadband internet. A school of arts in a university is an ideal observation post for fans and their practices: the students are visually and media literate, they are sophisticated consumers of cultural products, they are already invested in the ways that cultural industries function and they are inclined towards creative participation. Over the years the students have taught me that fandom and fan practices are a significant and important part of the South African media landscape. They are not a marginal or exotic sub-cultural practice; rather they are ubiquitous, diverse and constitute an important induction into culture and creativity for students. To ignore fans and fandom in South Africa is to ignore an important, widespread and ever-growing aspect of media and cultural practice. Despite this, and until this study there had been no research explicitly directed towards these local fan cultures. This research has drawn attention to this phenomenon and has started mapping its contours in anticipation of future investigations.

A second lesson I took from my students was that my own research should start with as open and grounded an exploration of the phenomenon as possible. To pursue an extant set of questions related to a

singular text, fandom or practice transposed to our local context would suggest that there is something intrinsic or distinctive in the national character or “South Africanness” of these participants that could be discovered. Instead, this thesis deliberately cast a wide net foregrounding discovery and exploration of the phenomenon of fandom. Guided by Cavicchi’s inciting questions, its investigation was what does fandom *do* in this particular context (Cavicchi in Duffett 2013). This approach resulted in some key decisions that shaped the outcomes: Firstly, participants who self-identified as fans were taken at their word. I allowed *them* to tell *me* what this meant rather than applying exclusionary criteria borrowed from a definition of fandom. Secondly, the focus was the everyday practice of the participants rather than the highpoint of a convention or competition. Fandom, viewed through this lens is a mediated social practice rather than a textual or subcultural practice. The research views fan practices as exemplary of larger patterns of mediated life – not that they are exceptional or extraordinary. This distinction was an important ontological foundation for the research and has implications beyond fandom for how the findings might be applied more generally to globally dispersed, contextually situated and mediated collectivities or communities.

## 7.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The research set out to discover how the practices of South African fans of global popular culture can make visible the material complexities and tensions of access, participation and belonging. This focus on the material constraints of access, territory and political economy was coupled with the question of the imaginary: both the role of the imagination in the “imagined community” of fandom and how the imagination might be mobilised for understanding the tension between the local and the global.

What the research did not find is as interesting as what it did discover. Firstly, the findings confirmed that South African communities of fans of global popular culture are not imbued with unique markers derived from some quality of South Africanness. Secondly, it demonstrated that the model of a virtual or distributed community of fans abstracted from the “here-and-now” is not especially useful for talking about “global” fandom: aside from the observation that online fandom allows for greater transnational and transcultural access and interaction, the answers to the questions “what it is worth” and “what it does” remain grounded in lived lives. The technology may well afford the transmission and consumption that facilitates transcultural fandom, but the practices will still be grounded in the everyday lived realities of individual fan lives. Thirdly, the research found no evidence to suggest local fans consume transnational texts out of “escapist cosmopolitanism” or a disavowal of their lives as citizens of South Africa. Finally, nothing in the findings suggested that the participants are prey to false consciousness or are “dupes” falling prey to exploitation by cultural industries or the cultural homogenisation engines of globalisation.

What was present instead was evidence of complex, entangled sets of practices and motivations.

In *Chapter 4* I discussed how I found that domestic sites (and domestic lives) are central to the fan’s experience of their fandom. And, as a corollary, fandom is important to the constructions and operations of the home. Being a fan plays a role in the intimacies of sharing a domestic space, a family life, memory-making and tradition. The home is a concrete and contained place of familiar comfort and refuge and the site of fan practices – long hours of crafting and work on projects, a place to retreat to for consumption of texts and a site housing collections. In turn, the domestic setting of the home is shaped by fandoms, as it influences the aesthetics of the space and, in some cases, the compromises and contestations about how and when the space is used for fan practices. From this, the thesis argues that fan practices can be understood as place-making activities. In addition, the concept of home was

deployed through the metaphor of “feeling at home”. This was used to express affinity and belonging within a practice or a community; as well as pleasure in the co-presence of other fans. Both placed an emphasis on shared experiences of communities and friends – the hospitality of shared meals, offers of accommodation, transport and care. It also includes those moments of celebration, commiseration and even confrontation. In these ways fan practices are community-making practices in fundamental ways.

However, the concept of home was also used to refer to the imaginative transportation to a familiar and comforting textual place. In their attachment to and desired immersion in imagined worlds fans are extraordinary, different from casual consumers or audiences. This expressed feeling of nostalgia, safety and comfort to be found in the familiar places and passages of well loved texts is a result that might be particular to the fanish imagination. The practices and pleasures to be found in imagined landscapes and cartographies, the experience of “going home” to textual spaces and the translation or transposition of fictional space onto a real world equivalents were unanticipated findings.

*Chapter 5* expanded to consider a larger scale: the work that it takes to create and maintain a local community of fans and how it connects this fandom (a supposedly leisure activity) and other kinds of labour and value production. Evidence was presented to show that a number of the participants are engaged in paid labour in the creative economy and there would seem to be a correlation between the work the fans do professionally, and their fan work. Even when this is not the case, the porous boundaries between paid work and leisure shows that the work that fans do frequently shades into fan work. The distinction between *fans at work* and *fan work* is blurred. The chapter also explored the tensions between free labour and the labour of the fan as a cultural intermediary. The “free labour” of fans revealed two key observations: one, it facilitates the production and maintenance of community: two, it serves self-promotion, professionalisation and hopes for future employment.

I then went on to argue that the boundaries of community cannot be maintained through free labour alone and this fan work was accompanied by a set of guidelines that governed what could be considered acceptable or unacceptable fan practices. All groups have some norms or values that inform the tacit doxa for participation: what was significant was that these rules for legitimacy as a “good fan”, or a fan who enjoys fandom appropriately, relied on the languages of labour and leisure. The schema for legitimate fandom depended on maintaining the distinctions between work and play, labour and leisure, one’s responsibilities and in-judicious waste of time and money. Practices falling on the wrong side of this divide were framed as pathological and labelled addiction, excess and obsession.

The chapter concluded that fan practices take place in a local context that structures access and participation. However, these practices themselves produce and reproduce the conditions of locality in the form of community. In other words, locality is not there to simply be occupied, it is made and re-made continuously by means of its occupation.

In the final findings chapter, *Chapter 6*, the organising principle is the tension between the experience of an embodied local fandom and a constant awareness of an “elsewhere”, loosely defined but always exerting a pull. In short, global popular culture fandom has a centre, seen as geographically located in an elsewhere (most often given as the USA) and relative to which South Africa is peripheral. But access and the possibilities for participation are not linear or unidirectional, they are tangled, co-productive and recursive. The findings show that participants access the flows of texts and commodities by sanctioned purchases and imports but, just as frequently, they relied on piracy. The chapter considered how the participants frame the limits and frustrations to their access to these resources. However, the imagination is just as important as these strategies as a means to insert oneself into, access or divert the flow of texts and communication. I traced some key ways in which the global fan community is imagined by local participants. Epitomised by the fan convention, these centres are characterised as highly aspirational

destinations that are imagined as “authentic” in contrast to local iterations. They are also episodic in the sense that they are not persistent or rooted in a territorial conception of place but are temporary, cyclical, floating above place or shifting between “no-places”. For the participants these spaces are disembedded from the concept of nation; the participants did not equate these fannish centres with the larger agenda of the geopolitics or policy of the hosting country. To explain this, I have used Foucault’s concept of the heterotopia. I argue that, from the participants’ perspective, the imagined community of global fandom lacks contextual specificity or situated conditions. However, while the imagined spaces of global fandom may be cut free from geographic place and historic time, within heterotopic fan spaces, proximity and liveness have currency: “being there when” or “being near at the time” function as symbolic capital when repatriated once more to the local community at the periphery.

## 7.2 METHODOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

Based on a grounded theory approach for exploratory research I used an innovative data collection method inspired by creative and participatory methodologies that was particularly productive and generative. The multimodal approach yielded excellent retention of participants in the study as well as a high volume of creative, original data for analysis. It allowed for researcher-absent exploration of everyday practices yielding a perspective and insights into fan and fandoms that are generally only accessible in autoethnographic accounts.

One outcome from the methodological choice to use a system of word-of-mouth references or snowball sampling was the predominance of white South African participants who were referred to, or volunteered for, the study. This had both advantages and disadvantages. It confirmed other scholarship from the field of South African audience studies as to the persistence of as to racially segmented audiences two decades after the end of Apartheid (Schieferdecker 2017). It also meant that there were

limited variables to account for and, given the small size of the sample group, this simplified analysis. However, it did make for a narrowly circumscribed and limited perspective and set of experiences.

I had not anticipated quite how fruitful the methods used in this study would be. I had planned the design to elicit responses from the participants to the creative brief and had given extensive thought to how the data collection process was framed. However, I did not expect the levels of participant retention or productivity. I would account for this as being due to the tendency of fans to be creative or producing audiences. As such, the method was especially well suited to their dispositions. Additionally, the pleasures of participation are strong motivators for fans – another advantage of the research design. This intersection between fan practices and creative research methods has potential for ongoing exploration.

Finally, a method and theoretical framework that privileges everyday media practices builds investigative links with relevance for other kinds of collectivities. Especially those that are “double framed” by media (2016). What Hepp and Couldry mean by this term is those collectivities where media content is the object of interest for the collective while simultaneously providing the mechanism of holding the collective together. Previously fans typified and were fairly distinctive in this double framing but, increasingly, other kinds of collectivities may be taking on similar characteristics. Some of the findings as to methods of investigating these phenomena empirically and ethnographically may reveal unanticipated inflections on otherwise well-known phenomena or unanticipated types of collectivities.

### 7.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The theoretical contribution that underpins these findings holds that fandom and fan practices can be, and indeed are, deployed as resources in

the production and reproduction of locality. We are in a period of what Hepp and Couldry term “deep mediatization”. They define this as occurring when “the very elements and building-blocks from which a sense of the social is constructed” (Couldry and Hepp 2016, p. 7) are mediated. They assert that one of the questions media and cultural studies must ask is, what are the implications of this mediatization for the way that we make sense of the world phenomenologically. While acknowledging that media practice is completely “entangled with the constraints, affordances and power-relations that are features of media as infrastructures for communication” (Couldry and Hepp 2016, p. 7), this thesis offers one answer to Hepp and Couldry’s question. Namely, that under the conditions of “deep mediatization” the production of locality is as critical and ongoing as it has ever been. Furthermore, this “produced locality” is neither neutral nor universal, but rather is inflected in particular ways given the South African context for this research. The three findings chapters should be read as mutually informing and, taken together, they support this thesis’s overarching claim.

Fans and their fandoms can be seen as the “canaries in the coal mines” of media studies. Fans were early adopters of digital technologies and have been engaged in mediated transnational and transcultural communities for some time: their practices are instructive as exemplars. Moreover, the fan’s practices are increasingly being seen as the norm for media consumption – the mainstreaming of fan practices (or the fanification of the mainstream) – making what was once an outlier activity the norm. From fans we can learn about how to make sense of the world in a time of deep mediatization since they have long been invested in highly mediated communities.

In this instance, what is evident is that everyday fan practices produce locality. That there are systems implicated in the “production of locality” is nothing new, however, “locality” as a concept has become unsettled from some of its previous certainties. It can mean territorial place (the locale or neighbourhood), it can mean belonging (rather than a visitor or stranger), it can be synonymous with, or productive of, identity (to be of



the place by birth), it can limit or confer status and rights (citizenship or other rights to vote or speak). It can mean community and it can mean nation, and it has lately been modified by the concept of translocality in order to exceed all of these meanings. It can be concrete or it can be virtual. It can be cultural and geographic. It can be affective and it can be shaped by economics. It is relational. It has no size or even scale that we can agree on.

This research has argued for the necessity of revisiting locality. To understand it as an attribute and an accomplishment, something that is made not found. The findings show that locality can no longer precede belonging or affiliation or place (if indeed it ever did). One does not belong because one is local, one makes locality through one's belonging; one does not have community because of shared origins or circumstances of locale, one constructs community in order to produce a sense of the local. This thesis finds that fandom is a "resource in the making of" rather than "the result of" locality. It finds that the phenomenon of locality in the era of deep mediatization relies on everyday practices that provide the threads that, woven together, make up the fabric that is locality. Held in tension, creating texture and pattern, snagging, breaking, tangling, unravelling – these individual strands together offer a glimpse of the process and realisation of the production of locality. However, unlike fabric that can be cut from the loom and persist in a stable state, locality exists only as long as it is being made – it is no permanent achievement. In a time of mediated mobility, displacement and diasporas of different kinds and driven by different forces, the production of locality seems to be a precarious and particularly precious phenomena.

#### 7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A limitation for this research is that, being a small group study, these findings should not be extrapolated to all South African fans of global

popular culture. At a primary level, the clear racial bias in the self-selecting and snowball sampling method means that only a small subset of the members of fan communities and cultures have been explored. But as the discussion in chapter 3 points to, the question of whiteness and the assumptions and terms of reference for how fandom is traditionally understood demands further research. In the South African context, where whiteness and affinity are simultaneously both invisible and highly visible, mainstream and dominant while also being the marginal interest of a "powerless elite" (Tulloch and Jenkins 1995) these concepts reconfigure and remake a range of power relationships that fan studies quite often takes for granted. However, this sets up promising possibilities for equivalent research projects that use similar methods to explore how race (and its implications of class) might texture practices and shift the conclusions that can be drawn.

However, the method also raises questions as to the embedded role and ethical obligations of the researcher working with creative and participatory methods. In this instance the free and affective labour of the fan who participates and contributes artworks, insight, time and effort resulted in the accrual of value to me, the researcher. I would argue that some of the contributions that fan studies has made to a theory of affective and immaterial labour might be turned towards a useful meta-discussion of these methodological approaches themselves.

In addition to these offshoots from the method and research design, the findings from the thesis suggest two areas for future research. The first is especially relevant to my teaching role in a university division that prepares students for a future of work in the cultural industries. A study, that focuses on the value of fandom as a means of induction into, and apprenticeship in, the creative industries has particular resonance in a country like South Africa where these training opportunities are limited.

A second potential project arises from the finding that, for fans at least, there is an experience of transportation into the text; a sense of going home into an imagined landscape. And the reciprocal move: the trans-

position and transference of a fictional landscape onto a real territory. These relationships between place and imagination via immersion, pilgrimage and heterotopia have been surfaced in this thesis, but my impression is that there are depths to explore in this particular realisation of “produced locality”. These questions offer a fascinating variation in the way imagination, space, place and locality are configured.

## REFERENCES

---

- Abercrombie, Nicholas and Longhurst, Brian J. (1998). *Audiences: A Sociological Theory Of Performance And Imagination*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Anderson, Benedict (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. 2nd edn. London: Verso.
- Andrejevic, Mark (2008). Watching Television Without Pity: The Productivity of Online Fans. *Television & New Media* 9.1, pp. 24–46.
- Ang, Ien (1996). *Living Room wars: Rethinking media audiences for a post-modern world*. London: Routledge.
- Appadurai, Arjun (1995). The Production of Locality. *Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge*. Ed. by Richard Fardon. London: Routledge, pp. 208–229.
- (1996). *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Ashcroft, Bill and Griffiths, Gareth and Tiffin, Helen (2002). *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*. 2nd edn. London: Routledge.
- Auslander, Philip (2008). *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. 2nd edn. Oxon: Routledge.
- Bacon-Smith, Camille (2000). *Science Fiction Culture*. Feminist Cultural Studies, the Media, and Political Culture. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Baines, Gary (1998). Catalyst or Detonator? Local Music Quotas and the Current South African Music ‘Explosion’. *Social Dynamics* 24.1, pp. 66–87.
- Banaji, Shakuntala and Burn, Andrew and Buckingham, David (2010). *The Rhetorics of Creativity: A Literature Review*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Creativity, Culture and Education London.

- Banda, Fackson (2006). Negotiating Distant Influences: Globalization and Broadcasting Policy Reforms in Zambia and South Africa. *Canadian Journal of Communication* 31.2. URL: <http://cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/1785>.
- Banks, John A. and Deuze, Mark (2009). Co-creative Labour. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12.5, pp. 419–431.
- Banks, Mark (2009). Fit and working again? The Instrumental Leisure of the 'Creative Class'. *Environment and Planning A* 41.3, pp. 668–681.
- Baym, Nancy K (1993). Interpreting Soap Operas and Creating Community: Inside a Computer-mediated Fan Culture. *Journal of Folklore Research* 30.2/3, pp. 143–176.
- Baym, Nancy K. (1999). *Tune In, Log On: Soaps, Fandom, And Online Community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Baym, Nancy K and Burnett, Robert (2009). Amateur Experts International Fan Labour in Swedish Independent Music. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12.5, pp. 433–449.
- Bennett, Lucy (2013). Researching Online Fandom. *Cinema Journal* 52.4, pp. 129–134.
- Bhabha, Homi K (1990). Nation and Narration. Ed. by Homi K Bhabha. London: Routledge.
- Biltereyst, Daniel and Meers, Philippe (2011). "The Political Economy of Communications". Ed. by Janet Wasko and Graham Murdock and Helena Sousa. 19. Chichester: Wiley Online Library. Chap. The Political Economy of Audiences, pp. 415–435.
- Bird, Elizabeth (2003). *The Audience in Everyday Life: Living in a Media World*. New York: Routledge.
- (2010). From Fan Practice to Mediated Moments: The Value of Practice Theory in the Understanding of Media Audiences. *Theorising Media as Practice*. Ed. by Birgit Bräuchler and John Postill. Oxford: Berghahn Books. Chap. 4, p. 85.
- (2011). Are We all Producers Now? *Cultural Studies* 25.4-5, pp. 502–516.
- Bird, S Elizabeth (1992). Travels in Nowhere Land: Ethnography and the 'Impossible' Audience. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 9, pp. 250–260.

- Booth, Paul (2010). *Digital Fandom: New Media Studies*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Booth, Paul and Kelly, Peter (2013). The Changing Faces of Doctor Who Fandom: New fans, New Technologies, Old Practices. *Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies* 10.1, pp. 56–72.
- Bornman, Elirea (2016). Information Society and Digital Divide in South Africa: Results of Longitudinal Surveys. *Information, Communication & Society* 19.2, pp. 264–278.
- Bosch, Tanja Estella (2014). Commercial Music Radio, Race and Identity in South Africa. *Media, Culture & Society* 36.7, pp. 901–915.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brah, Avtar (1996). *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge.
- Brooker, Will (2005). The Blade Runner Experience: Pilgrimage and Liminal Space. *The Blade Runner Experience: The Legacy of a Science Fiction Classic*. Wallflower London, pp. 11–30.
- (2007). Everywhere and Nowhere: Vancouver, Fan Pilgrimage and the Urban Imaginary. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 10.4, pp. 423–444.
- Buckingham, David (2009). Creative Visual Methods in Media Research: Possibilities, Problems and Proposals. *Media, Culture & Society* 31.4, pp. 633–652.
- Bury, Rhiannon (2005). *Cyberspaces of Their Own: Female Fandoms Online*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Busse, Kristina (2013). Geek hierarchies, boundary policing, and the gendering of the good fan. *Participations Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 10.1, pp. 73–91.
- Busse, Kristina and Gray, Jonathan (2011). Fan Cultures and Fan Communities. *The Handbook of Media Audiences*. Ed. by Virginia Nightingale. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 425–443.
- Carpentier, Nico (2012). A Short Introduction to Trans-Politics and the Trans-Political. *Trans-Reality Television: The Transgression of Reality, Genre,*

- Politics, and Audience*. Ed. by Nico Carpentier and Sophie Van Bauwel. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Carter, Scott and Mankoff, Jennifer (2005). When Participants do the Capturing: The Role of Media in Diary Studies. *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems*. ACM, pp. 899–908.
- Castells, Manuel (2010). *The Rise Of The Network Society*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers.
- Cavicchi, Daniel (1998). *Tramps Like Us: Music and Meaning among Springsteen Fans*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chaney, Keidra and Leibler, Raizel (2007). Canon vs. Fanon: Folksonomies of Fan Culture. *Proceedings of Media in Transition 5: Creativity, Ownership and Collaboration in the Digital Age*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Chin, Bertha and Morimoto, Lori Hitchcock (2013). Towards a Theory of Transcultural Fandom. *Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies* 10.1, pp. 92–108.
- Chow, Yiu Fai and Kloet, Jeroen de (2008). The Production of Locality in Global Pop: A Comparative Study of Pop Fans in the Netherlands and Hong Kong. *Participations Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 5.2. URL: [http://www.participations.org/Volume%205/Issue%202/5\\_02\\_chowdekloet.htm](http://www.participations.org/Volume%205/Issue%202/5_02_chowdekloet.htm).
- Comaroff, Jean and Comaroff, John L (1999). Occult Economies and the Violence of Abstraction: Notes from the South African Postcolony. *American Ethnologist* 26.2, pp. 279–303.
- Couldry, Nick (2003a). Media Meta-capital: Extending the Range of Bourdieu's Field Theory. *Theory and Society* 32.5-6, pp. 653–677.
- (2003b). *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*. London: Routledge.
- (2005). Transvaluing Media Studies: Or, Beyond the Myth of the Mediated Centre. *Media and Cultural Theory*. Ed. by James Curran and David Morley. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 177–194.
- (2007). On the set of *The Sopranos*: 'Inside' a Fan's Construction of Nearness. *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*. Ed. by Jonathan Gray and Cornel Sandvoss and C. Lee Harrington. New York: New York University Press, pp. 139–148.

- Couldry, Nick (2010). Theorising Media as Practice. *Theorising Media and Practice*. Ed. by Birgit Brauchler and John Postill. New York: Berghahn Books. Chap. 1, pp. 35–54.
- Couldry, Nick and Hepp, Andreas (2016). *The Mediated Construction of Reality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Couldry, Nick and McCarthy, Anna (2004). *MediaSpace: Place, Scale and Culture in a Media Age*. London: Routledge.
- Cowling, Lesley (2006). South Africa. *Global Entertainment Media: Content, Audiences, Issues*. Ed. by Anne Cooper-Chen. New Jersey: Lawrence and Erlbaum Associates. Chap. 7.
- de Certeau, Michel (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- De Kloet, Jeroen and Van Zoonen, Liesbet (2007). Fan Culture-Performing Difference. *Media Studies: Key Issues And Debates*. Ed. by Eoin Devereux. London: Sage Publications. Chap. 14, pp. 322–341.
- De Kosnik, Abigail (2012). Fandom as Free Labor. *Digital Labor: The Internet as Playground and Factory*. Ed. by Trebor Scholz. New York: Routledge. Chap. 6.
- Denzin, Norman K (2001). The Reflexive Interview and a Performative Social Science. *Qualitative Research* 1.1, pp. 23–46.
- Dicks, Bella and Soyinka, Bambo and Coffey, Amanda (2006). Multimodal Ethnography. *Qualitative Research* 6.1, pp. 77–96.
- Dolby, Nadine (2006). Popular Culture and Public Space in Africa: The Possibilities of Cultural Citizenship. *African Studies Review* 49.3, pp. 31–47. ISSN: 00020206, 15552462. URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20065262>.
- Drushel, Bruce E (2013). Introduction: The Exemplar of Fan Culture. *Fan Phenomena: Star Trek*. Ed. by Bruce E Drushel. Bristol: Intellect Books. Chap. 1.
- Duffett, Mark (2013). *Understanding Fandom: An Introduction to the Study of Media Fan Culture*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Dyer, Richard (1997). White Routledge. New York.
- Eagleton, Terry and Bourdieu, Pierre (1992). Doxa and Common Life. *New Left Review* 191, pp. 111–121.



- Erdely, Jennifer L and Breede, Deborah Cunningham (2017). Tales from the Tailgate: The Influence of Fandom, Musical Tourism and Pilgrimage on Identity Transformations. *The Journal of Fandom Studies* 5.1, pp. 43–62.
- Falkof, Nicky (2015). *Satanism and family murder in late apartheid South Africa: Imagining the end of whiteness*. Springer.
- Fast, Karin and Örnebring, Henrik and Karlsson, Michael (2016). Metaphors of Free Labor: A Typology of Unpaid Work in the Media Sector. *Media, Culture & Society* 38.7, pp. 963–978.
- Fiske, John (1992). The Cultural Economy of Fandom. *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*. Ed. by Lisa Lewis. London: Routledge. Chap. 2, pp. 30–49.
- Fletcher, Marc (2010). 'You Must Support Chiefs; Pirates Already Have Two White Fans!': Race And Racial Discourse In South African Football Fandom. *Soccer & Society* 11.1-2, pp. 79–94.
- (2012). "'These Whites Never Come To Our Game. What Do They Know About Our Soccer?': Soccer Fandom, Race, And The Rainbow Nation In South Africa". PhD thesis. Edinburgh: The University of Edinburgh.
- Florida, Richard (2014). *The Rise of the Creative Class: Revisited*. New York: Basic Books.
- Foucault, Michel and Miskowiec, Jay (1986). Of Other Spaces. *Diacritics* 16.1, pp. 22–27.
- Galbraith, Patrick W (2010). Akihabara: Conditioning a Public" Otaku" Image. *Mechademia* 5.1, pp. 210–230.
- Gatson, Sarah N and Reid, Robin Anne (2011). Editorial: Race and ethnicity in fandom. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 8. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/392/252>.
- Gauntlett, David (2007). *Creative Explorations: New Approaches To Identities And Audiences*. Oxon: Taylor & Francis.
- Geraghty, Lincoln (2014a). *Cult Collectors*. Oxon: Routledge.
- (2014b). It's Not All About The Music: Online Fan Communities And Collecting Hard Rock Café Pins. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 16.

URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/492/438>.

- Giddens, Anthony (1981). *A Contemporary Critique Of Historical Materialism*. Berkeley: University of California Press of California Press.
- (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gill, Rosalind and Pratt, Andy (2008). In *The Social Factory? Immaterial Labour, Precariousness And Cultural Work*. *Theory, Culture & Society* 25.7-8, pp. 1–30.
- Goh, Robbie B.H. (2014). The Lord Of The Rings And New Zealand: Fantasy Pilgrimages, Imaginative Transnationalism And The Semiotics Of The (Ir)Real. *Social Semiotics* 24.3, pp. 263–282.
- Gray, Jonathan Alan and Sandvoss, Cornel and Harrington, C. Lee, eds. (2007a). *Fandom: Identities And Communities In A Mediated World*. New York: New York University Press.
- (2007b). Introduction: Why Study Fans? *Fandom: Identities And Communities In A Mediated World*. Ed. by Jonathan Alan Gray and Cornel Sandvoss and C. Lee Harrington. New York: New York University Press. Chap. 1.
- Gregg, Melissa (2009). Learning to (Love) Labour: Production Cultures and the Affective Turn. *Communication & Critical/Cultural Studies* 6.2, pp. 209–214.
- Hannerz, Ulf (1996). *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. London: Routledge.
- Harrington, C Lee and Bielby, Denise D (2005). Global Television Distribution Implications of TV ‘Traveling’ for Viewers, Fans, and Texts. *American Behavioral Scientist* 48.7, pp. 902–920.
- (2007). Global Fandom / Global Fan Studies. *Fandom: Identities And Communities In A Mediated World*. Ed. by Jonathan Alan Gray and Cornel Sandvoss and C. Lee Harrington. New York: New York University Press. Chap. 13, pp. 179–197.
- (2010a). A Life Course Perspective On Fandom. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13.5, pp. 429–450.

- (2010b). Autobiographical Reasoning In Long-Term Fandom. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 5. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/209/176>.
- Hassan, Nedim (2013). Hidden Fans: Fandom and Domestic Musical Activity. *Popular Music Fandom: Identities, Roles and Practices*. Ed. by Mark Duffett. Routledge. Chap. 4, pp. 55–71.
- Haupt, Adam (2010). *Stealing Empire: P2P, Intellectual Property And Hip-Hop Subversion*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Hellekson, Karen and Busse, Kristina (2006). Introduction: Work In Progress. *Fan Fiction And Fan Communities In The Age Of The Internet: New Essays*. Ed. by Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse. North Carolina: McFarland. Chap. 1.
- Hepp, Andreas (2010). Researching 'Mediatized Worlds': Non-Mediacentric Media And Communication Research As A Challenge. *Media And Communication Studies Interventions And Intersections: The Intellectual Work Of The 2010 Ecrea European Media And Communication Doctoral Summer School*. Ed. by Nico Carpentier et al. Tartu: Tartu University Press, pp. 37–50.
- Hermes, Joke (2009). Audience Studies 2.0. On The Theory, Politics And Method Of Qualitative Audience Research. *Interactions: Studies in Communication & Culture* 1.1, pp. 111–127.
- Hesmondhalgh, David (2010). User-Generated Content, Free Labour And The Cultural Industries. *Ephemera* 10.3/4, pp. 267–284.
- Hesmondhalgh, David and Baker, Sarah (2008). Creative Work And Emotional Labour In The Television Industry. *Theory, Culture & Society* 25.7–8, pp. 97–118.
- Hills, Matt (2002a). *Fan Cultures*. London: Routledge.
- (2002b). Transcultural Otaku: Japanese Representation Of Fandom And Representation Of Japan In Anime/Manga Fan Cultures. *Media in Transision 2: Globalisation and Convergence Conference*. MIT. Cambridge, Mass: MIT.
- (2005). Negative Fan Stereotypes ("Get a Life!") and Positive Fan Injunctions ("Everyone's Got To Be a Fan of Something!"): Returning to Hegemony Theory in Fan Studies. *Spectator* 25.1, pp. 35–47.

- Hills, Matt (2014). From Dalek Half Balls To Daft Punk Helmets: Mimetic Fandom And The Crafting Of Replicas. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 16. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/531/448>.
- Hills, Matthew (2001). Virtually Out There. *Technospaces*. Ed. by Sally Munt. London: Continuum. Chap. 9, pp. 147–160.
- Hine, Christine (2000). *Virtual Ethnography*. London Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Hodges, Amanda L and Richmond, Laurel P (2011). Taking A Bite Out Of 'Buffy': Carnavalesque Play And Resistance In Fan Fiction. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 7. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/265/231>.
- Hollington, Andrea et al. (2015). *Concepts of the Global South*. Global South Studies Center Cologne.
- Holstein, James A and Gubrium, Jaber F (1995). *The Active Interview The Active Interview The Active Interview*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- ICASA (2002, February). SA Content Position Paper and Regulations.
- Imre, Anikó (2009). *Identity Games: Globalization And The Transformation Of Media Cultures In The New Europe*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Ito, Mizuko (2010). The Rewards Of Non-Commercial Production: Distinctions And Status In The Anime Music Video Scene. *First Monday* 15.5. URL: <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2968/2528>.
- (2017). Ethics of Fansubbing in Anime's Hybrid Public Culture. *Fandom, Second Edition: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*. Ed. by J. Gray and C. Sandvoss and C.L. Harrington. 2nd edn. NYU Press. Chap. 20, pp. 333–353.
- Iwabuchi, Koichi (2002). *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture And Japanese Transnationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Jacobs, Sean (2010). 'It Wasn't That I Did Not Like South African Football': Media, History And Biography. *Soccer & Society* 11.1/2, pp. 95–104.

- Jancovich, Mark (2002). Cult Fictions: Cult Movies, Subcultural Capital And The Production Of Cultural Distinctions. *Cultural Studies* 16.2, pp. 306–322.
- Jenkins, Henry (1992). *Textual Poachers : Television Fans & Participatory Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old And New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press.
- (n.d.). Who the &# Is Henry Jenkins? Weblog. URL: <http://henryjenkins.org/aboutmehtml/>.
- Jenson, Joli (1992). Fandom As Pathology: The Consequences Of Characterization. *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture And Popular Media*. Ed. by Lisa Lewis. London: Routledge. Chap. 1, pp. 9–29.
- Johnston, Jessica Elizabeth (2015). Doctor Who-Themed Weddings And The Performance Of Fandom. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 18. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/637/507>.
- Jongh, Santie de (2013). Anarchy In The Archive Again: An Account Of A South African Punk Rock Music Collection. *Fontes Artis Musicae*, pp. 63–75.
- Kolb, Bettina (2008). Involving, Sharing, Analysing: Potential of the Participatory Photo Interview. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 9.3. URL: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1155>.
- Kraidy, Marwan (2005). *Hybridity, Or The Cultural Logic Of Globalization*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Kustritz, Anne (2015). Transnationalism, Localization, And Translation In European Fandom: Fan Studies As Global Media And Audience Studies. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 19. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/682/517>.
- Kytölä, Samu (2016). Translocality. *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Digital Communication*. Ed. by A. Georgakopoulou and T. Spilioti. Abingdon: Routledge. Chap. 23, pp. 371–388.

- Lamerichs, Nicolle (2010). Stranger Than Fiction: Fan Identity In Cosplay. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 7. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/682/517>.
- Lee, Hye-Kyung (2011). Participatory Media Fandom: A Case Study Of Anime Fansubbing. *Media, Culture & Society* 33.8, pp. 1131–1147.
- (2014). Transnational Cultural Fandom. *The Ashgate Research Companion to Fan Cultures*. Ed. by Stijn Reijnders and Koos Zwaan and Linda Duits. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing. Chap. 14, pp. 195–207.
- Lessig, Lawrence (2004). *Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology And The Law To Lock Down Culture And Control Creativity*. New York: Penguin.
- Liang, Lawrence (2005). Porous Legalities And Avenues Of Participation. *Sarai Reader 2005: Bare Acts* 5, pp. 6–17. URL: <http://sarai.net/sarai-reader-05-bare-acts/>.
- (2009). Piracy, Creativity and Infrastructure: Rethinking Access to Culture. *Alternative Law Forum*. URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1436229> (visited on ).
- Liebes, Tamar and Katz, Elihu (1993). *The Export Of Meaning : Cross-Cultural Readings Of Dallas*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Lobato, Ramon (2008). The Six Faces Of Piracy: Global Media Distribution From Below. *The Business of Entertainment*. Ed. by Robert C Siekels. Vol. 1: Movies. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger. Chap. 2, pp. 15–36.
- Lovell, Nadia (2005). Introduction. *Locality and Belonging*. Ed. by Nadia Lovell. London: Routledge, pp. 1–22.
- Mapaya, Madimabe Geoff and Mabaca Malinga, Joe and Thobejane, Tsoaledi Daniel (2014). The Anatomy of the South African Jazz Appreciation Societies. *Journal of Social Sciences* 39.1, pp. 59–65.
- Markham, Tim and Couldry, Nick (2007). Tracking the Reflexivity of the (Dis)Engaged Citizen Some Methodological Reflections. *Qualitative Inquiry* 13.5, pp. 675–695.
- Maton, Karl (2014). Habitus. *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*. Ed. by Michael James Grenfell. Stocksfield: Acumen. Chap. 3, pp. 49–66.
- McGee, Jennifer (2012). Discipline and Post : Foucault and “Weeaboo Horror Stories” on the Internet. *Aichi Shukutoku University. Graduate*

- School of Global Culture and Communications* 4, pp. 49–61. URL: <http://id.nii.ac.jp/0192/00001106>.
- McKay, Deirdre (2004). Everyday Places–Philippine Place-Making and the Translocal Quotidian. *Everyday Transformations: The Twenty-First Century Quotidian*. Cultural Studies Association of Australasia (CSAA) Conference. Murdoch University.
- (2006). Translocal Circulation: Place And Subjectivity In An Extended Filipino Community. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 7.3, pp. 265–278.
- Metz, Christian (1975). The Imaginary Signifier. *Screen* 16.2, pp. 14–76.
- Meyrowitz, Joshua (1985). *No Sense Of Place: The Impact Of Electronic Media On Social Behavior*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Moore, Shaun (2005). *Media/ Theory: Thinking About Media And Communications*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Morimoto, Lori Hitchcock and Chin, Bertha (2017). Reimagining the Imagined Community: Online Media Fandoms in the Age of Global Convergence. *Fandom, Second Edition: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*. Ed. by J. Gray and C. Sandvoss and C.L. Harrington. 2nd. New York University Press. Chap. 10, pp. 174–188.
- Morley, David (2002). *Home Territories: Media, Mobility And Identity*. London: Routledge.
- (2007). *Media, Modernity And Technology: The Geography Of The New*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Mosco, Vincent (2009). *The Political Economy of Communication*. 2nd edn. London: Sage Publications.
- Mothobi, Onkokame and Chair, Chenai and Rademan, Broc (2017). *SADC not Bridging the Digital Divide*. Tech. rep. Research ICT Africa. URL: [https://researchictafrica.net/polbrf/Research\\_ICT\\_Africa\\_Policy\\_Briefs/2017\\_Policy\\_Brief\\_6\\_SADC.pdf](https://researchictafrica.net/polbrf/Research_ICT_Africa_Policy_Briefs/2017_Policy_Brief_6_SADC.pdf).
- Murphy, Patrick D (2011). Locating Media Ethnography. *The Handbook of Media Audiences*. Ed. by Virginia Nightingale. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. Chap. 19, pp. 380–400.



- Negus, Keith (2002). The Work Of Cultural Intermediaries And The Enduring Distance Between Production And Consumption. *Cultural Studies* 16.4, pp. 501–515.
- Nell, Victor (1988). *Lost In A Book: The Psychology Of Reading For Pleasure*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Orgeret, Kristin Skare (2004). Unifying and Dividing Processes in National Media: The Janus Face of South Africa. *Critical Arts: A South-North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies* 18.1, pp. 147–162.
- (2014). From ‘The Devil in the Black Box’ to a Nation-Building Tool. *Modernization, Nation-Building, and Television History*. Ed. by Melissa Chakars Stewart Anderson. New York: Routledge. Chap. 10, pp. 187–208.
- Oyedemi, Toks Dele (2012). Digital Inequalities And Implications For Social Inequalities: A Study Of Internet Penetration Amongst University Students In South Africa. *Telematics and Informatics* 29.3, pp. 302–313.
- Parkin, David (2005). Foreword. *Locality and Belonging*. Ed. by Nadia Lovell. London: Routledge, pp. x–xiv.
- Peaslee, Robert and El-Khoury, Jessica and Liles, Ashley (2013). The Media Festival Volunteer: Connecting Online And On-Ground Fan Labor. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 15. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/502>.
- Perks, Lisa Glebatis (2015). *Media Marathoning: Immersions In Morality*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Phillips, Whitney (2015). *This Is Why We Can’t Have Nice Things: Mapping The Relationship Between Online Trolling And Mainstream Culture*. Cambridge, Mass: Mit Press.
- Pieterse, Jan (2009). *Globalization And Culture: Global Mélange*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pink, Sarah (2011). Multimodality, Multisensoriality And Ethnographic Knowing: Social Semiotics And The Phenomenology Of Perception. *Qualitative Research* 11.3, pp. 261–276.
- Porter, Jennifer E (2004). Pilgrimage And The Idic Ethic: Exploring Star Trek Convention Attendance As Pilgrimage. *Intersecting Journeys: The*



- Anthropology Of Pilgrimage And Tourism*. Ed. by Ellen Badone and Sharon Roseman. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. Chap. 9, pp. 160–179.
- Postill, John (2010). Introduction: Theorising Media and Practice. *Theorising media and practice*. Ed. by Birgit Brauchler and John Postill. New York: Berghahn Books. Chap. 1, pp. 1–34.
- Pradhan, Jinni (2010). “It’s My Passion, That’s My Mission to Decide, I’m Going Worldwide: the Cosmopolitanism of Global Fans of Japanese Popular Culture”. PhD thesis. Amherst: University of Massachusetts.
- Rajagopalan, Sudha (2011). Shahrukh Khan as media text: celebrity, identity and emotive engagement in a Russian online community. *Celebrity Studies* 2.3, pp. 263–276.
- Rambukkana, Nathan (2007). Is Slash An Alternative Medium? ‘Queer’ Heterotopias And The Role Of Autonomous Media Spaces In Radical World Building. *Affinities: A Journal of Radical Theory, Culture, and Action* 1.1. URL: <https://ojs.library.queensu.ca/index.php/affinities/article/view/6164>.
- Ramrathen, Trisha (2015). “Rise of the Otaku: Investigating the Anime Fandom in South Africa”. PhD thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Rehak, Bob (2007). *On Fanification*. URL: <https://graphic-engine.swarthmore.edu/fanification/>.
- Rheingold, Howard (2008). Using Participatory Media And Public Voice To Encourage Civic Engagement. *Civic Life Online: Learning how Digital Media Can Engage Youth*. Ed. by W. Lance Bennett. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Chap. 5, pp. 97–118.
- Robertson, Shanthi K (2008). Cultural Probes In Transmigrant Research: A Case Study. *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 4.2. URL: <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1f68p0f8>.
- Schieferdecker, David (2017). When Audience Segmentation is Twofold: Differences in Media Consumption Along Race And Socio-Economic Background at a South African University. *African Journalism Studies* 38.1, pp. 129–151.
- Schieferdecker, David and Wessler, Hartmut (2017). Bridging Segregation Via Media Exposure? Ingroup Identification, Outgroup Distance,

- and Low Direct Contact Reduce Outgroup Appearance in Media Repertoires. *Journal of Communication* 67.6, pp. 993–1014.
- Schimmel, Kimberly S. and Harrington, C. Lee and Bielby, Denise D. (2007). Keep Your Fans to Yourself: The Disjuncture between Sport Studies' and Pop Culture Studies' Perspectives on Fandom. *Sport in Society* 10.4, pp. 580–600.
- Seekings, Jeremy (2008). The Continuing Salience Of Race: Discrimination And Diversity In South Africa. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 26.1, pp. 1–25.
- Shefrin, Elana (2004). Lord Of The Rings, Star Wars, And Participatory Fandom: Mapping New Congruencies Between The Internet And Media Entertainment Culture. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21.3, pp. 261–281.
- Shen, Lien Fan (2015). Traversing Otaku Fantasy: Representation of the Otaku Subject, Gaze and Fantasy in Otaku no Video. *Debating Otaku in Contemporary Japan: Historical Perspectives and New Horizons*, p. 73.
- Shimpach, Shawn (2005). Working Watching: The Creative And Cultural Labor Of The Media Audience. *Social Semiotics* 15.3, pp. 343–360.
- Smit, Alexia (2016). Intimacy, Identity and Home: 40 years of South African Television. *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research* 42.4, pp. 1–10.
- Spracklen, Karl (2013). *Whiteness and leisure*. Springer.
- Statistics South Africa (2017). *Living conditions of households in South Africa*. Statistical release Ref P0310. Statistics South Africa.
- Stein, Louisa Ellen (2015). *Millennial Fandom: Television Audiences in the Transmedia Age*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.
- Stein, Louisa et al. (2014). Spreadable Media: Creating Value And Meaning In A Networked Culture. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 17. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/633/451>.
- Storey, John (2009). *Cultural Theory And Popular Culture: An Introduction*. 5th. London: Pearson-Longman.
- Strelitz, Larry (2001). Global Media/ Local Meanings. *Communicatio* 27.2, pp. 49–56.

- Strelitz, Larry (2002). Media Consumption And Identity Formation: The Case Of The 'Homeland' Viewers. *Media, Culture & Society* 24.4, pp. 459–480.
- (2003). Where The Global Meets The Local: South African Youth And Their Experience Of Global Media. *Global Media Studies: An Ethnographic Perspective*. Ed. by Marwan Kraidy and Patrick D Murphy. New York: Routledge. Chap. 13, pp. 234–256.
- (2004). Against Cultural Essentialism: Media Reception among South African Youth. *Media, Culture & Society* 26.5, pp. 625–641.
- Tager, Michele (1997). Identification And Interpretation: The Bold And The Beautiful And The Urban Black Viewer In KwaZulu-Natal. *Critical Arts* 11.1-2, pp. 95–119.
- Tal-Or, Nurit and Cohen, Jonathan (2010). Understanding Audience Involvement: Conceptualizing And Manipulating Identification And Transportation. *Poetics* 38.4, pp. 402–418.
- Théberge, Paul (2006). Everyday Fandom: Fan Clubs, Blogging, And The Quotidian Rhythms Of The Internet. *Canadian Journal of Communication* 30.4. URL: <http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/1673/1810>.
- Tulloch, John and Jenkins, Henry (1995). *Science fiction audiences: watching Doctor Who and Star Trek*. New York: Routledge.
- Turk, Tisha (2013). Fan Work: Labor, Worth, And Participation In Fandom's Gift Economy. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 15. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/518/428>.
- van Staden, Cobus (2017). Watching Hong Kong Martial Arts Film Under Apartheid. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 29.1, pp. 46–62.
- Wanzo, Rebecca (2015). African American acafandom and other strangers: New genealogies of fan studies. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 20.
- Weiss, Brad (2002). Thug Realism: Inhabiting Fantasy In Urban Tanzania. *Cultural Anthropology* 17.1, pp. 93–124.
- Wilkinson, Lili (2011). Nerdfighters, 'Paper Towns', And Heterotopias. *Transformative Works and Cultures* 10. URL: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/374/301>.

- Williams, Raymond (1977). *Marxism And Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Woo, Benjamin (2012). Alpha Nerds: Cultural Intermediaries In A Sub-cultural Scene. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 15.5, pp. 659–676.
- Zubernis, Lynn and Larsen, Katherine (2014). Introduction. *Fan Phenomena: Supernatural*. Ed. by Lynn Zubernis and Katherine Larsen. Bristol: Intellect Books.

## CREATIVE WORKS CITED

---

- Adams, Douglas (1978). *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. BBC.
- (1979). *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. London: Pan Books.
- Ben G Geldenhuys, Danelle Malan (Last updated December 2017). *Cotton Star*. Self published web comic.
- Canales, Juan Díaz and Guarnido, Juanjo (2000). *Blacksad: Somewhere Within the Shadows*. Dargaud.
- (2003). *Blacksad: Arctic Nation*. Dargaud.
  - (2005). *Blacksad: Red Soul*. Dargaud.
  - (2010). *Blacksad: A Silent Hell*. Dargaud.
  - (2013). *Blacksad: Amarillo*. Dargaud.
- Meyer, Stephenie (2005). *Twilight*. USA: Little Brown.
- (2006). *New Moon*. USA: Little Brown.
  - (2007). *Eclipse*. USA: Little Brown.
  - (2008). *Breaking Dawn*. USA: Little Brown.
- Rowling, JK (1997). *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Bloomsbury.
- (1998). *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. London: Bloomsbury.
  - (1999). *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. London: Bloomsbury.
  - (2000). *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. London: Bloomsbury.
  - (2003). *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. London: Bloomsbury.
  - (2005). *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. London: Bloomsbury.
  - (2007). *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Tolkien, JRR (1937). *The Hobbit*. UK: George Allen & Unwin.
- (1939). *On Fairy Stories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
  - (1954a). *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. UK: George Allen & Unwin.
  - (1954b). *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. UK: George Allen & Unwin.
  - (1955). *Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. UK: George Allen & Unwin.

Tolkien, JRR (1977). *Silmarillion*. UK: George Allen & Unwin.

#### TELEVISION

*Adventure Time*. 2007 - present. Created by Ward, Pendleton. Cartoon Network.

*Agents of Shield*. 2013 - present. Created by Joss Whedon Jed Whedon, Maurissa Tancharoen. Marvel Television.

*Arrow*. 2012 - present. Created by Greg Berlanti Marc Guggenheim, Andrew Kreisberg. Warner Bros Television.

*Big Bang Theory*. 2007 - present. Created by Chuck Lorre, Bill Prady. Warner Bros Television.

*Biker Mice from Mars*. 1993 - 1996. Created by Ungar, Rick. Marvel Productions.

*Chicago PD*. 2014 - present. Created by Wolf, Dick and Olmstead, Matt. Universal Television.

*Dallas*. 1978 - 1991. Created by Jacobs, David. Lorimar.

*Dark Angel*. 2000 - 2002. Created by James Camero, Charles H. Eglee. 20th Century Fox.

*Doctor Who*. 1963 - present. Created by Sydney Newman C. E. Webber, Donald Wilson. BBC.

*Game of Thrones*. 2011 - present. Created by David Benioff, D. B. Weiss. Warner Bros Television.

*Hannibal*. 2013 - 2015. Created by Fuller, Bryan. Gaumont International Television.

*Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*. 1993 - present. Created by Saban, Haim. Fox Kinds.

*Naruto*. 2002 - 2007. Created by Date, Hayato. TXN Tokyo.

*Naruto: Shippuden*. 2007 - 2017. Created by Date, Hayato. TXN Tokyo.

*Neighbours*. 1985 - present. Created by Watson, Reg. Freemantle Media.

*Sherlock*. 2010 - present. Created by Gatiss, Mark and Moffat, Steven. BBC.

- Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. 1993 - 1999. Created by Berman, Rick and Piller, Michael. Paramount Domestic Television.
- Star Trek: Enterprise*. 2001 - 2005. Created by Berman, Rick and Braga, Brannon. Paramount Domestic Television.
- Star Trek: The Next Generation*. 1987 - 1994. Created by Roddenberry, Gene. Paramount Domestic Television.
- Star Trek: The Original Series*. 1966-1969. Created by Roddenberry, Gene. Paramount Domestic Television.
- Star Trek: Voyager*. 1995 - 2001. Created by Berman, Rick and Piller, Michael. Paramount Domestic Television.
- Star Trek: Discovery*. 2017 - present. Created by Fuller, Bryan and Kurtzman, Alex. CBS Television Studios.
- Supernatural*. 2005 - 2017. Created by Kripke, Eric. Warner Bros Television.
- Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. 1987 - 1996. Created by David Wise, Patti Howeth. Lionsgate Home Entertainment.
- The 100*. 2014 - 2017. Created by Rothenberg, Jason. Warner Bros Television.
- The Bold and the Beautiful*. 1987 - present. Created by Bell, William J and Bell, Lee Phillip. Bell-Phillip Television Productions.
- The Sopranos*. 1999 - 2007. Created by Chase, Davis. HBO Entertainment.
- Twin Peaks*. 1990 - 1991. Created by Lynch, David and Frost, Mark. Lynch Frost Productions.
- Twin Peaks: The Return*. 2017. Created by Lynch, David and Frost, Mark. Lynch Frost Productions.

#### FILM

- A Clockwork Orange*. 1971. Directed by Kubrick, Stanley. Warner Bros.
- Captain America: The Winter Soldier*. 2014. Directed by Russo, Anthony and Russo, Joe. Marvel Studios.
- Cassablanca*. 1942. Directed by Curtiz, Michael. Warner Bros.

- Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. 2004. Directed by Columbus, Chris. Warner Bros.
- Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1*. 2010. Directed by Yates, David. Warner Bros.
- Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*. 2011. Directed by Yates, David. Warner Bros.
- Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. 2004. Directed by Newell, Mike. Warner Bros.
- Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. 2009. Directed by Yates, David. Warner Bros.
- Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. 2007. Directed by Yates, David. Warner Bros.
- Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. 2001. Directed by Columbus, Chris. Warner Bros.
- Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. 2005. Directed by Cuarón, Alfonso. Warner Bros.
- Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. 2001. Directed by Jackson, Peter. WingNut Films.
- Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*. 2003. Directed by Jackson, Peter. WingNut Films.
- Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. 2002. Directed by Jackson, Peter. WingNut Films.
- The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. 2005. Directed by Jennings, Garth. Touchstone Pictures.
- The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*. 2012. Directed by Jackson, Peter. WingNut Films.
- The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*. 2014. Directed by Jackson, Peter. WingNut Films.
- The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*. 2013. Directed by Jackson, Peter. WingNut Films.
- The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. 1975. Directed by Sharman, Jim. 20th Century Fox.
- The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn (Part 1)*. 2011. Directed by Condon, Bill. Summit Entertainment.



*The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn (Part 2)*. 2012. Directed by Condon, Bill. Summit Entertainment.

*The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*. 2010. Directed by Slade, David. Summit Entertainment.

*The Twilight Saga: New Moon*. 2009. Directed by Weitz, Chris. Summit Entertainment.

*Twilight*. 2008. Directed by Hardwicke, Catherine. Summit Entertainment.

#### DIGITAL GAMES

*Clash of Clans*. 2012/ 2013. .

*Gears of War*. 2006 - 2016. Epic Games.

*Half-Life*. 1998 - 2007. Valve Corporation.

*Halo*. 2001 - 2017. Bungie.

*Mass Effect*. 2007 - 2017. BioWare.

*Skyrim (The Elder Scrolls IV)*. 2011 - 2016. Bethesda Game Studios.

*World of Warcraft*. 2004 - present. Blizzard Entertainment.

## APPENDICES

---

### A.1 TABULATED ACTIVITY DIARY ENTRIES

| Kelga  |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Crafting No-Face cosplay for Sunday rAge 2014                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Weekdays are night, weekends mostly whole day for 5 weeks                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | About 3, 4 hours a night, 8 hours on weekends                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home or a friend's house, we craft our cosplays together.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Will provide images for work in progress pics                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | rAge weekend, cosplay orientated photographer for lazy gamer and also cosplaying                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Whole of Saturday and Sunday, Saturday night was a cosplayers meet up at Monte Casino                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 8am to 11pm on Saturday. 9:30am to 5pm on Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Coca-Cola Dome, Monte                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Went as press for Lazygamer.net, a cosplay-orientated photographer on Saturday and Sunday. Cosplayed as Light Yagami from Death Note on Saturday and No-Face from Spirited Away on Sunday for the competition, placed 4th in the Anime Category. |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | rAge photos editing and uploading to my KELGA Creation FB page                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Every night the week after rAge                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 3,4 hours for 4 days                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At the office                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Stay at the office after working hours till 8,9 everyday to use the work pc and internet to work on the photos. After completion, shared the photos with Lazygamer and they created an article about the cosplays at rAge with my photos         |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | Picnic and Photography session for cosplayers in Jhb                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Sunday morning to early afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 10Am- 3PM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Walter Sisulu Botanical Garden                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Photographers and cosplayers come together, encouraging new photographers to join, few were new. Team up in groups, and regroup and choose different people, so everyone has opportunities to work with different people |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Photos from picnic and photography session for cosplayers in JHB                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Night after working hours                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 3,4 hours for 3 days                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At the office                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Designing Cover banner image for South Africa's League of Legends Cosplay FB group                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Thursday Night                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 2,3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | See attached image for work in progress pic                                                                                                                                                                              |

## Gumi

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | 26 Sep 2014. Carved prop for Soraka cosplay, started making petticoat for Panty cosplay, watched anime and Japanese movie                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon 'til evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Prop- 1hr, Petticoat -1hr, Anime -1.5hrs, Movie -2hrs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home, specifically in bedroom                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Prop for Soraka (from pc game league of legends) carved out of expanding foam- will become the top of her staff. Trying new method of making a petticoat- learned from cosplay friend (loved how she made hers & she sent a link for a tutorial she used). Continued watching anime called mirai nikki (storyline is getting good enough to ignore violence). Watched Bugmaster, an adaption of Mushishi. I really loved the anime, which I finished recently, then found out about the live action movie and got it from a friend. Different to anime but I loved it. |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | 27 Sep 2014. Continued work on petticoat, primed and painted Soraka vest & Panty's 7 rings, watched anime and animated movie. Contacted customers regarding Perler creations Facebook cosplay fan page management.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Throughout the day, morning until early evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Petticoat- 30mins, Prime & paint - 2hrs, Anime - 20 mins, Animated Movie- 2hrs, Perler sales- 30 mins, Fan page Management- 45 mins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home again, mostly in my bedroom. Occasionally using Facebook in different parts of the house.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Petticoat requires a lot of tulle and ruffles, also hemmed the circle skirt that'll be the base for it, Primed craft foam air dry clay with cold glue, then painted with acrylic paint. Watched part of Puella Magicka Something Something, really confusing because the movies seemed to be an omnibus of the series? Not sure. Should probably Google it. Also watched a movie called The Children Who Chase Lost Voices- which was sad but had a great storyline. Contacted customers about items in stock and about their orders being ready for collection at rAge. Posted progress pictures on Facebook fan page and scheduled posts for 100 likes or less project and more progress.                                            |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | 28Sep 2014. Browsed deviant art, played video games discussion on voice acting & race in games, watched Dota games                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Morning to afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Deviant art- 30 mins, Discussion- 1.5 hrs., Video games- 4hrs, Watched Dota- 15mins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Boyfriend's house                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I follow multiple crafters and cosplayers on deviant art that I enjoy seeing but also use it as a form of inspiration for future cosplays and a way to find new anime/games through cosplays and fan art. Played star Craft 2, a strategy game, with boyfriend- taking turns by playing different story line chapters. Very enjoyable but he sometimes gets frustrated because I have little intention to learn the —? -Which speeds up playing. Discussed voice acting and race in games, game developers occasionally ignore consumers wanting games in Japanese with subs. Race in games is usually unbalanced, not representative of the world. I enjoy watching my boyfriend play DOTA when I am too tired to do anything myself. |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | 29 Sep 2014. Played games. Watched Movie. Worked on cosplay. Watched cartoon. Checked friend's cosplay progress. Posted on Facebook                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Morning. Early evening- late evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Games- 1.5hrs, Movie -2.5hrs, Work on cosplay- 1.5, Facebook- 1hr, Cartoon- 2.5hrs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home. Boyfriends house (for morning)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Continued playing StarCraft with boyfriend, getting better at —? From reminders from boyfriend. Watched Maleficent, replayed some of my favourite scenes. Drew a picture based on Diaval's horse form. Worked on cosplay, finished top of one cosplay and worked on small details. So close to finishing but lazy and reluctant to work on petticoat. Regularly check Facebook to see cosplays of international people but also friend's progress and to talk to cosplay friends. Started watching The Legend of Kora, the second season from the avatar series. Enjoying it so far but don't like any characters enough to consider cosplaying any of them.                                                                           |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | 30 Sept 2014. Worked on some cosplay                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 2hr                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Worked Friday cosplay for rAge expo. Commissioned faun horns and antlers from local crafter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | 1 Oct 2014. Finished Friday cosplay                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Late afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 3hr (cosplay), 1hr (drawing)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home (some drawing at university)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Finished all costume elements started on props. Drew fanart of Syndra from League of Legends                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | 2 - 9 Oct 2014. Worked on Saturday and Sunday cosplay as well as props. Played games. Attended pre-rAge get together.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon and evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Approx. 2 hrs. a day. Full day crafting on the 8th. Gaming 4hrs a day.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home. Boyfriend's House (gaming)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Playing a lot of StarCraft and some Guild Wars 2. Completed all cosplays before deadline except for prop for Friday cosplay, as they were optional. Pre-rAge get together for cosplayers who travelled from other parts of SA to chill, talk and share a meal                                                                          |
| Item 8 | ACTIVITY               | 10 - 12 Oct 2014. Attended rAge for full weekend in cosplay. Post rAge meet at Monte Casino                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Morning to early evening all 3 days                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Roughly 30hrs over the weekend. 3hrs for post rage meet.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Coca-Cola Dome (JHB). Monte Casino.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Spent time in artist alley selling Perl's and my friends wigs, lenses and cosplay accessories. Purchased various geeky items such as stick-ers, a katana umbrella, wall scroll and badges. Exchanged cosplay cards with people, met lots of new cosplayers. Had small photo shoots. Ate dinner at Monte with group of cosplay friends. |
| Item 9 | ACTIVITY               | 16 - 20 Oct 2014. Gaming. Cosplay Photo-shoot.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Gaming all day. Photo-shoot- late morning till early afternoon.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Gaming approx. 8 hours a day. Photo-shoot. 5 Hours.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Boyfriends house. Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Played and finished StarCraft Heart of the Swarm, Played a lot of Guild wars 2, mostly edge of the mists (world vs. world). Had a cosplay photo-shoot, about 3-5 cosplayers per photographers, went off a take pictures. Had a bit of fun but feet got blisters! The things we do for cosplay"                                         |

---

### KimberlyHart

---

|        |                |                                                    |
|--------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY       | Nightly catch-up sesh and some IMDB                |
|        | TIME OF DAY    | 10Pm - Bed                                         |
|        | TIME TAKEN     | 3 Hrs.                                             |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU | Fortress of solitude! My Mel Cave. My Bedroom haha |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Same nightly routine - laptop on - UTorrent open, PirateBay open download any movie/ show of the day. Already had Chicago PD finished and downloaded. Now to continue with The 100 my newest fave show. Watched Chicago PD followed by The 100 10th epi of 13. Then decided to do some searching on The 100 actors on IMDB read up, blog etc. Watched some fan vids for                                                          |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Fanfiction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 30mins- but it is intermittent cause I read a bit then do work. Read more                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Office at work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I do my routine check of my emails and Yay! Update for a CPD (Chicago PD) story I like. Finished reading it - it's a crossover story sorta with Chicago Fire - its sister show! Two of my favourite characters Det Erin Lindsey and Kelly Severide both acted in shows I loved. Sophia Bush also huge fan of because of OTH (on the hill) and amazing awareness of her impact on fans - BTW did Facebook likes for Stephen Amell |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Fanfiction for the win                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 10am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Whole day                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | My boss was away and I was waiting on more work. After watching the episode of the 100 I got into my 100 mode fanfiction. Every and anything to do with two characters Bellamy and Clarke+ Bellark fan - always start off looking for the in-progress - more than 30k words. Managed to read all (illegible)                                                                                                                     |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | Saturday fandom vids                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 10pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME TAKEN             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Lying in my bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Laptop on PJ's on - fandom 100 - surprisingly super addicted to the 100 now. I will definitely be depro after this week cause only 1 episode left - till next season. Been tempted to write again for the show. Bellark fan vids - maybe make scene as well. Bell and Clark actors both Aussie from 2 of my favourite Aussie soaps.                                                                                              |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Morning routine download king                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 5am woke up                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | an hr.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | in bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Routine download morning. Last night the 100's last episode for the season. Download! Then checked for updates in my email. Read a Chicago PD one                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | fanfic the 100                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 4:45am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | TIME TAKEN             | varies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Fanfiction.com - so I might be a little obsessive about the show. More Blake Bellarche. PS just watched the finale ohhh...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | Ollie and Felicity fanfiction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 7pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 1-2 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | in bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | So I follow Emily Brett Rickards who plays Felicity on Arrow and Stephen Amel who plays Green Arrow. So I constantly find myself watching and reading stuff, liking their posts so therefore I read a lot of their characters {together?} fanfiction - so far (Antfa?) is my favourite author of them as well as an Unexpected Life?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Item 8 | ACTIVITY               | the 100 series finale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 10pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | in bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Item 9 | ACTIVITY               | Last write in                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | few minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I realised I may not have documented as much as I thought. I felt a bit hampered or time constrained to document every moment I did fandom. Which I do constantly so to stop my fandom moments felt consuming so I apologise. But the days I have written are basically what I do every single day. There is not a day where fanfiction does not pass my eyes - I consume it at a fast rate like right now my fanfiction is buffy and angle pairing but as I head into season 4 I find it is Buffy really. As usually my first step is to find longer than 40000 word fan stories and consume them until I need to lower my numbers. |

## Idril

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Reading an academic essay written by Tolkien entitled Beowulf the Monsters and Critics"                                                                                               |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 15:00-16:00                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | An Hour                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | I decided to go to a coffee shop and enjoy an hour of me time"                                                                                                                        |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Today is my last day of maternity leave and therefore decided to leave baby with nanny for an hour to enjoy some time alone. A good glass of wine and Tolkien essay is my best spoil" |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Annotating my new Kindle edition Silmarillion                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 23:00-00:30                                                                                                                                                                           |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Hour and a half                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | In bed, feeding my baby                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I have recently downloaded an electric copy of the Silmarillion and slowly annotating it as I read. As I have a Kindle without a keyboard (You have to toggle between letters). This is very time consuming, but enjoyable as I can share my highlights online. |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Watching HP movies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 06:00- 13:30                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 7 _ h                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | At home with baby, husband sick in bed so I had living room to myself. Put on HP movies marathon style whilst seeing to little one's needs. I ended with Prisoner of Azkaban and decided to re-read Goblet of Fire.\                                            |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | Annotating Kindle edition Silmarillion                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 03:00am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | About 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | In bed with baby                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | C cant sleep so have him playing with toys on bed while I make notes                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Posting Online                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME OF DAY            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 45 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home on couch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Spent some time on Tolkien fanatics site reading post on new Beowulf released.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Posting Online                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 0.479166667                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Wrote a review on Beowulf on Good reads site in Tolkien group                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | Time spent on Pottermore"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 13-14:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Lunch Hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Spent some time looking through chapters on Pottermore. 10 house points earned                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Item 8 | ACTIVITY               | Reading an academic essay written by Tolkien On Fairy Stories                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I really enjoy Tolkien's take on what constitutes Fairy stories in comparison to Beast Stories (3 Little Pigs). He emphasises the moral aspects of Fairy tale interesting =) |
| Item 9  | ACTIVITY               | Re-reading Goblet of Fire                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Over the past few days                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME TAKEN             |                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         |                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Things are a bit crazy at home (nanny was involved in hit-and-run). I am back on leave so when I have time I am re-reading Goblet of Fire just for fun (I'm really bored!)   |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Time spent on Pottermore"                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 13:00-14:00                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 1 Hour                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Lunch hour at work                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Ravenclaw has won the house cup! Brewed a few potions and took some time exploring site of Goblet as I am re-reading                                                         |
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | Reading academic essays by Tolkien                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 3:00am                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 45 min                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home feeding baby                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Read On Fairy Story out-loud to C to get him to sleep                                                                                                                        |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | Read The Hobbit to baby                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 18:30 - 19:00                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | _ h                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | It is never too early to introduce little ones to the magic of story telling. He seems to enjoy story time already!                                                          |

### Commissioner Smirnov

|        |                        |                                                                                                  |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Tumblr/ Facebook/ email catch-up before work                                                     |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | pre-work day (9:00)                                                                              |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | +/- 20 min                                                                                       |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                             |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Catching up with Tumblr updated from overnight, clearing out in-boxes to start fresh for the day |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Encountered an artwork (Furry) on Tumblr I really liked. Followed the link to artist on my phone |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | When I was meant to be working (10ish)                                                           |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 5 min                                                                                            |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                             |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I follow a few blogs that showcase artists on Tumblr. If something appeals to me I generally try to find more by the artist. The better blogs tend to share links with the art. <a href="http://furaffinity.net/user/thanshuhai">furaffinity.net/user/thanshuhai</a> |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Reading and article on Cracked.com                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | during lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 30 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Finding something fun to read during work break                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | Read a VFX breakdown for an effect in breaking bad that impressed me                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 2:20 in the afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 5 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Watched breaking bad last night (S4 E13) season Finale Was amazed by a vfx shot. Had to find out if there was a shot breakdown                                                                                                                                       |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Playing quizup on ipad (joint activity with my wife and sister in law)                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 19:15                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 30 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At jess (my wife) folk's house (after dinner)                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Quiz game that pits you against international opponents picked categories such as Pixar, animation. Harry Potter, Hunger Games, Harry Potter Spells.                                                                                                                 |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Character sketches for my comic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 19:35                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 35-40 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | The in-laws                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Decided to flesh out a character doodle from work                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | wrote a scene for my personal comic/ graphic novel project                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | late. I work better at this time                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 30 min? Maybe?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home in a dark tv room and then a dark bedroom                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Felt inspired upon completion of my sketch. A whole new screen from my comic came to be on my drive home from the in-laws had to write it before I forgot it                                                                                                         |
| Item 8 | ACTIVITY               | Watching breaking bad                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | all day                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | all weekend                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Binge watching season 4/5 of Breaking Bad. Couple of episodes a sitting, several sittings this weekend                                                                                                                                                               |
| Item 9 | ACTIVITY               | Uploading podcast to my ipod for the week (Welcome to Nightvale)                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                        |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 21:00                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 15 min                                                                                                                                 |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | uploading latest episodes of one of the few podcasts that I enjoy. Was introduced to Welcome to Nightvale by work colleagues last year |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Listening to Welcome to Nightvale                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | all day                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | all day                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Listening to the podcast on my ipod as I worked today                                                                                  |
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | Drawing                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 21:00                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | ?                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | drawing to relax/ practice Furries appeared frequently                                                                                 |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | reading over breakfast                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | morning 8:00                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 15 min                                                                                                                                 |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | reading through a couple graphic novels/ trade paper backs over breakfast including Blacksad/ My Little Pony/ Sin City etc             |

### CityBug

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Browse 9gag, 9gag TV and explosm.net                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 10am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 10 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | In my bedroom                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I do this when I open my laptop to work (but don't work). It doesn't take me long to look at all the new content since yesterday (except 9gag tv). 9gag TV is new and I don't watch it that much. Today I watched a video of a naked (french?) woman lay paint filled eggs outside a museum. [ Diagram of confused/ bemused face] Time to work |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Talked to my younger brother while he was watching anime                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 11:20 Saturday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | less than 4 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Lounge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | He says he is watching 'Toriko' an anime about food. He lies in our lounge because he can access the wifi on his iPad better. Took two photographs. He says he has already finished all 641 onePiece episodes that have been made                                                                                                              |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Watched honest trailers on YouTube                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 12:00 - 16:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | four hours with a break for lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | honest trailers is a show on YouTube that makes fun of movies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | browsed 9gag                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | at around 11:00am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | (+/-) 1.5 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | in my room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | didn't find anything funny. Not a lot of jokes and memes. A lot of personal venting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Watching SNL (Saturday Night Live) videos on You tube                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | around 17:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | my house, my room, my bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I like SNL. I like the impersonators even when I don't know who they are impersonating                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Watched the movie HER                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME OF DAY            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | about 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at my girlfriend's apartment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | It is about a man who falls in love with his computer (voiced by Scarlet Johansen). The computer can perfectly imitate a human personality. It can absorb so much knowledge in a week that it transcends to another plain [sic] of existence. The only thing it can't do is get Scarlet Johansen to visually appear in the movie. |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | 9 gag                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 0.5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 5 - 10 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I do this impulsively. It's hard to remember to log it                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Item 8 | ACTIVITY               | watched episodes of the Daily Show from 2005 on Youtube                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | night                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 2-3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | home, room, bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | It might seem strange that I can enjoy foreign, decade old political satire. I just do. I like American political satire because politics over there seems to be made for TV. Also when their politicians act like clowns I know it doesn't directly affect me.                                                                   |
| Item 9 | ACTIVITY               | Watched the Delivery man                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | night                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | (+/-) 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at my girlfriend's apartment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Movie is about a man \$80 000 dollars in debt, his girlfriend is pregnant and he is supported by his family. Then he discovers he has over 500 adult children because of a mistake at the fertility clinic. One of the most depressing movies I've ever seen in my life.                                                                   |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Watched the reluctant fundamentalist                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | (+/-) 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home, room, bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | It is about a guy from Pakistan who goes to New York to become a financial analyst. After 9/11 he goes back to Pakistan to become a lecturer. I looked it up afterwards. Seems like it was based on a book like Q&A. Instead of making a movie like Slumdog Millionaire they made a CIA vs. Persian Terrorist movie. It wasn't bad though. |
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | More Daily Show on YouTube                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 0.75                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2-3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home, room, bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | More episodes from 2005. Apparently it was about the time Scooter Libby was found to have leaked the identity of a CIA agent. I know about it from the movie Fair Game. The reporting makes it seem much less dramatic.                                                                                                                    |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | Watched amine with my youngest brother                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11:00 - 16:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | a few minutes every hour or so                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | He started watching the original Pokémon. I never thought that it would make a comeback. Now he is watching Hunter X Hunter                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

---

### EssieJayne

---

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Watching YouTube videos of How I met your mother making of and blooper reels and analysis of the finale (ooh!)                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME OF DAY            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 1hr 15                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at work                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | so the show recently ended after 9 seasons and there was a big hullabaloo about the ending. I am trying to find out what the cast thinks of the fan reaction (personally I liked the finale) but cant find much |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | went on reddit (take this as everyday - it is an addiction!) every time I get on a computer                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | most free moments - I have a problem. But today 9am - 12:30. 4:30 pm                                                                                                                                            |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | usually 20 - 30 minutes looking at my subreddits (per time I log on)                                                                                                                                            |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | work and home                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Reddit can suck your brain out of you. I have specific subreddits I follow. The Mighty Boosh, Harry Potter. How I met your mother /r/-movies. I get caught up in strangers arguing ... silly really                                                                                                 |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Pottermore                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | about 15 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I saw that new things had been added to some of the earlier chapters that I had already completed so went to try and fill them in                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | linked Game of Thrones bad lip read to Facebook                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | midday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 10 seconds                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | God its funny! You should watch it. It is on my Facebook. Just look it up! Do! (see I'm like a pusher)                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | watching adventure time (thought I'd update this)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | afternoon morning night (all weekend)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 22 mins (11 mins each) we must have watched 6 episodes on Saturday, 3 on Sunday (4 on Thursday)                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | So may episodes for research purposes!!! Were mad about these crazy things. Totally weird and quite awesome. We've decided to go as Marceline the vampire (L) Fin (S), Jake the Dog (me - yup) , D (the Ice-King) we're going to buy stuff this week from China Mart!                               |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Watched the first episode of Matt Smith's Dr Who (Asylum for Daleks) can't remember season number (7)                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | evening around 7ish                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Ages because we had to keep pausing to change nappies, fetch bottles get kids in bed etc +/- 1 hour                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home in bed on laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | we downloaded the 2013 Christmas special and watched it with whole family - loved it and decided to watch the whole season. I let the kids watch because although it is scary it is a very clear-cut good/bad scary. Then we watched the comic-con special and the panel interviews on it - fun :-) |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | Twitter - I don't tweet but I follow people and read it everyday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | early morning, midday, late afternoon, middle of the night                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | ./- 10 minutes each time. I obsessively check twitter always just reading my timeline                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | bed, car, waiting for stuff                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I follow a few people but I really go on twitter to mostly follow the Sherlock Holmes role players - Geniusholmes/ thewhiphand (Irene Adler)/ Morriaty and the realsherlock holmes. The Irene Adler Role Player is awesome. She'll have these long role-plays with all the Sherlock characters and stays in character all day (her author is an actress). Notable accounts I check obsessively: Tweets from WWII (1942) Sherlock RP'ers/ Graham Norton Show/ Chris Lilley (Jonah from Tonga)/ Shakespeare (someone tweets quotes all day)                          |
| Item 8  | ACTIVITY               | more Dr Who                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 0.8125                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | So watch Dinosaurs in space. The kids got bored so I went upstairs and couldn't stop at one - watched A town called mercy and had to force myself not to watch the next one (D and I would be out of sync) So I watched the wire and knitted socks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Item 9  | ACTIVITY               | Internet stuff - one of my googling a new thing jags                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 40 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Watched a link my friend Jared put on FB of character Felix from Orphan Black's actor (cant remember his name) replying to a reporter's question at a panel, and then I went on a Google trail - I usually start with Wikipedia, then will hit any interviews that they've done: David Letterman, Jimmy Fallon, Graham Norton, Craig Ferguson, Conan O'Brian, Ellen                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Played Jewel quest with L                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | After S was asleep                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20 mins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | a version of those 3 in a row games that I get obsessed over. We took turns at the boards but I am not fun to play videogames with. L got a bit bored ... On the film group Whatsapp D got this msg from the most cynical member Just say a resounding thank you to Dirk for introducing me to an all time classic, to which I am now a convert! Alex has downloaded it for me and I'm waiting for my 83 yr old dad to get to me en route to the UK this wed and we're going to watch it together! He's gonna be so chuffed! Sharing what we love! Relevant maybe? |
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | Watched Game of Thrones (ep 4)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 8pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hr.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Bed home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Oh how I hated this episode! It is so weird that you can like something and then so viciously hate it as well (like the How I met Your Mother finale). Afterwards I asked D if we could watch episode 4 of Dr Who because I'd seen in the next week on part of episode 3 that it would be pretty cheerful - it was                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | Went to the movies! By myself! In the middle of the day!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 0.40625                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 107 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Cresta                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I debated whether or not to include this. I used to watch SO many films when I was single and solvent - 2 or 3 AT week at the cinema. I would read Empire mag or Premier or Total film at the bookshop before or after (which has been replaced by online sources almost totally for me) anyway - I really love watching movies at the cinema by myself - the trailers are a huge part (D and I play trailer death match when we go to movies :-)) I watched One chance but it wasn't the film it was going to watch the film that was so cool. Watching movies by myself was my very first act of independence so even though it is quite a solo/ lonely activity it brings me great joy! |
| Item 14 | ACTIVITY               | Googling images of Adventure time Cosplay                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 0.51875                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 10 mins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Looking at ideas for family costumes for comic book day. Yay!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Item 15 | ACTIVITY               | Shopping for Marceline's wig and Finns sword for L at china mart                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoonish                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | all eternity! Hours and hours (prob around 30 minutes)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | China Mart                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | We found L's wig quite quickly but it was impossible to find a sword! We'll have to make him one. Friday update: found a white hat I'm gonna covert into a Finn hat D and I are sadly behind on the costume front now ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Item 16 | ACTIVITY               | Watching Dr Who                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | after 8pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | hour or so                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | You are watching before your very eyes someone who is becoming a DR Who fan. I had to watch the next one EP 6 I think (last night) and then ep 7 tonight. At work I googled Matt Smith interviews but ended up chasing Jim Parsons through Ellen, Conan, Jimmy Fallon and who do you think you are ... not really related :-)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Item 17 | ACTIVITY               | Comic Book Day                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Actual time at comic shop: 40 minutes? Whole Escapade 9 - 4ish                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME TAKEN             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Comic book shop Beyers Naude and my cousin E's house                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Well, our costumes didn't go quite as planned. D and I flaked a bit and decided at the last minute to go as Wolverine and MIB agent respectively getting ready was fun - shouty and dramatic! Met my family and went together. The queue was very jolly - the couple in front of us were also adventure time characters so we had a nice chat. Actually getting a comic was a bit lame but we spent the rest of the afternoon having a braai and drinking wine. Excellent day |
| Item 18 | ACTIVITY               | Dr Who Episode 7 + Episode 8 season 7 (which makes it 7 episodes in 7 days)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | nearly 2 hours - S had to be put to bed again (also fed at some point)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home on the couch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | S too L was out. D fell asleep as soon as we got home so I had the computer ALL TO MYSELF Unbelievable! Until S woke up and only went back to bed at 9!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

---

### Captain Unobservant

---

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Completed conference paper                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 11:29                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Waaaayyy to long. This was planned for the holidays and got procrastinated to the day before deadline. I blame [illness]. Sigh                                                                                                  |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home and at work                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | The paper was written about the irresponsible gender depiction in (anime series) and why I believe it works! I had too much fun writing it and now it is way over the word limit - c'est la vie!                                |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Watching The batman"                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Late. Should be sleeping. But Batman                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 20 mins                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | In bed (not sleeping)                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I really love this show. It's totally underrated, but great! Season 4's character design changes irk me a little. I know Bruce is meant to be older but he's lost something. Batgirl Rawks though! Jess Matsuda is my art-crush |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Stopped watching Batman, updated Legion Ink Cosplay page                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | I really should go to be                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 5 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Computer Bah                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Found a spelling mistake. This will not do. My internet sucks                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | Comic illustrations (yay). Nighttime. Like batman I work better at night                                                                                                                                                        |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | +/- 2 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Desk of multipurpose (home)                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | I'm busy drawing [comic] it's a total honour but my health has made me lag behind badly!! Bah!                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Item 5  | ACTIVITY               | MOAR comic illustration                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | After work daily                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 4-6 hours                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | A glued to my desk                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Still busy with bulletproof. The deadline looms and I am very far behind. Sigh                                                                                                            |
| Item 6  | ACTIVITY               | Spliced comic                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Night (I sense a pattern here)                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 40 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home at the desk of creating                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Writing a column on why I'm an actual zombie for sliced magazine. You should read the mag it is amazing                                                                                   |
| Item 7  | ACTIVITY               | Noting, researching                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Night                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2hrs                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | the interwebs                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I was looking up the medical possibilities of zombies actually exist. Got sod (it is nigh-impossible for the undead to be undead)                                                         |
| Item 8  | ACTIVITY               | DAY 1 of ICON                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 9am - 6pm                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 9 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Jabulani Recreation Centre                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | the first stop of geek subculture and one of the larger opportunities to get together. I'm running a stand with the L team and today we are promoting the new [Comic] (It sold out WOOT!) |
| Item 9  | ACTIVITY               | SDCC plotting                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Random times                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 1hrs or so                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | various places                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | The sales of [comic] helped get the last scrap of cash that the guys needed to the SA team is all set to go. Minus me because of [being ill] nonsense                                     |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Comic run                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20 min                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | cosmic comics                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | headed to my local comic store to pick up my call order - I don't know whether I am more stoked for Deadpool of Guardians of the Galaxy (I do this once a month)                          |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | Arguing about gender representation in comics                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Pretty much anytime it's posted online or brought up in conversation                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20 mins or 4 hours depending on the level of ignorance                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Facebook - that evil place                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | O constantly debate about the ridiculous way that female characters are depicted in comics, especially poses and anatomy. It is a very steep uphill battle, but I have the will!                                                                |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | being depressed about not going to SDCC - sigh                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | All. The. time                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | a good few weeks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | all over the place                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I've been diagnosed with [illness] meaning no flights. So no SDCC for me :-(                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Item 13 | ACTIVITY               | SDCC panel handover                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Various                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2-3 days                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | various                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Chatted with Moray Rhoda and Neville Howard. We put together the overall presentation together, those guys will do us proud! Also, my awesome girlfriend just happened to send a laminated effigy of my face that ended up travelling to SDCC!! |
| Item 14 | ACTIVITY               | Panel success!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | varies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | NA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | They did it again! Yes! The panel went fantastically. I am crazy proud (and still sad)                                                                                                                                                          |
| Item 15 | ACTIVITY               | [comic]                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | quick email read through                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Facebook                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | ERMAGHERD!! (the creator/ writer) loves my work so far!! This really boosts the old ego!                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 16 | ACTIVITY               | Comic run                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20 mins                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Outer limits and Cosmic Comics                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Curses! Tradd Moore's Ghost Rider art is incredible - Guess I am a GR fan now! Haahaha I've also got my roomie hooked on Amazing Spiderman new (old) fan! Woot!                                                                                 |
| Item 17 | ACTIVITY               | Watched Guardians of the Galaxy immediately wanted to watch it again                                                                                                                                                                            |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 8pm                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2:45hrs                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Clearwater Mall                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Such Movie! So Wow!! Geeeee best comic movie eva!! I think I spammed Facebook for days about its greatness (I'll happily explain why it was so good)                                                           |
| Item 18 | ACTIVITY               | "Star Wars comic artist for serious                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 9:00                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | all of 30 seconds (excited speed read)                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | at work                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Yes!! I've been asked to draw for a new star wars comic project. I am super honoured (need to give you some sketches.                                                                                          |
| Item 19 | ACTIVITY               | KinCon 2014 Day!                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | weekend                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 9am - 6pm + 2 hrs. of the inaugural cosplay ball. Jabula Recreation Centre                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | I ran a stall for L at the second ever KinCon anime focused convention - Selling art prints and stickers. My prints sold out! Yay!                                                                             |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 20 | ACTIVITY               | KinCon cosplay Ball                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 6-8pm                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Jabula, squeaking doc Martens on the dance floor                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | SA's first ever cosplay ball was amazing. I dressed as Commander Deadpool and C as a vampire. We were totally the best looking couple there! I also nearly passed out from exhaustion. Sweatpool as it were.   |
| Item 21 | ACTIVITY               | Kin Cons cosplay competition                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | on stage Emceeing like a boss                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | One of my innate abilities is a total lack of shame and fear of public speaking so I dressed as Vash the Stampeded crossed with Angelina Jolie (dem legs) and ran the competition. There was some amazing work |
| Item 22 | ACTIVITY               | Comic store visit                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 40 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | cosmic comics                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I dropped off stock and then debated the virtues of DragonBallZ over Naruto. S keeps trying to sell me an expensive but gorgeous Deadpool Statue. Those people are evil                                        |
| Item 23 | ACTIVITY               | The return                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|                        |                                                                     |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon                                                           |
| TIME TAKEN             | Brief                                                               |
| WHERE WERE YOU         | work                                                                |
| DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I hand back this partially completed journal (stoopid time) to you. |

---

## Norvie

---

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Ruby's Haberdashery and the quest for turquoise beads                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 14:30 - 16:30                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Brooklyn mall, Ruby's                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | The plan: get beads for decorating Rarity's crochet bag, a ball of yarn and maybe more sparkles since my windowlens experiment to get excess glue off Rarity's necklace failed. (and took off silver backing) Ended up debating each blessed bead for ages. Happy about final product. See photos for list of goodies.                                                  |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Hunting for wig goodies, Rarity's Manicure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon (still on Ruby's shopping spree)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 30 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Mall- Dischem                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Cosplay confession: I lost some of my wig bags and wig nets because I was lazy. I bought new Ziploc bags for the kitchen anyway. Also got hair spray (cheapest) since I don't want to waste my good stuff on synthetic hair. Bought fake nails, which I hate, and then had huge internal debate on what Rarity would wear versus the budget. Cheapest false nails worn. |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Shapewear killing Lumpy Space for Rarity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon (still on Ruby's shopping spree)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 20 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Mall- Woolies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | For my Rarity cosplay I will wear a white dress and my full-body shapewear is black. So here I expose the beige underbelly of cosplay: [Diagram. See scan]The back even has a panel for butt cleavage (lift and separate)                                                                                                                                               |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | For your eyes only: Shared progress and photos with MLP group                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 3 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Shared photos of progress with the secret group on FB. The other members are doing Twilight Sparkle, Applejack, Rainbow dash and maybe Derpy                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Crochet (adding detail to Rarity's bag)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | late evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | TIME TAKEN             | From beginning of Strictly Come Dancing until the beginning of the late night movie- an hour?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home- in front of the TV                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | After inflicting my goodies from Ruby's on my mom and explaining that the zip lock bags are for wigs, it occurred to me that adding more detail to the lace I bought as a strap for the crochet bag would link it to the dress (I'm adding elastic to the dress since I refuse to try and lose weight to fit) Before cosplay I never managed to coordinate an outfit                                                                                                    |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Shameless self-promotion and entering giveaway on Facebook                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Difficult to say- I follow many fan pages and crafters so my timeline integrates this with my socialising- 45 minutes in total                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home on my PC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | With KinCon coming up, many people post cosplay progress pics. It's great to see I'm not the only slave to the sewing machine. I shared a link to my page on another page- fun! Now to see if any activity ensues. Entered one of those like and share giveaways to possibly win a Labyrinth (80s movie)- inspired necklace and clips. I've entered quite a few Hysterid Machine giveaways, but I don't expect to win. But if I don't enter I have no chance of wining. |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | Installed web cam                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Late afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Objectively: 15 min including fiddling. Subjectively: hours.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home-laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Item 8 | ACTIVITY               | Read articles on comic books on cracked                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | late evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | home-cellphone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Read article on Cracked.com with a link to superheros while waiting for the mother to get off the house phone so I could take a bath and head to bed. [Diagram. See scan] I'm stupid tired -> reading instead of sleeping and clicking links like a real internet zombie. I still enjoy graphic novels and own some but I own no comics and read articles on them instead of the source material                                                                        |
| Item 9 | ACTIVITY               | Chat with friend on committee- casual visit ended up talking shop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | visit- most of the day                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | no idea- we chatted for hours but got sidetracked many times. Maybe 2 hours?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Decorex- home design expo                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | This study is scary- as an organiser/ geek I never realised how much time casually slips into hobby time. Also because I'm a bridesmaid and she is planning a themed wedding. Today the anticipated theme (I'm sure it will change again) is Terry Pratchett and I've been threatened with Nanny Ogg. Time to lose weight! We also somehow went from talking about Yarn Indaba to discussing the merits of the Voortrekker monument as a convention venue - turns out Afrikaans meisies can organise alternative arrangements in person so we can do our own catering. At which point we looked at each other and said but NOT next year" |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Checking FB                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Late Morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 30 minutes. Estimated fan time: 15 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home- pc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Opened the FB to see many new likes of stuff on my cosplay page (mostly by one fan) Also greatly flattered to see my bunny used as inspiration for drawings by SINBIN: GRAPHIC AND FASHION design. Going to print out the photo and show it to bun                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | Setting up updates for my cosplay page                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Late afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 10 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home- cellphone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I had two photos to send my Seampunk page- so I shared the midnight crochet border and scheduled the next photo (me with contact lenses) for tomorrow then went back to work. Urgle blergle death by poor referencing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | Wig Fascination: powder and spray                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | evening (night)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 40 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home- living room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I just finished the boring chapter of doom, gloom boredom and frustration, so I needed to give my eyes and brain a rest. So I used the research as an excuse to video tape (actually record, but I remember tapes) and then while I was there anyway... I ended up powering the whole thing- and using loads of hairspray                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Item 13 | ACTIVITY               | Facebooking                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 10 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home- cellphone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Anyway, my weekend of geekery has come back to bite me in the ass. Damn boring book of doom not done yet. I've tried to be good today (aka work and not take watch an episode breaks). So far, so good. Just took short FB breaks, which involved commenting that I'm doing Miss Piggy for rAge and Kin Con is creeping up on me...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Item 14 | ACTIVITY               | Updating FB: Bunny Shenanigans                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | TIME OF DAY            | evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 5 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home- cellphone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Was happily reading when bunny attacked (well ran at) the cat. Next thing I know I end up making Monty Python references about the rabbit of Caerbannog                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <hr/>   |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 15 | ACTIVITY               | Facebook: The death of Robin Williams                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Mid Morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 30 minutes ( probably more for quote hunting distraction)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home- pc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Today when I opened FB I was met with the news of Robin Williams passing, or suicide to be accurate. I'm actually not a huge fan, but I felt it would be human to comment for my other friends. Somehow one memory that popped up was of Watchmen.. I saw the movie and then read the graphic novel while housesitting for a fellow bookworm. The badge with the blood. the news that a comedian has died. It's creepy how quickly you pick up Rorschach's style. Even when the voice belongs to Moore. I have a ton of work to do, but I take the time to lovingly google so memory does not play me false. I don't know why my brain insisted the clowns name was Belluci... I've taken a screenshot of my status so I can be lazy about writing more of the same quote. Scarily, many people like the quote about depressed comedians. except one sweet child that replied I also suffer from depression and I'm scared of clowns... So I did not find it funny. Everyone who practices escapism has, by definition something to escape from. In my experience a disproportionate percentage of the geek community suffers from depression. And since being an organiser makes you an accessible adult and I am for some reason the non-Catholic confessional, I've heard a lot of stories. |
| <hr/>   |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 16 | ACTIVITY               | Facebook: The death of Robin Williams (cont.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Mid Morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 30 minutes (probably more for quote hunting distraction)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home- pc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | the dark side of organising sometimes involves spending time reassuring someone they're human. When you start out, you think you're going to save people. In reality they can only save themselves. All you can do is give a little hope, and I do that by listening. [redacted personal information] He gave me a speech I use on anyone that threatens suicide. Everyone I've given it to is still alive and has never bothered me (if they just wanted attention) again. The speech: Suicide is an intensely personal decision. If you really want to kill yourself, there's nothing I can do to stop you. If you don't, you wont. I sometimes add: And if you kill yourself by accident, don't expect me to be sorry for you. I really hope Williams's death will not force me to give someone The Speech.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <hr/>   |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 17 | ACTIVITY               | Facebook: Self-promotion and Monty                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon to evening (in-between proofing chapters)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | TIME TAKEN             | ±10- 15 mins total                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home (office)- cellphone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Watching Monty Python's Rabbit if Caerbannog on YouTube, which is a former colleague's reply to my status about my bunny chasing the cat. Asking about cas cards on CosplaySA group - might as well promote myself while I'm not promoting an event...!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Item 18 | ACTIVITY               | Fitting at SINBIN & cake                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Late Morning (left home at 10:15)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | Fitting, no idea. Kuier- leisurely. Reached home 14:10. 4 hours total.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Joburg, SINBIN Workshop. Isabella's (Coffee shop)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Cyn and I met each other about 4/5 years ago when she had her first stall at UPCon. We became friends and I'm also the occasional customer/model. For rAge Sunday, I'm going to be part of the Star Wars group and I ordered Jedi robes from her. We've also been trying to get together for coffee and chat so we combined the two. Also because my current proofreading job is slowly killing me with boredom... So what I've realised about my geeky friends is that we always end up talking shop. Especially if you work together on projects. so we talked about freelancing, work, skindernuus... but also KinCon (overcharging), What we think of various events and marketing- and the joys of cutting wigs (or in this case the lack thereof) Long story short, Applejack, Rarity and RainbowDash cosplays will be worked on in a sew day that will include good food, drinks and lots of detangling spray. Of course leaving the home office comes with a price. I ended up working till midnight to get the day's proofing done. |
| Item 19 | ACTIVITY               | Updating FB: Cosplay page                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Late afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 15 minutes (joys of editing camera Photies)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home- cellphone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | While I was at SINBIN's workshop, I also collected my pony ears. They are adorable. I also found a slip from the post office for lenses I ordered. So I took a pic with both sets of items. My mother is a sweetheart. She offered to collect my package from the post office while I proofread!!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Item 20 | ACTIVITY               | Opening packages and updating FB                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | mid afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home, cellphone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Yay! My mom got my package from the post office and after many delays I finally have my blue Miss Piggy contact lenses. The order for these was placed month ago, and the original package went missing, then they re-sent prescription lenses instead of plain. Luckily I ordered through a local business, so they sorted out the admin for me. Part of the reason for the update is to thank and promote Plushie Heaven                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Item 21 | ACTIVITY               | Wasting time: wig-supplier.com                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Late afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 1hour, 20 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home- pc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | So I was planning on quickly checking the name of the contacts and wigs. Then... time disaster! They have new wigs. So I browsed... and browsed. Three chapters left to proof.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Item 22 | ACTIVITY               | Taking a break: three episodes of My Little Pony                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | early evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 40 minutes = 20 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home- pc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I decided to do 'research' for my Rarity cosplay (and I'm tired of Hannibal gruesomeness) to look for mannerisms and hairstyle. Not sure Pinkey Pie is the spirit of laughter- just flash with a high voice and a case of the giggles. I sometimes wonder what kind of deal Lauren Faust made to make such an addictive series...                                                                                                                                           |
| Item 23 | ACTIVITY               | FB                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Bits throughout the day                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | total $\pm$ 30 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home-cellphone and pc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Stupid proofread without end- arrghh... sleep... must get sleep... Anyway, in an attempt to stay awake I ?? about to someone on Facebook between chapters I gave wig advice to someone on CosplaySA group, read anonymous (so tired I almost wrote anon-more)                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Item 24 | ACTIVITY               | Updating FB page: Self promotion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Moving round the house                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Sadness-> I write the expiry date of lenses on the bottom of the case so I don't have to rely on memory to determine if they are still ok. My pink lenses for Suigintou (Rozen Maiden) are done for. Much sigh. Yay!-I've finally finished proofing that 420-page monstrosity, which means I can crochet and fuss and play with my rarity cosplay again! My grammar, spelling and patience have evaporated so some soothing crochet and beautification is just what I need! |
| Item 25 | ACTIVITY               | Sewing and crafting & binge watching series                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Evening to wee hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20:00- 02:00, 6 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | home                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | After a week of work, it was so relaxing to actually craft and do something for myself. And it really fun to learn new skills, for example, my new sewing machine can do cording and last night I added cording to the inside of a bag just to see if I could. My newest idea is to combine cosplay and crochet. For my Rarity cosplay I made a crochet mini horn, a headband and a bag. I use a lot of web patterns. I decided to do a mini horn for practical reasons ( as well as the desire to try out a pattern. Driving with a horn on my head would be tricky even though I'm short. And I prefer to leave home fully dressed for cosplay -> The thought of struggling to put contact lenses in with helpful onlookers gives me the heebies. I prefer to stick my finger in my eye in the comfort and privacy of my own home as the ads say. I'm rather impressed with myself though- I can now watch anime with subtitles while I crochet! Series binged: MLP Friendship Is Magic. Adventure Time. Law & Order. Half an episode Mirai Nikki (Future Diary). I'm too tired to watch anything dark. And I know I need sleep and relaxation when I start identifying with the issues in MLP Case in point: Season 1, ep 4 when Applejack works too hard and doesn't ask for help. It inspired me to think of fellow freelancers hat could help with the library book if I didn't get the proofing of the history book done. |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

---

### TheFabricWhisperer

---

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Fabric Shopping                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Morning 9:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | About 10 - 15 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | Hobby Hyper, Pretoria North                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Went fabric shopping for a costume order I got and quickly had a look at some new stock of fabric and buttons. I had to stop myself before I ended up buying tooo many / not-needed fabric and only later I realised I missed something. I will have to go back soon to complete the shopping                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Discussing out half-orc characters from Live Action Role Play                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | Afternoon 13:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | Twenty minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | a friend's place in his garage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | A fellow live action roleplay friend asked me about my half-orc character and informed me that he would also be part of the half-orc group in medieval legends - the LARP we are part of. We also discussed the huge pointy teeth problem and he told me he has a good friend who will make it for me for free if we supply the ingredients and go along and keep them company. Finally I found someone willing to help without asking anyone. I am so fired up! I cannot wait to see how my teeth will come out |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Making Samurai armour - cutting and shaping the front part of the chest armour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | morning to late afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

|        |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 6 and a half hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | a friend's place in his garage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | We cut the metal and shaped it and attached 3 of the 7 pieces of chest armour. I really did not know there were so many different hammers needed to make armour. I got a chance to shape one and it was hard work but doable. According to our friend we actually achieved a lot in one day but it was far from finished. It is a pity we live in an era where blacksmiths are just basically a hobby and we do not have knights in armour and fully dressed samurai running around defending their honour |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | Samurai armour making - adding threading holes to the chest pieces                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | about an hour and a half                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at my parent's home in my dad's garage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | We had to bore holes in the separate armour pieces so that we can later add them together by threading them together with chord or thin rope. Mental note for myself: get leather gloves and wear shoes while doing it next time. I had trouble getting the small pieces of metal out of my fingers and my feet.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Play World of Warcraft on a private server with my boyfriend                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | noon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | in my room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | We created tow new characters, both Paladin class and both Blood elf race and we levelled the characters to level 20. It is a new class and I am somewhat new to it but it was super fun taking on higher level creatures without dying                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Checking Deviant art for updates on the wonderful artists I follow                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 9:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 30 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | In my boyfriend's room on his laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I had to sort and go through about 60 updates from people I follow who are scattered all over the world. There were a few nice new pictures but none of the characters or stories / games/ anime that I loved and started following because of that                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 7 | ACTIVITY               | Sketching the Gosick girl costume dress using pictures available on the internet as referencing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 10 in the morning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | sitting on my boyfriend's bed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | First I needed to find the concept art of the dress I had to make and looking at it real closely and split the whole costume up into smaller parts like headpiece, skirts, top etc. After that I had to sit and sketch all the details on the parts taking one item at a time. I should really draw more often. Some of the sketching came out a bit skew but luckily I am the only one following my instructions. The dress would have been easier to sketch if I actually had the anime to watch as reference |
| Item 8  | ACTIVITY               | Cutting out all the grey parts of the Gosick Girl costume                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10:30                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | four and a half hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | in my boyfriend's room crawling around on the floor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | after sketching I isolated all the grey pieces and then started cutting them out. I cut extra grey knowing that most of the grey detail consisted of frills                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Item 9  | ACTIVITY               | Play WOW on private server                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 6:30 evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | sitting in bed playing on the laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I played with my Pandaren Hunter only doing archaeology until I made the rare mount I aimed on getting. I am so happy I finally got the mount. It looks so awesome. At some point in the near future I would love to play my Pandaren Hunter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Cutting out most of the Gosick girl costume                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10:30 AM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | five hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | In boyfriends bedroom crawling around on the floor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | sketched most of the pieces of the costume and cut it out. After I finished for the day I realised that the sewing part will go much faster than the cutting part. Looking at the costume parts I realised that there will be no difficulty making the costume it is just a lot of straightforward work. I should really get a big table to work on - crawling around on the floor is not that fun anymore - thankfully only one piece of the pattern for the dress remains and then I can start sewing         |
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | Play wow on private server                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 7:30 in the evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | in bed playing on the laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Played with my Pandaren Hunter in Northerend doing archaeology. It was somewhat mindless tonight but I was grumpy and needed and escape for a while. I am not sure it worked. I will know only when I wake up tomorrow.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | Finish cutting out the Gosick Girl costume                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10:30                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | an hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Boyfriend's room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | The piece I saved for last was a bit tricky but not impossible. After accidentally ripping the pattern piece 3 times I finally had the piece ready for the fabric. I need to remember to mark this piece well before I attempt the sewing part.                                                                                                          |
| Item 13 | ACTIVITY               | play wow on private server                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 12:30                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 4 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | sitting on bed playing on laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I levelled my character for two levels and did reputation farming. I really felt sick and so doing something I like really made me happy and feeling better. I played with my Pandaren Hunter and her Core Hound named fluffy                                                                                                                            |
| Item 14 | ACTIVITY               | Watched 3 episodes (17-19) of Black Butler while getting ready for the day                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 8:15 AM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | one and a half hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | in boyfriend's bedroom                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | thank goodness it is dubbed episodes so while I was busy I did not have to constantly watch and get behind schedule. Black Butler is a somewhat dark anime - and I still have trouble wrapping my mind around it. But I do love the old English theme of the anime. Thankfully I already played it so that is another costume off the bucket list I have |
| Item 15 | ACTIVITY               | Played WOW on private server.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | seven o'clock in the evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | sitting on bed playing on laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I had to wait for my boyfriend to come home so I decided to lay with my Pandaren Hunter and level her up a bit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Item 16 | ACTIVITY               | Played Naruto Ultimate Ninja Storm on the PS3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 5 evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | four hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | sitting on the bed playing on the TV                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Playing Naruto refreshes my memory of the anime I watched like 9 years back. It is good to see all the characters I love back in action. I even unlocked Jiraya - one of my most favourite characters tonight - Yay                                                                                                                                      |
| Item 17 | ACTIVITY               | Had a discussion with my friend on the Thrills Noir LARP and Vampire Diaries                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 12                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2-3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | In my boyfriend's room talking to my friend                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | So I showed my Thrills Noir character's magic tome to her and showed the sketches I made of the werewolf I have to still make and then it hit us both - Vampire Diaries and Thrills noir has a lot of stuff in common but where Vampire Diaries have a nice love story in the background - Thrills Noir have war schemes, hate, rivalry and bullets flying all over the place |
| Item 18 | ACTIVITY               | Played WOW on Private server with boyfriend                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 3pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 9 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | playing in boyfriend's room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | We levelled a bit and scouted the different areas while searching for nice farming spots and then split up and went off on our own. My boyfriend is getting sick and he got irritated with me being too slow so we went our separate ways - it seems I am more of a solo player                                                                                               |
| Item 19 | ACTIVITY               | Played WOW on Private Server with boyfriend                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 9am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 13 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Boyfriend's room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | We played with our alternative universe characters and levelled them on our own. Playing it slow for the day. It was really relaxing and very peaceful                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 20 | ACTIVITY               | Sewed and fixed my costume as well as Gosick Girl                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | In dining room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Sewed the apron and blouse part of the Gosick girl costume and fixed the one strap from my costume that came undone the last time I had it on. I should really make sure to fasten the straps better in the future. At least my alliance fatigues from Mass Effect 3 still looks awesome so I am ready to be Commander Shepard again. Yay                                     |
| Item 21 | ACTIVITY               | Watched CSI Las Vegas season 10 and started season 11                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 8 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | in boyfriend's bedroom                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I tried to sew but the overlocker gave problems from the start so instead I rather watched CSI with my sick boyfriend. I think it was time well spent                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Item 22 | ACTIVITY               | Did the finishing touches on the Gosick Girl costume                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Dining Room                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I finished the blouse so the costume is finally finished. I can now crawl back into bed and die. I am also sick now                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 23 | ACTIVITY               | Watched CSI Las Vegas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 14:00 in the afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 45 min                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | in bedroom                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Watched one episode of CSI before taking a nap. It is really difficult to fall asleep when you watch CSI it is just soo good                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Item 24 | ACTIVITY               | Played WOW on the private server                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 8 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | sitting on bed playing on laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Played with a few of my characters really slowly seeing as I was feeling sick and wanted to keep my hands busy and forget about the nagging burn in my nose and itchy throat. It worked                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 25 | ACTIVITY               | Left a Mass Effect quote on Facebook                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 9am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 10 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | On bed, laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | First I searched for a nice quote and then I updated my status with the cool quote from Mass Effect 3. I am getting my mindset ready to be Commander Shepard I cannot wait any longer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Item 26 | ACTIVITY               | Attended Rage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 5 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | At the Coca-Cola Dome, Johannesburg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I dressed as Commander Shepard and walked around the Dome mingling with friends. A few guys recognised my character and I was complimented a few times. Just before we left a girl and her mother stopped us and she begged to get a few photographs with me and her mother mentioned that female Shepard is her favourite character. It made me feel so warm and fuzzy and special because I did the character justice. It was a wonderful sweaty day |
| Item 27 | ACTIVITY               | Played WOW on private server with boyfriend                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 1:00 in afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 5 hrs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | In boyfriend's bedroom, on his bed, playing on laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | We tried levelling out characters but were not that successful. I was too drained because of the previous day so my reflexes sucked and he rather continued on his own. I was very sad.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Item 28 | ACTIVITY               | Uploaded the photos from RAGE onto Facebook and Deviant Art.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | an hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | on bed working on laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Seeing the photos of Rage was awesome so after I resized the photos I uploaded it to Facebook and Deviant Art. A few people liked the photos. Personally I think I looked good as the Default Commander Shepard                                                                                  |
| Item 29 | ACTIVITY               | Read a few chapters from a Mass Effect fanfiction that I follow                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 1:00 in the afternoon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | about an hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | on bed, on the laptop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | The fanfiction's name is the Soul behind the same and I read chapter 17 part 2. I love the small changes to the story but it is still good and really close to the real story. It felt like I was there. The author did a really good job with writing it. I can't wait to read the next chapter |

---

## CHRONOS

---

|        |                        |                                                                         |
|--------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | ACTIVITY               | Added and adjusted cue points in my DJ tracks                           |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 9:30 AM                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 4 hrs.                                                                  |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At work                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Christ... so many fucking tracks to mark. Luckily work isn't busy today |
| Item 2 | ACTIVITY               | Watched Zero Punctuation reviews Destiny                                |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 5:30                                                                    |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 7 min                                                                   |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at work                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                         |
| Item 3 | ACTIVITY               | Mixed tracks                                                            |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 6:00 PM                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hour                                                                  |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                         |
| Item 4 | ACTIVITY               | Sources title screens, snapshots and flyers for MAME                    |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 10:30 PM                                                                |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hours                                                                 |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | At home                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                         |
| Item 5 | ACTIVITY               | Bookmarked DJ tracks and sourced EP artwork                             |
|        | TIME OF DAY            | 3:00 PM                                                                 |
|        | TIME TAKEN             | 5 hours                                                                 |
|        | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                 |
|        | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                         |
| Item 6 | ACTIVITY               | Played MAME                                                             |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11pm                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 45 minutes                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 7  | ACTIVITY               | Bookmarked DJ tracks and sourced EP artwork                                                                                                                            |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 9:30 AM                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 and a half hours                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 8  | ACTIVITY               | Watched Nuclear Throne run on YouTube                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11:15 PM                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 30 min                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | at home                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | This is a daily play of Nuclear Throne, a randomly generated retro-styled shooter                                                                                      |
| Item 9  | ACTIVITY               | Commented on a post in the Shmups Facebook page                                                                                                                        |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 9am                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 5 minutes                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Shmups Facebook page is a fan page dedicated to old-school scrolling shoot-em-up (Shmups for short)                                                                    |
| Item 10 | ACTIVITY               | Added screen, title and flyer images to MAME                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 8:00 PM                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 11 | ACTIVITY               | Purchased a swanky new Traktor Kontrol F1                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 12:30                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 10 minutes                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Cresta Shopping Centre                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | The F1 is a MIDI DJ controller I will use to overlay samples on my House and Techno mixes. I will use it in conjunction with my current controller the Kontrol S2 MKII |
| Item 12 | ACTIVITY               | Learned basic F1 operation and messed around                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 7:30 PM                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                                |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Item 13 | ACTIVITY               | Watched Nuclear Throne run on YouTube                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11:00 AM                                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 25 minutes                                                                                                                                                             |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Item 14 | ACTIVITY               | Installed and played my old Left 4 Dead games                                                                                                                                               |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 7:00 PM                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Item 15 | ACTIVITY               | Browsed Beatport for new house and techno music                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 1:00 PM                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hour                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Item 16 | ACTIVITY               | Played Left 4 Dead (1&2)                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 1hr 30 min                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | Home                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Item 17 | ACTIVITY               | Browsed Beatport for new house and techno music                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 11am                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 30 min                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Item 18 | ACTIVITY               | Prepped a demo of my game project                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 9:45 PM                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Made minor changes, updates and bug fixes for my game's demo                                                                                                                                |
| Item 19 | ACTIVITY               | Watched Nuclear Throne run on YouTube                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 2:00 PM                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 35 minutes                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Item 20 | ACTIVITY               | Mixed music and practices using the F1 Controller                                                                                                                                           |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 7pm                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 4 hours                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Spent most of my time fiddling with the F1. Did some experimental overlays using a sample pack I purchased on Beatport. I think I'll capture my own samples. Those packs are fucking pricey |
| Item 21 | ACTIVITY               | Beatmarked, sourced cover art for tracks. Captured audio samples                                                                                                                            |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10:00 AM                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 8 hours                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Ensuring my track collection is categorised, beatmarked (with cue points), has cover art etc. Also captures loop samples and placed them in pad sections of the F1   |
| Item 22 | ACTIVITY               | Watched various Let's Play and Longplays on YouTube                                                                                                                  |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Throughout the day                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 4 hours                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Let's Plays are recorded game play-throughs with commentary. Longplays are a continuous play-through where the player tries to show as much of the game as possible. |
| Item 23 | ACTIVITY               | Browsed Beatport for new house and techno music                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 10:00 AM                                                                                                                                                             |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 20 minutes                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Item 24 | ACTIVITY               | Captures audio loop samples. Categorised samples by key                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 8:00 PM                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Item 25 | ACTIVITY               | Watched Lets Play of Risk of Rain                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 1:00 PM                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 40 minutes                                                                                                                                                           |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Risk of Rain is a small independent game featuring randomly generated terrain, enemies and items. It is also regularly played and commented on by my YouTubers       |
| Item 26 | ACTIVITY               | Sourced and categorised screen, title and flyer images for MAME                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 8:00 PM                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hours                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                 |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Item 27 | ACTIVITY               | Watched documentary on Techno music and an older live techno set by Jeff Mills                                                                                       |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | Throughout the day                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 3 hours                                                                                                                                                              |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                 |

|         |                        |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | Documentaries on the origin of techno music and famous DJ's and producers from Detroit. Live set by Jeff Mills in Japan 2003. Played 3 decks and a Roland 909 Drum Machine |
| Item 28 | ACTIVITY               | Captured and categorised audio loop samples on the F1                                                                                                                      |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 8:30 PM                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Item 29 | ACTIVITY               | watched guides to building an arcade cabinet on YouTube                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 1:00 PM                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 1 hour                                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Work                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS | I have a dream of building a custom arcade cabinet for my home. Will place an old PC inside and run MAME                                                                   |
| Item 30 | ACTIVITY               | Played Left 4 Dead                                                                                                                                                         |
|         | TIME OF DAY            | 7:00 PM                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | TIME TAKEN             | 2 hours                                                                                                                                                                    |
|         | WHERE WERE YOU         | Home                                                                                                                                                                       |
|         | DESCRIPTION & COMMENTS |                                                                                                                                                                            |

A.2 TABULATED PROMPT CARD RESPONSES

| EssieJayne                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Create a timeline of different moments in your life since you became involved in fandom/s | The best thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | What advice would you like me to keep in mind about South African fans while I am doing this research?                                                                | The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...                 | I feel at home when...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | The place that is the centre of my fandom is... |
| Hard to do - not sure if it is comprehensive enough                                       | Hmmm. I have no idea how to answer this! I would say ... people are generally friendly - the midnight book launches were a blast - people got involved and silly. We tend not to be very snobby (eish sometimes... sometimes not). Things are accessible in comparison to other African countries but in comparison to the UK and the States they're not... Hard question | um ... well I know my South African-ness isn't the first thing I want anyone to know about me ... bit sensitive and have a certain cultural cringe at things from SA? | Being far away from a centre - feeling outside and excluded from some things... | * I'm at home (not sarcasm). We've created a home that is nicely suited to our nerdiness, laptop set up as TV, books, Mags and ADSL. With 2 kids who are aware enough to share things but not yet old enough to create conflict. It's a sweet spot. * At the movies. I feel so at home in Cresta's cinema seats. I think I've been inside most cinema's in Jhb and definitely most in Cape Town. Compared to how awkward I feel at the Theatre ... its bizarre | My family :-)) at the moment - yes!             |
| GUMI                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                 |
| The best thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ....                           | What advice would you like me to keep in mind about South African fans while I am doing this research?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...                                                                                                       | I feel at home when...                                                          | The place that is the centre of my fandom is...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                 |
|                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                 |

We have a small, but close community. Easy to find similar people, also there's always someone you know who can help you with something. Friends are never far away- Cape Town is only a 20h trip by bus, got plans to visit again after a week there in January 2014. International people are intrigued by our small community and our country- got friends in USA and Portugal (Some in Germany too) through cosplay

The fandoms are diverse, some are less socially acceptable than others- such as those who are fans of hentai/yaoi/yuri etc. Sometimes people may take it personally if you express negativity towards what they're a fan of.

It's hard, and a very slow process, to get games and anime here. We need to wait for translations and subtitles and rights for distribution and all that jazz to get sorted before we get manga and anime. Games take a while but usually there is a delayed release. Difficult finding authentic merchandise from anime and games- often fake/ cheap imports. Pretty much all cosplay stuff has to be ordered online, only materials available here are power tools, building supplies like glue/wood etc., fabrics, thermo plastics (which is still ordered in but supplied by a local supplier, likewise with wigs and lenses and EVA/craft foam.

I'm around similar people- those who like games, anime etc. If I'm in cosplay and I'm around others who are in cosplay- otherwise I'm a little shy. Watching anime, playing games, reading manga or crafting calms me, sometimes games make me anxious if I play a new game or if I play something solo that I usually play with others. Talking to friends about different fandoms.

Mostly Japan- Country, people, language, anime, games. Western- Comics, games, cartoons. Worldwide- Cosplay, yaoi (anime & fanart/fanfiction) furry community.

## KIMBERLYHART

*Create a timeline of different moments in your life since you became involved in fandom/s*

2008 - out of high school. Dark angel. First the neighbours forum and met Belgium and Aussie pen pals. Wrote loads of fandom for that. 2009 - Consumed by Twilight fandom. Joined JBNP - Jacob Black 'n Pack. Connected with amazing people who shared my fandom and became my friends still to this day even though site shut down. 2010 - 2014 - Varsity took over but still consumed my shows and need to read alternative universes of these characters/ stories/ shows that I became invested in.

*The best thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ....*

'I suppose the fun thing would be the fact that there's a few HUGE fans - not many - that when you do find someone it's like discovering a majestic unicorn - you marvel and share stuff like a cooler connection (no)one could ever have! You are part of a secret society (overseas it's become saturated with people) I dunno, just a thought.

*What advice would you like me to keep in mind about South African fans while I am doing this research?*

Not sure - that fandoms are sacred - but more the fact that some people can easily share their fandom history/ moments than others because in SA I sometimes feel that to be an excessive fan - to read fandom and do the participations - talking about it is made to see taboo by others (geek/ nerd/ etc. superfan). It is still not a huge craze/ fad like overseas

*The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...*

No comic-con. Rage is the closest we will get - the fact that there is SDCC or Paleyfest or numerous cons on that my fandom characters and contributors and stars are going to - to be able to share in that is one of my wishes - I will go to a con one day. Front row seats to ask my questions and meet people that consume my life through a story.

*I feel at home when...*

I am comfy/ on a couch / in a car/ in my office and just sitting back in isolation/ alone being able to lose myself in alternate worlds

*The place that is the centre of my fandom is...*

Fanfiction.net or YouTube. I consume it as if it were a newspaper I need to acquire every morning. Fanfiction relaxes me - it is my de-stressor so any moment I need a break you will find me there surfing for stories on my favourite fandoms.

| CITYBUG                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <i>The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>I feel at home when...</i>                                                                                                                                                                                        | <i>The place that is the centre of my fandom is...</i>                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Being a Bafana Bafana fan (I presume). I hear they are pretty terrible                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | I am in my house, in my bed                                                                                                                                                                                          | My laptop                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| CAPTAIN UNOBSERVANT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <i>The best thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ....</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <i>What advice would you like me to keep in mind about South African fans while I am doing this research?</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <i>The worst thing about being a fan living in mind about South Africa is ...</i>                                                                                                                                    | <i>I feel at home when...</i>                                                                      | <i>The place that is the centre of my fandom is...</i>                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Funnily - enough how small the communities are. Connections become very personal and rich. Consumers and store owners know each other personally, meaning for greater support and engagement. The community is generally very accepting of people too with many endeavouring to grow their particular fan community. | SA is a small country, so by that virtue, any fandom is often very niche and insular. Oddly though (at least in my experience) even in our small groupings factionalism is extremely prevalent. It is a strange variety of clique mentality. So certain individuals tend to get elevated in notice/ notoriety and jealousy inevitably runs rampant. Fandoms (locally) are more like small communities rather than over-arching groups. | The lack of access to certain aspects like collectables / special editions. The big bummer is the lack of access to major conventions because of distance. SDCC is a 30hour flight that costs R22 000. its horrible. | I have a comic in my hand; a pencil against paper; or a comic themed animated series on the screen | From the form feedback it looks like it is my desk... the internet has made connections ridiculously easy - we can communicate with anyone and everyone and have the ability to see and engage with comic art and fandoms the world over. |
| NORVIE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <i>Create a timeline of different moments in your life since you became involved in fandom/s</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <i>The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>The place that is the centre of my fandom is...</i>                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |



I am 30. I started being involved in cons and organising in 2004. it would be highly depressing to map out how much of my life has gone into this. Here's where it started instead: Age2: fairy dress with wire wings. Age 7: learnt how to read English. Age 10: read the complete and unabridged Sherlock holms (399 pages) GAME OVER life as a bookworm and fan begins.

The Rand-Dollar exchange rate. Few fan items (e.g. books) are printed locally so the exchange rate influences everything that's imported- games books, figurines, wigs, DVD box sets. That's why piracy is so common here.

I'm fond of living in my head. I take the parts of things I like and stash them in my memory. Really, it's a kind of hoarding. And it's great when new material (idea) make friends with other, existing residents. So in some ways, my curiosity is at the centre, which is why I don't feel the need to be interested/ like everything. Physically, I like my home. It's my base of operations. Yay internet and space. And my gorgeous bookcases.

---

## THE FABRIC WHISPERER

---

*The best thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ....*

*What advice would you like me to keep in mind about South African fans while I am doing this research?*

*The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...*

*I feel at home when...*

*The place that is the centre of my fandom is...*

Some conventions are so close-knit family style that the exhibitors know the attendees by name; since no famous people attend conventions, the cosplayers get a chance to be treated like very important people by the characters they portray; small communities of fans gather almost on a monthly basis via anime screening, game evenings, LANs and cosplay meet-ups and 90% of the goers know each other and are most likely friends; no worry about conventions weather (no snow).

Most of the fans in South Africa struggle to find big communities so instead we rather start our own little communities and organise and host meet ups. Not all the conventions cover the desired amount of fandom we fans want, so most of the merchandise is bought online or ordered from a handful of specialised shops. So unfortunately most of us fans live off downloaded, fan subbed, hand-made and fake items.

It is difficult to find merchandise of the stuff we are fans of and if we do it is super expensive; we have limited materials locally, so if you need to make something more tricky, the chances are good you would have to import parts or make something similar by modifying something; during conventions we do not have a chance to meet voice actors, actors or models from the stuff we love; it is easier and sometimes the only way to watch anime is by downloading it from the internet - so it ruins the way some believe in owning the original discs from anime.

I'm working on a costume; I am watching anime or CSI; Cosplaying the characters I love; just dressing up in a costume for fun; I'm surrounded by people who share the same interests and love of anime, games or CSI; I am playing games especially Mass Effect, Final Fantasy or WOW

It depends on my mood, but it is either games; anime and manga (and Japanese culture and history can be included here); or a series - to be more specific CSI Las Vegas.

---

## KELGA

---

| <i>The best thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ....</i> | <i>What advice would you like me to keep in mind about South African fans while I am doing this research?</i> | <i>The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...</i> | <i>I feel at home when...</i>                                                                                                          | <i>The place that is the centre of my fandom is...</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Observe from a distance/ different perspective                         | Our passion is not Handicapped, at least I feel/believe.                                                      | Access, exposure, number of people, distance                           | I'm with like-minded friends that also share hobbies' When I create and exercise my mind. When I relax with games, movies, and series. | Creativity                                             |
| CHRONOS                                                                |                                                                                                               |                                                                        |                                                                                                                                        |                                                        |
| <i>The best thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ....</i> | <i>What advice would you like me to keep in mind about South African fans while I am doing this research?</i> | <i>The worst thing about being a fan living in South Africa is ...</i> | <i>I feel at home when...</i>                                                                                                          | <i>The place that is the centre of my fandom is...</i> |
| Nothing in particular                                                  | Nothing in particular springs to mind                                                                         | Our substandard internet connectivity                                  | I'm comfortably seated I my lounge with a decent wifi connection and my favourite YouTube shows are playing.                           | My lounge                                              |

### A.3 SELECTED PARTICIPANTS' PHOTOGRAPHS

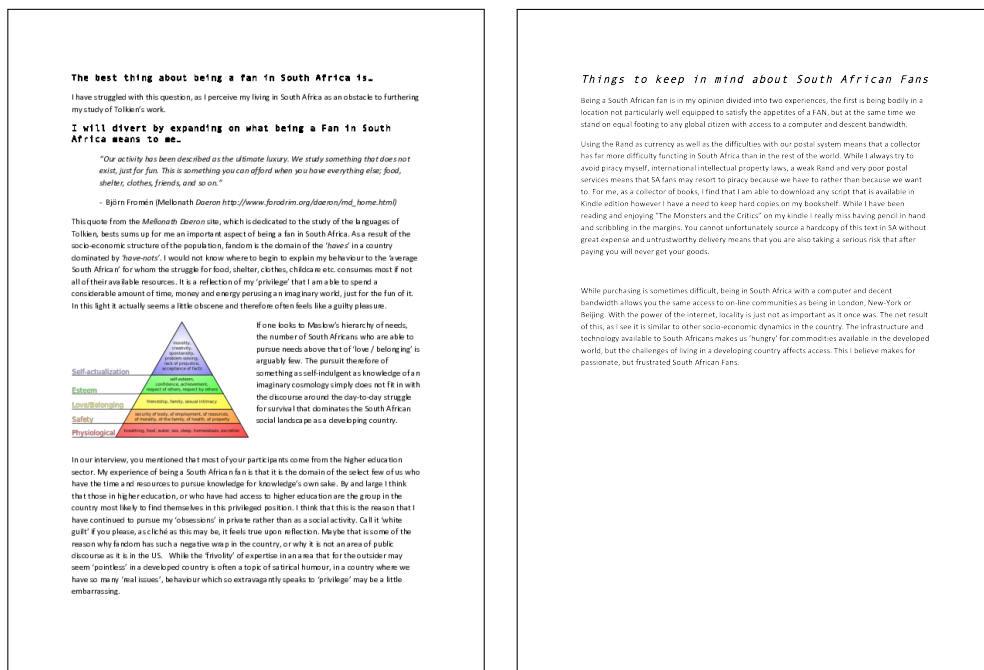
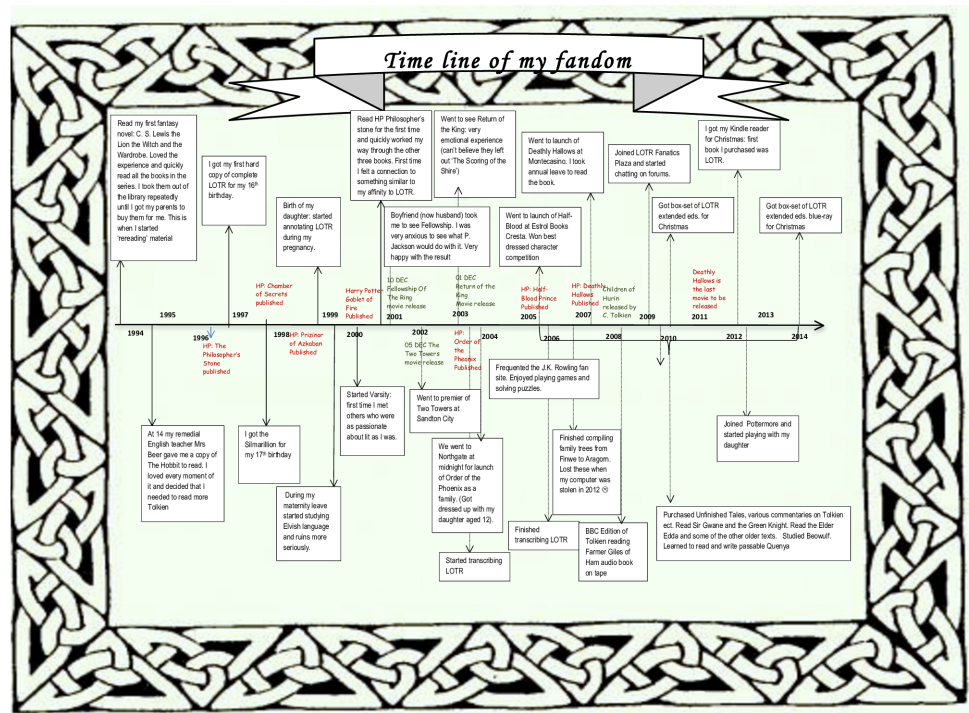


Figure a.1: Sample prompt responses from participant Idril

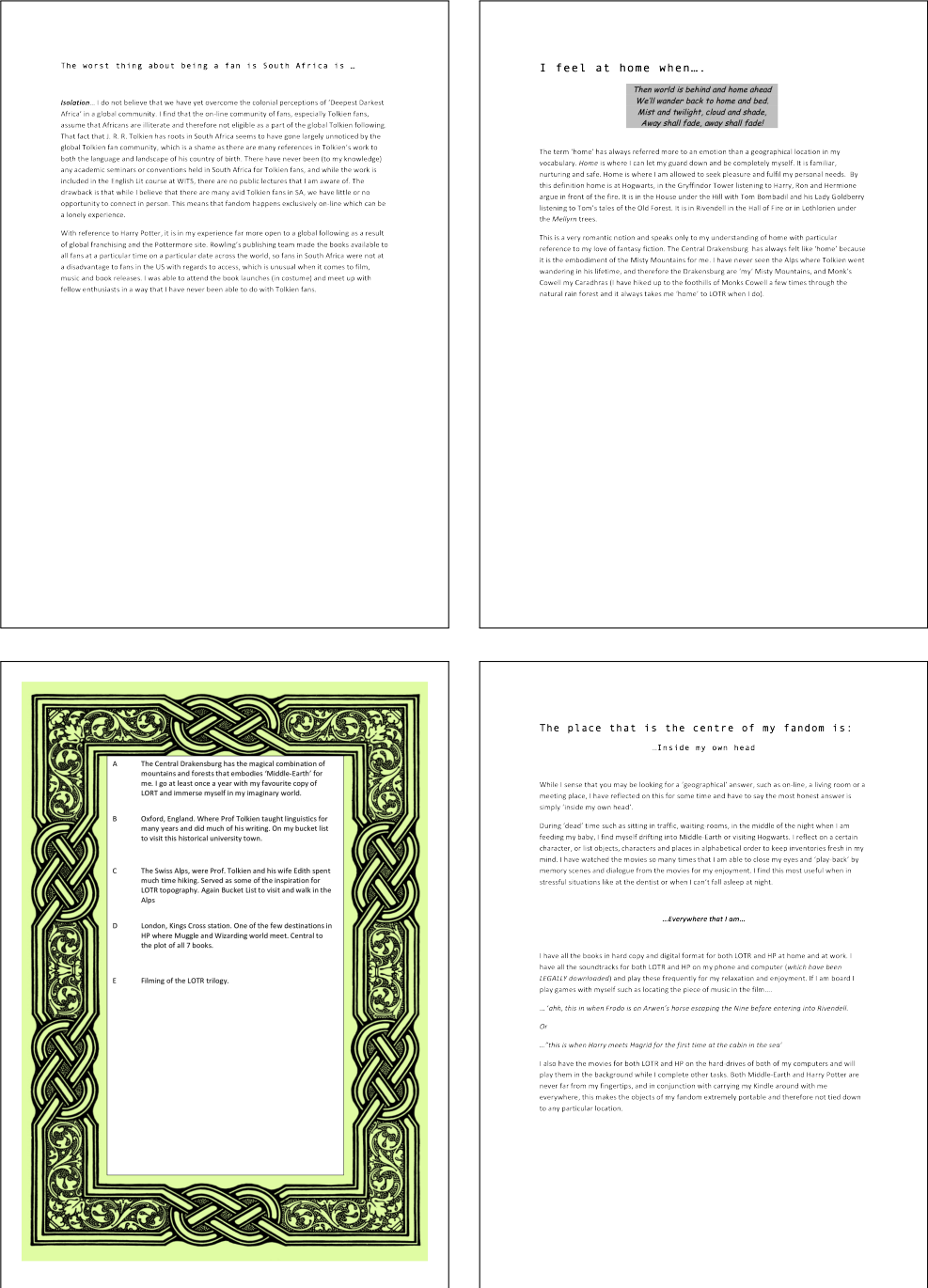


Figure a.2: (cont.) Sample prompt responses from participant Idril

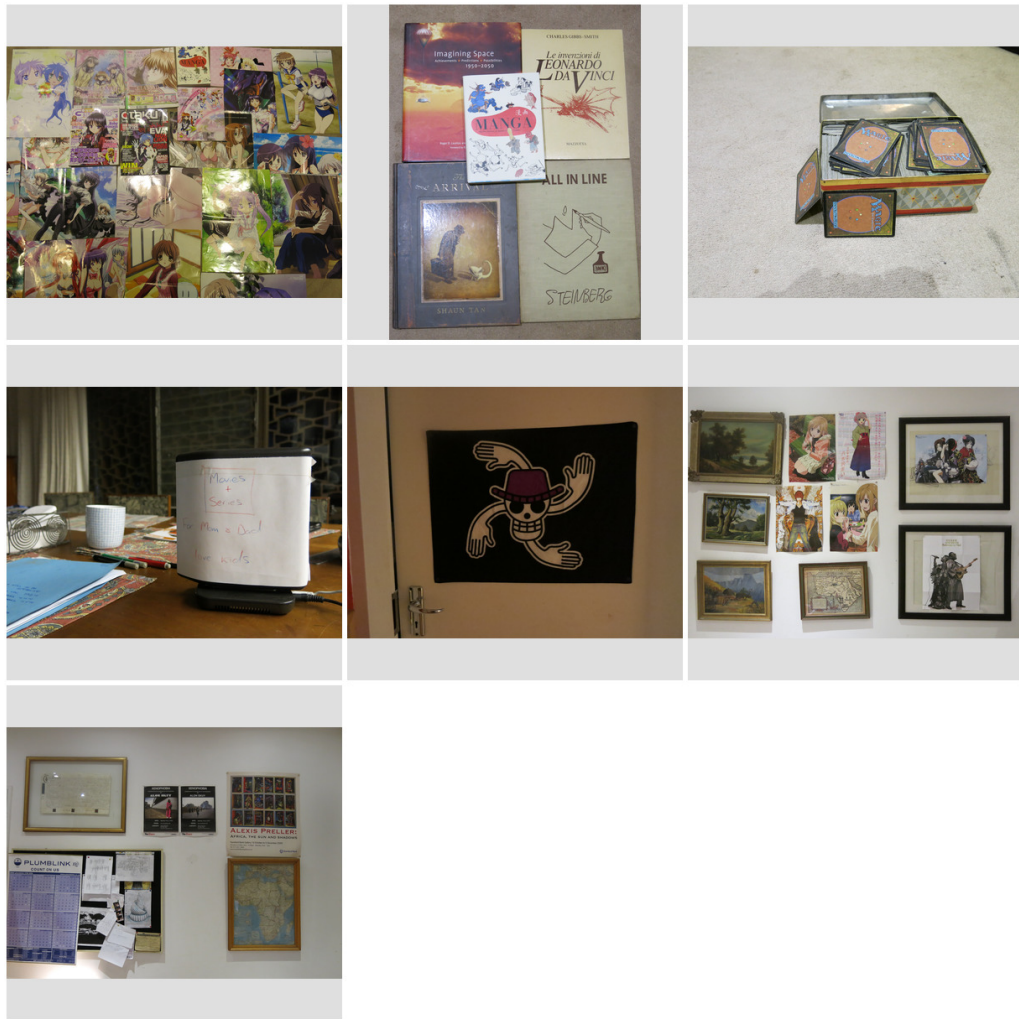


Figure a.3: Sample of photographs from participant CityBug



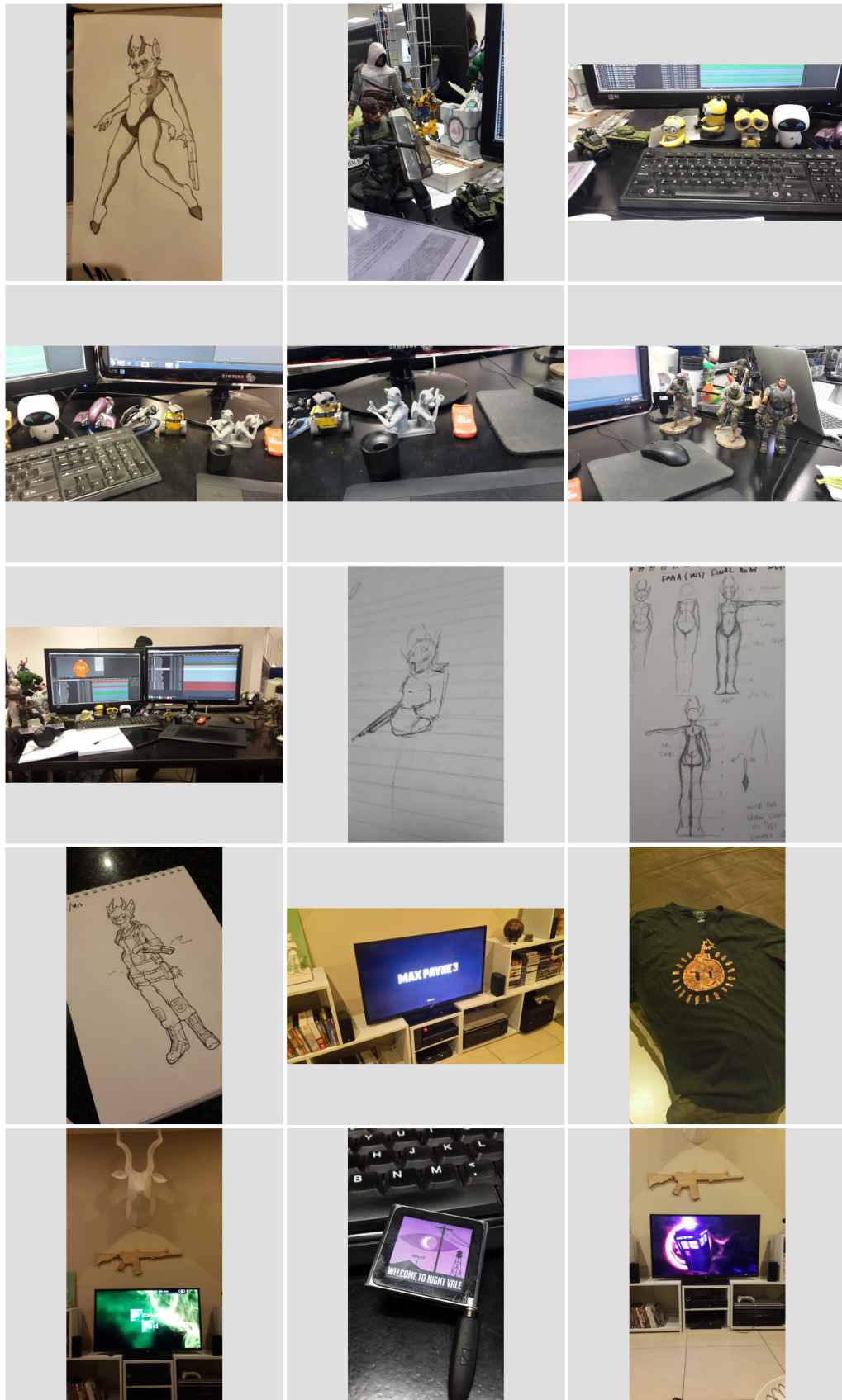


Figure a.4: Sample of photographs from participant Commissioner Smirnov

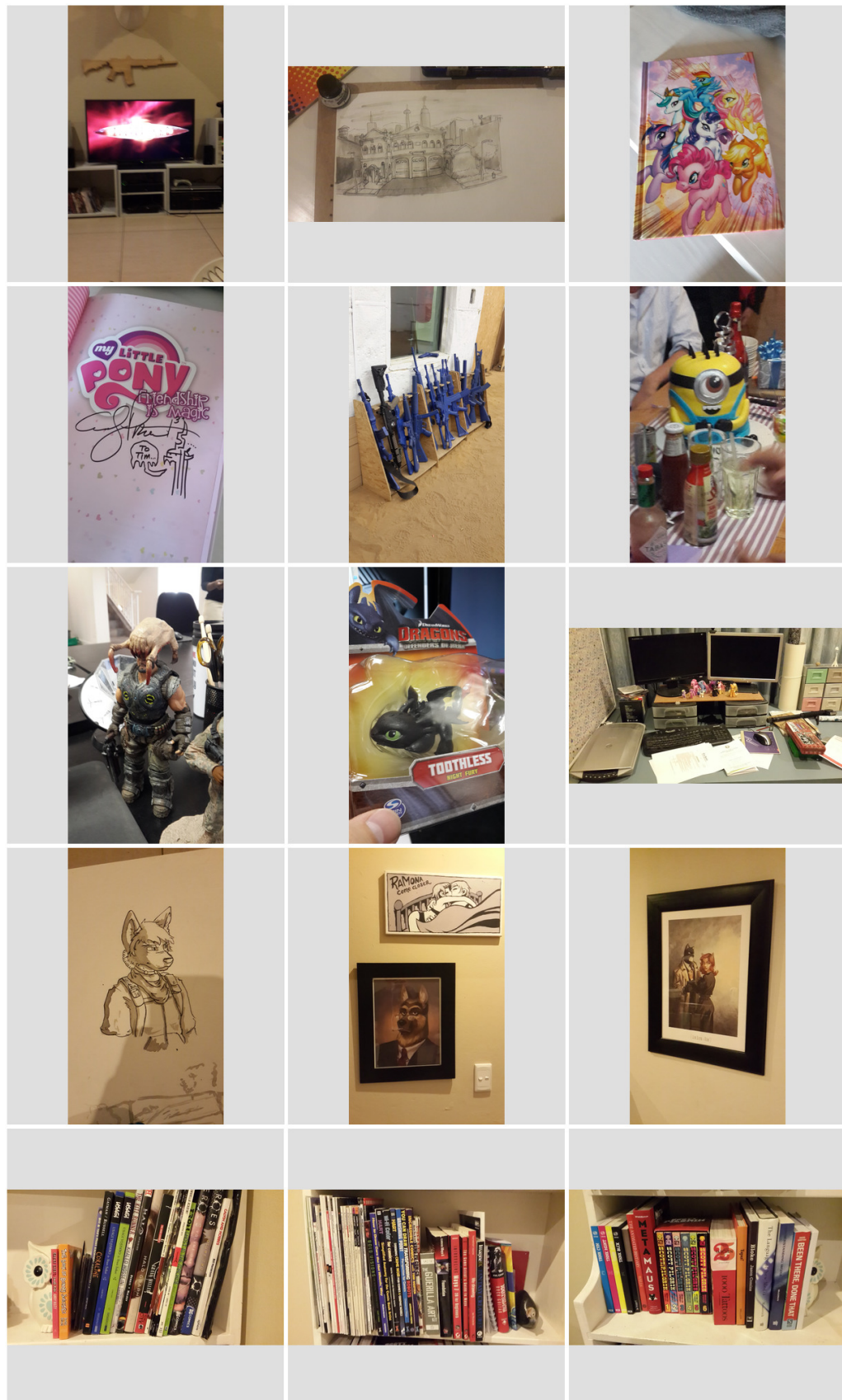


Figure a.5: Sample of photographs from participant Commissioner Smirnov



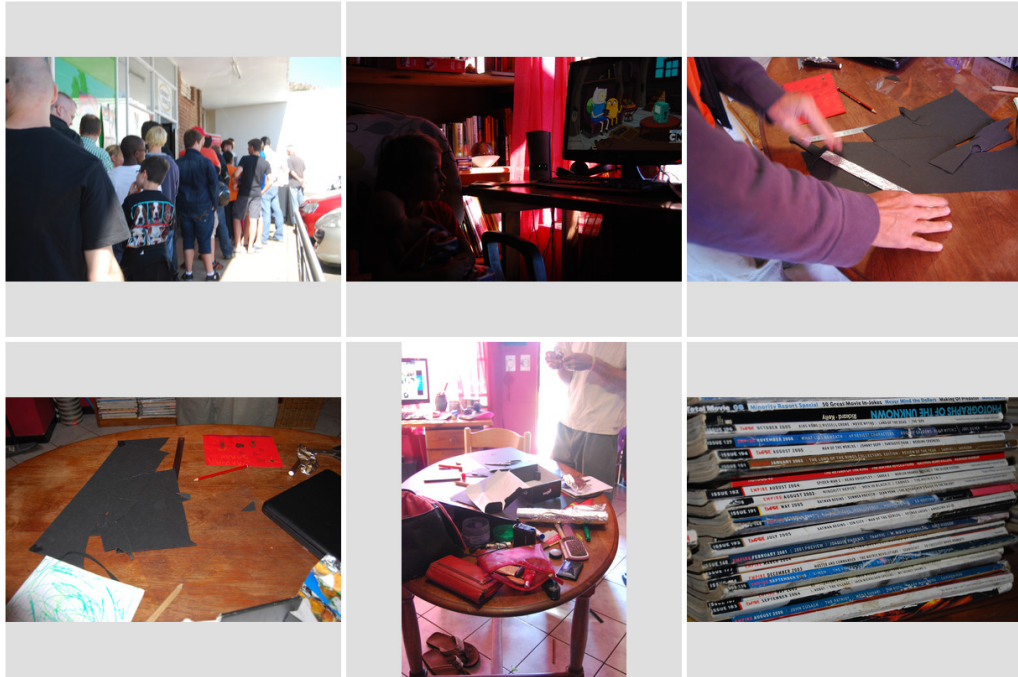


Figure a.6: Sample of photographs from participant EssieJane



Figure a.7: Sample of photographs from participant FabricWhisperer



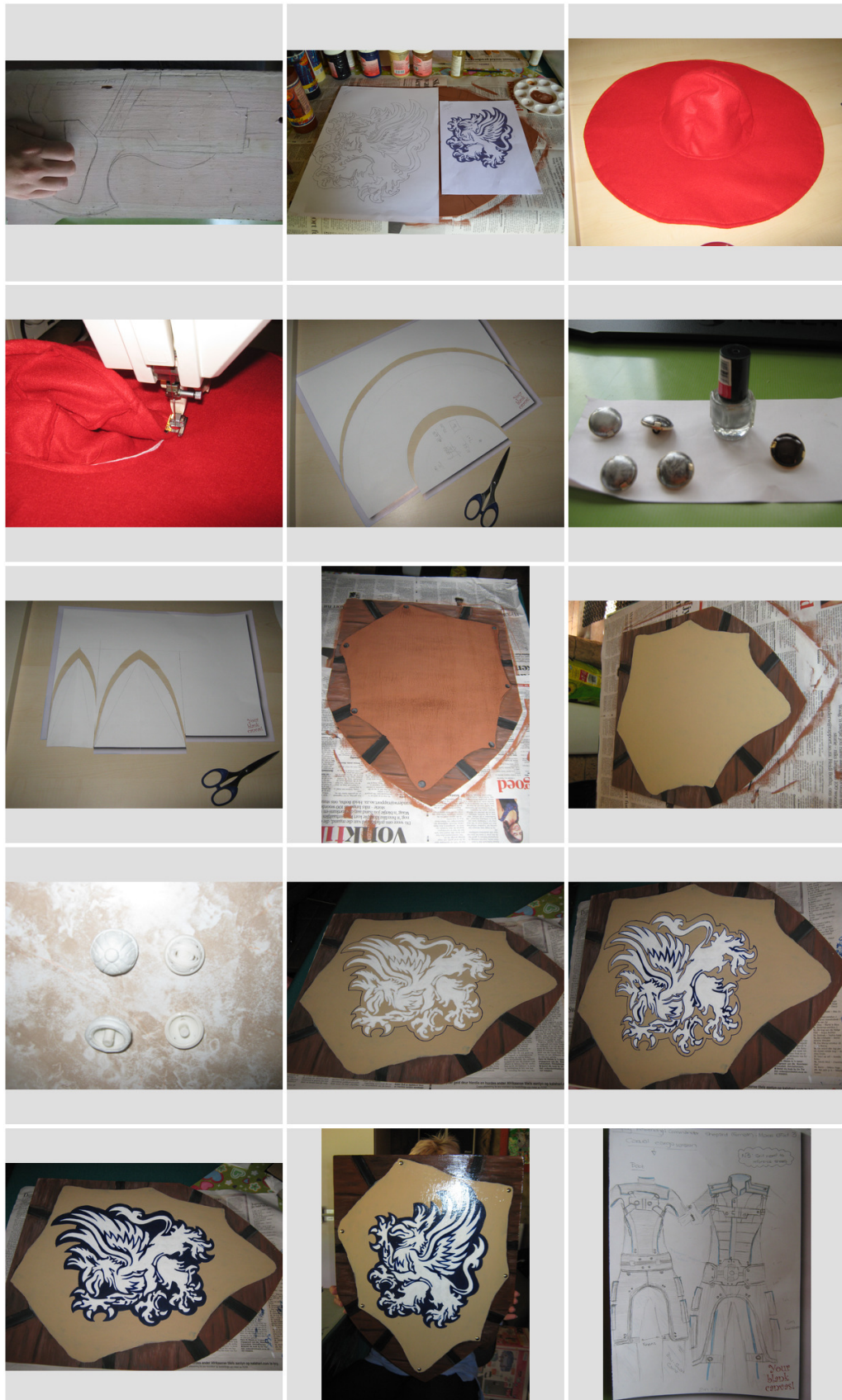


Figure a.8: Sample of photographs from participant FabricWhisperer

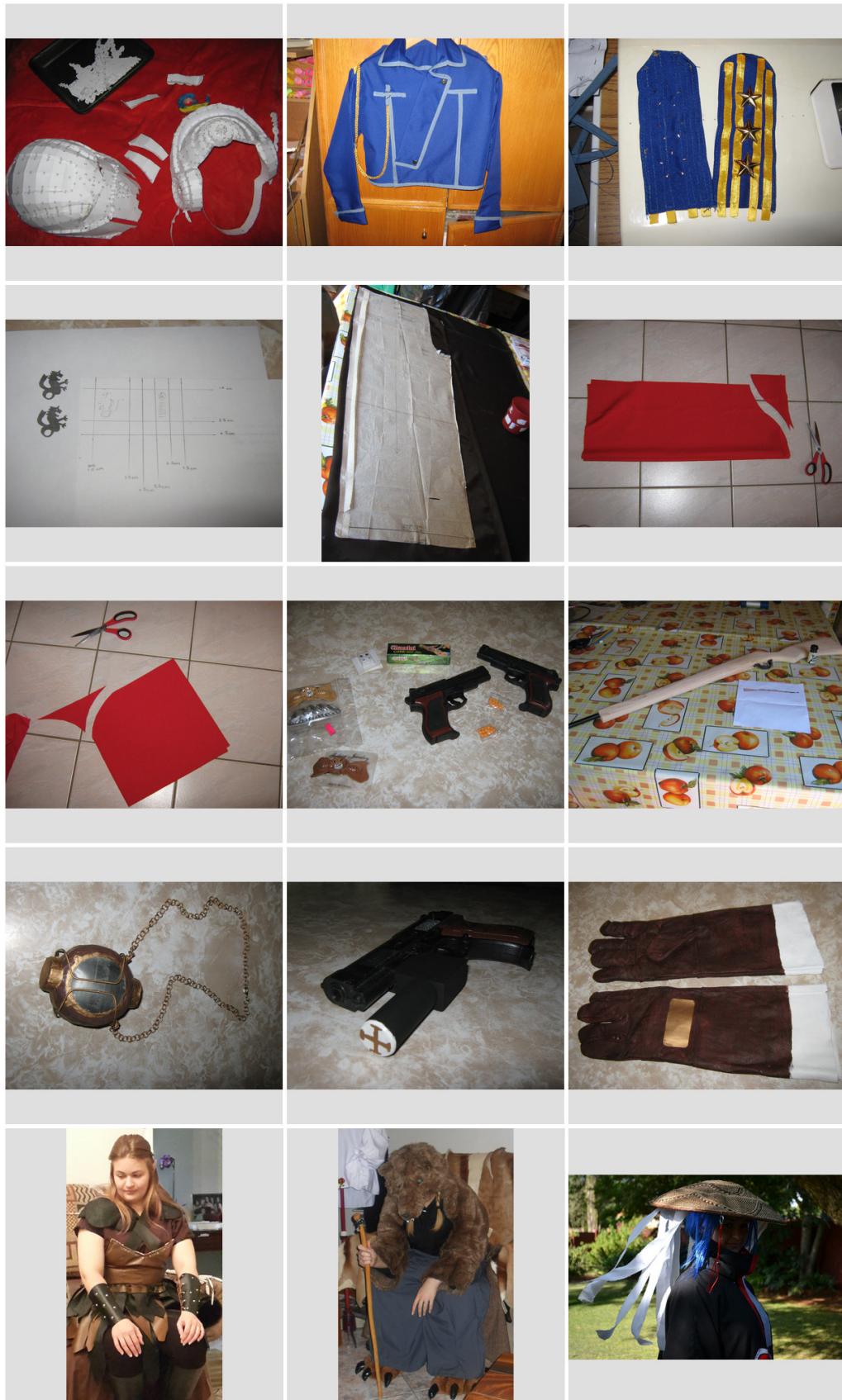


Figure a.9: Sample of photographs from participant FabricWhisperer



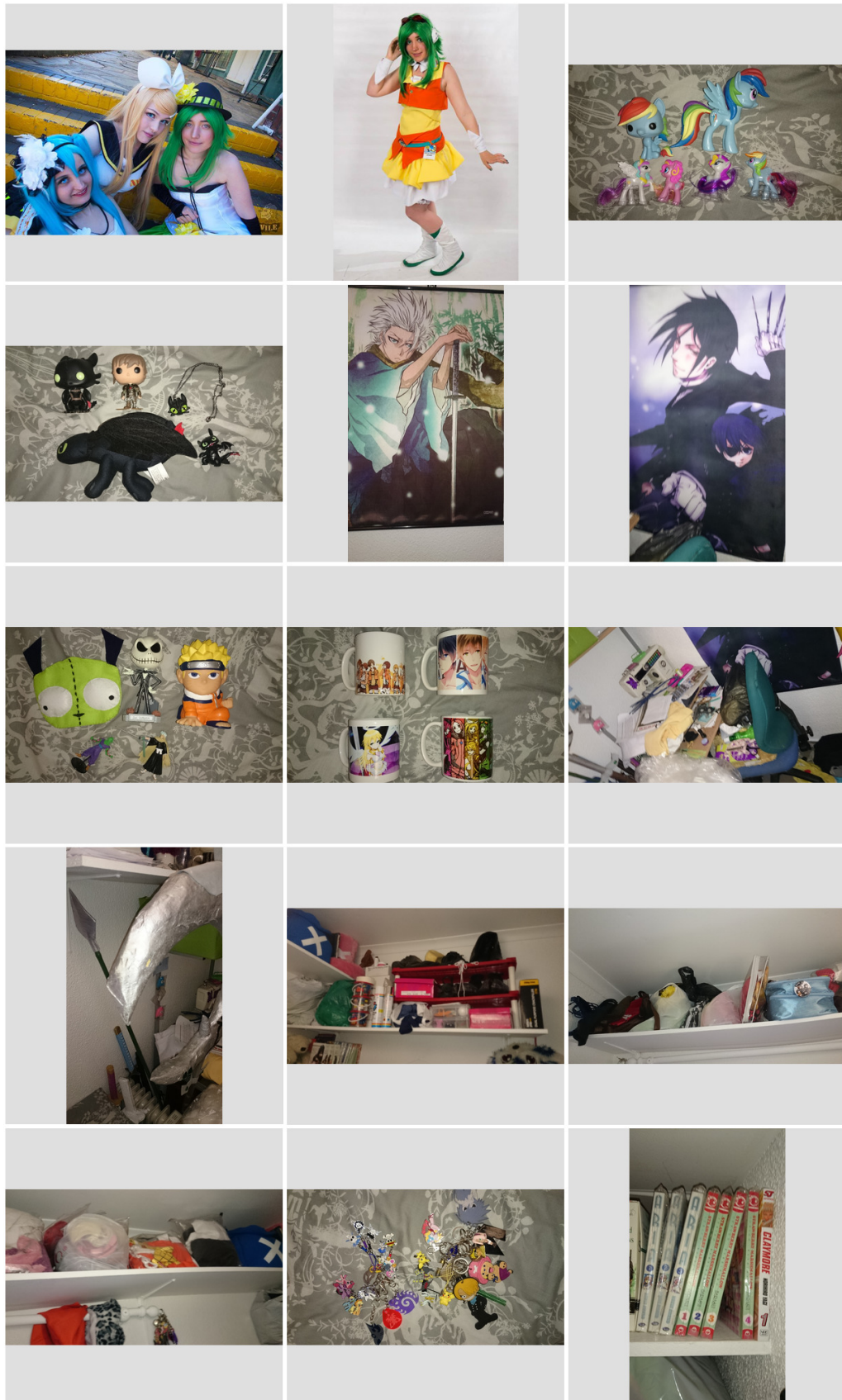


Figure a.10: Sample of photographs from participant Gumi

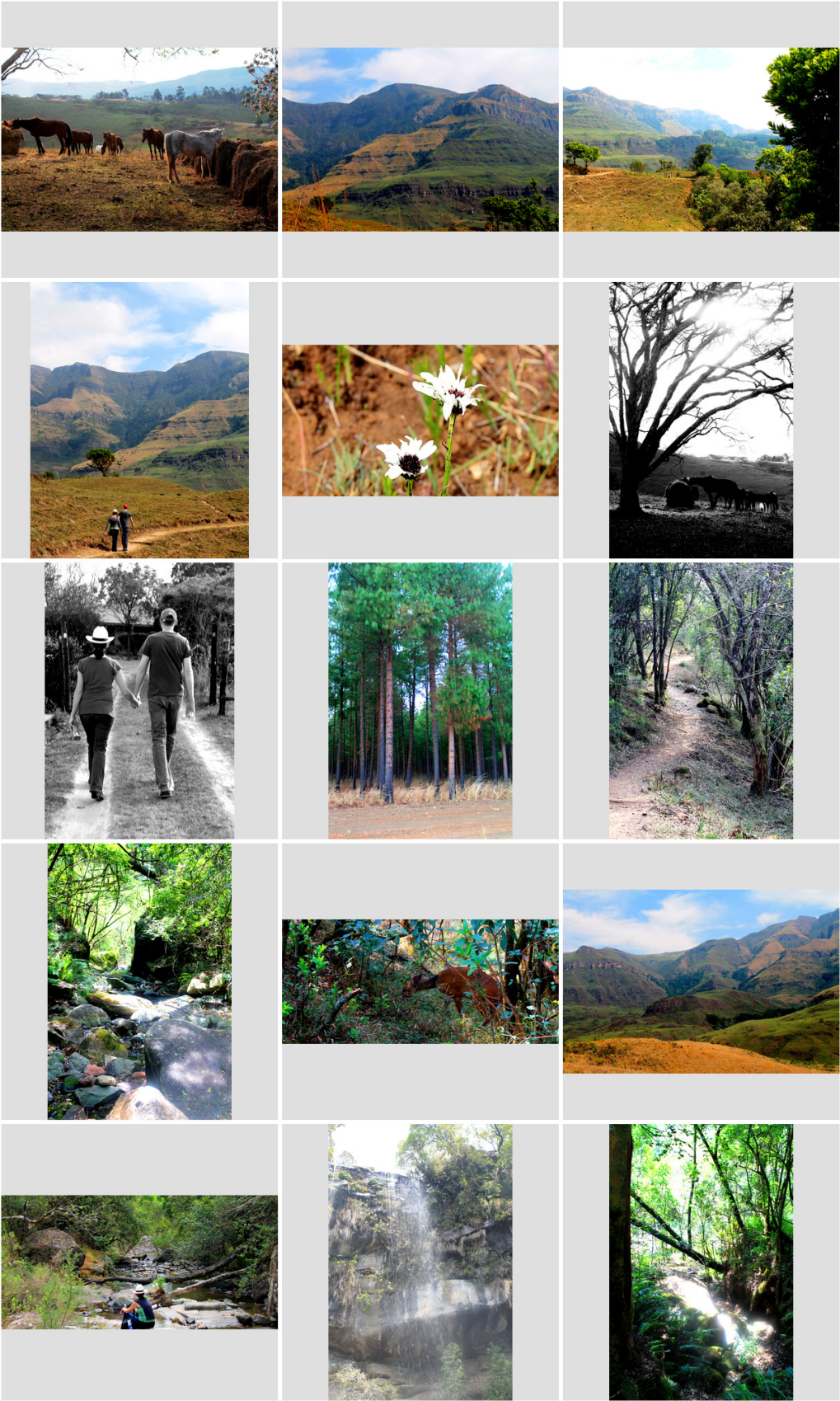


Figure a.11: Sample of photographs from participant Idril

#### A.4 ETHICAL CLEARANCE AND CONSENT FORMS



Research Office

**HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)**

R14/49 Duncan

**CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**PROTOCOL NUMBER H13/11/23**

**PROJECT TITLE**

Participation and community: media practices and global-local flow in South Africa film and television fandoms

**INVESTIGATOR(S)**

Ms C Duncan

**SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT**

Literature, Language and Media/Media Studies

**DATE CONSIDERED**

22/11/2013

**DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE**

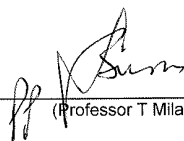
Approved Unconditionally

**EXPIRY DATE**

08/12/2015

**DATE** 09/12/2013

**CHAIRPERSON**

  
(Professor T Milani)

cc: Supervisor : Dr M Iqani

**DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)**

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10003, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES**



RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

**Study Title:**

Participation and Community: Media practices and global-local flow in South African film and television fandoms

**Researcher:**

Catherine Duncan  
University of the Witwatersrand

**Address and Contact Information:**

Room 240 WSOA Building East Campus Wits University  
011 717 4641  
082 564 6554  
catherine.duncan@wits.ac.za

**Supervisor:**

Dr Mehita Iqani  
011 717 4123  
mehita.iqani@wits.ac.za

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I am giving you this form to let you know about the research, to remind you that your participation is voluntary and to help you to make an informed decision about agreeing to be involved. You should feel free to ask me any questions you may have.

**PURPOSE OF RESEARCH:**

I have contacted you because you volunteered to be part of a research study investigating fandom in South Africa, in particular the different fan practices that involve film and television from elsewhere in the world. From this study, I hope to learn more about the kinds of things South African fans do and what they have to say about their fandoms and the local fan communities.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:**

Your participation will involve several stages:

1. A preliminary interview to help me get to know a bit more about you as a fan and your fandoms. This should take around 45 minutes and we will arrange to meet at a time and venue convenient for you.
2. At our preliminary interview I will give you a package inviting you to record different aspects of your life as a fan over a few weeks. This can include taking photos, making a note of your interactions in the world and online, noting the time and effort you put into your fandom, as well as prompts asking your opinions about fandom and the community of fans. How you use the contents of this package is entirely up to you, however I anticipate it might take a minimum of 10 to 15 minutes of your time several days a week. You will return these completed packages to me before we meet again. I will arrange payment for any material you send back to me by parcel mail, but if you would prefer to work digitally this is also very welcome. A password protected dropbox that is accessible only by you and me can be set up so you can send material via this method as well.
3. A follow up interview where you can explain to me in your own words about some of the things you recorded in the package. This should take around 60 minutes and, as before, can be arranged for a time and place that is convenient for you.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS OR RISKS:**

Being involved in this project has no direct or material benefits to you, but neither will it expose you to any unusual risks or dangers. However, I hope that you will enjoy the chance to talk about your fandom and show me some of the work you may make. You will be able to keep copies of any of these materials you make during the research such as photos or the diary etc.

## **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY:**

### **IMPORTANT:**

#### **Confidentiality**

I will record our interviews and then transcribe the audio. All of this information will be kept secure and confidential.

You are welcome to select the pseudonym that you would like to be referred to by in the report but I would suggest you don't use a handle that you might use online or in other contexts since this would make your identity apparent. In this case, while I will do everything I can to protect your identity, it is possible that other fans that are familiar with you and your work might be able to recognize you nevertheless.

#### **Photographs**

Since one of the methods of gathering information involves photography it is very important that you are aware of the implications of this.

1. I will not use images in which people can be recognized or identified visually. Where there are faces in the shot I will blur or crop these to maintain anonymity before the images are reproduced.
2. The cameras are to document any aspect of your fandom you choose and this may include friends, family and other fans. Please be mindful about informing people that these photographs are for research purposes and, wherever possible, ask for permission and let them know the photographs will be edited to protect their identity.
3. In the follow up interview you will be asked to indicate which of the photographs you have taken are:
  - NEVER to be reproduced
  - to be reproduced under certain CONDITIONS (such as blurring faces)
  - can be used AS IS.

#### **Creative Work**

If in the course of the research you might make work in the form of artworks, video edits, costumes, fiction etc. and share these with me. These will remain

your property and in the case of physical art work I will document it and return the original to you.

**YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE, SAY NO, OR WITHDRAW:**

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to say no. You can change your mind at any time and withdraw. However, if you decide you are no longer willing or able to participate in the research, please let me know as soon as possible.

**COSTS AND COMPENSATION FOR BEING IN THE STUDY:**

There is no remuneration for being involved in the study.

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:**

If you have concerns or questions about this study please contact me at the details at the top of this form.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**YOUR INFORMED CONSENT AS A PARTICIPANT:**

Before completing this consent document you should have:

- Discussed this study with the researcher
- Reviewed the information in this form
- Had the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

I understand that:

- I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time
- I have the right not to answer any questions that I do not wish to answer
- That my confidentiality will be protected
- That data will be securely stored in a password protected environment/  
locked office
- That there are no benefits/ risks to participation

I **give / do not give** my permission for the interviews to be audio recorded.

---

Name

---

Signature

---

Date

## A.5 SCHEDULE OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of things are you a fan of at the moment?
2. What does it mean to be a fan of something?
3. When was the first time that you thought about yourself as a ?fan of something??
4. Can you tell me the story of how you got introduced to [X] fandom?
5. What is it that you love about [X]?
6. Have the fandoms you are involved in changed over time?
7. Do you think you will always be involved with fan culture?
8. What kinds of things do you make or do as a fan?
9. What is it like being a fan in South Africa?
10. What can you tell me about the people you have got to know through being a fan?