

FANFICTION

David Selim Sayers
English Levels: B1-C2

Course Content

With millions of online stories, writers, and readers, fanfiction is the biggest literary movement of our day –but also the most controversial. It is illegal, because it uses copyrighted material. It is derided as artistically worthless because many authors are amateurs, juvenile, or both. And it is judged as unoriginal, because it relies on existing stories and characters. But fanfiction has a proud pedigree: many classic works of literature, from Ancient Greek tragedies to plays by Shakespeare, could theoretically be classified as fanfiction.



In this course, we will approach fanfiction as a distinct narrative genre. Drawing on folklore studies, we will determine fanfiction's place in the history of literature. We will trace how fanfiction has shaped, and continues to shape, the production of popular narratives. We will examine the legal controversies surrounding fanfiction. And last but not least, we will apply our knowledge by attempting our own fanfiction stories.

Learning Goals

This course has three main goals: (a) to impart in-depth knowledge on the topics of fanfiction and folkloric literature through readings and in-class instruction, (b) to develop critical thinking skills through assignments and in-class discussion, (c) to foster English oral and written expression and comprehension skills.

Evaluation

The course grade is based on attendance and participation (40%), written homework (30%), and an autonomy project (30%), for which you will complete your own fanfiction stories.

Sample Reading List

Burt, Stephanie. "The Promise and Potential of Fan Fiction." *The New Yorker*

Coppa, Francesca. *The Fanfiction Reader: Folk Tales for the Digital Age*

Jamison, Anne. *Fic: Why Fanfiction is Taking Over the World*

Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*

Thomas, Bronwen. "What Is Fanfiction and Why Are People Saying Such Nice Things about It?" *Storyworlds: A Journal of Narrative Studies*

Online fanfiction archives including *archiveofourown.org*, *fanfiction.net*, and others

The Rec Center, an online newsletter/website devoted to fandom and fanfiction

Transformative Works and Cultures, a scholarly journal on fanfiction