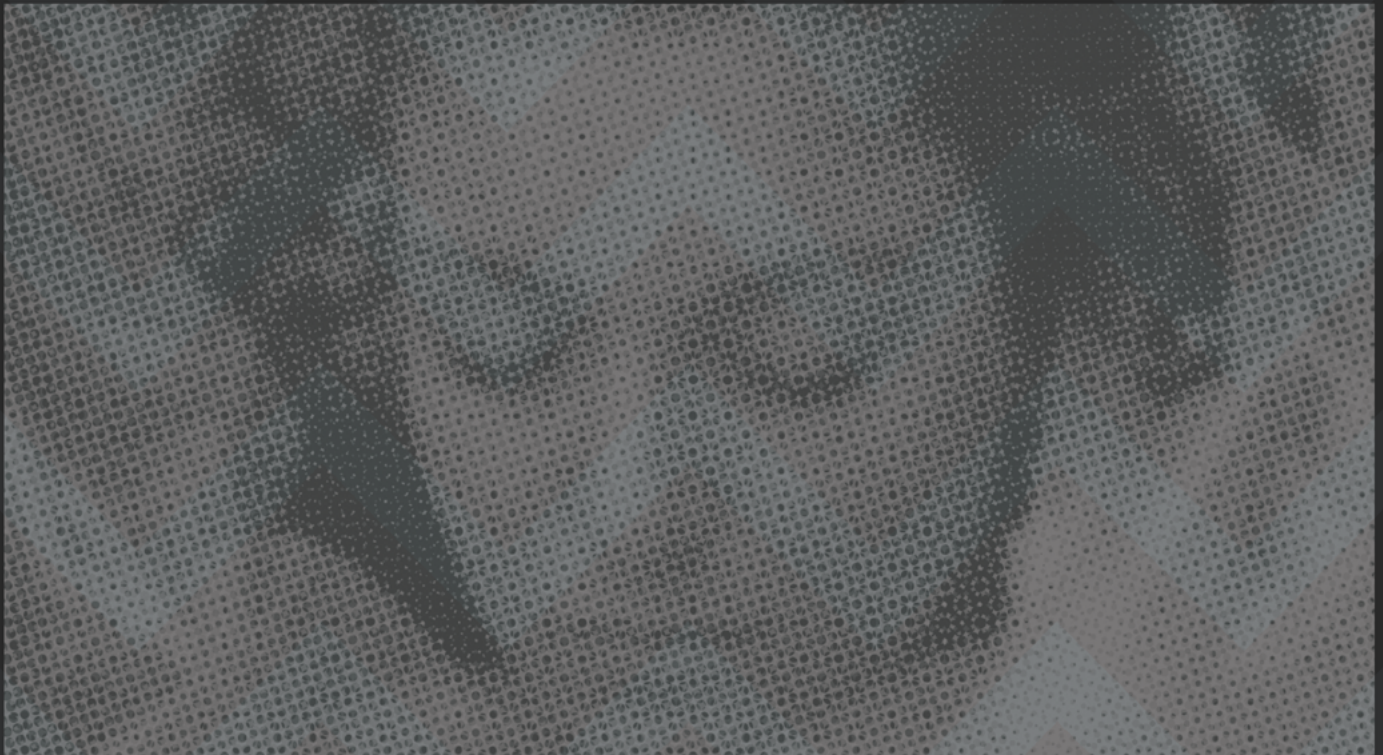# SERIES

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**Cover illustration** Francisco Javier Pastor Castillo

# INTRODUCTION: *TWIN PEAKS'* PERSISTENT CULTURAL RESONANCE

ANTHONY N. SMITH,
MICHAEL GODDARD AND
KIRSTY FAIRCLOUGH

Through taking different perspectives on the role of *Twin Peaks* (1990-1991, 2017-) within contemporary media contexts, the articles of this themed section together demonstrate *Twin Peaks'* enduring resonance within media culture. Since the airing in 1990 of its pilot episode, *Twin Peaks* has indeed proved to be a persistent cultural force. The *Sesame Street* (1969-) and *Saturday Night Live* (1975-) parodies of *Twin Peaks* that aired during the series original run reflect its prominent position in popular culture at this time (Clark, 2013: 9). Yet the continuation into the 21st century of newly produced media content offering pastiches of the Twin Peaks community, examples of which include the Japanese video game *Deadly Premonition* (2010) and the children's animated series *Gravity Falls* (2012-2016), speaks to an ongoing cultural

fascination with *Twin Peaks* (Jowett, 2015). So too does the continuation of a high degree of fan engagement and production in relation to the series. As part of contemporary digital culture, for instance, fans continue to circulate online content – e.g. screencaps, GIFs, fan art – that appropriates their favoured *Twin Peaks* elements – the Red Room, the cherry pie, the Log Lady, the damn fine cup of coffee. Jennifer Gillan, Rebecca Williams and Katriina Heljakka each reflect upon fan participation with *Twin Peaks* in their respective articles here.

*Twin Peaks'* intertextual afterlife and vibrant participatory culture is significant, and no doubt played a part in the premium cable service Showtime's decision to commission a new *Twin Peaks* series (scheduled to air in 2017, at this time of writing). But, in looking to understand *Twin Peaks'* persistent

influence within popular culture, it is important to look beyond the many direct citations of *Twin Peaks*, and observe the series' even wider impact on television culture in the decades since first airing. *Twin Peaks* has held a powerful influence over the production of original drama within US television, helping to popularise not only a distinct type of television narrative but also new ways of engaging with television drama. In terms of narrative production, the series' cryptic storytelling has served as an important influence in the years since the original series ended. In the decade prior to *Twin Peaks*, the narrative complexity of US network primetime television drama significantly increased. Following an era in which drama was often intended to be uncomplicated and therefore easily accessible to the widest possible audience, a range of so-called 'quality' dramas emerged in the 1980s designed to be more challenging and therefore more appealing to the sophisticated tastes of an educated and affluent niche audience; this context resulted in the incorporation of serialised storylines within many such dramas (e.g. *Hill Street Blues* [1981-1987]), as well as an embracing of intertextuality and arch self-reflexivity in others (e.g. *Moonlighting* [1986-1989]) (Thompson, 1996; Dunleavey, 2009).

Yet while *Twin Peaks* adhered to the precedents set by prior series via its adoption of these storytelling modes (Dunleavey, 2009: 144-147) its narrative's famed mysteriousness was highly innovative within a network television context. Layering enigma upon enigma, the series is structured as a matryoshka nesting-doll of mystery, with 'Who Killed Laura Palmer?' serving as only the first of many enticing questions that the series long withholds the answers to (Jenkins, 1995). *Twin Peaks* combines this enigma-laden plotting with its trademark narrative ambiguity (Thompson, 2003: 106-139; Curtin and Shattuc, 2009: 141), often leaving to interpretation any narrative meaning that audiences might make from the peculiar goings on in the town of Twin Peaks. Along with the ABC network's inconsistent scheduling of the series, *Twin Peaks*' inherent inscrutability likely contributed to the strong ratings decline (Telotte, 1995: 171) that led to the series' cancellation. Yet the series' storytelling approach has nonetheless served as a useful model in light of the continuous audience fragmentation that US television has faced since the 1980s onwards. The ever-increasing rise in viewer choice that has accompanied such developments as the widespread adoption of cable, digital and Internet streaming television services has led to many networks and cable channels frequently placing a high value on narratives that engender firm loyalty among audiences, even at the risk of limiting their wid-

er appeal (Hilmes, 2014: 400). As Henry Jenkins' (1995) study of *Twin Peaks* viewer practices during the original series' run observes, the series' opacity helped to foster strong commitment from viewers seeking to discover its secrets via message board speculation and the close scrutiny of VHS recordings of the series. For Jenkins, 'the many fan meta-texts that circulated on alt.tv.twinpeaks were as compelling as the aired episodes themselves. [...] [P]articipating in this virtual community became a way of increasing the intensity and density of these speculations, of building up other fans' explorations, and expanding upon their theories' (Jenkins, 1995: 66). Within industrial conditions in which such high levels of engagement have become increasingly prized, more recent series, such as *Lost* (2004-2010), *The Leftovers* (2015-2017), *Mr Robot* (2015-) and *Westworld* (2016-), have been permitted to offer their own brands of enigmatic storytelling. Challenging viewers to master their sphinx-like narratives, such series have encouraged practices of intense 'forensic fandom' (Mittell, 2015), which descend from those that formed decades ago around *Twin Peaks*. A key cultural legacy of *Twin Peaks* has therefore been the role it has served in helping to inspire certain modes of television storytelling and accompanying viewer engagement.

Each of the articles in this special section further considers via a distinct vantage point the continuing cultural relevance and influence of *Twin Peaks* within television culture. While Gillan and Heljakka focus on contemporary digitally mediated fan activities that keep the memory of the original series alive through practices of fabrication and social media dissemination, Willams and Ross Garners' articles focus instead on the events of commemoration and social media intervention leading up to the return of *Twin Peaks* after twenty five years to a much transformed televisual environment. Yet as these articles all attest, *Twin Peaks* persisted in the intervening years, in part due to the kinds of active and generative fan practices that the articles engage with.

Gillan turns her attention to the under-researched field of fan-produced GIFs and more specifically GIFs of Audrey Horne, which are then typically circulated on 'list' oriented sites like Buzzfeed. Gillan is interested to interrogate both what kind of textual relationship such practices maintain with their source texts, as well as what makes some television shows, like *Twin Peaks,* eminently 'GIF-worthy'. To do so she adapts from Jenkins (1992) the concept of 'textual poaching' and reworks it as 'textural poaching' referring to how the practice of producing GIFs based on the animation of a handful of frames is all about surface style rather than the more in-depth textual appropriation referred to by the

original concept. As Gillan puts it, "Of particular interest are GIFs created out of frame grabs that put on display Audrey's signature costuming and the eye-catching production design. … The practice involves repurposing top-of-the-mind textural content—a series' most arresting elements of costuming, set design, and dialogue—and posting it to a visual interface." These textural appropriations coupled with their social media dissemination, while not without precedents, are a new layer of fan practices, that also attest to the enduring legacy of *Twin Peaks* whose iconic production design, costuming and gestural performance make it eminently GIFworthy.

Heljakka points to a quite different practice that at first glance would seem more associated with the past than the present, namely the fabrication of *Twin Peaks* dolls that she refers to as 'Toyification'. These dolls are then used to play with and replay *Twin Peaks.* This points to a larger field of studies of play that, far from being limited to child hood, pervades adult fan practices. As she puts it, "the goal is to examine how a cult series of the '90s continues to inspire fans to re-create and immerse themselves in the fantasy by re-playing the original storylines with toys". While there is an element of DIY artisanal fabrication in these practices, since few *Twin Peaks* dolls have been commercially produced, they are also intimately connected to and played with on social media networks and specifically photo sharing sites like Flickr. As Heljakka puts it, "As shared on these platforms of social media, amateur images invite us to join in a game of mimetic practices […] At the same time, toy photography, or photoplay, presents itself not only a playful activity involving appropriation of miniature objects, but rather, a popular form of adult play." Heljakka's research of *Twin Peaks* doll playing fans suggests that not only are fan cultures inherently playful, but also that toy practices are a unique way of playing with and replaying the original series.

Garner's article turns its attention to the 25th anniversary of the original series, and the chain of events that led up to the commissioning of the new *Twin Peaks* series. However, Garner is especially interested in the practices of commemoration around *Twin Peaks* taking place in 2014, specifically associated with the release of *Twin Peaks: The Entire Mystery,* a DVD box set not only containing the entire series of the TV show and the prequel film *Fire Walk with Me* (1992), but also a disc of missing scenes from both and a strange interview, "Between Two Worlds", conducted between David Lynch and the actors who played the Palmer family in the show, who are interviewed as characters rather than performers. Garner sees this commemoration as something other than

a simple PR exercise, and instead positions it as a way of addressing complex fan expectations and anxieties, putting into play two distinct wills. According to Garner, "Regarding Twin Peaks in 2014, two discursive 'wills' clustered around the series. These were the 'will to commemorate', through which discourses of memory, nostalgia and, in some contexts, commerce became activated, and the 'will to cohere', which mobilised Romantic discourses of 'art' and authorship to support anniversary-based readings and make claims for the show's enduring value." In particular he points to the "Save the Date" campaign which alerted fans to expect something new to be happening in the *Twin Peaks* world on July 29, 2014. While this was strictly speaking only the release date of the box set, it also pointed, with its symbolism derived from both the TV series and the prequel, to anticipate "future developments in the *Twin Peaks* mythology", which ultimately took shape first though rumours then via the actual confirmation of a new series after twenty five years.

Rebecca Williams in a sense takes up her account where Garner's finishes in the events leading towards the actual new series itself. Originally scheduled for 2016, this plan seemed to have hit a wall in 2015 when David Lynch announced via Twitter that he would not be involved with the show due to a budget dispute with Showtime. Both fans and cast members from the original series protested this via social media, the latter making the widely shared "No Lynch, No Peaks!" social media campaign, spearheaded by Sherilyn Fenn. This consisted of a series of short videos that were then circulated by fans across a range of social media platforms, especially YouTube. Williams points out that this is a very interesting example of fan practices, given that it activated actors-as-fans: "The No Lynch/No Peaks campaign offers a relatively unusual opportunity to consider the celebrity/actor labour that often powers such movements and to explore *Twin Peaks'* stars as subcultural celebrities, media workers and fans of *Twin Peaks/ David Lynch*". In a sense, *Twin Peaks* fandom had come full circle, returning to the Internet in the Web 2.0 era, and using it as a vehicle not only to protest the potential axing of the series but also to insist on the centrality of Lynch as auteur (echoing frequent discussions on alt.tv.twinpeaks around the cancellation of the show back in 1991). Ultimately Lynch returned to the fold but not before animating a new generation of *Twin Peaks* fandom (whether deliberately or by accident), and, as he put it on Twitter, "it is happening again!"

Accompanying this section is a double interview conducted by Andreas Halskov with the series composer Angelo Badalamenti (who is also the composer for the new series),

and the music editor Lori Eschler Frystak. While some of the articles in this section are more focused on fan engagements with the visual aspects of the show, whether recreated as GIFs or dolls, as well as anxieties about its return, one of the key identifiers of the show that features in many of the paratexts that the show has generated in media culture is the distinctive music for the series. As Badalamenti says in the interview, you only have to hear the first two bass notes of the theme music to know you are entering the world of *Twin Peaks*. In our previous journal section on *Twin Peaks* for *Senses of Cinema*, several of the articles emphasized the sonic dimensions of the show; Agnes Malkinson (2016), for instance, points out that it is *Twin Peaks* signature music that enabled the coherence of the Georgia coffee campaign Lynch subsequently directed, featuring several of the *Twin Peaks* cast, and that was later adopted by fans as a part of the *Twin Peaks* universe. The interview goes well beyond the theme music, however, and looks especially at the use of different forms of jazz in specific moments of the show, and Badalamenti's own compositions like "Falling" that purportedly made Lynch's arm hairs stand on end, as well as the role of Julee Cruise's music within the show. The intimate portrait of Badalamenti's working relationship and intuitive communication with Lynch can be seen as one more instance of professional mutual fandom, and goes a long way to explaining the continuation of their working relationship from *Blue Velvet* (1986) to the anticipated new series of *Twin Peaks* itself in 2017.

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### Films
*Blue Velvet* (1986)
*Fire Walk with Me* (1992)

### Games
Deadly Premonition (2010)

### TV shows
*Gravity Falls* (2012-2016)
*Hill Street Blues* (1981-1987)
*The Leftovers* (2015-2017)
*Lost* (2004-2010),
*Moonlighting* (1986-1989)
*Mr Robot* (2015-)
*Saturday Night Live* (1975-)
*Sesame Street* (1969-)
*Twin Peaks* (1990-1991, 2017-)
*Westworld* (2016-)

# TEXTURAL POACHING *TWIN PEAKS:* THE AUDREY HORNE SWEATER GIRL GIFS

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**ABSTRACT**
This article aims to widen the lens of analysis of participatory culture inspired by long-arc serials like Twin Peaks. It considers GIF creation as a form of textural poaching, a new reception practice involving skimming off and repurposing top-of-the-mind content: the most arresting elements of costuming, set design, and dialogue. This behavior has become more popular as more series rely on textural storytelling and are filled with moments of excess that feel separate from the story. After an introduction to GIFs and GIF creation, it contrasts the impression of the character and series conveyed by Audrey Horne GIFs and the actual dynamics in the "Audrey's Dance" scene. It establishes that Audrey's look is most visually aligned with the Sweater Girl type, but as an allusive characterization it creates excess and calls attention to itself. Part of the "cool pop" reputation of the series may stem from the wider circulation of iconic moments of excess especially given that the GIFs detach the images from the series' uneven storytelling and its challenging surrealist sensibility.
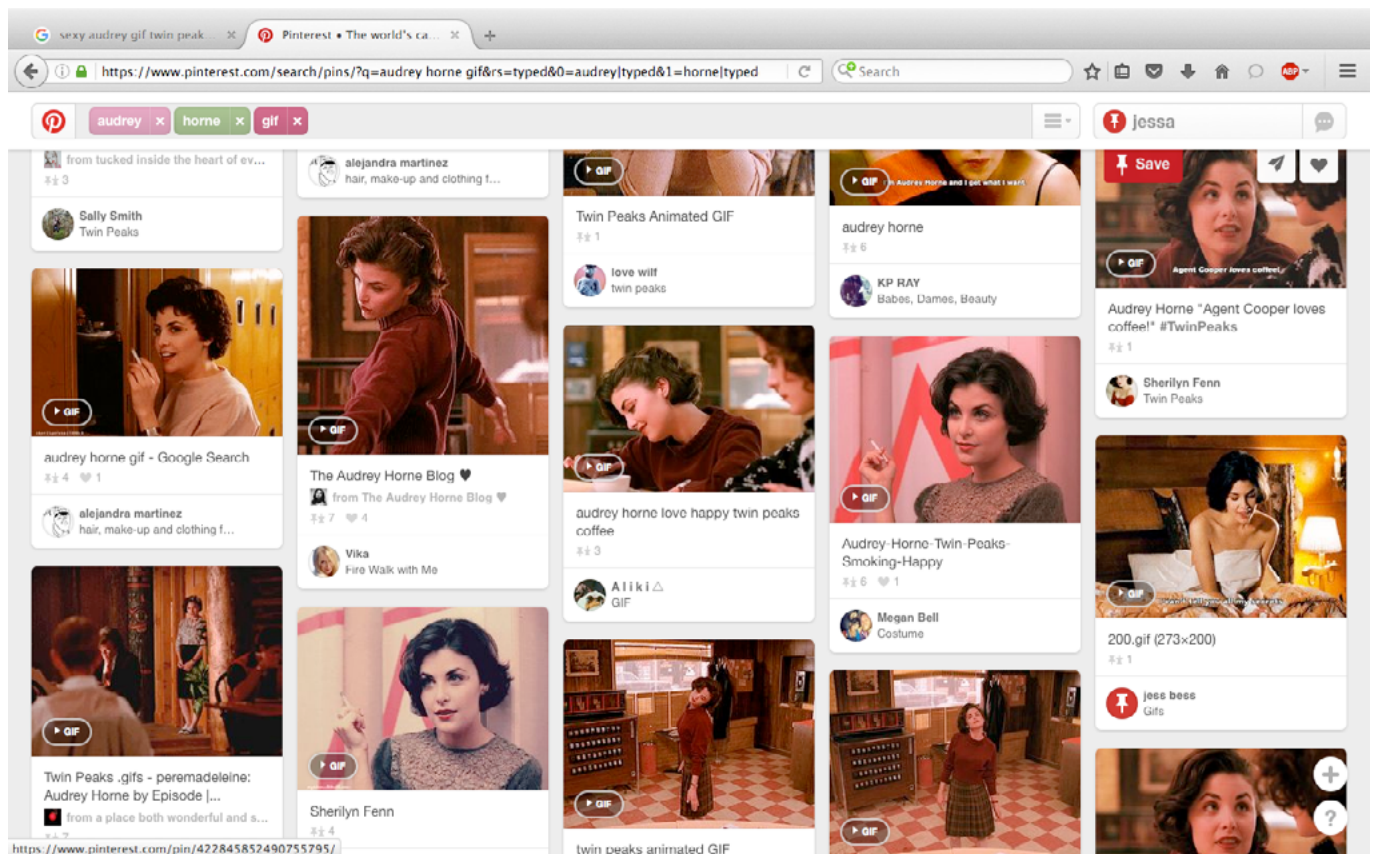
FIGURE 1. AUDREY GIFS RESULTS ON PINTEREST

Conducting a Google search for *Twin Peaks* images returns results that include sultry screen grabs of Audrey Horne in iconic moments from season one. Some of those images are actually Audrey GIFs, animated content created through layering several frames to suggest movement. Looking at the results in aggregate creates the impression that Audrey is the unambiguously sexy and self-assured character that she appears to be in the popular frame grabs. In actual episodes the unevenness in her characterization can erupt minutes after one of those GIF-worthy shots of alluring and audacious Audrey.

I contend that looking at an aggregation of frame grabs transformed into GIFs creates the

false impression that Audrey has a coherent and consistent characterization. Of particular interest are GIFs created out of frame grabs that put on display Audrey's signature costuming and the eye-catching production design—textural

elements that are most apparent when looking at an aggregation of GIFs via Google Images, Tumblr, or Pinterest[1].

In this article I use Audrey Horne GIFs as a means through which to examine the disconnect between the textural impressions of excised content circulating as GIFs and the textual implications of the same content when viewed within the series. I demonstrate that in place of straightforward characterization and textual exposition, *Twin Peaks* relies on textural storytelling, a concept I will detail later along with

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1  The original uses of GIFs in the art world and fan communities as a form of play with the surface textures of media texts emerged as part of a broader turn toward pastiche and collage associated with postmodernism  (See, for example, Jameson, 1991; Lyotard, 1984; Grossberg, 1989; Kellner, 1998; and Featherstone, 2007). The current proliferation of social media platforms has resulted in a greater degree of visibility and potential cultural power for decontextualized GIFs as their use has become a part of everyday communication

my theory of textural poaching. As a means of focus, I analyze the scene in which Audrey dances alone in the diner. In the screenshot capture above (figure 1), the scene provides 6 of the 11 visible GIFs. The diner scene is just one of several that is marked by eye-catching, but excessive costuming and set design; familiar but slightly off-kilter iconic character types and music; and intriguing, but unexplained behavior. Reviewers found these elements to be indicative of why *Twin Peaks* attracted but then could not maintain a general audience during its initial broadcast. Twenty-five years later this storytelling structure makes *Twin Peaks* an ideal content library for GIFs. Posted on platforms like Tumblr and Pinterest, GIFs can showcase *Twin Peaks*' textural delights divorced from its frustrating textual details.
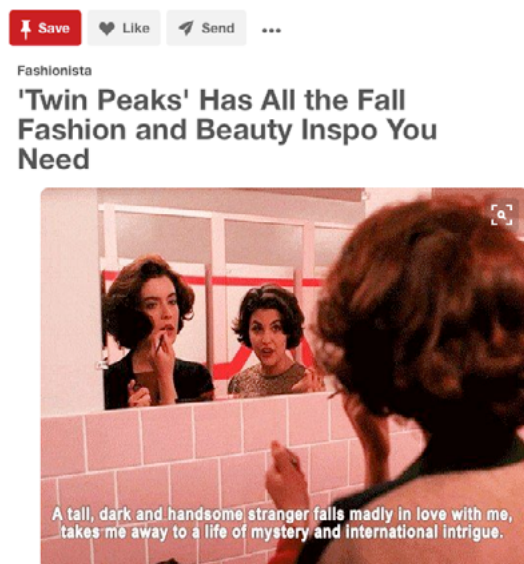


FIGURE 2. AUDREY'S LOOK AND OUTLOOK
CAPTURED ON PINTEREST

GIFs are perfectly suited for a mediasphere that values short-form video and other compressed content to circulate across platforms (Gillan, 2015; Grainge and Johnson, 2015) With access to relatively simple digital editing tools, prosumers can splice a television scene into pieces, and an episode into thousands of pieces. Yet, what is the mediating effect of the circulation of all this content detached from its original contexts? As frame grabs get circulated across web and social media platforms as part of GIFs, they become detached from any context offered by the original source and the GIF

creator. While many Audrey Horne GIFs, for example, focus on her retro look and sassy one-liners, they do not necessarily address the function of that look or those lines within the context of the series' narrative logic and its ideological complexities. They focus instead on the appealing textures of Audrey's look: her costuming, hair, facial expressions, and character blocking within a set design with its own textural attractions. The impressions such GIFs convey are compounded when viewed alongside a page of other similar images returned by a search on a Web aggregator platform. As they circulate, GIFs might have a particular impact on how audiences think about these characters if they have never seen the original source or have not seen it in a long time. To consider these issues, I focus less on GIF creation than on what results from GIF circulation, especially through general aggregation of GIFs and their potential collective impact on the public perceptions of a television program.

## 1. CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

This kind of decontextualized circulation of GIFs deserves closer examination because it has come to occupy a central place in media culture and everyday communication. Applying a media convergence perspective, I examine GIFs in the *Twin Peaks* case study that follows in order to explore how the public perception of the series' characterizations might be impacted by digital distribution of content detached from series. I look at GIFs focused on Audrey Horne, in part, because they rely on images that appear to be depicting a fairly straightforward characterization when isolated in GIFs. Yet, when the frame grabs are placed back in their original episode context, they do not seem as clear-cut.

I begin with a consideration of the impression of the character and series conveyed by Audrey GIFs and then closely examine the actual dynamics in the "Audrey's Dance" scene. I explain how Audrey's look aligns with the Hollywood "Sweater Girl" type, but as I demonstrate later, this allusive characterization exceeds the boundaries of the narrative and calls attention to itself as excess. Building on the theories of Richard Dyer, Henry Jenkins, Justin Wyatt, Jane Gaines, Stella Bruzzi, Barbara Klinger, and Anne Friedberg, I argue that its signature moments of excess work toward making *Twin Peaks* more mainstream by allowing the images to exist and be appreciated outside of the serial narrative. Part of the "cool pop" reputation of the series may stem from the wider circulation of its iconic moments of excess separate from the

series itself, especially given that the GIFs detach the images from the series' uneven storytelling and its challenging surrealist sensibility.

I contend that *Twin Peaks* is intriguing source material for GIF creators, as the series is structured around interpretive gaps. Although its tagline is "full of secrets", its storytelling structure is full of ellipses. As I will demonstrate later, these ellipses might hold the key to interpreting a town "full of secrets", but they also might signal that *Twin Peaks'* real secret is that there are no concrete answers, no easy assessments of character or motivation. The general frustrations with the series can be attributed in part to this structural feature, but the ellipses disappear in GIF form, potentially making GIFs more satisfying versions of *Twin Peaks'* characters. GIFs are efficient, says GIPHY chief operating officer founder Adam Leibsohn, "because they fill in interpretive gaps" (Satariano, 2016: 57). In my reading of the diner scene, I address what happens to the ellipses in characterization and storytelling in *Twin Peaks* (and by extension in other similarly nuanced serial television) when frames are poached from their original open-ended context and put into more static and closed forms.

## 2. TEXTURAL POACHING THEORY

Throughout this article I point to the ways GIFs capture the allure of the textural complexity of the chosen frames, showcasing the visual appeal of moments that spark enough fascination to circulate more broadly. I highlight that I am using the word textural as a way to introduce my theory that the proliferation of web platforms with visually oriented interfaces has prompted an uptick in a behavior I call textural poaching. The practice involves repurposing top-of-the-mind textural content--a series' most arresting elements of costuming, set design, and dialogue—and posting it to a visual interface. Textural poaching is terminology that builds on Henry Jenkins' (1992) famous theory about fans who poach media content in order to rework it within their own creative productions. My theory builds on this idea, but makes a key distinction. Textural poaching pivots on the appropriation of the textural elements of the look and feel of a shot or sequence of shots whereas textual poaching focuses more on appropriating elements of a story world or a characterization and utilizing them within original content. Although similar to textual poachers who traverse intellectual property that is not their own, textural poachers are more likely to use top-of-the-mind images and dialogue snippets, and in doing so

circulate more of a textural impression of a series, the visual and tactile sense of how it looks and feels.

Jenkins developed his range of initial observations about textual poaching and other participatory culture activities which he observed as he participated in an early Web community that emerged in response to *Twin Peaks'* initial broadcast airing in 1990-91. Jenkins later complicated and augmented the theory (2006, 2012, 2013). Scholars (see, for example, Coppa, 2008; Hanmer, 2014; Russo, 2009; Stein & Busse, 2009; Gray, 2010) have broadly built on Jenkins' theories and studied audiences who reposition elements of mainstream television series so that they better serve their unmet needs and desires. These prosumers take ownership of poached television content for use in their own creative production and/or media commentary. Some stick closely to the story and characterization, but extend it. Others create alternate universes to flesh out themes or characterization only hinted at or left unexplored in the original. Most know the original well, in some cases better than the series' writers. They see their creative productions as acts of reclamation of the embedded potential in the characterization or story world, and purposely offer negotiated or oppositional readings. Through textual poaching these viewers "transform the experience of watching television into a rich and complex participatory culture" (Jenkins, 1992: 23). Such behavior has been a popular site of academic study because it typically involves the "transformative use of existing source material" (Jenkins, 2012).

Jenkins' original textual poacher paradigm depicts textual poaching to be a response to some frustrating element of the original work. It could be motivated by fandom or anti-fandom and could take the form of homage or critique (Gray, 2010). As Jenkins (1992: 23) puts it, "because the texts continue to fascinate, fans cannot dismiss them from their attention but rather must find ways to salvage them for their interests".

## 3. FORENSIC FANDOM

This article's consideration of Audrey GIFs as textural poaching and of *Twin Peaks* as reliant on textural storytelling aims to complement the existing academic commentary focused on the textual engagement of viewers who dedicate an extensive amount of time and creative energy to watching for and analyzing the nuances of a television series (see, for example, Mittell, 2009; Ross, 2009; Jenkins, 2006; Gillan, 2010; and Hills, 2015). Jason Mittell (2015) uses the term forensic fandom to describe, "a mode of television engagement en-

couraging research, collaboration, analysis, and interpretation". Discussing *Lost* and the new *Battlestar Galactica* (BSG), Mittell (2015) argues that these types of complex "programs create magnets for engagement", encouraging "fans to drill into the mythology" and post commentary on an official Wiki or on "countless blogs or online forums". Mittell notes that this behavior is confined to "the most dedicated" viewers, but their voices carry: "their intensity rises in positing theories and interpretations about the story world and its potential outcomes, or debating the show's representational politics or social commentary". While he frames their engagement in textual terms, his comments imply that fan interpretations have power because of the broad circulation they have online.

Assessing the motivations for viewers of *BSG* and *Sherlock* to engage in time-consuming reception behaviors, Bertha Chin (2014) describes how fans accrue status within their communities for their deep understanding of series as evidenced on their wikis and websites. Jenkins (1995), David Lavery (1995), and David Bianculli (1992) make similar claims about the intensity and dedication of viewers of *Twin Peaks* who came together online to dissect the textual nuances of the series during the early 1990s before the Web became a global platform for spreading content and commentary. As one of these fans, Jenkins (1995) closely observed how the web community worked toward a collective interpretation, commenting via the text-based interface of Usenet. Fast forward twenty-five years and the web interfaces of Tumblr, Pinterest, and YouTube, among others, not only allow, but also encourage visual commentary. These user-friendly interfaces and the broad availability of simple digital editing tools have led to an increase in textural poaching of visually arresting frames from television and film. The content spreads further and further as GIFs posted to Tumblr get captured by other aggregator platforms like Google Images and reposted on viewers' social media spaces and web sites.

Mittell (2015) focuses on differentiating spreading and drilling into media content, noting that BSG inspired "spreadable offshoots", including a spoof video "requiring no depth of story-world knowledge". GIFs fall somewhere in the middle as they can reflect deep knowledge of the source text and target other loyal viewers of the original series. GIFs can also attract and entertain general viewers who have only a passing knowledge of the series, either from actually watching it at some point in the past or from secondhand exposure to it through the commentary and content circulated by others.

While Tumblr and other sites have popularized GIFs, they have been utilized by artists for decades (Saidon and Sitharan,

2004; Kac, 1995; Eppink, 2014; Walker, 2014), and their work has come to more general attention in recent years with press coverage of gallery shows like the one in London in 2014 (Wainwright, 2014). GIF art also plays a role in fan communities. In a post to *Flow*, Louisa Stein (2016) addressed how Tumblr's interface helped mainstream the circulation of fan created GIF sets, or "sets of images, sometimes animated, sometimes not, arranged in a grid of sorts to communicate as a whole". Tumblr, which utilizes "infinite scroll" rather than next buttons, is a platform made for GIF sets, she says, as "the interface allows for easy juxtaposition" (Stein, 2016). Writing about GIFs that set images to lyrics, Stein argues that they parallel early fan vids (Stein, 2015). These GIF sets rely on a loyal viewer's memory of the scene and song "rather than reproducing extensive lyrics and a complex play of associations" (Stein, 2016). In this way, interpreting these kinds of GIFs aligns with what Paul Booth (2012) says of the reception requirements for mashups: "we as audiences must be knowledgeable about both sources, as well as the convergence of them, in order to make sense of the final product". Writing specifically about "GIF fic", the combination of multiple GIFs to create a storyline, Booth (2015: 26) says that a pastiche is created "based both on semantic reproduction of textual elements and syntactic appropriation of ideological moments from a media text". The resulting GIF fic reproduces "the specific textual moments from the original text" and relies on the audience's understanding of the dominant messages associated with those moments (2015: 27). GIF creators may intentionally appropriate ideological moments, but general users recirculating those GIFs are not necessarily aware of the underpinnings of the images. Whereas Booth and Stein offer significant insights into the creative motivations and goals of GIF creators and their role within fan communities, my interest is in the mediating effect of the general circulation of the content they create.

Stein and Booth look at how GIF sets and GIF fic work toward "telling an extended story", but GIF users who grab the GIFs made by others are typically focused on "crafting a moment" (Walker, 2016). The moment crafted may have little to do with engaging the ideological complexity of the original, especially if the GIF is utilized as part of a breezy commentary or a social media communication strategy.

## 5. **AGGREGATORS AND LISTORIALS**

Let's return to the aggregate impressions conveyed by Google image search results. Clicking through the images reveals that

FIGURE 3. AUDREY HORNE SMOKING IN THE GIRLS' ROOM: SEXY AND CONFIDENT

many have been grabbed for use in various hybrids of creative work crossed with commentary. Frame grabs from the diner and bathroom scenes are popular visuals in *Twin Peaks*-themed listorials, on-line commentary broken into list form and illustrated with video snippets, frame grabs, or GIFs. *The Huffington Post* has three GIFs of a sweater-clad Audrey looking very retro in its "11 Reasons to (Re)Watch *Twin Peaks*". The purpose of this kind of listorial is to offer commentary, but make it more appealing by breaking it into a cheeky list. The web-only magazine *Paste* placed Audrey and her signature saddle shoes in its number two slot in "The Looks that Made Twin Peaks". Their Audrey is characterized by "wit, allure and smarts to back it up". The title image is one of the most popular GIFs: Audrey smoking in the girls' room, while talking to high school classmate Donna Hayward.

A quick web search reveals that the most common Audrey images have her outfitted in one of her signature sweaters, and the captions offered in *New York* magazine's tribute to *Twin Peaks*' sweaters capture the kinds of characterizations associated with Audrey: sexy, sassy, sultry, seductive, and passionate (Lange, 2014)..Many blog posts use these terms and echo Angela Bayout's assessment (2013: 22, 26, 27) that Audrey, with her "voluptuous bob and twinkling eyes", is a "saucy", "unapologetic", "agent provocateur in schoolgirl garb" (See, for example, Miranda, 2016; 18 Reasons, 2016; Van Schlit, 2013; Inspirado, 2014; Jane, 2014; Brandes, 2007). Similar descriptions proliferate on style sites like Polyvore and blogs posted to Esty offering curated looks that capture Audrey's "schoolgirl-meets-vixen charm" (Bayout 2013: 22).

This combination comes across in a glance she gives when dancing alone in the Double R Diner. The look is typically taken to signify what Tim Gunn (2012: 234) calls the "faux innocence" of Classic Hollywood's "Sweater Girl": tight mock-necked sweater, plaid skirt, and saddle shoes. Adding to the retro effect in the episode, Audrey dances alone to music supposedly emanating from a diner jukebox. The music in the episode is actually Angelo Badalamenti's contrapuntal instrumental composition, "Audrey's Dance".

As still frames or GIFs circulate as part of listorials or on image-driven sites such as Tumblr, how does their broad circulation re-shape the memory of past TV or impact general public perceptions of a character, especially if consuming GIFs is not accompanied by watching or re-watching the original source text? Note, for example, that Donna is just outside the frames of Audrey dancing in the diner, although that significant detail is not typically captured in GIFs made out of Audrey dancing or sitting at the diner counter. These omissions indicate that GIFs and other snippets of online content convey the textural feel of a series, but not necessarily the textual position of a chosen shot, costume, or line of dialogue.

## 6. EVERYDAY USES OF GIFS

Before detailing the differences between Audrey as GIF and Audrey in the diner scene, let me clarify a bit more about how GIFs work in general and why they appeal. Jesse Walker (2016) explains, "the most popular GIFs are tiny snippets from movies and TV, ripped from one context and plugged into another" so that they function as "a disposable little gag to stick in a Tumblr post or a Buzzfeed article". The fact that GIFs are detached from the original context from which they take their textual meaning matters less in fan spaces where everyone has a deep familiarity with the source, but is more significant when the images get scooped up and re-circulated by interfaces like Google Images. Aggregate searches that return a proliferation of very similar frames create the impression that GIFs are accurate reflections of the original's characterizations and thematics. This effect has the potential to create misleading, but hard-to-dislodge impressions of a series among potential viewers or audiences with vague recollections of the original.

*Twin Peaks*, like many of today's self-proclaimed quality television serials, provides great source material for GIFs. It gives extra attention to textural details within shots that linger long enough to invite admiration of the artful compo-

sition and speculation about the implications of the visual storytelling. It is filled with moments of excess in which the shot composition, costuming, or music feels separate from the story, drawing audience attention to the texture of these elements and keeping the focus there rather than moving the story forward. *Twin Peaks* relies heavily on such textural excess, thereby making it an especially appealing content library for "breezy, image-driven sites such as Buzzfeed" (Satariano, 2015: 57). The Audrey GIFs in '18 Reasons Why Audrey Horne Was the Best Part of Twin Peaks' (2016), for example, enable the chosen snippets of shot sequences and dialogue to embody Audrey's ability to "sass with ease in any situation", "to command attention just by standing still" (see figure 6) and to be "more clued up" than her friends (see figure 4).

Facebook only added GIF sharing capabilities in May 2015, signaling that it is only in the past few years that GIFs began to be broadly circulated. GIFs now sit alongside emojis in the content library that comes standard in the text-messaging interface of recent iPhone operating systems. A GIF cycles through a series of stills (and sometimes static text) to suggest animation, making it a more advanced form of communication than an emoji. Like emojis and memes, GIFs "[swap] out text for visuals" and, in some cases, add a caption or subtitle (Johnson, 2015). *Business Week*'s Adam Satariano (2016: 56) describes GIFs as "seconds-long, looping video clips that people text when words are too hard to conjure or quick shots of a shivering Leonardo DiCaprio in *The Revenant* better convey how cold you are". He adds that it has become "a mostly wordless way to emote via text, snapchat, Gchat, or email" (57). This example indicates that users of GIFs do not need to recall characters' names or even see source texts to incorporate them into their social media communication strategies. A typical everyday use of GIFs is to click on one provided by one's phone interface or an aggregator like GIPHY and employ it as a cool shortcut for signaling a mood, a state of mind, or a look. Selecting a GIF in this way to express a response (*Wow!*, *Really?*, *Yes!*, *What?*) requires no knowledge of the textual source.

## 7. WHY TWIN PEAKS?

What is it about the look, sensibility, set design, costuming, and storytelling of *Twin Peaks* that makes it both so tempting and so elusive for the GIF creator poaching its images and lines and the GIF user keeping it in circulation? GIFs are about "crafting a moment", which makes *Twin Peaks* ideal source
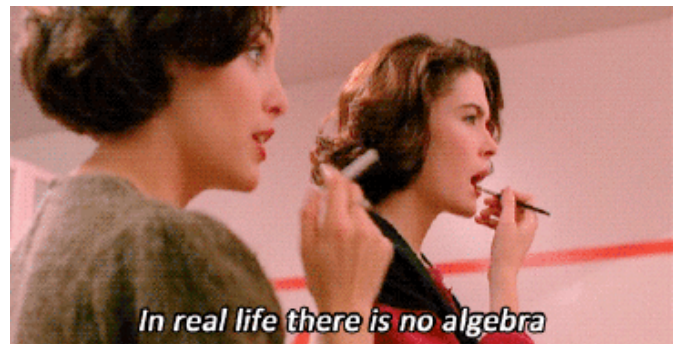


FIGURE 4. GIF QUIPS: AUDREY AND DONNA AS 'GOOD GIRLS GONE BAD'?



FIGURE 5. AUDREY "TRANCE DANCING" IN THE DOUBLE R DINER.

material as it often plays like a series of crafted moments, many of which create excess that stops the story instead of seamlessly moving it forward. For me, Audrey Horne embodies those moments, but perhaps only because like many of these GIF creators, my memory bank of *Twin Peaks* moments all seem to involve Audrey: dancing in the retro diner, smoking in the girls' room, and sidling up to the handsome FBI agent. While this article focuses only on Audrey's Dance, *Twin Peaks* is filled with plenty of other out of context sequences, dialogue, and music cues. It is not always clear how this series of moments adds up to a coherent story, but it is clear that it is hard to forget the series' moments of excess.

Excess occurs when moments or scenes can be easily extracted from the narrative because they feel like separate

modules. As Justin Wyatt (1994: 40, 60) explains, these moments create a rupture that "distances the viewer from the traditional task of reading the [film's] narrative". As a result, "the viewer becomes sewn into the 'surface' of the film, contemplating the style of the narrative and the production (60). On a textural level, the shot composition in the dancing in the diner scene relies on several appealing textures—the nubby sweaters worn by Audrey and Donna, their blunt, but bouncy short haircuts, the punctuated music, and the oversaturated lighting. Overall, the scene offers a series of very appealing elements perfect for use in GIFs. As Audrey dances dreamily, the shot is framed to call attention to the contrasting tiles on the floor and the jukebox in the background. The minute-long dance translates well to a GIF because it is wordless and because of the vagueness of what the dance means and of the significance of Audrey's outfit, pose, and behavior. Some GIFs imply that Audrey's "trance dancing" is the epitome of self-possession and sexual confidence and see her as unconcerned with making a spectacle of herself while she dances for her own pleasure.

This kind of attention to textural details is a feature of the work of David Lynch, who came to TV presold from his films, which established his prestige reputation as surrealist artist attracted to stylistic excess (Nochimson, 1997; McGowan, 2007; Corliss, 1990; Leonard, 1990; Weinstock, 2015). Creating subtle slippages between textural impression and textual implications is part of Lynch's storytelling strategy, which relies heavily on beautiful, but ambiguous shots and sequences. Lynch is known for using playful, allusive, or intentionally ambivalent images that entice viewers (Richardson, 2004; Dolan, 1995; Telotte, 1995; Mactaggart, 2010), but the more challenging textual implications prove more elusive and are often only available to those willing to engage in forensic fandom (Holt 2008; Bianculli, 1992; Dolan, 1995; Savoy, 2015).

Scholarship has taken the forensic approach to the series and addressed the textual complexities of *Twin Peaks* and its uses of postmodernism (Richardson, 2004; Collins, 1992; Reeves et al., 1995; Blake, 2015). There has been little discussion of how its textual density might be linked to its textural complexity, or why its arresting visuals ask us to stop and look at them as intriguing images in their own right.

My assessment of *Twin Peaks* is that its moments of excess are more significant than its nods to narrative logic. Comparing the GIF content excerpted from Lynch's careful shot sequences with in-series characterizations, as I do in the diner scene, indicates that Lynch adds an odd undercurrent of dimensionality to seemingly one-dimensional characters

in *Twin Peaks*. Those undercurrents become clearer over the course of the series, but are not readily apparent from GIFs made out of frame grabs. I contend that Lynch's allusive characterizations are especially GIF-worthy but that GIFs are not always worthy of *Twin Peaks* because they do not clearly convey that Lynch employs iconic types who exceed the boundaries of their typecasting. Audrey's look is often reminiscent of Classic Hollywood's Sweater Girl, for instance, but her characterization is more complex than this or any of the other types into which she is slotted in GIFs. This textural storytelling structure emerges in part from the choices made by Lynch's longtime collaborator, Hollywood costume designer Patricia Norris, who helped establish Audrey's initial "storytelling wardrobe" (Gaines, 1990)—retro, demure, out of time.





FIGURE 6. AUDREY PLAYS THE NYMPHET, PURPOSEFULLY MANIPULATING MIDDLE-AGED MEN

## 8. **AUDREY HORNE, SWEATER GIRL**

Audrey's costuming functions as excess in *Twin Peaks* because elements of it call to mind another era. In her typical outfit of a fitted sweater and skirt worn with saddle shoes, Audrey is the "Sweater Girl" embodying "the sexy-ordinary combination". As Richard Dyer (1992: 81) puts it, "a sweater is not a glamour garment", but it could become "blatantly erotic, showing off the breasts, clinging to the waist". Tim Gunn (2012: 233) explains that fitted sweaters show off curves but not the flesh itself, a position that allowed the Sweater Girl to "play the girl next door and be sexy at the same time". Dyer (1992: 81) says, "The girl next door was that never-never sex bombshell, plain-knit and voyeur's delight were one". This duality is picked up in many GIFs and becomes the focus of countless *Twin Peaks*' themed posts on fashion blogs and Pinterest curations. Broadly representative, the posts by Stephanie Van Schlit (2013) depict Audrey as "an innocent femme fatale in vintage inspired garb" and describe her trees cardigan as "encapsulating the feminine glamour of a bygone era". Her overall assessment of Audrey's "sultry swagger and confidence" aligns with the caption: "I'm Audrey Horne, I Get What I Want". The sentiment is left implicit in many of the GIFs using Audrey's most blatant Sweater Girl moment, when she purposefully stands in a corner and distracts a room full of her father's potential investors, who all turn to gape at her.

The Sweater Girl "image itself becomes in part the subject matter" of the long-arc storytelling, as does Audrey's pleasure in her outfit (Dyer, 1992: 92). Applying Dyer's theory (1992: 88), we can see that the Sweater Girl's "play on badness and the sexy-ordinary configuration" is a readable characterization, but one that also "courts incoherence in its construction" of Audrey who is more complex and empowered than her eroticized appearance implies (Spooner, 2016). Her outfits sometimes become what Stella Bruzzi (1997: xv) calls "spectacular interventions that interfere with the scenes in which they appear". *Bustle* captures the contradiction of the "things aren't what they seem" look of Audrey, describing her as "born at the intersection of 1940's femme fatale and schoolgirl [...] or rather schoolgirl trying to be a 1940's femme fatale" and enjoying the performance. Jason Holt (2008: 249) comments on how many of the series' female characters display the "tell-tale trappings, allure, poses, and behaviors, in fashionable fashion, of the true noir bad girl". Yet, these noirish elements are only a surface overlay because, as Holt (2008: 250) explains, "the femme fatale mystique seems less intrinsic to the female characters in *Twin Peaks* than a stylized



FIGURE 7. AUDREY'S ROMANTIC CLICHÉS AND INVESTIGATIVE PLANS

aesthetic veneer. Yet, GIFs often poach images (like any of the smoking shots) that emphasize this veneer as if it is a full characterization rather than a commentary on the manufacture of iconic types in Hollywood. Dyer (1992: 80) explains that the point of most Hollywood representations is to "disguise the manufacturing so that they simply appear to be what their images proclaim them to be", although sometimes it's "beguiling to see the strings being pulled". Along those lines, the oddity of the beguiling costuming in *Twin Peaks* makes us wonder if Audrey is the character depicted by GIFs showcasing those outfits. Close attention to her behavior and her conversations always suggest her sexual immaturity, even as her outfits make her seem more the sexy schoolgirl seeking out sexual experiences than one prone to romantic fantasies.

Gunn's (2012: 234) assessment of "the faux innocence of the sweater girl" may apply to the campy scene in which

FIGURE 8. BEN AND AUDREY HORNE: CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES CARDIGAN?

Audrey distracts the Norwegian investors, but there is more of a slippage between the textural appeal and textual inaccuracy of such an assessment in the diner scene. Audrey shows a complex side of the Sweater Girl, which Dyer (1992: 80) says is a type that can "speak to dominant contradictions in social life—experienced as conflicting demands, contrary expectations, irreconcilable but equally held values". Audrey's fundamental contradiction is that she is unable to sexually mature and to remain "daddy's little girl". As she does not seem fully conscious of that dynamic, she seems mystified by her father's rejection and dismissal: "I lost you years ago".

Audrey still yearns to be close to her father, later confessing: "All I ever really wanted was for him to love me". Did that loss occur when now eighteen-year-old Audrey became an adolescent? Does distancing himself enable him to repress his uncomfortable awareness of her sexuality or of the sexual interest she arouses in other men his age? Having this overt father daughter tension in the Ben and Audrey relationship might be a way to point subtly to the hidden father daughter incest in the Leland and Laura relationship. This troubling revelation is also a plausible explanation for Leland's murder of his daughter and it contextualizes Laura's secret sexual life including her work at a brothel, which Audrey discovers is owned by her father. None of these troubling textual details find their way into Audrey GIFs, which circulate outside the context of the long-arc story.

## 9. AUDREY AS AGENT PROVOCATEUR

Choosing images for GIFs works by associational recall. To create one you don't necessarily have to remember the textual implications of the poached content. In its simplest form, a GIF associates a mood, look, sensibility, sense of humor or irony with a remembered shot, costume, pose, facial expression, memorable line. Using a decontextualized Audrey GIF in this way relies on the assertion of fellow feeling, of implying that this character's look, or mood resembles or exaggerates the user's own. This process of identification relies on disavowal: a denial of the difference between GIFs' deployment of iconic Audrey and the more layered characterization that evolves over the initial episodes of the series. This disavowal allows Audrey to function, to borrow from Anne Friedberg's spectatorship theory, as "a possible suit for the substitution/misrecognition of self" (1990: 42). Putting on the suit is literal for some viewers who outfit themselves as Audrey, the Sweater Girl, and post the images along with commentary on Audrey (see Inspirado, 2014; and Jane, 2014). The behavior would not surprise Friedberg (1990: 41) who says, "the ego-ideal represented is not unified or whole, but a synecdochal signifier". Read through this model Audrey's sweater and her saddle shoes function metonymically as they are her "most highly commoditized part(s)".

The saddle shoes appear in most of the web-curated outfits inspired by Audrey and several GIFs poach the staged shot in which Audrey changes in front of her high school locker from saddle shoes to red heels. In the episode the shoes are showcased in a campy way as if to point to the false dichotomies often set up between good girl and bad girls.

The too easy characterizations, costume changes, and character contrasts do not hold up under analysis. The sweaters are used more subtly in the episodes to create as well as undercut Audrey's contrast with Donna, thereby calling attention to both the artificiality of the good girl / bad girl binary and the small-town labeling of any sexually active teen as a "good girl gone bad". Perhaps the purpose of the interplay between the two young women is not intended to reinforce the binary, but to offer metacommentary on the effects of a good girl-bad girl spectrum on the way young women are perceived and the way they perceive of themselves. These perceptions are at play in the dancing in the diner scene.

GIFs using images from Audrey's Dance often make it seem as if Audrey is alone, her eyes closed as she "trance dances" to the music. The actual sequence intercuts the shots of Audrey with reaction shots from Donna Hayward and her

parents. This reveals that Audrey is not just dancing for her own pleasure, but she is also being watched. Does the scene represent the disavowed pleasures of dancing for herself because for a teenager who looks like Audrey, everything she does is sexualized, mediated both through her preconceived notions of sexy dancing and through spectators' ideas of sexual signaling and posturing? She is certainly attracting the attention of Mrs. Hayward who gestures with her head to get her husband to turn around and look at Audrey making a spectacle of herself. Their reactions are a bit vague beyond some level of negative judgment—whether it is of Audrey the manipulative rich girl, Audrey the unstable kook, or Audrey the threat to their daughter. Donna is staring at Audrey who seems lost in the music until she looks up suggestively and directly at Donna. In GIFs, the look is often interpreted as something like, "join me in being a good girl gone bad".

In binary depictions Donna is the good girl next door. In other interpretations Donna and Audrey are both good girls gone bad or badass girls, bucking the small-town expectations of young women. After all, Donna was the best friend of the sexually adventurous Laura, who was selling sex at an underground brothel and cheating on her quarterback boyfriend with numerous older men and James Hurley, an unthreatening teenage James Dean type. After Laura's death it is Donna not Audrey who starts dating James.

Some GIFs imply that Audrey is an "agent provocateur", deliberately behaving controversially in order to provoke a reaction. She definitely has the potential to inspire sexual thoughts, occupying the position both as an object of desire and as the "ego ideal" for the way she seems to assert herself as a desiring subject despite those who try to control or limit her. In *Twin Peaks*' larger surrealist structure Audrey is a more nuanced kind of agent provocateur who may be provoking Donna to acknowledge things she has been repressing. Just before she began dancing, Audrey asks Donna in a seemingly nonchalant way, "Did Laura ever talk about my father?". Audrey knows there is something to be investigated about the relationship between her father Ben and Laura, and she believes it is of a sexual nature.

Has Audrey's "casual remark" about her father followed up by her uncomfortably long dance rattled Donna and made her start putting together details about Laura's secret life? Does the troubled expression that displaces Donna's earlier wry smile register her realization and desire to disavow that Laura's fate is entwined with male attitudes toward young female sexuality, and the corollary that this attitude might extend to some fathers in relation to their daughters? As she



FIGURE 9. THE DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE TEXTURAL AND TEXTUAL GAZE



*Isn't it too dreamy?*

FIGURE 10. ENJOYING THE SENSUAL MUSIC AND SIGNPOSTING THE SURREAL STORY FOR DONNA AND US?

considers the implications of Laura's secret sex life, is Donna also beginning to acknowledge oddities she's noticed in the Laura and Leland relationship? Donna (and the viewer of the episode) may be challenged here to pursue a solution to the narrative enigma, which is not simply who killed Laura Palmer. It is also: why did Laura evolve into someone who found a mix of sex and violence attractive and why did she enter into sexual relationships that mixed the two?

Audrey is already pursuing this line of thought, considering the broader implications of her father's relationship with Laura and its connection to his sexual attitudes. In several

scenes Audrey plays "agent provocateur" in relation to her father, trying to force him to reveal himself. Audrey poses as a call girl-in-training at his brothel and narrowly avoids a sexual encounter with him, which creates excess around the topic of incest. It opens the door to narrativize the incest in the Palmer family, but it is only momentarily acknowledged before the unsatisfying supernatural possession plot is tacked on as an unlikely explanation. When Sheriff Truman points out how hard it is to accept that outcome, Agent Cooper counters, "Is it easier to believe that a father raped and murdered his daughter. Is that that any more comforting?" The exchange illustrates how complex socio-sexual concerns are acknowledged and disavowed in *Twin Peaks*. Like other commentators, I am not sure what to make of *Twin Peaks'* treatment of young female sexuality and incest, (Stevenson, 1995; George, 1995; and Bainbridge and Delaney, 2012, 2016, among others). I raise the issues as a means of demonstrating that close analyses of *Twin Peaks* make it more difficult to revel in the textural appeal of the frame grabs poached for GIFs when one realizes they encode within them much more troubling thematic concerns such as sexualized father daughter relations.

## 10. SURREALISM AND SIRKIAN CONTAINMENT

While some GIFs call attention to Audrey's reference to dreamy music in the diner scene, they do not provide the larger context of Lynch's interest in dream states. Mikhail Skoptsov (2015) demonstrates that Lynch often plays with how repressed knowledge erupts in dreams. It is a topic other scholars address in their commentaries on Lynch and surrealism (Nochimson, 1997; McGowan, 2007 & 2016). When Audrey makes the GIF-worthy comment, "isn't it dreamy", and a few minutes later dances alone as if in a dream-state, these textural elements signal that we need to interpret Audrey's dance in a more surreal way. Following Skoptsov's theories about Lynch's surreal storytelling, we can interpret the excessive music and dance as provocations for us to acknowledge something repressed. McGowan (2016: 145) claims, "moments of excess" expose "the obscene underside of the social reality" that "we aren't used to seeing". The diner scene, in a more subtle way than the brothel scene, is part of the textural storytelling of *Twin Peaks*, whose excesses force us to acknowledge the obscene, and the desire to do forbidden things.

Audrey's knowing glance at Donna is also directed at viewers, acting as a textural clue to the more surreal story structure. The glance gestures to the unresolvable tension around young female sexuality for older men, for fathers, and for the girls themselves. This tension is not present in isolated frames or GIFs, which typically cut Donna out of the frames that signal she is watching Audrey dance. When those frames are viewed within *Twin Peaks* episodes, they contribute to the way the series gestures to these tensions before it reveals a real world motive for Laura's behavior and for her murder by her father. Viewers do not need to dwell in this unpleasant reality for long as the incest motive is quickly displaced by the story of Leland's possessed state when he committed the violent acts. This storytelling structure shares similarities with the strategies of Douglas Sirk, whose films raise social anxieties only to resolve them with an artificial conclusion. The containment fails because the ending feels tacked on and the midpoint problems still trouble the viewer, a description that could easily apply to *Twin Peaks*. Barbara Klinger (1994: 23) explains that Sirk's typical 1950s family melodrama "elicits a stylistic exhibition of neurosis linked to the sexual malaise of society". This parallels the *Twin Peaks* assertion, "the problems of our entire society are of a sexual nature", a line that is left hanging when it is spoken, but haunts the story even after the unlikely "Leland was possessed" plot twist overwrites the initial incest story and his realistic motivation for murdering his daughter. The structure is similar to a Sirkian film in which "narrative structure does not serve its usual function of laying to rest difficult ideological conflicts" (Klinger, 1994: 23). Instead, the structure and the stylistic excesses of *Twin Peaks* allow its unmanaged problems to continue to trouble viewers precisely because of the unlikely ending.

*Twin Peaks* follows a Sirkian dynamic in that its excesses triumph over its containment narrative. It puts on display and then disavows something known to be true (incest is more prevalent than popularly perceived), but if acknowledged (especially on broadcast television) would invite social breakdown. If *Twin Peaks* registers the strain of keeping the general social unconscious repressed, GIFs in general circulation contribute to this repression when their users do not understand the troubling textual implications of the textural content on offer. As I indicated above, the frames borrowed from Audrey's Dance do not convey how the costuming and set design, along with the dance itself (Mclean, 1993; Dyer, 1978), create excesses which destabilize the action and offer a contrapuntal discursive strategy—an injection of surrealist commentary into what might seem like a linear long-arc mystery.

GIFs tap into the real strength of *Twin Peaks*: it is most fascinating as a series of crafted images. Audrey's Dance is one of those crafted moments of excess because it creates a halting or freezing of the narrative, which Wyatt (1991: 41-47) says is likely to happen when a scene becomes self-conscious and seems to be referring to other films and aspects of popular culture. The diner scene feels allusive to some public perception about midcentury American life, but its intended meaning is illusive. Typically, a film or television show is sequentially structured and any moments of excess will work against that structure (Wyatt 1994: 40). This technically seems the case in certain iconic scenes in *Twin Peaks,* but upon closer examination, the moments of coherence are more likely the disruption of the surrealist structure of the series. *Twin Peaks* offers two registers: narrative logic and impressionistic affect. It is carefully structured to make us look at the image and affectively connect with it detached from the story, even as the image has a role to play within the long-arc surrealist structure of the story.

## 11. CONCLUSION

This article has identified and detailed a current participatory culture trend that I call textural poaching, and it has considered the potential mediating effect of the aggregation of still images and animated GIFs created out of television still frames and circulated through microblogging and social media platforms. Its examination of the circulation of stills and GIFs of Audrey Horne from *Twin Peaks* aimed to demonstrate the particular appeal of GIFs created out of content from texturally rich series that are known for their moments of excess. The popularity of Audrey Horne GIFs suggests that the iconic status of *Twin Peaks* stems from its ability to engage viewers on two levels—1) through the surrealism-laced social commentary of the long-arc storytelling, which can prompt viewers to mine the show's episodes for narrative clues and philosophical meaning, and, 2) through the "cool pop" allure of the look and feel of the series, which can inspire viewers to mine the iconic shots, scenes, and dialogue for textural elements to co-opt for their own creative expressions or modes of engagement. This case study proposes that textural poaching is an aspect of participatory culture that aligns with new visual interfaces and communication platforms. Focusing on the potential impact of the broad circulation of television character GIFs on general public perceptions of series characterizations broadens the scope of television studies during a period of expansion of the num-

ber and reach of platforms on which to access, comment on, poach, and re-circulate television content. Much has been written about how viewers now access television on their own schedules, but we also need to consider how the broad circulation of frames grabbed from media works and bent to align with individual users' interests might impact public perception of the original series content.

This article has addressed the charged emotional valance surrounding a GIF's poached images, especially when they are divorced from the actual story from which they came. As part of a larger consideration of web-enabled textural poaching, we might offer similar analyses of other decontextualized top-of-the-mind images of characters from *Twin Peaks* or from other illusive long-arc serial mysteries such as *True Detective (*2014-). As more communication platforms develop, there will be a need for more theorization of the decontextualized images and of the mediating effect of the circulation of media content divorced from its original context. Describing the GIF as a form that combines brevity and eternity, Walker (2016) notes that the video content utilized by GIFs is compressed (into a few seconds) and infinite (a GIF endlessly loops). GIFs are understood to be lighthearted forms of communication rather than series abridgements; yet, as forms that endlessly loop, popular GIFs can become culturally embedded as the iconic moments that stand in for a series. It may become hard to dislodge the ideas and characterizations that such GIFs circulate.

The GIFs of Audrey dancing in the diner function like the sound bites described in Joan Didion's (1984: 52) surreal novel *Democracy*: "Things that might or might not be true get repeated in the clips until you can't tell the difference". I mention the novel here in this disconnected manner because *Twin Peaks* works on me in the way *Democracy* does: as a story composed "of fitful glimpses" (1994: 232). These glimpses comment on the impulse to impose a linear narrative "upon disparate images" and the impact of the "ideas with which we have learned to freeze the shifting phantasmagoria which is our actual experience" (Didion 1979: 11). One of the characters in *Democracy* offers the list, "Colors, moisture, heat, enough blue in the air", as the fullest explanation of why she stayed in Kuala Lumpur after the United States pulled out of Vietnam (Didion 1984: 16). I stick with *Twin Peaks*, despite my uncertainty about the implications of its long-arc narrative, for the textural allure and the textual allusiveness of its GIF-worthy elements: a checkerboard floor; a zigzag line; a red room, homemade "saddle shoes"; and a cardigan sweater covered in trees.

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# TOYING WITH *TWIN PEAKS:* FANS, ARTISTS AND RE-PLAYING OF A CULT-SERIES

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## KEYWORDS

Adult play; fandom; photoplay; re-playing; toy play; toys.

## ABSTRACT

This article explores the playful dimensions of *Twin Peaks* (1990-1991) fandom by analyzing adult created toy tributes to the cult series. Through a study of fans and artists "toying" with the characters and story worlds of *Twin Peaks*, I will demonstrate how the re-playing of the series happens again and again through mimetic practices such as re-creation of characters and through photoplay. Earlier studies indicate that adults are showing increased interest in character toys such as dolls, soft toys (or plush) and action figures and various play patterns around them (Heljakka 2013). In this essay, the focus is, on the one hand on industry-created *Twin Peaks* merchandise, and on the other hand, fans' creative cultivation and play with the series scenes and its characters. The aim is to shed light on the object practices of fans and artists and how their creativity manifests in current *Twin Peaks* fandom. The essay shows how fans of *Twin Peaks* have a desire not only to influence how toyified versions of e.g. Dale Cooper and the Log Lady come to existence, but further, to re-play the series by mimicking its narrative with toys.

FIGURE 1. "IN THE WAITING ROOM", PINKKISFUN JANUARY 15TH, 2014.

# 1. INTRODUCTION: INVITATION TO PLAY WITH TWIN PEAKS

This article is an invitation to play with the idea of exploring the *Twin Peaks* television series as a source for fan play. The essay explores the playful dimensions of *Twin Peaks* (1990-1991) fandom by analyzing adult created tributes to the cult series. The focus is on the material practices of contemporary fans and artists who report to have a relationship to the TV series because of either fannish or artistic reasons.

"Engaging with any form of entertainment, particularly of a fictional nature, is a form of play, and thus texts are essentially spaces for play and the reception it inspires", writes Gray (2010: 205). The scope of my article lies in the understanding of the essential role of material artifacts, props and object play for *Twin Peaks* fans of different ages who are active ei-

ther on social media or as artists toying with the narrative and characters of *Twin Peaks*. Central to these activities is the desire to 'become one with the fiction':

> *Twin Peaks* hits a nerve that drove people to impersonate, act and become one with the fiction that is Twin Peaks. David Lynch's series has spawned many fan-made media projects. (Hallberg & Kring Hanse, 2013: 32)

As Burns notes, *Twin Peaks* proved that TV could be much more than it had been (2015: 101). With its status as a 'cult' series with dedicated followers, it provoked fans to partake in various activities, including the creation and consumption of fan texts and merchandise (or *paratexts*, see Geraghty, 2014:123). Lavery, for example, remarks that "two years af-

ter the series' demise, several Peaks fanzines were still being published in the United States and abroad" (1995: 7). The re-playing of the original series continues to inspire fans up to this day.

Play with transmedia phenomena has become perceivably more approachable for both the creative and productive fan as well as the wider fan community more interested in following the 'cultist' activities of these 'superfans' thanks to the development of online, social media. The re-imagining and re-playing of *Twin Peaks* still takes many forms[1]: "Fans gather annually, websites are devoted to its characters and settings, video games have been inspired by it" (Burns, 2015: 5).

Play is generally seen as an activity carried out mostly in childhood. The spirit of play develops as enabled by imagination either by playing alone or with others. As *playfulness* is a state of mind that may occur at all ages and *play* is a form of behavior that does not limit itself exclusively to either biological or socially constructed childhood, it would seem unproblematic for adults of the Western world to admit to be players. This does not, however, seem to be the case. Moreover, in adult fandom, play(ful) objects such as toys have been considered something other than things dedicated for ludic manipulation and meaning-making. Traditionally, these activities have been categorized under the two major headings "collecting" and "hobbying" (Heljakka, 2016a). Toys, then, from the perspective of adult appropriation, have for a long time been labelled either as *collectibles* or more lately, as designer toys which often come in limited editions only. In fan cultures, toys have been perceived as a sub-category of merchandise and sometimes novelties or gift items, which leave little space for the consideration of play as a way of using the objects. These constrained and perhaps dated labels also seem to suggest that adult interest in toys would rather serve more the needs of material investment and ownership than the motivations to creatively interact with the toys in the name of play. However, a toy, according to traditional thinking, does not have operational rules such as conditions that imply that goals are met guiding the use of the plaything[2].

A toy, when compared to a game, represents an open-ended plaything that signals potentialities – a promise of play. Due to its openness, a toy may also lead to unexpected play scenarios. If a toy is well-designed, it will leave room for the

imagination to such a degree that may even guide the use to directions that are perhaps not consciously articulated by the toy designer. Toys with a face – so called *character toys* – have found their way to the hearts, toy closets and experiences of players of all ages. For example dolls that may be posed, dressed-up, 'hairplayed' – even cosplayed with in terms of avatarial play, are of interest to both young and mature players. Sometimes a character toy functions as a 'blank canvas' that may be used in re-playing of narratives that are in no way related to the toys original backstory. One example of such play is the re-playing of *Twin Peaks*.

As only a few mass-produced character toys directly connected with *Twin Peaks* have been made available (e.g. through Bearbrick), it is rather in the DIY or maker cultures that toyified versions of the central characters appear. Apart from these unique, artistic and designerly creations, it is more common that mass-produced doll-types such as Barbies, Blythes and Pullip dolls are employed in the re-playing of *Twin Peaks*. The dolls are often styled (if not customized) to some degree in order to be able to capture the atmosphere conveyed by the series. Furthermore, contemporary, creative play practices with their point of origin in a media product include activities in which the employment of physical materials, technological devices, digital and social play cultures converge (Heljakka, 2016b). One example of these practices is the most topical play pattern addressed in this article: *photoplay*, or simply, photographing of toys. Game scholar Montola considers play as momentary and vanishing – after playing ends it may be difficult to get hold of it without the reports, photographs or artefacts created or used in play (2012: 74). What Godwin (2015) refers to as "photostories" and categorises as "fannish fiction", I have from the beginning of my explorations in adult toy play called photoplay (e.g. Heljakka, 2012).

On Flickr, one may find millions of toy related images. The ones that are simply documentations of toys or toy packaging – in other words photographs that function as an illustration or are purely informative in nature – do not represent photoplay. Instead, in photoplay, there is a clear narrative element involved, whether the photograph represents a singular image or a series of images. To clarify further, the outcomes of photoplay represent toys in staged scenarios inside displays, dioramas or dollhouses, or outside in urban or natural environments. Furthermore, photoplay may mimic popular narratives such as the scenes from *Star Wars* (for example, many of the scenes of this narrative have been reproduced with toys such as LEGO) or as illustrated in this article, from scenes familiar of a TV series like *Twin Peaks*. Moreover, photoplay may

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1   Henry Jenkins refers to this practice with the term "re-performing of favorite stories" (see Jenkins, 2010).

2   Salen and Zimmerman refer to operational rules in their *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*, Cambridge (MA): The MIT Press, 2004.

result from completely new characters and stories created by the players themselves. Sometimes photoplaying with toys involves known elements of the human world. When 'travelling toys' are photoplayed in the name of *toy tourism*, they are depicted in front of for example famous monuments or scenic views. This parallels the fan practice of pilgrimages, for example, to famous filming locations[3]. Furthermore, although toy play excluding the use of technologies still exists, it is notable how players appropriate technologies and social media in order to present their play activities to possible *audiences* who enjoy the play of others as *spectators, participants* and *social players*. The nature of contemporary object-based and screen-oriented play then, is thus not only remarkably *hybrid*, but also *social* (Heljakka, 2016b).

Social media has made adult appropriation of toys more visible than ever before. Platforms or playgrounds for digitally mediated and visual play such as Flickr, Instagram and YouTube have had a significant role in showcasing what adults have in their toy closets and collections, and in which ways they are using (or rather, *playing with*) their toys. Thanks to social media, practices of fandom such as the creation and sharing of fan fictions and fan art have also become more normalized as compared with in the past, when communication between fans mostly took place through fanzines and at conventions. Although these channels of communication still exist, it is through groups on for example Flickr that fans of different toys (e.g. Blythe dolls or My Little Pony) connect, and together develop new meanings and activities with the toys.

Fan culture is also about being an individual among fellow fans - the ways in which fans differentiate themselves within the fan community. Then a re-playing of *Twin Peaks* with the Blythe doll as in the example of interviewee "Pinkkisfun" (b. 1975) brought forward in this study, may have a dual meaning: First, in terms of how Blythe (which is a popular doll among adult players) is creatively played as Laura Palmer, and second how *Twin Peaks* is re-played with a doll.

*Twin Peaks* aired first in 1990, before the age of the Internet. The cultures around TV series fandom have since developed mainly thanks to new media services, which allow viewers to access their objects of fandom more easily than ever. In other words, while a series such as *Twin Peaks* has been available in direct TV services such as Netflix, audiences

– new as well as old have been able to immerse themselves in the viewing experience whenever and wherever. Perhaps even more importantly, social media platforms have enabled fans to share experiences and keep contact with other fans in more efficient ways than before. Consequently, digital media may, besides a communication channel, be seen as a tool for creative functions – one that includes characteristics supporting social play. Flickr, as one of the adult playgrounds online, enables the formation of playful communities familiar to many fandoms. On Flickr (www.flickr.com) one may find millions of toy-related photographs, where character toys extending from the hyper-real to the fantastic are depicted as collected objects, personalized artworks or as a part of visual and spatial photoplay in single or multiple images. Photoplay, once shared on these communicative platforms, functions as evidence and documentation of the otherwise ephemeral (e.g. Montola, 2012) toy play activity of adults. In this way, it is possible to expand the discussion on play and the performance of re-playing *Twin Peaks* in various ways to include the notion of spectacle. Today, increasingly, play is also about documentation, sharing and experiencing other people's play through spectatorship. Photoplay, then, functions as well as a spectacle, offering other fans a possibility to participate in the experience not through personal and individual creation, but the consumption of other's toying with *Twin Peaks*.

My attention now turns to how central characters of the cult series, such as Dale Cooper, Laura Palmer and the Log Lady, are constantly 'happening again' when re-played in fan – visual, material, play(ful) and toy-related - practices. In the article, the re-playing in relation to *Twin Peaks* is discussed under the concepts of object play, media play and creative play practices. Toy play as a type of *object play* functions as an umbrella term for many forms of playful behavior interested in the material and three-dimensional aspects of play, ranging from manipulative exploration to mimicry and from storytelling to creative interaction. In object play the value of manipulable, physical playthings is recognized in many ways: toys function both as *evocative objects* with personal meanings, "engaging as well the heart and the mind" (Turkle, 2007: 309) and as vehicles for interpersonal ludic activities. In the case of *Twin Peaks* fandom the affective relationship towards toys extends beyond nostalgia and solitary play practices towards socially-oriented *media play* inspired by transmedia storytelling.

In toy cultures, what is of interest to the fans are the backstories of the toy characters, whether they have their point of origin in the toy itself, or for example a film or TV series. Transmedia phenomena such as cinematic films, for

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3   Sometimes fans engage in transcendental journeys involving the use of individual imagination in order to revisit 'places' known from narratives. Roger Aden calls this fan symbolic pilgrimage (Aden 1999). In his book *Cult Collectors,* Geraghty (2013) describes pilgrimages taken by fans to actual filming locations.

example *Star Wars*, the *Toy Story* trilogy and the more recent *The LEGO Movie* all have their connections with the world of toys. *Star Wars* as the most popular (toy and entertainment) brand of all times (Geraghty, 2014) lives on in the play worlds of fans in various play patterns related to its action figures. Again, the *Toy Story* films and *The LEGO Movie* are, essentially, built around the narratives of the toy brands themselves. Nevertheless, fans appropriation of these story worlds may be considered creative as they range from careful re-creations of scenes to more leisurely re-played scenarios, where the fans creative input is of more importance than the 'correctness' of the scenes reproduced.

Booth defines media play as "a characteristic of contemporary media culture to focus on those instances in which individuals create meaning from activities that articulate a connection between their own creativity and mainstream media" (Booth, 2015: 15). In other words, the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* involves play patterns partaken with toys that draw inspiration from the original media product: storylines and iconic characters of the television series to which the fans add their personal touch through the choice of playthings employed and various customization practices used. In this way, the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* resembles the creation of fan art or fan fiction in which the toy play scenarios result from a combination of the 'backstory' presented in the series and a creative component provided by the player.

Fan scholar Matt Hills has argued in an interview made in 2009 that "much has been written about fan fiction, and there's started to be more on costuming and pilgrimage (visiting locations linked to filming), but the fan craft of modding and creating one-offs as well as generating photographs/videos of toys, has not been studied enough" (Interview with Dr. Matt Hills, Part 2, 2009). In this article (as well as in my earlier research, see e.g. Heljakka, 2013) the attempt is to fill this gap by studying adult toy play patterns in relation to contemporary toy cultures and fandoms.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The methods I have used to study transmedia-inspired toy play in fandoms include participatory observation at doll meetings and toy conventions, thematic interviews with artists and adult toy players and the analyses of screen-based play practices, i.e. toy photographs on blogs, Flickr, Instagram etc. (i.e. what I refer to as *photoplay*). Having participated in doll meetings and 'adult play dates' with my own toys, my

auto-ethnographic explorations of adult toy play have led to interesting discoveries in regarding how toy objects are manipulated, altered, customised and increasingly narrativised, sometimes leaning on or inspired by phenomena familiar from transmedia storytelling. In this article, the focus is on the re-playing of *Twin Peaks*, namely on fans, artists and their object play practices in tributes to a cult series. By drawing on literature exploring the phenomenon of *Twin Peaks* and demonstrating the outcomes of interviews with fans of *Twin Peaks*, my aim is to clarify, how the re-playing of the series happens again and again through mimetic, playful practices.

The altogether eight Finnish and one Columbian interviewees, including both 'everyday players' and artists, who represent both former fans and first-time viewers of the series of different ages, were interviewed either face-to-face or per e-mail in 2015-2016. The interview questions touched upon the personal relationships of the interviewees towards *Twin Peaks*, the most memorable characters, iconic scenes, particular physical objects of interest and the overall atmosphere of the series. Moreover, the interviewees were asked about their own object play, i.e. creative activities involving manipulation of physical materials such as toys or artworks in the making. The aim was to clarify the ways in which re-playing of *Twin Peaks* happens in reference to adults 'toyingĐ with narratives and various artifacts. By this qualitative, thematic study, the author was able to gain information on how adult fandom of *Twin Peaks* materializes in object practices beyond commercially produced merchandise.

## 3. "MYSTERIOUS AND FORBIDDEN": ENCOUNTERING AND REMEMBERING TWIN PEAKS

I was a child when the series was on television the first time. I remember that it was discussed at school. Someone was allowed to watch it and someone else had seen parts of it, in secret. It came with something mysterious and forbidden. (Jasmin, b. 1980)

In my interviews the overall atmosphere of *Twin Peaks* was identified as "Oppressing, decadent, mysterious, mystic, playful, enigmatic, sick, scary, cranky, fabled, surprising, erotic, weird, addictive" (Johanna, b. 1973) and, "exciting, a little scary, slow in tempo and agonizing". (Jasmin, b. 1980). The two interviewees, who have watched the show for the first time recently, use similar terms in describing the overall atmosphere of the series: "A little gloomy and tense"

(Interviewee: Henna, b. 1985) and "I have had an odd feeling that everything is oversize and people is heavily covered in thick fabrics which gives me a bit of tension. Not sure how to describe it well. Also I have noticed that shadows play an important role" (Jennifer, b. 1986).

Fandom itself changes over long periods of time for a series, such as *Twin Peaks*. The interviewees who participated in this study, and who became familiar with the series when it first aired in the 1990s as teenagers and young adults, still seem to have vivid impressions in their mind about the series. Three elements are considered the key attraction of *Twin Peaks*: the characters, the artefactual world and the overall atmosphere of the series.

Adult toy relations are often discussed through a framing of nostalgia. Although this may be one explanation for toy fandom at an adult age, it is questionable whether it is the only one to exist. There are adults with a keen interest in the toys of their childhood. Equally, there are adults who express an interest in contemporary toys with no connection whatsoever to what they played with as children. When considering the re-playing of *Twin Peaks*, it is important to include the notion of nostalgia in the discussions of fans who have a long-term relationship with the series, not because of what they have in their toy collection, but because of how they remember and describe the overall atmosphere of the series. At the same time, it is of interest to this article to investigate how the experience of the series may have been enriched when fans have toyed with by re-playing the series, long after their first encounter with it.

The role of memory in fandom offers an interesting starting point for a discussion on the re-playing practices of adults. In the case of "Pinkkisfun" (b. 1975), the interviewee claims that she has re-visited the series on several occasions before her photoplaying. This illustrates how for some fans of the series the accurate re-creating of the scenes is of high importance, although the physical media being manipulated for the sake of re-playing comes from toydom, and not human actors.

Today, fandom for TV series has changed from the times when *Twin Peaks* first was launched. Fans have become more active in terms of creative practices as the tools to manipulate the original content has developed alongside digital media services and platforms. In a way, then, fandom has developed into more active meaning making than simply the discussion and negotiation of the original narrative. The way this manifests is in the multifaceted practices of fans one of them relating to both individually cultivated material culture and socially shared creative outcomes of this culture.

## 4. MIMETIC POTENTIALITIES OF A CULT SERIES

Cult TV series such as *Twin Peaks*, with their iconic characters, scenes and catchy lines offer multiple possibilities for mimetic play. Although interviewee "Johanna" (b. 1973), considers the series as "something of 'GesamtkunstwerkÐ with all its thoughtful elements in both visually and in terms of its soundscape", the visually (and materially) enigmatic quality of *Twin Peaks* allows fans to re-play with important elements recognized as significant symbols for what *Twin Peaks* stands for. For example, as my interviews revealed, artifacts such as the Log, velvet drapes and the zig-zagged black-and-white floor pattern were often mentioned by the interviewees. Moreover, while an atmosphere of a TV series may be impossible to replicate, it is possible to choose memorable scenes and re-create them through a playful approach:

> The most iconic scenes always happen on the black-and-white floor in front of the red curtains, in another world. I have depicted red curtains in my paintings a lot. My master's thesis for the Academy of Fine Arts (2009) is named *Red Curtains – narrative and scenic painting*. The influence of *Twin Peaks* lies deep inside me, even though the first red curtains I saw were the ones in the hall of our primary school. (Katja, b. 1969)

Three of the interviewees (Jasmin, b. 1980, Mari, b. 1984 and Johanna, b. 1973) mentioned the log, and two the drapes (Katja, b. 1969 and Johanna, b. 1973). Further, many of the interviewees mentioned the plastic Laura's body was wrapped in – an element with perhaps the most attracting mimetic potential of all the material artefacts remembered from the series.

## 5. THE INFINITE PLAY(FULNESS) OF TWIN PEAKS

For Jenkins (1995: 55), one fan explained, "I don't care who killed Laura Palmer. I just love the puzzle". The mysteries of *Twin Peaks* seem to offer fans an endless playground, inviting them to ludic engagement ranging from game-like, structured and finite play to open-ended, infinite play with meanings and materials. As noted by one of the interviewees in this study, "Tomas", b. 1976, the playfulness of *Twin Peaks* also manifests

in its relationship with the history of television:

> The series is very playful with its connection to television history and its format – as the wonderful Invitation to Love underlines. It is very aware of itself – sometimes in playful ways. (Tomas, b. 1976)

As toys are objects which derive meaning in play, it is also important to consider how the concepts of playthings, free-form play and the playing of games become intertwined in the series itself and the fandom revolving it. Overall, one may associate the supposed playfulness of the series with various elements, such as the wordplay in interaction between characters: a certain quirkyness of the dialogue. On the level of physical artefacts, playful engagement manifests in an intercourse between chaos and order – between free-form and rule-bound play: The seemingly random placement of a moose head on the table of the sheriff's department as a sign of disorder and the meticulously organized donuts accompanying the department's workforce in many scenes as a lead for the desire to see order in the chaos. Hague (1995) compares *Twin Peaks'* narrative to Carse's concept of infinite play: "The narrative structure of *Twin Peaks* instead resembles what philosopher Robert Carse calls 'infinite playÐ. [...] Finite games depend upon the existence of unwritten rules, spatial and temporal boundaries, and 'conclusionsÐ in which someone must 'winÐ; in infinite games, on the other hand, boundaries are constantly being dissolved to prevent the game from ending. The rules of an infinite game change frequently in order to prevent a "win," or ending, and each "play" in an infinite game eliminates a boundary" (Hague, 1995: 133). According to Pulsipher, gamers need to be able to make decisions based on clearly articulated options, otherwise the plaything in question is not a game, but it can be a story, a toy or a riddle (Pulsipher, 2012: 39). Toys, on the other hand, represent open-ended playthings that signal imaginative potentialities – and a promise of play. Thus, the re-playing practices of *Twin Peaks* fans seem to lean more on infinite play and thus, neglect the competitive element.

The presence of actual, physical toys in *Twin Peaks* is not striking, but nevertheless, undeniable: Take for instance the miniature train in the shop window of the hardware store where Norma meets Nadine, or the Little Elvis figurine in the hands of Audrey's father, Benjamin Horne, when deciding to take a shower after an act of infidelity with Catherine Martell. Leo is referred by Agent Albert as "Mr. Potato Head"



FIGURES 2 AND 3. "I CARRY A LOG – YES. IS IT FUNNY TO YOU?" PINKKISFUN, DECEMBER 27TH, 2013 / "I FEEL LIKE I KNOW HER, BUT SOMETIMES MY ARMS BEND BACK", PINKKISFUN, JANUARY 15TH, 2014.

(a reference to a historically known toy brand from toy company Hasbro)[4]. Further, the toy soldiers play a significant role in the ludic aspects of Ben Horne's re-playing [!] of the American Civil War. One of the interviewees, "Jennifer", b. 1986, points to the log as an anthropomorphized plaything, as follows:

> Author: How would you describe the relations between toys and/or play in the series?
> Interviewee: I have noticed two instances: The log lady character [who] plays with her log and has somehow a strong connection with the object, I thought that was very interesting and such as small detail but that it perfectly describes the attachment someone can have to a toy (in this case her log) and the huge emotional connection toys play in our lives despite their physical appearance. (Jennifer, b. 1986)

The playful aspect of the Log Lady charater manifests on many levels. Her 'sidekick', the Log, is a character itself – one which carries magical capabilities. Dukes writes of the birth of the Log Lady as follows:

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4   See http://www.glastonberrygrove.net/texts/script10.html, accessed September 15, 2016.

After a few outrageous cameo appearances as the Log Lady during the first season, Catherine E. Coulson became an unlikely celebrity. The Log Lady was received with widespread amusement and curiosity as the character and her dear log received parodies on *Saturday Night Live* and *Sesame Street*. Part mystic and part messenger, the Log Lady was an idea that lingered in the minds of both David Lynch and Coulson for nearly fifteen years before the character came to life (Dukes, 2014: 147).

## 6. PUTTING TWIN PEAKS INTO PLAYTHINGS

*Twin Peaks* has indeed, always presented a *toyetic* potential[5]. Ken Scherer, former chief operating officer at Lynch/ Frost productions, recalls in the oral history of *Twin Peaks,* as recorded by Dukes, that several different types of playful products were planned to be launched: "There were talking logs (which were not produced) and so many insane things" (Dukes, 2014: 153). Today, *Twin Peaks* lives on in a multitude of physical products created by fans and other creative individuals drawing inspiration from the series' recognizable style: According to Howe, the second-hand auction site eBay has at any given time several thousand items for sale from the *Twin Peaks* universe (Howe, 2013: 41). However, to the fan, as interviewee "Tomas" (b. 1976), points out, the merchandizing, mass-marketable (and perhaps toyetic) potential of *Twin Peaks* is not as obvious as one might think:

> With many series you can package and sell replicas of certain items, but *Twin Peaks* is not like that. A damn fine cup of coffee is hard to brand. It would be a bit silly to start selling log lady logs. The recorder (Diana) Agent Cooper talks to is not special. The cherry knot that Audrey ties with her tongue does not really work as a key chain, nor the bottle that breaks when a stone hits it. (Tomas, b. 1976)

Today it is more and more common to find toy portraits of popular TV characters. *Breaking Bad* action figures (see Langsworthy 2015), are a recent example of the toyification

of characters known from a popular TV series. Still, online, one may find joke items such as a *Twin Peaks* action figure based on the Log Lady's log. When toy versions of a popular narrative are not available in the mass-market, it is up to independent toy designers, artists and everyday players to come up with designerly, artistic and DIY versions of their favourite characters. A search online sheds light on what kind of *Twin Peaks* related items are available as handmade creations. Besides fan memorabilia such as fan-created and in this way, pro-am style artifacts such coffee mugs and T-shirts on Etsy, there is evidence of the toyification of *Twin Peaks*[6]: for instance, a one-off Dale Cooper action figure is marketed by Twin Pie, and actress Catherine E. Coulson, or the Log Lady, can be seen to hold *amigurumi* (or crocheted toys, see Ramirez Saldarriaga, 2016) in her hands. One of the two first-time viewers of the show, "Jennifer", b. 1986), points to the need of people to use objects as memory aids and conversational pieces:

> It totally makes sense to me that people will collect and play with the characters because for many of us [it] seems to be important to gather memories though objects. Somehow I feel that [the] fans of any series could deposit in the action figures of their favorite characters those magical moments where they could feel part of the story or use them as a trigger for conversation. (Jennifer, b. 1986)

The toyish manifestations of *Twin Peaks* fandom occur today outside of the cult production itself. For instance, when considering contemporary toy culture and especially the designer toy and DIY aspects of it, *Twin Peaks* has inspired both companies and fans of the series to create toyified versions of the key characters. There are some mass-marketed toyified versions of *Twin Peaks* characters as well. For example, Japanese toy company Bearbrick demonstrates how Laura Palmer, from the infamous scene in the pilot of the series, has been turned into a (rare) toy portrait and in this case, a plastic action figure hybrid between a LEGO-type of figure and Bearbrick's signature form[7].

Not everything online is what it seems, though. When searching for *Twin Peaks* related toys on the Internet, it is pos-

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5  *Toyetic* refers to the suitability of a media property (TV series, film etc.) for merchandising tie-in lines of various playthings e.g. toys and games.

6  I propose that *toyification* communicates the idea of an entity being reinforced with toyish elements/aesthetic; an object, technology or a technological device, a character or a human being acquiring a toyish appearance, form or function through intentional behavior.

7  See http://www.bearbrick.com/1200.html. Accessed February 3, 2016.

sible to find examples that may represent 'the stuff of dreams' more than actual, mass-marketed products. Some toys again, are ready to be auctioned, like a custom-made Dale Cooper Figurine[8]. The toy as an example of a custom-made character toy is a case of pro-am created fan art for commercial purposes and functions as an example of an art toy. Art toys, sometimes also referred to as *designer toys*, may come in limited numbers. According to media scholar Marc Steinberg, "the designer toy generates an expanded field of creative and critical practice that simultaneously invokes and works against the grain of character merchandising" (2010: 227). 'Merchandise' or 'collectable items' is precisely how toys are often positioned in the context of adult fandom. In Steinberg's thinking, then, designer toys created by artists may offer possibilities to negotiate transmedially spread, somewhat uniform meanings of a commercial brand, positioned, through merchandising, as a "collectible".

Although the *Twin Peaks* experience was extended with only a few, licensed, mass-marketed items such as the "Welcome to *Twin Peaks*" town guide and *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer* (i.e. merchandise), fans soon saw other possibilities to enter the story worlds in terms of utilization of physical objects. According to one of my interviewees, "Tomas" (b. 1976), the series inspired him to re-create the wrapped-in-plastic theme by the appropriation of a Barbie doll in the 90s – a gift that was not appreciated in a way a fan would assume:

> I created a Laura Palmer figurine once. It is a fairly unique fan activity for me, I have rarely done any physical fan works. But I painted a blond haired Barbie doll blue and wrapped it in plastic. I was very happy with the outcome as it was a successful reproduction of a particularly striking image from the series. The doll was created as a present to a friend, a friend who I thought was as big a fan of *Twin Peaks* as I was. When giving the doll it was instantly obvious from his facial expression that he did not get the gift at all. I was disappointed, partially because he did not like the gift – and partially since I thought the doll was very neat and realized that I wanted to keep it myself. (Tomas, b. 1976)

## 7. RE-PLAYING TWIN PEAKS

This has happened before. It is happening again (Burns, 2015: 22).

The re-playing of *Twin Peaks* is oddly, but perhaps not surprisingly encouraged in the fictional guidebook *Welcome to Twin Peaks* in a 'Audrey Horne Photo Look-Alike Contest':

> Do you look like Audrey Horne or just act like her? Do your saddle shoes steam, I mean, do you really have the look? Send us your best Audrey-like photo and an essay of an hundred words or less explaining how is it you look like you do, or rather, like Ms. Horne does. First prize winner will have his or her photo published in the *Gazette* and receive a $100 gift certificate. Please include your name and Twin Peaks address with photo. Remember, a lot can be done with make-up, lightning and the spirit of deceit. (Wurman et al., 1991:103)

The 'wrapped in plasticÐ concept has evolved into an online meme which provokes and inspires people to cosplay and photoplay Laura Palmer either physically or through their toys. Cosplay (abbreviation for costume play) relates to the now global phenomenon of manga and anime, and refers to dressing up and playing your favorite character from popular culture. The activity does not limit itself to the dress – in cosplay the players try to get closer to the character with behavior and mimicry. Cosplay gives the players an opportunity to toy with a character, even to become a 'toyÐ herself (Heljakka, 2013: 355). The comment made by interviewee "Jennifer" (b. 1986) illustrates how the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* further manifests in cosplay practices:

> I have seen role playing and costume playing with characters of the series by people my age, which suggest to me that the impact of the series was very big because even younger generations are playing to dress up like the characters for Halloween and wanting to collect objects of the series. (Jennifer, b. 1986)

Nevertheless, what is of more interest for the article at hand, is the re-playing of Twin Peaks through material artefacts. Let us now turn to "Pinkkisfun" (b. 1975), who has re-played the series with her Blythe dolls.

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8   See "Miniature Dale Cooper Figure With Damn Fine Accessories" by Twin Pie on Nov 5, 2013at http://welcometotwinpeaks.com/shop/dale-cooper-collectible-figure/#ixzz3z6bePcNSat, Accessed February 3, 2016.

FIGURE 4. "SHE'S DEAD. WRAPPED IN PLASTIC". PHOTOPLAY BY PINKKISFUN, 30TH OF NOVEMBER 2013.

Author: What motivated you to begin the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* by making your own versions?

Interviewee: Maybe I first figured that it is something unique and that no one does this, it felt so silly [...] *Twin Peaks* is, in a way a scary [TV] series and such a cult series and to do that with dolls. But of course people do it. People do all kinds of things with dolls. (Pinkkisfun, b. 1975)

The choice of the toy used in re-playing the scenarios of *Twin Peaks* has an effect on the aesthetic of the outcome. When exploring the images as posted on Flickr which toy with the 'wrapped-in-plasticÐ scene it becomes apparent that different dolls have been used. With its 50 years and over of history, everyone (at least in the Western world) is bound to recognize Barbie. However, Blythe or Pullip dolls which are more recent toy-types with their large heads, big, moving eyes and 'cute' facial features, and are not as known as Barbie, offer the re-players a chance to distance themselves from the over-commercialized and perhaps dated (Western)

aesthetics of the character and allow a more contemporary, more intriguing (and Eastern) take on the action[9]. Doll-types, like the aforementioned, are popular in customization practices. Customizers try to produce the best version of beloved popular fan objects, says Godwin (2015). For example, action figure customizers privilege realism over the fantastic and after duplicating a beloved fan object's definitive appearance, clothing, and/or accessories in one-sixth scale, customizers often pose and photograph action figures in recreations of iconic scenes (Ibid.).

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9 Blythe, despite its 'Japanese look' is the original creation of American company Kenner (known especially for its Star Wars action figures) from 1973. Kenner has since been acquired by one of the largest toy companies in the world, Hasbro. Contemporary versions of Blythe carry almost the same look as Kenner's original designs, but are manufactured and marketed under Hasbro's license by Japanese toy company Tomy Takara. Pullip, on the other hand, is a Korean toy brand, popular among both young and mature toy fans around the world. Another point to be made here is to consider the use of other toy-types in the re-playing of *Twin Peaks*. Although they could not be seen on for instance Flickr as frequently in this context as other character toys, it is justifiable to consider how different the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* would appear, if re-played with LEGO characters or Sylvanian Families (animal) figures.

Contemporary doll play does not necessarily limit itself to manipulative interactions with the toy, but extends to both multiple media platforms and physical playgrounds, when cameras are appropriated in the play scenarios. Mobile camera technologies afford spatial or locative play[10]. When studying visual practices of adult toy players and an activity or adult play pattern I have named photoplay, it is possible to perceive its mimetic nature. Without the utilisation of photography and sharing on social media, the mimetic quality of contemporary toy play of fans, or the "deliberate imitation of an act or text", which Paul Booth refers to as *pastiche* (2015: 2), would remain largely unknown.

The images of the re-played *Twin Peaks* scenes with Blythe dolls and interview excerpts employed in this article demonstrate a case study conducted as a part of my explorations of adult toy play: the play of a Finnish Blythe doll player I have interviewed, observed and played with for this article. She uses the name "Pinkkisfun" on her blog and on Flickr. Her (play) work making homage to *Twin Peaks* is in progress. Besides sharing her photoplay on Flickr, Pinkkisfun also creates unique items such as coin purses and carry-ons for dolls related to *Twin Peaks*. As is the case for many participants of *Twin Peaks* fandom, Pinkkisfun has been a fan of the series since first seeing it in the beginning of the 1990's. Her fandom manifests through special appreciation of certain characters in the series, which becomes clear in her photoplay. The cult viewer enjoys repetition, for example reciting favourite lines (Lavery, 1995: 14). The mute, toyified characters which appear in the photoplay of Pinkkisfun and several other photoplaying fans showcasing their images on photo management application sites on social media, operate more on the level of the material and visual than the textual narrative, but often include captions with popular phrases from the series. One of the most memorable and re-played scenes of *Twin Peaks* for fans is the one in the pilot, in which Pete Martell finds the murdered Laura Palmer's body by the water, as illustrated by an interview excerpt:

> Author: Which scenes do you find particularly significant?
>
> Pinkkisfun: The opening scene, in which, was it Pete who finds Laura and [says] "She's all wrapped in plastic". [...] I have made the opening scene, the one in which Laura is in the water. And then, I have made [a version] of the Log Lady... Perhaps the fin-

est one is the one of Laura, wrapped in plastic. [...] I was driving somewhere with 'J' and I knew about the place where there is cold water and where there surely are no other people around at that time of the year [...] and it really was so much fun and it was really scary as the picture [result of photoplay] became so scary, and in some way, so realistic.

Wrapping up dolls in plastic does not materialize out of nowhere as a contemporary play practice and strategy for re-playing *Twin Peaks*. *Twin Peaks* related literature from Howe (2013) reveals that the practice has its point of origin at the offices of Lynch and Frost themselves, where Lynch's assistant Shimatsu-U is said to have wrapped up a Barbie doll in plastic and hung it on a Christmas tree:

In fan culture, Laura Palmer is always portrayed as having just been murdered. Indeed, among the most highly sought after and valuable objects for sale on the online auction sites are the 'wrapped in plastic' dolls. In 1990s Mark Frost's assistant, Paula K. Shimatsu-U, took a Barbie doll, stripped off all its clothing, wrapped it in plastic and then bound it in tape. This doll, which she hung on the Christmas tree at Lynch/Frost Productions, was so popular that she subsequently assembled a large group of replicas and had Sheryl Lee sign the tape of each one. These dolls typically sell in the $50-100 range ('The Laura Palmer Doll Is Back!' in Howe,. 2013: 43).

As the quote from Howe illustrates, the toy-related 'Wrapped in plasticÐ meme seems to have its origins at Lynch/Frost Productions, although it is likely that it spread among fan communities as a more viral photoplaying theme only after the launch of social media platforms, where the re-playing could spread with less effort. Long before the Internet meme, "Wrapped in plastic" was also the name for the *Twin Peaks* fanzine published between 1992-2005 by Win-Mill Productions – a platform on which fan art and fictions could be published.

In fanfiction, "enthusiasts are able to enter the creative register by injecting their wishes and desires (and even themselves) into their favourite narratives", writes Howe (2013: 44-45). In photoplaying of the 'Wrapped in plasticÐ meme it is not only that dolls that play the part of Laura Palmer. It is important to note that e.g. on images shared on Flickr, it is the re-players themselves who are sometimes willing to become Laura[11]. Nevertheless, even for fans not interested

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10  An example of a hybrid and social location-based game is the recent Pokémon Go developed by Niantic.

11  See photographs tagged 'Laura Palmer' on flickr at https://www.flickr.com/search/?text=laura%20palmer. Accessed February 3, 2016.

FIGURE 5. THE 'WRAPPED-IN-PLASTICÐ MEME PLAYED WITH AN ARTISTICALLY CUSTOMIZED MY LITTLE PONY BY MARI KASURINEN: "MY LITTLE LAURA", 2016.

in toyified versions of *Twin Peaks*, the photoplay including a Barbie, Blythe or Pullip doll may function as source of enjoyment, as illustrated in an interview excerpt:

> Author: What kind of feedback or comments have you received concerning your Twin Peaks versions?
>
> Pinkkisfun: Really, really good and supportive feedback. And people who do not care for dolls at all can oversee that this includes dolls. They see and appreciate [the re-play] even if it involves dolls.

And then again, doll people, they are maybe a little twisted and usually like *Twin Peaks* so it is two birds with one stone.

Besides the scene depicting the discovery of Laura's body, another iconic set of scenes from the series are the dream sequences taking place in the 'waiting room'. The Red Room, first appearing on Agent Cooper's dreams is significant for fans (Pheasant-Kelly, 2013: 99).

Although the use of toys and the notions of play in relation to photoplay inspired by *Twin Peaks* may at first seem to inject an additional dose of humour into the reading of an otherwise quirky and weird world envisioned by Lynch and Frost, there is another way to think of the element of play as an avenue for coming to terms with the darker themes of the series. Campbell (in Reeves et al., 1995: 190) provides an alternative reading of the either nihilist or progressive understanding of the suggested postmodern playfulness of *Twin Peaks* by stating: "Playfulness can be a way to confront issues that may be so horrific and dreadful that there's no other way." Playing as an activity is neither not always merely a fun-seeking activity, but also a way of dealing with the inevitable darkness present in factual and fictional human life. Even toy play has its serious side. Moreover, it is possible to consider the playful interaction with the darker themes of the series as a strategy of fans to encounter the complexity (and horror) of the narrative in ways that are fraught with paradox: for many, toys represent tools for happiness, but toy play at an adult age may also employ themes from the darker sides of human behavior.



FIGURE 6. TOYIFIED VERSIONS OF "BOB", "LAURA PALMER" AND "DALE COOPER" IN JENNIFER RAMIREZ'S AMIGURUMI, 2016.

At the end of the series I felt sad, said Lynch. I couldn't get myself to leave the world of *Twin Peaks*. I was in love with the character of Laura Palmer and her contradictions, radiant on the surface but dying inside. I wanted to see her live, move, and talk (Lynch and Rodley 2005: 184 in Burns 2015: 83).

The role of toy-realted practices in relation to the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* seem to enable fans of the series and fans of toys to revisit the intriguing and unique, narrative world of Lynch and Frost. Re-playing the characters, scenes and overall atmosphere of the series may give fans a possibility to re-experience *Twin Peaks*. Also, to toy with *Twin Peaks* may assist in keeping the fantasy alive, while waiting for the upcoming season of the series. Presumably one, that will offer fans plenty more possibilities to enter the world of the television series, through toys and play. The questions that remain unanswered but offer possibilities for further research: Are fans re-playing *Twin Peaks* for keeping Laura Palmer's memory alive? Or rather, does *Twin Peaks* represent a world that despite its acts of terror functions of a constant source of pleasure and as such, in the minds and creative acts of players, needs to happen again? Based on the findings of the study represented here, the motivations to toy with *Twin Peaks* are manifold. But there is one undeniable common nominator for re-playing the series – to, through toying – remember, re-experience and never forget.

## 8. **CONCLUSIONS: LET'S PLAY IT AGAIN!**

David Lynch has said about his films: "All my movies are about strange worlds that you can't go into unless you film them. That's what's so important about film to me. I just like going into strange worlds" (Lynch in Wolf, 2012: 1). Similarly, toy play at an adult age, allows the player to step into a "place both wonderful and strange" and in the case of re-playing *Twin Peaks* through photoplay, to re-enter a world dreamed up by David Lynch's imagination.

In sum, based on the results of my study it is viable to claim that *Twin Peaks* is continuously toyed with through at least two different mimetic approaches and strategies of re-playing: first, by the commercial, designerly and artistic creations and versions of the characters of the series – the 'designer', 'art' or 'DIY' toys, as created by Bearbrick and Twin Pie, as demonstrated here. Secondly, in the play scenarios of adults who use mass-produced – e.g. Barbie, Blythe or Pullip

dolls, or customized versions of them in play patterns such as photoplay as illustrated by the re-play of Pinkkisfun in this article. The study at hand shows how fans of *Twin Peaks* have a desire not only to influence how toyified versions of e.g. Dale Cooper and the Log Lady come to existence, but further, also in the re-playing of the series by mimicking its narrative with toys. When narratives, such as TV series or films, turn into transmedia phenomena, the possibility for the fan to attach to the content multiplies. In other words, when toys are produced based on a TV series characters, fans are able to physically manipulate them and to immerse themselves in the re-playing of the narrative either by mimicking actual scenes or developing the meanings and storylines based on for example on the parodying of them. Alternatively, with a TV series that has not spawned into various spheres of physical merchandise, fans have to use their own creativity in re-playing of the series.

Often, the toy play of adults, especially the play patterns in association with photoplay, is based on transmedia phenomena like *Twin Peaks*. What started as a television series is now present in many forms of fan culture, both as re-played narratives and as physical objects, including toys[12]. An important facet of the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* is socially shared photoplay, which functions as evidence for both the creation of DIY or self-made toy versions of characters and re-creations of iconic scenes familiar from the series. Through photoplay, both the players themselves and other fans of the series may revisit the world of *Twin Peaks* again and again. In terms of these ideas, the results of photoplay could, more than anything, be understood as realizations of the spontaneous, less rule-bound and creative play potential, representing the concept of infinite play. In the words of Geraghty, "digital spaces such as eBay, shop websites and fan-made pages offer the fan collector the potential for unlimited archives and images, knowledge and other digital ephemera" (2014: 161). What I would further suggest, is that the images, especially in the case of photoplay, offer potential players ideas on how to get into play with their own toys. Re-playing, then, means to 'toyÐ with the original content - to remember, re-create and once again experience what was of importance for the fan in the first encounter with the media product.

The various re-playing patterns spawned by *Twin Peaks* and shared on social media by adult toy players demonstrate the show's depth of cultural importance. To conclude, it is

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12 For more on adult toy play with transmedial dimensions, see e.g. Heljakka (2015a).

perhaps fitting to argue that not only the log will have something to say about the re-playing of *Twin Peaks* for the followers of the cult series in the future. Apparently, so will all the ludic manifestations related to it – both the artistically altered toys and the products of photoplaying with them, as illustrated in this article. Based on my analyses of *Twin Peaks* fandom in contemporary toy cultures I would also state that fandom is indeed, not only play*ful*, but *a form of play* continuously (and perhaps endlessly) inspired by the TV series that once became a cult and never was forgotten. Infinitely re-played and happening again.

What the launch of Lynch's upcoming season of *Twin Peaks* will result in, in terms of character toys such as dolls, action figures or soft toys, remains to be seen. Time will tell, for example, whether or not the Washington-based toy company Funko will develop and market its own line of 'cutified' *Twin Peaks* characters in the manner it has toyified a significant number of characters known from transmedia phenomena. Despite any possible and upcoming commercial merchandise of licensed items in relation to *Twin Peaks*, the fans of the series are always able to re-play the series according to their own choice of physical materials such as various playthings that have their own backstories with no connections to *Twin Peaks* whatsoever. On the other hand, in the creative hands of fans and artists, new versions of *Twin Peaks* characters may be endlessly created. How these become perceivable to the world is through the means of social media and in this way, function as new invitations to infinite play.

> Author: Will you continue this re-playing of *Twin Peaks*?
> Pinkkisfun: Definitely yes. I do not have a specific image or scene in mind, but for sure I will. It would be such a treasure chest to close by saying 'noÐ.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# "IT IS HAPPENING AGAIN": PARATEXTUALITY, 'QUALITY' AND NOSTALGIA IN *TWIN PEAKS'S* DISPERSED ANNIVERSARY

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## ABSTRACT

This article contributes to academic discussions regarding tele-anniversaries, 'quality' television, and nostalgia by examining an atypical example concerning how and why Twin Peaks (1990-91) underwent its 25th anniversary in 2014. Contrasting to previous studies, which have discussed centrally-controlled and brand-managed occasions (Holdsworth, 2011; Gray and Bell, 2013; Hills, 2013, 2015a), this article considers Twin Peaks's silver jubilee as a dispersed anniversary which originated from a range of nebulously-connected statements originating in journalistic discourse before becoming appropriated by official marketing strategies. By examining the serialised development of paratextual statements concerning the dispersed anniversary, I demonstrate that this progressed through three phases (1. paratextual speculation; 2. confirmation and verification; and, 3. calendrical establishment) and centred around establishing 'meta-paratexts' (Hills, 2015a) and discursive wills to 'commemorate' and 'cohere' around which meanings concerning nostalgia, art and commerce became negotiated.

## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

*Twin Peaks* (1990-1) has a long-standing reputation as a 'quality' (Thompson 1996; Nelson, 2007) and 'cult' television programme (Bianculli, 2010) both in and outside of the academy. During, 2014, the series' enduring reputation resurfaced as it underwent a 25th anniversary of sorts. This celebration culminated with a "commemorative event" (Gray and Bell, 2013: 100) held at Los Angeles's Vista Theatre on July 16th 2014 which was attended by many members of *Twin Peaks*'s cast and crew to celebrate the release of *Twin Peaks: The Entire Mystery* later in the month. *The Entire Mystery* was a Blu-ray box-set which collated for the first time every episode of the television series alongside prequel movie *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* (1992; *FWWM* hereafter) and 90 minutes of previously-unreleased deleted scenes from *FWWM* named 'The Missing Pieces'. Also included amongst the set's special features was a new sequence entitled 'Between Two Worlds' which was written and directed by the show's *auteur* David Lynch and featured members of the Palmer family moving from diegetic- and present-focused discussions occurring in-character to extra-diegetic reflections on making the show. This summary may, from one perspective, seem normative: anniversaries of media content have now, as Matt Hills (2015a: 2) recognises, "become a standardised part of media culture" and, when pertaining to niche-cult properties like *Twin Peaks*, are typically marked by re-releases featuring additional bonus content to drive sales (Hills, 2013: 227-8). Yet, subscribing to this understanding positions tele-anniversaries as commonplace and formulaic and so risks overlooking atypical examples and analysing how the meanings constructed in relation to specific cases originate, develop and become negotiated across cultural sites pertaining to distinct televisual forms. This article argues these points, and so furthers debates within TV Studies regarding tele-anniversaries, 'quality' television and nostalgia, by "retell[ing] the story" (Atkinson and Kennedy, 2015: para. 4) of *Twin Peaks*'s 2014 commemoration. By examining paratextual framings in journalistic commentary and official marketing, I conceptualise its development as what I call a *'dispersed anniversary'* which progressed through three phrases (theorised below as 'paratextual speculation', 'confirmation and verification' and 'calendrical establishment').

The value in examining *Twin Peaks*'s dispersed anniversary is two-fold: firstly, this case study complicates previous analyses of tele-anniversaries (Holdsworth, 2011: 113-7; Gray and Bell, 2013: 100-29) as it originated outside of centralised PR

strategies, only becoming located within official marketing discourses during its final stage. In contrast, previous studies of tele-anniversaries have examined centrally-managed examples and so accounted for these in relation to dominant industrial practices concerning branding (Johnson, 2012). Consequently, tele-anniversaries have primarily been used to further explore television's commercial and promotional cultures (see Hills, 2013, 2015a, 2015b). This article doesn't dispute the importance of marketing and hype to contemporary anniversaries. However, it does argue that positioning centrally-controlled brand celebrations as the sole ideal-type that characterises the contemporary TV environment (Hills, 2013: 217) has consequences. These include backgrounding commemorations that originate outside of industry hype and overlooking the range of agencies, investments and discourses that become negotiated between cultural sites of unofficial commentary and public relations.

Secondly, as paratexts work to "set the frames through which audience members [...] make sense of" (Gray, 2010: 10) texts at specific historical moments, examining the discourses circulating around *Twin Peaks*'s 25th allows for considering how anniversaries are constructed in relation to a specific televisual form like the (now-aged) 'quality' drama. *Twin Peaks*'s status as 'quality' television derives from a variety of factors including its challenge to the aesthetic and thematic norms of early 1990s network drama and Lynch's reputation as a respected Hollywood *auteur* (Halskov, 2015). Thus, whilst definitions of 'quality' television have altered within both industrial and audience contexts in the quarter-century since *Twin Peaks*'s initial transmission (Nelson, 2007), the discourses surrounding the show have adapted to these changes and its radical and innovative status has endured (Garner, 2016). In contrast, tele-anniversaries have been defined as representing "a claim for cultural value" (Ibid.: 104) for the commemorated object by "articulat[ing] affective intensities with an objective interval of time". Yet, as Su Holmes (2011: 214-7) discussion of tenth anniversary celebrations for the UK's *Big Brother* (2000- ) indicates, the security and terms of these claims are genre-specific and open to negotiation between interpretive communities.

Regarding *Twin Peaks* in 2014, two discursive 'wills' clustered around the series. These were the 'will to commemorate', through which discourses of memory, nostalgia and, in some contexts, commerce became activated, and the 'will to cohere', which mobilised Romantic discourses of 'art' and authorship to support anniversary-based readings and make claims for the show's enduring value. Central to these discur-

sive wills were two framing meta-paratexts – defined as "key, privileged paratext[s] which …underpin… a vast swathe of further content" (Hills, 2015a: 14) – concerning the '25 years' temporal marker and Lynch's authorial name. However, as detailed below, the interaction between these discourses and meta-paratexts was frequently reconfigured during different phases of the anniversary, and by different commentators, with ideas of nostalgia and commerce being invoked at some times, and distanced at others, in accordance with generating or sustaining specific 'quality' meanings. Recognising this point is significant as it complicates Hills' (2015b: 202) argument that *Twin Peaks*'s 25th saw a "fus[ing of] art and commercial discourses more thoroughly than many of *Twin Peaks*'s earlier paratextual iterations". Instead, outlining the anniversary's paratextual (re-)framings demonstrates a more complex scenario as ongoing fusions and splits between discourses of commerce, 'art', and nostalgia were observable. Thus, by analysing paratextual commentary across journalistic and marketing contexts, the specificities of how practices of *remembrance* are constructed in relation to enduring 'quality' forms can be used to enhance contemporary understandings of 'complex' TV (Mittell, 2015).

Regarding methodology, this article builds upon the phenomenological approach to studying paratexts (Gray, 2010) and tele-anniversaries (Hills, 2015a) indicated in preceding studies by tracking the temporal development of the dispersed anniversary's meanings from 1st January (when the '25 years' meta-paratext emerged) to 1st August 2014 (i.e. after the Blu-ray set's release). However, in contrast to Hills's (2013, 2015a, 2015b) foregrounding of officially-located and/or licensed paratexts, the ensuing analysis largely prioritises sources originating from what Jonathan Hardy (2011: 8) names "the non-corporate controlled axis" of media publicity which includes "'independent' news, commentary, previews and reviews in public media …[as well as] user-generated … content". Utilising a broader scope, which includes analysing newspaper reports and articles posted to niche-focused websites, provides opportunities for mapping the "textual field" (Couldry, 2000: 68) within which *Twin Peaks*'s silver jubilee was constructed. Such an approach permits exploring how specific meanings became forwarded and contested across cultural sites rather than subsuming these to a centrally-managed brand logic. Throughout the study online material is used but utilising the Internet generates large numbers of paratexts (Lindgren Leavenworth, 2016) and so requires reflexivity to be demonstrated towards the protocols employed for collating this study's sample. The primary website for data collection was *Welcome to Twin Peaks* (http://welcometotwinpeaks.com/; *WtTP* hereafter) because this is the most prominent *Twin Peaks* fan-site. *WtTP* attracted over 700,000 global visitors during this study's duration (Quantcast n.d.) and this figure points towards its centrality within the "textual environments" (Couldry, 2000: 67) of *Twin Peaks* fandom. However, to supplement *WtTP*'s postings and ensure triangulation, additional paratexts were collected by performing web searches for articles related to *Twin Peaks* during a 10-day period around the significant dates mentioned below. Although not all of the paratextual sources collated are directly cited here, those which are demonstrate the dominant frames through which *Twin Peaks* was discussed during 2014.

Finally, some readers may question the accuracy of asserting that *Twin Peaks*'s 2014 commemoration constituted its silver jubilee. This criticism only holds, however, if it is assumed that the readings around *Twin Peaks* mirrored those of other media anniversaries which position extra-textual dates such as those concerning first dates of transmission as the locus for commemoration and affect (Hills, 2013: 223). Applying this to *Twin Peaks*, which debuted on US television on 8th April 1990, *does* suggest an inaccuracy as it was only 24 years since the programme's introduction. Some may choose to interpret this discrepancy by recognising that "*Twin Peaks* has arguably enjoyed several doublings of its anniversaries. In the first instance, 2010 and 2011 have both been positioned as the show's twentieth anniversary" (Hills, 2015b: 197). Yet, resting upon this interpretation reinstates the 'quirkiness' frequently associated with *Twin Peaks* (Hayes and Boulègue, 2013: 5-6) and overlooks that the show's 25th anniversary in 2014 was largely due to the intratextual and authorially-based readings which were mobilised in unofficial paratexts and took precedence over extratextual production information.

## 2. ANNIVERSARIES, DISPERSALS AND BRANDS

Understood in the broadest sense, such as including commemorations of major historical events linked to significant temporal markers like the centenary of the start of the First World War, anniversaries are one component of public memory practices. Non-media anniversaries differ from their media-derived equivalents in many ways: historically-based commemorations typically generate monuments to the remembered occasion or figure and the forms that such memorials take demonstrate historical specificity (Machin and

Aboussnouga, 2011) and produce geographical locations (or *lieux d'memoire* – Nora, 1989) that encourage public remembrance. What's more, these forms of anniversaries perform ideological functions by forwarding shared humanistic values and appealing to (national) unity whilst also gaining legitimacy through mobilising the cultural capital of state institutions (Blair and Michel, 2007). The latter characteristic alludes to a crucial difference between media-based and non-media anniversaries because the endorsing institution for celebrations of media content is frequently the property's producer(s) who become aligned with commercialised discourses by being positioned as (re-)exploiting their ownership rights for profit (Murray, 2005: 417); the *Entire Mystery* Blu-ray set's release in 2014 indicates how such readings can be aligned with *Twin Peaks*. These commercially-rooted interpretations have resulted in hostility being directed towards media anniversaries by positioning them as 'pseudo-events' (Boorstin, 1963) and dismissing them via negative perceptions of popular culture (Johnston, 1991).

Caution should be expressed, however, as writing off tele-anniversaries as wholly profitmaking exercises constructs a false binary between historical/non-commercialised and media-based/commercial occasions. Such thinking is problematic for a variety of reasons: firstly, as returned to shortly, media coverage of historically-derived anniversaries intermingle with 'commercial' associations as institutional brand values impact upon how, and what aspects of, the original event becomes celebrated. Secondly, commemorative practices developed around events like 9/11 have also been critiqued for their economic underpinnings (Simpson, 2006: 5). Nevertheless, despite ongoing attempts to re-evaluate television's wider cultural reputation, the prevailing hostility towards tele-anniversaries indicates how the medium's associations as an ephemeral and largely commercialised cultural form endure and produce insecure claims to status for the content that media institutions select for commemorative purposes.

One way that academics have re-evaluated tele-anniversaries is by examining "institutional practices of memory" (Holdsworth, 2011: 113) and analysing linkages between the remembered object and the organising TV institution. Ann Gray and Erin Bell (2013: 100) have explored this point in relation to media coverage of historically-based anniversaries, arguing that:

> Anniversaries provide the opportunity for programme makers and national broadcasters to create and air material which offers knowledge of nationally and internationally significant past events, and also attempts to cement the position and reputation of a particular broadcaster, as in so doing they also demonstrate their own role as part of national history. For public service broadcasters such as the BBC, commemorative programming emphasises their role in creating and maintaining a memory of the past, while it also satisfies audience expectations that such events should be marked nationally

By re-circulating archival footage of how the institution covered the event *then*, and including this alongside their coverage of the commemorated object *now*, appeals to both national unity and the broadcast institution's ongoing importance to these constructions are communicated. Similarly Hills (2013: 230), writing in relation to the anniversary of a fictional series, has echoed Gray and Bell's position by arguing that *Doctor Who*'s 50th "hing[ed] on the branding equation of …consumer value with [the programme's] public service value to British (TV) culture" (2013: 230). In other words, part of the appeal of the show's golden jubilee for the BBC was "reinforce[ing the programme's] 'historical' worth as a public good" (Ibid.) and, by association, reminding audiences of the continued 'value' (whether commercially or culturally) of the commissioning institution. Whilst insightful, the aforementioned studies have all focused on anniversaries produced by the BBC and, to a greater or lesser extent (e.g. *Doctor Who*'s status as a global brand for BBC Worldwide – see Porter, 2012), underpinned by public service responsibilities. The commemorations are thus institutionally-framed by such requirements as achieving widespread appeal and communicating national identity (Debrett, 2009: 31-52). *Twin Peaks*'s 25th therefore contrasts with the examples discussed in previous examinations of tele-anniversaries because, despite achieving mainstream popularity in the early 1990s (Garner and Shimabukuro, 2016: 118-9), the show's appeal during 2014 was linked to niche-cult status rather than having to satisfy institutional requirements regarding cross-demographic cohesion. Moreover, anniversary discourse for *Twin Peaks*'s 25th originated outside of official institutional structures by instead arising through journalistic discourse, subsequently allowing it to be theorised as 'dispersed'. However, the type of dispersal characterising *Twin Peaks*'s silver jubilee differs from previous overlaps between studies of tele-anniversaries and notions of dispersal connected to centrally-located

branding strategies. It is therefore necessary to differentiate between these prior engagements with the term and how this study understands the concept.

Hills (2015a: 28) has made these links explicit by referencing Thomas Austin's (2002: 29) concept of "the dispersible text". Developed in relation to Hollywood cinema, Austin posits that contemporary blockbusters are industrially-designed "to achieve commercial, cultural and social reach, by both facilitating and benefitting from promotional and conversational processes of fragmentation, elaboration and diffusion" (Ibid.). These films, and their promotional strategies, initiate "[m]ultiple bids to capture audiences" (Ibid.: 30) and become characterised as dispersed through being broken up into various components (e.g. stars, genres) and disseminated across media forms targeting individuated audience niches. Socio-cultural ubiquity is the goal underpinning these strategies as "multiple address[es] to a coalition of audience fractions" (Ibid.: 29) are developed. Such ideas are also applicable to television programmes presently because, echoing Austin, Catherine Johnson (2012: 143) has identified that "the extension of content across the widest range of platforms and products has become an increasingly important part of the contemporary US and UK television industries". When discussing programme brands, Johnson (Ibid.: 159) argues that these frequently demonstrate "three central characteristics: longevity; transferability; and multiplicity" and it is the latter that intersects with discourses of dispersal. Building upon Sharon Marie Ross's (2008: 255) arguments that many contemporary TV shows exhibit "an aesthetics of multiplicity" via encouraging audience "tele-participation [and] featur[ing] narratives with multiple points of view", Johnson (2012: 163) posits that "multiplicity [...] extends beyond just the characters and the structure to the tone and address found across the programme brand". Branded programmes thus build a diverse, coalition audience by providing multiple access points which assist engagement and consumption across divergent profiles.

Links between discourses of dispersal and industrially-focused analyses of tele-anniversaries are easily made: whilst Bell and Gray's (2013: 100) characterisation of commemorations occurring across multiple media platforms provides one example, Hills' (2015a: 107-8) conclusion that "Media/brand anniversaries ...succeed in being many things to many people" reaffirm these connections. Yet, each of these are examples of what Hills (2013: 229) names the "hyped, brand anniversary" where the celebrated object "accrues ...brand value via emphasising its longevity, at the same time as using this birthday

to anchor a transmedia array of planned, coordinated merchandise and events" (Ibid.). These strategies represent what I'd call *centralised dispersal* as the commemoration displays "a centrifugal dynamic of aperture and extension via satellite texts, mirrored by a centripetal force which refers consumers from these texts to" (Austin, 2002: 30) the anniversary object (in this instance). In contrast, *Twin Peaks*'s silver jubilee demonstrated what I would name *nebulous dispersal* because commemorative discourse emerged from a disconnected range of unofficial sources and saw anniversary and authorial meta-paratexts arise from the readings made of *Twin Peaks* across cultural sites. This nebulous dispersal can be seen by analysing the anniversary's different phases of development.

## 3.1 PHASE ONE. PARATEXUAL SPECULATION: ESTABLISHING META-PARATEXTS

The initial phase of paratextual speculation arose when multiple press sources reported on information posted to the Facebook page of Sande Alessi Casting (https://www.facebook.com/sandealesicastinghawaii/?ref=br_rs) in early January 2014 concerning a highly specific and gendered call which explicitly named Lynch and *Twin Peaks* (see Figure 1). The combined presence of these names added legitimacy to the post and led to it being covered on a range of publications targeting different audience groups. Alongside featuring on *WtTP* (Twin Pie, 2014a), the website for the (primarily youth-orientated) music publication *NME Online* ran an article announcing that "David Lynch is returning to his cult TV show *Twin Peaks*" (Unaccredited, 2014: online). *MailOnline* (website of the British right-wing newspaper the *Daily Mail*) also reported that "[t]he cult-film director is gearing up to return to the mill town of Twin Peaks, as the 1990 TV series looks to be getting the conclusion it deserves after two and a half decades in limbo". (Maxwell, 2014: online). Picking up on the '25 years' angle, this article then made connections between diegetic information from *Twin Peaks* and the extra-diegetic present:

The series ...made mention of its possible return in an episode, when the spirit of murdered beauty queen Laura Palmer whispered to FBI Agent Dale Cooper that she would see him again in 25 years ...The primetime drama was set in 1989... so it looks like Laura might make good on that promise. (Ibid.)

Similarly, Alanna Bennett (2014: online) of online magazine *Bustle* speculated that:

In the finale episode of *Twin Peaks* Laura Palmer tells Kyle MacLachlan's Special Agent Dale Cooper that she will see him again in 25 years. That series was set in 1989 (though it aired '90-'91), so 25 five years from then is...well, right about now. 2014, to be exact, so in fact it's *exactly now*. Oh god. What does it mean.



> **Sande Alessi Casting**
> 7 hours ago
>
> TWIN PEAKS PROMO. Directed by David Lynch. Shoots in Los Angeles on Tuesday, January 7, 2014. Prob a 6 hour or less day. Rate is 150/8. You must live in LA to submit. I don't think SAG has jurisdiction on this, so SAG and NON can submit. I have called SAG to double check this and I am awaiting a call back to confirm this though.
>
> HOT Caucasian girl – BRUNETTE OR REDHEADS ONLY to play waitress. Age 18–27. MUST have an amazing body. Busty, very period looking face. Please submit two current color photos (one body shot, one face shot), your sizes, union status and contact info to: SandeAlessiCasting@gmail.com Subject line should read: TP Promo

FIGURE 1: CASTING CALL FROM JANUARY 2014 EXPLICITLY NAMING LYNCH AND TWIN PEAKS

As "press criticism will [...] set a yardstick for public opinion" (Todd, 2012: 87), the recurrent ideas which are mentioned across these articles are significant as they cumulatively established two discursive clusters (Mittell, 2004) which mobilised different claims to cultural value when discussing *Twin Peaks* at this historical moment. Firstly, a 'will to commemorate' is identifiable as intratextual readings focused around aspects of *Twin Peaks*'s narrative mythology (and typical of "forensic fandom", see Mittell, 2015: 52) were aligned with extratextual happenings. Laura Palmer's (Sheryl Lee) comment of "I'll see you again in 25 years" from *Twin Peaks*'s final episode, "Beyond Life and Death" (2.22), became re-interpreted as meaningful by journalists via connecting the casting call, the series' setting in 1989, and the current year of 2014 to establish the '25 years' reading as a shared meta-paratext.

Regarding claims to status, this initial 'will to commemorate' was constructed through combining culturally-valued ideas concerning textual 'depth' with connotations of nostal-

gia. Writing in relation to contemporary "complex" TV, Jason Mittell (2015.: 288; original emphasis) argues for "thinking of such texts as *drillable*" as audiences are "encourage[d] ...to dig deeper, probing beneath the surface to understand the complexity of a story and its telling" (Ibid.). What's more, texts that inspire these readings have typically accrued greater status than those presumed to offer more surface pleasures (Ibid.: 290). By connecting one of *Twin Peaks*'s unresolved diegetic enigmas to the extra-diegetic present, nebulously dispersed journalistic speculation identified a significant temporal marker and used this to (re-)imply the series' 'quality' reputation by constructing it as one that continues to reward 'deeper' audience engagement despite it being almost a quarter-century after first being broadcast. Additionally, intermingling with these claims to status are associations of nostalgia regarding re-creating *Twin Peaks*'s initial viewing experience(s) for some generational audiences. Henry Jenkins' (1995: 56-7) study of online *Twin Peaks* fandom during its first-run identified that audiences would produce in-depth readings of episodes in an attempt to crack the series' enigmas. Thus, just as Andreas Halskov (2015: 182) has argued that fans listening to podcasts of first-time *Peaks* viewers attempting to decipher the show can stimulate their own nostalgic memories of first-watching, paratextual speculation connecting the possibility of new *Peaks* footage appearing in 2014 to unresolved mysteries represents an alternative, more first-hand, inflection of such nostalgia. This is because feelings of nostalgia would be stimulated amongst audiences by inviting them to recall their own initial viewing experiences of *Twin Peaks* rather than these memories being triggered vicariously through the reactions of others. Thus, since anniversaries "articulate [...] affective intensities with an objective interval of time" (Hills, 2015a: 4), recurrent mentions of the '25 years' meta-paratext initiated a 'will to commemorate' *Twin Peaks* which layered reminders of the show's 'quality' status with nostalgic invocations of experiencing the programme first time around.

Constructed alongside the 'will to commemorate' was a 'will to cohere' which mobilised alternative discourses of 'quality' and (re-)established a second, authorially-based meta-paratext as an overarching interpretive frame. One discourse underpinning this 'will to cohere' was Romantic conceptualizations of art linked to "aesthetic organicism" (Dolan 1995: 31). Organicism posits that "Art ...should arise from a unified conception on the part of the artist, with all elements contributing to the creation of an organic whole" (Ibid.). By treating an unresolved enigma as meaningful, and so positioning *Twin Peaks*'s narrative world as serialised, jour-

nalistic speculation demonstrated an investment in Romantic discourses which constructed *Twin Peaks* as 'unified' and 'coherent'. Moreover, the 'will to cohere' was complemented and strengthened by forwarding another (Romantic – see Caughie, 1981) discourse concerning authorship as journalistic commentary used what Mittell (2015: 107; original emphasis) names an "*inferred author function*" to position the show as "the creation of a single aesthetic consciousness" (Dolan, 1995: 31). David Lynch's construction as "master programmer" (Jenkins, 1995: 61), which also originated during *Twin Peaks*'s initial run, was observable across each of the above statements and so attests to how Lynch's authorial name continued to operate as a valued meta-paratext which guides contemporary (re-)interpretation of the show. Having originated nebulously within a range of 'non-official' sources, these discursive wills and meta-paratexts endured and mutated throughout subsequent phases of *Twin Peaks*'s dispersed anniversary.

## 3.2 PHASE TWO. CONFIRMATION AND VERIFICATION: CAST RESPONSES AND NEGOTIATIONS OF NOSTALGIA

Shortly after the paratextual speculation, actor Ray Wise (*Twin Peaks*'s Leland Palmer) conducted multiple interviews to promote his new movie, *Big Ass Spider!* (2014). During these discussions, Wise frequently responded to questions regarding *Twin Peaks* and it was at this point that journalistic speculation gained confirmation and verification. For example, an interview with *Fangoria* quoted Wise (in Hanley, 2014: online) as saying "Yeah, we [shot the promo for the Blu-ray] two days ago ...It's been done ...I'm not at liberty to say what was done. I can say that it's going to be a big surprise." Wise's comment was reported across multiple niche-orientated cult media websites (Diaz, 2014; Twin Pie, 2014b) and is significant because, as someone who talks of having a "lifetime contract" (Wise in The Black Saint, 2014: online) with Lynch, provided endorsement and legitimacy for the speculation concerning new *Twin Peaks* footage appearing in 2014. What's more, Wise's interview performance(s) further supported the nebulously-dispersed origins of *Twin Peaks*'s silver anniversary; after confirming the shoot, he backtracked by stating "I don't know if I was supposed to leak that to anybody" (in Hanley, 2014: online), positioning himself as autonomous from an official PR campaign.

Wise's confirmation also generated further journalistic discourse regarding the '25 years' meta-paratext; Ken W. Hanley (2014: online) of *Fangoria* observed that Wise's comment "was especially titillating as it would coincide with Laura Palmer's posthumous sentiments to Agent Cooper" whilst Brendon Connelly (2014a) of *Bleedingcool.com* also echoed these sentiments. Such statements imply the continuation of fusing the wills to 'commemorate' and 'cohere' amongst journalists as the blurring of diegetic and extra-diegetic time with a view to constructing an objective temporal marker for commemorative purposes remained. These alignments contrast with how Wise engaged with the '25 years' meta-paratext, though, as in another interview he separated aspects of the 'will to commemorate' from the 'will to cohere' by distancing *Twin Peaks* from associations of nostalgia which were coded in relation to contemporary industrial practices:

They wouldn't remake it. If anything was done, it would be 25 years later. It would never be a remake of anything we already did. Maybe you just didn't mean to use that word, I don't know. A remake, no, but it would be something new and fresh. David always said the town of "Twin Peaks" is still there; it's still going on whether we watch it or not. So, who knows what'll happen in the future? It would be 25 years later, not anything remade. (Wise in Wangberg, 2014: online)

Wise's response occurred within the context of being questioned about whether *Twin Peaks* could, or should, be rebooted in the style of other shows such as *Dallas* (2012-2014). Whilst reboots "have proven popular with producers and networks interested in building on the nostalgic capital of past hits" (Lavigne, 2014: 1), wider cultural perspectives towards this type of televisual nostalgia demonstrate hostility by reading such forms as "as a stagnating force" (Lizardi, 2014: 39) that blocks creative and critical understandings of both our 'past' and 'present'. What's more, industrially-focused perceptions of reboots account for these as attempts to "generate some buzz and bring in some ratings points" (Howard, 2015: para. 8) and so have primarily read such forms of tele-nostalgia through commercial discourses. Applying these perspectives to Wise's engagement with the '25 years' meta-paratext, his comments juxtapose *Twin Peaks* against prevailing industrial strategies of capitalising upon nostalgia for popular 80s and 90s television programmes by instead foregrounding discourses of seriality and authorship to position the show as antithetical to these trends. Wise therefore prioritises the 'will to cohere' and, by doing so, draws upon a discourse of organicism to re-affirm *Twin Peaks*'s 'quality' status. The 'will to commemorate' is not wholly reject-

ed, however. Instead, his confirmation of the Blu-ray shoot, alongside explicitly mentioning the '25 years' meta-paratext, suggested links to discourses of commemoration and temporal significance. Nevertheless, Wise's endorsement of the 'will to commemorate' requires distancing nostalgic associations and, unlike journalistic speculation seeking to recapture 'past'-coded *Peaks* pleasures, stressing the show's status as a coherent and ongoing 'artwork' over its status as a commodity that responds to the demands of contemporary television production. Whilst his statements remain part of the matrix of "commercial intertextuality" (Hardy, 2011: 7) surrounding *Twin Peaks*, in terms of the discourses framing the show, nostalgia is something to be distanced from the series' meanings for Wise (and by association Lynch) because of its commercial associations.

Following Wise's interviews, journalists nevertheless continued to combine the 'will to commemorate' with the 'will to cohere' by turning to speculate on a preferred release date for the Blu-ray set. Such commentary was, in fact, observable prior to Wise's verifying statements as Connelly (2014b: online) wrote prior to this second phase that "if the set lands on March 25th in the US, as I'm expecting, that's exactly 25 years after Dale Cooper met Laura Palmer in the Black Lodge". However, in the days following Wise's interviews, *WtTP* (and others – see Diaz, 2014) also asked

> If it's not a question about *if*, then *when* will the BD be released? 03/27/2014 would be a brilliant release date for the Twin Peaks Blu-ray since, at least according to my calculations, that's exactly 25 years after Laura Palmer tells Dale Cooper she'll see him again in 25 years. And what a great opportunity for a newly filmed epilogue starring Kyle MacLachlan and Sheryl Lee in The Black Lodge, right? Right?! (Twin Pie, 2014c: online; original emphasis)

The discursive differences that arise between the statements offered by nebulously-dispersed unofficial journalists and those made by Wise are noteworthy for many reasons. Firstly, journalistic discussion further supports academic arguments positing that anniversary dates become "learn[ed] and fix[ed]" (Hills, 2013: 223) as a result of "socially-organised fandom ...debating the show" (Ibid.) over an extended period of time. By demonstrating the type of forensic deep-readings associated with (fan) audiences of 'complex' television, and adhering to this in their reporting(s) of *Twin Peaks* in 2014, these writers further demonstrate the role that reception

contexts play in identifying the preferred dates for individual tele-anniversaries. Secondly, the wider discourses which underpin these comments indicate how multiple appeals to cultural value continued to endure in journalistic interpretations. A sustained investment in Romantic discourses is clearly identifiable by consistently circulating readings of *Twin Peaks* that are rooted in ideas of authorship and organicism and these combine with the series' serialised narrative form to construct a desire that unresolved narrative enigmas will now be resolved. However, for journalists, this 'will to cohere' is combined with discourses of commemoration via anticipating that a new, albeit pre-planned, "milestone moment" (Holdsworth, 2011: 36) will be provided and nostalgically harking back to pleasures (of authorially-focused deep-readings) associated with watching the show during its first-run. Thirdly, the different attitudes that journalists and Wise expressed towards ideas concerning nostalgia linked to the anniversary indicate how meanings concerning nostalgia can differ across cultural sites. Whereas unofficial writers freely included nostalgic connotations in their framings of *Twin Peaks*'s 25th, Wise's statements associated nostalgia with commercial discourses and so distanced these in favour of foregrounding Lynch's authorial meta-paratext whilst linking the '25 years' framing solely to the show's serialised narrative. Interestingly, similar separations were negotiated further during the third stage of development.

## 3.3 **PHASE THREE. CALENDRICAL ESTABLISHMENT: COMMERCIAL TENSIONS AND TRANSMEDIA AUTHORSHIP**

The dispersed anniversary's third stage concerned *calendrical establishment* and was the point when the Blu-ray set's release date was announced and centralised marketing strategies began. The release date of July 29th was confirmed on May 15th through CBS Home Entertainment's YouTube channel (2014) which released a teaser video featuring brief snippets from The Missing Pieces and ended by revealing the date (Figure 2). Obviously, the chosen date was far-removed from that which was identified in unofficial commentary and this decision complicates existing academic understandings of contemporary tele-anniversaries which have focused solely on centrally-initiated examples and accounted for their popularity in relation to branding (Hills, 2015a: 3-4). According to these arguments, industrially-controlled anniversaries are ex-

pected to exhibit "a commercial, brand logic" (Hills, 2013: 230) which includes demonstrating "paratextual precision" (Hills, 2015b: 200) by honouring a pre-identified date (see above) as the locus for commemoration. Despite generating additional promotional material such as trailers and "*paratext[s] for ...paratext[s] – that is, ...para-paratext[s]*" (Ibid.: 198-9; original emphasis) including teaser videos for the set's special features, the chosen release date meant that *Twin Peaks* 25th diverged from the industrial strategies which have been examined in other examples of tele-anniversaries. Instead, to extend the metaphor used here for theorising *Twin Peaks*'s silver jubilee, its anniversary date suggests another form of dispersal occurring, this time at the calendrical level, as the commemoration was deferred until later in the year meaning that "a more vague or gestural commemoration of 'around' 25 years" (Ibid.: 200) became connoted (an approach that contrasts starkly with fan-produced commemorations such as *Twin Peaks*'s unofficial third series which was produced through Twitter and explicitly recognised the March 25th date – see Ibid: 203-4).

Given the prominence of the '25 years' meta-paratext and the 'will to cohere' in the anniversary's previous stag-

es, though, the chosen release date risked undermining *Twin Peaks*'s alignment with 'art' discourses that had occurred within unofficial and nebulously-dispersed paratexts. Instead, commercial priorities appear to have taken precedent with regard to how *Twin Peaks* was positioned in industrial contexts of marketing and distribution during this time period. Although DVD and Blu-ray sales have declined year-on-year since 2005 due to factors including the availability of content through streaming services (Ulin, 2013: 188-9), these sell-through distribution windows remain a lucrative revenue stream for rights holders (Acland, 2008: 86) – especially in the case of programmes with enduring reputations like *Twin Peaks* (cf. Murray, 2005: 417). As Blu-ray releases now adhere to frontloading practices to maximise sales (Ulin, 2013: 189), and *The Entire Mystery*'s only noteworthy competition in its US week of release was box office flop *Noah* (2014), the chosen release date is readable as having been primarily selected for financial reasons.

However, if CBS Home Entertainment's chosen release date downplayed discourses of 'quality' linked to the 'will to cohere', an additional paratext was produced which explicit-
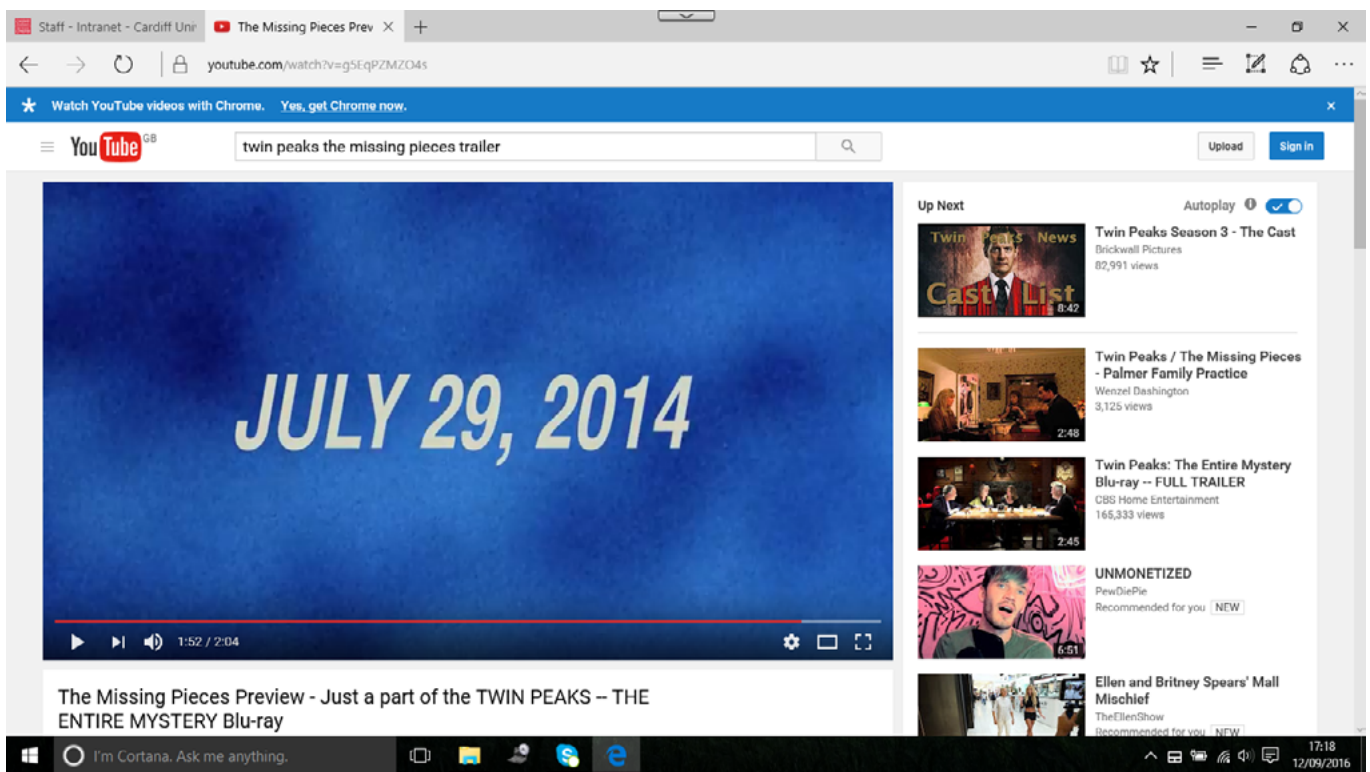
ly engaged with these discursive clusters. This was because May 15th saw David Lynch's official Twitter account unexpectedly release a tweet which featured a specially-commissioned piece of artwork that was assigned to Lynch's name and invited fans to 'Save the Date' by marking July 29th a 'Blue Rose Day' (Figure 3). Read from one perspective, this promotional image foregrounded the 'will to cohere' observable within journalistic readings of *Twin Peaks* by (re-)asserting Romantic discourses of authorship and art regarding the series via inviting audiences to read the release date as part of Lynch's pre-conceived masterplan. Through doing this, *Twin Peaks*'s enduring alignment with 'quality' discourses became appealed to as commercial motivations were softened in favour of those concerning serialisation and authorial control. This approach is not uncommon in relation to *Twin Peaks* because, as Hills (2015b: 194) has argued, "art discourses have proliferated around David Lynch and *Twin Peaks*, meaning that this work takes on cultural value by virtue of being semiotically disarticulated from connotations of commerce". Lynch's Twitter invitation thus represents an instance where, at this stage in the dispersed anniversary, discourses of art and commerce became paratextually-fused (cf. Ibid.: 202) with the former taking precedent over the latter through appeals to pre-established meanings linked to the 'will to cohere'. What's more, whilst it would be naïve to assert "that Lynch (or, for that matter, any other post-classical auteur) might be considered a 'free agent', operating independently of the system" (Todd, 2012: 14), the promotional image added to the dispersed nature of *Twin Peaks*'s anniversary. By associating the image with Lynch's authorial name, and releasing it through his personal Twitter account rather than CBS Home Entertainment's, connotations of Lynch engaging with 'the system' of marketing and promotion are downplayed in favour of implying that Lynch was operating autonomously. This promotional item therefore reflexively recognised the anniversary's dispersed origins and suggested that Lynch was simply adding his contribution to the anniversary meta-paratext. Through doing this, Romantic associations of authorship and 'coherence' were re-affirmed.

Further alignments between *Twin Peaks* and discourses of 'quality' arose from this image due to the connections it made between the series and contemporary trends concerning transmedia storytelling. Jenkins (2006: 95-6) has argued that "a transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole" and, writing specifically in relation to television, Mittell (2015: 292-318) has further posited that



FIGURE 3: LYNCH'S OFFICIAL TWITTER ACCOUNT MARKS THE BLU-RAY RELEASE DATE AS A ÐBLUE ROSE DAY'.

such strategies generate claims to cultural value via being a characteristic employed by complex narrative forms. Thus, when read in relation to transmedia storytelling's conventions, the 'Save the Date' image represented "a *diegetic extension*" (Ibid.: 298; original emphasis) of *Twin Peaks* in two ways. Firstly, drawing upon the series' serialised narrative, unresolved enigmas and fantastical mythology, the artwork suggested "new narrative events and broaden[ing] the storyworld" (Ibid.: 311) as the July 29th date *was* diegetically-meaningful but Lynch could only now reveal that significance in 2014. This approach subsequently connoted the '25 years' meta-paratext that was crucial to this year becoming positioned as *Twin Peaks*'s silver jubilee.

Secondly, as "mixing ...th[e] fictional world with the real world of the viewer's lived experience" (Evans, 2011: 25) is another characteristic of transmedia storytelling, Lynch's tweet suggested that *Twin Peaks*'s (hyper)diegesis was bleeding in to 'real' online spaces. This meaning was further enhanced by the Blue Rose's presence: within *Twin Peaks*, the Blue Rose relates to highly classified information concerning events leading up to Laura Palmer's murder and is a code initiated by FBI controller Gordon Cole – the character Lynch plays – and recognised by only a few of his trusted agents. By demark-

ing July 29th as another Blue Rose Day, the promotional image invited Lynch's followers to question whether they were being addressed by Lynch or Cole and to prepare for narrative events to 'happen again' as a new instalment within the show's ongoing mythology would be provided. *Twin Peaks*'s engagement with transmedia storytelling in 2014 via Twitter therefore blurred boundaries between 'fiction' and 'reality' by positioning followers of Lynch's account as though they were now also Lynch/Cole's trusted confidents. Aspects of the 'will to cohere' such as *Twin Peaks* being an ongoing narrative which is controlled by a singular authorial vision instead took precedence and connected with contemporary practices for developing and maintaining interest in complex TV drama beyond the boundaries of the programme itself (Mittell, 2015: 295). Through doing this, *Twin Peaks*'s associations as an enduring 'quality' series were again asserted.

However, regarding the 'will to commemorate', the 'Save the Date' image communicated a more complex set of discursive negotiations. On the one hand, this will was easily identifiable as the Blue Rose demarcation suggests the construction of a new 'milestone moment' for *Twin Peaks* fans. On the other, positioning the release date as an original and unanticipated locus for remembrance again implies a distancing between *Twin Peaks* and discourses of nostalgia. Although a multi-faceted term (Boym, 2001), constructions of nostalgia are frequently understood as mobilising a backwards-facing attitude within the present (Davis, 1979: 12-14) and so are frequently chastised for being ideologically regressive. If read from an audience-orientated perspective, these associations potentially arise from the Blue Rose image as Lynch's established position as trickster *auteur* (Jenkins, 1995: 62-3) resurfaces – albeit this time within the context of official publicity. The promotional image's sudden and unexpected revelation of new narrative information concerning *Twin Peaks* "restores fans' 'vulnerability' to Lynch's trickster role" (Hills, 2015b: 201) and, through doing this, again suggests (re-)experiencing nostalgic pleasures linked to prior experiences of the series. However, if approached from a narrative viewpoint, the Blue Rose paratext arguably rejects associations of nostalgia and 'looking back' as audiences are instead invited to adopt a future-orientated perspective by looking towards a new date within the series' narrative. In terms of the storytelling device employed by the promotional image, then, it is possible to connect this with further ideas concerning complexity and cultural value as the mode of address relates to Mittell's (2015: 42) arguments concerning the "operational aesthetic". One aspect of this type of device can be invit-

ing audiences "to reconsider all that we have viewed before" (Ibid.: 45) as new revelations undermine established textual information. Lynch's Twitter announcement works as an extra-diegetic example of this as the sudden announcement of a new date of importance to *Twin Peaks* undermines what audiences have previously known about the programme's narrative (e.g. that it's serialised development ceased following cancellation in 1991; *FWWM* acting as a prequel) by revealing the continuation of its world off-screen. Rather than solely inviting audiences to nostalgically revisit the series and reconsider what they already know (see Mittell, 2009), the 'Save the Date' image instead encourages looking forward and anticipating further developments within *Twin Peaks*'s mythology (as was to be the case later in 2014 with the confirmation of a third series for Showtime). Thus, whilst commercial motivations undoubtedly underpin the image's promotional aims by "avoiding celebratory clichés, and ...[instead] offering something new to fan-consumers" (Hills, 2013: 226) via the promise of 'new' *Twin Peaks*, this branding-derived interpretation overlooks how individual discourses were negotiated by different groups engaging with the 'will to commemorate'. In the case of *Twin Peaks*'s 25th, associations between the series and nostalgia were incompatible within paratexts attributed to the show's creative personnel because these compromised the series' preferred readings as 'art' and a 'complex serial'.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Previous scholarly discussions concerning nostalgia in relation to 'quality' television drama have occurred in relation to British TV drama and suggested hostility towards the concept because of either its gendered associations (Caughie, 2000: 203-26) or its perceived challenge to the dominant (social) realist aesthetic that is regularly valued in relation to the form (see Cooke, 2003). This article has examined these ideas in a different set of circumstances by looking at globally-distributed paratexts linked to a U.S. 'quality' drama within an anniversary context and has further demonstrated the separation between discourses of 'quality' drama and nostalgia within specific cultural sites. The example of *Twin Peaks*'s 25th shows that, whilst journalists located along the unofficial axis of commentary surrounding the series regularly articulated positions that engaged with nostalgia and combined this with other discourses of cultural value, paratextual framings of the show made by its creative personnel instead distanced the series from these associations. This was because nostalgia

became associated with discourses of commercialism and/or 'looking back' which threatened *Twin Peaks*'s enduring reputation and location amongst valued discourses concerning the organic and authored artwork. The different meanings and forms of nostalgia demonstrated across *Twin Peaks*'s dispersed anniversary therefore suggest that future studies of tele-anniversaries and/or 'quality' television should compare different case studies to that outlined here with a view to better understanding how discourses of nostalgia become positioned in relation to 'quality' forms at specific temporal moments. What's more, attention should also be paid towards which interpretive communities either invoke or distance 'nostalgic' associations in relation to the commemorated object as reflecting on such issues will provide a fuller understanding of which groups, and in what forms, nostalgia becomes a significant component of remembering 'quality' forms. Through tackling these issues a more complete understanding of the role nostalgia plays in relation to the enduring reputation of complex serials can be formulated.

Secondly, by retelling the development of *Twin Peaks*'s dispersed anniversary, this article has demonstrated the value in considering individual examples on a case-by-case basis as doing so permits engaging with atypical examples such as this and enhances our understanding of where anniversary discourses become initiated beyond institutional practices of branding. Although commercial concerns undoubtedly underpin each phase of the anniversary (the casting call which encouraged anniversary discourse amongst journalists was, after all, linked to the show's re-release on Blu-ray), the 25 years meta-paratext emerged outside of an official marketing context and led to a range of agencies and discourses working to frame the series during the time period discussed. Recognising the origins of *Twin Peaks*'s anniversary meta-paratext has therefore permitted differentiating between centrally-dispersed examples (e.g. those initiated by publicity industries with a view to leading multiple audience niches towards the commemorated object) and processes of nebulous dispersal where commemorative discourse emerges from a disconnected range of sources that coalesce to produce shared meanings around a ('quality') series at a particular point in time. TV Studies should thus continue to study individual examples of tele-anniversaries as these reveal how serialised narratives become constructed at a meta-textual level where the meaning of any show becomes negotiated across cultural sites at specific points in time.

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*Twin Peaks* (1990-1991)

# "NO LYNCH, NO PEAKS!": AUTEURISM, FAN/ACTOR CAMPAIGNS AND THE CHALLENGES OF *TWIN PEAKS'* RETURN(S)

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## KEYWORDS

Fandom; authorship; celebrity; David Lynch; Twin Peaks; fan campaigns.

## ABSTRACT

This article explores the return of Twin Peaks in 2017, exploring how the series' revival may threaten fans' sense of trust in the text and their own fan identity (Williams, 2015). Many fans welcome the return of beloved shows such as Twin Peaks and the involvement of original creators Mark Frost and David Lynch offers a 'guarantee' of authenticity, whilst the return of cast members presents the opportunity to re-visit favourite characters. This paper firstly explores how Twin Peaks' resurrection allows consideration of fan responses to the continuation of an assumed dormant textual world by exploring the potential impact of the return of original actors and the series' creators. Secondly, the paper considers the impact of Lynch's temporary departure from the series in April 2015 and the subsequent actor-led campaign to encourage his return. The "No Lynch, No Peaks" campaign allows exploration of how the actors involved positioned themselves as both fans and potential employees. The paper thus analyses David Lynch's enduring position as the auteur of Twin Peaks and how the campaign allows consideration of the actors as media professionals, fans of Lynch, and figures who display forms of cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu. 1984)..

This article explores *Twin Peaks*' return on the American cable network Showtime in 2017 in terms of debates around returning television series, potential fan reactions to these and the possible threat they pose to fans sense of self-identity and trust in the fan object, and the blurring of boundaries between actors/celebrities and fans. It argues that fandom allows fans to maintain a sense of connection to the series, their associated self-identity as a fan, and a sense of "ontological security" (Giddens, 1990). It thus explores how the return of the series may threaten this sense of trust in the text and one's own fan identity. Henry Jenkins argues that *Twin Peaks* was one of the first TV shows to attract a dedicated online fan audience who developed specific "reading practices and interpretive strategies (their fixation on resolving narrative enigmas, their development of multiple alterative restagings of the core plotline, their complex relationship to Lynch as author, their appeal to extratextual discourse and intertextual linkages)" (1995: 53). Since the programme first aired in 1990 and 1991 the online presence surrounding the show has not abated and, with the advent of social media, has actually proliferated (see Williams, 2016). More widely the series has enjoyed "a high level of cultural penetration several decades after its release" (Howe, 2013: 41) and continued to infiltrate and influence popular culture (see Jowett, 2015).

Furthermore, as the series is now to return in 2017, its fandom has seen radically different periods in its history since the series was first cancelled. This period between its original ending in 1991 and its return can be viewed as a form of "interim fandom", a period where fans assume that their fan object is dormant without knowing when – or if – it will return. Many fans welcome the return of beloved shows such as *Twin Peaks* and the involvement of original creators Mark Frost and David Lynch offers a 'guarantee' of authenticity whilst the return of cast members such as Kyle MacLachlan presents the opportunity to re-visit favourite characters. However, some fans remain ambivalent about accepting such resurrections and reject such texts as commercial and inferior. What fans construct or perceive as second-rate versions of beloved fan objects can undermine their self-identities since they threaten to dilute aspects of the series that the fan was originally attracted to. Inauthentic or inferior copies of a fan object can endanger fan attachments both by highlighting the commercial nature of fandom, and threatening to 'betray' the original characters and narrative worlds. Considering this moment in *Twin Peaks*' history allows consideration of potential fan responses (both positive and negative) to the continuation of an assumed dormant textual world. The article explores how these resurrections can allow fans to maintain or renegotiate their fandom, and their often complex responses to the revival of *Twin Peaks,* by focusing on returning actors and the roles of creators David Lynch and Mark Frost. As the revival of TV texts becomes more common, consideration of how fans may respond to these – and how they may try to reassure themselves that the returning text will be 'good' – is crucial for scholars of television and audiences/fans.

Secondly, and related to the importance of the return of author figures, the article will consider debates around celebrities-as-fans, seeking to challenge "the otherwise "restrictive categories" of pure celebrity and fan, where media production and consumption are neatly carved apart" (Hills, 2006:103). Whilst much work in Fan and Television Studies has focussed on the tensions between fans/audiences and creators or producers (see Hadas and Shifman, 2013, Johnson, 2007, Williams, 2010), this article explores the triad of fans/actors/showrunners to consider how those involved in making media texts can be viewed as, or position themselves as, fans (see Jones 2016). The article thus considers the (temporary) departure of series creator David Lynch from *Twin Peaks* in April 2015 and the subsequent "No Lynch, No Peaks" campaign to encourage his return. Featuring stars from the original series such as Sherilyn Fenn, Sheryl Lee and Dana Ashbrook, the campaign relied heavily on the "subcultural celebrity" (Hills, 2003) of these figures who functioned as guarantors of authenticity for those who recognised them. The paper argues that this campaign allows exploration of how the actors involved positioned *themselves* as fans of the series and Lynch to appeal to fans and inspire them to join the cause. However, this necessitates a dual position-taking since the *Twin Peaks* actors occupy insider positions and possess levels of authenticity that everyday fans cannot (e.g. having direct access to Lynch himself). Thus, the paper argues that the campaign makes visible the work of the celebrity since the actors operated as potential employees of the revived show who displayed "deference or respect which reflects professional necessity and [their] place within the production hierarchy" (Hills and Williams, 2005: 357).

## FANDOM, ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY AND TELEVISUAL RESURRECTIONS

Media texts are often crucial to helping fans formulate a sense of self-identity and security or "trust" (see Williams, 2015). Such objects can provide fans with a sense of what

sociologist Anthony Giddens calls "ontological security" which refers to "a comfortable mental state in which actors engage in taken for granted activities in familiar surroundings and in the company of unthreatening others" (Cohen, 2008: 328). Ontological security is closely linked to the "basic trust" in the world established in early childhood (see Winnicott, 1964). Those who fail to develop such basic trust are inherently "ontologically insecure" (Laing, 1960:39) and do not properly develop a sense of self-identity (Layder, 1997:67). Ontological security also presupposes a "shared – but unproven and unprovable – framework of reality" (Giddens, 1991:36) and when unforeseen events suggest that this "framework of reality" is not universal our ontological security is undermined. This is linked to the fact that "the routinisation of day-to-day life [...] is the single most important source of ontological security" (Giddens, 1981:37), enabling development of a "basic sense of "confidence" in the "continuity" of self-identity and the "constancy" of the surrounding, everyday social world" (Giddens, 1990:92). Such routine can come, in part, from the media; for example, "fixed [television] schedules, in which the same programme is put on at the same time of the day [...] mean that audiences can come to find the overall shape of output to be ordered and predictable" (Moores, 2005:20). Similarly, fandom of specific objects may provide individuals with a sense of ontological security which derives from the fan's devotion to his/her fan object and also from the resultant fan community (Williams, 2015). For example, ontological security may develop from the constancy of a fan object, for example television programmes which are screened regularly and which return with each new "season" of television (Moores, 2005:20).

However, individuals may experience threats to their ontological security through the demise of, or loss of interest in, a fan object or through the failure of fan community (for example, if a favourite message board shuts down). When this occurs, trust in the text can be destabilised and the fan's sense of self must be reworked in order to cope with this disruption. When objects such as television shows come to a close, fans employ a range of discourses to deal with this including grief and sadness or, in rarer cases, "expressing relief at their demise and critically evaluating their final episodes" (Williams, 2015: 197). They also participate in various practices to maintain their fandom such as re-watching favourite episodes of a television show, writing fanfiction, or discussing the text with fellow fans. This allows them to cope with the consequences when the end of "a favourite program creates an emotional void and forced detachment from the program narrative"

(Costello and Moore, 2007: 135). However, in a contemporary media landscape littered with remakes, reboots, and resurrections, fan reactions to these returns are also worthy of study.

Indeed, the return of television programmes across a range of genres is becoming increasingly common. As Harrington notes, the television "industry itself aims for the profit potential of narrative immortality and/ or resurrection (in syndication, in another medium, etc.)" (2013: 584) and "wish[es] for the profitability of immortality (or resurrection/afterlife in syndication or other platforms)" (2013: 588). Examples include the return of science-fiction series *Doctor Who*, the various incarnations of *Star Trek*, the return of soap opera *Dallas,* and recent revivals of cult shows such as *The X-Files,,* 24, and *Heroes*. Jason Mittell refers to these as examples of TV resurrections where "an already concluded series returns, either on television or in another medium" (2015: 321). Such resurrections are often motivated by "having more stories left to tell" (Mittell, 2015: 321) whilst others are driven by "commercial imperatives" (Ibid.) although, clearly, all resurrections are linked to the economic drives of the media industry.As Harrington notes, such resurrection of shows has the potential to generate a range of emotions in fans of the series and "fans are hesitant about industry vs. creative imperatives regarding narrative endings. A textual death that leaves open the possibility of an afterlife or re-boot can be 'good' from a fan perspective insofar as that possibility is realized and well-handled" (2013: 590-1) but, in many cases, such reboots are not well received.

Prior research indicates that fans may feel both excited and apprehensive at the prospect of a revival or reboot, especially when considering a show such as *Twin Peaks* that had a prolonged gap between its second and third seasons. In this case, *Twin Peaks* offers us a relatively unusual example of a fan object which has been cancelled and then resurrected a-quarter-of-a-century later, rewriting its surrounding fandom from "post-object fandom" into a form of "interim fandom" (Williams, 2015: 168) in the twenty-six year gap. Rather, given "Lynch and Frost's categorical denial of any intentions to return to the series" (Weinstock, 2015: 1), fan connection was predicated on the assumption that the show was "over" and that their fandom was concerned with a finite text. Thus, fans of *Twin Peaks* assumed that their fan object was dormant and had to readjust or negotiate their responses when the object became active again.

For many fans a return can be welcome, offering an opportunity for closure for a narrative that ended abruptly with the possession of heroic lead character Dale Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan) by the evil spirit BOB (Frank Silva), and to return

to the town and characters that they loved. However, such resurrections can also provoke anxiety in fans that have been used to a complete and bounded text. In discussion of *Doctor Who* fandom Matt Hills notes the anxiety felt by many when "the idealized fan object is potentially threatened (in a way in which tie-ins, spin-offs and unofficial material cannot pose a threat)" (2012:114). This article explores these anxieties by first focusing on the two main discourses that can be employed by fans to cope with any potential anxiety or threats to ontological security generated by news of *Twin Peaks'* return; the emphasis on the return of actors from the show and the return of its original creators Mark Frost and David Lynch. It then examines the potential threat to this sense of security caused when Lynch temporally left the revived series and the emergence of the ensuing campaign to encourage his return. This actor-led campaign offers an example of how figures such as Sherilyn Fenn, Sheryl Lee and Kimmy Robertson positioned themselves as fans of the series and Lynch – and, thus, similar to 'ordinary' fans - whilst also negotiating their own roles within systems of television production.

## ACTORS, AGING & COLLECTIVE MOURNING

There are various strategies available to the fan whose ontological security is threatened by the resurrection of a series. For example, such threats can be warded off by drawing on the involvement of the original cast members (including Kyle MacLachlan as Agent Dale Cooper) and the centrality of original creators David Lynch and Mark Frost to the resurrection of the show. Kyle MacLachlan quickly confirmed his involvement, tweeting "Better fire up that percolator and find my black suit :-) #Twinpeaks" on October 6, 2014 (MacLachlan, cited in Weinstock, 2015: 2). The return of the actors "provides a parallel return for the characters who fans are attached to, functioning as literal reminders-in-the-present of the narrative world" (Williams, 2015: 179).However, in the case of *Twin Peaks* – which is diegetically set at least 25 years after the original series – the actors look markedly different and in some cases are almost unrecognisable. Alongside the natural changes brought about by aging, for instance, actress Lara Flynn-Boyle who played Donna Hayward in the series (but was replaced by Moira Kelly in the movie *Fire Walk With Me*) has undergone extensive plastic surgery whilst James Marshall who played biker James Hurley looks considerably different due to a prolonged period of illness.

For some fans the fact that actors look older works to re-iterate the sense that a narrative universe, and the characters within it, have continued in the period that a world has been off-screen and that the "hyperdiegesis" of a series – its "vast and detailed narrative space" - has endured (Hills, 2002: 137). David Lynch himself made such a comment when he noted that "I sort of assume that *Twin Peaks* is still there, it's just that no one is pointing a camera at it now" (Lynch cited in Rodley, 1997:181).However, other fans may resist the return of the embodiment of a character because they would not look "the same". The physical appearance of actors can provide a sense of continuity or ontological security via the notion of co-presence. As Ross Garner argues in his discussion of the return of *Doctor Who* actress Elisabeth Sladen to the series, such "embodied presence" works to provide ontological security via familiarity and a sense of reassurance (Garner, 2013:203). However, the fact that actors can provide "co-temporality" by functioning as "age cohorts" may also be relevant when they return to play particular roles (Turnock, 2000: 48). Changes in the physical appearance of a favourite character may threaten fans' sense of ontological security, highlighting both their own co-presence with aging characters and undermining their original views of what characters look like. This was especially linked to those actors who had not remained in the public eye after the cancellation of *Twin Peaks* such as Dana Ashbrook and James Marshall (Garner, 2015).

In contrast, actors such as Ray Wise and Kyle MacLachlan had continued to work in film and television steadily over the twenty-five years between the second and third seasons of the show. MacLachlan had relatively high profile roles on television shows *Sex and the City, Desperate Housewives* and *Agents of SHIELD* which allowed audiences to witness his aging process as he moved from playing younger, more risky, roles to more mature characters who were often married with children, mirroring his own aging process and that of the original *Twin Peaks* audience. MacLachlan thus remained recognisable to a wider audience and retained "culturally ubiquitous and mass-mediated recognition" (Hills, 2006: 103). His return to *Twin Peaks* is thus reassuring for viewers of the original series since he has aged alongside them, functioning as a secure "embodied presence" (Garner, 2013:203) of the original series.

Another potential source of anxiety is related to the fact that several of the actors who originally appeared in *Twin Peaks* have passed away in the years between the second and third seasons of the show. These include Don S. Davis who played Major Garland Briggs, Jack Nance who portrayed Pete Martell and, perhaps most crucially, Frank Silva who played the

evil spirit BOB. Closer to the return of the series, Catherine Coulson who played the enigmatic and iconic Log Lady passed away on September 28 2015. Her character was widely reported to be appearing in the revived series and the outpouring of grief on Twitter after her death (Parkinson, 2015) indicates her status as a beloved character in the world of *Twin Peaks* and a sense of collective mourning for one element of the series that cannot, unless some scenes have already been filmed, return. Death is extremely disruptive to our sense of ontological security since it is "the ultimate abject, the 'great extrinsic factor of human existence', the 'fateful moment' (of dis-order) which is ultimately resistant to human containment and control" (Ritchie, 2003: 2) and, when favourite actors die, this can work to "remind [fans] of [their] own mortality" (Garde-Hansen, 2011: 131). Thus, whilst the deaths of on-screen characters can be a source of grief and sadness, the passing away of the actors who play those characters also causes a "traumatic loss and ... subsequent collective mourning" (Wang, 2007: 335).Whilst the aging of actors can threaten fan ontological security and their idealised image of what a character looks like, the death of an actor presents the definitive end of that character, preventing the fan from seeing further development of their on-screen narrative and irrevocably altering one aspect of a beloved fan text such as *Twin Peaks.*

In addition to discussion of the actors, fans were also able to draw on the involvement of the show's co-creators and auteur figures David Lynch and Mark Frost as a potential source of ontological security. However, as discussed below, the return was, as with the series" original two seasons, largely viewed as "a Lynch auteur-work" (Williams, 2005:42) with Frost's contribution discussed in fairly narrow ways. Lynch functioned as the show's auteur figure from the outset in 1990, offering the promise of quality and being perceived by fans as "a trickster who consistently anticipates and undermines audience expectations" (Jenkins, 1995: 61). The next section thus explores Lynch's status as the show's creator, his reputation for the unexpected, and the subsequent interplay between fans, producers/creators and actors when he temporarily left the revived series in 2015.

## SUBCULTURAL CELEBRITY AND THE ACTOR-AS-FAN IN THE NO LYNCH, NO PEAKS CAMPAIGN

Matt Hills notes that auteur figures often act "as a point of coherence and continuity in relation to the world of the media cult" and "fans continue to recuperate trusted auteur figures" (2002: 132-133). The involvement of original creators in resurrections and returns therefore functions as an important signifier of trust and "quality" for fans:

> Their previous involvement, their presumed knowledge of and their love for a text suggests that the revived series is in good hands, allowing fans to attempt to avoid any anxiety or threats to fan ontological security that may be caused by news of a resurrection (Williams, 2015: 179).

However, Lynch's presence on the new series of *Twin Peaks* does not unproblematically offer fans a sense of security since his authorial brand connotes ambiguity, uncertainty and a sense of the ontologically insecure (see Todd, 2012). Even in early fan discussion of the series in the early 1990s fans were aware of Lynch's status as a "trickster" against whom they could "match [...] wits" (Jenkins, 1995:63) and this common view of Lynch endures to this day.

In the case of the revived *Twin Peaks*, Lynch's involvement does not necessarily provide the reassurance and security that we may expect; given his authorial status as someone who provides shock and surprise, as a creator of forms of cinematic ontological insecurity, fans cannot necessarily expect anything certain. As Williams notes, Lynch's "marketing catchphrase is Expect the Unexpected" (2005: 40). *Twin Peaks*' predilection for mystery and uncertainty – for representing the uncanny and often attempting to shock and disorient the viewer – is well-known. For example, Kyle McLachlan may well be returning to the series as Dale Cooper but there is no clear sense of his role in the show – he may be killed off in the first episode, for example. Equally, given that his character was shown to have been possessed by the murderous spirit BOB in the final scenes of the show's second season, we do not yet know what 'version' of Cooper we may encounter in the revived series. Hills has noted this expectation of the unexpected for fans of the series, suggesting that "New *Twin Peaks* almost needs to kill or betray old *Twin Peaks* in order to really be *Twin Peaks*-ish; cosy recreations of cult could ossify into audience-pleasing sameness instead of something truly unexpected and thrillingly unforeseen" (Hills, cited in Halskov, 2015: 219).The uncertainty engendered by Lynch's authorial reputation highlights how ontological security cannot provide "an emotional inoculation which protects against [...] ontological anxieties" (Giddens, 1990:94) but rather ensures that one can deal with the unexpected and adjust to changes

in routine (Craib, 1997:357). Giddens himself notes that the "protective barrier [that ontological security] offers may be pierced, temporarily or more permanently" (1992:40). In the case of *Twin Peaks'* return this became clear when Lynch's status as an ontologically insecure or unreliable auteur appeared to be well-founded.

Actress Kimmy Robertson (who played Lucy in the series) posted the following message on her Facebook page on Easter Sunday – April 5th 2015 –: "Dear Showtime....I hope you're happy. P.S. you really really suck". After several hours of debate, David Lynch posted a message on his Facebook and Twitter profiles, announcing his exit from the *Twin Peaks* revival:

> Dear Facebook Friends, Showtime did not pull the plug on *Twin Peaks*. After 1 year and 4 months of negotiations, I left because not enough money was offered to do the script the way I felt it needed to be done. This weekend I started to call actors to let them know I would not be directing. *Twin Peaks* may still be very much alive at Showtime. I love the world of *Twin Peaks* and wish things could have worked out differently (cited in Brown, 2015).

Lynch's statement here must be read as performative, as a display of honesty and open-ness that must be treated as a text. However for fans of the series, Lynch's announcement about his departure appears to violate the "sense of the reliability of persons and things" that Giddens argues is "so central to the notion of trust, is basic to feelings of ontological security" (1990: 92) since his commitment to the revived *Twin Peaks* becomes uncertain. Fulfilling here his role as unreliable auteur, Lynch's claim that he was leaving Showtime's reboot was greeted by emotional outpourings by fans, many of whom spent the Sunday evening posting angry (and often abusive) messages on Showtime's social media pages. However, alongside efforts by fans of the show (Halskov, 2015: 214), the actors themselves picked up the mantle of campaigning, launching the "official *Twin Peaks* cast run site" group on Facebook and posting a video of various cast members including the Log Lady (Catherine Coulson), Sherilyn Fenn, Dana Ashbrook and Laura Palmer herself – actress Sheryl Lee – all proclaiming that *Twin Peaks* without David Lynch was unthinkable. The actors compared *Twin Peaks* without Lynch to a variety of examples, many of which were linked to the series or the characters they played; for example actress Peggy Lipton stated that the series without

Lynch was "like a pie without cherries" and Sheryl Lee that it was "like a girl without secrets". Notable by his absence was Kyle MacLachlan who, according to actress Sherilyn Fenn who was one of the driving forces behind the campaign. However MacLachlan was apparently the only star locked into a contract at the point of Lynch's departure which may explain his public silence on the matter (Marino, 2015).

Fan-led campaigns are not unusual; fans of shows including *Angel, Firefly,* and *Chuck* instigated campaigns to protest when they were cancelled by networks (see Abbott, 2005, 2008; Barton, 2014, Paproth, 2013). However, actor-led campaigns are less common and, in the case of the "official *Twin Peaks* cast run site", the lines between actors and fans became blurred; the actors were both appealing for the show to return with Lynch at the helm and positioning themselves as fans of the series. This situated and "active agency" allows actors to "reflect upon [their] role within hierarchies of production and reflect [their] imagined and embodied relationships with fandom" (Hills and Williams, 2005: 347). In analysis of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* star James Marsters, Matt Hills and Rebecca Williams discuss his manoeuvres to align himself with fans and to position himself as close to them. They argue that Marsters "participates in industry processes that appear to blur character and actor, while also seeking to partly position himself as 'ordinary' and thus as a potential figure for (fan) audience identification" (2005: 350). They note that "TV actors can participate in, and discursively appropriate, industry forms of promotion within their function as subcultural celebrities" and that "elements of character and actor 'identity' can be activated extra-textually in order to position the celebrity as semiotically 'close' to a fan subculture" (2005: 350).

In the case of the No Lynch/No Peaks campaign such manoeuvres are necessary to appeal to fans and to inspire them to join the cause. However, the actors did not solely function as fan-surrogates or stand-ins and, like Marsters, occupied a range of roles. Indeed, there was a clear sense of many of the actors as both fans and as potential employees of the Showtime network who would benefit financially from appearing in the series. Actress Sherilyn Fenn, who was one of the driving forces behind the cast campaign, made this point explicitly on the Facebook Cast Group:

> Been thinking a lot......and I now know that for me, if DKL is NOT directing than Showtime can RECAST AUDREY HORNE.......or say she DIED in the explosion," Fenn wrote. "The blood will be on their hands" [...] "It makes me sad and scared", she

admitted. "I need to work but just could never disrespect DKL [David Keith Lynch] like that" (Fenn, quoted in Jacobsen, 2015b).

As well as being employees of the TV industry and fans of the series, the actors involved in the No Lynch/No Peaks campaign position themselves as fans of David Lynch himself, highlighting how "fan and celebrity cultural identities can overlap and interact rather than belonging to wholly separable domains" (Hills, 2006: 103). However, their proximity to the director allows them to display forms of cultural and symbolic capital which most fans cannot attain. This was further displayed as figures such as Sherilyn Fenn posted updates on the situation based on their personal friendships and closeness to Lynch. For example, she posted on the Facebook cast site, "Hi, it's Sherilyn…. Happy Monday. We have nothing solid to share with all……I was in touch with DKL [David K Lynch] yesterday…….[…]Again, all this outpouring has been so heartfelt. It means more than you all can know.Yours, Audrey" (Fenn, cited in Jacobsen, 2015a).

Several of the actors including Madchen Amick, Fenn and Sheryl Lee also posted a photograph of themselves with Lynch which had been taken on 30 April 2015 (Harp, 2015). The cast video, the associated online campaigning by the actors, as well as Fenn's ongoing displays of familiarity by referring to Lynch by his initials DKL, allow fans to align themselves with those close to the production of the series. Furthermore, Lynch's apparent refusal to work within Showtime's limited budget is not articulated as a financial decision within a discourse of economics or consumption. Rather, it is, as with much of the discussion that surrounds Lynch, subsumed into notions of art and auteurism. In discussions of the apparent failure of the second series of *Twin Peaks* in 1991, fans valued the fact that "he remained true to what they perceived as his 'vision': that he kept the [narrative] problem complex despite pressure to simplify it for mass consumption, and that he did so at the expense […] of commercial success" (Jenkins, 1995:64). There is thus a long-held view that *Twin Peaks* cannot exist without the vision of its creator and the reboot should not – according to the Official *Twin Peaks* cast campaign – occur without his presence. Some of the actors involved in the 2015 campaign thus continued to position themselves as fans/employees and as deferent to Lynch-as-auteur. They thus subordinate themselves to Lynch as the creator of the series and display "a mark of deference or respect which reflects professional necessity and [their] place within the production hierarchy" (Hills and Williams, 2005: 357).

However, whilst Lynch was solely positioned as the author of *Twin Peaks*, series co-creator Mark Frost was publically silent on the matter of Lynch's departure and the subsequent campaign. There was never any reported dissatisfaction from Frost nor any sense that he, too, was leaving the project. However, in a Q&A that took place on the Cast-run Facebook site Sherilyn Fenn noted that "Silence can speak volumes. Let's pray it all comes back together" (Marino, 2015), suggesting that Frost, too, had his own views on Lynch's departure. Thus, whilst Sherilyn Fenn's overt mention of her need to work makes visible the labour of the celebrity-actor, Mark Frost's work on *Twin Peaks* is often rendered absent. Frost has long been the overlooked author behind the series since, when the show first aired, "The TV critics […] made Lynch the centre of their attentions […] They gushed on about the show, finding it different from regular TV and therefore excellent, and they became fascinated by the quirky oddness of its creator" (Thompson, 1996: 154). When Frost has been discussed, scholars have tended to focus on his role in apparently taming the worst of Lynch's cinematic excesses and marshalling him to complete episodes on budget and to schedule. *Twin Peaks* has thus been "often read as the perfect hybrid of Lynch's cinematic strangeness and Frost's respectable televisual pedigree" (Williams, 2005:38) with Frost offering respectability to the series as a televisual text even as the series was "pre-sold on the basis of Lynch's reputation as an internationally renowned maverick" (Williams, 2005:41). Furthermore, when the show began to lose audiences in its second season, this was popularly attributed to Lynch's absence as he directed the film *Wild At Heart*.Frost has thus been rather narrowly viewed as the stabilising and mundane sidekick to Lynch's wild artistry and as the figure who led to the series' downfall and its journey towards what Lynch himself referred to as "the trite invasion of the banal into *Twin Peaks*' (cited in Nochimson, 1997:94). This emphasis on Lynch also neglects the fact that *Twin Peaks* had numerous other collaborators including a range of both well-established and novice directors (see Abbott, 2015). The No Lynch/No Peaks campaign thus offers an example of an actor-led campaign which works within the established readings of the series, continuing the widely-held view of *Twin Peaks* as a Lynch auteur-work and the director as the crucial creative figure behind it.

The campaign to save *Twin Peaks* appeared to have succeeded when Lynch and Frost posted on social media sites on Friday 15th May. They posted simultaneously on Facebook and Twitter:

Dear Twitter/Facebook friends, the rumors are not what they seem ... It is !!!

Happening again. #TwinPeaks returns on @SHO_Network (cited in Brown, 2015).

This announcement was quickly followed by statements from the Showtime network President David Nevins who stated that "This damn fine cup of coffee from Mark and David tastes more delicious than ever. Totally worth the extra brewing time and the cup is even bigger than we expected. David will direct the whole thing which will total more than the originally announced nine hours. Preproduction starts now!" (cited in Brown, 2015). The news was thus sanctified both by the authors of the series (Lynch/Frost) and those who were responsible for the stalling in the first place (the economically driven network). This art vs commerce discourse was warded off in Showtime's statement which avoided any direct mention of money or contracts and, instead, drew on metaphors relevant to the content and themes of the series via the invocation of the brewing of coffee and by emphasising the benefits to fans who would now have more episodes to watch and an apparent guarantee that Lynch would direct all of these. The promise of imminent pre-production also works to ensure that the network appears committed to the series and appears to want to draw a line under the ontological uncertainty that had preceded it. Similarly, after Lynch's return was confirmed, the subcultural celebrities involved in the campaign acknowledged the importance of the fan support whilst downplaying their own involvement as celebrity figures and media workers. As Halskov points out, "a mythology was now being created around the fans themselves, as active participants in the resurrection of *Twin Peaks*' (2015: 215). Here, fans and (once again) Lynch are valorized whilst the campaigning work of the (largely female) *Twin Peaks* cast members is rendered invisible.

## CONCLUSION

In addition to allowing exploration of possible fan reactions and the operations of celebrity/fans, the case of *Twin Peaks* also highlights many of the challenges of studying returning texts – whether we conceive of these as reboots, resurrections or revivals – pose to television studies scholars. Academic work on endings within television is currently thriving with attention being paid to the aesthetics of the finales of shows such as *The Sopranos, Seinfeld,* and *Lost* (Corrigan and Corrigan, 2012; Morreale, 2003, 2010), the economic importance of endings to the television industry (Harrington, 2013:584;Todd, 2011: 856) and fan reactions to these endings (Williams, 2015). However, part of this agenda needs to centre on how returns are theorised and studied since this poses its own unique challenges. Indeed, *Twin Peaks* offers a case of a problematic return that was littered with false starts and uncertainty. The confusion over Lynch's role, as well as the fan/actor campaign, means that this was a relatively messy road to return. In contrast, for example, we can consider the trajectory of FOX" s revival of *The X-Files* series which followed a more linear and secure pathway with a more formal and organised PR campaign which began with the FOX network upfront presentation in May 2015 where the confirmed air dates of January 2016 was announced. However, *Twin Peaks*' fragmented and uncertain route to return offers more of an opportunity to need to excavate and follow the lines of interest. Much like its "dispersed 25th anniversary" (Garner, 2015), the early stages of its return were equally dispersed and rickety, beset by false starts and ambiguity. Since Lynch's return and the start of filming, however, there has been a more coherent strategy for promoting the new series with an enigmatic trailer released by Showtime on 4 October 2015 and a tendency for the production to fall in line with contemporary media practices to retain secrecy and avoid spoilers being posted by fans watching filming in North Bend in Washington State. (Fitzpatrick, 2015).

As television resurrections become more common, TV studies' researchers need to consider how best we can understand, archive and analyse returning objects that are not stable and whose resurrection is open to threat or alteration. We need to develop how we trace the often disparate lines of enquiry to fully understand the genesis and lineage of some of these returns, as well as fan reactions to these. As argued here, fans may highlight the importance of the return of original cast members and creators to reassure themselves that a resurrection will succeed and to ward off any threat to their fandom or self-identities. Whilst the return of cast members offers a sense of co-presence and reassurance, "functioning as literal reminders-in-the-present of the narrative world". (Williams, 2015: 179), fans who emphasize "the necessity of the presence of original producers or auteur figures draw on this as a potential reassurance against such anxiety, discursively suggesting that such figures work as a 'guarantee of quality'" (Williams, 2015: 178). For many fans, "the desire for character

continuity, loyalty to long-term fans and the involvement of the original creative teams suggests that what fans fear more than a complete lack of continuation of a narrative is that the narrative will be revived but that it will disappoint" (Williams, 2015:171). Furthermore, when resurrections are derailed (albeit temporarily) it is also crucial to consider the responses via fan campaigns or, in the case of *Twin Peaks*, the role of stars and actors in these campaigns. The No Lynch/No Peaks campaign offers a relatively unusual opportunity to consider the celebrity/actors that often power such movements and to explore *Twin Peaks'* stars as subcultural celebrities, media workers and fans of *Twin Peaks*/David Lynch. Thus, much as "observation of the way we react to the expiration of a television show offers us another chance to understand the complexities involved in the institution of television as a portion of our social fabric" (Anderson, 2005: online) so, too, does observation of how fans react to returns and resurrections of their favourite shows.

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*The Sopranos* (1999-2007)
*Twin Peaks* (1990-1991, 2017)
*Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* (1992)
*The X-Files* (1993-2002, 2016)

# "A MARRIAGE MADE IN HEAVEN": THE MUSIC OF TWIN PEAKS ACCORDING TO COMPOSER ANGELO BADALAMENTI AND MUSIC EDITOR LORI ESCHLER FRYSTAK

## INTERVIEWED BY ANDREAS HALSKOV

It is virtually impossible to think about *Twin Peaks* (ABC, 1990-1991) without instantly recalling the music. Using leitmotifs in different variations and a combination of popular music and original tracks, composer Angelo Badalamenti and music editor Lori Eschlar Frystak created a score that informed the atmosphere in *Twin Peaks*, while cueing the subtle shifts between different characters, places, genres and moods. I have talked with Badalamenti and Frystak about their work on *Twin Peaks*, focusing on some of the most vivid scenes and sequences and a few of the most heartrending, memorable themes from the series and the prequel *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* (1992). What follows is a double-interview with Angelo Badalamenti and Lori Eschler Frystak (credited as Lori L. Eschler). Badalamenti has become something of a celebrity, and his long-standing musical partnership with David Lynch, starting with *Blue Velvet* (1986), has been thoroughly documented. Frystak, on the other hand, is a lesser known collaborator of David Lynch, yet she has worked with Lynch on both Twin Peaks, Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me and On the Air (ABC, 1992), before leaving the film and television industry.



FIGURE 1. A CLASSIC SCENE FROM *TWIN PEAKS* (ABC, 1990-1991) THAT FEATURES THE SONG *PENNSYLVANIA 6-5000* AND A HEARTRENDING VARIATION UPON *LAURA PALMER'S THEME*.

## "ENTERING THE TOWN OF TWIN PEAKS": THE BEGINNING OF A MUSICAL PARTNERSHIP

**H** *You have often worked with David Lynch, Angelo. How did you get to work with him on* Blue Velvet*, and how would you describe David Lynch as a director and the musical collaboration you have with him? To me, your collaboration is reminiscent of the creative collaborations of, say, Sergio Leone and Ennio Morricone.*

**AB** First of all, I met David Lynch when he was doing *Blue Velvet*. I received a phone call from one of my friends, and Fred Caruso was working with Isabella Rossellini, and they were having some difficulties with her. They needed someone to help her, and David and Isabella were not happy with the people who were working with her. So they called me in, and they said, "We know that you work with singers. Could you come in and help". I wasn't really interested, to be honest, but I came in, and we recorded a little cassette with me playing the piano and her singing Bobby Vinton's song. We were recording the last scene, and David he said, "This is peachy keen, this is the ticket".

They wanted to use a song by This Mortal Coil, but Dino De Laurentis didn't want to pay for the synchronization license, so Dino thought that maybe I could do it. The bottom line is that Isabella came in to me with a little piece of yellow paper saying "Mysteries of Love" with a few lines on it, and I said, "This is not a song. It's a poem, but there's no hook, there's nothing to latch on to". So I thought that I would call him back, and I called up David to say that I wasn't sure what he wanted. "Make it feel timeless, like the waves of the oceans", he said, and I said, "Oh, I see", and of course I didn't see. I had no idea what he was talking about. He came in and asked me, "Do you know any singer who sings like an angel – angelic, ethereal" – and I said, "Yeah, I know this singer called Julee Cruise". And it was love at first sound.

Like Leone and Morricone, David and I have been lucky to have a great creative relationship. I usually call it *a marriage made in heaven*. In terms of the process, I did *Blue Velvet* in the traditional way, which is where a director shows you a mostly edited film and then you score it, but on every project since we have talked about it before we even started shooting. And a lot of the music of *Twin Peaks* was done before we started filming. David would even play the demos and have the actors move to the tempo of the music. It's a marriage made in heaven. Let's face it, very few times have a director and a composer really hit it off like a team. It's like Danny Elfman and Tim Burton, Alfred Hitchcock and Bernard Herrmann or Sergio Leone and Ennio Morricone.

**H** *How about you, Lori? You had not worked with David Lynch prior to* Twin Peaks*. How did you get to be a part of that show?*

**EF** I was very lucky. My friend Jon Huck was the sound recordist on the pilot. Apparently, he told David about me and for that I'm really grateful. Like David, I'm also from Montana. I was called in for an interview, and we met and spoke about the music and Montana, and he made the decision right on the spot. I floated about a foot off the ground for at least 2 years after that David and much of the team that he assembled had never done television. I think that was one of the big deals about it. Also, *Twin Peaks* was in post-production at the very beginning of television surround sound. When we were mixing the final sound (dialogue, sound FX, and music) we were very focused on getting the mix just right so it would sound good on the best home theatre system but also on the most modest little mono speaker that someone might be using. And again, everything you hear was intentional.

**H** *You were a music editor on* Twin Peaks*, and I have heard you say that David Lynch likened the process to "painting around the bushes". What was the point of that analogy, and how would you describe the musical or aural side of* Twin Peaks*?*

**EF** I can't speak for what David meant when he said that. It was during my job interview with him, but I interpreted him to mean that the music should be integral, subtle, and somewhat mysterious. The music and audio in *Twin Peaks* had to go hand in hand. Each detail was intentional and if it distracted from any important element or wasn't essential in telling the story, it was eliminated.

**H** *The music that you have done for* Twin Peaks *has an airy and otherworldly character to it, which is beautifully underscored by Julee Cruise's singing voice. How would you say that this ethereal quality fits the tonality and themes of* Twin Peaks*?*

**B** I feel that Julee's ethereal quality works so well with *Twin Peaks*. In most cases in *Twin Peaks*, the music and the lyrics of the song are in total contrast to the madness of the vocals – this ethereal, angelic voice in this ruckus of The Roadhouse. In the ruckus of beers flying through the air at The Roadhouse, we have Julee singing a beautiful, slow-tempo song, and it's so outrageous. You would never have that kind of song in a place like that. But the beautiful thing is that, in addition to the way that they contrast what's going on, it fits the general tone of the show and it fits Laura.

FIGURE 2. ANGELO BADALAMENTI AND DAVID LYNCH HAVE BEEN MUSICAL PARTNERS EVER SINCE *BLUE VELVET* (1986), AND THEIR PARTNERSHIP IS DESCRIBED BY BADALAMENTI AS A "MARRIAGE MADE IN HEAVEN." PHOTO: COURTESY OF ANGELO BADALAMENTI.

The songs with Julee serve a two-fold purpose: They contrast the visuals and they set the tone for the show. Often, the thing that works best is a song or piece of music that goes against the visuals, something that functions as a contrast or a counterpoint.

## ICONIC THEMES AND HARROWING THEMATICS

*After discussing different musical collaborations and how Badalamenti and Frystak came to be a part of* Twin Peaks, *we went into a deeper exploration of* Twin Peaks, *discussion some specific sequences, scenes and leitmotifs.*

**H** *Falling is the main theme of* Twin Peaks, *and in many ways that track sets the mood and tonality of the show. What is it musically that makes this particular piece so interesting, and how does it fit the tonality of the show?*

**B** First of all, Andreas. We were so lucky that all of the different instrumental versions of *Falling* worked so well […]. When we wrote the song, and I did an instrumental version, David thought it would be a perfect theme. Those opening baritone notes turned out to be magical. You could be anywhere, and all you had to hear was those notes, and you would know that it was *Twin Peaks*. It's just amazing how we caught the tonality of the show. The musical sections of *Falling* keep building to a climax. It keeps building and going to a climax, and then David's lyrics go *Falling*. The music and the lyrics of *Falling* mirror the two sides of *Twin Peaks*. For years, nobody knew which instrument it was, but it was a tuned down electronic guitar sound. It was an electronic guitar that was lowered.

**H** *It seems as if some of the elements from Falling reappear in the Sycamore Trees track which is performed by Jimmy Scott in the final episode of the series. Was that meant as a sort of mirror-version of Falling, just as the black male performer could be seen as a mirror-version of the fair-haired female singer at The Roadhouse? Did you use some of the same elements intentionally to underline the theme of mirroring and doubling?*

**B** No. That was not intentional at all. However, if there was some mysterious, subliminal thing going on, well that's cool.

**H** *In* Twin Peaks, *you use a number of leitmotifs, and this to me has a strong effect of making us think about a certain person, even when he or she is not there. I particularly love Laura Palmer's Theme and the way that it pops up very subtly in different scenes throughout the series. Could you describe Laura Palmer's Theme and how it reflects the ambiguity of the entire show?*

**B** *Laura Palmer's Theme* has two contrasting sections, which created a musical identity for the whole show: It introduced a dark, mysterious and foreboding element – that minor chord leitmotif – but it also set a hypnotic tone for the entire show. But the second section segues from that minor into a major chord, and it related totally to the emotions of Laura Palmer. It's a wonderful story how that was written. David Lynch came to my office across from Carnegie Hall, and David said to me, "I have this show. It's called *Northwest Passage*". I was sitting at my piano – my Fender Rhodes – and
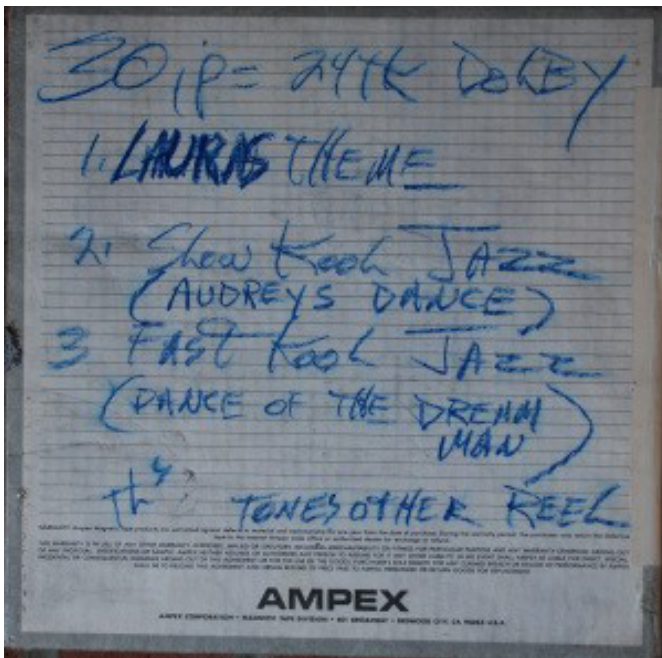
FIGURES 3-4. ANGELO BADALAMENTI'S MUSICAL NOTES AND THE FENDER RHODES ON WHICH HE RECORDED THE ICONIC THEMES FOR THE SHOW. PHOTO: COURTESY OF DANIELLE & ANGELO BADALAMENTI.

he started saying, "We're in a dark woods, and it's kind of foreboding". He constantly asked me to go slower, and we were going so slow that I thought we were almost going in reverse. And then he said to me, "Now there's this little girl", and we went from the minor to the major chord. The hair on David's arms was standing up... Then it falls down. Falling is a very important to David. Even in *Blue Velvet*, Isabella Rossellini says, "I'm falling", and it seems there is a connection there.

**H** *The use of leitmotifs is a very traditional scoring principle, known from Wagnerian opera and classical Hollywood films. There are so many different variations of the different themes, however. Could you, Lori, say a few things on how different variations of a theme (e.g. Laura Palmer's Theme) were used to create different moods within the show?*

**EF** *Laura Palmer's Theme* was great in the way that it developed from a very simple repetition of a figure in a minor key to the very beautiful romantic and sad part that eventually resolved back to the simple minor theme. This made it really effective and satisfying. The simple part was used as dark clues were being discovered in the story line. Sometimes the clues would tie into Laura and the theme would evolve to the beautiful part and as the character(s) in the scene would reveal a memory or share a moment of grief the theme would ease into the very sad part that would eventually lead back to the dark mysterious theme. It was

perfect because each new discovery surrounding the murder followed this path from mystery to beauty to sadness and back to darkness. Of course other characters, like Audrey, or Ed and Norma had different leitmotifs because their stories weren't so intense.

**H** *Perhaps you could say a few words on the sequence where Maddy is killed, where we segue from Rockin' Back Inside My Heart to The World Spins, before cutting to the Palmer residence where we hear the ominous sound of the record player (which is also heard underneath the animalistic slow-motion growling of Leland/BOB as he kills Maddy). That sequence seems very interesting in terms of sound and music editing.*

**EF** That scene was so scary and disturbing. The first time I watched it without sound effects or score, and it seemed finished, like it didn't need anything more. *The World Spins* was a beautiful piece of music to lead into and out of the murder because it starts out just sort of lulling us into a hypnotic state and we sort of find ourselves frozen and defenseless while we watch the murder. Then the song transitions to this sad, sad part when they cut back to The Roadhouse. The score under the murder is so subtle but it seems to keep us grounded in the terror of the scene. Also, the sound of that record player just says to me that Leland's record is over, now things are going to get very serious.

## "A BENNY GOODMAN-LIKE DANCE": POPULAR TUNES AND CONTRAPUNTAL MUSIC

**H** *Another interesting example from* Twin Peaks *in terms of music is the scene where Leland dances to Pennsylvania 6-5000. Could you say a few words on that scene and how the music changes both in terms of style and mood?*

**B:** You are going against what's happening. Laura has died, and he's doing this crazy, Benny Goodman-like dance. David loves that kind of thing, like in *Blue Velvet* where Ben is singing *In Dreams*. But then, in the end of the scene, the mood changes, as we hear *Laura Palmer's Theme*, as if we're back to reality. By the way, Ray Wise has told me that when they were shooting that scene, Ray actually cut his hand on the glass, and they kind of improvised the rest of the scene.

**EF** That scene with Leland dancing to *Pennsylvania 6-5000* was wonderfully done because what I saw was a father who was losing himself in grief. It played very well that way and only much later down the road do we find out about Leland and realize that the early scene had another whole level of inner torment happening. There was another scene in which Leland was singing *Mairzy Doats*. On the surface, it just seemed like he was going a little crazy over the loss of his daughter. That song has such a naive feeling and to me it stirred up this feeling that Leland was really struggling to connect with his innocent self.

**H** *In general, David Lynch seems to have a thing for slightly sentimental 50s-like music. There is one scene in the episode "Coma" (2.02) which is interesting. Here James, Maddy and Donna sing Just You As a viewer, however, I don't know exactly how to feel – whether the scene is melodramatic or intentionally off. The acoustics don't seem to fit (there seems to be a mismatch between the physical room and the musical room), instruments are introduced even if they aren't part of the scene visually, and James' singing voice is notably different from his speech voice. What was the idea here? It reminds me of the ending from Wild at Heart.*

**B** David and I just wrote this song, and David just wanted this song that could work for the three of them and the whole point of the melancholy of that piece was to underscore the relationship between James, Donna and Maddy. It was a song that emotionally worked really well for them, and, yes, the scene is similar to the ending of *Wild at Heart*. That all comes from David's head. He does those kinds of outrageous things, like the scene in *Blue Velvet*.

**EF:** In context, David had just finished *Blue Velvet* so maybe he still had some of that 1950's music playing around in his head. He really loves a huge variety of music, as did most of the directors on the series – everyone was very enthused by the music.



FIGURE. 5. A PIVOTAL SCENE IN *TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME* (1992) IN WHICH LAURA'S SENSE OF SADNESS AND DESPAIR IS MIRRORED IN THE MUSIC AND THE ETHEREAL VOICE OF JULEE CRUISE.

## THE HEART OF DARKNESS: FROM TWIN PEAKS TO FIRE WALK WITH ME

*After discussing the television series, we turned our attention – however briefly – to the prequel* Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me.

**H:** *The title sequence of* Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me *is quite different from the title sequence of* Twin Peaks*, and one noticeable difference is the music. In the opening of* Fire Walk with Me*, we see a television screen tuned to a dead channel – we see some blue static, and we hear a slow and noticeably darker theme involving whiskers, piano and a (muted) trumpet. There is a sadness and a darkness to this theme, which differ from the theme of* Twin Peaks*. Which feelings and moods were you trying to evoke, and how would you say that* Fire Walk with Me *differs from* Twin Peaks *in terms of mood and tonality?*

**B:** I just caught that theme. It's just a small, jazzy kind of tune. It has this Miles Davis-like or bluesy theme. It's really interesting, and it sets the mood for the film, albeit a very different kind of mood and tone compared with *Twin Peaks*.

**H** *A strong moment in* Fire Walk with Me *is underscored by the track* Questions in a World of Blue. *To me this fits Laura's frame of mind perfectly, neatly underscoring her sadness, as she looks in the mirror and cries by the booth in the bar. Were your different songs in* Twin Peaks *and* Fire Walk with Me *primarily used to mirror the feelings and psychology of the different characters (apart from establishing a general mood)?*

**B** The whole thing about *Questions in a World of Blue* works in an emotional way, but, even more, the culminating scene with *The Voice of Love*. If you see that angelic scene and hear that music against Laura – this tortured soul going to a better place – that to me is a culmination. It just tears your heart out. The intent there was to show no mercy and to go with it.

For more on the music in *Twin Peaks* (ABC, 1990-1991) and *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* (1992), see Halskov, Andreas (2015a). *TV Peaks: Twin Peaks and Modern Television Drama. Odense:* University Press of Southern Denmark, and Id. (2015b). 'Between Two Worlds: The Competing Moods of David Lynch'. *16:9,* April 19, 2015 (http://www.16-9.dk/2015/04/between-two-worlds/).

# DIMENSIONAL EXPANSIONS AND SHIFTINGS: FAN FICTION AND TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING THE FRINGEVERSE

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**ABSTRACT**

This article explores the characteristics of user-generated texts in fictional transmedia storytelling based on the fan fiction originating from FOX's television series *Fringe* (2008-2013). A *fan fiction* (also known as *fanfic* or *fic*) is a piece of writing in which the author recreates the setting, events and characters of a source text or canon. After reviewing fan theories and practices, the article focuses on three examples examples of *Fringe* fan fiction analysing them with a double-edged methodology that combines narrative semiotics and narratology. Based on the results we update a set of transmedia narrative strategies by adding *dimensional expansion* and *shifting*, and also redefine the different areas of the storyworld where fan fiction is set with special emphasis on alternate universe (AU) scenarios.

Conceived by Bad Robot, the same production company responsible for ABC's *Lost*—one of the biggest television phenomena in the last decade—and ambitiously marketed by the FOX network as one of their new shows for the 2008 season, it would have been strange that *Fringe* had not been equally as ambitious as the island-based series in pushing the boundaries of narrative beyond the box. A similar multimedia and multiplatform effort can be seen in this sci-fi tale, created by J.J. Abrams, Roberto Orci and Alex Kurtzman, about a brilliant but reckless and arrogant scientist who caused a rift between parallel universes in order to save his dying son and thus set into motion a myriad of consequences. Despite winning critical acclaim, *Fringe*'s five-year run on FOX was not smooth as the show always had to fight against the threat of cancellation due to low ratings (Cochran et al., 2014). It was the passionate fanbase that literally saved the series by buying the DVDs and tuning their DVR recorders in. At the same time fans also produced a wide range of user-generated content and took action through live events organised on social media in a compelling example of a transmedia experience powered by grassroots. Although there has been wide media coverage of the show, there has been little scholastic production on it apart from some narrative (Clarke Stuart, 2011; Garín, 2013), science fiction (Grazier, 2011) and multidisciplinary (Cochran et al., 2014) approaches and some contributions from the transmedia storytelling field (Belsunces Gonçalves, 2011, 2013). This article will add more to the latter, focusing this time on the fan fiction inspired by *Fringe*.

As an introduction, we will explore the specific fan practices and genres and present them under a general classification of transmedia fan practices. We will then analyse three examples of the fan fiction practice based on a methodology that merges semiotics and narratology to show how fans add new input to our understanding of transmedia narrative strategies.

## 1. TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING AND USER-GENERATED CONTENT IN *FRINGE*

More than ten years since Henry Jenkins coined the term in his well-known article in MIT's Technology Review (2003), we can define *transmedia storytelling* as "a process in which the discourse of a story can be spread through different media, platforms and languages" (Guerrero, 2012: 76). Jenkins (2006, 2009) identified narrative expansion and user-generated content (UGC) as the two main features attached to the concept of transmedia storytelling. Narrative expansion can be carried out through books, comics, movies and webisodes, among many other possibilities. Examples are the TV series *24*, *Lost* (Scolari, 2009, 2013a) and *Battlestar Galactica* (Hernández and Grandío 2011) and *Doctor Who* (Perryman, 2008), which have all grown into complex storyworlds through narrative expansion across different media, platforms and languages.

### 1.1. **The origin of transmedia contents**

User-generated contents are the prime testimony of the idea of "participatory culture" that Jenkins (1992) initially linked only to the cultural production and social interaction that occurs in fan communities (Jenkins et al., 2013). UGC also contributes to the expansion of the storyworld; therefore, initially there is a double stream when it comes to classifying the origin of the contents created in transmedia storytelling: *top-down* and *bottom-up* contents (Scolari, 2009). Top-down content is official comics, books, videogames or any other product made by cultural industries or owners of intellectual property for the consumption of users or audiences. Bottom-up content is UGC like fan fiction. Occasionally the latter can follow the opposite path and become a profitable, top-down product despite starting out as a fanwork[1]. However, as we will see in this article, UGC falls into a third stream of content that we categorise as *bottom-to-bottom content.* That is, works made by fans for fans inspired in bottom-up content rather than top-down content, thus expanding the narrative of the fan-made product instead of the official content.
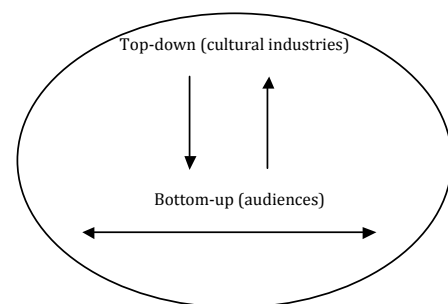


FIGURE 1. ORIGIN OF TRANSMEDIA CONTENTS

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1   In this sense, Scolari (2013) highlights the case of *Pardillos*, a parodic webcomic based on *Lost* created by the Spanish student Carlos Azaustre,which, in 2009, made its way from a fan website to the main bookshops in Spain..

While research on transmedia storytelling still gravitates heavily towards top-down scenarios, Scolari et al. (2012) and Scolari (2013a), from a semio-narratologic perspective, have already thrown some transmedial light onto a few of the common texts and formats developed at the core of fandom. Scolari's analysis of *Lost*'s video recapitulations (2013a), which are a concise and summarised paratextual format, challenges the idea of transmedia storytelling being exclusively expansive as the story can also be compressed.

In this work, we will adopt this integrated vision of transmedia storytelling and explore UGC with the aim of discovering a meeting point between semiotics, narratology and Fan Studies. It is impossible to make a textual study of UGC in relation to transmedia storytelling without examining the full range of possible fan activities and some of the basic concepts developed over years of fan tradition. However, assuming that it would be impossible to cram an ever-changing object of study like this one[2] into just a few pages, in this article we will look at a small portion of the fan production around *Fringe*, specifically three works of fan fiction: lullebel's *Synaptic*, spy_barbie's *This Charming Man* and Chichuri's *Choke Chain 'verse*. The goal here is to provide some practical tools to give an overview of UGC, particularly fan fiction, without getting caught up in a tangle of transient terminologies.

## 1.2. The complexity of fandom

What can a fan do with top-down contents? Moreover, what does a fan do at all? Classic research on media fans (Fiske, 1992; Jenkins, 1992; Bacon Smith, 1992) has often tackled these questions from the angle of productivity, especially because fan fiction—or any kind of fanwork for that matter—is one of the most visible and iconic fan products (Hellekson and Busse, 2006). But as Sandvoss remarks "fan fiction itself accounts for only a part of fan performance and productivity" (2005: 29). He adds:

> Fiske's work (1992) again provides a useful starting point, as he distinguishes between three different forms of fan productivity: *semiotic*, *enunciative* and *textual* [emphasis mine]. Semiotic productivity refers to the creation of meaning in the process of reading and therefore takes place on an intraper-

sonal level. Enunciative productivity, by contrast, describes the forms of social interaction that are cultivated through fan consumption. A key dimension of such productivity is the regular verbal exchange between fans […] in the form of fan talk or gossip, which, according to Fiske (1992: 38) accounts for 'much of the pleasure of fandom'. Enunciative productivity also includes pleasurable forms of non-verbal communication, such as replicating a star's appearance or wearing shirts or buttons to display affection for one's favourite team or television programme. Textual productivity, finally, refers to materials and texts created by fans which are manifest concretely, in that they are either written, edited or recorded, such as fanzines, fan fiction, self-produced videotapes or 'filk' songs (see Jenkins 1992). (Sandvoss, 2005: 29)

Enunciative productivity—for example, through a *Fringe* online fan forum[3] or meeting at Comic-Con—and, above all, textual productivity—through the *Fringe* fan fiction archives at ArchiveOfOurOwn.org[4] and FanFiction.net [5] or at one of the many LiveJournal communities[6]—have often been used to differentiate between fans and the general audience (Sandvoss, 2005). Fans are seen as an advanced critical mass where subversive and resistant meanings are moulded through passionate consumption of mass media products and who actively participate in communities in a process that leads to the construction of a combined social identity (Jenkins and Tulloch, 1995). General audiences are seen as being viewers who do not go beyond the mere act of consumption, whereas fans are "consumers who also produce, readers who also write, spectators who also participate" (Jenkins, 1992: 208). Fans can be considered as the epitome of the prosumer figure. However, Hills suggests that there are fans who don't produce at all, and feels that such stress on productivity in fan research encapsulates a tension between the 'consumption' and 'production' aspects of fandom in which the former is devaluated and the latter over valued so that fandom "is salvaged for academic study by removing the taint of consumption and consumerism" (2002: 5-6). In a similar fashion, Sandvoss states that

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2    "The notion of a work in progress is thus central to fandom and the study of fandom" (Hellekson and Busse, 2006: 7).

3    http://fringe-forum.com/forums/index.php (accessed 18 December 2015).

4    https://archiveofourown.org/tags/Fringe/works (accessed 18 December 2015).

5    https://www.fanfiction.net/tv/Fringe/ (accessed 18 December 2015).

6    http://www.livejournal.com/interests.bml?int=fringe (accessed 18 December 2015).

fans who do not actively participate in communities or have no textual productivity "derive a distinct sense of self and social identity from their fan consumption" and advocates for taxonomies that include "the varying degrees of productivity and social organization in fandom" (2005: 30).

## 1.3. **The fandom sphere**

In this scenario the area of semiotics of interpretation (Eco, 1979) has been proven useful for identifying the various fan types that can come into play (or not) in a fandom. Observing the model reader inside the different parts and contents of a television website, Guerrero (2014: 261–262) elaborated a list of participation models with their corresponding user roles to address the question of non-productive fans:

- *Observational model – lurker role*: although they do not leave verbal traces on the website, simply the presence of this quiet user affects the development of the web (i.e. most read contents or gaps between pages viewed and messages on a forum).
- *Discursive/argumentative model – chatter role*: a user that gives their opinion in the spaces the website provides for comments on news articles or forum threads.
- *Creative/informative model – creator role*: unlike the chatter role, this user contributes with contents that expand or compress the narrative or help new users to approach it.
- *Ludic model – player role*: a user that integrates the previous models of participation through the ludic applications and contents offered by the television website.

These models and roles can be transferred from a TV website to the whole range of activities a fan might perform regardless of the media environment. Going back to the *Fringe* online forum example, at this site we find two user roles: the chatters who post opinions and theories and the lurkers who just read what the others say. The lurkers, while not being (in Fiske's words) enunciatively productive, are still *Fringe* fans that keep coming back over and over again to the forum and are, in fact, consuming the show's content through the website. Likewise, creators are the fan authors who upload their fan fiction based on *Fringe* to fiction archives; the fan artists that share their fan art inspired by the show at platforms like deviantART.com[7] and Tumblr[8]; or even the fan con-

tributors that generate new entries at wikis like *Fringepedia. net*[9]. Creators contribute to the expansion or compression of the storyworld with creativity-driven works or products that serve as "orienting paratexts" (Mittell 2012–2013) targeted at spreading knowledge about the narrative universe and providing easier access to it. Finally, we can spot players in *Search for the Pattern*, one of *Fringe*'s official Alternate Reality Games (ARGs), which serves as prequel to the first season.

These models can be taken further, from the single fan to the entire extent of fandom as a representative group, highlighting at the same time another important side of fan performance that connects directly with the most resistant and anti-commercial stances outlined by Jenkins (1992): fandom's capacity to influence the decisions made by media executives. For instance, this organised activism lies underneath many of the ventures that *Fringe* fans set up to save the show from cancellation (Belsunces Gonçalves, 2011) between the third and the fifth season[10]. So, from passionate consumption to activism, fans travel through a number of activities and performances that have come to be referred to as *the fandom sphere.* This sphere is constituted by the following areas: *consumption, discussion and argumentation, creation of transmedia contents, performance* and *influence and vindication.* While consumption is the necessary starting point, a fan is not obligated to engage in all these activities to be considered a fan. All fans watch *Fringe* episodes religiously—consumption—but some fans may focus on forum or social network debates—discussion and argumentation—and totally disregard fan fiction writing—creation of transmedia contents—whereas others may want to dress like The Observers––performance––or may launch Twitter events to create buzz about the show in the media—influence and vindication. And others may just stick to revisiting the episodes several times and re-reading the comics and not do any of the other possible activities—consumption.

## 2. **TRANSMEDIA USER-GENERATED CONTENTS (TUGC) IN FICTION**

Out of all these activities, we will focus on the creation of transmedia contents. As we have seen above, UGC is a key part of the definition of transmedia storytelling. However,

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7   http://www.deviantart.com/?q=fringe (accessed 18 December 2015).

8   http://www.tumblr.com/search/fringefox (accessed 18 December 2015).

9   http://www.fringepedia.net (accessed 18 December 2015).

10   http://morethanoneofeverything.net/2011/10/27/not-neilsen-how-to-overcome-invisibility/ (accessed 18 December 2015)

the breadth of the very term UGC implies at the same time some conceptual issues when it is presented in the context of transmedia narrative. These problems can be summarised under the following question: could any instance of UGC or bottom-up content be automatically considered transmedia storytelling? Let's take, for example, a paratext like an opinion posted in a *Fringe* forum or a social media account about the character of Peter Bishop. Unlike a regular piece of fan fiction it would be necessary to look closely at the opinion itself to determine if it bears some of the inner characteristics that make storytelling transmedial. In other words, we should observe if the opinion transforms the original source, either by expanding or compressing it. Therefore, to prevent any confusion on the idea of bottom-up and bottom-to-bottom productions regarding transmedia storytelling, from here on we am referring to *transmedia user-generated content (TUGC)* as introduced elsewhere (Guerrero, 2012, 2014). Likewise, as transmedia storytelling is not confined to the realms of fiction (Scolari 2013b), it is equally relevant to specify that TUGC derived from fictional stories—or fanworks—are just a portion of all the TUGC.

We can understand TUGC in fiction as "the textual, graphic or audiovisual manifestations made by the fans of a particular product of mass culture based on it" (Guerrero, 2014: 250). After examining this concept in several works (Guerrero, 2012, 2014), we propose here an updated classification of TUGC in fiction divided into two basic forms of expression or practices: *creative*—with a primarily recreational or playful purpose—and *informative*—with a primarily informative purpose. In these two categories we can find two subgroups, *practices that emerged before the digitalisation process* and *practices that emerged after the digitalisation process*[11], taking the 1980s as the chronological reference point of the development of this process. Digitalisation played a key role in fostering the new practices that came later on[12]. In addition, we have refined the categories of fanworks, providing further detail in some of them and adding specific key practic-

es[13]—as may be the case for *filk, audiofic, cosplay, machinima* and *podfic*—that were not included in previous definitions. Thus, using examples from *Fringe* and, where necessary, other franchises for each practice, the TUGC taxonomy proposal is revised as follows:

## Creative practices

*Before the digitalisation process*
- Fan fiction (also known as *fanfic* or *fic)*: written stories.
- Fan vid: music videos edited by fans using the source footage and an already existing song (called *vids*), and also short videos with fan-made footage (e.g., *Peter/Olivia – Listen to your heart* by Estelle5[14]; *Why you should watch Fringe?* by Denis Bezard[15]).
- Fan film: films and short films made by fans editing the source footage or shooting new material (e.g., *Star Wars Revelations* –2005– by Shane Felux[16]).
- Fan art: drawings, paintings, graphic art, and diverse crafts (e.g., *Fringe in progress* by jasonpal[17]; *Fringe Seasons Compilation* by mustafaakara[18]).
- Fancomic: comics and graphic novels (e.g., *The Genosha Sequence* by Ardatli & Rich Morris, a comic that combines *Stargate S1* and *The Avengers* storyworls[19]).
- Filk: science-fiction or fantasy-inspired music by fans

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11   In previous works (Guerrero, 2012, 2014), the distinction between practices after and *before digitalisation* referred mainly to the creative practices with the exception of recaps in the informative practices. The disposition in the present article gives a clearer and more precise overview of the origin of fanworks regarding digitalisation.

12   "But media fans are making more kinds of art than ever before. Not only are they still writing fan fiction, but image manipulation software has also allowed for ever more sophisticated visual art. Digital editing software has taken the fannish art of creating music videos, or vidding [...], to a whole new level" (Coppa, 2006: 59).

13   There is not an actual consensus either in the academic or the fan community on the different types of fanworks as they are objects of constant transformation. For instance, fandom wikis like Fanlore.org provide an exhaustive list with *banners, icons, character shrines, doujinshis, archiv*es and *fansites* among other very specific fan productions (http://fanlore.org/wiki/Fanwork). However, for informative reasons, we have opted to integrate many of these practices under a significant and well-known term that unites acquainted productions, for example in the case of *fan art*, which brings together icons, banners and doujinshis; or *fan vid* that goes beyond the creation of music videos using source footage and also extends to fannish short videos. At the same time, archives would fall into the *fan fiction* category as they function as storage for fanfic works. As for fansites they can serve as publishing platforms for other fan practices, either creative or informative. Wikis are considered a type of fansite in Fanlore's classification but here they appear as an independent practice because of their high informative characteristics and the unique degree of fan collaboration they enable.

14   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUgxfd7-pr4 (accessed 20 December 2015).

15   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtp8ZrNA020 (accessed 20 December 2015).

16   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4oIDc3rQfU (accessed 20 December 2015).

17   http://www.deviantart.com/art/Fringe-in-progress-142704324 (accessed 20 December 2015).

18   http://www.deviantart.com/art/Fringe-Seasons-Compilation-259649674 (accessed 20 December 2015).

19   http://comics.shipsinker.com/archives/ (accessed 20 December 2015).

(e.g., *Banned from Argo* by Leslie Fish, a parodic filk song of *Star Trek*[20]).

- Audiofic*:* collage of sounds and dialogues retrieved from the original source to tell a new story (e.g., *Spork! An Erotic Love Story* by cirrocumulus and jiaren_shadow[21], an erotic audiofic created using extracts from the *Star Trek* movie audiobook).
- Cosplay: activity in which fans wear costumes of mass-culture characters or stories and impersonate them (e.g., fans cosplaying The Observers from *Fringe*[22]).

*After the digitalisation process*

a. Practices linked to videogames:

- MOD: fan-made extension for a videogame (e.g., *Grand Theft Auto IV – Superman Script (MOD) Official Trailer* by taltigolt [23]).
- Machinima: videos or films made by manipulating game engines (e.g., *Red vs. Blue*[24], a machinima web series based on *Halo*).
- Glitch

b. Practices linked to the Web 2.0.:

- Characters' blogs and social profiles: online role playing games (e.g., *El Twitter de Peterfantas*[25] *y Olivia Dunham*[26]*,* parodic Twitter accounts for *Fringe*'s Peter Bishop and Olivia Dunham's Spanish soppy alter egos).
- Podfic: recording of a fan fiction read by one or several fans (e.g., *Help Wanted* by reahanna27, read by nickelmountain[27], a *Fringe* podfic).

## Informative practices

*Before the digitalisation process*

- Recapitulations (shortened as *recaps*): textual, graphic or audiovisual summaries (i.e., *Fringe seasons 1-3 recap (fanmade)* by Megatrix96[28], a video recap; *Fringe Timeline Infographic* by anderssondavid1[29], an infographic recap).
- Fanzines: fan-made magazines featuring discussions of fannish topics and recaps of fan fiction anthologies.
- Subbing: translating and making subtitles (i.e., *Fringe – Promo 5x02 "In Absentia" [Subtítulos en Español]* by Fringe Latino[30], a promo clip subbed in Spanish).

*After the digitalisation process*

- Wikis: collaborative encyclopaedias (i.e., *Fringepedia.net*[31]).
- Transmedia narrative strategies applied to fanworks

After having reviewed the main TUGC in fiction or fanworks, let's start the proper textual analysis of one of these productions. If semiotics and narratology have proven to be reliable tools for understanding transmedia narrative universes (Scolari et al., 2012, 2013a), it's time to apply them to the study of fan fiction. To elaborate the theoretical basis of the study, on a first level, we followed the work of Greimas and Courtés (1982) and Eco (1979) from semiotics and the work of Genette (1997) and Chatman (1978) from narratology. On a second level, these classic contributions were afterwards complemented with the approaches developed in Osservatorio sulla fiction smart_serials (2010) and Scolari (2013a) and to build an eight-part analysis model adapted to any kind of fanwork. Among the aspects observed in this model are: general identification of the fanwork (title, author, type, fandom…); area of the storyworld where the fanwork operates; transmedia format; characters; evolution of the narrative programmes in the fanwork compared to the source; genre fidelity, hybridisation or substitution between the fanwork and the source; featured themes; and transmedia narrative strategies. This model was tested on a representative sample of 94 *Fringe* fan fictions, written in English and posted

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20    Full recording (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJjQGfqoDqM) and lyrics (http://www.ovff.org/pegasus/songs/banned-from-argo.html) to Leslie Fisher's *Banned from Argo* (accessed 20 December 2015).

21    http://ontd-startrek.livejournal.com/1043908.html (accessed 20 December 2015).

22    http://bakerhood.tumblr.com/post/81302542152/fringe-observer-cosplay-at-emerald-city-comicon (accessed 20 December 2015).

23    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yEUZr4VRqc (accessed 20 December 2015).

24    http://roosterteeth.com/archive/?id=88&v=more&s=1 (accessed 20 December 2015).

25    http://www.twitter.com/peterfantas (accessed 20 December 2015).

26    http://www.twitter.com/oliviadunham1 (accessed 20 December 2015).

27    http://www.mediafire.com/listen/30bm4azj82ajilf/Help+Wanted.mp3 (accessed 20 December 2015).

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28    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2HDclRqMCRs (accessed 20 December 2015).

29    http://anderssondavid1.deviantart.com/art/Fringe-Timeline-Infographic-350541948 (accessed 20 December 2015).

30    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJDJxn1IwUo (accessed 20 December 2015).

31    See note 10.

on ArchiveOfOurOwn.org between 1 September 2009 and 31 May 2013. In order to select them, a twelve-month participant observation in six *Fringe* forums and fan fiction communities was conducted between 1 June 2012 and 31 May 2013[32].

For reasons of space and relevance, out of all the mentioned aspects and sample of fan fiction works, we will focus just on transmedia strategies and the area of the storyworld applied to three fanfics: *Synaptic*, *This Charming Man* and *Choke Chain 'verse*. Additionally, the main motive for focusing the in-depth analysis on fan fiction and not on other TUGC was, on one hand, its status as the oldest fan practice studied from a transmedia storytelling perspective and, on the other hand, the apparent lack of creative and technical barriers fan fiction provides to the potential fan writer.

## 3.1. On how fandom reshapes transmedia narrative strategies

### 3.1.1. Dimensional expansion and shifting

Scolari (2013a) has already discussed the issue of transmedia narrative strategies drawing on classical rhetorical operations—see Table 1. For example, we could say that *Fringe seasons 1-3 recap (fanmade)* is an *omission* that the fan Megatrix96 performed on the first three seasons of the main text, the TV series, whereas a prequel like *The Zodiac Paradox* novel is an example of *addition* to the main text.

| | |
|---|---|
| Addition | Operation based on the expansion of elements in a text. |
| Omission | Operation in which items are removed from a text. |
| Transposition | Operation based on changing the order of elements in a text. |
| Permutation | Operation in which items are substituted in a text. |

△ **TABLE 1.** TRANSMEDIA STRATEGIES BASED ON CLASSICAL RHETORICAL OPERATIONS (ADAPTED FROM SCOLARI 2013A)

At first sight lullebel's fan fiction, *Synaptic*[33], can also be considered as an addition if we stick to this rhetorical approach. In fact, the fanfic's summary reads:

> Future-fic. Peter's got Olivia back from Mr. Secretary. She's back in the right half of the universe and the side effects of interdimensional travel are hitting her a little harder and faster than they did before.

However, if we look inside this fanfic, we realise that the issue is a bit more complex than adding a new chapter to the main story. In its form it is indeed an addition to the narrative as it is located in time after the *Fringe* season 2 finale; thus it expands the timeline, although the events told in the fanfic do not entirely fit with the timeline and facts of the official storyworld depicted in the series. By the time season 3 premiered, the death of Olivia Dunham in *Synaptic* had already contradicted the events of the main text—Olivia obviously survives. In this apparently paradoxical narrative scenario it is necessary to go back to Scolari's first proposal of strategies (*expansion*, *compression* and *parody*) based on the manipulation of the basic narrative elements of time, space and characters (2013a: 15) to find some answers. Based on this model rooted in Greimas' discursive structures (*temporalisation*, *spatialisation* and *actorialisation*) (1982), I have retrieved the Greimasian concept of *actor*[34] instead of character, added more explanation to the strategies, and substituted the strategy of parody with *shifting* because not all the fanworks end up being parodic after permutation is applied. Parody, therefore, it is a consequence of the strategy, not the strategy itself.

As shifting always involves a change of the original genre in the end, *Synaptic* would not fall into this category because it is still sci-fi like the source text or hypotext. Moreover, it stills adheres to the *Fringe* storyworld and expands its timeline. However, it does alter the fate of a main character. So, could it be an example of shifting after all? Yes and no. In fact, we can see a genuine fandom-bred hybrid strategy here. On one hand, there is an actorial shifting that does not affect the genre of the resulting hypertext, and on the other hand, there is a temporal expansion. TUGCs like *Synaptic* are a prime ex-

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34   "An actor may be **individual** (for example, Peter), or **collective** (for example, a crowd), **figurative** (anthropomorphic or zoomorphic), or **non-figurative** (for example, fate)" (Greimas and Courtés 1982: 7).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Expansion** | Temporal | Strategy in which there is an extension of the timeline of a hypotext by adding past, ongoing and future events. |
| | Spatial | Strategy based on increasing the locations where a hypotext takes place. |
| | Actorial | Strategy in which there is an expansion in the current actors' narrative programmes, an introduction of new actors, or an upgrade in the secondary actors' narrative programmes. |
| **Compression** | Temporal | Strategy in which there is a contraction in the timeline, or an alternative reorganization of the events presented by a hypotext. |
| | Spatial | Strategy based on decreasing the locations where a hypotext takes place. |
| | Actorial | Strategy in which there is a decrease in the number of actors featured in a hypotext or their narrative relevance is decreased. |
| **Shifting** | Temporal | Strategy based on the transformation or mix of the timeline within an hypotext–or several–in order to accomplish a hypertext than can be associated with a genre tradition distinct from the source material. |
| | Spatial | Strategy in which there is an alteration or mix of the locations within a hypotext–or several–so that the hypertext cannot be categorised in the same genre tradition as the source material. |
| | Actorial | Strategy based on the shift or mix of the actors' narrative programmes within a hypotext–or several–in order to obtain a hypertext that can be associated with a genre tradition distinct from the source material. |

△ TABLE 2. TRANSMEDIA STRATEGIES BASED ON EXPANSION, COMPRESSION AND SHIFTING OF DISCURSIVE STRUCTURES (TIME, SPACE AND ACTORS)

ample of *dimensional expansion (shifting + expansion):* a hybrid transmedia narrative strategy based on the moderate alteration or mix of some of the elements (time, space and actors) that constitute the diegetic world in a hypotext—or several—or of the events depicted in it, but at the same time expanding the hypotext timeline and keeping its diegesis and genre tradition recognisable. Dimensional expansions lead to the creation of fanworks based on *contextualised alternate universes* (see Section 3.2) or *crossovers* that make up the diegesis of two or more different hypotexts aligning with the original genre of at least one of the diegetic worlds in the mix, as seen in *The Red Balloon* by syllogismos[35] who builds a bridge between *Sherlock* (BBC One, 2010-) and *Fringe.* Genre is completely unaltered in this piece where the FOX series provides the setting to *Sherlock*'s expansion as Holmes and Watson join the Fringe Division in New York to help them solve the case featured in the episode "Bad Dreams" (1.17).

### 3.1.2. **Genette fandomised**

So far the textual study of TUGC has allowed us to enhance the transmedia narrative strategies adding two hybrid possibilities, but there is still more room to identify more ways transmedia storytelling, in general, and TUGC, in particular,

might unfold. In this sense, Genette's comprehensive insight into hypertextuality through literary transformations[36] (1997) becomes an indispensable reference. Although they are thought for a monomedia environment, many of Genette's categories can be applied to transmedia hypertextual relations like the ones between *Fringe,* its extensions and the fanworks related to the franchise. However, this does not mean that these categories are definitive and don't admit any sort of revision, summarisation or further development when confronted either with the mutable transmedia textualities or other theoretical approaches on the same matter—see Table 3. For instance, it would be appropriate to extend the Genettian concept of *transmodalisation* (one of the called *formal transpositions*) to something beyond the transition between the narrative and dramatic mode to include any transformation in terms of medium, language or platform. Any transmedia product derived from a previous one is, by default, a product of transmodalisation.

As it is not the purpose of this article to make a complete study of Genette's categories, I would like to draw attention to *supplement, diegetic transposition, parody, travesty*

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35  http://www.archiveofourown.org/works/808562 (accessed the 29 March 2015)

36  In Genette (1997) hypertextuality can adopt two basic types, *imitation* and *transformation,* which take place on three different functional levels or regimes: *playful, satiric* and *serious.* This article is focused on transformations.

| | |
|---|---|
| Diegetic transposition | Transformation that impacts the diegesis–"the world wherein the story occurs"–presented by a hypotext; therefore, basic aspects of the story may change, such as its original "spatiotemporal framework" and characters' nationalities, genders or sociocultural backgrounds. At the same time, these kinds of diegetic conversions can also modify the action that occurs in the hypotext (1997: 294-296). |
| Transmotivation | Transformation that consists of the substitution of a motive, either by adding a new one that didn't exist in the hypotext (*motivation*) or removing an existing one (*demotivation*). |
| Transvaluation | Transformation of "an axiological nature bearing on the value that is implicitly or explicitly assigned to (…) the sequence of actions, attitudes and feelings that constitute a "character"" (1997: 343). This can be achieved through two different operations: *revaluation* - making a character more "attractive" in the value system of the hypertext than in the hypotext, or just boosting its narrative relevance – and *devaluation* – the opposite movement. |
| Supplement | "Transposition in the shape of a continuation" (1997: 377). The hypotext is just the starting point of "an extrapolation disguised as an interpolation" (1997: 202). |
| Parody | "Distortion" of a hypotext through a minimal and semantic transformation (1997: 25-27). |
| Travesty | Stylistic transformation "whose function is to debase" a hypotext (1997: 25). |

△ TABLE 3. HYPERTEXTUAL TRANSFORMATIONS (EXCERPT ADAPTED FROM GENETTE 1997)

and *transmotivation* and *transvaluation*[37] ––see Table 3–– to discover the traces of these categories found in a good number of bottom-up contents. Firstly, supplement is very commonly found in fan fiction: for example *Synaptic*, which is written in the aftermath of a *Fringe* episode and resolves the cliffhanger; or fan art in the form of comics unravelling the next instalment of a story during times of production hiatus. Following Genette's lead, these productions appear to be examples of *continuation*[38], but even if they succeed in being faithful to the hypotext's canon[39], either by maintaining characters' traits or the original atmosphere, they eventually turn out to be essentially pragmatic[40], or even diegetic, transpositions because the hypotext follows its own course or the fan has deliberately changed some key facts. Supplement, thus, mirrors the dimensional expansion strategy described in Section 3.1.

Secondly, Genette provides a quite broad definition for diegetic transpositions which might involve operations of time, space or actor shifting or, conversely, operations that respect the hypotext diegetic coordinates and apply the changes only to formal or motivational aspects, but he does not specifically comment on genre. For example, *This Charming Man* by spy_barbie[41] features an explicit sexual relationship between *Fringe*'s Peter Bishop and Alternate Lincoln Lee, who meet at a bar after a tough day working at the Fringe Division. The diegetic world of this slash one shot is located in canon––as it expands the hypotext's timeline and its diegetic setting––, but the writer introduces a change in the actors' motives—a homosexual attraction—, in other words, there is an actorial shift affecting the narrative programmes and actantial roles—the subject Peter wants the object Lincoln, and vice versa—, which, at the same time, triggers a shift in the thematic hierarchy of the diegesis, degrading a canonical theme, like the existence of a parallel universe within the canonical diegesis,

37 Transformation of "an axiological nature bearing on the value that is implicitly or explicitly assigned to […] the sequence of actions, attitudes and feelings that constitute a Ðcharacter?" (1997: 343). This can be achieved through two different operations: *revaluation* - making a character more "attractive" in the value system of the hypertext than in the hypotext, or just boosting its narrative relevance – and *devaluation* – the opposite movement.

38 Genette makes a distinction between the concepts of *continuation* and *sequel* based on two aspects. First, on the authorship of the work drawing from D'Alambert's *Dictionnaire des synonymes*: "One may write the continuation of someone else's work and the sequel to one's own" (1997: 161). Second, on the motivations bringing about the work: "When a work is left unfinished for reasons of the death of its author or any other cause of final abandonment, *continuation* consists in finishing the work in the author's stead, and can only be the work of another. The *sequel* performs an entirely different function, which in general consists in exploiting the success of a work (…), and in setting it into motion again with new episodes" (1997: 162).

39 As mentioned in Hellekson and Busse (2006) on fan fiction, fans value the fan creators' skill in capturing the essence of the object of fandom and transmitting it in their works.

40 A pragmatic transposition is a transformation that alters the course of events and action in an original plot. It is an "unavoidable consequence" of transdiegetisation, so its autonomy can be considered as "much more restricted" than that of the former (1997: 311).

41 http://archiveofourown.org/works/214773?view_adult=true (accessed 21 December 2015).

and promoting a new theme such as homosexual desire. Thus, a substitution of the hypotext's original genre is generated, as science fiction is replaced by erotica in the fic's hypertext. In light of *This Charming Man*'s example, we must remark that the issue of genre transformation in the Genette's work is framed from the beginning in a clear distinction between serious and non-serious texts, which is attached to Aristotle's views on poetics[42]. So, the only generic transformations acknowledged here, *parody* and *travesty*, are related to non-serious genres. Even in this case, the semantic differences between them are blurry, and they can come to be used as synonyms over the course of time (Fernández Bueno, 2002).

Thirdly, and keeping *This Charming Man*'s example, we have just seen how transmotivation (motivation and demotivation) is implicit in operations of actorial shifting, so that any permutation in narrative programmes may alter the actor' motives to perform a specific action. Finally, transvaluation (revaluation and devaluation) lies behind examples of actorial expansion and compression such as spin-off-like fanfics about a specific character (e.g., *The Things I See Before Me* by crazylittleelf[43], centred on the alternate version of Astrid Fainsworth, Walter Bishop's assistant) or, stepping onto fan vid territory, a recap consisting only of Olivia and Peter's romantic narrative arc (e.g., *Peter & Olivia – The Kisses [Up to Season 3]* by AngelMoonGirl[44]).

### 3.2. **Canon and fanon: areas of a storyworld**

Keeping in mind the origin of transmedia content discussed in Section 1.1., it's easier to understand the area of the *Fringe* storyworld a fan would choose as a reference point for their creations, establishing a transfictional link (Sant-Gelais cited in Ryan, 2008) with it [45]. Top-down contents equal *canon,* the

official narrative universe formed by the television series and all its transmedia extensions. A fan may choose to set their work in this context and expand it without introducing any contradictory elements to the canonical events, settings or characterisations. So, bottom-up contents may align with the canon, but there is still much more to it than that. Drawing on the canon, a fan could also opt to create their own possible world (Eco, 1979), what if scenario, or *alternate universe* (*AU*) of *Fringe*, dimensionally expanding or shifting time, locations and characters. Let's go further. Instead of taking the canon as a reference, a fan might pick another fan's AU version and start from there, definitively leaving the canon behind. This is the case of work by the *Fringe* fans Chichuri and crazylittleelf. Chichuri created a seven-part alternate universe fan fiction called *Choke Chain 'verse*[46] in which Olivia, Peter and Nick Lane (a recurrent character in the canon related to Olivia's childhood) work as soldiers for the ZFT (the terrorist organisation responsible for The Pattern events in the first season of the series), which had recruited them when they were little. Crazylittleeelf expanded and enriched Chichuri's AU with *Ways and Means*[47], a collection of 29 fanfics set in the *Choke Chain 'verse*. Therefore, AU versions can produce hypertextual relations that, put together, form a *shared universe*. Shared universes are made of bottom-to-bottom contents and constitute the best example of how *fanon* evolves. Busse and Hellekson (2006: 9) define fanon as "the events created by the fan community in a particular fandom and repeated pervasively throughout the fantext. Fanon often creates particular details or character readings even though canon does not fully support it". Thus, we can affirm that fanon is born in AUs and spreads through shared universes.

To address the origin of fanon and shared universes with as much detail as possible, during the analysis we propose differentiating between a *contextualised alternate universe (CAU)* and a *pure alternate universe (PAU)*––see Figure 2. CAUs set divergent narrative possibilities starting at a specific point in the canon but without breaking free from the original diegetic world; for example, an alternate ending video to an episode or a fanfic that dismisses a pivotal fact in the canon, such as the death of a main character. In this sense, CAUs are intimately linked to the use of dimensional expansion strategies. PAUs, on the other hand, work as the complete opposite, placing the characters and their basic canonical characterisation in a diegesis that has nothing to do

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42 "Aristotle, who defined poetry as a representation in verse of human actions, immediately opposed two types of actions, distinguished by the level of their moral and/or social dignity as high and low, and by two modes of representation as narrative and dramatic. The intersection of those two oppositions determines a four-part grid that constitutes the Aristotelian system of poetic genres properly speaking: high action in the dramatic mode—tragedy; high action in the narrative mode—the epic; low action in the dramatic mode—the comedy. As for low action in the narrative mode, that is illustrated only by allusive references to works that are more or less directly designated under the term *parodia*" (Genette, 1997: 10).

43 http://archiveofourown.org/works/101943 (accessed 21 December 2015).

44 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiwVi4gqjYo (accessed 21 December 2015).

45 As Saint-Gelais (cited in Ryan 2008, p. 386) notes, "the concept of transfictionality covers those practices that expand fiction beyond the boundaries of the work: sequels and continuations, return of the protagonists, biographies of characters, cycles and series, "shared universes", etc".

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46 http://archiveofourown.org/series/851 (accessed 21 December 2015)

47 http://archiveofourown.org/series/617 (accessed 21 December 2015)

FIGURE 2. AREAS OF THE STORYWORLD

with the original one. Though it is by no means a fanwork, the episode "Brown Betty" (2.19) could be considered, in its steampunk setting and musical script, an allegoric PAU of Walter and Olivia's search for Peter, who'd run away in the previous episode after learning Walter stole him from the parallel universe when he was eight years old. The application of *shifting* strategies is probably behind the creation of many PAU stories in fandom.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Should transmedia user-generated contents (TUGC) in fiction or in any other context continue to be left to themselves when it comes to transmedia storytelling research? TUGC are recognised as a basic component of any transmedia narrative universe but because of their transformative nature–– a circumstance that greatly hinders the task of categorising them––they tend to be neglected in the researchers' agenda. TUGC appears to be a big black-hole category next to the always more detailed top-down systems, but if we dare to look into them maybe we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how transmedia storytelling works and, in this sense, how the fans/users/readers' interpretations of texts become something so tangible that they affect the original narratives they come from––with increasing consent from the cultural industries as they jump onto the bandwag-

on of transmedia production. After all, transmedia storytelling, with its emphasis on user participation and, therefore, co-creation, is the vehicle that has made Eco's idea of "open text" (1979) more open than ever: "the authority of the canon has steadily diminished in today's participatory media climate, and transmediality puts additional layers between the original work and the writing fan" (Leavenworth, 2011). Or as Busse and Hellekson (2006: 6) put it: "the open-text source in particular invites fan fiction as an expansion to the source universe and as interpretative fan engagement where the fan not only analyzes the text but also must constantly renegotiate her analyses".

Aware that the taxonomies we have presented in this article are not irrefutable, the use of a combined perspective in the case study of the fanworks from the *Fringe* franchise has permitted, on one level, to continue to test the reliability of classic methods for analysing transmedia narrative systems, building bridges to fan texts; and, on another level, to enhance the set of transmedia narrative strategies by adding *dimensional expansion.* With this hybrid type of expansion and *shifting* we have cleared up the mechanisms of a big part of fannish derivative works, split between fidelity to *canon* and *fanon*, which could have been generated in a *contextualised* or *pure alternate universe* version of the same storyworld.

In this work, fan fiction has taken central stage as object of analysis from among fictional TUGC; however, as we've seen above there are more practices waiting for further investigation that may help to broaden academic scope. For example, fan vid offers an interesting research playground because of the transformations the practice has undergone over recent years with the emergence of a solid remix culture (Russo and Coppa, 2012) able to mash up *Fringe* with the cheerful opening credits of the sitcom *Friends*[48]. Remix formats like these are proof of how shifting strategies operate regardless of generic affiliations and styles.

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48  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81nWbGibtYg (accessed 17 January 2015)

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## TV Shows

*24* (2001-2010)
*Battlestar Galactica* (2004-2009)
*Fringe* (2008-2013)
*Lost* (2004-2010)
*Sherlock* (2010-)

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