Game of Thrones: An International Conference
University of Hertfordshire, De Havilland Campus, 6-7 September 2017
#GOTconf

Co-organised by the Media Research Group of the School of Creative Arts and Humanities

PROGRAMME

<u>DAY ONE: WEDNESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2017</u>

9.00-9.30   Coffee and Registration – Atrium

9.30-9.45   Opening Remarks – Room N003
      9.30-9.35   Judy Glasman, Dean of School, Creative Arts
      9.35-9.45   Kim Akass, Leader of the Media Research Group, School of Creative Arts

9.45-11.15   Room N003
KEYNOTE 1:   Professor Anne Gjelsvik – 'The Hall of Faces in *Game of Thrones*: Facing the Changes from Words to Images'

11.15-11.30   Coffee – R Corridor

11.30-1.15   PARALLEL PANELS X 2

Panel 1 - Transmedia and World Building – Room R141

Chair: Kim Walden

Ian Sturrock.   Games of Ice and Fire: Close reading the themes of *Game of Thrones* through analogue and digital play.

Alexander Sergeant. Across the Narrow Screen: Televisual World-Building in HBO's *Game of Thrones*.

Andrew Lynch. Watercooler Westeros: After the Thrones as transmedia Quality paratext.

Panel 2 – Representation – Room R147

Chair: Kim Akass

Rosser Johnson. Legitimacy and being female: character arcs and storyline convergence in Season 6 of *Game of Thrones.*

Olivia Hinkin. Representations of Incest within *Game of Thrones.*

1.15-2.00   Lunch – Restaurant de Havilland

2.00-3.45   PARALLEL PANELS X 2

Panel 3 – 'Virtual Westeros': Fan Practices in the Online *Game of Thrones* Universe.– Room R141

Chair: Dr Darren Elliott-Smith

Julie Escurigan. 'They do not sow': The Creation of a *Game of Thrones'* Economic Fanverse through Fan-Made Merchandizing.

Briony Hannell. Restoring the Balance: Feminist Meta-Texts and the Productivity of Tumblr's *Game of Thrones* Fans.

Amanda DiGioia. 'All my life I've been knocking men like you into the dust': Feminist Critiques of *Game of Thrones* Within Online Feminist Communities.

Panel 4 – Adaptation and Transtextuality – Room R147

Chair: Dr Laura Mee

Eve Smith. What if Richard had left the princes with their mother rather than putting them in the tower? Oh wait, isn't that the plot of *Game of Thrones*?: Shakespearean transtextuality in *Game of Thrones* fandom.

Amanda Potter. Classical Heroines in HBO's *Game of Thrones*: Iphigenia and Medea in Westeros.

Nicholas Furze*.* Time through a lens: *Game of Thrones*, a modern perception of Late-Medieval Life.

3.45-4.15   Tea and Refreshments - R Corridor

4.15-5.45   Panel 5 – Fans and Viewing Practices – Room R141

Chair: Dr Sylvie Magerstadt

Héctor J. Pérez. Fan Theories and Aesthetic Consciousness: On Jon Snow's Death and Resurrection

Zoë Shacklock. Embodied Spectatorship and the *Game of Thrones* reaction video.

Joan Ramon Rodriguez-Amat. Games of Piracy and Fandom: Technology, Copyright and Industry.

6.00-7.00pm   Launch of the George R. R. Martin Society. 'R' Corridor

7.30 – late   Conference Dinner – **Comet Restaurant**

DAY TWO: THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2017

9.00-9.30   Coffee and Registration – R Corridor

9.30-11.00   Room N003
KEYNOTE 2:   Associate Professor Rikke Schubart – 'Broken Things, Women and Change: *Game of Thrones* and Playing with Existential Explosive Plasticity'

11.00-11.30   Coffee – R Corridor

11.30-1.00

Panel 7 – Beyond Westeros: Extra-textual Practices – Room R147

Chair: Professor Martin Barker

Rachel Mizsei Ward. ' We're going to need a bigger box of red crayons' – Adapting *Game of Thrones* for the adult colouring book market.

Christian Gonzatti. *Game of Thrones* and Journalism: the emergence of feminist collectives in Brazilian digital pop culture.

Daniel Clarke. Westeros via Belfast: faux-authenticity and the heritage experience of HBO's *Game of Thrones.*

1.00-2.00   Lunch – Restaurant de Havilland

2.00-3.30

Panel 9 – Death and Trauma – Room R141

Chair: Professor Anne Gjelsvik

Matteo Barbagallo. The one we are living in: Westeros and the dantesque interpretation of Death.

Simon Born. Valar morghulis – Representations of Death and Dying in HBO's *Game of Thrones*.

Ben Tyrer. Fantasy Decomposed: Traumatic desire and (dis)integration in *Game of Thrones*

3.30-4.00   Tea – R Corridor

4.00-5.30   Room N003
KEYNOTE 3:   Professor Martin Barker – Questeros Round Table - 'Letting the smallfolk speak: a first report from the International Game of Thrones Audience Project'

5.30-6.00   Closing Remarks
6.00pm   Conference Close

<u>DELEGATE LIST</u>

MATTEO BARBAGELLO is a PhD candidate at the University of Glasgow. His doctoral research focuses on the thematic subversions of the literary sources within George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* which aims at identifying a new approach to Fantasy Literature in the 21st century. He is the founder and a committee member of the Martin Studies International Network and the founder of Glasgow International Fantasy Conversations. He has authored several papers on Fantasy Literature, Comparative Literature, Film and Comics Studies.

The One we are Living in: Westeros and the Dantesque Interpretation of Death
Since its beginning, *Game of Thrones* has guided the audience through the many landscapes and places in Westeros. In these places, whether it is King's Landing or Castle Black, the aura of an imminent death surrounds the characters inhabiting them. This is the case of Eddard Stark, who seems to predict his own death the day he sets foot in King's Landing, and Jon Snow, whose martyrdom echoes what Melisandre told him before his journey to Hardhome.

All these characters, though, entrusted their lives to deities such as The Seven or the Old Gods, who should have protected the lives of those who do good. Syrio Forel, though, believes otherwise: 'There is only one god and his name is Death'. With these words Syrio marks an important point, which is the admittance that those who believe in the archetypical gods are making a huge mistake. Syrio's thoughts are then corroborated by Melisandre when she declares 'There is only one hell, and that's the one we are living in'. Syrio and Melisandre's words are the key to decipher the dimension of Death in Westeros. In my paper, I will show how the possibility of a godless reality destabilizes the lives of those who inhabit Martin's secondary world, and how the simple assumption that Westeros is in truth the embodiment of Hell relates to Dante Alighier's depiction of Hell in the *Divine Comedy*, a place where, according to the law of *contrapasso*, the punishment fits the crime.

MARTIN BARKER is Emeritus Professor at Aberystwyth University. He is the main coordinator of the just-completed International *Game of Thrones* Audience Project, which has been gathering responses to the series as widely as possible– achieving more than 10,000 in the end. Martin has a long background in audience research, having been involved in more than 20 projects since the 1980s, including the *Lord of the Rings* and *Hobbit* international projects. He is the author of 16 books of research in the broad field of media and cultural studies.

'Letting the smallfolk speak: a first report from the International Game of Thrones Audience Project'
My presentation will offer some first findings from an interim download of more than 8000 responses to the complex questionnaire used in the International *Game of Thrones* Project, a project which has brought together 41 researchers in 12 countries. Within the context of the intense debates that have accompanied the series (over its politics – as compared with *Harry Potter*; and over its representations of sex and sexual violence – especially the 'Sansa issue'), and focusing on the discovery of five distinct ways of watching and engaging with the series, I will particularly explore three aspects of people's responses: their ways of relating to favourite characters; the meanings they attach to the famous saying 'Winter Is Coming'; and their choices of the most intriguing peoples and lands. The overall aim is to indicate the ways in which the audience

research tradition can throw new kinds of light on the public role of this remarkable series, and – through that – to throw light perhaps on the shifting role of 'fantasy' in public life.

SIMON BORN studied Media Dramaturgy at the Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz in Germany and is working on his Ph.D. thesis about death motifs in contemporary television series at the University of Siegen. His research includes contemporary TV series, concepts of transmedia storytelling, the theatricality of superhero comics and the history and theory of comedy. As a film critic, Simon wrote numerous reviews, essays and TV recaps of *Breaking Bad*, *Dexter* and *Game of Thrones*.

Valar Morghulis – Representations of Death and Dying in HBO's Game of Thrones
In the brutal world of *Game of Thrones* (2011- , HBO), death is omnipresent. He poses a constant threat to the show's characters which constantly fall victim to betrayal, schemes and the horrors of war. As a manifestation of the show's gritty take on the fantasy genre, the "anyone can be killed" formula functions as a unique selling point of the series: *Game of Thrones* famously kills off beloved protagonists to raise the dramatic stakes and create widespread media attention (VanDerWerff 2016).

This paper examines how death is represented in *Game of Thrones*. What is the relation between narrative, seriality and death? Which images are used in the depiction of dying? *Game of Thrones* is part of a current trend in contemporary TV where the audience is confronted with a new system of death representation (Weber 2011). Violent on-screen deaths and artistically displayed corpses serve as key entertainment facilities and branding strategies of pay television services like HBO that address their niche audience by breaking taboos. Ultimately, TV narratives like *Game of Thrones* make a vital contribution to the seemingly repressed cultural discourse of death which has shifted from society into the sphere of fictional experience. Beyond the gruesome spectacle, the show exhibits a unique attitude towards death. This becomes particularly evident in the character of Arya Stark through which the show not only expresses its existentialistic view on the finality of death, but also provides a way of dealing with the harsh reality that all men must die – Valar morghulis.

DANIEL CLARKE is a PhD candidate at the University of Sheffield and Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. He is part of the White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership and its network on 'European history and identity in cinema', which works across the Universities of Sheffield, Leeds, and York. His thesis, *Wearing Historicity*, examines the politicised usage of medieval Europe as imagined time and place in Hollywood film and contemporary American television. Here, he explores the formal and thematic (dis)connectivity between HBO's *Game of Thrones* as high quality television drama and Medeival films of Classical Hollywood. Essentially, he asks: how do reproductions of the European Middle Ages, interpreted or mediated through the American cultural imagination, operate as fantasies of the social, political, psychic?

Westeros via. Belfast: Faux-authenticity and the Heritage Experience of HBO's Game of Thrones.
The use of medieval Europe as historical setting is well-rehearsed in Hollywood cinema. Susan Aronstein (2005) considers how such Hollywood adaptations take artistic liberties with historical fact to reveal their own contemporary narrative ideologies. In this paper, I will expand the premise of Aronstein's argument beyond both conventional Hollywood cinema and close-textual readings.

Through a case study of high-quality American television drama *Game of Thrones*, I will argue that discourse on authenticity in historical film and television drama (often focused on anachronism and factual inaccuracy) has moved beyond screen 'text' and into the domain of 'paratext'. In its traditional, literary manifestation, the 'paratext' came to mean input that surrounded the main text, such as the frontispiece of a book or the opening credits of a film. The rise of globalisation and the internet has expanded the ways in which fans can interact with their favourite television shows. Increasingly, audiences can engage with the 'text' through heritage tourism: they can visit sets and filming locations, which have been adapted to provide an immersive visitor experience. On the *Game of Thrones* tour in Belfast, audiences can walk around key settings such as 'Winterfell', dress up as their favourite characters, and re-enact scenes from the series. I argue that these experiences have become an important form of paratext. The historical implications of these experiences are contentious as they are often in direct competition with heritage activities based on more authentic histories. Drawing upon Rob Stone's work on the postmodern heritage experience, I will examine how the *Game of Thrones* tours at Titanic Studios in Belfast and at the Giant's Causeway exist alongside more genuine heritage narratives, such as the story of the Titanic and Northern Ireland's medieval past. Through an analysis of marketing on social media and material on the tour's website (www.gameofthronestours.com), I will consider whether the narratives constructed by the T.V series and the tour challenge or supersede other heritage experiences, particularly in terms of popular interaction. This analysis will enable me to consider how these fan experiences constitute as mode of what Matt Hills has called *hyperdiegesis*, that which expands the textual diegesis into immersive practices of fandom, such as role-playing. Inevitably, I will ask: are the roles of audience member, fan, and tourist necessarily interchangeable?

AMANDA DIGIOIA received a M.A. in Women's Studies from Southern Connecticut State University in 2016, and is currently a PhD student at the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies. Amanda's work has been featured in *Metal Music Studies*, *Horror Studies*, and *Fan Phenomena: Game of Thrones.* Amanda's book, entitled *Childbirth and Parenting in Horror Texts: The Marginalized and the Monstrous,* will be released by Emerald Publishing as a part of the series *Emerald Studies in Alternativity and Marginalization*.

 'All my life I've been knocking men like you into the dust': Feminist Critiques of Game of Thrones Within Online Feminist Communities
The culture and characters of Westeros and Essos have simultaneously fascinated, inspired, and repulsed feminists for decades. George R.R. Martin's treatment of female characters has stirred much debate amongst feminists. Now more than ever, online communities allow feminists fans of *Game of Thrones* to gather and discuss the work of the well-known author and his representation of women.

Hence, this paper aims at finding out how feminism in *Game of Thrones* is represented, interpreted and changed by those who comment in feminist online communities: how is feminism presented in *Game of Thrones* and how is this representation then discussed and critiqued in online feminist forums? Are feminist fans more critical toward the book or the series? Is the online environment in which feminists discuss *Game of Thrones* the 'safe space' it should be?

Building on recent research in feminism, fan studies (Jenkins, 2006; Hills, 2002) as well as psychological and sociological aspects of motherhood (Miller, 2014; Schulte, 2011; Daniels, 2009)

and relying on in-depth rhetorical analysis of exchanges on online feminist communities as well as on interviews with these communities' participants, this study explores the manifold associations between *Game of Thrones* and online commentators in feminist communities. One of the key findings is that online feminist communities are not always a 'safe haven', because the *dispositif* itself also allows misogynists to participate. Therefore, those who identify as feminist fans of *Game of Thrones* can face gendered harassment while discussing their object of fandom. However, it is worth noting this harassment does not stop them from staying committed to feminist causes.

JULIE ESCURIGNAN is a doctoral researcher in Film and Television Studies at the University of Roehampton, London. She holds a BA and an MA in Communication Studies from the Sorbonne University and has conducted research at doctoral level at the University of Texas at Austin. She received a Ph.D. Scholarship to research questions of cross-media, cross-border and cross-cultural adaptations in television series in association with the AHRC-funded network Media Across Borders. Her thesis, for which she conducts the *Game of Thrones Fans Project*, looks at the transmedia experience of *Game of Thrones'* transnational fans.

'They do not sow': The Creation of a Game of Thrones' Economic Fanverse through Fan-Made Merchandizing
Game of Thrones is currently one of the most famous examples of television fandom. Fans engage on a diversity of products, platforms and practices. With the series, HBO has created a particular visual identity that can be found on all instances of the franchise, from online platforms to merchandizing such as mugs, collectibles and jewellery. However, fan- producers who create unofficial *Game of Thrones'* artefacts have also discerned these characteristics and use them in their creations sold online, on platforms such as Etsy, Amazon Handmade, Shapeways or the new social media marketplace Cosmunity. Indeed, the online environment has allowed fans to develop, showcase and sell their own creations. In doing so, fan-producers blur the line between official and fan-made merchandizing.

Therefore, this work analyses how fans' productions on the collaborative website Etsy copy, mock and divert HBO-*Game of Thrones'* visual features, thus revealing opposing logics: while fans' engagement through material production demonstrates their wish to be part of the *Game of Thrones'* storyworld, fans' reappropriation of HBO's visual identity shows their will to create their own fan-made universe. Building on research in transmedial narratology (Harvey, 2015; Ryan, 2004), fan studies (Jenkins, 2006; Hills, 2002), television studies (Mittell, 2015) and marketing (Touze, 2015; Gray, 2010), and relying on in-depth semiotic analysis of online platforms and interviews with fans, cosplayers and producers, this paper examines *Game of Thrones* creations and creators on Etsy, providing fresh insights on the development of a new type of fan community: the Economic Fanverse.

NICHOLAS FURZE is a PhD candidate and sessional lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University. His thesis is focused upon applying the principals of adaptation theory to historical film and television, with a particular focus on Medieval history, and he has previously presented papers at the annual conferences for BAFTSS (2016 & 2017) and TAAS (2016).

Time Through a Lens: Game of Thrones, a Modern Perception of Late-Medieval Life

This paper provides an analysis of *Game of Thrones*, and how despite the fact that it is set in a purely fantastical setting, the series attempts to engage with questions about what life was like during the Late-Medieval period. This paper will discuss how the series engages with modern popular perceptions of Late-Medieval life, and how it presents various nuances in its representation of people's attitudes towards topics as diverse as: superstition, gender and culture. This analysis will also consider *Game of Thrones'* position on a continuum of texts that are focused upon the Medieval period, and how these texts have influenced the popular perception of the society in order to determine the extent to which *Game of Thrones* either rejects, advances or supports these preconceptions.

CHRISTIAN GONZATTI graduated in Social Communication - qualification in Advertising by Unisinos. Master in progress - Communication Sciences at Unisinos. Member of the LIC (Event Research Laboratory). He is interested in the topics of digital networks, pop culture, gender, sexuality and journalism.

Game of Thrones and Journalism: the Emergence of Feminist Collectives in Brazilian Digital Pop Culture

This paper analyses the ways in which media collectives from a feminist perspective, distinct from traditional media, produce content about *Game of Thrones*, what kind of ties they create with their audiences, and what meanings they produce in these network mediation processes. Specifically in Brazil, these collectives become a pluralistic digital scenario in approaching socially marginalized issues and of confrontation in relation to the prejudices performed by fans of different cultural products. At the same time they are distinguished from mass media, they trigger dynamic senses in pop culture environments. To the extent that power relations traverse the stories of *Game of Thrones*, we take this as a structural metaphor for the Brazilian media system, concentrated in the hands of a few families, which constitute true mediatic thrones. As a result, certain themes are obliterated to the detriment of issues that are intersectionalised; the lives of people who incorporate historically privileged signs: masculinity, heterosexuality, cisgenerity and whiteness make up most of the massive journalistic spaces. To give substance to the proposed metaphor, we analyze the sites of collectives Minas Nerds (http://minasnerds.com.br/. Acesso: 28 mar. 2017) Collant sem Decote (http://collantsemdecote.com.br/. Acesso: 28 mar. 2017) and Nó de Oito (http://nodeoito.com/. Acesso: 28 mar. 2017), which focus on feminist themes around the series, such as female representation and the culture of rape - what is articulated to issues that develop remarkable visibility in the Brazilian context and have triggered cybervents.

ANNE GJELSVIK is Professor of Film Studies at the Department of Art and Media Studies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway. Gjelsvik is a leading Norwegian film scholar, and has done work on media theory, adaptation, popular cinema, film violence, and the representation of gender in the media. She has published several books both in English and Norwegian on these topics, as well as a large number of articles in journals and anthologies. She is currently researching intermediality and the mediation of terror and trauma, and is the project leader for "Face of Terror. Understanding Terrorism from the Perspective of Critical Media Aesthetics." (2016-2020), funded by the Research Council of Norway. Among her recent publications are *Women of Ice and Fire: Gender, Game of Thrones and Multiple Media Engagements* (co-edited with Rikke Schubart,), *Hva er film* (*What is Cinema*) (Universitetsforlaget, 2013), and the co-edited anthologies *Eastwood's Iwo Jima. A Critical Engagement With Flags of*

Our Fathers & Letters from Iwo Jima (Columbia University Press, 2013) and *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions* (Bloomsbury, 2013).

Facing Change in Westeros?

A more handsome Tyrion, a more motherly Cersei, harsher fates for female characters (Sansa Stark, Shireen Baratheon, Talisa/Jeyne), no Lady Stoneheart. More explicit violence and sex. In this talk I will address some of the most debate-inducing changes made in HBO's adaptation of Martin's novels, and discuss some of the reactions, from both fans and scholars, towards these. I will base my discussion on some of the case-studies in the anthology *Women of Ice and Fire. Gender, Game of Thrones and Multiple Media Engagements* (ed Gjelsvik and Schubart 2017) (on motherhood (Eidsvåg), sex (Larsson) and violence (Gjelsvik), as well as central topics within adaptation studies (medium specificity, fidelity). I intend to discuss what these changes can tell us about differences between literature and television (both in terms of cultural status and the reader/viewer experience), focusing on the role of the body and the face in particular.

BRIONY HANNELL is a Ph.D. student in Politics at the University of East Anglia (UEA), where she is researching feminist identity and the practices and productivity of the *Game of Thrones* and *A Song of Ice and Fire* fandom(s) on Tumblr. She is a member of the international research team conducting the *Game of Thrones Research Project,* and her work has been featured in *Fan Phenomena: Game of Thrones.* Her research interests more broadly include feminist identity, popular culture, digital cultures, and fan studies.

Restoring the Balance: Feminist Meta-Texts and the Productivity of Tumblr's Game of Thrones Fans

Fan communities have long been characterised as subversive and transformational, challenging norms and existing power structures (Fiske, 1989; Jenkins, 1992). Recent research has positioned the blogging and social networking website Tumblr as a space in which fans are motivated to engage in "social justice" through their fandoms, utilising the object of fandom to participate in discussions about issues such as racism, sexism, and homophobia (Hillman, Procyk, and Neustaedter 2014).

This paper draws upon these debates to explore how female fans of *Game of Thrones* perform feminist identities and demonstrate intense critical distance from HBO's television adaptation of the *A Song of Ice and Fire* novels through their enunciative and textual productivity on Tumblr. In order to illustrate this, this study examines focus group data and a selection of fan works to reveal how the production and circulation of women-centric fan works on Tumblr provides a means for female *Game of Thrones* fans to collectively critique, contest, and reformulate the text to place women at its centre. In doing so, this research highlights how Tumblr serves as an online space in which female *Game of Thrones* fans mobilise "social justice" discourses to articulate feminist critiques of the adaptation, and subsequently recreate and reformulate it through their production of fan works. In doing so, these fans contribute to the collective construction of a "feminist meta-text" that is larger, richer, and more female-friendly than the original text, therefore allowing fans to work towards "restoring the balance" to *Game of Thrones*.

OLIVIA HINKIN is a second year MPhil/PhD Candidate at Birkbeck, University of London in the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies. My working title is "Changing methods of anime distribution within convergence culture". I graduated with a first in my BA Film and Television Studies from Royal Holloway and a distinction in my MA Film, Television and Screen Studies from Birkbeck. I am conducting my research under the supervision of Dr. Janet McCabe (Birkbeck) and Dr. Griseldis Kirsch (SOAS).

Representations of Incest within Game of Thrones

This paper outlines the differing representations of incest within the television series *Game of Thrones*. Incest remains one of the most taboo and difficult subjects in our society, and its inclusion in television drama is a fitting place for it, as the longitudinal narrative offers the possibility for more in-depth exploration than film. This show is a fascinating case study as it not only explores incest as a form of abuse and control but also as completely consensual. Furthermore, it is one of the few examples of incest which does not have a parent/child dynamic, but of a more equal sibling relationship. I will be exploring the how incest is represented (explicitly or implicitly by the narrative), the extent to which it is discussed/shown, treatment of characters involved within the narrative and how this treatment coincides with the circumstances of incest (forced/consensual). This is particularly interesting as although we usually associate incestuous narratives with the worst characters, this is not necessarily the case with *Game of Thrones*. Although incest is not condoned within the world of *Game of Thrones*, it does play a significant part in their fictional history. Despite the fictional world, an analysis of the way incest is represented will give us an insight into current societal attitudes towards incest as an issue.

ROSSER JOHNSON is Associate Dean (Postgraduate) in the Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies at Auckland University of Technology. His research interests include promotional culture, media depictions of mental ill health and popular television.

Legitimacy and Being Female: Character Arcs and Storyline Convergence in Season 6 of Game of Thrones

Season 6 of the HBO series *Game of Thrones* was notable for, among many things, the increasing thematic and structural importance of major female characters. Storylines coalesced around a range of events that led to these characters achieving long-held and/or important goals: Brienne found a willing noble worthy of her service; Arya regained her sight and crossed people off her list; Yara became ruler after her father's death; Daenerys found her army; and Sansa avenged the suffering she endured at the hands of her husband.

While it is clear that these developments speak to increasing (and increasingly visible) gendered dynamics of power within the *Game of Thrones* narrative, they also work to uncover and interrogate another deep-level concern within the show: legitimacy. Here, the central presence of bastards and bastardry that featured since Season 1 is now revealed in a more layered and nuanced manner. This paper will outline the various ways in which notions of legitimacy underpin and motivate the character arcs of five main female characters as Season 6 progressed. It will also demonstrate how, in each case, the struggle for legitimacy for each of these women plays out in opposition to men and notions of maleness that are deployed in the narrative. Finally, it will offer a tentative conclusion about the legitimate nature of femaleness as the series moves into its final stages.

ANDREW LYNCH is a doctoral candidate, lecturer and course-coordinator in The School of Culture and Communication at The University of Melbourne, Australia. Andrew is also a postgraduate participant in the Transformative Technologies Research Unit at the University of Melbourne. His current research is in the field of television, and the contemporary mainstreaming of the "Quality" aesthetic and genre entertainment fandom. He has recently presented at the ACA/PCA national conference, Flow television studies conference and the Crossroads international conference for cultural studies. He has an upcoming book chapter titled "The Last-night's Watch: *Game of Thrones,* contemporary recap culture, and HBO's continuing legacy" in *HBO's Original Voices* an edited compilation to be published by Routledge.

'Watercooler Westeros: After the Thrones as Transmedia Quality TV Paratext'

Following the Monday night US premier of the sixth season *Game of Thrones* (GOT), HBO Now subscribers might have been surprised to find a new supplementary talk show titled *After the Thrones* (ATT) available to stream. Hosted by two relatively unknown culture critics, this official recap program provided in-depth discussion of GOT, while also using humour to undercut the uniformly serious tone with which HBO had otherwise treated its flagship prestige property. While this might have seemed unusual to viewers who were not aware of the paratextual recap narrative surrounding the show, ATT was only the most recent addition to a massive inter-textual landscape of online recaps, podcasts and even official tie-in talk shows like the Sky Atlantic-produced *Thronecast*.

While the idea of transmedia television is already well established academically (Mittell, 2015), the degree to which the reception meta-narratives surrounding the GOT 'mothership' contribute to the difficult and complex process of textual world building has often been underestimated. This paper will argue that ATT and other recap media act as a combination of Mittell's 'orientating' and 'what is' paratexts, while also performing acts of transmedia storytelling, creating a supplementary narrative which both surrounds and penetrates the central text. By analysing both the content and the production genesis of ATT - from a series of recaps, columns and podcasts hosted first by ESPN-affiliated sports and culture website *Grantland*, to an HBO-branded companion program - we can examine not only how essential to the ongoing popular and critical discourse these recap paratexts have become, but how in GOT's case, they have also created an unprecedentedly coherent transmedia hyperdiegesis. This has expanded the show's appeal beyond any traditionally- held expectations for either a prestige or telefantasy programme.

RACHEL MIZSEI WARD is an Eisner Award nominated scholar who works on aspects of transmedia and the critical responses to them. Her edited collection *Superheroes on World Screens* is now available in paperback. She has published in *Comparative American Studies*, *The Journal of Popular Television* and the *Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies.* Her latest project is on the discourse surrounding adult colouring books.

"We're going to need a bigger box of red crayons" Adapting Game of Thrones for the Adult Colouring Book Market

Colouring books for adults have become a thriving industry, with books appealing to varied audiences by featuring a multitude of different kinds of image. A publishing trend that started with pictures of flowers and animals expanded in 2015 to include not one, but two, *Game of Thrones* licensed colouring books. These colouring books are part of a larger expansion into licensed

colouring books, suggesting a maturing market. Both colouring books describe themselves as official, with the first providing pictures inspired by the original books and the second providing pictures taken from the television shows. These provided an interesting merchandising opportunity for both George R.R. Martin and HBO. The pictures depict outlines of key scenes and characters, ready for fans to colour in. However the books' release in the autumn lineup positioned them as Christmas present fodder for the unimaginative present-buyer. This appears to be similar to other licensed colouring books released at the same time, such as those for *Harry Potter* and *Outlander*. The choice of *Game of Thrones* clearly marks the colouring books as a product for adults.

This paper will discuss how these books fit within the colouring book market and then consider how they act as an adaption. Part of the pleasure of these books is in recognition and remembrance of the scenes depicted, while the practice of colouring is used as an aid to mental health and mindfulness. I will also consider some of the online response to the books, which often comically combined the key Red Wedding scene with a requirement for more red crayons.

HÉCTOR J. PÉREZ is Associate Professor of audiovisual narrative at the Universitat Politècnica de València (Escola Politècnica Superior de Gandia). He undertook pre-doctoral Studies at the Musikwissenschaftliches Institut of The Universität Leipzig (1995-97) and received a European Ph.D. in 1999 from the Universidad de Murcia, and continued post-doctoral studies at the Università degli Studi di Milano, Dipartimento di Estetica (1997-2002). A main line of his research is the study of the role of corporeal narration on acting in film, TV series and opera, and also works regularly in the cognitive aesthetics of television series and the relationships between mythology and cinema. His most recent book is *Cine y mitología: de las religiones a los argumentos universales* (Peter Lang, 2013). He is editor of SERIES, International Journal of TV Serial Narratives and Principal Researcher of the research project: www.researchseries.org.

Fan Theories and Aesthetic Consciousness: On Jon Snow's Death and Resurrection.
This contribution will explore how aesthetic consciousness appears in the middle of fandom practices. We will investigate an intriguing case, in terms of fandom activity and quality of conscious aesthetic processes: The two (linked by fandom theories) plot twists implied by Jon Snow's Death and Resurrection. Many different formal aspects of contemporary television may elicit the awareness of spectators with regard to the aesthetic qualities of the work. However, none of them involves surprise so clearly, or not in the same way as a plot twist do. Surprise, as narrative effect, awakes a stream of fan reactions when successful, that may elicit consciousness easily as one of its most clear identified consequences. We will follow a theory of surprise originally proposed by cognitive psychologists Meyer, Reisenzein and Schützwohl. This surprise theory may help us even to determine if we need to consider John Snow's death or resurrection as the genuine twist. Shouldn't we consider as a genuine plot twist the event that is able to awake a more intense activity of aesthetic conscious evaluation?

After a careful analysis of how fandom has been expressing opinion regarding aesthetic issues we have stated that the fandom reactions to Jon Snow's death we have explored shows reflection focused on aesthetic aspects, and consequently is a clear expression of aesthetic consciousness. It shows explicitly how such an event as a character's death, elicits a spectator's perspective about the end (and meaning) of a narration, and that is the kind of response that many fans may have experienced when Jon Snow died. Many of them, that shared the belief about his origins, experienced his death as a spark that brought them to think about the future development of the

main plot of the series. Jon Snow's death has provoked more narrative desires and character desires than his resurrection and in this sense may be considered the real plot twist here, a particular one, because it is based mainly on the great expansion of a theory made by fan. This fact leads us to think how far fandom practices may determine one of the core aspects of the aesthetic experience in contemporary serial television.

AMANDA POTTER is a Research Fellow with the Open University, where she was awarded her PhD in 2014 for her thesis on viewer reception of Greek myth on television in *Xena: Warrior Princess* and *Charmed*. Amanda has published on *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *Charmed*, *Rome*, *Spartacus*, *Torchwood* and *Doctor Who*, focussing on viewer engagement including fanfiction. Amanda is currently working on science fiction and epic and Wonder Woman's Amazon heritage.

Classical Heroines in HBO Game of Thrones: Iphigenia and Medea in Westeros

When I had a brief opportunity to meet George R. R. Martin at a book signing in London in 2014 I asked him about how much his work was inspired by classics and how much by medieval history. He interpreted 'classics' as ancient history, rather than classical literature, and gave the answer 80% medieval, 20% ancient history. This made sense, as Hadrian's Wall as inspiration for the wall in the *Songs of Ice and Fire* books is well documented, as is his interest in the period in British history which has come to be known as the War of the Roses, which resonates strongly throughout the books. However, when 'The Dance of Dragons' (5.9) was first aired in 2015, heroines from the Euripidean tragedies *Iphigenia in Aulis* and *Medea* were invoked when Shireen Baratheon is sacrificed to the Lord of Light and Daenerys escapes death in Meereen on the back of a dragon.

In this paper I discuss how the death of Iphigenia in *Iphigenia in Aulis* is a model for the death of Shireen (in a departure from the published novels). Both of these young girls are sacrificed by their fathers, who are kings, in order to achieve success in war. I argue that the story of Iphigenia was familiar to showrunner David Benioff, as this was a plot line he had to cut from his original script for *Troy* (2004), and so although Martin may have suggested the death of Shireen, Benioff's interest in the character of Iphigenia is also a major factor influencing how this death is depicted on-screen. I also discuss the parallels between Daenerys and Medea, not only in Dany's escape on the back of a dragon as Medea escapes in a chariot pulled by dragons, but also in her relationship with Khal Drogo. I conclude by suggesting that a comparison between female characters in *Game of Thrones* and those from classical myth and tragedy more broadly can be used to shed light on both texts.

JOAN RAMON RODRIGUEZ-AMAT PhD. is Senior Lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University (UK). He has published pieces on fandom, copyright regulation and transmedia narratives around *Game of Thrones*.

Games of Piracy and Fandom: Technology, Copyright and Industry.

Game of Thrones has been the most pirated TV series of 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 (Ernesto, 2014; Ernesto, 2015; and Parsons, 2016). For Time Warner CEO, Jeff Bewkes, "that's better than an Emmy" (Ernesto, 2013). For director David Petrarca, "illegal downloads did not matter because such shows thrived on 'cultural buzz' and capitalised on the social commentary they generated" (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2013). This 'throne' of piracy enhances the series as a cultural product that embodies important timely tensions in the creative industrial landscape.

This paper results from the critical analysis of focus groups with faithful viewers of *Game of Thrones* conducted in Vienna (AT) and Sheffield (UK) in 2016. Viewers watch online sourced material, build strands of complicity and understanding, and perceive anti piracy regulation conveniently as less strong in areas with more generalised illegal downloading.

The analysis presented in this paper connects audiences, creativity and business. Viewers actively contribute with, user generated content, download illegally, and deal with a vague idea of anti piracy measures. Meanwhile, a blossoming creative drive grows complex characters and narratives, hundreds of hours of digitally post-produced worlds in a new golden age of TV-series. Opposite, the industrial sector makes efforts to curb the digital piracy by intervening at supra-national and local levels, with policies, intermediaries and stakeholders, while dramatically helps criminalising illegal practices of cultural consumption. These three lines of tension grow across technological conditions, economic imperatives and a buzzing thirst for stimulating stories, between viewers, creators and producers.

ALEXANDER SERGEANT is a PhD candidate within the Department of Film Studies at King's College London. His thesis examines issues of spectatorship in relation to the Hollywood fantasy genre and is supported by a grant from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. His research interests include the history of Hollywood cinema in the twenty and twenty first centuries, film theory, theories of film spectatorship, film philosophy and psychoanalysis.

Across the Narrow Screen: Televisual World-Building in HBO's Game of Thrones

The commercial and critical success of HBO's *Game of Thrones* represents an important watershed moment in the history of televisual fantasy fiction. Whilst the science-fiction and horror genres have flourished on television throughout the 20th century, fantasy – and in particular the kind of "high" fantasy epitomised by George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Fire and Ice* series – has traditionally struggled on the small screen. The large-scale production costs needed to convincingly realise a detailed, alternative fantasy world onscreen has seemingly meant the fantasy fiction has been a genre best left to the cinema, the practicalities and aesthetic conventions surrounding this form of storytelling supposedly unsuitable for the smaller, domestic sphere of the television drama. With close analysis of the HBO series, this paper proposes to consider the specifics of *Game of Thrones*' world-creation that have fundamentally altered that assumptive dynamic. Debates surrounding fantasy cinema have often focused on the role of visual spectacle, or the "spectacular vista" (Brown, Butler, Walters), defining the visual fantasy world through its relationship to the singular, intense moment – Dorothy stepping into Oz for the first time in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) or the Orcs arriving at Helm's Deep in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (2002). *Game of Thrones*, however, demonstrates a form of world-creation that is far less reliant on its immediate visual impact on the spectator bur rather the durative impact such images make in terms of the multiplicity/reputation of view-point achieved in the series. Drawing on the specifics of its medium, particularly television's innate ability to stretch narratives across time, it establishes the spectator's relationship to the world of Westeros through the necessary repetitive activity of episode-watching, an act which regulates and indoctrinates the fantasy space as each new fictional circumstance gives further clarity and fascination to the specifics of the alternative world. Ultimately, it is by being in Westeros, rather than seeing Westeros in all its glory, that the TV series celebrates its magical fantasy world.

RIKKE SCHUBART is associate professor at the University of Southern Denmark. Her research is on emotions, gender, and genre cinema. She currently works on women and the fantastic in film and television using a biocultural framework. Her book *Mastering Fear: Women, Emotions, and Contemporary Horror* is forthcoming 2018 from Bloomsbury, New York. Among her publications are *Women of Ice and Fire: Gender, Game of Thrones, and Multiple Media Engagements* (Bloomsbury, 2016, co-edited with A. Gjelsvik), *Eastwood's Iwo Jima: Critical Engagements With Flags of Our Fathers and Letters from Iwo Jima* (2013, Columbia/Wallflower, co-edited with A. Gjelsvik), and *Super Bitches and Action Babes: The Female Hero in Popular Cinema, 1970-2006* (2007, McFarland). She also writes fiction.

Broken Things, Women, and Change: Game of Thrones and Playing with Existential Explosive Plasticity
From season one, women took over *Game of Thrones* (HBO, 2011–), I think, primarily, in the adaptation of George R. R. Martin's book series, *A Song of Ice and Fire* (1996–). However, I leave this to speculation. In the TV series, the women mark the terrain, take the floor, fill the minutes, and generate talks, comments, dreams, and viewers. In this talk I discuss how the women of GOT capture our imaginations through their existential changes. I combine three ideas: First, I use French philosopher Catherine Malabou's concept about neuroplasticity and change; second, I draw on the concept of edgework from sports sociology; and, third, I take from game studies in "rough games" that play can be fun *and* unpleasant. "[T]he history of being itself consists perhaps of nothing but a series of accidents," says Malabou (2012: 91). Life is a series of accidents, and with accidents come change and an unanticipated story about ourselves. To play with accidents takes us to the edge of trauma. So, this is where I shall seek our story.

ZOË SHACKLOCK is a doctoral researcher in the Department of Film and Television Studies at the University of Warwick. Her research explores the role of kinaesthesia in contemporary serial television, focusing on questions of embodied affect, identity, and empathy. She has been published on *Game of Thrones, Orphan Black,* and *Outlander.*

Embodied Spectatorship and the Game of Thrones Reaction Video
Following almost every new episode of *Game of Thrones*, videos of audience members reacting to key scenes are uploaded to YouTube and shared across social media platforms. Reaction videos emphasise the corporeal responses of audience members: they scream, clutch their faces, leap out of their seats, and fall to the ground. In this paper I argue that these videos present embodied spectatorship as the preferred, or ideal, mode of watching *Game of Thrones*. The embodied responses on display in the reaction video parallel the heightened body dynamics of the series itself, and so become part of the brand identity of the programme, in which spectacular displays of physicality stand as markers of quality. The videos thus operate as a paratextual frame, encouraging us to consume the programme in a particular way. In doing so, the *Game of Thrones* reaction video invites us to recognise and identify with an audience community. While existing scholarship on the reaction video (Middleton 2014) argues that they rely upon an affective disjunction between the two audiences - laughing at audiences who cry or scream - I suggest that television reaction videos do encourage a sense of self-recognition and empathy. By allowing us to observe and identify with the responses of other viewers, reaction videos foster a sense of presence and community that parallels the ontologies of broadcast television. At a time when television's audiences are

increasingly fragmented, the *Game of Thrones* reaction video thus presents an ideal mode of spectatorship in order to construct a coherent audience community.

EVE SMITH is a Lecturer in Media, Culture and Communication at Liverpool John Moores University. Where she was awarded a PhD for her research entitled "Engaging with Comedy as Social Conscience in Terry Pratchett's Discworld". Her research has been published in *Diegesis*, *Participations* and *Comedy Studies*.

"What if Richard had left the princes with their mother rather than putting them in the tower? Oh wait isn't that the plot of Game of Thrones": Shakespearean Transtextuality in Game of Thrones Fandom.
Although there are claims of witchcraft, *Richard III* is not one of the plays in which Shakespeare explores magic. Nevertheless, with its persecution of the innocent, intrigue and murder, it has been seen as an influence for a range of gothic texts (Punter, 1980).   However, there is a diverging parallel between the sons of Edward IV and Robert Baratheon, while the monstrous uncle is transtextually convergent through Peter Dinklage's critically acclaimed 2004 portrayal of Richard. Shakespeare's history plays have long been grouped as a series, but the success of the television adaptation of *Game of Thrones* has been followed by the BBC adaption of the Shakespeare plays as *The Hollow Crown.* This suggests that the transtextuality is not simply an influence of Shakespeare on George R.R. Martin, but also an influence of *Game of Thrones* on the ways in which Shakespeare is perceived within popular culture.

Gelder (2004) suggests that for popular fiction the expertise of fandom takes the place of scholarship for works excluded from the academy. Although there is now a burgeoning academic body of work on *Game of Thrones*, SFF fandom has been engaging with these texts since before *Game of Thrones* hit our screens. This paper will discuss the Shakespearean transtextuality identified in *Game of Thrones* online fandom. It will show that while much of this is light-hearted, some of it represents the proto-scholarship Gelder referred to and is only excluded from being called scholarship by its context.

BEN TYRER is a Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of Exeter. He is the author of *Out of the Past: Lacan and Film Noir* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and co-editor of *Psychoanalysis and the Unrepresentable: from Culture to the Clinic* (Routledge, 2016). He is co-coordinator of the Psychoanalysis in Our Time international research network, and a member of the Board of the Nordic Summer University.

Fantasy Decomposed: Traumatic Desire and (dis)integration in Game of Thrones
Game of Thrones makes a habit of stunning its audience: with both awe-inspiring visuals and jaw-dropping narrative twists, from giants riding mammoths to the sudden deaths of beloved characters. In this paper, I will explore the relation between these elements through Lacanian psychoanalysis in order to identify what I will suggest is an antagonism between form and content in *Game of Thrones* that marks a defining feature of the series overall. Taking as a point of departure the framework set out by Todd McGowan's *The Real Gaze* –which posits a distinction between narratives of "integration" where impossible situations are impossibly overcome and narratives of "intersection" where desire and fantasy violently collide – I will explore a tension

within the fantasy-text of *Game of Thrones*: between the smoothly integrated image (a seamless blending of live action and CGI) and the traumatically disruptive narrative (events such as the Red Wedding or Shireen's death). Through an analysis of such key episodes, as well as associated paratexts (e.g. Making Of documentaries; fan forum discussion), I will attempt to identify both the features and the effects of what I am claiming is the structuring logic of the series. I will suggest that, while *Game of Thrones* often seems to subvert or deconstruct the conventions of the neo-medieval fantasy genre, it is in fact much closer to the understanding of fantasy in Lacanian psychoanalysis: as, simultaneously, pleasurable plenitude and shattering excess.