Identity in the Age of the Internet: Teaching Through Fanfiction

Kristen Boegner

University of South Carolina

Introduction: Identity in the Age of the Internet

We are living during a time in which media saturates our daily lives. We are in constant contact with television, advertising and the Internet. While the content of television and advertising is often understood as mass produced commercial culture which serves the interests of large corporations, not allowing the viewer to interrupt and transform the messages divulged, the interface of the Internet allows users to engage in self initiated explorations and transformations (Storey, 2006). The Internet has no doubt expanded the way community is defined. No longer is community bound by geographic, political or social order; rather it has the potential to be formed around single social issues, electronic communication and associations, and through common hobbies, additions, and life-styles (Coder, 1996). With apps, gaming communities, blogs, forums, and social networking sites as our companions, we have the ability to define, connect, and understand ourselves in new contexts through the interface of the Internet.

Not so long ago identity was shaped largely by our immediate surroundings, embedded in a fixed space-time paradigm. In these new times, the age of the Internet, the average person in the US has the ability to transcend the constraints of space to accomplish once lengthy tasks in record time. Our new relationship with space and time increases the breadth of information accessed and the rate at which it is digested. This gives individuals the opportunity to develop and divulge ideas, and thus, shape identity, at unprecedented rates. With information and audience at their fingertips, the average Internet user holds a great power to spread ideas. As educators we must remember: In the co-creator of Spiderman, Stan Lee's words-as uttered through the character Peter Parker, "With great power, there must also come--great responsibility" (Wikiquote)! While it was once the job of educators to distribute information, our role has transformed into one in which we teach students how to handle the vast amount of information that is readily available (Duncum, 1997). Exposure to great amounts of information offers students great opportunities to transform knowledge through creative processes as means of shaping personal identity. To

be most effective and relevant to student's lives, creative endeavors in the school environment should allow students to construct their identities through pursuits specific to their own interests of which may align with or challenge those of the mainstream.

Identity and the Postmodern

The rise of the Internet has led to the advent of a new cultural epoch termed the 'postmodern'. Postmodern times recognize a merging of high and popular culture and view the individual as multifaceted. In postmodern times individuals are positioned within as well as across multiple types of identities, needs, and lifestyles (Duncum, 1997). As educators it is our job to facilitate exercises that encourage students to explore their positions within the groups with which they identify. We must teach them how to look critically and in depth at the media and messages that surround us. We must teach them the importance of, as well as how to, interpret the cultural histories contained within media messages, by considering the messages in the context of group alignments, intended audiences, stereotypes presented, and issues surrounding their distribution and ownership. These explorations will give students a foundation from which to identify their alignments and oppositions in regard to messages presented in everyday media experiences. Teaching students how to engage in critical interpretation allows them to perceive media from a standpoint that goes deeper than the superficial, addressing the underlying meanings implicit in mediated experiences.

Identity and Appropriation

Media is oftentimes created in response to existing related media and messages, the meaning continually transforming, thus serving as a sort of mirror to the interests of its creators (Duncum, 1997). The process of taking existing messages and transforming them for one's own purposes is nothing new. It is referred to as appropriation and has been going on as long as man has existed. The media produced by appropriation serves as a sort of mixed media narrative of our times. It is our job as educators to help students appropriate meaning from their media experiences in a way that helps them shape their identities as members in communities. The age of the Internet marks a time in which

ideas are spread (appropriated) from person to person at unprecedented rates. We have moved from a time when media was produced by a select group of individuals and consumed by a predictable audience, toward a new time in which access to and parameters that define audience are not as restricted. This element of fluidity allows media to be both produced and consumed by the general population, which has in turn transformed the notion of popular culture.

Identity and Popular Culture

According to social developmental psychologist James Vander Zanden (1989), "Few words have the capacity to cause as much pleasure, and as much pain, to adolescents as does the word popularity" (p.367). Thus the notion of 'popular' logically must be addressed in the school environment. Popular culture in its simplest form refers to something that is well liked by many (Storey, 2006). This definition invariably implicates those 'other than' 'many,' thus the maintenance of popular culture is categorized by a constant struggle between dominant and subordinate groups. Popular culture is the victor of negotiations that occur between hegemonic and subservient groups (Storey, 2006). Fortunately, no longer is popular culture synonymous with mass produced consumer culture as it was when TV reigned. The audience that the Internet provides offers a space in which subordinate groups can form communities and shape identity along lines that are not in accordance with the mainstream. The Internet communities are a place to challenge hegemony, and form alliances to transform the content of 'popular' culture. The Internet enables the adolescent school bound student's construct of popularity to transcend the physical school environment. It gives students who do not identify with popularity as defined inside the physical boundaries of the school, a community to identify with tailored to their unique or 'other than' popular pleasures. Incorporating Internet media and popular pleasures in curriculum allows students to construct their ways of learning rather than be confined by them, thus treating the students to lead rather than follow. A

useful site of investigation that allows students to explore a self determined popular pleasure from which they may deconstruct narratives, as means of constructing identity, is the realm of fanfiction.

Identity and Fanfiction

Fanfictions are fan-authored texts stemming from popular culture and media such as books, music, movies, and video games (Black, 2006). Fanfiction is about arresting control of the dominant text from its creator to rework it for one's own purposes. It is an opportunity to challenge hegemony with a participatory audience. Fanfiction allows readers to ask 'What if' and 'What else' to create narratives which more accurately represent marginalized groups. Given that the community on fanfiction.net is comprised of upwards of two million members most of which are females between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one, it serves as a unique site of investigation from which high school students may explore fictional characterization as means of understanding concepts and constructs that form their own identities (Jae, 2012). According to American media scholar Henry Jenkins (1992):

[Fans'] activities pose important questions about the ability of media producers to constrain the creation and circulation of meanings. Fans construct their cultural and social identity through borrowing and inflecting mass culture images, articulating concerns which often go unvoiced within the dominant media. (P.23)

Engaging in fanfiction involves a great deal of deconstruction, appropriation and communication. It is a fluid process of meaning-making and identity negotiation. Fanfiction can be understood as a literary corollary to appropriation art given that both involve recontextualizing elements from an original work to make personal meaning and or as commentary.

My unit of curriculum is interdisciplinary in nature. It involves high school students choosing a popular fiction with which they identify and using fanfiction.net as a site of investigation to engage in a series of literary exercises in which they compare and contrast characterization in their chosen fiction to the fanfictions written about it, as a mode of exploring identity construction. The exercises will consist of having students answer a series of questions aimed to help them digest ideas associated with identity. The students will then use concepts explored through the compare/contrast exercises in a series of visual art lessons that enable them to explore their own identities.

Conclusion: Identity Contextualized

Exploring fanfiction is an imaginative process by which popular fiction is infused with social and cultural themes as well as concerns from the creator's daily life. It is a sort of literary role playing in which fans' day-to-day interactions can be recontextualized and reimagined: A dialogic process linking the past to the future and transcribing the popular to the personal (Bakhtin, 1981). Fanfiction.net is a venue, not only for language learning and literacy development, but also a place to affiliate with other youth around social and cultural issues that are central to their lives and identities. In postmodern times students have more independence and choices than ever, thus it is more important than ever to engage students in curriculum that explores self identity so that they may understand their relationship to and place within our world. Fanfiction as a site of investigation allows students to comfortably explore fantastic and permutable identities; that is the ever-changing social construction of the self as understood in the multiple contexts the postmodern world provides (Richards, 2007). The realm of fanfiction serves as a safe community for students to open up and try out 'otherness' thus encouraging understanding, tolerance and acceptance. In this regard, fanfiction has the potential to foster a greater sense of connectedness, inclusion, and community among student bodies.

References

Bakhtin, M.M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination: four essays by M.M. Bakhtin*. Ed. M. Holquist, Trans. M. Holquist & C. Emerson. Austin:

University of Texas Press.

Black, R. W. (2006). Language, culture, and identity in online fanfiction. E-learning, 3 (2), 170-184.

Coder, Kim D. 1996. A new sense of community, defining social changes. University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service Forest

Resources Unit publication FOR96-27. Pp.1-2.

Duncum, P. (1997). Art education for new times. Studies in Art Education, 38(2), 66-79.

Jae. (2012). A study of demographics and writing-/reading-habits of fanfiction writers and readers. Retrieved from http://www.jae-

fiction.com/

Jenkins, H. (1992) *Textual Poachers: television, fans, and participatory culture*. New York: Routledge.

Richards, M. (2007). Engaging "looking-glass" youth in art through the visual narratives

of the transforming self in popular culture. Visual Arts Research, 33(65), 24-37.

Stan Lee. (n.d.). Retrieved December 11, 2012 from the Wikiquote: http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Stan_Lee

Storey, J. (2006). Cultural theory and popular culture (4th ed.). Athens, GA: University

of Georgia Press. (pp. 1-12).

Vander Zanden, J.W. (1989). *Human development (fourth edition)*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Curriculum Unit Theme: Identity in the Age of the Internet: Teaching Through Fanfiction

Teacher: Kristen Boegner

Grade Level: High School

State Visual Art Goals: VAH4-1.1, VAH4-1.3, VAH4-1.4, VAH4-1.5, VAH4-2.1, VAH4-2.2, VAH4-2.3, VAH4-3.1, VAH4-3.2, VAH4-3.3, VAH4-4.1, VAH4-4.2, VAH4-4.3, VAH4-4.4, VAH4-4.5, VAH4-5.1, VAH4-5.4, VAH4-6.1, VAH4-6.2, VAH4-6.3
State Media Arts Goals (if any): MAHS4-1.1, MAHS4-1.2, MAHS4-1.4, MAHS4-1.5, MAHS4-2.1,
MAHS4-2.2, MAHS4-2.3, MAHS4-2.4, MAHS4-2.5, MAHS4-4.1, MAHS4-4.2, MAHS4-4.3, MAHS4-4.4, MAHS4-5, MAHS4-5.2
State Language Arts Goals (if any): E4-1.1, E4-1.2, E4-1.4, E4-1.5, E4-1.6, E4-1.7, E4-1.8 E4-2.1, E4-2.2, E4-2.3, E4-2.4, E4-2.5, E4-2.7, E4-2.8 E4-5.2, E4-5.3,

<u>**General goals for the curriculum (describe in 2-5 sentences):**</u>

- In teaching this unit, I would like for my students to learn how to think critically about how identity is shaped through group alignments, gender roles, stereotypes and race. I would like for them to translate concepts associated with appropriation in language arts and apply them to their own lives through the creation of visual art works. I would like my students to explore characterization in fanfiction and appropriation art as means of recognizing the power of recontextualization in making personal meaning. I aim to enable my students to think critically about how authorship, distribution, audience and ownership influence thinking, art making and the dissemination of ideas.

Lesson Title (name each lesson to reflect a general unit theme)	Visual Exemplars (list specific images and artists, TV shows, and/or books that you plan to use for each lesson)	Motivation / dialogue (list basic issues and questions to be explored during classroom dialogue and any other motivational strategies that you plan to use for each lesson)	Media / process (list artistic processes that your students will engage in during each lesson)	Concepts and/or design principles to be learned during each lesson	Assessment/ Closure (list an assessment strategy that can be used at the end of each lesson)

Lesson 1 Introduction to Fanfiction, Group Alignment, and Identity: Inkblot Drawings and Collage 3 class periods	A. *Agony in Pink,* Power Rangers Fanfiction B. *My Immortal*, Harry Potter Fanfiction C. Adbusters magazines D. Fanfiction.net	A. Have you participated in fanfiction? Have you made appropriation art? What do you think of taking someone's work and reconstructing it for your own purposes? What do you think you could gain out of doing this? How is fanfiction similar to role-playing? B. Consider social groups: who is considered an outsider? Is this role self determined or determined by others? Consider characterization in your fiction and a fanfiction that challenges social relations/character roles/group dynamics. Does the character's reappropriated role make them and insider or outsider? Does inclusion in one group/identity construct cause exclusion in another? Is it possible to belong to many groups at the same time? C. Consider the emotive states of the character in response to their changing roles. Consider repression and empowerment. D. Upload responses on the class forum on fanfiction.net.	-Students will individually choose a fiction to explore from fanfiction.net as means of understanding the relationship between social groups/ group dynamics/ character roles on individual emotion. They will use the concepts discovered in fanfiction and apply them to their own lives. They will consider times when they have felt inclusion/exclusion and/or repressed/empowered in their personal lives and how they felt within these constructs. They will create an asymmetrical mixed media piece using an inkblot as a starting point to convey the emotions they experienced. They may choose to use drawing and/or collage. Students will write an artist statement relating their emotive states to the experiences that induced them.	-Students will understand how the characterization is used to create group dynamics/alignments. They will understand that inclusion and exclusion can be either voluntary or involuntary and consider the associated emotive states .Students will understand techniques associated with drawing and/or collage as they relate to differing perspectives. Students will consider color, line, unity, (im)balance, and proportion in their art making. Vocabulary Fanfiction Appropriation art	1. Did the student participate in class discussion 2. Did the student explore their fiction through fanfiction.net and submit a forum entry that addresses the questions posed? 3. Did the student create an asymmetrical art piece based off an inkblot using drawing and/or collage that considers emotion, color, line, unity, (im)balance and proportion. 4. Did the student write an artist statement relating their emotive states to the experiences that induced them

Lesson 2 Gender Roles and Identity: Personal Ads: Watercolor 3 class periods	A. *Supermamies und Muttersöhnchen* Elzbieta Jablonska B. My Little Pony Fanfiction*: What if My Little Ponies were Ninjas* C. My Little Pony Fangroup: Bronies D. Famous character personal ads E. Listen to dating ads for horror film characters:*The Maverick of the Twitter Set* (NPR Ask Me Another) E-HORROR-mony F. Photography of Jj Levine G. Fanfiction.net	A. Discuss stereotypical gender roles. Consider gender roles in fanfiction: B. Choose a vignette from a chosen fanfiction that transforms a character's gender role. This may be through empowerment or submission, reversal of traditional gender roles or associated with lgbtq alignments. C. Consider dominance/ submission, equity/inequity, tolerance/intolerance in regard to your character's emotional state in both the fiction and fanfiction. Consider the conditions that created these emotions. Who is responsible for them? Is the role of the character self determined or determined outside of the self? Do you experience these conditions? D. Consider flash fiction and vignettes and their relationship to gender roles and first impressions. Consider first impressions and the information that is conveyed during first impressions in different situations. Can you think of a first impression situation that challenges traditional gender roles or reinforces them? Recall and reflect upon a first impression that you have made in the past and the associated emotions. E. Upload responses on class forum on fanfiction.net	A. Choose a scenario from your life from which to create a watercolor painting that acts as a vignette to depict you and your gender role. This may be based off of a role you play within a group of which you are a part of, a situation where certain things are expected from you, a memory of a first impression or a response to stereotypes/ gender expectations that confine you. Consider setting, hierarchal constructs, dominance/submission, tolerance/ intolerance and emotion. You may choose to create an abstract or more realistic piece. A visual of yourself may or may not be present in you visual art piece. Consider color space and proportion in the creation of your vignette. You may choose to outline your watercolor with a fine tip marker to add definition. B. Add accompanying text to transform your vignette into a personal ad. The text should draw attention to the way you felt in response to tolerance/ intolerance, dominance/submission or equity/inequity presented by the situation. Consider your audience, remember: A personal ad does not necessarily need to be an ad for a partner, rather it could be a statement that describes you much like you would submit in a yearbook. C. Reflect upon whether a vignette or personal ad can tell a whole story. They will write a reflection about what they were not able to say about the situation within the constraints of the assignment. Is there a story within the story? D. Artworks and reflections will be posted on the class forum on fanfiction.net.	-Students will understand how gender roles can be challenged and reconstructed through fanfiction. -Students will think critically about their own gender roles. -Students will think about how gender roles influence the way they interact. -Students will consider the statements that they make both explicitly and implicitly. -Students will consider the use of color, space and proportion. Students will become acquainted with techniques involved with watercolor painting. -Students will consider impressions that they make and whether or not they are representative of them as a whole. Vocabulary Vignette Personal Ad Flash Fiction	1. Did the student participate in class discussion 2. Did the student explore their fiction through fanfiction.net and submit a forum entry that addresses the questions posed? 3. Did the student consider emotion, color space and proportion in the creation of their personal ad? 4. Did the student write a reflection that explored what they were not able to say in their artwork?

Lesson 3 Carving through Stereotypes: Woodblock Prints

4 class periods | A. Youtube: *#1 The Manic Pixie Dream Girl Tropes versus Women*
B. Tvtropes.org
C. Michael Ray Charles
D. Kissmyblackads.blogspot.com
E. Feministfrequency.com
F. CrimethInc | A. Discuss tropes. Have students explore tvtropes.org as means of familiarizing themselves with tropes
B. Have students identify tropes in their chosen fiction and fanfiction
C. Are these tropes clichés? Why or why not? What stereotype(s) do they address?
D. Are there different tropes in your fiction and fanfiction? Did the authors of your fiction and fanfiction dismantle/ reinforce stereotypes? Did the author of your fanfiction present new tropes, clichés or stereotypes altogether?
E. Can you identify with these stereotypes? Have you experience/witnessed situations in which similar stereotypes were presented? How did these experiences make you feel?
F. Consider Michael Ray Charles: Does his work dismantle or reinforce stereotypes? Consider shock value. Consider Authorship: Would you feel differently if he was a different race?
G. Upload responses on class forum on fanfiction.net | A. Put yourself in the context of your chosen fiction or fanfiction. Consider what character you identify with most.
B. Create a woodcut in which you carve through a stereotype addressed in your chosen fiction, fanfiction or personal life. You may choose to focus on the dismantling or reinforcement of this stereotype. Consider how visual 'reinforcement' can be a powerful way to conceptually dismantle stereotypes (shock value). Consider emotion during this process, how did/does the perpetuation or debunking of this stereotype make the character/you feel? Convey this feeling through the use positive and negative space, line, repetition, movement and/or juxtaposition.
C. Describe how you conveyed the experienced emotion in your woodblock print and how your choice to dismantle or reinforce your chosen stereotype could be received by your audience through an artist's statement.
D. Class prints and statements will be combined in a carving through stereotypes zine and uploaded on the class forum. | -Students will understand the use of tropes and their role in creating characterization.
-Students will recognize the ability of fanfiction to reinforce or break down clichés and stereotypes
-Students will explore stereotypes presented in their chosen fanfiction as an entry point for exploring stereotypes in their own lives.
-Students will consider the ability of shock value in conveying powerful messages and inducing thought.
-Students will understand the techniques associated with carving wood.
-Students will consider the use of positive/ negative space, line, repetition, movement and/or juxtaposition.

Vocabulary
Tropes
Clichés
Stereotypes | 1. Did the student participate in class discussion
2. Did the student explore their fiction through fanfiction.net and submit a forum entry that addresses the questions posed?
3. Did the student consider emotion, positive/negative space, line, repetition, movement and/or juxtaposition in the creation of their woodcut?
4. Did the student write a reflection that explored emotion and the dismantling or reinforcement of a stereotype? |

Lesson 4 What if? Imagining Identity: Mixed Media Drip Painting 4 class periods	A. *What if My Little Ponies Were Ninjas* Fanfiction B. Surrealism: Salvador Dali C. Watch YouTube: *The What if Machine*	A. Explore your chosen fanfiction from the author's perspective consider their inspiration for creating the fanfiction by asking the question: What if? Come up with a What if question the author answered through their fanfiction. Possibilities include: • The context of time and space • Character focus: taking a closer look at minor characters • Moral realignment: The bad guy of the show becoming the main character of fanfiction. • Genre shifting: There can be more action or more character interaction than in the original. • Crossover: Characters from different fandoms can meet • Character dislocation: A character can be placed in another time or location. • Personalization: The writer can write his own characters that share some of his personality into the story. • Emotional intensification: This includes hurt/comfort fanfiction. B. Consider surrealism and Dali's *Persistence of Memory.* Consider Dali's Inspirations: Everyday experience, dreams, childhood, where and when he lived, imagine him asking the question: What If? As means of discovering new ways of thinking and understanding emotion. C. Discuss how fanfiction and art making can be used to transcend boundaries and reshape circumstances through perception. D. Upload responses on class forum on	A. Consider the What if''s in your life. Choose a What if scenario to apply to your own life. This could involve science/technology, time/space, relationship dynamics etc. B. Create a mixed media drip painting exploring your chosen what if scenario. The students may choose to use drawing, painting, printmaking or collage. Consider color, value, space, emphasis and unity. C. Consider the emotions associated with your What If exploration. Does your created scenario break down constraints? Write a short fiction based off of your life that explains your what if scenario and how it transformed you. D. Artworks and fictions will be uploaded onto the class forum on fanfiction.net	-Students will explore fanfiction and art making as a way to transcend boundaries and reshape circumstances by changing perceptions. -Students will transform their own lives by manifesting a 'what if' scenario into a mixed media drip painting. -Students will become familiar with techniques associated with drawing, painting, printmaking and/or collage as well as color, value, space, emphasis and unity. -Students will transcribe concepts presented in their visual piece to a piece of fiction as means of understanding the unique value and synergy of literary and visual art in conceptual exploration. Vocabulary Surrealism Drip painting	1. Did the student participate in class discussion 2. Did the student explore their fiction through fanfiction.net and submit a forum entry that addresses the questions posed? 3. Did the student consider color, value, space, emphasis and unity in the creation of their mixed media drip painting? 4. Did the student write a fiction that explains their what if scenario and how it transformed them?

| Lesson 5

Changing Audience: Changing Forms Claymation

4 class periods | A. knowyourmeme.com video series
B. The history of The Little Mermaid
C. Without You I'm Nothing: Art and Its Audience, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago
D. Concepts and ideas associated with art for arts sake.
E. YouTube Claymation: The Metamorphosis | A. Consider the origins of your fiction. Research the history of your fiction. Are there previous versions of the story? How has it changed throughout time and been adapted to different cultures? Is there anything surprising about the history of your fiction? Discuss historic tales that have been adapted into Disney fictions.
B. Consider audience in the shaping of these adaptations. Consider fanfiction and audience. Is the audience more or less important and predictable in fiction or fanfiction? Consider distribution and its role in shaping audience. Consider the Internet and distribution. Do you think audience is more of a consideration in writing fiction that will be sold or more important in creating fanfiction that will be distributed on the Internet for free? How do you think audience and distribution influence the sort of fiction and fanfiction that is created? Do you think the Internet plays a big role in shaping this?
C. What about art for arts sake? Do you value it? What do you think about process versus product? Which is more important to you?
D. Upload responses on class forum on fanfiction.net | A. Consider your fiction. Who is the intended audience? Do you fit into this construct? What if the intended audience were to change? How could the story be adapted? Create a fanfiction written with a new audience in mind. How can you adapt the story to make it more relevant to your chosen audience? Consider characterization. How would the characters be different in your new fanfiction?
B. Create a short stop motion Claymation in which a character in your fiction takes on a new form as a result of the changed audience in your constructed fanfiction. Consider shape, form, texture, contrast, rhythm and movement in your Claymation.
C. Write a short narrative, poem or song to accompany your Claymation as means of explaining the altered character traits.
D. Claymation's will be uploaded onto class forum of fanfiction.net | -Students will explore visual and language arts created with the intention to appeal to an audience. They will explore fanfiction and art for arts sake as sites of self-discovery.
-Students will become acquainted with the techniques associated with adapting stories for unique audiences.
-Students will become familiar with techniques associated with creating Claymation stop motion video paying special attention to texture, contrast, rhythm and movement.

Vocabulary
Meme
Art for Arts Sake
Stop Motion Claymation | 1. Did the student participate in class discussion
2. Did the student explore their fiction through fanfiction.net and submit a forum entry that addresses the questions posed?
3. Did the student to texture, contrast, rhythm and movement.in the creation of their stop motion Claymation?
4. Did the student write a short narrative, poem or song to accompany their Claymation? |

Lesson 6 Production, Ownership and Distribution: Myself, My Character, My Identity Triptych 3 class periods	A. Shepard Fairey's *Hope* Triptych *B. Fifty Shades of Grey, Fifty Shades Darker, Fifty Shades Freed* C. Keanu Reeves meme D. Mememaker.net E. Knowyourmeme.com	A. Discuss memes and the idea of rapid distancing from original contexts. Are there any memes created about your fiction? Do you understand them? B. Consider art production and technology. Consider making something from scratch versus using something that has been prefabricated, handmade versus machined and digital versus film and the respective values placed on them. Consider if knowing the origins/conditions of production of something changes its meaning. C. Discuss fanfiction and the concept of appropriation. Are products that appropriate ideas less authentic? Do all products appropriate ideas? When is it okay? When is it not? Discuss Fanfictions in terms of their personal meaning making purpose versus creating fanfiction to be sold- *Fifty Shades of Grey.* D. Discuss copyrighting and how much something has to change to be considered unique from the original. Discuss Shepard Fairey's *Hope* Triptych. E. Consider memes, ownership and the ability of ideas to spread virally on the Internet through the example of Keanu Reeves meme. F. Upload responses on class forum on fanfiction.net	A. Students will explore mememaker.net and knowyourmeme.com. They will consider a character with whom they identify and have used as a site of investigation in the previous lessons in this unit. B. Students will create a triptych comprised of three memes which includes • an image of themselves • an image of their character • an image that depicts how their fanfiction explorations in this unit changed the way they see themselves C. Students will consider aspects of photography such as shutter speed and aperture in their meme creations. They will consider color and space to create emphasis and unity in the creation of their triptychs. D. They will consider how they can use text as means of conveying a message that encourages the viewer to think about issues addressed in this unit.	-Students will gain an understanding of how the modes of production influence value and affect meaning. -Students will explore the role of art in issues associated with copyrighting, ownership and distribution. -Students will become familiar with how to make a meme and how to think critically about translating concepts learned into a piece of artwork that aims to initiate inquiry. -Students will become familiar with how to use color and space to create emphasis and unity. Vocabulary Triptych Copyrighting laws	1. Did the student participate in class discussion? 2. Did the student submit a forum entry that addresses the questions posed? 3. Did the student create a triptych that includes an image of themselves, their characters, and their transformation that encourages inquiry about a topic addressed in this unit? 4. Did the student consider color and space to create emphasis and unity?

Lesson #1
Title: Introduction to Fanfiction
Grade: High School
Teacher: Kristen Boegner
Length: 90 minutes

State visual art goals: VAH4-1.2, VAH4-1.3, VAH4-2.1, VAH4-2.2, VAH4-4.4, VAH4-5.1, VAH4-6.1, VAH4-6.2
State media arts goals (if any): n/a
State language arts goals (if any): E4-1.1, E4-1.2, E4-1.6 E4-2.2 E4-2.4

Objectives:
1. Students will understand the role of appropriation in meaning making.
2. Students will discuss social groups in the context of inclusion and exclusion.
3. Students will analyze characterization in fanfiction as means of exploring social groups and emotion.
4. Students will convey emotional responses to inclusion/exclusion situations in their own lives using inkblots, drawing and/or collage.
5. Students will become familiar with techniques associated with inkblots, drawing and collage that consider color, line, unity, balance and proportion.

Concepts and vocabulary:
1. Appropriation: Generally understood as: To take for one's own use
2. Appropriation Art: The deliberate borrowing of an image for this new context is called recontextualization. Recontextualization helps the artist comment on the image's original meaning and the viewer's association with the original image or the real thing.
3. Fanfiction- fictive stories, which are written by fans, based on the original work of another author. create new, alternative storylines for the characters and the world of the original or develop existing storylines further with more detail. Fanfiction.net is an Internet community in which fanfiction is posted, edited and commented upon.
4. Fanfiction and Appropriation art: Are both mediums that provide an audience for a message that would otherwise not be heard. The message serves as an expression of the creator's identity.
5. Internet meme- refers to catchy derivative of some aspect of pop culture, parodied and repeated to the point that its origins and original meaning become muddled and completely mutilated beyond any point of recognition or humor. It may take the form of an image, hyperlink, video, picture or website. Internet memes are spread from person to person via social networks, blogs, direct email, or news sources. They may relate to various existing Internet cultures or subcultures and be used to reinforce identities within them.

Teacher materials:
Computers to show examples of fanfiction
Adbusters Magazines to show examples of appropriation art

Student materials:
Fanfiction.net
Adbusters magazines
Acrylic paint to make inkblot
Paper
Pencils
Pens
Collage materials (books, magazines, etc).

Procedures (detailed step-by-step description including dialogue):

Introduction *(90 minutes)*

-When students enter the room, they will be greeted with an Internet meme from a popular fiction.
-What is this? Has anyone ever seen this before? Has anyone ever made one before?
-Students will learn that the picture depicts an Internet meme. Students will learn that the Internet meme is a way of reappropriating images to spread ideas.
-Students will view appropriation art in Adbusters magazines. As a class we will discuss the role of appropriation art in making new meaning through recontextualizaiton.
-Students will be asked if they are familiar with fanfiction. Students will explore fanfiction.net to familiarize themselves with it. We will discuss how fanfiction is similar
 to appropriation art in that the author is able to make his or her own meaning through recontextualization.
-Students will choose their own piece of fiction and fanfiction from fanfiction.net to engage in a series of exercises related to making meaning and understanding identity
through group alignments.

Discussion *(85 minutes)*
-Students will then participate in a critical exploration/discussion to analyze different aspects of group alignments present in their chosen fiction and fanfiction. These
questions include…
  - Consider social groups: who is considered an outsider?
  - Is this role self determined or determined by others?
  - Consider characterization in your fiction and a fanfiction that challenges social relations/character roles/group dynamics. Does the character's reappropriated role
    make them and insider or outsider? Does inclusion in one group/identity construct cause exclusion in another? Is it possible to belong to many groups at the same
    time?
  - Consider the emotive states of the character in response to their changing roles. Consider repression and empowerment.

Demonstration/Activity *(90 minutes)*
-After the discussion, students will consider their own group alignments. They will consider times when they have felt inclusion/exclusion and/or repressed/empowered in
their personal lives and how they felt within these constructs. They will ask themselves the same questions addressed in the discussion and journal about them.
-The teacher will demonstrate how to create a symmetrical inkblot and techniques associated with drawing and collage
-Students will create an asymmetrical mixed media piece using an inkblot as a starting point to convey the emotions they experienced. They may choose to use drawing
and/or collage.

Closure *(5 minutes)*
- Students will write an artist statement relating the emotive states presented in their inkblot mixed media pieces to the experiences that induced them to be uploaded on the
class forum on fanfiction.net

Learning center/ back up activity (if any):
-Further explorations on fanfiction.net relating to gender roles.