

MetaFandom Unconference: Call for Participants



The University of Waterloo's [Games Institute](#) as well as the [IMMERSe Research Network](#) is proud to host a MetaFandom Unconference on **Thursday, September 18th and Friday the 19th**. Unconferences are gatherings of interested scholars and experts, where they have informed conversations on a particular topic -- fandom and fan studies, in this case! Attendees shouldn't prepare papers or presentations; rather, they should come to the unconference prepared to speak briefly about a specific topic as a panelist, ask informed questions of other panelists, and, most importantly, get to know other scholars, experts, and interested fans. We invite fans of all kinds to apply -- whether you are a fan scholar or a fan yourself, we look forward to discussing all kinds of topics with you.

If you'd like to attend, please send us a fandom biography of at least 200 and no more than 300 words to uwmetafans@gmail.com by **August 14th**. Let us know what fandoms you consider yourself invested in (however you define that!) and what topics you are interested in talking about, particularly those you would be comfortable speaking on a panel about. Additionally, interested parties should provide evidence of immersion in fandom, academic or otherwise, so let us know about a publication, conference presentation, fan-blog, cosplay, or other fan practice by including a link or citation. Take a look at the organizers' bios below to get an idea of how to introduce yourself to us!

We also have a limited number of travel subsidies available, and will be happy to offer what we can to those who are making the trip to Waterloo. Please include tentative travel details in your bio if you would like to be considered.

Because we want to encourage a meaningful conversation, we can only offer invitations to 25 people, and we will notify you by **August 18th**. We will make our decisions in order to ensure there is a varied and balanced representation of fandoms and fan (aca- or otherwise) practices.

Finally, the MetaFandom Unconference is a safe space. We will not tolerate bigotry of any form, and we expect everyone to respect other people's fannish engagements. The MetaFandom Unconference is fandom-, ship-, and practice-agnostic, so there will be no favoritism or belittling of certain groups of fans. The general rule of Wheaton's Law applies: [Feel free to disagree, but don't be a jerk about it.](#)

Tentative Schedule

The unconference will be split up into three main topics, which will allow us to discuss a variety of fandoms, practices, and issues of interest. The schedule is as follows:

September 18th

Introductory Lunch (provided by the Games Institute)

General Fandom/Fan-Studies Discussion: What's going on in fandom, generally?

- Books, TV, Movies, Games, Music, Sports, Art, Aca-fans, etc
 - We are looking for diverse fandoms within those larger categories so that we can discuss fandom in general from a variety of perspectives

Keynote: Aimee Morrison

Pub night at the Grad House

- There will be board games and appetizers! If you've made a tabletop game, please feel free to bring it.

September 19th

Fan Practices: What kinds of things do fans engage in and how?

- Fanart, Fanfiction, Fanvids, Cosplay, Giffing, Meta
 - We are looking for people who study these as well as those who produce them themselves

Lunch (provided by the Games Institute)

Issues in fandom: What kinds of problems are fans and producers dealing with?

- Issues of class, race, gender, as well as problems of fanon vs canon, producer-fans, and fan-producer relationships
 - We want to hear from people of all sides of these issues; those who have experienced them personally as well as those who study them.

Screening: TBA

Organizer Bios

Kassandra Arthur

I am a doctoral candidate with the University of Waterloo's department of English Language and Literature. I am currently writing my dissertation on how fanfiction functions as a genre, looking specifically at the Potterverse to do so. I have previously worked on projects analyzing how Twilight fans interact with the content of *Twilight* through their fanfiction and how fanfiction, as a genre, destabilizes the producer consumer binary. I have published on Rowling's involvement with Harry Potter and have presented at various conferences regarding the intersections between fanfiction and adaptation, Whedon as auteur, and the construction of werewolves in popular media. I also maintain a blog concerning all things acafan: acafanning.blogspot.com.

However, my interest in fandom extends far beyond my academic work. I am an active consumer of fanfiction (though I can't write it anymore... because I can't stop writing it when I do) and participate in less structured discussions around popular media fandom. I am familiar and heavily invested in *Harry Potter*, *Teen Wolf*, *Veronica Mars*, *Sherlock*, and Whedon fandoms (including the Marvel cinematic universe). I am especially concerned with the representation of werewolves and fans and have interesting things to say about the werewolf as a destabilizing figure in *Harry Potter* and *Ginger Snaps*, the queer male gaze in *Teen Wolf*, the representation of fans and fandom in *Supernatural*, the concept of the "acafan," and the differences between Orlando Jones as fan and Steven Moffat/Mark Gatiss as fan.

I look forward to discussing these topics and others with you all in September.

Elise Vist

I'm doing my PhD at the University of Waterloo, where I'm lucky enough to dip my toes into a number of different kinds of fandom. I've presented at PCA on the topic of *Lord of The Rings* fanart, specifically art that contests Peter Jackson's visual representation of the world and people of Middle Earth. However, my main focus is on tumblr fan-communities (not just because it means the hours I spend on tumblr count as "research"). Aside from obnoxiously [stanning](#) unpopular characters (I'm a part of the Scott McCall Defense Squad) and [shipping](#) literally everyone, I'm particularly interested in the ways that fan-communities centered around queer/feminist/anti-racist politics negotiate (and construct) the boundaries between various canons (the "official" story) and fanons (what fans believe the story *should* be) in the *Supernatural*, *Sherlock*, and *Hannibal* fandoms.

As a fan, I've made [LOTR gifs](#) and a [fanvid](#), and written meta for [Sleepy Hollow](#), *Supernatural*, [Hannibal](#), and *Almost Human*. I write and read mostly *Supernatural* fic (I won't tell you my AO3 username, but you can find me on tumblr at visticuffs.tumblr.com and maybe one day you'll figure it out). [I have so many OTPs](#) that I worry that I shouldn't be calling them **OTPs**. I love shipping so much I made a game about it (which you'll be able to play at the pub night!).

Emma Vossen

My name is Emma Vossen and I am about to start the third year of my PhD at the University of Waterloo. My dissertation is about depictions of explicit sexuality in comics. More specifically it is about pornographic comics and the queer and feminist forms that porn comics often take.

Academically I have written a lot about *The Walking Dead* (the comic and the game, but not as much the show), *Twilight*, the *Twilight* fandom, and the *Twilight* anti-fandom. I have an article coming out next spring examining *Fifty Shades of Grey* as pornography, and discussing the considerable backlash it has endured. I have been playing video games for as long as I can remember and I am especially fanish about anything related to Nintendo and/or *The Legend of Zelda*. I'm also very invested in *Harry Potter*, *Adventure Time*, anything horror related (especially *American Horror Story*), and am a more recent but very enthusiastic convert to the Supernatural universe. I will also talk (rant? cry?) to you for hours about *How I Met Your Mother* and the poor execution of the last season/ series finale.

Recently I've been completely obsessed with the Netflix original series *Hemlock Grove* and would love to discuss the show in general and more specifically a comparison of the book and show with anyone who has read it! I've never really had an OTP but if I ever did it would totally be Roman and Peter, or Roman/Peter/Miranda, obviously. Elise and I spent a good week of last summer making a [LOTR machinima](#) (fan video) where all the hobbits are women. I blog much less frequently than I would like about comics at www.getsomeactioncomics.com and as much as I lurk on tumblr I'm really more of a twitter person, you can follow me there: [@getsomeaction](#).