

## ABSTRACT

The Slow Burn that Lasts Forever: Bookbinding Transformative Fiction

Grace Chen

Director: Professor Arna Hemenway

Fan studies and transformative fiction studies are still relatively new areas of scholarship. Fan studies also lacks focus on transformative fiction (“fanfiction”) of stories with transcultural roots, such as anime and manga fanfiction. Finally, although existing fan scholarship studies fanfiction from several perspectives—including areas such as English and communications, anthropology and ethnography, media, film, and television, psychology, and law (Hellekson and Busse)—there is focus on fanfiction’s past and present, rather than its future. In this project, I write long-form fanfiction that transforms two anime and manga franchises (Haruichi Furudate’s *Haikyuu!!* and Kyoto Animation’s *Violet Evergarden*) and use the work as material to bind into a case-bound, hardcover book. In doing so, I argue for fanfiction’s right to existence in a permanent, physical form, in opposition to its current, ephemeral existence online, thus preserving fanfiction’s transcultural, queer feminist, and folkloric nature.

APPROVED BY DIRECTOR OF HONORS THESIS

---

Professor Arna Hemenway, Department of English

APPROVED BY THE HONORS PROGRAM

---

Dr. Elizabeth Corey, Director

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

THE SLOW BURN THAT LASTS FOREVER:  
BOOKBINDING TRANSFORMATIVE FICTION

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of  
Baylor University  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Honors Program

By  
Grace Chen

Waco, Texas

August 2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures . . . . .	iii
Acknowledgements . . . . .	iv
Introduction . . . . .	1
Chapter One: THE MEAT (How Fanfiction is Transformative) . . . . .	9
Chapter Two: THE BONES (Providing Artifact Context) . . . . .	23
Chapter Three: IT’S ALIVE (Providing Social and Economic Context) . . . . .	48
Conclusion . . . . .	74
Appendices:	
Appendix A: Glossary of Fan Terms . . . . .	78
Appendix B: Process and Book Photos . . . . .	80
Appendix C: Archive Link . . . . .	112
Bibliography . . . . .	113

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Buchsbaum's Fanfiction Communication Circuit	.	.	.	33
Figure 2: Buchsbaum's Community Model	.	.	.	35

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A million thanks to Professor Hemenway for agreeing to advise a thesis about anime fanfiction. Without his patience, encouragement, and advice, this project would not have been possible.

I couldn't have started making books in the first place without the help of all the lovely folks at Renegade Bindery—special thanks to ArmoredSuperHeavy and the mods for organizing, sbooksbowm for sharing her wonderful and insightful blog and her equally wonderful and insightful dissertation (without which Chapter Two of this thesis would not exist), and also to every Renegade member who has ever answered my frantic questions about glue, paper, and shipping.

A huge thanks to the lovely Pearl for partnering with me for the Kagehina Big Bang and for letting me include her gorgeous art.

All my love to my friends, both online and irl—especially to Mary and Laura (thanks for always cheering me on, my dears), to Katie (thanks for yelling with me about paper and printer mishaps), to Tessa (thanks for yelling with me about planes and flying!), and very especially to Janine, without whom *Letters* would not exist (thank you for yelling with me about Them always, dear friend).

Many thanks to my family for periodically sticking their heads into my room these past few quarantine months to check on me. They have always been a little confused, but nevertheless endlessly supportive of my hobbies, for which I am forever grateful.

To Sarah, who eight years ago said, “I SHALL EXPLAIN.” Thank you for explaining. In case you couldn't tell, I listened.

And finally, to Julie, my first reader and the first person for whom I ever wrote: again, thank you so much for reading. Rain's here.

## INTRODUCTION

### I Bind Fanfiction into Books

Fanfiction often gets a bad rap. It is written and read primarily by women<sup>1</sup> for fun (read: for free). If its raunchy depictions in popular culture and mainstream journalism are to be believed, it is also entirely erotic and deviant.<sup>2</sup> It is strange, and not meant for polite company. However, while still an emerging field of academia, fan studies is now both old enough and established enough to have its leading scholars, required reading, and discourse.<sup>3</sup> Its professional name of *transformative fiction*—used by fandom bastion Organization for Transformative Works and their academic journal, *Transformative Works and Cultures*—is all well and good for academia, but I am rather attached to the word *fanfiction*. Fanfiction is transformative, yes, but it is first and foremost a fan endeavor—to me, although the transformative part is central (and this will be explored in Chapter One), it ultimately comes second to the fan part. While useful for explaining to elderly relatives what I do in my free time, *transformative fiction* does not encompass the passion of the fan quite as well as *fanfiction* does.

There is also discourse even within academic fan (“acafan”) circles about how broadly to categorize fanfiction—as Hellekson and Busse write: if a work is a product of

---

<sup>1</sup> Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, “Fan Identity and Feminism,” in *The Fanfiction Studies Reader*, ed. Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse (University of Iowa Press, 2014), 75.

<sup>2</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 76.

<sup>3</sup> Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, “Why a Fanfiction Studies Reader Now?” in *The Fanfiction Studies Reader*, ed. Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse (University of Iowa Press, 2014), 1.

communal storytelling, then Homer's *Odyssey* is fanfiction.<sup>4</sup> If a work simply transforms existing canons, then *The Divine Comedy* is fanfiction. If it only transforms existing copyrighted material, then *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* is fanfiction.<sup>5</sup> However, while these analogies are useful (and indeed, I will use a few of these examples in the chapters to come), for the purposes of this project, I will be using the criteria for fanfiction that Francesca Coppa details in *The Fanfiction Reader: Folk Tales for the Digital Age* (a book which functions as a kind of fanfiction *Canterbury Tales*):<sup>6</sup>

1. Fanfiction is fiction created outside the literary marketplace (not for profit).
2. Fanfiction is fiction that rewrites and transforms other stories (a phenomenon I will prove using my own work in Chapter One).
3. Fanfiction is fiction that rewrites and transforms stories currently owned by others (in other words, copyrighted works).
4. Fanfiction is written within and to the standards of a particular fannish community (fanfiction is communally created—and that community has standards!).
5. Fanfiction is speculative fiction about character rather than about the world (while this criterion is a little more flexible than the others, there is a reason that, despite

---

<sup>4</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Francesca Coppa, "Introduction: Five Things Fanfiction Is, and One Thing It Isn't," in *The Fan Fiction Reader: Folk Tales for the Digital Age* (The University of Michigan Press, 2017), 6. *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* is not generally considered fanfiction.

<sup>6</sup> Coppa, 1-17.



its incredible worldbuilding, James Cameron’s *Avatar* is not a hotbed of fanfiction creation).<sup>7</sup>

6. Fanfiction is made for free, but not “for nothing” (fanfiction is—quite literally—about the friends we make along the way).

It would be difficult for a single word to convey all the nuances of the six points listed above. So perhaps neither *fanfiction* nor *transformative fiction* are adequate terms. However, in further defense of the term *fanfiction*, I also much prefer Coppa’s more poetic description that she includes in her expansion of the third criterion, a definition which doesn’t quite match fanfiction’s professional alter ego of *transformative fiction*: “Fanfiction is the bastard child; the disavowed heir; outlawed.” “Bastard,” “outlawed,” “disavowed”: now *these* terms seem to fall more in line with the popular view of fanfiction as deviant and strange. I embrace that strangeness.

So, throughout this thesis, I will use the word fanfiction, or *fic* for short. And in keeping with the slow reclamation of the term, this project will not be arguing for the validity of *fic* as a legitimate form of artistic and literary expression. That is a question that fan studies has long since moved past.<sup>8</sup> This thesis will instead explore several facets of fanfiction—what it does for original works, who writes it, and what it does in a capitalist society—all during its creation and after its preservation in a case-bound book. Using my own *fic*, I examine how bookbinding fanfiction works on the following three levels:

---

<sup>7</sup> John Keagle (@jkeagle), “I can think of no more damning fact...”, Twitter, November 2, 2018, <https://twitter.com/jkeagle/status/1058518592436588544?lang=en>.

<sup>8</sup> See the existence of TWC, peer-reviewed and Gold Open Access. Better yet, in 2019, Archive of Our Own, the OTW’s most well-known and biggest project, won the Hugo Award.

1. Chapter One (THE MEAT, or the fic): This chapter demonstrates what Buchsbaum and Coppa call the “writerly-ness” of fic, or the ongoing meaning-making of fanfiction. I use my own fic, called *Letters from Heaven*, which combines characters and settings from Haruichi Furudate’s *Haikyuu!!* and Kyoto Animation’s TV anime series *Violet Evergarden*. Using my own fic as an example, this chapter will focus primarily on how fanfiction transforms character, themes, and narrative structure.
2. Chapter Two (THE BONES, or the book): This chapter focuses on the book object: how it functions within fandom space and as a continuation of book history, primarily the invisible history of women’s private manuscript practices. This section draws heavily from Buchsbaum’s *Follow the Fans: Community Adaptive Art and a Communication Circuit for Fanfiction*. Buchsbaum transforms Robert Darnton’s communication circuit for traditionally published books to describe how fanfiction is created and disseminated in fan spaces—in the true spirit of fandom, commandeering and transforming an existing narrative and making it her (our) own. It also outlines the bookmaking process and how the labor is volunteer, autodidactic, and—to use another unconventional term—amateur.
3. Chapter Three (IT’S ALIVE, or how the book-fic works): This chapter explores how the book object operates as a vehicle for the fic within—how it preserves my fic’s (and fanfiction’s largely) transcultural, queer, feminine, and anti-capitalist nature. Not every fic fits into these roles—in fact, fic and fandom at large, much like any other literary tradition and community, is not immune to racism and

bigotry. However, there are several larger trends that remain true about who writes fanfiction, what their fanfiction is about, and the communities they write for—in my case, fanfiction about Japanese anime and manga franchises for a transcultural, diasporic anime and manga fandom (“animanga” fandom). These lenses are both specific to my own fic and speak to larger traditions. Finally, I revisit the term “amateur” and qualify its use to describe this project as both an artistic and political statement.

These three lenses—fic, book, and book-fic object—are (and have been) entire dissertations, theses, and fields of study unto themselves. I have chosen to focus on them and these subtopics because I believe they are the most relevant to the specific qualities of my fic, fandom, and the fannish activities in which I am a participant. By beginning with the fic contained within the book, then shifting focus to the book object, and then finally ending with how the combined book-fic object functions in larger society, I hope to provide three lenses that grow in scope (although not in importance), much in the way a camera might zoom out from a close-up of subject to a broader view of the scenery around it.

*A Note on Why My Fic and Not the Other 1133 (and Counting) in My AO3 Bookmarks*

Why bind my fic, and why bind this fic out of all the other fics I’ve written and read? Although there were several fics that I wanted to choose for this project, the implied courtesy in fan academia of asking permission for fics and meta (nonfiction fan writing), as well as the in-depth analysis needed to demonstrate intertextuality and “writerly-ness,” simply made it more convenient for me to use my own fic as the focal point of this project. More importantly, since I wrote the work myself, I have firsthand

awareness of what meta, fic, and other community interactions contributed to the transformative nature of the work.

In addition, the wildly different genres of the two canons I transform in this specific fic—one a tournament-driven sports manga about high schoolers, and the other a post-war steampunk drama about ghostwriting—also makes it easier to understand how fanfiction is intertextual. There is also a comparative gap in fan and fanfiction studies for international and diasporic fandoms (in comparison to Anglophone, Western media fandom), a gap within which my fic exists. I do not believe my fic to be more worthy of preservation than the other fics I have bound (and I in fact prefer to bind other people’s fics because of the responses I receive from other authors—a demonstration of the gift economy of fandom).<sup>9</sup> However, for the reasons listed above and for the purposes of this paper, I use my fic, *Letters from Heaven*, a story which combines the world and premise from the TV anime series *Violet Evergarden*, and the characters and character arcs from the manga series *Haikyuu!!*.

#### *A Note on Audience, Unconventional Sources, and Love*

Given that this paper is written for an undergraduate thesis as well as an academic fan community, I have constructed it in such a way so that it might be useful to both parties. I have included a glossary for acronyms and fan terms that may require clarification, as well as a link to the fic itself should readers wish to access it. However, one does not need to read the fic in order to understand this paper.

---

<sup>9</sup> Buchsbaum, 46.

Unconventionality is perhaps the governing word for a still-developing academic fan tradition. At times I will use sources that are more unconventional, including Tweets, Tumblr posts, and wiki sites such as Fanlore (a sister project to the Archive of Our Own). I mentioned earlier that fan academia is still emerging—this is true in that many of our foundational texts and commentary are simply not published in peer-review journals. For example, astolat’s now-famous *An Archive of One’s Own* post was made on the journaling platform LiveJournal—and astolat went on to found the Archive of Our Own, now the largest and most well-known archive of fanfiction on the Internet.

More than other academic fields, fan academia studies communities and trends that—especially on the Internet—often evolve overnight. Added to acafan unconventionality is the oftentimes marginalized identities of fans, especially fans of color. Fans of color are often excluded—whether by structural design or choice to avoid bigotry in white-dominated Internet spaces—from more official channels of scholarship and communication.<sup>10</sup> All of this to say—while the bibliography of this thesis may look a little unconventional, all sources are legitimate.

Finally, like many fan academics, my work is tied directly to my hobbies. The events, behaviors, and trends described in this paper are those with which I often have firsthand experience. I am a volunteer with the OTW and Fanlore, and I have my own fanfiction I write and post to AO3 outside the scope of this thesis. As such, this paper is both an argument for binding fanfiction as well as a personal statement tied to my

---

<sup>10</sup> Rukmini Pande, “Decolonising Fan Studies: A Bibliography-In-Progress,” Google Docs, accessed July 9, 2021, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DASV2eulNmTOdtwWMJBpuUW1vkWkxvVOAKP0JxZR9T8/edit>

creative work. At all times it is academic, but if there is one thing I wish to convey, it is this: while this project is much more formally constructed than a meta essay posted to my blog, string of messages to an online friend about a new chapter update, or fic I have written about my favorite characters, it is, much like anything else I write, a labor of love.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE MEAT (How Fanfiction is Transformative)

This chapter demonstrates how my fic functions as an intertextual, transformative work. Specifically, my work explores and transforms the canons and characters from two existing works: the manga series *Haikyuu!!* by Haruichi Furudate, and the TV anime adaptation by studio Kyoto Animation of the light novel series *Violet Evergarden* by Kana Akatsuki. I will provide the cultural context surrounding the medium of anime, as well as the character developments and narrative arcs necessary for understanding how my fic functions as a transformative work. Finally, I will explain how my fic—written in an Anglophone community within a larger international and transcultural fandom—transforms *Haikyuu!!*'s use of a traditional Japanese narrative structure called *kishoutenketsu*. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate the literary, artistic, and intercultural merit of my work and ultimately argue that the “thing” preserved inside the artifact of the case-bound book is indeed worthy of preservation.

#### *Anime*

Anime is medium of Japanese animation. *Medium* is the operative word here; although animation in the West is generally associated with children's media, its audience members and genres are varied and diverse. Anime is most often created for television, usually aired in seasons of twelve to fourteen episodes, with each episode running around twenty minutes. Many anime series' more popular features may include overexaggerated body proportions (large, expressive eyes perhaps being the most well-

known), magical transforming schoolgirls, and themes of friendship and camaraderie. However, while these descriptors are often the most identifiable to those unfamiliar with anime, the term *medium* to describe anime—rather than *genre*—is crucial. To say that the aforementioned features describe anime as a whole would be akin to saying that romance describes all novels; while romance certainly plays an influential role in the novel’s identity and popular subgenres, romance itself is a genre, not a medium for storytelling.

Anime’s global popularity and accessibility by fans outside Japan has increased in the age of streaming services. Large media companies such as Sony, Netflix, and Amazon Prime have joined more anime-focused licensing companies like Crunchyroll and Funimation in distributing series to non-Japanese viewers.<sup>1</sup> As a result, anime is also widely influential in certain Internet subcultures, with characters, dialogue, and scenes from popular series often repurposed and disseminated as memes. Anime is also a popular subculture of modern fandom, with its “own artistic styles, language, and forms that have crossed into other communities.”<sup>2</sup> This cross-communal nature of animanga fandom will be further explored in later chapters, but for now this basic understanding will suffice.

Finally, animanga fans may be in fandoms for several series, may be longtime fans of a single series, or are often a combination of both. As with most fan communities, popular fannish activities include creating fanart and fanfiction, as well as organizing events such as Big Bangs, Secret Santa exchanges, and fanweeks.

---

<sup>1</sup> D.M Moore, “Sony’s Funimation acquires anime streaming service for \$1.175 billion,” *Polygon*, December 9, 2020, <https://www.polygon.com/2020/12/9/21547657/sonys-funimation-acquires-crunchyroll-deal-price-watching-anime>.

<sup>2</sup> Coppa, 9.



## *The Big Bang*

The fandom event most relevant to our discussion is called a “Big Bang,” an event in which artists and authors are paired with one another to create a multi-media work centered around a theme (oftentimes a ship—or a romantic pairing of two characters). There is usually a word count requirement for authors; all the Big Bangs I have participated in necessitated a minimum of ten thousand words. The author then sends a draft of the work to the moderators, who then pass it on to the artist so that they may create an accompanying art piece.

The relevance of the Big Bang for this discussion is its demonstration of how fic is often written in a community context and in close consultation with other community members—not for profit, but for pleasure. Coppa writes: “fiction that is written in and for fandom is not only written to community specifications; it is also typically written as a gift.”<sup>3</sup> She speaks to the larger gift economy of fandom (although this has changed in recent years as fandom becomes more monetized)<sup>4</sup>, and more specifically that “fanfiction reading and writing tends to create social obligations.”<sup>5</sup> The Big Bang is a demonstration of one such social obligation, a contract by the moderators, authors, artists, and beta readers involved that we will all participate and meet the agreed-upon deadlines. The Big Bang is just one of many events organized by fandom community members, and, as

---

<sup>3</sup> Coppa, 9.

<sup>4</sup> ArmoredSuperHeavy, *How to Make a Book*, Google Docs, accessed April 25, 2021, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/11JyVxeRS8yEWgCYrNMUPINrEbR5AAD3Z2aDP-QXEP3Y/edit?usp=sharing>.

<sup>5</sup> Coppa, 9.

Coppa writes, “encourage[s] and organize[s] creativity for the general pleasure of the group: just as [Chaucer’s] pilgrims get to hear all the tales, challenge participants get to read the glut of stories produced.”<sup>6</sup>

*Canon Context (or: The Intertextuality of Fic, Demonstrated)*

*Haikyuu!!: The Characters*

*Haikyuu!!* is a serialized sports manga by author Haruichi Furudate. It was published in *Weekly Shounen Jump*, a magazine geared towards young male readers, from 2012-2020.<sup>7</sup> It has several commercially successful adaptations, including an anime series (still ongoing), a stage play, several OVAs (“original video animations”), movies, light novels, console games, and merchandise. The plot focuses on a young boy named Hinata Shouyou, whose dream is to play volleyball despite his short height, and the members of his high school volleyball team. Sharing the narrative limelight is the deuteragonist, Kageyama Tobio: Hinata’s rival, teammate, and eventual friend. As the narrative progresses, we are introduced to several other members of Karasuno High School’s volleyball team and the teams they compete against. Due to its tournament-based narrative structure, with each arc introducing new teams and characters, *Haikyuu!!* boasts a massive ensemble cast. Furudate often uses different teams to symbolize different philosophies and pits them against one another to create interesting dynamics.

---

<sup>6</sup> Coppa, 5.

<sup>7</sup> “Haikyuu,” *Fanlore*, accessed April 23, 2021, <https://fanlore.org/wiki/Haikyuu>.

The mechanics and rules of the sport are integral to understanding *Haikyuu!!* (and Furudate very organically explains them within the series proper), but for the purposes of this paper, it is more relevant to focus on the symbolic meaning that volleyball takes on in the story's final arcs. Volleyball becomes the vehicle for several different explorations of human relationships; the three that are most relevant to my fic are: the need to connect with others emotionally, the importance of legacy in shaping identity, and the process of cultivating a healthy love for one's craft.

*Kageyama Tobio, Hinata Shouyou, and the Meaning of Volleyball*

Integral to this understanding of volleyball is the relationship between Kageyama Tobio and Hinata Shouyou. Kageyama serves as Hinata's narrative foil in several ways: while Hinata is outgoing and emotionally intelligent, Kageyama is awkward and often has trouble recognizing social cues. While Hinata is a beginner in volleyball, Kageyama has been playing for as long as he can remember. Even their names are foiled: 日向 (Hinata), contains the kanji 日, meaning "sun," and 向, meaning "facing towards/to face," while 影山 (Kageyama) contains the kanji 影, meaning "shadow," and 山, meaning "mountain." So Hinata's name could be interpreted as "facing the sun," while Kageyama's is "shadowed mountain:"<sup>8</sup> opposites, in every sense of the word.

At the story's beginning, Kageyama has been socially isolated from his middle school team. He is known as the "King of the Court" due both to his prodigious abilities as a player and his controlling nature with his teammates when they do not perform to his

---

<sup>8</sup> onepetal, "A Study of Haikyuu!! Character Names," *Tumblr*, April 17, 2016, <https://bo-cute-o.tumblr.com/post/142975667998/a-study-of-haikyuu-character-names>.

standards. He is both aware of his status as an outcast and, at the narrative's start, unable to fix it. As a result, he overaccommodates socially to meet the volleyball-related needs of his new teammates at Karasuno, but ultimately struggles to connect with them emotionally.

Another important relationship for Kageyama is that which he shares with his grandfather, Kageyama Kazuyo. Kageyama Kazuyo loved and was loved by his two grandchildren—Tobio and his older sister, Miwa—and passed on his love for volleyball to them. Volleyball played an integral role in his relationship with Tobio especially. However, when Tobio was in middle school, Kazuyo passed away, Miwa quit volleyball, and, due to the emotional stress from these events, Tobio lashed out at his teammates and soon became a social outcast.

Kageyama later gains a found family in his teammates and a rival, partner, and eventual friend in Hinata. While Hinata's arc focuses mainly on his technical growth as a player and the development of volleyball as his craft, Kageyama's is driven more by his developing social skills and the relationships which blossom from that growth. Integral to these developments is Hinata, who accepts Kageyama and all his flaws from the beginning due to their shared love for the sport and his respect for Kageyama as a player. Likewise, Kageyama is one of the few people who takes Hinata's desire to improve in the sport seriously, despite the obstacles of Hinata's height and relatively late introduction to the game. Throughout the series, the two of them mutually inspire each other to become better people and athletes. Because of their status as narrative foils and their relationship's integral nature to the plot, these two are the most popular ship in the

*Haikyuu!!* fandom, with over 14,000 works listed under the Hinata Shouyou/Kageyama Tobio pairing on Archive of Our Own.<sup>9</sup>

*Violet Evergarden: The Premise and Setting*

Violet Evergarden is the titular character of a fantasy light novel series written by Kana Akatsuki and illustrated by Akiko Takase.<sup>10</sup> Relevant to this discussion is the 2018 anime adaptation by studio Kyoto Animation, a studio known for their distinct visual style and aesthetic. Throughout the series' fourteen-episode runtime, Violet Evergarden is introduced as an ex-child soldier who has lost her both arms and her commanding officer/father figure, Gilbert Bougainvillea, in the final battle of a bloody war. After the war, Violet is employed by CH Postal Company as an "Auto-Memory Doll," the story's name for young women ghostwriters, at the behest of her late commanding officer. Because Violet was raised in a time of war as a living weapon (called "Leidenschaftlich's Soldier Maiden" by allies and enemies alike), she is unable to recognize her own emotions and the trauma of her childhood. She is also unable to assert her own desires outside of her Major's military orders and, due to her inability to empathize with others, is emotionally isolated from her coworkers and friends. The series is told in the style of "client of the week," and as Violet meets more people through her work, she comes to understand what love is and how to connect with others emotionally. Although her character initially acts as a conduit through which the audience explores several different

---

<sup>9</sup> "Hinata Shouyou/Kageyama Tobio," *Archive of Our Own*, accessed April 23, 2021, [https://archiveofourown.org/tags/Hinata%20Shouyou\\*s\\*Kageyama%20Tobio/works](https://archiveofourown.org/tags/Hinata%20Shouyou*s*Kageyama%20Tobio/works).

<sup>10</sup> "Violet Evergarden," *Fandom*, accessed April 23, 2021, [https://violet-evergarden.fandom.com/wiki/Violet\\_Evergarden\\_\(series\)](https://violet-evergarden.fandom.com/wiki/Violet_Evergarden_(series)).

stories of love and loss, by the series' end, she eventually gains true agency over her own life and emotions.

*Into the Fanfictionverse: Alternate Universes (or AUs)*

These two stories are very different in tone, visual style, and narrative structure; at first glance, it may be difficult to see how they are related. However, fanfiction authors often do just that: find the common threads and connect two very different worlds in a new story. These kinds of fics are known as *alternate universe* fics, or “AUs” for short.<sup>11</sup> Thus is the transformative nature of fanfiction in an era where stories are the intellectual property of individuals and corporations. Or, as noted by Coppa: “Fanfiction is what happened to folk culture: to the appropriation to fables and retellings of local legends.”<sup>12</sup>

I will now demonstrate how this transformative nature works in my own project, given the contexts provided above. As stated earlier, some of the relevant themes of *Haikyuu!!* are: the need to connect with others emotionally, the importance of legacy in shaping identity, and the process of cultivating a healthy love for one's craft. These themes are relevant because they are also the themes I took from *Violet Evergarden*. Although the two series are very different, I drew several lines of commonality between Kageyama and Violet's character arcs.

The common thread I found most important was how both characters grow closer to newfound loved ones after a traumatic experience. These interactions allow them to

---

<sup>11</sup> An alternate universe can also explore changes to a canon's original universe; for example, an author might explore what would happen if a pivotal moment went differently, or if a character's backstory were altered. *Letters* instead transplants characters from one universe to another.

<sup>12</sup> Coppa, 7.

gain new understandings of human emotions and learn the importance of connecting with others. For Kageyama, this understanding is achieved through his love for volleyball, passed down from his beloved late grandfather; for Violet, it through her work as a ghostwriter, a role in which she is placed by her beloved late CO. I combined these two separate character arcs, inserting Kageyama Tobio into the role and world of Violet Evergarden, and thus with these pre-existing narratives, themes, and characters, created my own governing metaphors, character arcs, and emotional questions in a reimagined world.

*Changes Made: Flight and Gravity Reimagined*

AUs do not simply equate one character to another; after all, fanfiction, as stated earlier, is also transformative. These similarities are only the foundation upon which fic writers build new worlds. Thus, although Kageyama and Violet are both characters who improve their communication skills, their skillsets and the metaphors which act as vehicles for their development (namely, volleyball and ghostwriting) in their respective canons are completely different. For example, while Violet is a quick study in grammar and typing, Kageyama is notoriously bad at anything related to academics. As a result, some changes were needed to Violet's craft of ghostwriting in order to maintain Kageyama Tobio's canon character trait of being a weak writer.

These changes borne of close readings and interpretations of characters fall in line with Buchsbaum's observation (also referenced from Coppa) that "fic writers negotiate with the source text author, their readers, and conventions of fandom and fanfiction to

produce fic.”<sup>13</sup> Coppa also defines fic as “written within and for particular communities that have highly specific expectations for fiction, which can be seen in their elaborate vocabulary and critical literature, which fans call *meta*.”<sup>14</sup> My extensive reading of several meta essays, conversations with fellow fic-writing friends, and deep reading of the original works played an important role in my understanding of both stories. In keeping with my own interpretation of Kageyama’s character, then, I decided to slightly alter the original Violet Evergarden premise, changing ghostwriting as the governing metaphor for emotional connection and legacy to piloting instead.

This change allowed me to do several things: first, establish the “thing” passed down from Kageyama Kazuyo to Tobio in my reimagined world, thus paralleling Violet’s struggle with legacy and creating an emotional conflict more in line with Kageyama’s character. Second, it allowed me to create a parallel situation in my new universe of Kageyama’s canon emotional exile by his middle school teammates (in my fic, reimagined as members of his flight squadron during the war). Finally, it allowed for a greater metaphor throughout the work that explores the concept of flying and gravity in relation to intimacy and emotional dependency.

These changes also allowed me to create a more coherent narrative than Violet Evergarden’s episodic client-of-the-week structure. The governing metaphor for emotional vulnerability and emotional through-line to a deceased mentor figure becomes something that Kageyama has more of a personal investment in than he would

---

<sup>13</sup> Buchsbaum, 33.

<sup>14</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 8-9.



ghostwriting. More importantly, flying becomes something that he shares with his friend and emotional lynchpin of the narrative, Hinata. Thus, although my reimagined Kageyama still develops his emotional skills within the narrative structure and premise of *Violet Evergarden*, he does so through interactions with fewer characters that have more development than one-off “clients of the week.” This allowed me to more deeply explore his past trauma and his relationship with Hinata Shouyou, as well as keep his character in line with both my own and fandom’s interpretations.

*Eastern Versus Western Storytelling: Exploring Grief and Love*

Finally, the themes I most wished to explore with this story were grief and healing after the loss of a loved one. I did so by paralleling the loss of Kageyama’s grandfather, Kageyama Kazuyo, and *Violet Evergarden*’s commanding officer, Gilbert Bougainvillea. Again, these relationships are not paralleled one-to-one; Gilbert (at first glance) plays a much greater narrative role in *Violet Evergarden* than Kageyama Kazuyo does in *Haikyuu!!*. Gilbert is present in several flashbacks throughout *Violet*, while Kazuyo is not introduced until the final chapters of *Haikyuu!!*.

Kazuyo’s late introduction is what I believe to be a demonstration of the *kishoutenketsu* structure of storytelling, one which originated from Chinese four-line poetry.<sup>15</sup> In Western tradition, stories often follow a three-act structure: beginning with the introduction, then inciting incident/conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and finally a resolution, or something similar. However, the *kishoutenketsu* narrative structure

---

<sup>15</sup> “Kishōtenketsu: Exploring The Four Act Story Structure,” *The Art of Narrative*, accessed April 25, 2021, <https://artofnarrative.com/2020/07/08/kishotenketsu-exploring-the-four-act-story-structure/>.

is slightly different. The order follows: *ki* (introduction), *shou* (development), *ten* (twist), and finally *ketsu* (conclusion). What makes *kishoutenketsu* so interesting and relevant to this discussion is how, unlike the three-act structure of Western tradition, it does not require narrative conflict to function. Instead, it relies on a shift in the *reader's* understanding of a story or characters.<sup>16</sup>

This narrative reading is not perfect; throughout *Haikyuu's* run, Kageyama does face narrative conflict in the form of his rivalry with Hinata and other members of the cast. However, what is most important to the *kishoutenketsu* structure is *ten*, or the twist. Rather than pushing the narrative forward like conflict might in the three-act structure, *ten* rather re-contextualizes what the reader already knows about the character, thus shedding new light on events that have already happened. The reveal of Kageyama Kazuyo fulfills this *ten* structure; technically, in the chapter where Kazuyo is introduced via flashbacks, nothing new happens in the narrative that furthers Kageyama's development as a character. Rather, it is the reader's perception which develops. His introduction as the socially isolated "King of the Court" (*ki*) is recontextualized. We realize, belatedly, that his struggle to communicate with others is not only the result of poor interpersonal relationship skills; it also stems from the difficulty he faces processing the grief of losing his grandfather. As a result, his eventual acceptance of his role as a leader/true "King of the Court," made possible by the unconditional acceptance by his teammates and Hinata in particular, takes on even greater weight. Karasuno's team members become a newfound family who provide the love and stability his grandfather

---

<sup>16</sup> "Kishōtenketsu: Exploring The Four Act Story Structure."

once provided, and which his middle school team ultimately could not. Once the reader reaches these conclusions, we then move to *ketsu*, or the conclusion: Kageyama Tobio learns how to communicate his emotions, understands the importance of that communication, and finds a group of friends and loved ones who accept him fully and unconditionally.

I found Kazuyo's reveal and all its implications for Kageyama's character to be fascinating. So, over a period of five months, I wrote with a goal of 1) further exploring Kageyama's character within this recontextualized reading and within the world and premise of *Violet Evergarden* and 2) meeting the deadlines for the Big Bang event (an act of "engagement with the community," as Coppa explains).<sup>17</sup> At the heart of my story are questions I believe are raised in both *Haikyuu!!* and *Violet Evergarden*, but which I wished to explore more deeply in fanfiction: how do we grieve? How does loss affect our daily lives? How does legacy affect us now, and in the future? As human beings, is loving someone a choice or a compulsion; is it more like flying or falling? I believe these questions have literary and even human importance, and thus explored them in my work.

#### *Conclusion: The Thing Inside the Book*

I wrote a longfic (a term for longer works of fanfiction) and AU combining *Haikyuu!!* and *Violet Evergarden*. However, in terms of narrative structure, fanfiction is not beholden to any particular form or tradition; fic can be as short as a few words to several hundred thousand. Fic can span sprawling, epic plots or simply detail an hour of a character's life—mine lies somewhere in the comfortable middle. Fic can explore the

---

<sup>17</sup> Coppa, 9.

events of canon, combine two canons (as I did), or create entirely new worlds. In fact, most fic writers skip stages of conventional storytelling such as the introduction of characters and setting, because fic writers assume that their readers will already have at least a basic understanding of these elements.<sup>18</sup> What is most important, at least to me, is that fanfiction is written and read by and for people who see literary and emotional potential in further exploring existing stories and characters. We are not financially compensated for our work, and in fact many fic writers love receiving feedback, but oftentimes do not expect it.<sup>19</sup> As this chapter has demonstrated, writing fanfiction combines literary analysis, community building, and transformative storytelling. However, while these aspects are important and are often used to justify fanfiction's existence, fanfiction is first and foremost a labor of love. The next chapters will detail how and why that labor is so important within fandom spaces and larger society.

---

<sup>18</sup> Coppa, 8.

<sup>19</sup> Coppa, 3.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE BONES (Providing Artifact Context)

#### *Fanfiction as Book History*

Fan studies is interdisciplinary—it employs several other fields of study, such as literary analysis, media studies, or psychology. We now turn our attention to fanfiction as it resides within the book object, at the intersections of media fanfiction history and women’s book history. While the last chapter focused on the nuts and bolts of the fic and how it works on a transformative, literary level, this chapter focuses on the book object which contains it. This focus on the book and the histories which informed its creation allows for new interpretations of fanfiction history and book history that have already been developed by others: Catherine Coker argues that fanfiction is a continuation of women’s private coterie manuscript practices.<sup>1</sup> Buchsbaum builds on this argument by examining how interpretation of that history changes when fanfiction is bound into books. An understanding of how fanfiction history may be informed by book history—specifically its invisible nature by predominantly women writers in private, closed communities—then allows for an understanding of what fanfiction preservation may look like in the years to come.

---

<sup>1</sup> Catherine Coker, “The Margins of Print? Fan fiction as Book History,” *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 25 (2017): <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2017.01053>.

*A History of Fanfiction Preservation and Loss (Or: Why Make Books in the First Place?)*

Fanfiction, while still a niche hobby, is no longer the obscure, under-the-table practice it once was.<sup>2</sup> How, then, is fanfiction “invisible?” The similarities between women’s unpublished manuscript practices and the ephemeral nature of stories published online provides insight into the invisibility of fanfiction, and thus why it is so important to bind fic. Although much of this invisibility, particularly for fanfiction, is not the product of malicious intent, it is no coincidence that both traditions have been historically practiced by women. Furthermore, fan history shows that in many instances, the loss of fannish history has, in fact, been the result of deliberate action. The loss of large fanfiction archives is the fan equivalent of the burning of the Library of Alexandria. Rather than “invisible,” then, perhaps the better word would be “silenced.”<sup>3</sup>

While there are many accounts of (Western, Anglophone) fan history (much of it documented on Fanlore),<sup>4</sup> due to this project’s focus on preservation, I will sketch fandom’s history of loss from the perspective of archiving (or attempts to archive) fanfiction. As such, I draw heavily from Versaphile’s *Silence in the Library: Archives and the preservation of fannish history*, published in the Organization for Transformative

---

<sup>2</sup> As I will mention in later chapters, see the worldwide success of series such as *Fifty Shades of Grey*, or the larger acceptance of “nerd” culture in multibillion-dollar mega-hits like the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

<sup>3</sup> Coker quotes Margaret Ezell’s 1999’s *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* in her argument that women’s manuscript writing practices have historically been communal created, privately circulated, and “silenced” in their unpublished status.

<sup>4</sup> “Timeline of Major Fandom Purges, Restrictions, and Hassles Regarding Fanworks and Their Content,” *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_Major\\_Fandom\\_Purges,\\_Restrictions,\\_and\\_Hassles\\_Regarding\\_Fanworks\\_and\\_Their\\_Content](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Major_Fandom_Purges,_Restrictions,_and_Hassles_Regarding_Fanworks_and_Their_Content).

Work's academic journal *Transformative Works and Cultures*. Versaphile details fannish history from this specific lens of fanfiction preservation.

### *Versaphile's Account of Fandom History*

Modern commercial media fandom is generally agreed to have begun in the 1970s and '80s with Star Trek<sup>5</sup> printed zines and amateur press associations (APAs) acting as vehicles for the bulk of fannish production.<sup>6</sup> With the rise of the Internet and the World Wide Web in the 1990s came the first internet archives, run by volunteer moderators who would accept, format, and archive fics submitted by authors.<sup>7</sup> However, due to the lack of robust categorization and search functions, it was often difficult to find desired content. In addition, these archives were often at the mercy of whoever maintained them, and thus were liable to disappear without warning, often overnight, should anything happen to the mods.<sup>8</sup> The losses of these archives devastated or, more often not, completely obliterated the communities who relied on them.

The late 1990s brought the short-lived advent of mailing lists, including ONElist, Topica, and eGroups.<sup>9</sup> These emailing lists, which sent fics directly to individual users' inboxes, allowed for more privacy and preservation in comparison to the semi-public archives. However, the nature of the lists also led to much more audience

---

<sup>5</sup> "History of Slash Fandom," *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Slash\\_Fandom](https://fanlore.org/wiki/History_of_Slash_Fandom).

<sup>6</sup> Versaphile, "Silence in the library: Archives and the preservation of fannish history," *Transformative Works and Cultures* 6 (2011): <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2011.0277>.

<sup>7</sup> Versaphile.

<sup>8</sup> Versaphile.

<sup>9</sup> Versaphile.

fragmentation.<sup>10</sup> In addition, mailing lists, much like archives, could be deleted at the whim of the administrators, and mergers and renames of major services used to send out fanfiction often led to broken links and data loss.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the use of mailing lists as a mode of distribution and preservation lasted only about four years.<sup>12</sup>

The development of online journaling software marked a major shift for fannish hubs of activity. LiveJournal in particular became popular in the early 2000s, a site that allowed members to make posts on a centralized profile, build communities of friends, and participate in comment threads.<sup>13</sup> However, like the earlier archives, there was no robust search function, and users would post both fandom and non-fandom related blog entries (unlike the earlier archives, which specifically hosted fic). Finally, LiveJournal allowed for what Versaphile calls a “blow to the preservation of fandom”; namely, it allowed authors to have full control over their works,<sup>14</sup> fannish or otherwise. This is, perhaps, one of the biggest ethical dilemmas those who are interested in fic preservation must face: considering author intent. Often, fic authors remove all association with their work, or even delete their work from the Internet entirely, thus erasing it from existence (provided it does not exist in physical form elsewhere). Versaphile ultimately concludes that while that author control and story longevity are at odds with one another, “creation of new narratives within the structure of fan fiction” ultimately relies on the preservation

---

<sup>10</sup> Versaphile.

<sup>11</sup> Versaphile.

<sup>12</sup> Versaphile.

<sup>13</sup> “LiveJournal,” *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, <https://fanlore.org/wiki/LiveJournal>.

<sup>14</sup> Versaphile.



of old narratives; such is the “primary lifeblood of media fandom.”<sup>15</sup> Given my project, I am inclined to agree.

So, if fandom wishes to survive, we must preserve our stories. However, more often than not, the biggest obstacle fic preservationists face is not fic author deletion of a work. And while many of the aforementioned shifts to different fannish hubs were the result of developing technologies, moderator negligence, or simple disinterest, many were in fact the result of targeted removals and/or corporate buyouts. In 2007, LiveJournal removed and struck through (hence its name, “Strikethrough,” and the subsequent “Boldthrough”) over 500 fannish users and communities based on their interest lists, most of which were related to NSFW topics.<sup>16</sup> In 2007, the website was bought by a Russian company,<sup>17</sup> which in 2017 changed the website’s terms of service, banning political writing and containing anti-LGBTQ rhetoric.<sup>18</sup> As a result, fans began to move to other sites, such as Tumblr and Twitter, arguably where the majority of fandom activity occurs now.

However, these sites were not (and are not) safe from corporate buyouts and censorship either. In 2013, Yahoo!! bought Tumblr—a popular microblogging site known for being a hub of fannish activity—for \$1.1 billion, ushering in attempts at monetizing

---

<sup>15</sup> Versaphile.

<sup>16</sup> “Strikethrough and Boldthrough,” *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Strikethrough\\_and\\_Boldthrough](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Strikethrough_and_Boldthrough).

<sup>17</sup> “Russian Firm Buys LiveJournal,” *New York Times*, December 3, 2007, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/03/technology/03deal.html>.

<sup>18</sup> “LiveJournal,” *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/LiveJournal#Migrations\\_away\\_from\\_LJ](https://fanlore.org/wiki/LiveJournal#Migrations_away_from_LJ).

content and more targeted ads.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps most infamous of the changes was Tumblr's 2018 NSFW Content Purge, in which Tumblr's app was removed from the iOS store, and several NSFW blogs were deleted en masse.<sup>20</sup> The "Porn Ban," as it is infamously known as, followed not three months after the "Snapping," which similarly led to several takedowns, allegedly for copyright reasons.<sup>21</sup> Following these overhauls, fans began moving to other websites, most notably Twitter. While Twitter allows for NSFW works to be posted (most of which is fanart), due to its character limit and lack of a robust tagging system, it is by no means ideal for fanfiction preservation, or rather, for any fanwork preservation.

### *The Establishment of the Archive of Our Own*

As stated earlier, the loss of a fan archive is to a fandom the equivalent of the loss of the Library of Alexandria. Fandom in the age of the Internet has a history fraught with such loss, with entire archives and communities deleted en masse, sometimes overnight. As Versaphile argues: "The fandom community cannot depend upon the kindness of corporations to maintain our platform and tools."<sup>22</sup> This sentiment was the driving force behind the creation of AO3. In 2007, there was buzz in fandom after the announcement of FanLib, a commercial website for fanfiction widely perceived as an attempt by

---

<sup>19</sup> "Tumblr," *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, <https://fanlore.org/wiki/Tumblr>.

<sup>20</sup> "Fan Blogs are Deleted," *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Tumblr\\_NSWF\\_Content\\_Purge](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Tumblr_NSWF_Content_Purge). Mainstream media's portrayal of fandom as a hub for NSFW works, including erotica, is a bit sensationalized, but not entirely inaccurate. As I will mention in Chapter Three, much of fannish work is indeed NSFW and fringe, and often does not appeal to the general audiences; to fans, the banning of NSFW works within fan spaces is an act of censorship.

<sup>21</sup> "The Snapping," *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/The\\_Snapping](https://fanlore.org/wiki/The_Snapping).

<sup>22</sup> Versaphile.

outsiders to capitalize on fandom.<sup>23</sup> Shortly after the announcement, LiveJournal user astolat (and later founding member of AO3) posted a proposal which called for fans to establish a fan-run and fan-built archive for themselves. This was a call-to-action, that, as echoed in a supporter's later post, cited a need for fans to "own the goddamned servers."<sup>24</sup>

We need a central archive of our own, something like animemusicvideos.org. Something that would NOT hide from google or any public mention, and would clearly state our case for the legality of our hobby up front, while not trying to make a profit off other people's IP and instead only making it easier for us to celebrate it, together, and create a welcoming space for new fans that has a sense of our history and our community behind it.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, in 2009, the Archive of Our Own was established. Some of its features informed by fan histories and needs include:<sup>26</sup>

- one-click downloads of fanworks in multiple formats (ePub, HTML, Mobi, PDF)
- freeform tagging system which allows fanwork creators to define their own tags for classification
- commenting, kudos and bookmarking systems
- hosting of fanwork collections and challenges
- importing of fanworks previously posted elsewhere

The ability to download works, thus making them accessible even without an internet connection; the tagging system which allows users to easily find and filter works; the commenting and challenges system which allows for community building; and finally the

---

<sup>23</sup> "FanLib," *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, <https://fanlore.org/wiki/FanLib>.

<sup>24</sup> "Why I Support the OTW, by Speranza, aged mumble-mumble," *LiveJournal*, January 9, 2008, <https://cesperanza.livejournal.com/190204.html>.

<sup>25</sup> "An Archive of One's Own," *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/An\\_Archive\\_Of\\_One%27s\\_Own\\_\(post\\_by\\_astolat\)](https://fanlore.org/wiki/An_Archive_Of_One%27s_Own_(post_by_astolat)).

<sup>26</sup> "Archive of Our Own."

importing of fanworks from other archives: all are features that were designed with fanfiction's history of loss in mind.

AO3's website describes itself as a "noncommercial and nonprofit central hosting site for transformative fan works such as fanfiction, fanart, fan videos and podfic."<sup>27</sup> It is "a wholly fan-created and fan-run space, where fannish creativity can benefit from the OTW's advocacy in articulating the case for its legality and social value."<sup>28</sup> As a user of the site myself, as well as someone who has experienced several of these corporate takeovers and loss of fannish work firsthand, the work that the OTW does for fans on AO3 is invaluable. Unlike other sites such as fanfiction.net or Wattpad, AO3 is run completely off donation drives, contains no ads, and does not attempt to curate user experience based on profit-driven social media models. It is, as stated earlier, an archive, one whose design is informed by a history of burned libraries (metaphorically speaking), and one which exists solely to preserve and protect fan works for years to come.

#### *A Note on the OTW, Its Other Projects, and the Elephant in the Room*

The OTW's many projects are likewise informed by fandom's history of loss, and several of their projects form the backbone of this thesis. AO3, as stated earlier, is an archive of fanfiction that allows users to upload their own work. It is maintained by tag-wranglers who organize the archive's robust user-generated tagging system, allowing for a system similar to a library categorization system. Fanlore is a wiki dedicated to the documentation of fan history, open to fans to document their experiences and maintained

---

<sup>27</sup> "Archive of Our Own," *Organization for Transformative Works*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://www.transformativeworks.org/archive\\_of\\_our\\_own/](https://www.transformativeworks.org/archive_of_our_own/).

<sup>28</sup> "Archive of Our Own."

by wiki staff, who are fans themselves. *Transformative Works and Cultures* is the OTW's international, peer-reviewed academic journal, which has published Versaphile's and several other fan academics' works. The OTW also provides legal advocacy for fans. Borne out of a history of loss, the organization is non-profit, volunteer-run, and dedicated to the preservation and advocacy of fannish activities.

The OTW also protects fan works that are NSFW. Fanfiction and fan culture's often sensationalized depictions in mainstream media is due in part to the more (often sexually) deviant nature of fan works.<sup>29</sup> However, such depictions are only one part of a greater whole, and while much of fanfiction is certainly, unashamedly erotica,<sup>30</sup> to say it is only erotica would be inaccurate. From AO3's rating system alone (comparable to the Motion Picture Association's film rating system), one can see that fanfiction covers all manner of ratings and topics—from those rated “gen” for all audiences to “E” for explicit. As a result, it is important to acknowledge that fanfiction comes in all kinds of flavors and styles, and that, from the most vanilla one-shot to the raunchiest series-length epics—the OTW protects them all. The tentative ground that fan works hold against copyright claims, as well as fanfiction's slow acceptance outside fandom spaces (see AO3's Hugo win in 2019, or casual references to fanfiction in shows like *Parks and Rec*)—none of it would be possible without the OTW's foundational work.

---

<sup>29</sup> Shelley Ingram, “On Fanfiction and the Amateur/Professional Divide,” in *Implied Nowhere: Absence in Folklore Studies*, ed. Shelley Ingram, Willow G. Mullins, and Todd Richardson (University Press of Mississippi, 2019), 46.

<sup>30</sup> Hellekson and Busse write that popular press's focus on fanfiction's explicit writings is largely due to sensationalism. However, the subversive nature of homoerotic works invites scholars to engage with the genre; furthermore, fic writers are self-aware of the nature of their work. “As a result,” Hellekson and Busse write, “in both popular and academic work, fan fiction often gets reduced to its erotic aspects, but these erotic aspects also tend to present fan fiction's engagement with gender, sex, and sexuality at its fullest.” (Hellekson and Busse, 76).

*On the “Redundancy of Preservation”*<sup>31</sup>

However, despite the existence of the OTW and its many projects, many fans are still wary.<sup>32</sup> The Internet itself is constantly changing, and one still needs an Internet connection in order to access AO3. Although the OTW owns AO3’s physical servers,<sup>33</sup> the very existence of the Internet is arguably fragile and at the mercy of large corporations and government censorship (for example, AO3 is banned in China).<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, events like the Texas freeze in early 2021 have proven that vital infrastructure like the electricity grid, which we rely on for much more than Internet access, is vulnerable to poor leadership, shoddy maintenance, and destruction by climate-related disaster. Much like other bookbinders interviewed in Buchsbaum’s study, I trust AO3’s mission statement and purpose but am ultimately wary of further loss. Although I am not motivated solely by a desire to preserve my favorite works (social connections, as well as personal and creative gratification are other major motivators), and although I am a strong advocate for AO3 and trust its infrastructure, I am still preparing for a potential future in which the archive no longer exists. Thus, despite the existence of the OTW and AO3, I bind books.

---

<sup>31</sup> Shira Belén Buchsbaum, “Follow the Fans: Community Adaptive Art and a Communication Circuit for Fandom,” (Master’s dissertation, publication forthcoming), 58.

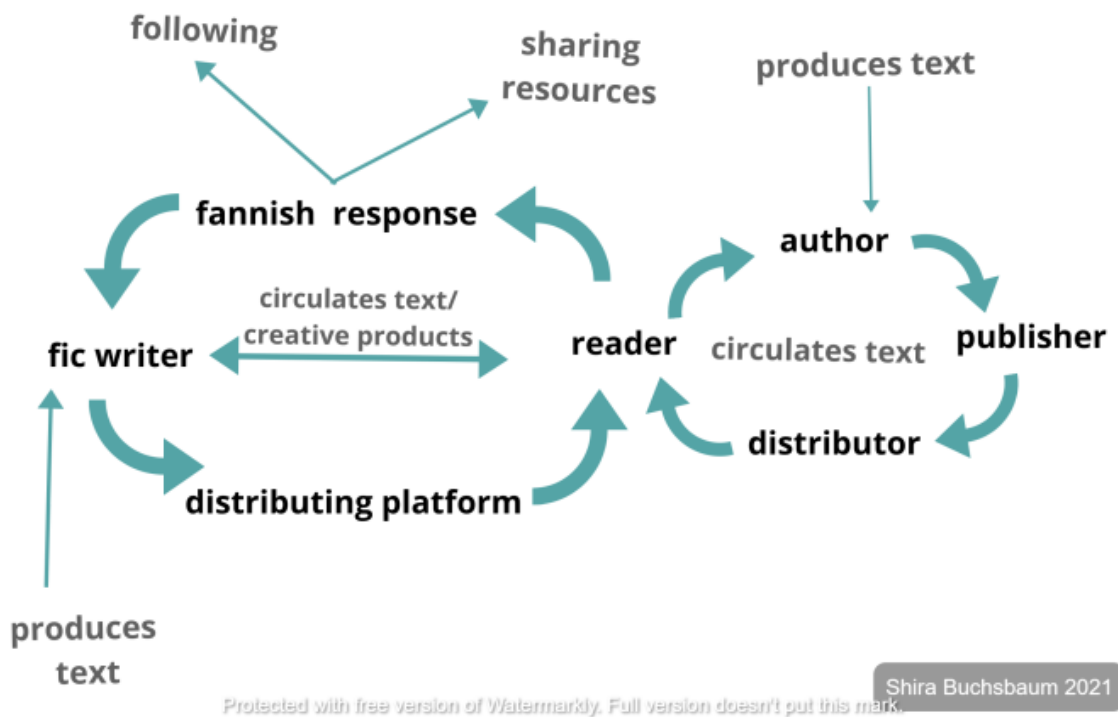
<sup>32</sup> Buchsbaum, 58.

<sup>33</sup> “Behold, the Archive of Our Own!,” *Tumblr*, January 16, 2021, <https://ao3org.tumblr.com/post/640510281227829248/behold-the-archive-of-our-own-after-moving-our>.

<sup>34</sup> “Blocking of AO3 in China,” *Fanlore*, accessed June 29, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Blocking\\_of\\_AO3\\_in\\_China/](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Blocking_of_AO3_in_China/).

Given fandom's history of loss, what does the format of the book do for the fic contained within? I establish the importance of the book's anti-capitalist nature and how it operates outside fandom spaces in Chapter Three; however, before I argue for the why the book artifact is important outside fandom, I must first establish how it works within fandom, or within what Buchsbaum calls the Fanfiction Communication Circuit:

### **Fanfiction Communication Circuit**



*Figure 1: Buchsbaum's Fanfiction Communication Circuit*

As stated earlier, Buchsbaum develops her circuit in the context of fanfiction as book history. More specifically, she builds off of Catherine Coker's argument for situating fanfiction within women's private coterie manuscript practices. These private

manuscript practices of the 16<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> centuries operated in tandem with and also subverted public, predominantly male models of print production and publication. This practice is mirrored in fanfiction's history and production: much of fic continues to be written largely by and for other women within private fan communities.<sup>35</sup> Coker and Buchsbaum also argue for how fanfiction is not only analogous to (women's) book history, but a natural continuation of the practice in today's media landscape. Thus, in the following section, it would be useful to maintain this anchor of fanfiction writing to women's manuscript practices as both a point of comparison to and larger context in which to situate fanfiction production.

Buchsbaum's communication circuit transforms Robert Darnton's, which originally communicates "the relationship between author, printer, publisher, distributor, and reader."<sup>36</sup> Her circuit diverges tangentially from Darnton's because fic and fic production also exist in a divergent, tangential process centered on the reader, who anchors and acts as the link between Darnton's model and her own.<sup>37</sup> The Fanfiction Communication Circuit models both the fan's relationship to the original text, demonstrating fanworks' intertextuality, as well as the fans' relationship to the work of other fans, thereby demonstrating the communal, "writerly" nature of fanfiction (here, "writerly" meaning "the ongoing meaning-making in fic").<sup>38</sup> She also provides a

---

<sup>35</sup> Coker.

<sup>36</sup> Buchsbaum, 17.

<sup>37</sup> Buchsbaum, 17.

<sup>38</sup> Buchsbaum, 30. Using *Letters* as an example, I also demonstrated writerly-ness in Chapter One.



Community Model which shows “fandom’s web-like nature and...that fic production crosses the boundaries of text, actors, and response.”

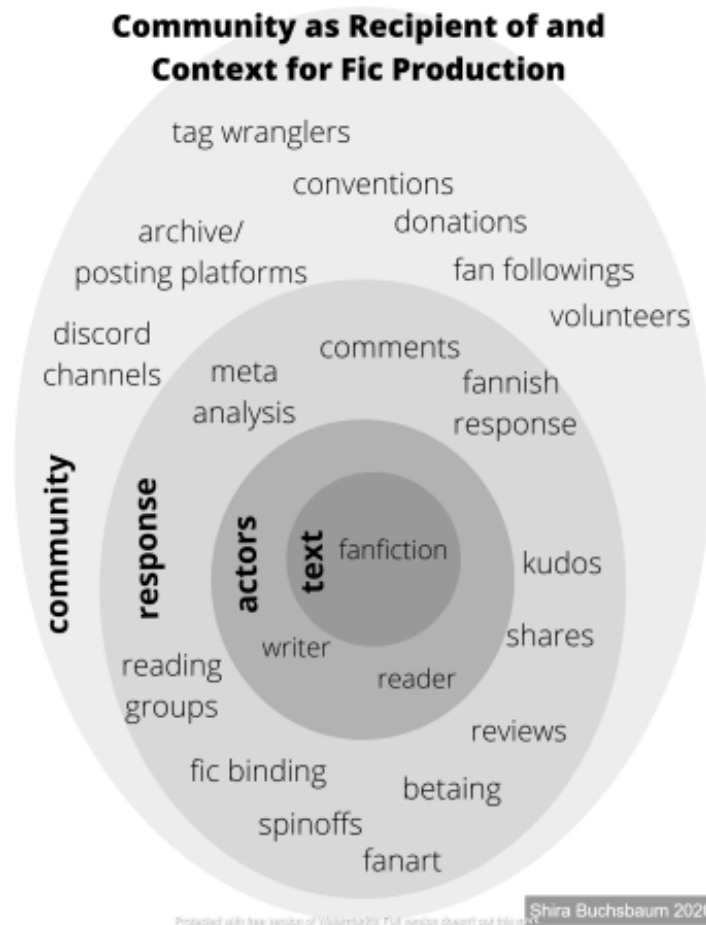


Figure 2: Buchsbaum’s Community Model. From the author’s caption: “The Community Model visualizes the interconnected web of elements that contribute to the creation, dissemination, and discussion of fanfiction. The outer zones influence the inner zones and vice versa.”<sup>39</sup>

This model, Buchsbaum argues, “accounts for the shortcomings of the fanfiction communication circuit, which anchors fic production in four inflexible nodes and does

<sup>39</sup> Buchsbaum, 19.

not depict the aggregating nature of fandom.”<sup>40</sup> These models put name to the demonstrations of intertextuality in Chapter One and how I “wear many hats” as both fic writer and reader: I, acting as the reader in the FCC (an “actor” in the Community Model), also respond to the source text as a writer by writing a fic which focuses on transforming and exploring the themes and characters I found most interesting. My interpretations of these character and themes within both texts were informed by my reading of not only the source texts, but also of other fic and meta (products of the “response” node of the Community Model). I did so both as a writer and reader (“actor” node of Community Model) and a member of a Big Bang Discord channel<sup>41</sup> (“community” node of model), and thus took on several different roles of community member, reader and interpreter of original text, reader and interpreter of fan text, and fic writer.<sup>42</sup>

### *Bookbinding in the FCC and Community Model*

Where does bookbinding fit in? Buchsbaum places fic binding in the “response” node of the Community Model,<sup>43</sup> serving as an act of reciprocation to fic authors by fic binders for the enjoyment derived from reading their work. This completes the Communication Circuit via the exchange of creative products<sup>44</sup> (for those binders who

---

<sup>40</sup> Buchsbaum, 19.

<sup>41</sup> Discord is an online instant messaging platform where many fan communities reside today.

<sup>42</sup> Buchsbaum, 34.

<sup>43</sup> Buchsbaum, 51.

<sup>44</sup> Buchsbaum, 53.

send author copies of their bound works). Much like the participants of Buchsbaum's survey, I derive the most enjoyment from participating in the "response" node by binding books and sending copies to authors, a further demonstration of the gift-economy of fandom. Indeed, when my online fandom friend, someone who I have never met in person, whose face and age I do not know, and who I cherish very dearly, received the three books I bound for her as gifts, she expressed such gratitude and affirmations of our shared love for the same stories that it made all the months of hard work and production costs worth it. To me, bookbinding fanfiction is about the connections I form with the authors whose stories I love, and is ultimately worth the extensive monetary and labor costs.

However, what of binding my own work, since I am both the recipient of the book and its author? Binding my own work allows me to focus more centrally on another benefit bookbinding offers: long-term preservation. Like the participants of Buchsbaum's survey, "while preserving fic is not the only driving reason to ficbind, it is on the list."<sup>45</sup> In addition to receiving satisfaction from gift-giving, I also find value in the crafting process, as well as the feeling of accomplishment when holding a completed book in my hands. By removing the gift-giving aspect, binding my own work becomes more an act of preservation and aesthetic pleasure, rather than direct participation in an online fandom community (although, as I will explain shortly, I am still connected to that community). Instead, I bind my work as both an act of self-publishing and self-preservation, "challeng[ing] the notion that only the worthiest information merits the cost of book

---

<sup>45</sup> Buchsbaum, 58.

production and that only traditional publishing can establish a work's worth."<sup>46</sup> I find value in the "what-if?", in the combination of two very different fictional worlds, and the exploration of my favorite characters, all done within a community that both informs and receives those understandings.<sup>47</sup>

*Protecting the Library: The Book as a Container*

Although binding my own fic removes the gift-giving aspect to a specific author or friend, this does not remove my participation in the greater Fanfiction Communication Circuit. Buchsbaum notes that although binding fic in a physical form "strips the fic of its community context...the gains of permanence, the opportunity to create a physical object, and the ability to thank the writer through bound fic [this part not applicable to binding my own work] outweigh the instantaneous losses of accessibility and digital interactivity."<sup>48</sup> Given fandom's fraught history, by binding my own fic, I am preparing for a potential future in which the "distributing platform" node of the FCC is no longer AO3, or perhaps even the Internet. Also given our history, I believe the loss of any fannish community to be within the realm of possibility; not likely, but also not impossible. In other words, the book acts as a vehicle of long-term preservation and means of distribution that does not rely on fragile online structures of communication. Although I am not gifting the book to an author, it will still function as the centrally

---

<sup>46</sup> Buchsbaum, 54, citing David Reinking's *Valuing Reading, Writing, and Books in a Post-Typographic World* in *A History of the Book in America: Volume 5: Enduring the Book*, ed. David Paul Nord, (University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

<sup>47</sup> Buchsbaum, 42.

<sup>48</sup> Buchsbaum, 61.

located “text” node in Buchsbaum’s community model, as well as the distribution platform in the FCC, all in the event that the platforms, electrical grids, governments, and technology which currently allow these processes to operate online cease to exist. In doing so, I argue that my work—and the works of all my friends and favorite authors—is worthy of a permanent existence for anyone to enjoy in the future, as long as the English language can be read and as long as these books are readable.

This permanent existence contains power. The stories that are most well-known are arguably the ones that are most distanced from their original authors by time and retellings (the *Odyssey*, the *Illiad*, Chaucer’s tales).<sup>49</sup> By binding a fic, I give it longevity and physical permanence, and therefore the ability to persist long after the death of the author. Similar to how medieval scholars build history from illuminated manuscripts, so too will it be possible for future readers to construct an understanding of the original source texts of bound fic.<sup>50</sup> If other fics are preserved, it would also be possible for readers to construct a view of the fandom, learn about the tropes and characters popular at the time, and even begin telling new stories based on their own interpretations. I believe this cyclical nature, this telling and retelling, to be the true heart of storytelling, in the tradition of folklore before the for-profit model of publishing.

Thus, binding fic not only “further distances fic from that traditional circuit as it assigns the codex with new production and value meanings,”<sup>51</sup> but furthermore marks a

---

<sup>49</sup> Coppa, 7.

<sup>50</sup> Buchsbaum, 61: “were every copy of *Harry Potter* to be lost and the internet wiped, one could reconstruct the events of the series through bound copies of Annerb’s ‘The Changeling’ and dirgewithoutmusic’s ‘boy with a scar’ series.”

<sup>51</sup> Buchsbaum, 49.

return to storytelling outside for-profit models, paradoxically based on works created in a for-profit capitalist society. What makes binding fic even more interesting is its irrevocable ties to contemporary forms of online communication and community-building, a modern twist on the old traditions. Binding fanfiction thus becomes both a product of for-profit storytelling as well as the ultimate rejection of it.

### *Process*

#### *Typesetting and the Patriarchy*

With these contexts in mind, this section will briefly describe my process for creating the book, structured very closely with the steps provided in ArmoredSuperHeavy's guide, *How to Make a Book*. I found ArmoredSuperHeavy's bookbinding posts in late summer of 2020 after they went viral on Tumblr. I have since become a member of the ficbinding artist's collective known as Renegade Bindery (located on Discord), of which they are a founding member. ArmoredSuperHeavy's guide is constantly evolving as new members join the group and provide their own expertise, further demonstrating the communal nature of fannish work<sup>52</sup> (indeed, many of the binders in the Discord community are also fan writers, fan artists, and all are, of course, avid fanfiction readers). The purpose of this section is not to instruct readers on how to build a book; rather, I hope to demonstrate that all my work is self-taught, done for pleasure rather than profit, and volunteer,<sup>53</sup> thus placing the practice outside the professional world of for-profit publishing.

---

<sup>52</sup> Buchsbaum, 19.

<sup>53</sup> The importance of claiming these labels for my work will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

The first step is to, of course, write the fic. Chapter One detailed the major themes and character arcs I wished to explore and subvert; this writing process took, in total, from my submitting a Google form to sign up as a Big Bang writer in early August 2020, to posting the final chapters on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, about five months. My writing process is fairly simple: I write the whole fic in a notebook by hand, then edit as I type. I usually read through the completed work once before I post to AO3, then make small changes as I re-read on mobile. This again demonstrates how fanfiction posted online is not static, subject to revision and edits by the author even after it has been read by others, in contrast to the permanent nature of the fic after it is printed. The fic is split into five chapters, with each chapter and summary derived from a corresponding track title in the *Violet Evergarden* Original Soundtrack (further demonstrating the intertextual and inter-media nature of fic). It totals at 60,056 words. (For comparison, *The Great Gatsby* totals at 47,094 words,<sup>54</sup> *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* is 77,325,<sup>55</sup> and *The Magician's Nephew* totals at 64,480<sup>56</sup>).

As with my other projects, I copy the body text from AO3. I use the aforementioned feature that allows registered users to download fics in a variety of formats (in this case HTML), a feature designed in response to our history of content

---

<sup>54</sup> “Five Great Books Too Short for NANOWRIMO,” *Barnes and Noble*, accessed May 19, 2021, <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/blog/5-great-books-too-short-for-nanowrimo/>.

<sup>55</sup> “The Word Count of 175 Favorite Novels,” *Broke by Books*, accessed May 19, 2021, <https://brokebybooks.com/the-word-count-of-175-favorite-novels/>.

<sup>56</sup> “The Word Count of 175 Favorite Novels.”

purges.<sup>57</sup> I then paste the text into a word document to preserve italics. I use the program Affinity Publisher to format my books, a more cost-efficient program with similar features to Adobe InDesign (which is more commonly used in the professional industry). Like many other bookbinders, cost is one of the more influential factors in the scale and process of production.<sup>58</sup> Thus, although I have experience using Adobe InDesign from earlier projects, due to cost constraints, I found Affinity Publisher to be more suitable for my bookbinding projects in the long term.

The main body text of all my books is eleven-point Garamond, and I model my front matter and title pages off of traditionally published books. These books include but are not limited to: Vintage's reprint editions of Toni Morrison's novels (including *Beloved*, *Jazz*, and *The Bluest Eye*), Picador's reprint edition of Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead*, Quill Tree Books' *Crier's War* by Nina Varela, and Penguin Classics' omnibus edition of Jane Austen's novels (specifically for my anthologies, usually of several fics by one author). All of these companies are imprints of one of the "Big Five" publishers (Vintage being an imprint of Penguin Random House, Picador an imprint of Macmillan, and Quill Tree Books an imprint of HarperCollins). My decision to base my typesetting on their designs is deliberate; in doing so, I argue for the legitimacy of ficbinding as a form of (micro)publishing as well as follow in ArmoredSuperHeavy's footsteps, which they describe in their call to guerilla publishing in *How to Make a Book*: "I am challenging ideas of what should be inside the book. The more a book looks like

---

<sup>57</sup> "Major Fandom Purges," *Fanlore*, accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_Major\\_Fandom\\_Purges,\\_Restrictions,\\_and\\_Hassles\\_Regarding\\_Fanworks\\_and\\_Their\\_Content](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Major_Fandom_Purges,_Restrictions,_and_Hassles_Regarding_Fanworks_and_Their_Content); "An Archive of One's Own."

<sup>58</sup> Buchsbaum, 56.



something a ‘real’ publishing house would put out, the stronger and more subversive the statement it makes.”<sup>59</sup>

Adding to ArmoredSuperHeavy’s declaration of bookbinding fanfiction as subverting traditional publishing standards, my decision to typeset in the style of the Big Five is also subversive of fic’s online-only existence, as well as a transformative return to the physical zines of media fandom. Going even further before fanfiction for media fandom, typesetting in the style of major publishing houses strengthens the argument for fic as a continuation of book history.

But we may go even further still: that history has its own instances of subversion: namely, the private manuscript practices of 16<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> century European women writers, in contrast to the public, published book realm of their male counterparts. Furthermore, this time around, women of color are included (although not as equally as their white counterparts).<sup>60</sup> As Coker says:

We can reread women’s work in the literary and book trades from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries as a function of operating with and subverting patriarchal norms of literary production. In other words, the more things change, the more they stay the same.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, not only does bookbinding fic in the style of the Big Five subvert and transform modern publishing practices and design, it also transcends those practices’ histories and contexts which have historically oppressed women writers.

---

<sup>59</sup> ArmoredSuperHeavy, 3.

<sup>60</sup> Rukmini Pande, “Dial Me Up, Scotty: Fandoms as Platforms for Women’s Online Identity,” in *Squee from the Margins: Fandom and Race* (University of Iowa Press, 2018), 6.

<sup>61</sup> Coker, [2.1].

### *Putting It All Together*

After formatting the book, I then take the files to my local Office Depot for printing. In this regard, I am a little different from many of the other binders in the Renegade Bindery group,<sup>62</sup> many of whom print at home. However, all other steps of my process are done at home, and all resources are paid for out of my own pocket, a further demonstration of how “the lack of outsourcing aspects of production emphasizes...dedication to the autodidactic craft.”<sup>63</sup> After printing, I then fold all the signatures, press them for flattening in my lying press, then punch holes for sewing. After sewing, I compress and glue the spine in my standing press, then trim the edges using a paper guillotine. I then round the spine using a wide and flat-faced hammer, which provides extra support for preservation purposes and creates a rounded look for aesthetic purposes. After rounding, I return the text block to the standing press and glue the mull (a material similar to cheesecloth that offers extra support) and then the headbands.

Then comes construction of the case; I cut a 9” x 11.5” Davey board in half for the covers, a spine made of Bristol board, and connect these elements using a strip of book cloth. Then, after cutting the decorative sheets that will serve as the cover of the book, I glue them onto the case. For this project, I decided to use celestial-themed scrapbook paper with navy blue book cloth to match the color scheme from *Violet Evergarden* (see Appendix B). I then design the spine, cover titles, and decals using Cricut Design Space (Cricut is a crafting machine that cuts designs and shapes) with iron-

---

<sup>62</sup> Buchsbaum, 55.

<sup>63</sup> Buchsbaum, 55.

on vinyl and foil. For this project, I chose gold and white. I then glue the text block into the case (a process called “casing in”), then press the book in my lying press for about eight hours to dry. After those eight hours, the book is officially complete.

With this book as well as all the others I have made, my choices regarding the design of decorative paper, endpaper, headbands, typesetting, and titling all require my careful consideration of the content of the fic. I go to great lengths to match fic content with the design of book that contains it. These choices are a reflection of my interpretation of the work, further deepening the intertextual nature of my work as a fanfiction reader, writer, and bookbinder (or, as Buchsbaum’s model delineates, demonstrates my participation in several different nodes of the Community Model).<sup>64</sup> In addition, my work is strictly volunteer and autodidactic—much in the spirit of how creative literary work by women has taken place in private households and is thus “invisible.” Coker writes, “at this point in time, all too often books themselves are not seen; we usually don’t consider the sourcing of paper, bindings, ink, etc. because we are so distanced from it...The invisibility of the material object becomes a point of erasure: what is not seen becomes nonexistent.”<sup>65</sup>

Learning how to bind books makes this process visible; likewise, the fact that the material bound is fanfiction—historically ephemeral and female—makes the at-home process all the more important. My tools are sourced from what I had on hand. My lying press is constructed from two cutting boards; my standing press is made from scrap

---

<sup>64</sup> Buchsbaum, 19.

<sup>65</sup> Coker, [2.8-12].

plywood; all templates for cutting paper, punching holes, and folding signatures were made using materials I already owned. I use 20 lb Hammermill cream copy paper because it is the cheapest paper that looks the closest to commercially published books. The entire process takes, generally, around ten to fifteen hours over the course of anywhere from a week to a week and a half (again, because this is my hobby, I do it in my free time, generally in the evenings). Even for author copies, I receive no financial compensation for my work, a decision I have made as a member of the gift economy of fandom. These aspects of the process further demonstrate how fic binding exists within a larger history of invisible labor done by women in private households and how the practice “inverses the publicly circulated, for-profit book production model that dominates the narrative of book publishing.”<sup>66</sup> If women’s work in the household has historically been “a point of erasure,” then the fic binding process inverses and transforms that erasure; household bookbinding becomes a means of preserving and giving voice to stories that have historically been silenced, as well as ensuring those stories will outlive the Internet’s dwindling time limit.

*Conclusion: Why Bind Fic, When to Bind Fic, and How to Bind Fic*

The book object subverts existing publishing circuits, further transforms fan work through a binder’s design choices, ensures long-term preservation, and is created in response to a history of loss as well as a desire to build community. Furthermore, despite wearing the trappings of a for-profit object, it is created in a strictly not-for-profit, volunteer setting. It contains intertextual content which spurs modern copyright laws by

---

<sup>66</sup> Buchsbaum, 55.

actively transforming existing intellectual properties. I believe ficbinding's subversion of conventional publishing practices is one of the most rewarding and valuable aspects of the process. This anti-capitalist tilt will be further explored in Chapter Three, where I will argue for how the book functions outside fandom spaces in a capitalistic and heteronormative society. For now, however, I hope that I have demonstrated how every aspect of the book object—from its contents to its creation—is informed by a history of loss, functions in several different capacities of fandom community, and is created using volunteer labor in the spirit and continuation of women's book history. Finally, the bound fic is intended for further transformation by both current and future fans. Each book I bind is a labor of love, created as a member of a larger, intricately-connected community built on shared love for a story, and each book is ready for whatever the coming decades may have in store for fandom.

## CHAPTER THREE

### IT'S ALIVE (Providing Social and Economic Context)

#### *Fandom Goes Mainstream: Context*

This section will discuss how the book object and the fic within functions in three larger social and economic contexts: fic and fandom as transcultural, historically female and queer, and located outside capitalist structures of modern publishing. These three lenses are the most pertinent to providing context and justification for the book object because: 1) my fic explores and transforms non-Western stories, thus providing insight into an area of fan studies that is lacking in nonwhite narratives, 2) my fic is slash fic, which utilizes queer theory to interpret and transform existing stories that lack queer narratives, and 3) my fic exists in the tradition of fic as modern folklore in an age of for-profit storytelling.

In addition, these three lenses shed light as to why fandom and fanfiction history are ephemeral and at times vulnerable to intentional and/or accidental erasure (as discussed in Chapter Two). Diana Floegel writes in *“Write the story you want to read:” world-queering through slash fanfiction creation* that members of marginalized groups must often use informal information systems, such as social media platforms, in order to build community. However, “major social media platforms are embedded with oppressive discourses that often misalign with queer individuals’ and communities’ more

localized needs.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, because many fandoms are composed of marginalized people, many fandom communities are likewise vulnerable to bigotry and erasure, both within fan spaces and without. This social context aligns with and explains in part the fragility of fandom spaces discussed in Chapter Two.

In addition, these lenses are also important to consider given fandom’s more recent brushes with mainstream media. In 2009 and 2012, Disney purchased Marvel and Lucasfilms, both franchises with large fandom followings, and franchises such as these have since come to dominate the pop culture media landscape.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, fans are now on the radars of company executives looking to appeal and appease audiences.<sup>3</sup> And as awareness of fandom grows, so too does awareness of fanfiction. Fanfiction has always had a tenuous relationship with copyright laws (and takedowns of fanfiction are sometimes even spearheaded by angry authors).<sup>4</sup> As fic becomes more entangled with

---

<sup>1</sup> Diana Floegel, “‘Write the story you want to read’: world-queering through slash fanfiction creation,” *Journal of Documentation* 76, no. 4 (2020): 786. Citing Noble’s *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (New York University Press, 2018) and Lingel and Golub’s “In face on Facebook: Brooklyn’s drag community and sociotechnical practices of online communication” in *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 20, no. 5 (2015).

<sup>2</sup> “‘Star Wars,’ ‘Pinocchio’ and More as Disney Leans Sharply Into Streaming,” *New York Times*, December 22, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/10/business/media/disney-star-wars.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 16.

<sup>4</sup> “Anne Rice: Removal of Fanfiction Based on Anne Rice’s Works from Fanfiction.net,” *Fanlore*, accessed June 2, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Anne\\_Rice#Removal\\_of\\_Fan\\_Fiction\\_Based\\_on\\_Anne\\_Rice.27s\\_Works\\_from\\_Fanfiction.net](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Anne_Rice#Removal_of_Fan_Fiction_Based_on_Anne_Rice.27s_Works_from_Fanfiction.net).

See also: Hellekson and Busse, 131. From *Chapter 3: Fan Communities and Affect*: “Until very recently, the general public’s opinion of fans could be summed up with a dismissive imperative: ‘Get a life!’ This was the punch line in the now infamous *Saturday Night Live* skit where William Shatner dismisses his convention audience of eager and costumed fans by declaring their fannish interests unimportant and not part of real life.”

mainstream audiences and traditional publishing, more questions arise regarding its legality and profitability. Perhaps fanfiction's most infamous encounter with those outside fandom is E.L. James' *Fifty Shades of Grey*, originally a fic of Stephanie Meyers' *Twilight* with the title *Master of the Universe*, written under the pen name Snowqueens Icedragon.<sup>5</sup> Fan terms and fanfiction tropes previously unheard of outside fan communities, such as "ABO," have also found their way to *New York Times* articles.<sup>6</sup> Thus, as fandom becomes more visible to, and in many ways even courted by, mainstream media producers and audiences (although very rarely in a way that risks alienating a majority of the fanbase),<sup>7</sup> it is important to explore the ways that some parts of fandom are still niche and often marginalized—both in its content and creators.

Finally, if one accepts fandom as a valid area of study and fanfiction as a valid a literary form, it is also important to discuss how fandom is flawed—particularly how its history and academic structures, whether intentionally or unintentionally, erase the experiences of fans of color. Such critiques can only better fan communities and allow fandom to truly be a place where fans can bond over a shared love for stories.

---

<sup>5</sup> Hayley C. Cuccinello, "Fifty Shades Of Green: How Fanfiction Went From Dirty Little Secret To Money Machine," *Forbes*, February 10, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/hayleycuccinello/2017/02/10/fifty-shades-of-green-how-fanfiction-went-from-dirty-little-secret-to-money-machine/?sh=54ae485e264c>.

<sup>6</sup> Alexandra Alter, "A Feud in Wolf-Kink Erotica Raises a Deep Legal Question," *New York Times*, May 23, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/23/business/omegaverse-erotica-copyright.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 16: "Engaged viewers are now actively invited and courted by producers, including even the previously marginalized fans. This doesn't mean that sexual content (for example) is necessarily welcome, or that many of the less conventional romantic fan pairings will suddenly become canon on the shows."



*Fandom and Fanfiction About and By People of Color*

*Writing About Japanese Media*

Rukmini Pande, author of *Squee from the Margins: Fandom and Race*, as well as one of the leading fan academics on race and racism in fandom, notes how “any discussion of transnational and transcultural fandom...seems to circulate around fan cultures that are demonstrably outside the dominant paradigm that grants certain texts fandom canonicity, either by geographic location or language.”<sup>8</sup> I believe my project, while not wholly representative of animanga fandom, perhaps sheds some further light on this gap in fan studies. I write within two distinct<sup>9</sup> but connected<sup>10</sup> media fandom traditions: that of Western Anglophone media and that of Eastern Asian media, specifically Japanese media.

As stated in Chapter One, anime is a Japanese medium of animation, which, much like other media, has been influenced by the Internet’s ability to connect international users via social media and streaming platforms. This is evident in newer series that have the anime “aesthetic” but are produced in other countries such as China or the United States.<sup>11</sup> When examining the cross-cultural nature of fanfiction written in a Western

---

<sup>8</sup> Pande, 6.

<sup>9</sup> I say “distinct” here not to perpetuate Western fan academia’s tendency to create narratives that leave out nonwhite, non-Western fandom histories, but rather to bring the two narratives together for further discussion and exploration of diasporic and transcultural fandoms.

<sup>10</sup> Sandra Annett, review of *Boys love manga and beyond: History, culture, and community in Japan*, edited by Mark McLelland, Kazumi Nagaike, Katsuhiko Suganuma, and James Welker,” *Transformative Works and Cultures* 25 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2017.01011>.

<sup>11</sup> See Netflix’s *Castlevania* or *Yasuke*, as well as Crunchyroll’s *RWBY*.

setting about media created in Japan, it is important to emphasize that while anime is by no means representative of Japanese culture, much of anime is still written and informed by Japanese writers, artists, and audiences (although the diversity of each of these groups, especially audiences, continues to grow). As such, I write about characters and themes from two separate series informed by that culture: *Haikyuu!!* takes place in very specific locales of Japan, with the main cast attending school in Miyagi Prefecture and competing in tournaments and professional leagues with real-life counterparts. In the series' penultimate arc, the main character goes to Rio de Janeiro to play beach volleyball, a niche of Brazilian sports that has its own unique culture and practices.<sup>12</sup> The characters are unambiguously Japanese, and their depictions by Japanese mangaka Haruichi Furudate are likewise informed by Japanese culture. Finally, as discussed in Chapter One, the narrative structure of Kageyama's character arc, *kishoutenketsu*, is a Japanese form of storytelling.

Another discussion in Chapter One now relevant to this discussion of transcultural fandom is *Violet Evergarden*'s visual aesthetic. Although *Violet Evergarden* features a blue-eyed, blonde protagonist in a pseudo-German, fantastical, and vaguely European setting, it is based off a Japanese light novel series and produced by Japanese animation studio Kyoto Animation. Indeed, the phenomenon of Eastern Asian media, and anime in particular, utilizing and perhaps even fetishizing Western imagery for aesthetic purposes,

---

<sup>12</sup> Haruichi Furudate, *ハイキュー!! [Haikyuu!!] Complete Illustration Book*, (Shueisha, 2020).

is the subject of much discourse.<sup>13</sup> (Although the word “fetishizing” is perhaps an ill-fit given the West’s history of colonization and imperialism, a history which extends to global media). In short, the characters and themes I write about exist within a space heavily informed by a culture that is not my own; within my fic, characters refer to each other using appropriate honorifics, live in a world informed by Japanese interpretations of a European fantasy world, and undergo developments likewise informed by a Japanese narrative structure. This cross-cultural nature of my work—myself as an Asian American, learning and writing about Japanese characters—demonstrates how fandom and fanfiction can allow for cross-cultural boundaries.

### *Racism in Fandom*

However, simply adopting Japanese characters and narrative structures does not necessarily mean that those adaptations are free of prejudice and stereotypes.<sup>14</sup> Fandom and its academia are plagued by racism<sup>15</sup> and bigotry.<sup>16</sup> Fandom and fanfiction by and about people of color is also underdeveloped in Western fan studies,<sup>17</sup> due in part to a

---

<sup>13</sup> Toshio Miyake, “Doing Occidentalism in contemporary Japan: Nation anthropomorphism and sexualized parody in *Axis Powers Hetalia*,” *Transformative Works and Cultures* 12 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2013.0436>.

<sup>14</sup> It would not do to simply say “my work is not racist.” My interpretations of the world are fallible and not immune to prejudices. However, I can in good faith say that when it comes to *Letters*, I have done my best to portray my characters with the utmost care and understanding of their original cultural contexts and literary canons.

<sup>15</sup> “RaceFail ’09,” *Fanlore*, accessed June 2, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/RaceFail\\_%2709](https://fanlore.org/wiki/RaceFail_%2709).

<sup>16</sup> Kelly Marie Tran, “Kelly Marie Tran: I Won’t Be Marginalized by Online Harassment,” *New York Times*, August 21, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/21/movies/kelly-marie-tran.html>.

<sup>17</sup> Floegel, 799.

larger perception that media fandom is mostly composed of white fans. Pande argues that “the unexamined yet assumed whiteness of media fan spaces has allowed for successive theorizations about their workings to have now solidified into accepted histories.” This history, with its focus on (white) women’s subversion of heteronormativity, excludes the narratives of and criticisms from fans of color.<sup>18</sup> This history and its erasure affects even trusted fan infrastructures like the AO3 and the OTW; while AO3 hosts an Abuse and Policy team, it also does virtually nothing to address racist fanfiction hosted on its site, instead citing its existence as an archive and its anti-censorship policy as defense for inaction.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, fandom is not exempt from racism, particularly racism by white creators in portrayals of nonwhite and/or non-Western cultures. While this section primarily focuses on my project as it exists within animanga fandom, and what I believe to be ultimately positive and productive demonstrations of how fandom can cross cultural boundaries, I am also aware of the greater contexts in which my work and the current construction of fandom history exist. I am a person of color writing in an Anglophone media fandom tradition which largely overwrites non-white fan experiences and privileges white narratives. However, I am also a guest in the cultural space that created the stories I write fanfiction about, stories which are rooted in Japanese fandom and larger Japanese culture. Ultimately, fandom is a space of freedom, escape, and creativity for so many, but not for

---

<sup>18</sup> Pande, 12-13.

<sup>19</sup> Samira Nadkarni (@SamiraNadkarni), “For those that don’t know, fandom’s been reckoning with a racism problem...,” Twitter, June 12, 2020, <https://twitter.com/SamiraNadkarni/status/1271340989181919232>.

all; if we accept fanfiction and fan works as valid forms of cultural and intellectual expression, then we must also critique and try to better our communities.<sup>20</sup> Although there is much work to be done, particularly in the design of structures as central as AO3, I believe that, at its best, fanfiction and fandom can allow for healthy, positive interactions between different cultures.

### *A Note on Boys' Love and Slash*

These cross-cultural happenings are also evident in the terms I use to describe and tag my work (which in turn affects how community members find and interact with my work).<sup>21</sup> Although my work focuses more on Kageyama Tobio's journey to self-acceptance, this journey is heavily influenced by his friendship (and eventual romantic) relationship with Hinata Shouyou. As such, in Western animanga fandom, my fic is considered *slash* fic, or fic that explores the romantic (and sometimes sexual—although my fic remains G rated) relationship between same-sex pairings. However, my fic is also written within and for animanga fandom, so it may also be classified as Japanese “BL,” or Boys' Love. BL is considered its own subgenre of animanga and animanga fanworks, depicting the romantic and sometimes sexual relationship between men. BL and its counterpart, Girls' Love, has its own history, tropes, and community cultures. Historically, BL is comparable to and exists in conversation with, but is ultimately not the same as, slash.

---

<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth R. Hornsby, “A Case for Critical Methods: Sense Making, Race, and Fandom,” in *Fandom, Now in Color*, ed. Rukmini Pande (University of Iowa Press, 2020): 17.

<sup>21</sup> Buchsbaum, 40.

### *Diasporic Fandom Spaces*

Despite the differences between slash and BL traditions, however, they are not islands unto themselves—the Internet has seen to that. The two have begun to intermingle,<sup>22</sup> influencing and interacting with one another across Twitter threads, Pixiv links,<sup>23</sup> and fanfiction comment sections. Current paradigms of fan studies would place slash and BL in separate fandom traditions. I write in a space that includes hallmarks of both.

Pande writes that animanga fandoms are spaces home to “cross-cultural collaboration and high skilled use of language, translation, and graphics as well as website and web chat administration.” Fans who exist in these spaces—many of whom are people of color—have always been a part of fandom; they are prime examples of how fandom is also cross-cultural and influential for racial/cultural identity formation. However, the history of these spaces is often left out or skimmed over.<sup>24</sup> Pande also writes that historical narratives of early media fandom that do not take into account racial identity “inevitably [lead] to some erasure of its own...a differentiation is made between Western English-speaking fans and Japanese fans, completely eliding the presence of those participants who are diasporic, immigrants, or otherwise placed in between such identifications.”<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Coppa, 9.

<sup>23</sup> Pixiv is a Japanese online artist community.

<sup>24</sup> Pande, 37.

<sup>25</sup> Pande, 26.

Thus, many animanga fans are part of a “diasporic” fandom (for whom anime and manga fandoms were their gateway to media fandom, including myself), and often “code switch” between terms such as *slash* and *BL* when participating in different fandoms divided by language and culture.<sup>26</sup> Annett’s review of *Boys love manga and beyond: History, culture, and community in Japan* likewise acknowledges the “transnational nature of BL” as well as a need for further exploration of “international perspectives—for instance, by looking not only at BL readers in Japan and/or North America, but also in East Asia, Europe, Latin America, and other emerging global fan bases.” This project, although limited in its focus on a single fic, is a demonstration of one way diasporic fans interact and curate fandom experiences through Big Bangs and bookbinding.

I write within this “space of liminality, of in-betweenness” in which Pande constructs “media fandom as a post-colonial cyberspace.”<sup>27</sup> Many of the meta essays which influenced my interpretations of characters were written by English-Japanese bilingual fans, whose translations inform what Buchsbaum calls the Brownian motion<sup>28</sup> of fan interpretations (“fanon”).<sup>29</sup> The liminal existence of animanga fandom and the impact that intersectionality has on other elements of fanfiction history is important to

---

<sup>26</sup> Pande, 43.

<sup>27</sup> Pande, 39.

<sup>28</sup> Buchsbaum, 43.

<sup>29</sup> Within academic circles and without, animanga fans who do not speak Japanese experience the original source texts via translation. As a result, there is another layer of interpretation to consider when engaging in transcultural fannish activities. Pande provides an example of this translation work in her interviews with fans who do scanlation and subbing work, or fan translations and typesetting of manga and anime into different languages; Pande, 39.

consider when reading the following sections of this chapter. These elements include fanfiction's creation by queer women (a narrative that, as Pande argues, has historically not allowed for construction of fandom history outside white paradigms) and its participation in a folkloric tradition that includes non-Western forms of storytelling (such as oral histories).

The rest of this chapter, then, will focus on how the book object and its English-language fanfiction, containing a story and characters from Japanese anime, functions in a larger Anglophone, Western literary and social zeitgeist. The existence of my fic within a diasporic animanga fandom, as well as my own identity as an Asian American with a limited grasp of Japanese, may provide some insight about the fandom experiences of nonwhite fans and their work.

### *Fandom and Fanfiction by Queer Women*

#### *Early Theories*

In their introduction to the chapter entitled *Fan Identity and Feminism* in *The Fanfiction Studies Reader*, Hellekson and Busse write that “From its very beginnings, media fan fiction has been a female, if not feminist, undertaking.”<sup>30</sup> And indeed, slash fanfiction has historically been written by women, for women, and perhaps most interestingly, about gay men. This phenomenon comprises much of early and current fan scholarship. Early studies, such as those conducted by Lamb and Veith in *Romantic Myth, Transcendence, and Star Trek Zines*, posit that women who write stories about gay

---

<sup>30</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 79.



men do so because such narratives “are about two loving equals; within their relationship neither is ‘masculine’ while the other is ‘feminine,’ stronger or weaker, ‘husband’ or ‘wife.’”<sup>31</sup> In other words, writers see both parties in a romantic relationship as equals in every way, with each character possessing qualities perceived as traditionally feminine and masculine in equal parts.

For many years, this view was the most widely-accepted explanation for the abundance of women writing and sharing stories about gay men—called the first wave of fan studies by Hellekson and Busse.<sup>32</sup> They argue that this first wave builds its foundation on the incorporation/resistance paradigm, in which women work “against the patriarchal grain and [imagine] a utopian, truly equal world.”<sup>33</sup> Indeed, given the nature of how women are often portrayed in media, most often as love interests or sex symbols for the male gaze alone, such a view situates fanfiction as the righter of representational wrongs—a way for women to explore gender and sexuality through men in a way that would never be possible in mainstream media.

### *Today’s “Second Wave” of Fan Studies*

However, this first wave of fan studies in the ’80s and ’90s, while foundational for the field, has since shifted along with sociopolitical understandings of queerness, representation, and fandom, all facilitated by the Internet: “Gay, lesbian, bi, and trans

---

<sup>31</sup> Patricia Frazer Lamb and Diana L. Veith, “Romantic Myth, Transcendence, and *Star Trek* Zines,” from *The Fanfiction Studies Reader* (University of Iowa Press, 2014), 112.

<sup>32</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 79.

<sup>33</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 79.

fans, fans of color, queer fans—all are now vocal and visible, and fanfiction, particularly slash, can no longer be considered the aegis of straight white women.”<sup>34</sup> Likewise, in Pande’s collection of essays, *Fandom, Now in Color*, Hornsby writes that “convergence culture” via the internet allows for online fandom to be “ever-growing sites of social construction and participatory culture...fans find points of identification across multiple social identities.”<sup>35</sup>

So, times are changing. Hellekson and Busse posit that we are currently in a second wave of fan studies, its beginning marked by studies such as Jones’s formative *The Sex Lives of Cult Television Characters*, which argues that slash readings of homosocial relationships in television are not actually subversive.<sup>36</sup> This second wave, they argue, begins in the post-zine beginnings of the Internet. (Coppa likewise christens Hellekson and Busse’s 2006 publication *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* as the publication which marks the “coming of age” of this second wave).<sup>37</sup> In addition to the Internet allowing for cross-community interactions, the second wave of fan studies may also be due to the greater, if still limited and often problematic, representation of women and queer characters in mainstream media. As such, fan studies that exist in this second wave focus more on how fans from these groups—specifically

---

<sup>34</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 80.

<sup>35</sup> Hornsby, 17.

<sup>36</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 79.

<sup>37</sup> Coppa, 17.

fans who do not fit the label of straight and, in the case of scholars like Pande and Hornsby, white—interact with fanfiction and fandom.

In general, queer fans of slash pairings write fic to explore personal identity, reorient heteronormative content, and create queer communities.<sup>38</sup> Floegel calls these communities “queer information worlds,” a term they also use to describe feminist infrastructure of fanfiction archives such as AO3. These queer communities, housed on fan-run websites, allow for community building and identity development in both fan and non-fan capacities; such spaces allow for “the development of perceptions of sexuality...providing a non-threatening space for exploring and expressing sexuality in self and in others”<sup>39</sup> Although fandom is not a monolith, slash fandom in general is more accepting and open to the exploration of queer identities because those who partake in slash fandom are often queer themselves.

The fact that much of slash fanfiction is written by, for, and about queer people is important, offering what Hayes and Ball call “a point of agonism to dominant discourses on sexuality,”<sup>40</sup> or as Floegel puts it, allows for the “reorient[ing] of cis/heteronormative content” by and “for marginalized people whose perspectives are not included in formalized information resources and systems.”<sup>41</sup> However, the studies from these

---

<sup>38</sup> Floegel, 789.

<sup>39</sup> Sharon Hayes and Matthew Ball, “Queering Cyberspace: Fan Fiction communities as Spaces for Expressing and Exploring Sexuality,” in *Queering Paradigms*, ed. Burkhard Scherer (New York: P. Lang, 2010).

<sup>40</sup> Hayes and Ball.

<sup>41</sup> Floegel, 785-800.

articles are not wholly representative of slash fandom; both conducted research on specific fan communities centered around a specific pairing (specifically Captain America fanfiction and Harry Potter fanfiction). They cite a need for further research in other fan communities, particularly those that have denser populations of fans of color (such as animanga fandoms). This again demonstrates the ongoing discourse surrounding the intersectional nature of fan identities for those who are queer and nonwhite: “whiteness also limits [a work’s] queer theoretical depth, given that queerness is part of an interlocking matrix of oppression that includes race, class, ability, and other sites of privilege and marginalization.”<sup>42</sup>

Slash fandom is not the utopia that many fans—often white—see it as. However, sites like AO3 and TWC are capable of change and betterment when informed by criticisms from and narratives constructed by POC, such as Pande’s post-colonial cyberspace theory. Thanks to the advocacy and scholarship of fans of color, there have been some efforts to combat harassment in fan archives: AO3 has recently announced a user-blocking system that will allow fans of color who face harassment or encounter racist work to protect themselves from such interactions.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, it is not insignificant that the OTW’s mission statement is rooted in histories of oppression that fall along lines of gender, sexuality, and now, fans of color say, race. It is not perfect, but it is a start.

---

<sup>42</sup> Floegel, 799. Citing Cohen’s “Punks, bulldaggers, and welfare queens: the radical potential of queer politics?” in *GLQ* 3 (1997).

<sup>43</sup> sbooksbowm, “these changes are the result of fan advocacy...” *Tumblr*, May 9, 2021, <https://sbooksbowm.tumblr.com/post/650751356690464768/these-changes-are-the-result-of-fan-advocacy-and>.

So although imperfect and still-developing, queer/feminist infrastructure like AO3 allows queer fans to find, create, and build community around stories that speak to them. Thus, in many ways queer, slash fanfiction and its many creators (particularly those who are POC) are at the forefront of queer representation, and perhaps provide a look at what mainstream media outlets and publishing companies will be publishing in the coming decades as social norms change. Perhaps, in time, the spaces queer people must create for themselves will become a part of the cultural norm, and the necessity of “acceptance” by largely cis, heteronormative power structures will cease to exist.

### *Fandom and Fanfiction as Folklore*

#### *Fanfiction’s Unprofitability*

However, it is also because of fanfiction’s fringe nature—both in content, copyright infringement, and authorship—that it remains unprofitable for fan creators, at least in a monetary sense. In the age of copyright, where stories are the intellectual property of individuals and corporations, where does fanfiction, with its community-based storytelling and production in a gift economy, fit in? Given the success of fanfiction-turned-global franchises such as *Fifty Shades of Grey*, perhaps more pressing would be to ask—can fanfiction actually be profitable?

There have been attempts to commercialize fanfiction with varying levels of success, from Amazon's Kindle Worlds launch in 2014<sup>44</sup> to FanLib.<sup>45</sup> However, none have been widely accepted by fans and certainly none are central hubs of fannish activities like AO3. These attempts to commercialize fanfiction are what Lipton, author of *Copyright and the Commercialization of Fanfiction*, calls "the next step in the process," that process being fanfiction becoming a viable way for writers to support themselves financially.<sup>46</sup>

Fanfiction-turned-franchises, like E.L. James's *Fifty Shades of Grey* or Anna Todd's *After*, seem to prove that fanfiction can be profitable, and shouldn't fic writers strive to support themselves with their writing? Some members of the community have reached a similar conclusion: fanfiction "keeps women poor," and some further argue that "female fans should commodify fanfiction themselves, both to do it right (that is, before the outsiders) and so that women [can] begin to profit from this female-dominated literary form instead of 'giving our talents away as gifts.'"<sup>47</sup> Given the worldwide success—and controversy—of *Fifty Shades*, it is worthwhile to question fanfiction's place in a society structured around the maximization of profit.

---

<sup>44</sup> Jacqueline D. Lipton, "Copyright and the Commercialization of Fanfiction," *Houston Law Review* 52, no. 2 (October 2014): 425–66.

<sup>45</sup> "An Archive of One's Own."

<sup>46</sup> Lipton, 465.

<sup>47</sup> Coppa, 11. Citing Cupidsbow's 2007 essay, "How Fanfiction Keeps Us Poor" and Abigail DeKosnik's article, "Should Fanfiction Be Free?"

So yes, it seems that fanfiction can be profitable. Or can it really be, if it must be stripped of its intertextual nature and fan community in order to sell? *Fifty Shades* and *After*, originally *Twilight* and One Direction RPF (Real Person Fiction) fanfiction, were heavily edited and changed character names in order to avoid copyright infringement. Coppa, again citing DeKosnik, notes that *Fifty Shades* ceased to be fanfiction the moment “it was removed from its community and context”<sup>48</sup> (that community being the community of fans who make up the reader-writer members of Buchsbaum’s FCC and Community Model). Thus, again using the example of *Fifty Shades*, once a work is removed from that original fan network and sold as a “single, commodifiable object: a book,” a work ceases to be fanfiction. In an economic system where stories are commodities, then, fanfiction cannot be profitable, because in order to be acceptable for the market, it must be stripped of the community and intertextual context so integral to its identity. In other words, the moment it becomes profitable, it ceases to be fanfiction.

However, what is the difference, then, between binding a fic in one’s home and having it bound via a large publishing house, since both remove the fic’s community context? It is again the aspect of profit that differentiates the two: bound fic lives in and continues the tradition of fandom’s gift economy and community storytelling. As stated in Chapter Two, the act of binding fic is not profitable in a monetary sense—and many binders (including myself) intentionally do not take commissions.<sup>49</sup> True fanfiction—

---

<sup>48</sup> Coppa, 11.

<sup>49</sup> Buchsbaum, 56.

fanfiction that has not been altered to exist within the bounds of copyright—is likewise unprofitable.

Thus, although bound fic is physically separated from the community context which created it, it is still connected to that community—for lack of a better word—spiritually. (And given the Internet’s nonphysical form, physical connection is rarely part of the equation—such is why binding a fic is so subversive). Ficbinding ultimately does not reject the non-profit gift economy practiced by the community members who both form and inform its creation. Put another way, fanfiction is only fanfiction because of copyright laws—or as Coppa delineates, fanfiction must “transform stories currently owned by others.”<sup>50</sup> Fanfiction is simply the name given to a way of storytelling that has existed long before for-profit models of production; in a world where stories are not owned by individuals and corporations, fanfiction is simply communal storytelling. Through its creation via volunteer labor and existence as a gift back to the community, the book perpetuates that tradition.

### *Fanfiction as Folk*

Therefore, fanfiction is not profitable; *should* it be? No. Setting aside the fact that copyright bars fanfiction from ever being profitable, writing to meet the standards of a for-profit publishing house and writing for oneself and a group of friends as a hobby creates two distinct stories; the motives for writing are inherently different.<sup>51</sup> Fanfiction is

---

<sup>50</sup> Coppa, 6.

<sup>51</sup> Indeed, “for-profit” does not necessarily mean “higher quality.” See: the *Game of Thrones* season finale or *The Rise of Skywalker*.



conversation among fans, and it is community building. Fic's communal nature can be viewed through the lenses of several different literary traditions—as discussed in Chapter Two, one of the more recent traditions, one which highlights fanfiction's femaleness, is that of women's manuscript practices in book history. The argument for employing this lens is strengthened by fanfiction's historically female, ephemeral, and invisible nature; it is further strengthened by the act of binding it, which I offer to be a “next step” in fanfiction's ever-evolving place in several literary traditions. Indeed, as streaming platforms and services rise and it becomes harder to physically own media, so too do fan efforts to own physical copies of one's favorite books, movies, music, TV shows, etc.<sup>52</sup>

However, it would also be useful to consider fanfiction through older and broader traditions—specifically that of folklore and folk arts. This lens is presented in Shelley Ingram's “On Fanfiction and the Amateur/Professional Divide” in *Implied Nowhere: Absence in Folklore Studies*. Ingram argues that fanfiction exists not only as modern folklore, but as a strictly amateur (this word and all its connotations used intentionally) endeavor in opposition to capitalism's creation of a “professional class.”<sup>53</sup> Ingram cites Marilyn Motz's definition of folklore as “‘fugitive knowledge,’ an expression of culture that exists outside of institutionalized systems of belief.”<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Maria Bustillos, “Paper Books Can't Be Shut Off from Afar,” *Popula*, June 30, 2019, <https://popula.com/2019/06/30/own-paper-books/>.

<sup>53</sup> Ingram, 48.

<sup>54</sup> Ingram, 45. Citing Motz's “The Practice of Belief” in *Journal of American Folklore* 111 (1998). The word “fugitive” also brings to mind Coppa's “bastard child; disavowed heir; outlawed” descriptors mentioned in the introduction.

The term “institutionalized systems of belief” refers not only to the for-profit model of publishing offered by Darnton (the belief inherent here being that writer and reader are separated so that one may profit off the other); it also refers to the divide between professional and amateur storytellers. Like folklorists, fanfiction writers are often, at best, disregarded by professionals, and, at worst, seen as “usurpers” of the professional class.<sup>55</sup> Fanfiction is further seen as deviant, due in part to its writers being mostly women (often queer) writing for women (also often queer). This divide of professional/amateur falls along lines of class, race, gender, and most importantly profitability: “the dichotomy between professional and amateur persists anywhere there is institutional support or monetary compensation for work, whether it be through universities or licensing boards or authorizing agencies.”<sup>56</sup> Thus, fanfiction exists in opposition to professional writing: it is unpaid, unprofessional, and amateur.

### *Reclaiming the Amateur*

Fanfiction authors are not “real” authors because they, in a society which privileges the solitary genius of an author and his literary work (most often a published book),<sup>57</sup> forgo writing original characters and stories to instead write about other people’s. Does this discount fic as a valid literary form? No.<sup>58</sup> So why the controversy?

---

<sup>55</sup> Ingram, 49.

<sup>56</sup> Ingram, 49.

<sup>57</sup> Coppa, 6. Citing Busse: “copyright *embraced* and in a way *needed* an aesthetic theory that emphasized the original creation.”

<sup>58</sup> “In Defense of Fanfiction (2018 essay),” *Fanlore*, accessed July 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/In\\_defense\\_of\\_fanfiction\\_\(2018\\_essay\)](https://fanlore.org/wiki/In_defense_of_fanfiction_(2018_essay)).

Fanfiction's unprofitable nature is highlighted in its discourse because it exists in a capitalist space; similarly, its status as "amateur" is highlighted—and even scorned—because it exists in a society which legitimizes the practice writing as a career through a professional class of (historically middle-upper class, white, male) writers.

Thus, fanfiction as folklore deconstructs and challenges connotations associated with the terms "professional" and "amateur." Ingram further cites Gerry Beegan and Paul Atkinson in their criticism of professionalism:

The very notion of professionalism "acts as a system of exclusion by setting up criteria that, intentionally or unintentionally, bar individuals and groups on the basis of money, class, ethnicity, and gender," from its beginning constructing "social arenas that were largely middle class, white and male."<sup>59</sup>

What I find most interesting, and perhaps the most amusing, about Ingram's argument is her point that "scholars of culture and its artifacts, like folklorists or literature professors, are simply fans who have found a way to legitimize their obsession within a culturally sanctioned space."<sup>60</sup> Through this lens, meta that responds to the original text and builds upon other meta does the work of academic literary analyses; comment threads in a fic discussing an author's portrayal of a character or use of language do the work of creative writing workshops;<sup>61</sup> reading one hundred and fifty fics of the same character and pairing in order to understand popular fandom interpretations does the work of an extensive

---

<sup>59</sup> Ingram, 40. Citing Beegan and Atkinson's "Professionalism, Amateurism and the Boundaries of Design" in *Journal of Design History* 21 (2008).

<sup>60</sup> Ingram, 48.

<sup>61</sup> Seanan McGuire (@seananmcguire), "An MFA takes three years. My journey from fanfic newbie to published author took me more than a decade," Twitter, March 18, 2018, <https://twitter.com/seananmcguire/status/979106652728180736?s=20>.

literature review. As Ingram puts it: “fan and scholar alike are at times adoring, at times critical, but always intellectually engaged with the object of their affection.”<sup>62</sup>

I use the word “amateur” not as an antonym to professionalism in terms of the quality of the fic writer’s work, but rather as a statement that returns the word to its Latin roots: *amator*, a lover of a thing.<sup>63</sup> In writing and binding fanfiction, I do so not out of a desire to profit monetarily nor to align myself with a professional class of writers, but rather because I value how aspects of the process—community building, literary preservation, and participation in a largely queer and feminist tradition—both predate and transcend capitalist models of for-profit storytelling. Binding fic is, as stated several times by now, a labor of love. It is also an act—however small—of rebellion.

#### *A Note on Economic Privilege and High Horses*

I realize the position of privilege I am in to insist that fanfiction remain unprofitable and done strictly out of love. Floegel points out that in order to write fanfiction, one must possess an adequate “amount of time and work needed to write, edit, publish, and engage with audience responses...this requires certain literacies, privilege, and sacrifice.”<sup>64</sup> Bookbinding, too, is not a cheap hobby. Furthermore, not all fans share the same mindset; in fact, many fans—particularly fan artists—have found ways to

---

<sup>62</sup> Ingram, 48.

<sup>63</sup> *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, online dictionary (2021). <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/amateur>.

<sup>64</sup> Floegel, 799.

monetize their hobbies, either because they have the resources and time to do so or because they have no other choice.

Ultimately, although I believe fan works (particularly fanfiction) should remain strictly volunteer, I cannot be the judge of what other individual fans do with their creative labor in order to make ends meet. Additionally, I do not mean to imply that those who are professional writers are any less invested and passionate about their work simply because they make a living from it. Rather, I posit that there should be no divide at all; that fanfiction is storytelling in its oldest form of folklore, created communally and out of love in an unjust, for-profit system that separates writer and reader.

By binding and giving fic physical form in the book object, I both use and subvert notions of what deserves to be preserved.<sup>65</sup> I do so all within a capitalist landscape in which it is becoming increasingly difficult for individuals—particularly those from oppressed groups of people—to have agency over what stories get told and remembered. In doing so, I work within a growing sentiment of anxiety among fans in the age of streaming and digital media—an anxiety that only grows as media becomes increasingly difficult to own. Perhaps the growing fanbinding movement (Renegade Bindery recently surpassed 350 members and continues to grow) marks a shift in fandom—an echo of the zine era of fandom now informed by years of loss and growing connections via the Internet.

---

<sup>65</sup> Fic is historically ephemeral, and although I align it with fireside oral storytelling, my insistence on a physical codex as a means for preservation is also influenced by a (largely Western) focus on written preservation. See note no. 67.

*Conclusion: All this in the Book*

Henry Jenkins, largely considered the father of fan studies,<sup>66</sup> writes that “fanfiction is a way of the culture repairing the damage done in a system where contemporary myths are owned by corporations instead of owned by the folk.” The book object contains this mark of repair, a communally-informed fic written in the tradition of old folkloric storytelling, and preserved for future readers in a book created within a culture which values the written, physical word (often over oral traditions—which are just as capable of preserving history as the written word).<sup>67</sup>

The book object of this specific project contains a story written about Japanese characters in a diasporic fandom environment that draws from both Western, Anglophone media slash fandom as well as Japanese BL fandom, allowing for cross-cultural interactions made possible by expanding Internet spaces. Efforts to decolonize these spaces are still ongoing through creation of new narratives that include diasporic, transcultural fandoms. Most fandoms that are active in online fic writing today are almost entirely composed of queer women (or rather, not cis men),<sup>68</sup> important because stories written by, for, and about queer people have historically been the targets of erasure. So too have stories that are not the praxis of a professional class been largely ignored or even

---

<sup>66</sup> Coppa, 17: “It behooves us to consider what was at stake in that choice [acafan’s general consensus of Jenkins as the father of fan studies]: I don’t think it was an accident that the two women scholars were at that time less inclined to speak of themselves as fans when writing about this female-dominated fan subculture, not that female fans responded with particular enthusiasm to the validation of a male scholar from MIT.”

<sup>67</sup> Layli Long Soldier (poet), Baylor class visit, Beall Poetry Festival, 2021. See also the existence of podfic, or fic that is orally narrated much like audiobooks are.

<sup>68</sup> Hellekson and Busse, 11.

scorned. In short, these central aspects of the fic—transcultural, queerfeminine, and folkloric—are all preserved within the book object, and in doing so challenge and transcend white, male, cis, heteronormative, and capitalist structures of storytelling—its existence both a defiant artistic and political statement.

## CONCLUSION

### All of This, Within the Book

Broadly speaking, fanfiction is beginning to gain larger cultural acceptance. This is due to the accessibility of the Internet, changing social norms surrounding those who write fanfiction, and a pop culture landscape increasingly dominated by large entertainment corporations like Disney. That last reason, in particular, is perhaps the greatest argument for the preservation of fanfiction today: the motive for its creation is not profit. Fanfiction, much like any other literary movement, is a response to our changing cultural landscape, acting as both a reflection and, oftentimes, a subversion of that landscape. More specifically, alongside this general increase in popularity and more positive perception of fandom and fannish hobbies, anime and manga fannish work created in bilingual, diasporic communities is also growing as a subject of study in fan academia.

I wrote *Letters from Heaven* within such an international fan community. I did so as a participant in a Big Bang, a fandom event that pairs authors, artists, and beta readers to create fanfiction and fan art surrounding the specific ship of Kageyama Tobio and Hinata Shouyou. I wrote an AU (Alternate Universe) that combined these characters from their original series *Haikyuu!!* with the setting and premise from the TV anime adaptation of *Violet Evergarden*. Within the fic, I explore both series' shared themes of healing, grief, friendship, family, and love. I also transformed the Japanese narrative structure of *kishoutenketsu* present in the canon text; I manipulated the events of *Violet Evergarden* to



parallel those of Kageyama Tobio's journey to self-acceptance and discovery of a loving found family. These changes are representative of the "writerly-ness" of fic, or how the source text is interpreted and re-interpreted by fans in new ways. Even the fic itself becomes writerly—thanks to several lovely commenters, I learned that different readers found different things significant. One reader found my depictions of sibling relationships meaningful and touching; another enjoyed a song lyric reference to one of our shared favorite artists; another, my exploration of grief, loss, and love. As I continued with these discussions, I found myself recontextualizing my understandings of both my own and the original works.

In that same line of thought, fic is both a creative and a communal act, one that has a history of loss due to the fleeting nature of the Internet, corporate buyouts of servers and hosting platforms, and targeted attacks of fannish hubs of activity such as LiveJournal and Tumblr. From this history of loss came the Organization for Transformative Works, the Archive of Our Own, and her sister projects. I bookbind fanfiction within this era of preservationist response. Once bound, fic becomes permanent, transforming notions of what deserves to be remembered. In addition, its "invisible" history and bound form strengthens Coppa's argument for linking fanfiction to a larger book history, specifically women's private manuscript practices that took place in the 16<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Buchsbaum further builds off Coppa's interpretation of fanfiction as a continuation of book history by transforming Robert Darnton's communication circuit. In doing so, she creates the Fanfiction Communication Circuit, which describes how fanfiction is disseminated in fandom spaces, similar to but not entirely in tandem with how commercially published works are distributed. The act of

binding fanfiction into books further strengthens its parallels to this traditional circuit because both processes produce a book object.

However, more important than its similarities to traditional book publishing, binding fic also (rather paradoxically) distances fanfiction and fic binding even further from for-profit models of publishing. It does so by preserving elements of fanfiction that have historically been shunned from professional publishing and even larger society. Firstly, especially within transcultural and diasporic fan spaces such as animanga fandoms, fanfiction can be a place of refuge for people of color who face harmful and racist depictions of themselves in mainstream media and even other fan works. Racism in fandom, due in part to the Internet's white structures and to Western media fandom's perceived white majority, is an ongoing problem that influences how fans of color interact with other fans and create their own spaces for their own works. However, the existence of bigotry and racism in other fan works does not negate the transcultural nature of the work that fans of color do in diasporic communities. Ultimately, when created by those who are well-informed (often by those who reside in such communities), fanfiction can allow for truly wonderful learning experiences about other cultures.

Secondly, fanfiction is largely written by queer women. Historically, women and queer women in particular have not been depicted in mainstream media with the same complexity and nuance as cisgender men. This argument formed the governing body of thought of the earliest fan studies about slash fanfiction, when fan scholars posited that slash fanfiction allowed female writers to envision a relationship in which both parties were equal in every sense. However, intersectionality continues to influence how different people face differing nexuses of oppression, and more recent fan studies account

for this, broadening fan studies' focus away from straight white women and focusing on fan communities of color and queer fans.

Finally, fanfiction is folklore. In addition to its existence as a continuation of book history, it is also a continuation of storytelling at its fireside oldest, before for-profit models of publishing. Although some fic-turned-best sellers like *Fifty Shades* or *After* have had great commercial success, true fic is created without any monetary incentive, in conversation with a vibrant fan community, and out of volunteer labor. Fic is a labor of love. This also places fic (and binding it) within the realm of the amateur (“lover of a thing”), a practice that goes back to long before the creation of today’s for-profit professional. Bookbinding fic is a deliberately political act that spurns profit-driven social hierarchies and economic systems. Thus, as amateur, non-profit work, binding fanfiction is also anti-capitalist.

All of this is contained within the book. The creation of fanfiction and its binding into hardcover case-bound books is a process that exists within, continues, and transforms several literary traditions, socioeconomic norms and structures, and existing literary canons. Fic is a bridge between different languages and cultures; the book makes that bridge permanent. Fic is a continuation of women’s silenced literary history; the book gives our stories a voice on our own terms. Fic is storytelling in its oldest form; the book ensures that these stories will grow older still. But above all else, fic is an act of love. The book, then, is a handmade object created not just to contain that love, but to keep it, to preserve it, and—perhaps like every other person who has ever sat around a fire and told their favorite story—to pass that love on, forever.

## APPENDIX A

### Glossary of Fan Terms

(Note: some definitions listed are referenced from Fanlore. Definition will indicate if sourced from Fanlore)

**Acafan:** combination of terms academic and fan, used as a noun and a descriptor.

**Animanga:** combination of the terms anime and manga, used in fandom as shorthand for anime and manga.

**Alternate Universe (AU):** a type of fic that changes aspects of an original work, often either making departures from the original canon or transplanting characters and settings into other stories (from Fanlore).

**Big Bang:** a fandom community event that pairs writers and artists (and often beta readers) to create a usually long-form multi-media work over a set period of time.

**Boys' Love (BL):** a genre of anime and manga that explores the romantic and/or sexual relationship between men.

**Canon:** source that is considered authoritative by a fannish community (from Fanlore), also a word for an original story that is transformed in fanfiction.

**Discord:** an online instant messaging platform where many fan communities reside today; the program utilizes “channels” to split topics into different conversation threads.

**Fandom:** a community of fans.

**Fanon:** an element that is widely accepted among fans but has little or no basis in canon (from Fanlore).

**Fic:** short for “fanfiction.”

**Meta:** an authored piece of non-fiction writing discussing any aspect of fandom, fanworks, or the source text (from Fanlore).

**Organization for Transformative Works (OTW):** non-profit founded by fans for fans, dedicated to the preservation of fan works and cultures. Projects include:

**Archive of Our Own (AO3):** online archive of fan works posted by users and maintained by OTW staff and volunteers, won the Hugo Award in 2019.

**Fanlore:** wiki site dedicated to the documentation of fan history by fans.

**Transformative Works and Cultures (TWC):** international, peer-reviewed journal published by the OTW; TWC publishes articles about transformative works, broadly conceived; articles about media studies; and articles about the fan community.

**Pixiv:** an online Japanese artist platform and community.

**Ship/Shipping:** from the word “relationship,” the act of supporting or wishing for a particular romantic relationship (from Fanlore).

**Slash:** type of fanwork in which two (or more) characters of the same sex or gender are placed in a sexual or romantic situation with each other (from Fanlore).

**Tumblr:** popular microblogging social media website that historically has been a hub of fannish activity.

## APPENDIX B

### Process and Book Photos

Heavily referenced and modified from ArmoredSuperHeavy's *How to Make a Book* (see Bibliography).

### Typesetting

lights out x phollie | A... x appleapple x Holiday - a... x Et in Arcadi... x Road Mou... x Letters from... x Letters from... x

File | C:/Users/grace/Downloads/Letters%20from%20Heaven%20(1).html

Apps Google Choose Databases... prepare PaperCut NG - Web... Reading list

**Letters from Heaven**  
Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/28154124) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/28154124>.

Rating: [Teen And Up Audiences](#)  
Archive Warning: [No Archive Warnings Apply](#)  
Category: [M/M](#)  
Fandom: [Haikyuu!](#)  
Relationship: [Hinata Shouyou/Kageyama Tobio](#)  
Character: [Kageyama Tobio, Hinata Shouyou, general Karasuno fam, Oikawa Tooru, Kageyama Kazuyo](#)  
Additional Tags: [Violet Evergarden AU/inspired, Letters, ghostwriters, flying and planes, Healing, Slow Burn, Mutual Pining, vaguely fantasy/historical setting, post-war experiences, brief descriptions of height/vertigo, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD, Alternate Universe](#)  
Collections: [Kagehina Big Bang 2020, Haikyuu Fics That Light my soul on Fire](#)  
Stats: Published: 2020-12-18 Completed: 2021-01-07 Chapters: 5/5 Words: 60056

**Letters from Heaven**  
by [clubsonthemoon](#)

Summary

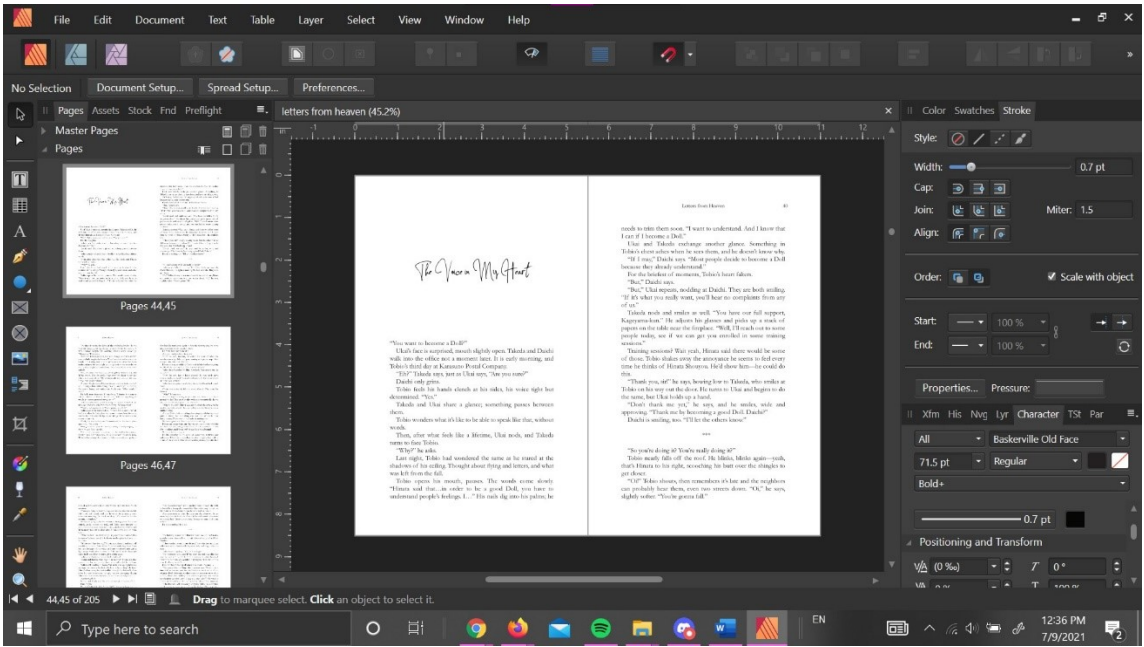
"Letters connect us," Hinata says. "To be a good Doll, you have to understand the human soul. What it means to love."

Notes

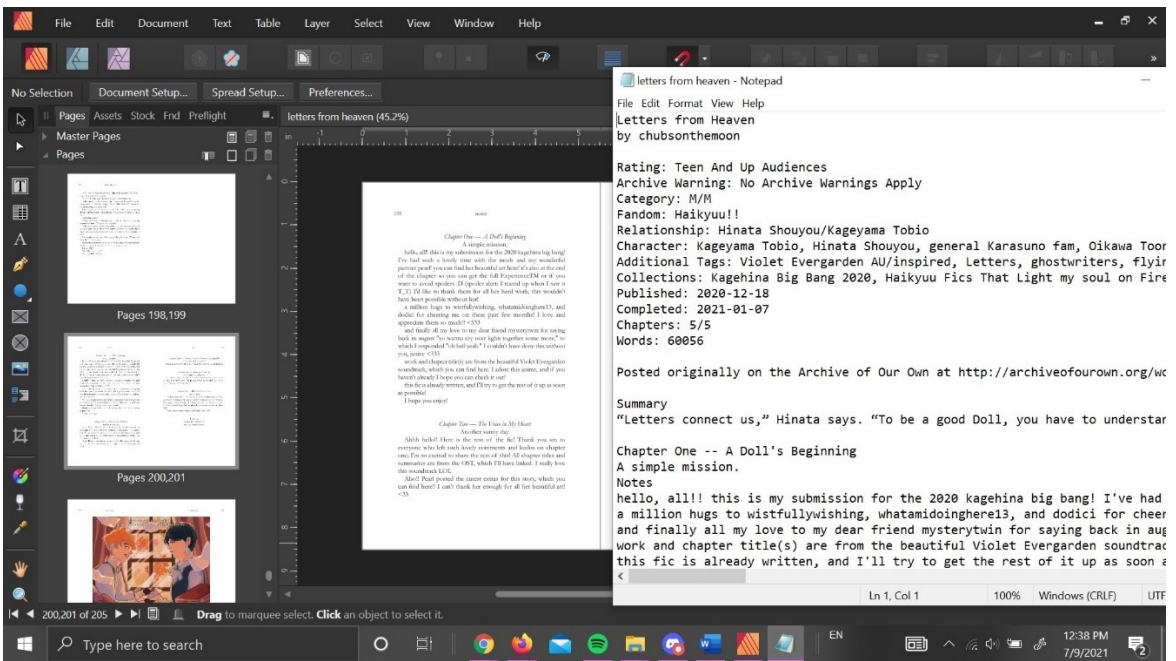
Type here to search

EN 12:40 PM 7/9/2021

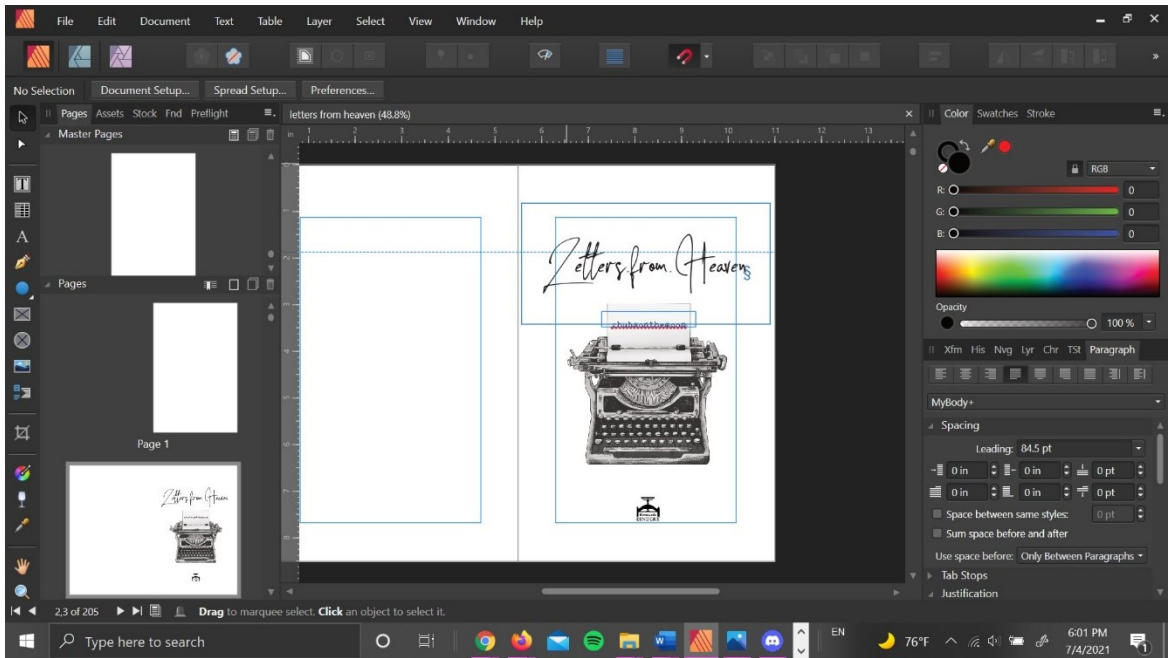
*Harvesting the text from AO3*



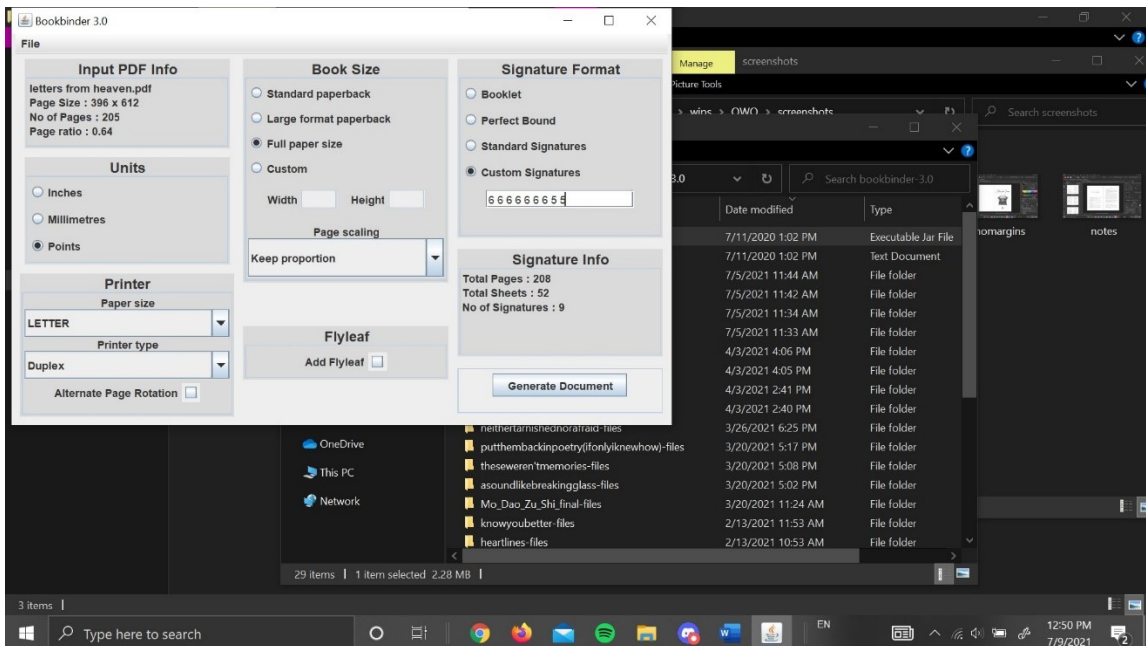
*Formatting chapter titles and main body text*



*Copying metadata and notes; checking for spacing issues; inserting art pieces; designing chapter titles; ensuring margins, headers, and page numbers are all correct*

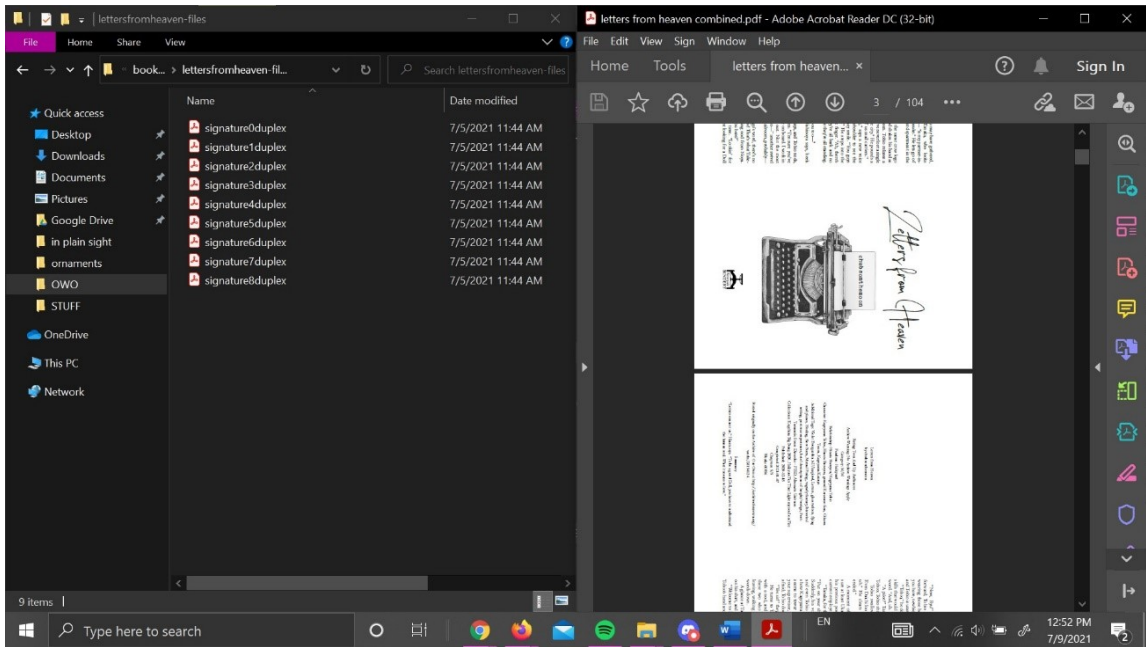


*Designing title pages*



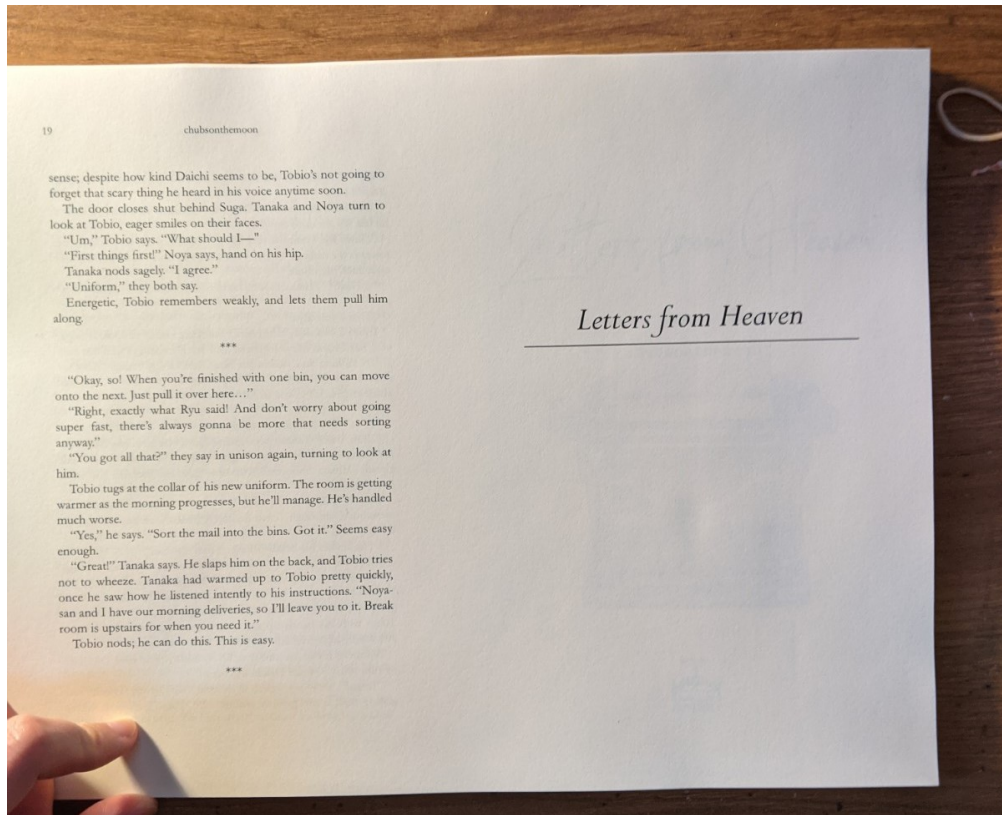
*Formatting PDF into signatures using Bookbinder 3.0 (free Javascript program)*



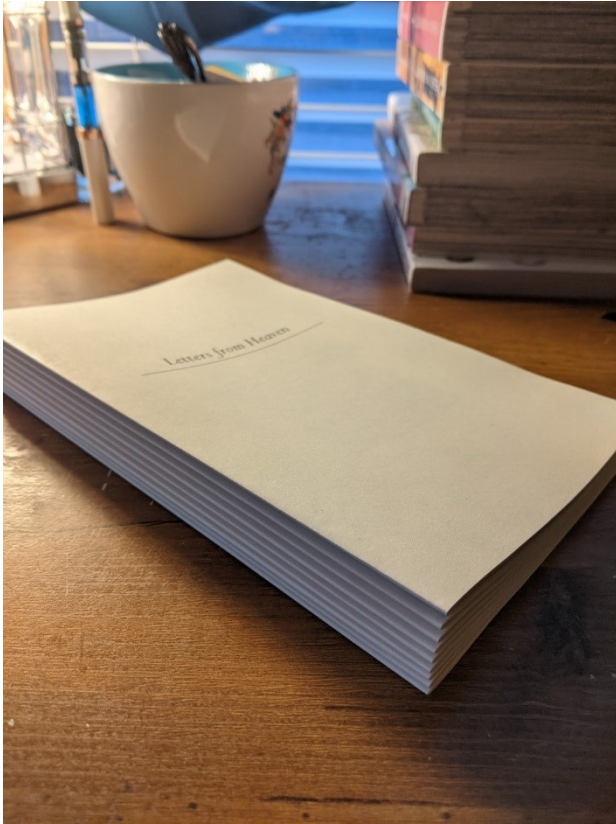


*Combining signatures into single PDF for printing*

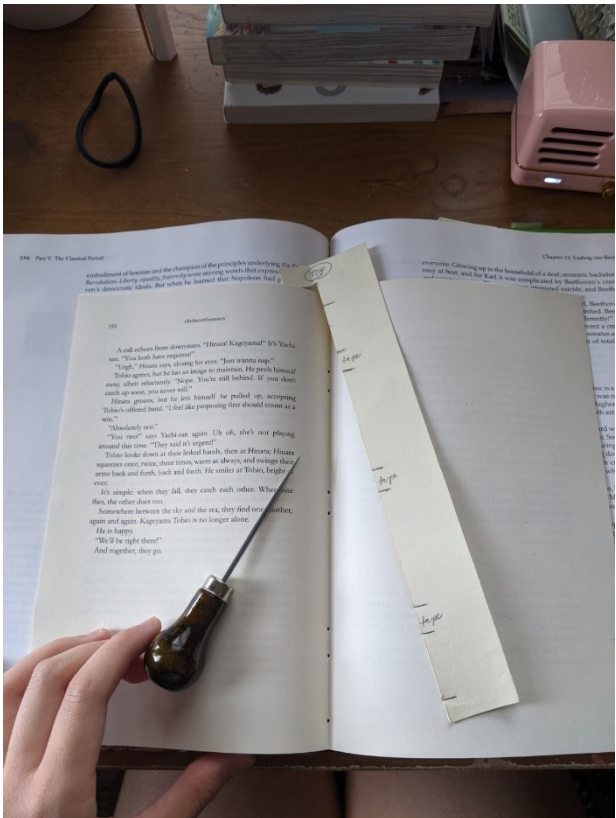
## Building the Text Block



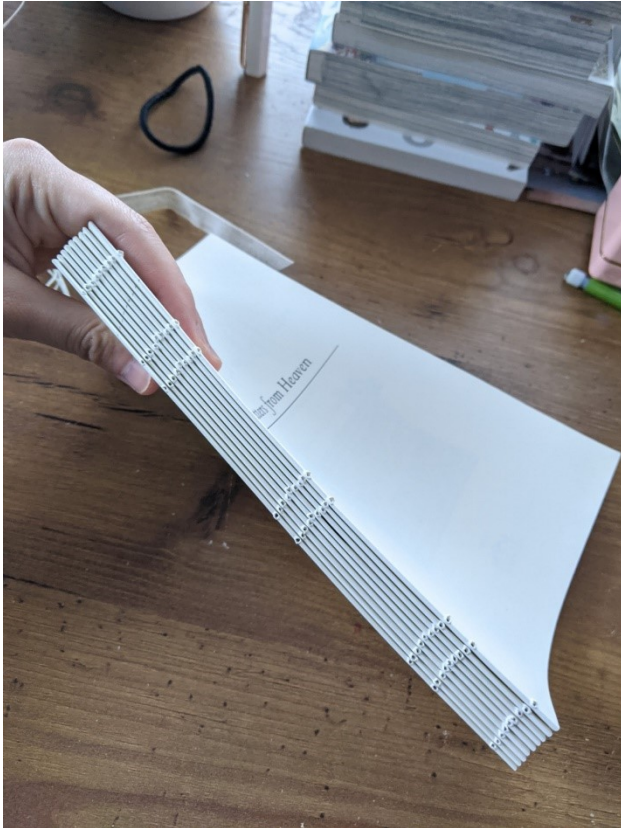
## Printing



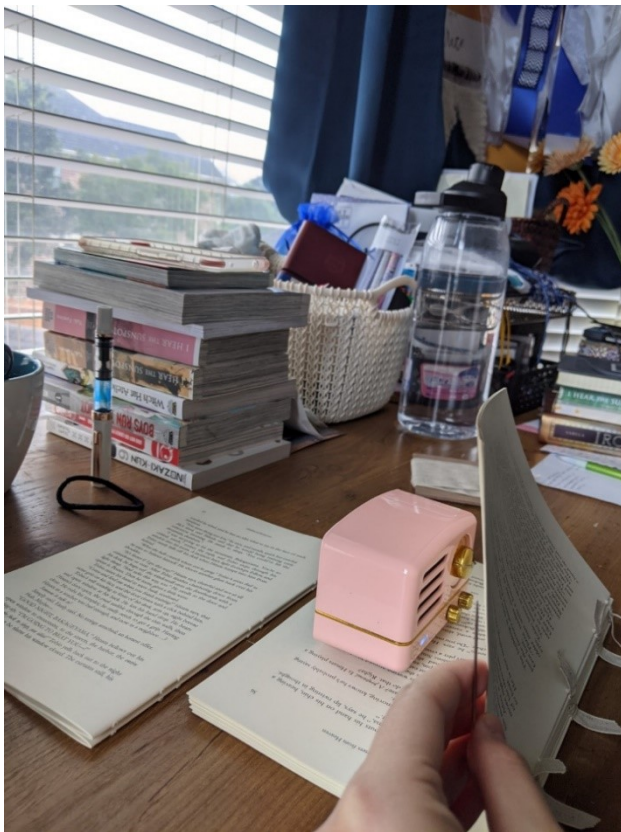
*Folding printed pages into signatures*



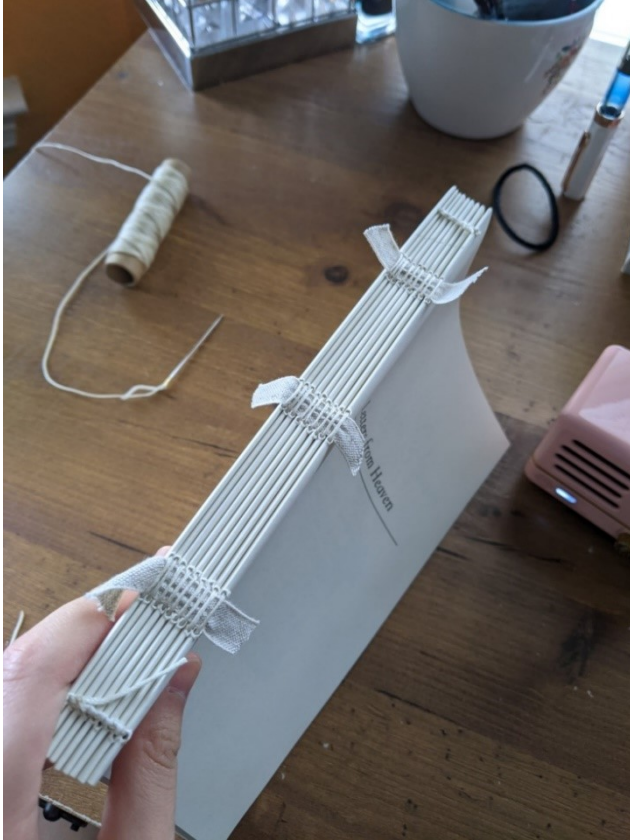
*Punching the holes for sewing.*



*Holes punched*



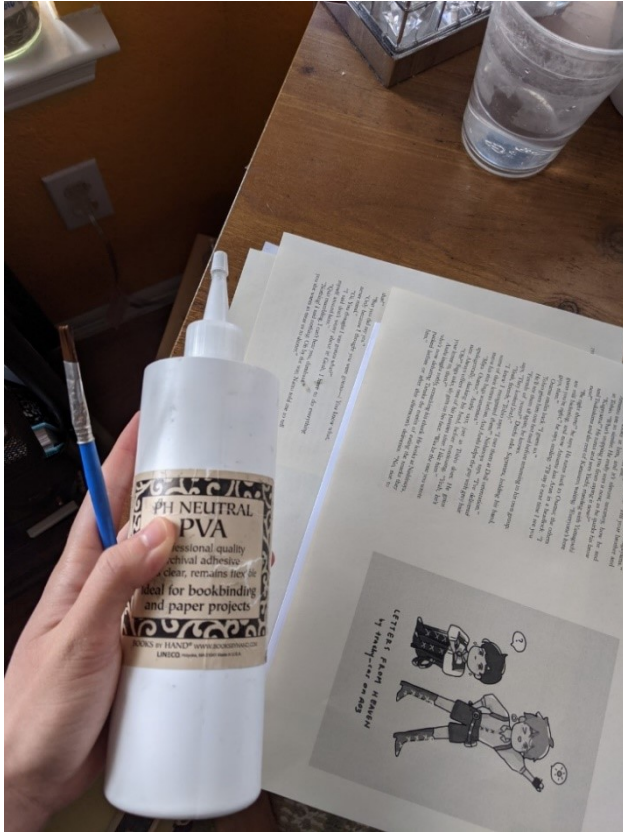
*Sewing the signatures with linen tapes  
and waxed thread*



*Completed sewn signatures with tapes*



*Choosing and cutting endpapers*



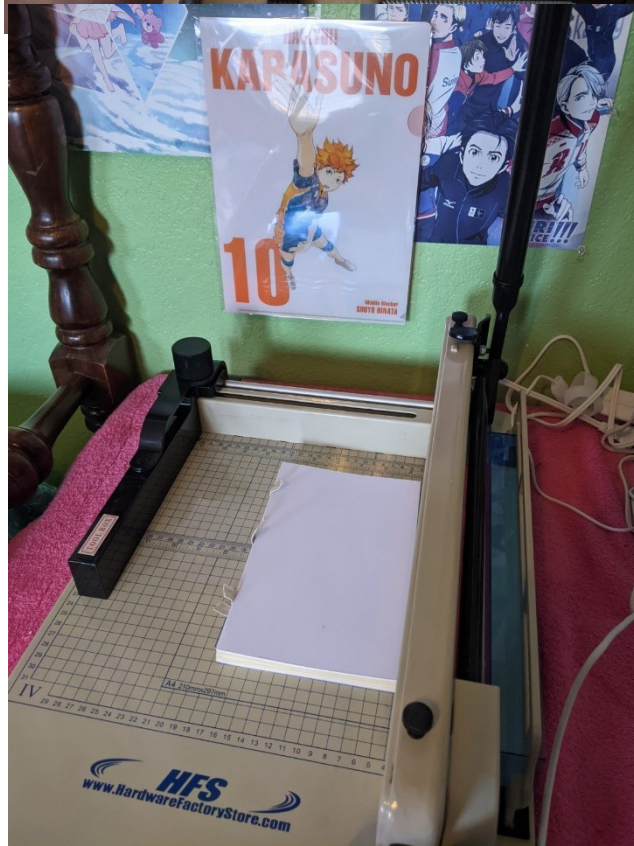
*Tipping on endpapers*



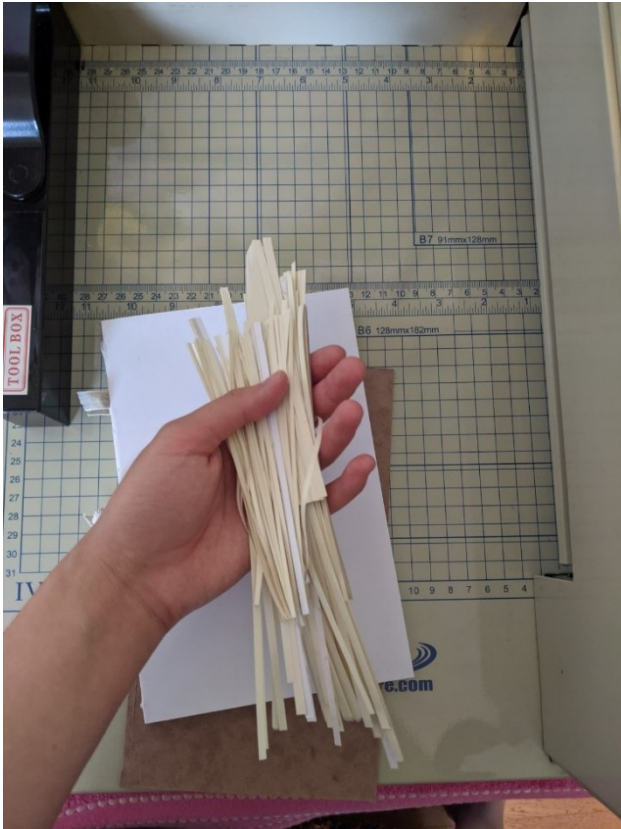
*Text block ready for first round of glue on spine*



*Gluing the spine*



*Trimming the text block after first layer of glue*



*Scraps from trimming*



*Rounding the spine with gentle taps from a hammer*





*Cutting the headbands and mull for spine*



*Second round of glue on the spine, this time with mull and headbands*

## Building the Case



*Choosing and cutting cover paper*



*Cutting book boards*



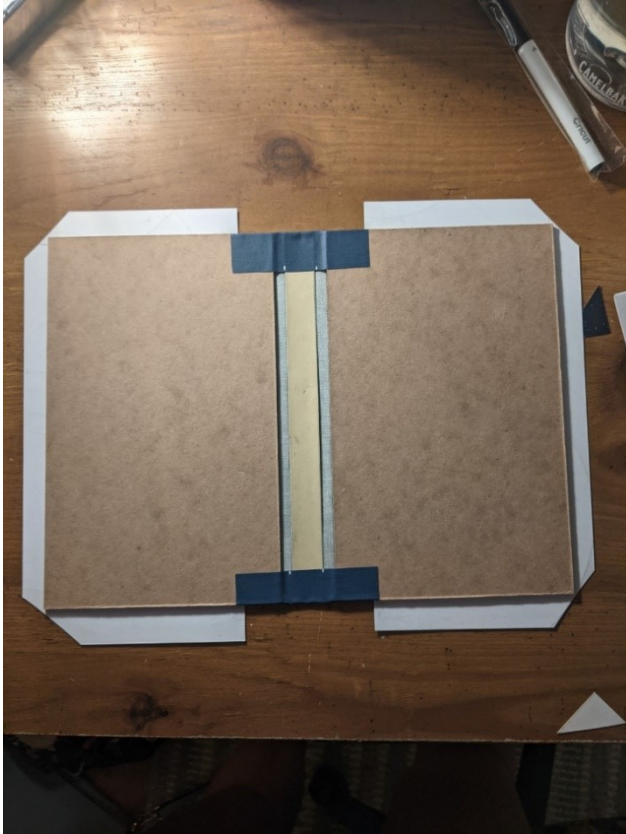
*Cutting and measuring the book cloth*



*Cutting spine lettering out of iron-on vinyl with Cricut*



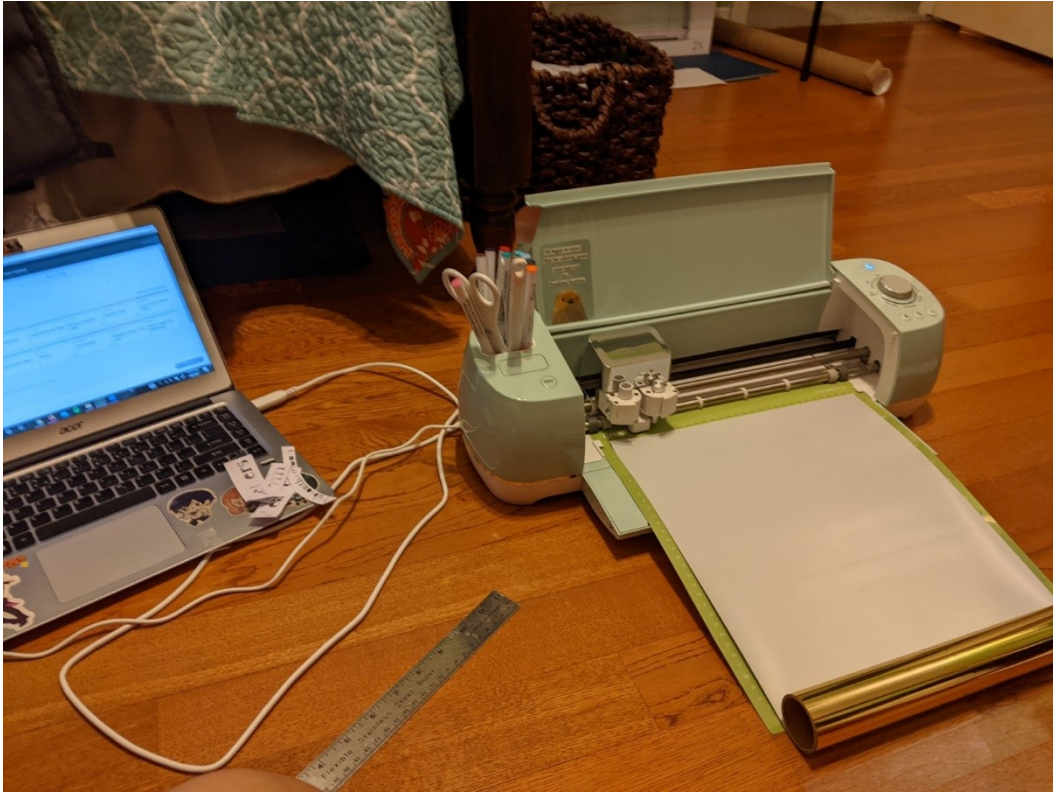
*Case materials ready for gluing*



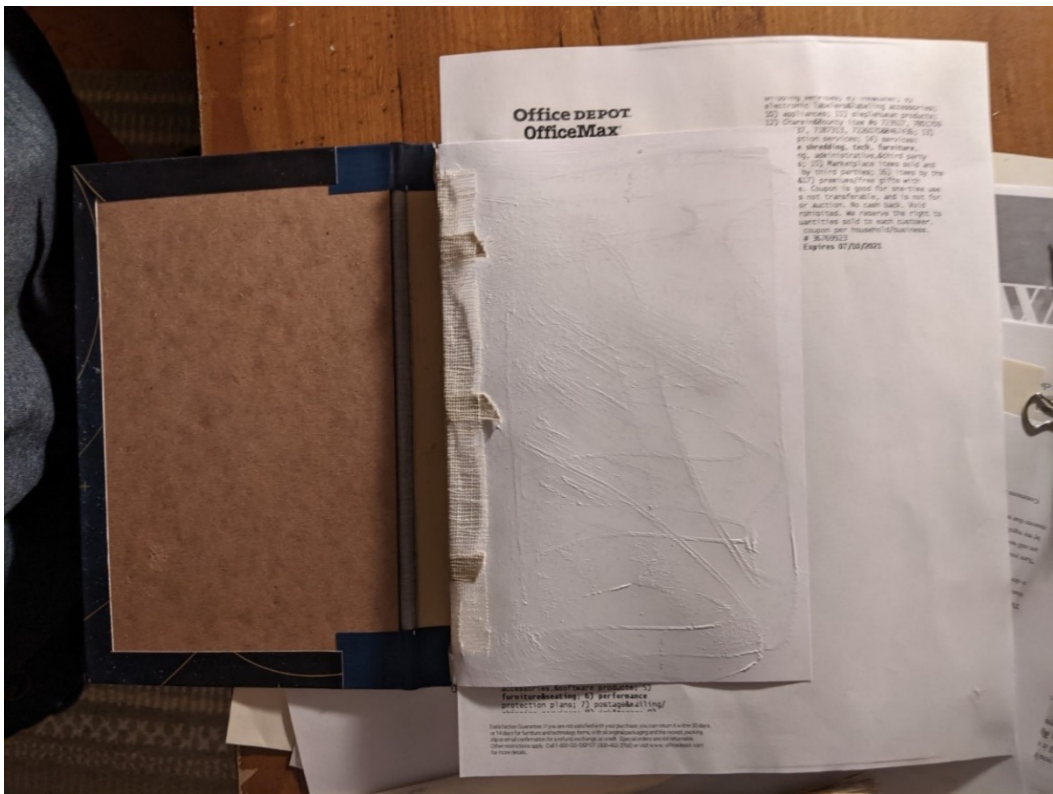
*Inside of glued case*



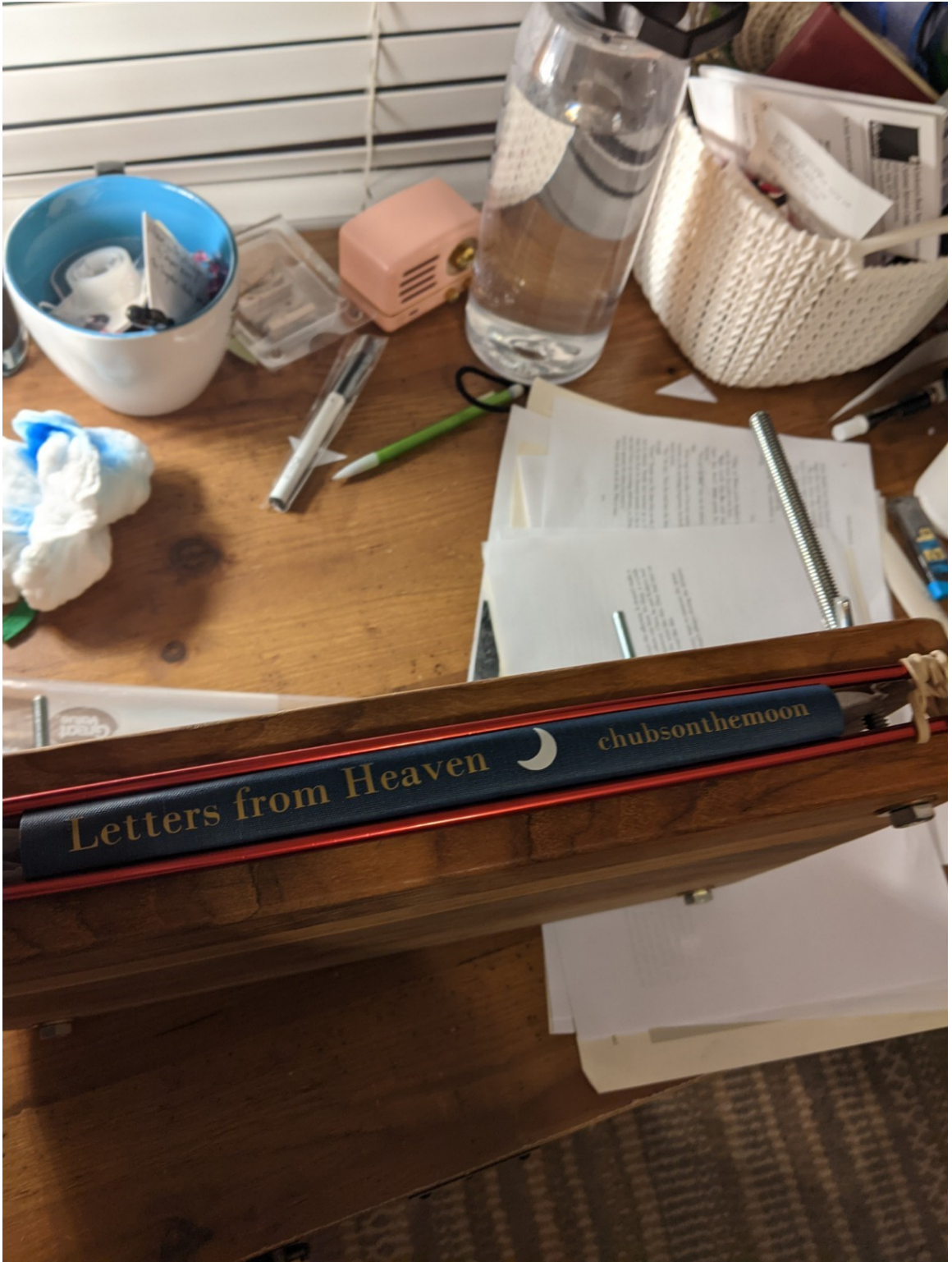
*Outside of glued case with iron-on vinyl title, author name, and moon decal on spine*



*Cutting cover title, author name, and decals with gold foil iron-on and white vinyl*

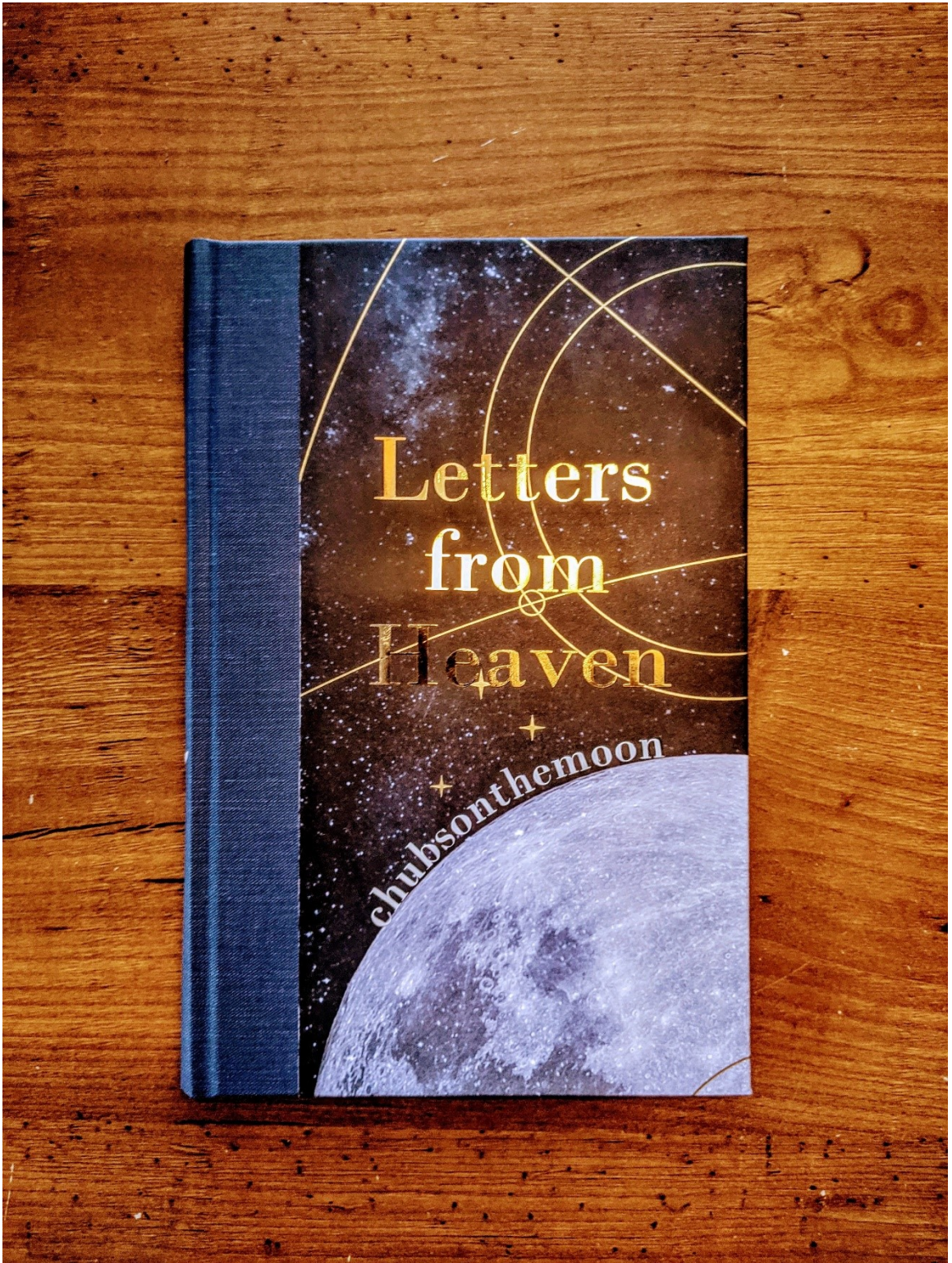


*Casing in the text block*



*Pressing the book—cook time eight hours*

Finished Book



*Cover*





*Back*



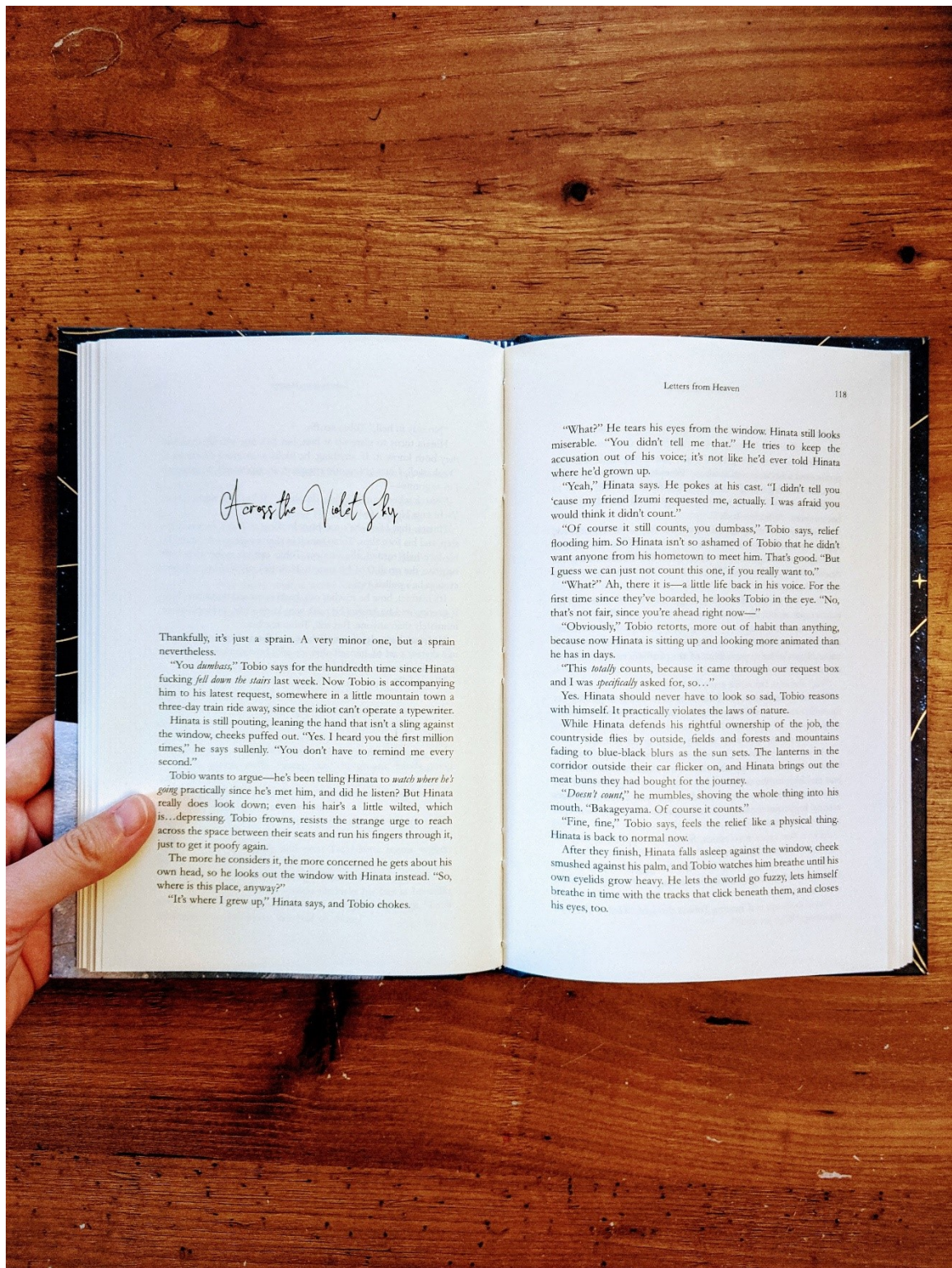
*Spine*



*Endpapers*



*Title page*



Across the Violet Sky

Thankfully, it's just a sprain. A very minor one, but a sprain nevertheless.

"You dumbass!" Tobio says for the hundredth time since Hinata fucking *fell down the stairs* last week. Now Tobio is accompanying him to his latest request, somewhere in a little mountain town a three-day train ride away, since the idiot can't operate a typewriter.

Hinata is still pouting, leaning the hand that isn't a sling against the window, cheeks puffed out. "Yes. I heard you the first million times," he says sullenly. "You don't have to remind me every second."

Tobio wants to argue—he's been telling Hinata to *watch where he's going* practically since he's met him, and did he listen? But Hinata really does look down; even his hair's a little wilted, which is...depressing. Tobio frowns, resists the strange urge to reach across the space between their seats and run his fingers through it, just to get it poofy again.

The more he considers it, the more concerned he gets about his own head, so he looks out the window with Hinata instead. "So, where is this place, anyway?"

"It's where I grew up," Hinata says, and Tobio chokes.

"What?" He tears his eyes from the window. Hinata still looks miserable. "You didn't tell me that." He tries to keep the accusation out of his voice; it's not like he'd ever told Hinata where he'd grown up.

"Yeah," Hinata says. He pokes at his cast. "I didn't tell you 'cause my friend Izumi requested me, actually. I was afraid you would think it didn't count."

"Of course it still counts, you dumbass," Tobio says, relief flooding him. So Hinata isn't so ashamed of Tobio that he didn't want anyone from his hometown to meet him. That's good. "But I guess we can just not count this one, if you really want to."

"What?" Ah, there it is—a little life back in his voice. For the first time since they've boarded, he looks Tobio in the eye. "No, that's not fair, since you're ahead right now—"

"Obviously," Tobio retorts, more out of habit than anything, because now Hinata is sitting up and looking more animated than he has in days.

"This *totally* counts, because it came through our request box and I was *specifically* asked for, so..."

Yes. Hinata should never have to look so sad, Tobio reasons with himself. It practically violates the laws of nature.

While Hinata defends his rightful ownership of the job, the countryside flies by outside, fields and forests and mountains fading to blue-black blurs as the sun sets. The lanterns in the corridor outside their car flicker on, and Hinata brings out the meat buns they had bought for the journey.

"*Doesn't count!*" he mumbles, shoving the whole thing into his mouth. "Bakageyama. Of course it counts."

"Fine, fine," Tobio says, feels the relief like a physical thing. Hinata is back to normal now.

After they finish, Hinata falls asleep against the window, cheek smushed against his palm, and Tobio watches him breathe until his own eyelids grow heavy. He lets the world go fuzzy, lets himself breathe in time with the tracks that click beneath them, and closes his eyes, too.

Chapter title page and main text



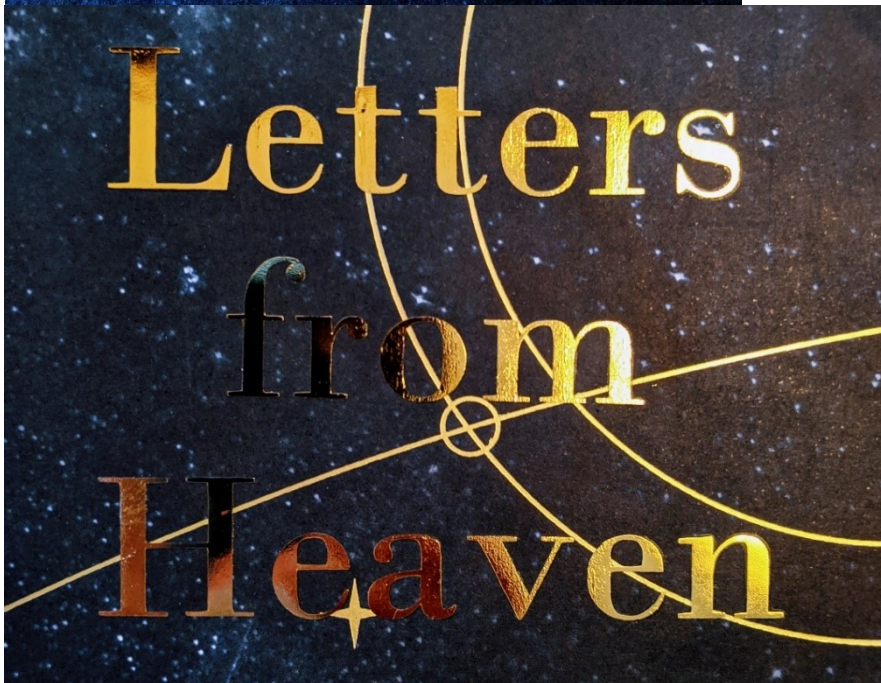
*Accompanying art piece by Pearl*



*Extra gift art by Pearl*



*Foil details*



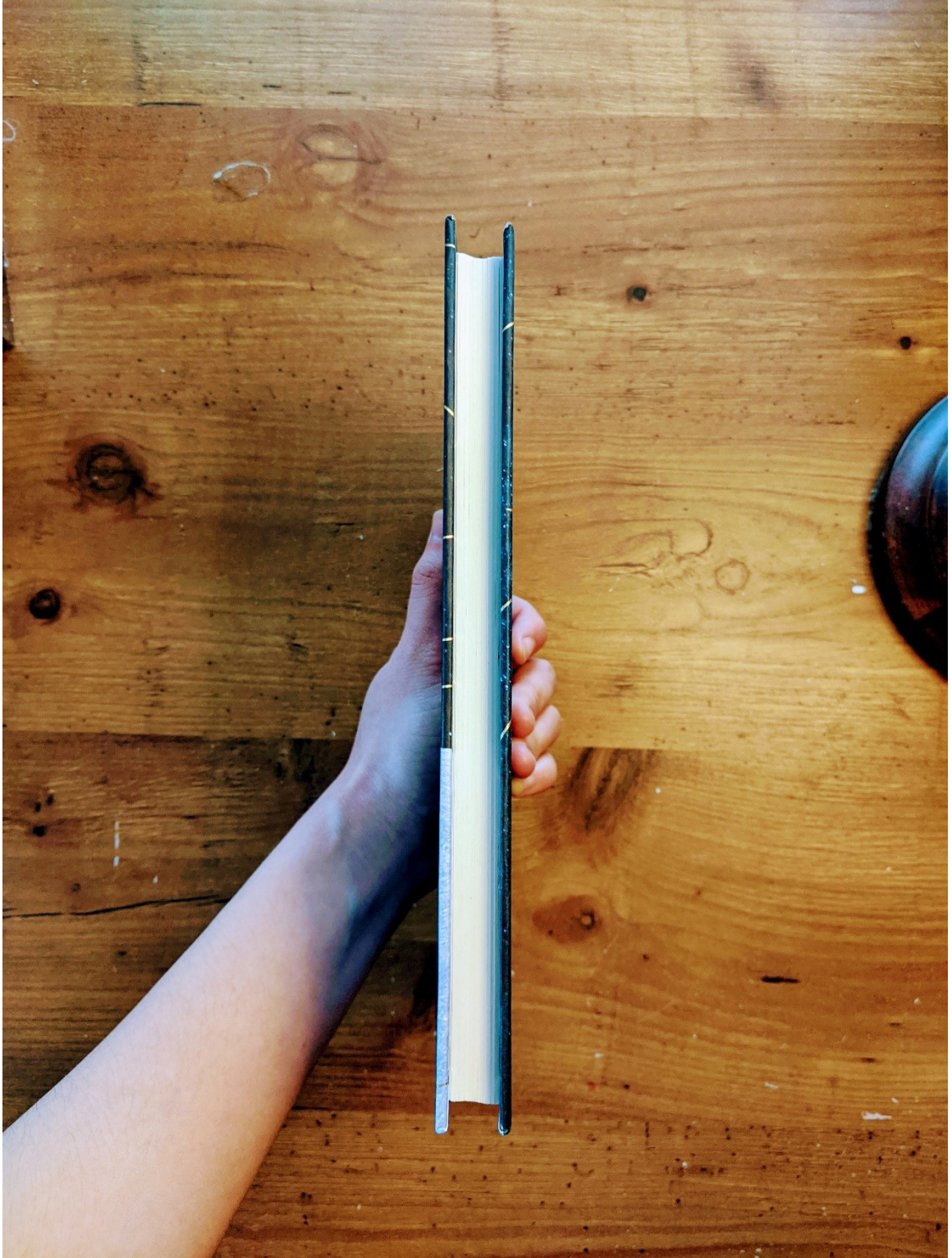




*Back cover details*



*Cover vinyl details*



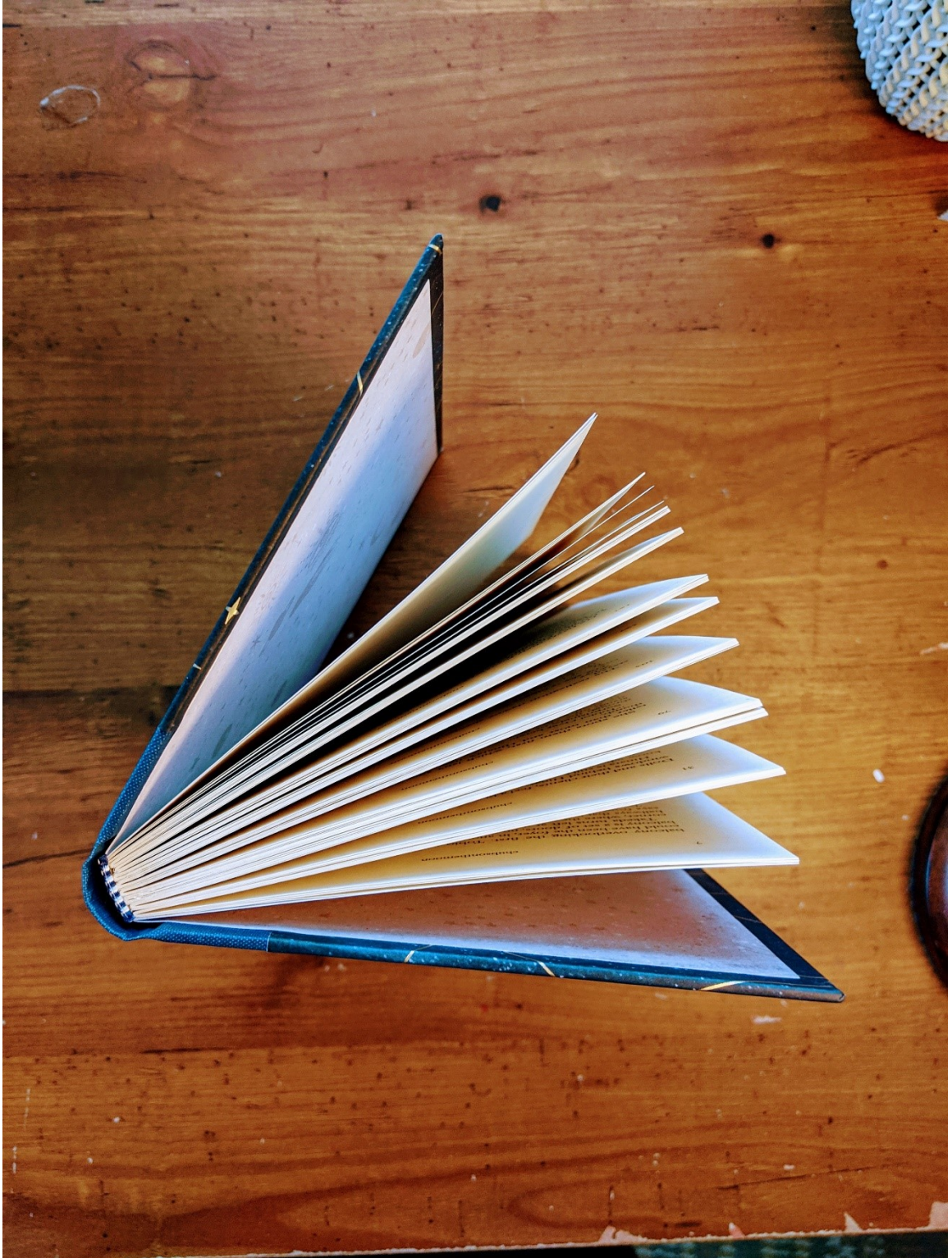
*Fore-edge*



*Bottom edge/tail*



*Headband*



*Top edge/head*

## APPENDIX C

Archive Link

<https://archiveofourown.org/works/28154124/chapters/68985375>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alter, Alexandra. "A Feud in Wolf-Kink Erotica Raises a Deep Legal Question." *New York Times*, May 23, 2020.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/23/business/omegaverse-erotica-copyright.html>.
- "An Archive of One's Own." *Fanlore*. Accessed June 3, 2021.  
[https://fanlore.org/wiki/An\\_Archive\\_Of\\_One%27s\\_Own\\_\(post\\_by\\_astolat\)](https://fanlore.org/wiki/An_Archive_Of_One%27s_Own_(post_by_astolat)).
- "Anne Rice: Removal of Fanfiction Based on Anne Rice's Works from Fanfiction.net." *Fanlore*. Accessed June 2, 2021.  
[https://fanlore.org/wiki/Anne\\_Rice#Removal\\_of\\_Fan\\_Fiction\\_Based\\_on\\_Anne\\_Rice.27s\\_Works\\_from\\_Fanfiction.net](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Anne_Rice#Removal_of_Fan_Fiction_Based_on_Anne_Rice.27s_Works_from_Fanfiction.net).
- Annett, Sandra. Review of *Boys love manga and beyond: History, culture, and community in Japan*, edited by Mark McLelland, Kazumi Nagaike, Katsuhiko Suganuma, and James Welker." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 25 (2017).  
<https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2017.01011>
- "Archive of Our Own." *Organization for Transformative Works*. Accessed May 19, 2021. [https://www.transformativeworks.org/archive\\_of\\_our\\_own/](https://www.transformativeworks.org/archive_of_our_own/).
- ArmoredSuperHeavy. "How to Make a Book." Google Docs. Accessed May 19, 2021.  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/11JyVxeRS8yEWgCYrNMUPINrEbR5AAD3Z2aDP-QXEP3Y/edit?usp=sharing>.
- "Behold, the Archive of Our Own!" *Tumblr*, January 16, 2021.  
<https://ao3org.tumblr.com/post/640510281227829248/ behold-the-archive-of-our-own-after-moving-our>.
- "Blocking of AO3 in China." *Fanlore*. Accessed June 29, 2021.  
[https://fanlore.org/wiki/Blocking\\_of\\_AO3\\_in\\_China/](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Blocking_of_AO3_in_China/).
- Buchsbaum, Shira Belén. "Follow the Fans: Community Adaptive Art and a Communication Circuit for Fandom." Master's dissertation (publication forthcoming).
- Bustillos, Maria. "Paper Books Can't Be Shut Off from Afar." *Popula*, June 30, 2019.  
<https://popula.com/2019/06/30/own-paper-books/>.
- Coker, Catherine. "The Margins of Print? Fan fiction as Book History." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 25 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2017.01053>.

Coppa, Francesca. "Introduction: Five Things That Fanfiction Is, and One Thing It Isn't." In *The Fanfiction Studies Reader: Folktales for the Digital Age*. The University of Michigan Press, 2017.

Cuccinello, Hayley C. "Fifty Shades of Green: How Fanfiction Went From Dirty Little Secret To Money Machine." *Forbes*, February 10, 2017.  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/hayleycuccinello/2017/02/10/fifty-shades-of-green-how-fanfiction-went-from-dirty-little-secret-to-money-machine/?sh=54ae485e264c>.

"FanLib." *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://fanlore.org/wiki/FanLib>.

"Fan Blogs are Deleted." *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021.  
[https://fanlore.org/wiki/Tumblr\\_NSFW\\_Content\\_Purge](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Tumblr_NSFW_Content_Purge).

"Five Great Books Too Short for NANOWRIMO." *Barnes and Noble*. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/blog/5-great-books-too-short-for-nanowrimo/>.

Floegel, Diana. "'Write the story you want to read': world-queering through slash fanfiction creation." *Journal of Documentation* 76, no. 4 (2020).

Furudate, Haruichi. ノイキユー!! [Haikyuu!!] *Complete Illustration Book*. Shueisha, 2020.

"Haikyuu." *Fanlore*. Accessed April 23, 2021. <https://fanlore.org/wiki/Haikyuu>.

Hayes, Sharon and Matthew Ball. "Queering Cyberspace: Fan Fiction communities as Spaces for Expressing and Exploring Sexuality." In *Queering Paradigms*, edited by Burkhand Sherer, 219-39. New York: P. Lang, 2010.

Hellekson, Karen and Kristina Busse. "Introduction: Why a Fanfiction Studies Reader Now?" In *The Fanfiction Studies Reader*, edited by Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, 1-17. University of Iowa Press, 2014.

———. "Fan Communities and Affect." In *The Fanfiction Studies Reader*, 131-37.

———. "Fan Identity and Feminism." In *The Fanfiction Studies Reader*, 75-81.

"Hinata Shouyou/Kageyama Tobio." *Archive of Our Own*. Accessed April 23, 2021.  
[https://archiveofourown.org/tags/Hinata%20Shouyou\\*s\\*Kageyama%20Tobio/works](https://archiveofourown.org/tags/Hinata%20Shouyou*s*Kageyama%20Tobio/works).

"History of Slash Fandom." *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021.  
[https://fanlore.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Slash\\_Fandom](https://fanlore.org/wiki/History_of_Slash_Fandom).



Hornsby, Elizabeth R. “A Case for Critical Methods: Sense Making, Race, and Fandom.” In *Fandom, Now in Color*, edited by Rukmini Pande, 17-28. University of Iowa Press, 2020.

“In Defense of Fanfiction (2018 essay).” *Fanlore*. Accessed July 19, 2021. [https://fanlore.org/wiki/In\\_defense\\_of\\_fanfiction\\_\(2018\\_essay\)](https://fanlore.org/wiki/In_defense_of_fanfiction_(2018_essay)).

Ingram, Shelley. “On Fanfiction and the Amateur/Professional Divide.” In *Implied Nowhere: Absence in Folklore Studies*, edited by Shelley Ingram, Willow G. Mullins, and Todd Richardson, 44-54. University Press of Mississippi, 2019.

Keagle, John (@jkeagle). “I can think of no more damning fact...” Twitter, November 2, 2018. <https://twitter.com/jkeagle/status/1058518592436588544?lang=en>.

“Kishōtenketsu: Exploring the Four Act Story Structure.” *The Art of Narrative*. Accessed April 25, 2021. <https://artofnarrative.com/2020/07/08/kishotenketsu-exploring-the-four-act-story-structure/>.

Lamb, Patricia Frazer and Diana L. Veith. “Romantic Myth, Transcendence, and *Star Trek* Zines.” In *The Fan Fiction Studies Reader*, edited by Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, 98-115. University of Iowa Press, 2014.

Lipton, Jacqueline D. “Copyright and the Commercialization of Fanfiction.” *Houston Law Review* 52, no. 2 (October 2014): 425–66.

“LiveJournal.” *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://fanlore.org/wiki/LiveJournal>.

Long Soldier, Layli (poet). Baylor class visit. Beall Poetry Festival, 2021.

“Major Fandom Purges.” *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021, [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_Major\\_Fandom\\_Purges,\\_Restrictions,\\_and\\_Hassles\\_Regarding\\_Fanworks\\_and\\_Their\\_Content](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Major_Fandom_Purges,_Restrictions,_and_Hassles_Regarding_Fanworks_and_Their_Content).

McGuire, Seanan (@seananmcguire). “An MFA takes three years. My journey from fanfic newbie to published author took me more than a decade.” Twitter, March 18, 2018. <https://twitter.com/seananmcguire/status/979106652728180736?s=20>.

Miyake, Toshio. “Doing Occidentalism in contemporary Japan: Nation anthropomorphism and sexualized parody in *Axis Powers Hetalia*.” *Transformative Works and Cultures* 12 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2013.0436>.

Nadkarni, Samira (@SamiraNadkarni). “For those that don’t know, fandom’s been reckoning with a racism problem...” Twitter, June 12, 2020. <https://twitter.com/SamiraNadkarni/status/1271340989181919232>.

- onepetal. "A Study of Haikyuu!! Character Names." *Tumblr*, April 17, 2016. <https://bo-cute-o.tumblr.com/post/142975667998/a-study-of-haikyuu-character-names>.
- Pande, Rukmini. "Dial Me Up, Scotty: Fandoms as Platforms for Women's Online Identity." In *Squee from the Margins: Fandom and Race*, 21-44. University of Iowa Press, 2018.
- . "Decolonising Fan Studies: A Bibliography-In-Progress." Google Docs. Accessed July 9, 2021. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DASV2eulNmTOdtwWMJBpuUW1vkWkxvVOAKP0JxZR9T8/edit>.
- "RaceFail '09." *Fanlore*. Accessed June 2, 2021. [https://fanlore.org/wiki/RaceFail\\_%2709](https://fanlore.org/wiki/RaceFail_%2709).
- "Russian Firm Buys LiveJournal." *New York Times*, December 3, 2007. <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/03/technology/03deal.html>.
- sbooksbowm. "these changes are the result of fan advocacy..." *Tumblr*, May 9, 2021. <https://sbooksbowm.tumblr.com/post/650751356690464768/these-changes-are-the-result-of-fan-advocacy-and>.
- "'Star Wars,' 'Pinocchio' and More as Disney Leans Sharply Into Streaming." *New York Times*, December 22, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/10/business/media/disney-star-wars.html>.
- "Strikethrough and Boldthrough." *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021. [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Strikethrough\\_and\\_Boldthrough](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Strikethrough_and_Boldthrough).
- "The Snapping." *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021. [https://fanlore.org/wiki/The\\_Snapping](https://fanlore.org/wiki/The_Snapping).
- "The Word Count of 175 Favorite Novels." *Broke by Books* (blog). Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://brokebybooks.com/the-word-count-of-175-favorite-novels/>.
- "Timeline of Major Fandom Purges, Restrictions, and Hassles Regarding Fanworks and Their Content." *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021. [https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_Major\\_Fandom\\_Purges,\\_Restrictions,\\_and\\_Hassles\\_Regarding\\_Fanworks\\_and\\_Their\\_Content](https://fanlore.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Major_Fandom_Purges,_Restrictions,_and_Hassles_Regarding_Fanworks_and_Their_Content).
- Tran, Marie Kelly. "Kelly Marie Tran: I Won't Be Marginalized by Online Harassment." *New York Times*, August 21, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/21/movies/kelly-marie-tran.html>.
- "Tumblr." *Fanlore*. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://fanlore.org/wiki/Tumblr>.

Versaphile. "Silence in the library: Archives and the preservation of fannish history." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 6 (2011). <https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2011.0277>.

"Violet Evergarden." *Fandom*. Accessed April 23, 2021. [https://violet-evergarden.fandom.com/wiki/Violet\\_Evergarden\\_\(series\)](https://violet-evergarden.fandom.com/wiki/Violet_Evergarden_(series)).

"Why I Support the OTW, by Speranza, aged mumble-mumble." *LiveJournal*, January 9, 2008. <https://cesperanza.livejournal.com/190204.html>.