InterPARES Trust Project

InterPARES Trust

Research Report

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Introduction / Summary

Jim Suderman

InterPARES Trust Project approved an historical study of cloud-based services to help identify and define key terms and to explore aspects of trust in cloud-based services. The study deliberately limited its scope to

- identifying specific cloud-based services that had lost the trust of their user communities:
- from the services so identified, identifying criteria or patterns that account for lost trust.

Cloud-based services are defined here as those where shared software and information are provided to computers and other devices as a utility (like the electricity grid) over a network, typically the Internet.[1] It was expected that the study would suggest fruitful avenues for primary research within the broader InterPARES Trust research agenda.

The literature search was unsuccessful in identifying definite relationships between the decline of a service and trust. However, a study of a cloud-based services used by fan fiction communities was conducted and its findings are included in this report.

The study, still based on a literature review, morphed into an examination of studies of trust in relation to cloud-based services, in particular mainstream services such as Facebook. Specifically, the study explored how perceptions of privacy, risk, and organizational/culture factors influenced (dis)trust in cloud service providers by individuals and virtual communities and trust between/among members [of those communities]. The study did not examine trust in the content, i.e., data, information or records, maintained and transmitted by cloud-based services.

The study concluded that the relationship between trust and use of cloud-based services is both indirect and multi-faceted. Trust is indirectly linked to service delivery because that trust is mediated by the technology, the community of users, and the perception or behavior of the service provider. The multi-faceted nature of trust in cloud-based services reflects

- the dynamic aspects of trust, categorizes as calculated, relational, or cognition-based;
- the willingness to trust at any given moment or over a sustained period;
- a dynamic relationship between users, communities, service providers, and technologies.

The nature of the information or records created, accessed, and maintained by cloud-based services appeared to be a secondary factor in terms of its effect on trust in cloud-based services. It is important to note that little research appears to directly address online, cloud-based information or records in relation to trust. This may be a fruitful line of inquiry for InterPARES Trust, particularly since key contextual information essential to establishing the authenticity of records is often not clear (or even present).

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[1] "Cloud computing," Wikipedia, accessed August 16, 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud_computing

Privacy is considered to be the ability of a user to control who has access to their personal information and how it is used is consistently identified as a concern by users. The study was not able to directly link fears of a loss of privacy with migration to alternative cloud-based services, in part due to lack of detailed data. Some authors refer to a 'privacy paradox' – the apparent importance placed by users on limiting access to their personal information by others and the posting of personal information using social media services. Privacy influences the trust relationship between user and community as well as user and service provider. An aspect of privacy was also highlighted in the fan fiction case study, which is a group or community-based expectation of privacy on-line as a result of obscurity.

The study investigated the willingness of users to accept risks, including risk to personal privacy, in using cloud-based services. This line of inquiry clearly brought the role of the technology into sharp relief, particularly in terms of the 'perceived usefulness' of the service and the 'perceived ease of use' of the technology by which the service is accessed. Existing levels of trust affect users' ability to perceive risk and their assessment of the likelihood and consequences of that risk. The concepts are reflected in a Risk-Trust assessment model, developed in the course of this study.

A review of online organizations or communities provided insights into
- how they form;
- the influence of technology on online communities; and
- contexts of creation and use of information exchanged using the services, e.g., Facebook postings.

Individual users and the communities within which users interact provide key aspects of the identity and integrity of the information and records they create. The review of organizations also highlighted the importance of respect for the values of user communities by service providers as a major factor influencing users` trust decisions.

Study method
The dominant information gathering approach was through surveying the literature. The 2007 article by danah m. boyd and Nicole B. Ellison entitled "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship" provided an effective starting point. Initial searches returned volumes of potential resources larger than what the study resources could or were intended to accommodate. As a result, searches were limited to more recent content and predominantly academic literature. Bibliographies of relevant articles were mined for additional references.

This survey approach identified specific user concerns with specific service providers, e.g., that users had privacy concerns with Facebook. However, it was also clear that as the number of Facebook users continued to climb, any loss of trust did not result in any large-scale exodus of users away from the service or towards a competing service. As a result, the study opted to try to determine how trust-related issues changed the nature of users' trust in the service. In response to a status report at the InterPARES Trust meeting in February 2014, exploration of the risk aspect was encouraged.

The trustworthiness of the information and records created and relied upon in the use of services was not central to this study. However, a preliminary assessment of a typical

'posting' was made against two InterPARES ontologies: *Concept of a Record* and *Trustworthiness of a Record*. This assessment contributed to understanding the degree of trust and risk appropriate to the information and records. It also contributed to understanding the context of creation and use of the information and records.

Scope of study
The study identified three main categories of trust:
1. Cognition – impressions of the service or technological interface;
2. Relational – trust based on direct experience, i.e., with a service provider, or indirect experience, i.e., the service provider is trusted by someone I trust;
3. Calculated – a point-in-time trust decision based on the benefit of doing so in relation to the cost.

and three principal entities:
  a. Users – the individuals making use of on-line services;
  b. Communities – the communities of users emerging through the use of on-line services;
  c. Service providers – the organizations that provide on-line services

Characteristics or qualities of technology and the information itself influenced the trust relationships between the three entities. The relevance of these categories should be understood to be dynamic. In other words, the category of trust of a user or user community may change over time or vary in relation to specific aspects of a service.

The literature was reviewed primarily from the perspectives of the individual user or community / group with the service provider. However, aspects of the individual user with the broader user community are also identified in this study.

Some of the literature reviewed specifically addressed trust in the technology providing the platform for cloud-based services. Obviously, users must trust the technology sufficiently to avail themselves of cloud-based services. However, this study's findings suggest that trust in the service provider is a far greater consideration than trust in the technology.

The literature did not specifically address trust in content, i.e., information or records. For this reason any inferences or extrapolations made from conclusions of this report should be supported by other studies and research data.

Risk

Kathryn Nalliah

What is Risk?

Prior iterations of the InterPARES project have not been able to reach a consensus on the definition of risk. This difficulty arises from the fact that there are numerous definitions in use in the English-speaking world. Definitions vary greatly from discipline to discipline, organization to organization, and person to person. There have been numerous academic papers written that attempt to define risk, many of which also break the concept down into subtypes.[2] Rather than provide yet another attempt at analyzing the term risk, this paper will adopt the most basic definition in order to provide an overview of the role of risk in users' trust of cloud-based services. For the purposes of this paper, risk is broadly defined as being vulnerable to a possible, but not certain, unwanted outcome.[3] This is essentially a rewording of the first component of the Oxford English Dictionary definition: "(Exposure to) the possibility of loss, injury, or other adverse or unwelcome circumstance; a chance or situation involving such a possibility."[4]

Perceived risk is generally defined as the subjective belief of potentially suffering a loss.[5] According to General Deterrence Theory individuals may be influenced by the perceived certainty and severity of repercussions. Thus perceived risk may be more influential if the probability of a particularly severe consequence being realized is believed to be high. [6] In online transactions the literature suggests that while people may perceive the consequences of a risk being realized to be severe, they generally view the probability of them being realized to be statistically slim.[7] For example, consider online shopping: the repercussions of having one's identity or financial information stolen are deemed severe by most people, but if you ask the average person what the odds are of them having their identity or credit card information stolen they will typically say it is very low. How often do we see people who are the victims of crime on the news expressing their shock at being victimized? As a society we tend to downplay the probability of unwanted outcomes occurring, especially when few alternatives to accepting a risk exist. For example, most people greatly underestimate the odds of getting into a motor vehicle accident because driving for most North Americans is a fact of everyday life, a risk that must be accepted. Cloud-based services, for the most part, are not considered a necessary risk. In the future, prevalence of

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[2] Chen, "The Impact of Perceived Risk."
 Nickel and Vaesen, "Risk and Trust."
 Das and Teng, "The Risk-Based View of Trust."
[3] Nickel and Vaesen, "Risk and Trust," 859.
[4] "risk, n.," OED Online.
[5] Das and Teng, "The Risk-Based View of Trust," 98-99.
Kim, Khansa and James, "Individual Trust and Consumer Risk Perception," 7.
Nickel and Vaesen, "Risk and Trust," 859.
[6] Kim, Khansa and James, "Individual Trust and Consumer Risk Perception," 4-7.
[7] Ibid, 11.
Lacohee, Phippen and Furnell, "Risk and Restitution," 489.

cloud-based services may make them a fact of everyday life; however, at this time individuals are free to assess situations on a case-by-case basis.

Risk, Trust, and Control

Trust is only needed in a situation that is risky.[8] Trust is believed to mitigate both perceived certainty and severity of unwanted consequences, thus reducing perceived risk.[9] Common definitions of trust typically include words such as "depend upon" and "reliance on." The use of words such as these link the discourse on trust with that on power as they indicate that the trustor relinquishes some amount of power to the trustee.[10] Power is exerted through control. As McKnight and Chervany explain, "[p]ower is the potential for influence, while control puts that potential into action."[11] An individual with power over an event, object, or person has, to a certain extent, the ability to control that event, object, or person. Trust may be viewed as a substitute for control in relationships.[12] As such, the use of control measures in an interaction may express a lack of trust between parties. In the context of cloud-based services, undue exertion of power over users may severely damage the trust relationship between service providers and users. Three examples come to mind: 1) Friendster's policing of profiles, 2) LiveJournal's suspensions of accounts, and 3) Facebook's manipulation of news feeds.

Friendster was made available to the US public in 2002 and is regarded by many as the first successful, large-scale social networking site. Some of the most popular profiles on Friendster were those considered "fake," i.e. those of fictional characters, celebrities, concepts, etc. The company was not pleased with the popularity of "fake" profiles and chose to respond by deleting profiles they believed to be "fake." The deletion of profiles, some of which were legitimate users, stirred up user unrest. As danah boyd states:

> Online communities are more like nation-states than technological tools. There is a master behind the architecture, a master who controls the walls of the system and can wage war on her/his people at any point. People know this. They have to trust that the creators have their best intentions in mind. They invest a lot of time and energy into creating an identity in the system - they want to believe that it is worth it. Killing off profiles destroys the trust that users have in the leader. Doing so will alienate users and their friends. There are good reasons to alienate some groups - spammers, malicious users, etc. But if you start off treating all of your users as potential criminals, you will not build a healthy environment. Kinda like in real life...[13]

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[8] Wang and Emurian, "An Overview of Online Trust," 111.

[9] Kim, Khansa and James, "Individual Trust and Consumer Risk Perception," 4-7.

[10] McKnight and Chervany, "The Meanings of Trust," 28.

[11] Ibid, 30.

[12] Das and Teng, "The Risk-Based View of Trust," 104.
McKnight and Chervany, "The Meanings of Trust," 30.

[13] boyd, "Friendster Lost Steam. Is MySpace Just a Fad?" *Apophenia* (blog), March 21, 2006, http://www.danah.org/papers/FriendsterMySpaceEssay.html

This exertion of control by Friendster, incompatible with their users' interests, tainted their relationships with their users and ultimately contributed to its failure in the North American market.[14]

May 29, 2007, LiveJournal suspended 500 accounts, the majority of which were Community accounts contributed to and watched by numerous people. The names of these accounts appeared with a line through them leading to the nickname "The Great Strikethrough." The story goes that LiveJournal was approached by a right-wing Christian group called "Warriors for Innocence," claiming that the accounts in question were promoting pedophilia and child pornography and demanding their termination. Account holders were not informed before their accounts were suspended and LiveJournal later admitted that none of the contents of the accounts were reviewed before suspension. While the majority of the accounts were eventually reinstated, the seeds of distrust had been sown. Some users would leave the service, while others stayed despite lingering feelings of distrust. LiveJournal's blatant exertion of control, imposing external values on their user-base, greatly harmed their relationships with their users. [15]

June 2, 2014, the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* published an article entitled "Experimental evidence of massive-scale emotional contagion through social networks" by researchers at Facebook, the University of California, San Francisco, and Cornell University.[16] The article soon reached the public's attention as it was picked up by mainstream media. The article revealed that in 2012 Facebook conducted a psychological experiment on nearly 700,000 users. For the purposes of the experiment, Facebook manipulated users' News Feeds to show either fewer positive or negative stories. Public outrage over the experiment was widespread with terms such as "lab rats" and "guinea pigs" being bandied about. This exertion of power by Facebook over its users prompted many users to reconsider their use of the service. While outrage over the experiment has resulted in many angry comments from users, few are likely to actually delete their accounts. Online marketer Robert Nava likens the situation to that of new traffic laws, the public complains about them but they will continue to drive because the benefits continue to outweigh the costs. Facebook, like driving, has become an indispensible part of many people's lives, thus giving the service provider untold power over its users.[17]

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[14] boyd and Ellison, "Social Network Sites," 215-216.

[15] Moellenberndt, *"*Livejournal Loyalty and Melodrama,*"* 58-93.

[16] Kramer, Guillory and Hancock, "Experimental Evidence of Massive-scale Emotional Contagion Through Social Networks," http://www.pnas.org/content/111/24/8788.abstract

[17] Albergotti, "Furor Erupts Over Facebook's Experiment on Users," http://online.wsj.com/articles/furor-erupts-over-facebook-experiment-on-users-1404085840

Guynn, "No One Mad Enough to Quit Facebook Over Research Study," http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2014/06/30/facebook-emotions-quit/11793079/

Learmonth, "Facebook Experiment Creates A Trust Gap," http://www.ibtimes.com/facebook-experiment-creates-trust-gap-1615676

Sagan, "Facebook's Emotion Experiment Angers Users Kept in the Dark," http://www.cbc.ca/newsblogs/yourcommunity/2014/06/facebooks-emotion-experiment-angers-users-kept-in-the-dark.html

To Trust or Not to Trust?

Many authors have broken down the concept of trust into subtypes, each with its own antecedents. For example, Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt and Camerer differentiate between calculative and relational trust. They argue that calculative trust is based on a rational cost-benefit analysis and is situational while relational trust is based on repeated interactions over time and "…information available to the trustor from within the relationship itself…." [18] In this paper we argue that all decisions to trust (or not) are the result of an situational assessment. Trusting is not an autonomic function of the human brainstem or a reflex; it requires a decision to be made. While the factors (often referred to as antecedents) considered in the assessment may differ for different types of trust, the end result is the decision to trust or not to trust which is specific to the situation at hand. Trust and perceived risk can, to some extent, be understood within the same framework of probability estimates.[19] Indeed, when considering cloud-based service providers "risk evaluation and determination of trust are in some sense different answers to the same question: whether to rely on the company to perform a given action."[20] If the probability of the unwanted outcome is deemed low enough the user may make the decision to trust. If the probability of the unwanted outcome is deemed too high (the perceived risk is deemed too great) the user may make the decision not to trust. In either case an assessment of the situation is required. When making the decision to engage with a cloud-based service provider an assessment is conducted, whether consciously or unconsciously. The user weighs the perceived pros, cons, and – to a certain extent—the probabilities of each outcome. The majority of assessments will likely occur informally and unconsciously, with users giving little, if any, serious consideration to statistical probabilities. Instead users are likely to rely on numerous factors, largely personal and/or social in nature, which are explored in greater detail in the following sections.

Social Influences

It could be argued that social influences are the most pervasive factors in any decision-making process as they affect the way all other factors are perceived. Indeed, even personal disposition may be considered the result of socialization.[21] As such, each of the factors considered in the trust-risk assessment are assumed to rely to some extent on social influences.

Cognition-based trust research suggests that trust is generally built on first impressions rather than experience. This line of research also suggests that stereotypes may play a significant role in determining trustworthiness. Further, as mentioned in the previous section on personal disposition, people are more likely to trust those perceived to be similar to themselves; similarity extends beyond personal disposition to social characteristics such as cultural norms and values.[22] This suggests that users are more inclined to trust service providers that are located in the same country or that they perceive to have similar values. Interactions governed by a system of shared social

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[18] Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer, "Not So Different After All," 399.
[19] Das and Teng, "The Risk-Based View of Trust," 98-99.
[20] Nickel and Vaesen, "Risk and Trust," 860.
[21] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 63.
[22] Ibid.

norms, obligations, and beliefs have been described by many in the social sciences as occurring within a moral economy. The moral economy, determined by popular consensus, has been described as "…an implicit set of understandings about what is 'right' and what is 'legitimate' for each player to do."[23] Violation of the terms of the moral economy may result in a loss of trust. The role of the moral economy can be clearly seen in the examples presented in the section on risk, trust, and control. From the perspective of Friendster and LiveJournal, users were perceived to have violated the terms of the moral economy by creating 'fake' profiles and using the service to disseminate 'unacceptable' content respectively. The responses of these service providers to the breach of the moral economy was deleting profiles and suspending accounts. In contrast, from the perspective of users their uses of the services were considered legitimate and thus they viewed the service providers' response to their actions as breaches of the moral economy. Regardless of which side violated the moral economy first, the violations resulted in a loss of trust in the service providers. Similarly in the case of Facebook, users reacted so strongly in opposition to their actions because Facebook was construed to have violated the moral economy by running experiments on users. [24]

Another factor that may be considered in many trust-risk assessments is that of second-hand information. In the absence of experience with a service provider, users may place more emphasis on information provided by trusted third-parties. This so-called third-party trust is most easily seen in a case where a user makes a decision based on the advice of a friend or family member. The third-party need not, however, be personally acquainted with the user. In many cases the relationship may more accurately be described as a chain of trust. For example, the user may trust the friend of a friend of a friend more readily than a complete stranger under the assumption that they can trust their friend who in turn can trust their friend and so on. In cases such as this, each link in the chain may weaken the trust placed in the information provided through it. Another form of impersonal third-party trust is that placed in expert opinion. For example, many people rely on the expertise attributed to the editors of CNET.com when choosing computer software and hardware. While expert opinion is unlikely to play a role in the decision to trust social media service providers, it may very well play a role in the decision to trust other cloud-based service providers.[25]

Yet another form of third-party trust is that which is best exhibited by open created content platforms such as wikis and review websites. Information and advice from these sources are trusted based on the concept of social validation. According to Jessen and Jorgensen, "social validation simply means that the more people acknowledge a certain piece of information the more trustworthy it is perceived." Social validation is enabled by the ability of the collective to pass judgment on content. For example, the ability of users to edit Wikipedia pages and flag passages as inappropriate is one form of social

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[23] Jenkins, Li, and Domb Krauskopf with Green, "If It Doesn't Spread, It's Dead: Creating Value in a Spreadable Marketplace," 44.
[24] Ibid, 44-46.
Thompson, *Customs in Common*, 188, 260, 336-340.
[25] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 63.
Lacohee, Phippen, and Furnell, "Risk and Restitution," 490.
Nickel and Vaesen, "Risk and Trust," 860.
Wu and Tsang, "Factors Affecting Members' Trust Belief and Behaviour Intention in Virtual Communities."

validation. In the case of review websites, social validation is best represented by the number of users who found a particular review helpful; many websites allow users to rate individual reviews with quality indicators such as thumbs up, thumbs down, and flags. Where content creation is open to the public it is generally believed that the goodwill of the many will outweigh the ill-intentions of the few. In the example of Wikipedia, it is generally believed that factual inaccuracies, whether purposely introduced or not, will be caught and corrected in a reasonable amount of time. In the case of consumer reviews, the genuine reviews made by legitimate consumers will likely outnumber the paid promotional reviews. In these instances the user trusts the aggregate of content-creators rather than any one particular person. In cases where the user must rely on one or a few content-creators, the ability to view a content-creator's profile becomes more important. The social characteristics of the content-creator (age, gender, nationality, occupation, etc.) and their activity level on the website (number of reviews/articles written) also contribute to the trust attributed to their words. For example, a review of a new smartphone written by an Apple employee whose past reviews are all glowing reviews of Apple products may be given less credence than a review written by unaffiliated reviewer who has provided varied reviews of numerous products.[26]

Another social influence, that may be specific to social media and similar services, is the role of social ties. Social ties may be pre-existing; however, the potential for new social ties may also be a driving force. Individuals may choose to engage with a social media service simply because their friends use that service or they may join a service because they anticipate that like-minded people will be more accessible through the use of that service. For example, a young person might join LinkedIn, not to keep in contact with real-world friends, but rather to connect with people working in their area of study.

Finally, culture may also influence the trust-risk assessment. The potential influence of culture is clearly expressed in the following quote:

> Since each culture's "collective programming" results in different norms and values, the processes trustors use to decide whether and whom to trust may be heavily dependent upon a society's culture. Indeed, one of the greatest impacts of culture is on how information is used to make decisions.[27]

Culture may influence how people perceive and experience risk. The level of risk that is deemed socially acceptable varies from culture to culture, with some cultures being considered more risk-averse than others. Similarly, the ease with which and degree to which people trust their peers and authorities may vary culturally.[28] In relation to cloud-

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[26] Jessen and Jorgensen, "Aggregated Trustworthiness."
Lucassen and Schraggen, "Trust in Wikipedia," 20.
Lucassen and Schraggen, "Evaluating WikiTrust."
Rowley and Johnson, "Understanding Trust Formation in Digital Information Sources," 501, 504-505.
[27] Doney, Cannon, and Mullen, "Understanding the Influence of National Culture on the Development of Trust," 601.
[28] Ibid.

based services, recent research indicates that culture may play a significant role in the way people perceive and interact with new technologies.[29]

Personal Disposition

Some people are simply more likely to trust than others. McKnight and Chervany describe what they call dispositional trust: "the consistent tendency to trust across a broad spectrum of situations and persons."[30] Das and Teng characterize this dispositional trait as a stable, internal factor that affects the individual's propensity to trust in any given situation.[31] In contrast, Cofta relates trust to identity, a dynamic construct shaped by experiences and memories.[32] Whether it is considered stable or dynamic, a trusting disposition enables users to give others the benefit of the doubt when faced with insufficient information to make a rational assessment. Similarly, risk-taking attitudes may also be at least partially attributable to one's personal disposition. In addition to personal disposition, the perceived similarity between the other party and oneself positively contributes to perceptions of trustworthiness. It has been suggested that, in the absence of sufficient information, individuals may overinflate their personal beliefs about trustworthiness in order to gain a sense of control in an uncertain situation.[33]

Familiarity

Several studies have found that trust in online transactions and relationships increases with familiarity.[34] Familiarity with the technology being used, the online interface, the nature of the transaction, and the service provider may all be considered in course of the trust-risk assessment. For example, the *Cyber Trust & Crime Prevention Project* conducted in 2003 in Great Britain shed light on several interactions between internet use and perceptions of trust and risk. The study found that increased use of the internet increases trust and reduces risks perceived in online transactions. Increased use of the internet includes frequency of use (how many times per day), types of use (multiple online activities), and timespan of use (number of years of experience). In general, heavy internet users (more times, more ways, more years) have more trust in the technology, information, and people they interact with online. The directionality of the relationship between usage and trust is unknown and may very well be bidirectional with use increasing trust and trust increasing use. The study also found that perceived risk tends to decrease with usage of the internet regardless of users' 'bad experiences' (viruses, identity theft, spam, etc.). This is likely due to the fact that the risks

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[29] Vance, Elie-Dit-Cosaque and Straub, "Examining Trust in Information Technology Artifacts."

[30] McKnight and Chervany, "The Meanings of Trust," 37.

[31] Das and Teng, "The Risk-Based View of Trust," 96.

[32] Cofta, "Confidence, Trust and Identity"

[33] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 62-63
 Wang and Emurian, "An Overview of Online Trust," 110-111.

[34] Chen, "The Impact of Perceived Risk, Intangibility and Consumer Characteristics on Online Game Playing."
Dutton and Shepherd, "Confidence and Risk on the Internet."
Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping."
Hsieh, Hsieh, and Chiu, "Post-Adoption Switching Behavior for Online Service Substitutes."
Hsu, Chang, and Yen, "Exploring the Antecedents of Trust in Virtual Communities."
Lacohee, Phippen, and Furnell, "Risk and Restitution."
Park and Ryoo, "An Empirical Investigation of End-users' Switching Toward Cloud Computing."

experienced in actual use are typically less common and less severe than those perceived by non-internet users. This is not to say that these individuals are not concerned about risks but rather that they have developed confidence in their ability to identify risks and determine who and what online are trustworthy. [35]

Another interpretation of familiarity lies in the notion that past behaviours influence future behaviours because users recall their past experiences when making decisions. In other words, people learn from their experiences, whether they be positive or negative. [36] However, in reality negative past experiences may be overlooked when a behaviour has been repeatedly performed.[37] Familiarity with the service may override perceptions of risk. This notion may partly explain why services, such as Gmail, which have experienced numerous problems, including security breaches, continue to thrive. Users are willing to overlook past negative experiences and perceived future risks in order to maintain the comfort that comes from using a familiar service.

Situational normality is the perception that things appear to be as they should be.[38] When the online interface appears the way the user expects it to they are more likely to trust the interaction. For example, a user would not expect to see numerous external advertisements on an online banking website thus the presence of these ads acts as a cue that the website should not be trusted. Similarly, abnormalities in a procedure may also suggest that continuing an interaction is risky. For example, if in the process of entering an online sweepstakes the website asks for a Social Insurance Number this would indicate that the site should not be trusted. Similarly, tips for identifying spam and phishing scams include looking for irregularities such as poor grammar and spelling. Any deviation from the familiar may indicate to the user that risk is high and trust should be withheld.

Finally, another well-researched type of familiarity is brand recognition. People are more inclined to trust companies that they recognize as having a good reputation. For example, people are more willing to purchase an item online from a store that they are familiar with than from an unknown vendor at a lower price.[39]

Structural Assurances

Structural assurances are steps taken by an authority that increase user trust. Examples of structural assurances that may be used by online service providers include things like providing guarantees, listing third-party certifications and awards, being open about policies and procedures, and providing readily accessible customer service contact information. For example, in online shopping free return policies reduce the perceived risks and consequences associated with buying items sight unseen. Allowing user ratings of products and vendors also serves to assure other users of their trustworthiness (see the section on social validation above). [40] Service providers' use of

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[35] Dutton and Shepherd, "Confidence and Risk on the Internet," 1, 5-8, 13-15.

[36] Hsieh, Hsieh, and Chiu, "Post-Adoption Switching Behavior for Online Service Substitutes," 1915.

[37] Chen, "The Impact of Perceived Risk, Intangibility and Consumer Characteristics on Online Game Playing," 1609.

[38] McKnight and Chervany, "The Meanings of Trust," 37.

[39] Lacohee, Phippen, and Furnell, "Risk and Restitution," 490.

[40] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 63-65.
Kim, Khansa, and James, "Individual Trust and Consumer Risk Perception," 6.

control mechanisms to increase user trust is also reflected in their use of technological security measures such as Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS), firewalls, verification, and encryption services. [41]

External authorities may also provide structural assurances. For example, industry regulations or legislation may provide users with legal recourse in the event of negative consequences.[42] For example, the recent European Commission ruling on the 'Right to be Forgotten' may reduce the risks and consequences of engaging with social media as EU citizens may no longer have to fear the items they post today being dredged up at the most embarrassing moment in the future via Google search.[43]

Users trust that the structural assurances in place will either reduce the risks associated with engaging with the service provider or minimize the consequences if a risk is realized.[44] Overall, open communication with users may be the most important structural assurance as it humanizes an otherwise impersonal online interaction.

Technology Acceptance

The technology acceptance model (TAM) was first proposed by Fred D. Davis in 1989 to help predict user acceptance of computers in the workplace. TAM posits that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use determine user acceptance of technologies such as personal computers. Perceived usefulness is defined as the extent to which people believe a technology will aid them in the completion of some activity or transaction. Perceived ease of use is defined as the ease with which the technology can be used; the benefits of usage must be outweighed by the effort required to use the technology. Simply put, technologies that are perceived to be both useful and easy to use are more likely to be adopted than other technologies.[45] "Numerous empirical tests have shown that TAM is a parsimonious and robust model of technology acceptance behaviors in a wide variety of IT, across both level of expertise, and across countries."[46]

Koehn, "The Nature of and Conditions for Online Trust."

Pavlou, "Consumer Acceptance of Electronic Commerce," 113.

Wang and Emurian, "An Overview of Online Trust," 112-114.

[41] Kim, Khansa, and James, "Individual Trust and Consumer Risk Perception," 6.

Koehn, "The Nature of and Conditions for Online Trust."

[42] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 65.

[43] European Commission, "Factsheet on the 'Right to be Forgotten' Ruling (C-131/12),"
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/data-protection/files/factsheets/factsheet_data_protection_en.pdf

[44] Pavlou, "Consumer Acceptance of Electronic Commerce," 106-107.

[45] Davis, "Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology,"
http://www.jstor.org/stable/249008

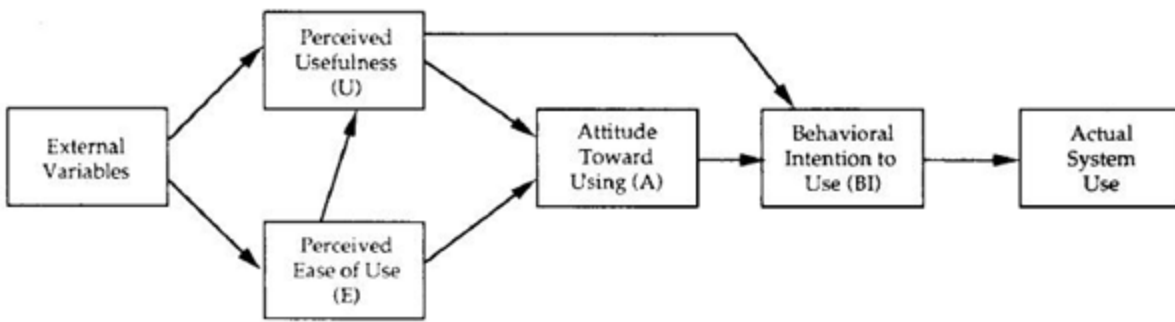[46] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 53-54.

Figure 1. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)[47]

The model above illustrates how perceived ease of use may affect technology adoption directly and indirectly via perceived usefulness. Simply put, a technology that is easy to use is perceived as more useful. Several variations of the original technology acceptance model have been proposed over the years however the core components of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use remain.[48]

How does TAM pertain to social media usage? The internet is a technology and a channel for communication, thus technology acceptance and trust both play significant roles in its usage. Empirical research on TAM's applicability to the internet has largely focused on e-commerce. These studies have identified two major antecedents of customer retention: the technological features of the website and the consumers' trust in the vendor. Extended to apply to the use of online services in general, TAM and trust in the service provider are posited to be two of the main factors affecting usage. Website features that may be relevant to perceptions of usefulness and ease of use include navigability, layout, information content, interactivity, intuitiveness, and personalization.[49]

Research has also identified several interactions between trust and TAM; however, these findings are not always consistent. For example, at least one study suggests that perceived ease of use of a website increases trust in the service provider while another suggests that trust is one the determinants of perceived ease of use.[50] While research seems to indicate that a relationship does exist between the components of TAM and trust, the type of relationship remains obscure. For the purposes of this paper, the components of TAM, perceived ease of use and usefulness, are included as contributing factors in the risk-trust assessment.

The Risk-Trust Assessment Model
All of the preceding factors (personal disposition, social influences, familiarity, structural assurances, and technology acceptance) include perceptions about the service provider under consideration. For example, perceptions about the service provider's values and

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[47] Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw, "User Acceptance of Computer Technology," 985, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2632151

[48] Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, and Davis, "User Acceptance of Information Technology," http://www.jstor.org/stable/30036540

[49] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 52-53

[50] Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub, "Trust and TAM in Online Shopping," 65.
Pavlou, "Consumer Acceptance of Electronic Commerce," 110-11.

other characteristics may be considered in determining the similarity of the service provider to the user (personal disposition). Perceptions about the ethics of the service provider may be considered in relation to the socially ingrained morals of the user (social influences). Perceptions about the reliability of the service provider may be based on past experience with the service provider (familiarity). The user may read the terms of service in order to assess the power the service provider would have over them and their information (structural assurances). Finally, perceptions about the competence of the service provider may hinge on the design of their website or user interface (technology acceptance). Thus, perceptions about the service provider may form the underpinnings of each of the factors considered in the risk-trust assessment.
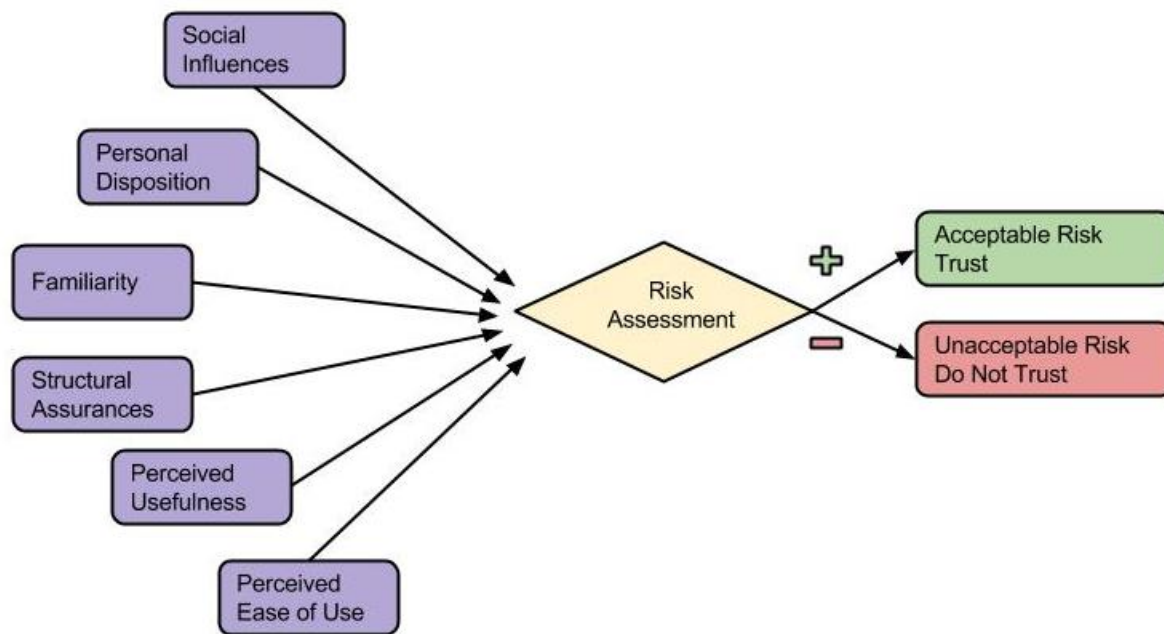

Figure 2. Risk-Trust Assessment Model.

This model is a simplification of the decision-making process. It is in no way meant to be exhaustive. No factor exists in a vacuum; each likely interacts with other factors in numerous ways. One, some, or all of these factors may be considered in the decision-making process. The risk assessment consists of a weighing of the pros and cons expressed by the factors discussed above. It also considers the certainty and severity of the perceived consequences for either course of action. For example, if the certainty of a negative consequence is high but the severity is negligible the user may decide that the benefits of engaging with the service provider outweigh the negatives. This may best be illustrated by the use of social media services such as Facebook. The perception that using social media will have negative consequences such as loss of control over personal information is quite high due to public awareness campaigns and popular media coverage. However, in most cases the severity of such consequences is low. For example, someone uses a photo without the user's permission or sends the user an unwanted message. Social media may also serve as an example of low certainty and high severity consequences. For example, identity theft may be considered a low certainty, high severity consequence of social media use. The risk assessment weighs all of these possible consequences.

The result of the assessment is either positive (the risks are deemed acceptable, the user decides to trust and engage with the service provider) or negative (the user decides that the risks involved are too great to ignore and chooses not to trust or engage with the service provider). The dichotomous nature of this model is meant to reflect the result of a point-in-time decision-making process where one either chooses to take an action—trusting another party—or not. While the end result of the risk assessment is portrayed as an either or decision, in reality the decision to trust is not quite so black and white. It is the opinion of the authors that trust exists along a continuum, with theoretical extremes consisting of complete trust and the complete absence of trust. Conceptualizing trust as a continuum it becomes clear that the decision to engage may not be as clear cut as the model suggests. Indeed, the decision to engage with a service provider may be the source of much turmoil for the user as the assessed risk level nears the threshold for acceptability. As discussed earlier the level of risk deemed acceptable will vary from person to person and situation to situation depending on numerous factors.

Organization

Jim Suderman

Nature of organizations

Users of cloud-based services create information and records and use or refer to them. Social media services such as Facebook go to considerable lengths to give users the sense that they control both the content posted and who can access it. In other words, service providers want users to focus on their community, presumably in order to take advantage of existing trust relationships.

boyd and Ellison assert that online communities prior to the advent of social network sites were organized around interests. With the introduction of social network sites, online communities have become "primarily organized around people, not interests… social network sites are structured as personal (or 'egocentric') networks, with the individual at the center of their own community."[51] In a way, the origins of the Facebook 'community' followed both paths as the service was initially only available to college students, i.e., an actual community, and college student life, presumably also a common interest. By contrast, "bands-and-fans" communities emerged on MySpace primarily as a common interest.

In general, users of cloud-based services form organizations through i) transposition of actual communities into on-line communities and ii) individual users seeking and joining with other users having a common interest. The Fan Fiction case study outlines the transition of fan communities from paper, ink, and mail technology through usenet and mailing lists in the 1980s to full-fledged online communities, including 'archive' services.[52]

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[51] boyd and Ellison, "Social Network Sites," 219.
[52] See "Historical and Technological Context" and "" sections.

Network theory contributes to an understanding of on-line communities. In particular, several aspects of Granovetter's theory regarding the strength of weak ties, although articulated in 1973 and well before the appearance of online communities, appear to aptly reflect the nature of many social media communities. Social media technology and services allow individuals to more easily maintain tenuous or weak ties with individuals who may be on the periphery of one's core social network(s) than may have been possible before.

...the strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize a tie.[53]

While social media enables an individual to establish and maintain a broad network, there will be those within that network who are much closer to each other than others. Granovetter proposes that weak ties, i.e., ties to individuals with whom one does not frequently interact, are more likely to form bridges with other social networks than the strong ties of one's core network. This is because there is likely to be little 'new' information among those with whom one has strong ties. It is over the bridges formed by weak ties that 'new information' is most likely to enter one's core network or community. For example, Granovetter refers to information regarding changing jobs, pointing out a "'structural tendency for those to whom one is *weakly* tied to have better access to job information one does not already have."'[54] Weak ties that act as bridges have value and may illustrate aspects of situational trust.

Some communities come into existence simply because of the commonality of the platform used by the individuals. While it may stretch the term to say that a "community" exists of users of Amazon's remarkable on-line marketing service, if one browses an item, the service lists other products purchased by customers who bought the item being browsed. While there is no way to contact these individuals, the service indicates choices of others having a common interest, which may be valuable to the user. The service provider's own marketing values are evident in that the service indicates neither how many individuals purchased the item being browsed (and the related items), nor does it indicate how many individuals purchased the item without purchasing any other items. Users of Amazon's services can also create and share 'wish lists,' which are much more personal in that the identity of the wish list creator is known to those users to whom the creator has authorized access.

The fore-going outlines aspects of how organizations or communities form but does not look into why they form. Media system dependency (MSD) theory focuses on individual responses to informational stimuli. Like Granovetter's insights relating to strong and weak ties in the context of networking theory, MSD theory pre-dates online services. It identifies three different categories of dependency on media:
To understand one＇s social world;
To act meaningfully and effectively in that world;

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[53] Granovetter, "Strength of Weak Ties," 1361.
[54] Granovetter, "Strength of Weak Ties: Revisited," 205. Italics in the original.
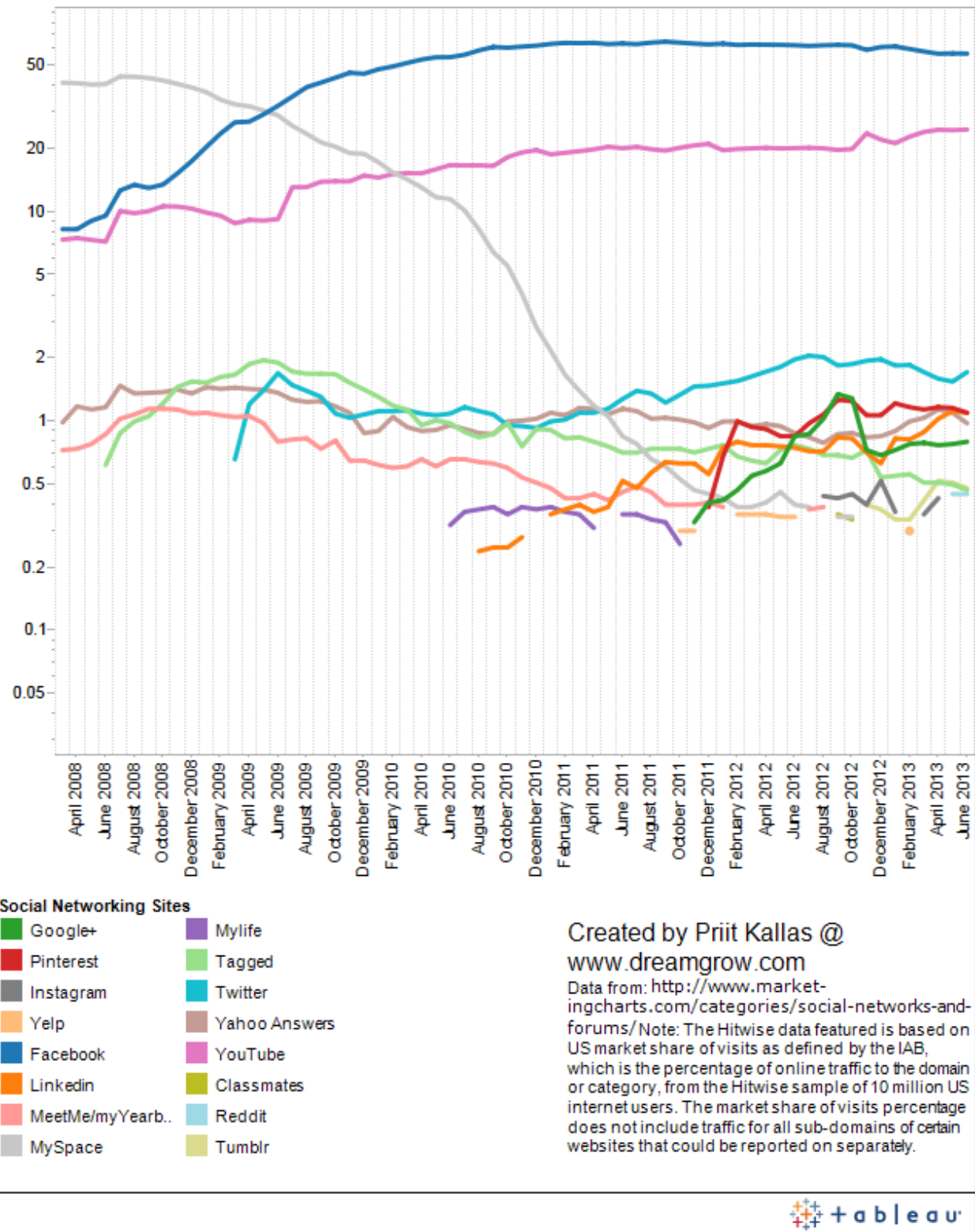
To escape from that world.[55]

"The conceptualization [of the effects of mass communications] stresses as a central issue the dependency of audiences on media information resources – a dependency that leads to modifications in both personal and social processes."[56] All three categories of dependency suggest aspects of how individuals engage and comprehend the world, helping them make sense of social influences and establish familiarity with events and in particular how others perceive and interact with those events. The third category of dependency determines what one might wish to escape from.

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[55] Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, "Political Efficacy on the Internet," 6.
[56] Ibid, 5. Italics in the original.

Top 10 Social Networking Sites 2008-2013

U.S. Market Share of Visits (Priit Kallas, www.dreamgrow.com)

Social Networking Sites

- Google+
- Pinterest
- Instagram
- Yelp
- Facebook
- Linkedin
- MeetMe/myYearb..
- MySpace
- Mylife
- Tagged
- Twitter
- Yahoo Answers
- YouTube
- Classmates
- Reddit
- Tumblr

Created by Priit Kallas @ www.dreamgrow.com

Data from: http://www.market-ingcharts.com/categories/social-networks-and-forums/ Note: The Hitwise data featured is based on US market share of visits as defined by the IAB, which is the percentage of online traffic to the domain or category, from the Hitwise sample of 10 million US internet users. The market share of visits percentage does not include traffic for all sub-domains of certain websites that could be reported on separately.

+tableau

Kallas, "Top 10 Social Networking Sites by [U.S.] Market Share of Visits," June 2013.

Organizations as context: Online communities

The twenty-one "virtual communities" having in excess of 100 million active users, three of which have in excess of half a billion users identified by Wikipedia fall into the former category.[57] The scale of use suggests that social media services fulfil one or more fundamental needs. There are many studies of human needs and it may be that these are relevant to how we as individuals assess risk and extend trust. For example, do social media services fulfil human needs for Love/Belonging, Esteem, and Self-actualization?[58] The three categories of media dependency proposed by MSD theory suggests a link between media and need.

A study of the political efficacy, a key driver of participation in politics, of internet based news concluded that efficacy is predicted by internet "dependency." The study, grounded in media system dependency (MSD) theory, concluded that dependency is predicted by the
- perceived utility of online media as relevant and comprehensive sources of news;
- perceived social utility of communicating with ideologically like-minded discussants.[59]

While media system dependency theory appears to have its origins in news mass media, it is based on the assumption that the effects of media use are based on the inter-relationship between individuals and their society. As such, it may be reasonable to interpret the term "media" broadly to include on-line services discussed in the context of this study.

MSD theory proposes that there are cognitive, behavioral and affective consequences of media use, of which the latter two are particularly relevant in the context of this study. Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur suggest that where media dependency is high, polarized affective and behavioral consequences may result. In other words, where media dependency is high, affective consequences may result in heightened sensitivity or insensitivity while behavioral consequences may result in activism or apathy. It is not hard to see how these responses might affects change an individual's assessment of risk and consequently their willingness to extend trust.

The degree to which members of online communities need to identify themselves within the community varies. Some cloud-based services require no identity or profile, e.g., users referencing articles on Wikipedia. Marketing values appear to be absent from those of Wikipedia and so what other Wikipedia users have consulted is not made known (if it is systematically tracked at all) to individuals as is the case with Amazon. However, many services, including some of the largest, require users to establish an identity within the context of the service, ranging from provision of confidential payment information to creation of substantial profiles. In many instances, identifying information contained in user profiles and log-ins are used both by the service provider for marketing purposes, e.g., projecting advertising that may be of interest, and other users for networking purposes.

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[57] "List of Virtual Communities with more than 100 Million Active Users," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_virtual_communities_with_more_than_100_million_active_users
[58] These are upper levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
[59] Ognyanova and Ball-Rokeach, "Political Efficacy on the Internet," 9,11.

Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield applied signalling, common ground, and transaction cost theories to assess the reliability or trustworthiness of individual facebook profiles. A key finding is that signalling and common ground elements, e.g., high school attended and field of study, respectively, may act as indicators of "offline" networks, e.g., people who attended the same high school, and communities of interest such as those in the same field of study but at different academic institutions. Transaction cost theory suggests that some profile elements affect the negative and positive costs of establishing and maintaining an online profile. The more profile elements present on one's profile the easier that individual can be located by others seeking to make a connection. If an individual establishes a false profile, cost is incurred in terms of the effort needed to credibly maintain it along with the risk that the false profile will be discovered and resulting negative effect on the individual's reputation.[60] This conclusion is reinforces the suggestion made several years earlier by Donath and boyd that in "a situation in which there is persistent identity and repeated interaction, receivers can punish deceivers through the social mechanism of reputation."[61]

Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield's conclusion appears to be validated further by a study of messaging practices within Facebook conducted by Golder, Wilkinson, and Huberman. Their study found that "over 90% of messages were exchanged...between friends," i.e., between individuals who had a pre-existing connection, whether strong or weak.[62] An exchange of messages is not an assurance that the on-line profiles are "true," of course. These findings support the concept of relational trust (introduced above). The fan fiction study describes how online fan communities police themselves, including shaming community members who violated the values of the community, e.g., exposing fan fiction communities to unwanted attention.

Broader circumstances, such as Snowden's release of thousands of documents detailing surveillance by the National Security Agency, may also influence trust decisions. While NSA surveillance is not considered by this study to be a cloud-based service, the publicity surrounding the disclosure has negatively affected US-based providers of cloud services. According to the CEO of Cogeco Data Services and Peer 1 Hosting, one in three Canadian firms and one in five United Kingdom firms began actively moving data out of the United States in 2014 in response to the NSA scandal.[63] Overall, estimates of the cost to U.S.-based cloud service providers through 2016 range from $21.5 to $35.0 billion.[64]

Organizations as context: Online service providers

Service providers influence and are influenced by the online communities they serve. Their actions can significantly affect the willingness of servicer users to accept risk. Buzz was a new service launched by Google in 2010.

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[60] Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield, "A Familiar Face(book)," 437-8.
[61] Donath and boyd, "Public Displays of Connection," 73.
[62] Golder, Wilkinson and Huberman,"Rhythms of Social Interaction," 5.
[63] Ciciretto, "Trust and Technology," 5.
[64] Castro, "How Much Will PRISM Cost the U.S. Cloud Computing Industry?," 3.

Google, in its launch blog post, described 'Buzz' as

> a social networking, microblogging and messaging tool that was developed by Google and integrated into their web-based email program, Gmail. Users could share links, photos, videos, status messages and comment organized in conversations and visible in the user's inbox.

The post went on to reference groups and communities among the users of its Gmail service:

> If you think about it, there's always been a big social network underlying Gmail. Buzz brings this network to the surface by automatically setting you up to follow the people you email and chat with the most.

The same post went on to invite independent developers to participate with Google "to make Buzz a fully open and distributed platform for conversations."[65]

Buzz became available to approximately 150-200 million Gmail users in February 2010 and within a few days the rate of comments and posts exceeded 160,000 per hour suggesting a very strong uptake by existing users.[66] Simultaneously there also emerged a significant protest over privacy concerns. Canada's Privacy Commissioner contacted Google asking them to explain "how its new social network, Buzz, has addressed privacy issues since its recent launch."[67] By late 2011, Google shut Buzz down following attempts to resolve the privacy concerns, an apology, and an $8.5 million civil lawsuit settlement.[68] In this case, the service provider lost the trust of a significant portion of its user community privacy values.

Friendster, one of the earliest social media services, was launched in 2002. boyd and Ellison relate that the initial growth of Friendster was the result of the early adoption by bloggers, attendees of the annual Burning Man event, and gay men. Rapid growth resulting from media attention overwhelmed the technological infrastructure, eroding its value as a utility. Rapid growth also destroyed Friendster's value to users seeking a niche service or at least a degree of obscurity.

> Friendster's servers and databases were ill-equipped to handle its rapid growth, and the site faltered regularly, frustrating users who replaced email with Friendster. Because organic growth had been critical to creating a coherent community, the onslaught of new users who learned about the site from media coverage upset the cultural balance. Furthermore, exponential growth meant a collapse in social contexts: Users had to face their bosses and former classmates alongside their

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[65] "Introducing Google Buzz," Google: Official Blog, February 9, 2010, http://googleblog.blogspot.ca/2010/02/introducing-google-buzz.html

[66] Gmail is a cloud-based, social media mail service provided by Google.

[67] Canada, Privacy Commissioner. "Commissioner Challenges Google Buzz Over Privacy Concerns," February 17, 2010, https://www.priv.gc.ca/media/nr-c/2010/nr-c_100217_e.asp

[68] "A Fall Sweep" Google: Official Blog, October 14, 2011, http://googleblog.blogspot.ca/2011/10/fall-sweep.html
Coursey, "Google Apologizes for Buzz Privacy Issues," *PC World*, February 15, 2010,
Parr, "Google Settles Buzz Privacy Lawsuit for $8.5 Million," *Mashable*, September 3, 2010,
http://mashable.com/2010/09/03/google-buzz-lawsuit-settlement/

close friends. To complicate matters, Friendster began restricting the activities of its most passionate users.[69]

Friendster's popularity declined in the United States but it continued to expand elsewhere. By 2008 it was a major social networking site in Asia, particularly popular in The Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.[70]

FanLib's policies, set out in the fan fiction case study, exhibited values at odds with those of many among the fan fiction communities. Those differences undermined the trust of the user community. Users suspected that they were neither the audience that FanLib was seeking while the perceived profit motive of the service (pp.27-31, above) was contrary to the widespread value of the gift economy. It was not that FanLib was necessarily dishonest with its users but rather that the values expressed through their editorial policies, e.g., a right to edit, and through how the service was framed, e.g., that completed work is just 1st draft to be polished by the pros, was in conflict with a significant portion of the user community.

More recently, Wikipedia introduced a requirement that editors must "disclose whether or not they are getting paid – a change meant to prevent contributions from non-objective sources."[71] This editorial policy sets a bar as a means to maintain the trust of Wikipedia users by requiring its editors, who monitor new, and changes to existing, content. In this case, Wikipedia seeks to retain the trust of users by maintaining a level of objectivity in the editors, even though the editors are not employees of the service provider but a user community.

The study suggests that even before users of cloud-based services consider the content (data, records) of the service, there occurs an assessment of the values of the service provider itself. This may suggest, in turn, that users may be pre-disposed to trust the content (data, records) provided by services that espouse values consistent with that of the user or user community.

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[69] boyd and Ellison, "Social Network Sites," 215. danah boyd provides a more detailed regarding the limitations on Friendster usage in "Friendster Lost Steam. Is MySpace Just a Fad?" March 21, 2006.
[70] Goldberg, "Analysis," *digitalmediawire,* May 13, 2007, http://www.dmwmedia.com/news/2007/05/13/analysis-friendster-is-doing-just-fine.
See also Woo Liu, "Friendster Moves to Asia," *TIME,* January 29, 2008, http://content.time.com/time/business/article/0,8599,1707760,00.html.
[71] Bell, "Wikipedia's New Rules," *Mashable,* June 20, 2014, http://mashable.com/2014/06/20/wikipedia-rules-change/.

Fan Fiction Case Study

Mel Leverich

Introduction

This study concerns a case where a new service provider failed to gain the trust of the pre-existing virtual community that it presented its service to. Based on a cultural history and analysis of the community, this chapter explores contributors to the immediate break down of trust that occurred between a service provider, FanLib Inc., and the community it offered its services to, media fandom. This study shows how calculus-based risk assessment is unavoidably integrated with relational and cognitive assessments of trustworthiness. Rather than directly applying the risk-trust assessment developed by the research team, this study focuses on social factors, including cultural norms and values, as found in the Risk-Trust Assessment model, in order to demonstrate the gravity of these and other factors on trust. Note that this study concerns the failure of a service provider to gain the trust of a community which it targeted as potential users. The gain and loss of the trust of an established user community implies different social and cultural dynamics,[72] as does the gain and loss of trust of individual users with no particular community identity. FanLib was also not a typical Web 2.0 service due to its business connections with its partners in the media industry, its history as a marketing company, and on account of the fact that its audience was not the general populace, but a marginalized, subcultural community with a pre-existing cultural history and identity.

This study begins with a description of the virtual community and its origins, culture and moral economy.[73] "The moral economy describes the set of social norms and mutual understandings which make it possible for two parties to do business with each other. … The measure of a moral economy is the degree to which participants trust each other to hold up their end of these implicit agreements."[74] Changes in economic and technological conditions can lead to perceived violations of social norms which are taken for granted in the moral economy, causing disruptions in trust between the affected parties.[75] In this case, FanLib's attempts to shift the uneasy moral economy that exists between fans and the media industry out of detente and into a new stage of relations was perceived as a threat by fans.

Methodology

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[72] For a thorough history of Livejournal's development of a loyal user community and the erosion of its community's trust, see Christine Moellenberndt, *"Livejournal Loyalty and Melodrama."*

[73] Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the 18th Century." Cited by Jenkins, Li, and Krauskopf with Green, "If It Doesn't Spread, It's Dead: Creating Value in a Spreadable Marketplace," 44.

[74] Jenkins, Li, and Krauskopf with Green, "If It Doesn't Spread, It's Dead: Creating Value in a Spreadable Marketplace," 44.

[75] Ibid, 44-45.

This study is based on a review of academic literature on media fandom, fan literature on media fandom, literature about FanLib, and other sources. The description of media fandom found here is limited by my own knowledge of where to find media fandom sources, which are disparate and not easily searchable. For this reason Larsen and Zubernis write, "the danger for the researcher is in believing that whatever slice of fandom which he or she knows best is therefore representative of the whole."[76] As a fan, the specific section of media fandom which I am most familiar with and which I focus on here is anglophone and most active on Livejournal during the events described, a blogging website. A second issue with researching media fandom is that there is no comprehensive history of media fandom and its scope, written either by fans or scholars, and what accounts that do exist may vary.[77] Due to the ephemerality of internet archives, the history of media fandom is often recounted after the fact by individuals who participated in events and periods of change as they developed and occurred. During the course of researching this study, I discovered that perhaps up to half of the fan sources that I attempted to locate via references and links had been removed from their original locations, or were otherwise unavailable.

In addition to textual analysis, academic research on media fandom typically uses a combination of three tactics to collect information: personal account, ethnography and subject interviews. All are susceptible to the bias of limited and localized primary sources, leading to the final issue with studying media fandom: its large scope and disparate nature. Certain cultural features and trends are considered to be held widely in common in media fandom communities, but there is no central, original, or archetypal media fan or media fan community which can be said to be representative of the whole. While I have attempted to be comprehensive and balanced, the account presented here should be accepted in the context of the above limitations.

On account of the community's sensitivity to observation, certain precautions will be taken when citing public fan sources. Many community members are wary of academic interest into their activities, on account of the objectifying ways in which researchers theorized fan activity and engaged with these communities in the past:[787980] As Matt Hills puts it, "Academic practice—regardless of its favored theorists and theoretical frameworks—typically transforms fandom into an absolute Other."[81] Fans who highly value privacy and independence from the attention of community outsiders may oppose any discussion of community activities or links to community texts outside of community spaces.[82] On account of the community's expectation of privacy, *Transformative Works and Cultures,* an academic journal focused on fan culture, requires that submitting authors obtain explicit consent from community members before quoting or citing them.[83]

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[76] Larsen and Zubernis, *Fandom at the Crossroads,* 36.
[77] Coppa, "A Brief History of Media Fandom," 41.
[78] Hills, *Fan Cultures,* 3-8
[79] Duffett, *Understanding Fandom,* 152-209
[80] Larsen and Zubernis, *Fandom at the Crossroads,* 48-53.
[81] Hills, *Fan Cultures*. 5.
[82] Hellekson and Busse, "Fan Privacy and TWC's Editorial Philosophy."
[83] "Author Guidelines," Transformative Works and Cultures.

Kristina Busse, an editor of *Transformative Work and Cultures,* has written about the spectrum of public and private spaces online and the ethics of directing public attention to digital authors and communities who have a reasonable expectation of privacy on account of their obscurity.[84][85] She recommends providing bibliographic citations without direct links except where permission is obtained from the author as a baseline practice. For the purposes of this research project, I will provide bibliographic information for media fan journals and websites without direct hyperlinks except where 1) the blog is primarily non-fannish, non-personal, scholarly, or otherwise directed toward a general audience, d) where the primary author has made a blanket statement inviting links to their texts, or 3) I've obtained consent from the primary author to include a link.[86] I will also avoid referencing comments made by media fans on blogs and forums, as there may be a higher expectation of privacy afforded to comments than top-level blog and forum posts. An exception is made for forum and blog comments made by FanLib Inc. employees about FanLib.

Background and Introduction Media Fandom

A thorough description of the virtual community's history and culture is necessary to understand the nuances of the turbulence that FanLib's launch triggered in many fan communities, collectively referred to as media fandom. Media fandom refers to a diverse set of fan communities which share common social and cultural norms, interact with each other, and produce and consume fan work.[87] Fan work, a type of transformative work, is non-commercial, creative work that is explicitly derivative of another text. Popular types of fan work include fan fiction (fic), fan music videos (vids), and fan art.[88] Fan work is usually defined in relation to the audience it is produced for: namely, fandom.[89] Professional derivative works which are contracted licensed, or produced for mainstream consumption are usually not considered fan work.[90] For example, a modern pastiche of *Sherlock Holmes* published for popular consumption would not be referred to as fan fiction per se by most authors, except perhaps ironically, but a pastiche of *Sherlock Holmes* non-commercially produced within the bounds of a *Sherlock Holmes* fan community would always be referred to as fan fiction.[91]

Media fandom and fan work may supersede the importance of the original text for fans, particularly when the original text is no longer being produced. Fan communities form

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[84] Busse, "Attention Economy, Layered Publics, and Research Ethics."

[85] Busse, "acafans, fan scholars, and how to navigate academic and fannish spaces."

[86] "While Fanlore is first and foremost a space both by and for fans, one of our goals is to make its contents accessible and appealing to other parties, like academics, media people, or fans new to online fandom. We hope Fanlore can help these groups learn more about fandom and fan practices; we hope to become a resource and a space where fans are in control of their own representation to more mainstream sensibilities."
    "Fanlore:About," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Fanlore:About

[87] "Media Fandom," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Media_fandom

[88] "What do you mean by a transformative work?" Organization For Transformative Works, http://transformativeworks.org/what-do-you-mean-transformative-work

[89] Hellekson, "A Fannish Field of Value," cited by Stanfill, "Fandom, Public, Commons."

[90] Berlatsky, "Do Fans Really Own Fan Fiction?" cited by Stanfill, "Fandom, Public, Commons."

[91] When a media subject is placed in front of the word fandom, such as in *Sherlock Holmes* fandom, it refers to all of the fans of that media subject in media fandom.

when fans bond with or become fans of other fans.[92] Seemingly paradoxically, some fans may not even like the source text which inspires the fan work that they enjoy. 'Fan' is sometimes redefined as someone who produces or consumes fan work in media fandom or other creative communities, as opposed to someone who simply enjoys a television show or who is a member of a fan community that is not focused on transformative fan work.[93][94] In this research paper which takes media fandom as its scope, 'fan' is used to refer to a member of media fandom rather than any of the latter, generic meanings of the word.

The genealogy of media fandom is typically traced back to female fans of *The Man from U.N.C.L.E* and *Star Trek: The Original Series*.[95] The beginning of media fandom is attributed to tensions between male science fiction literature fans and the large influx of female fans of the new television show *Star Trek*.[96] Women and other fans of new science fiction media who felt excluded from established science fiction fan communities on account of their gender and interests began to interact outside of science fiction fandom. These new, female-dominated *Star Trek* communities were sometimes referred to as "media fandom" in order to differentiate them from male-dominated science fiction fandom, initiating a gendered cultural divide that still persists today.[97] Francesca Coppa describes media fandom per se as not being born until the 1970's, when large numbers of *Star Trek* fans became interested in other genres of television, especially buddy cop shows.[98]

While science fiction fandom "has maintained close ties to the professional science fiction writing community," media fandom was "founded less upon the consumption of pre-existing texts than on the production of fan texts."[99] Focus on the production and consumption of fan work still distinguishes media fandom from science fiction fandom. Henry Jenkins proposes that "the close ties between male fans and male writers created barriers to female fans"; when media fans removed themselves from science fiction fan spaces, they "bought freedom at the expense of proximity to writers and editors."[100] Media fans were not only marginalized for their gender, but their focus on relationships and emotional experience in storytelling.[101] The vast majority of media fans use pseudonyms for privacy reasons. Many still resist increasingly public presence of their communities and practices, preferring to remain obscure as a deterrent to negative attention.[102] Media fan cultural practices and other, feminine-coded fan behaviors continue to be marginalized both in science fiction fandom and in wider

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[92] Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 38

[93] Ibid, 41.

[94] See also Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green, with participants Paul Booth, Kristina Busse, Melissa Click, Sam Ford, Henry Jenkins, Xiaochang Li, and Sharon Ross, "Online Roundtable on Spreadable Media."

[95] Coppa, "A Brief History of Media Fandom," 43-46.

[96] Hills and Jenkins, "Intensities Interviews Henry Jenkins @Console-ing Passions, University of Bristol, July 7th, 2001," 7-8.

[97] "Science Fiction Fandom vs. Media Fandom," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Science_Fiction_Fandom_vs._Media_Fandom

[98] Coppa, "A Brief History of Media Fandom," 49-50

[99] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers,* 46-47

[100] Ibid, 48.

[101] Coppa, "A Brief History of Media Fandom," 48-50

[102] Romano, "The Crumbling of the Fourth Wall: Why Fandom Shouldn't Hide Anymore."

culture.[103][104] "Obsessively collecting comic books or speaking Klingon," both associated with men and science fiction fandom, "is more acceptable within and outside of fandom than creating fan vids or cosplaying" the former a creative genre in media fandom and the latter associated with female fans in general.[105] Both issues of gender and the preference of many media fans to preserve the the community's independence and privacy will be discussed further in relation to FanLib.

While "media" was originally meant to refer to these fans' preference for new media forms, the split between media fandom and science fiction fandom was primarily a cultural one rather one than based on different generic interests.[106] Both science fiction fandom and media fandom are now closely associated with comics and anime and manga fandom, while media fandom has broadened further outside of these genres, to include buddy cop shows and detective stories, fantasy and fiction about real persons. Media fandom is descriptive of fan communities that have been identified to more or less share a common terminology and set of cultural and creative practices and norms, and does not encompass all fans of a certain genre, type of media or source text. In practice, when speaking of the fans of a particular text, such as *Doctor Who,* science fiction fans, media fans, and all *Doctor Who* micro-communities, even mutually exclusionary ones, might be conflated into one group, "*Doctor Who* fandom," on the basis of their consumption of the same source text.[107][108]

There is no canonical list of communities or fandoms that are considered to be a part of media fandom. The boundaries of media fandom are fluid, ever changing, and inconsistently determined by established media fans. New fan communities that share similarities to established media fan communities, but which are mainly populated by new fans who may have created new practices, norms and terminology in minimal contact with media fandom have been sometimes referred to as "standalone fandoms," "feral fandoms" or "threshold fandoms" by media fans.[109] "Feral" is often considered to be a disparaging term which falsely implies one homogenous media fandom with determinable boundaries, rather than media fandom as a loosely connected set of communities and individual fans. The label "feral" may also be used to deliberately exclude fans and fan communities who are considered to be undesirable; Anne Jamison suggests that the stigma attached to *Twilight* fandom, considered to be a feral fandom, is related to "internalized gender and genre prejudice" of many media fans.[110]

Since the early 1960's, the genealogy of media fandom has branched out from a tightly-knit network to a vast web of diverse, loosely connected individuals and communities. This trend was only exaggerated when fans began interacting on the internet, and large

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[103] Busse, "Geek Hierarchies."

[104] Busker, "Fandom and Male Privilege."

[105] Busse, "Geek Hierarchies," 75.

[106] England, "Worldcon, Not Just Literature."

[107] As in Paul Booth and Peter Kelly, "The Changing Faces of Doctor Who fandom: New fans, New Technologies, Old Practices?"

[108] On the conflation of differing interpretive fan communities which may not want to be associated and which may have little in common outside of liking the same source text: Kate Morrissey, "Fandom Then/Now: Popular Fandoms & Stories."

[109] "Feral," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Feral

"Threshold Fandom," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Threshold_Fandom

[110] Jamison et al, *Fic,*. 179

influxes of new fans began to form internet-based communities side by side with media fans who were used to a print-based, fanzine tradition.[111] Cultural clashes between new "net fans" and older media fans, also called "print fans" by way of contrast, ensued.[112] The explosion of fan activity on the internet initiated a new generation of media fans, or the beginning of the end of traditional media fandom, depending on who you ask. Some "net fan" communities that were once perceived of as feral by established media fans, such as *The X Files* or *Xena: Warrior Princess* fandoms, are now each thought to have originated significant aspects of the genealogy of what is considered to be media fandom today. Media fandom has expanded and evolved with every new generation of fans. Fan cultures older than media fandom by decades, such as the original *Sherlock Holmes* fandom, anime, comics, music and celebrity fandoms have been encountered and had their objects of interest adopted by sections of media fans online.[113] Among mainly anglophone fan cultures, media fandom is often defined against anime and manga fandom, fan communities which do not focus on fan work such as science fiction fandom or soap opera fandom, or fandoms that are excluded as feral such as *Twilight* fandom. Media fans of different communities may draw their own boundaries based on their perceptions of their own and other fan communities.

Media fandom's history is characterized by both expansion and internal division. Media fandom can be split into the fandoms of a specific text, for example *Star Trek* fandom, and from there into micro-communities, which may be localized to a forum, a mailing list, or even a rough network of social network users who share an interpretive framework, such as a preference for a particular romantic pairing; individual fans may be active in many fandoms and micro-communities, or only one at a time.[114] Micro-communities "cater to very specific shipper[115] groups or interpretations of the texts" and have "their own sets of boundaries, rules and hierarchical structures that may not necessarily conform to the wider fan community."[116] Bertha Chin proposes that these communities are typically formed by splinter groups that break up with the main community on account of irresolvable conflict about rules, norms and values, or due to competing interpretative lenses – termed fan-tagonism by Derek Johnson.[117] New communities are also created when fans whose interests are in the minority, or who feel excluded from established communities, collect to communicate amongst themselves in new spaces, causing generational fractures.[118]

Over time, fan communities cross borders of media and culture to engage with each other's work, interact, and influence each other's practices; "it is becoming increasingly difficult to map out clearly national and/or regional boundaries within the digital world

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[111]Fanzines are non-professionally printed publications, circulated by post, that may include fan work, articles, fan art or other news relevant to fans.

[112] "Net fans," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Netfans

[113] Coppa, "A Brief History of Media Fandom," 54-57.

[114]A 2008 survey found a roughly even split between fans who are active in only one fandom and those who are active in more than one at a time. Kate Morrissey, "Fandom Then/Now: Engagement."

[115]A shipper is someone whose main interest is in fan work that depicts the romantic or sexual pairing of two characters. For example, a Buffy/Spike shipper is someone who is interested in fan work depicting the fictional relationship between those two characters. Fans tend to congregate with other fans who ship the same characters as they do, creating 'shipper communities.'

[116] Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 119.

[117] Johnson, "Fan-tagonism."

[118] Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 120.

that many fans seem to inhabit."[119] At the same time, established communities may isolate themselves and new fan communities may spring up using new media and platforms, each showing startling ignorance of the other. This evolutionary process of social integration and disintregration forces fans and scholars to question what we mean by media fandom and what continues to distinguish it as a community or culture distinct from other fan cultures.[120][121]

The original 1960's media fans are a significant, but small part of the diverse cultural genetics of what is considered media fandom today. The boundaries of modern media fandom are porous, challenged, and in some ways artificial. Many fans may not conceive of themselves as members of media fandom at all, but only as a member of the fandom for their favorite text. Even so, fans who have never heard of the concept of media fandom, and who have no knowledge of its history and breadth, might still recognize other fan communities that, in general, talk about and do things similarly to the ways that they talk about and do things. For the purposes of this research paper, any fan community for which the creation and consumption of fan work is central, and which has features inherited in common from other media fan communities---such as shared terminology, social norms and creative practices---is considered to be a part of a media fandom. By science fiction fan I will mean, fans who share with media fans an interest in Western science fiction and related genres, but who generally do not produce or consume the kind of fan work that is typical of media fandom.[122]

Those who produce creative fan work are the most visible and celebrated portion of media fans. Media fans have sometimes been put in a binary with non-participatory, or passive fans by fan studies scholars, where all fans involved in media fandom are assumed to produce fan work and visibly interact with other fans (to be active and participatory) and all fans who do not produce fan work or visibly interact with other fans are assumed to have no involvement in media fandom (and to be passive consumers and non-participatory).[123] This false dichotomy erases other fan cultures as well as fans who participate in media fandom in less obvious ways, such as by consuming fan work, writing reviews or critical essays, hosting discussions, managing community spaces, curating social bookmarks, or volunteering their time and skills to fan archives. A more expansive understanding of participation "may still exclude 'fans who merely love a show, watch it religiously, talk about it, and yet engage in no other fan practices or activities' (Gray, Sandvoss, and Harrington 2007, 3–4), but it does allow us to recognize

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[119] Jenkins, "When Fandom Goes Mainstream…"

[120] Chin and Morimoto, "Towards a Theory of Transcultural Fandom," 105.

[121] Jenkins, Ford, and Green, with participants Booth, Busse, Click, Ford, Jenkins, Li, and Ross, "Online Roundtable on Spreadable Media."

[122] While it is widely recognized that there is a significant and lasting cultural divide between media fandom and science fiction fandom, terminology may differ on how each should be identified in relation to the other. The former may be described as textual poachers (Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*), textual gifters (Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters"), fan fiction fans (Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 38), fangirls, transformational fans, etc., and the latter may be referred to as 'mainstream' fans, fanboys, affirmational fans, and by other means depending on the author and the matter in question. See obsession_inc, "Affirmational fandom vs. Transformational fandom." For an extended discussion of fan culture associated with 'fanboys' (here science fiction fandom) as compared to 'fangirls' (here media fandom) on different axes, see fandebate.livejournal.com.

[123] Larsen and Zubernis, *Fandom at the Crossroads,* 16.

the ways in which even nonproductive fans can participate in fandom's gift economy through their engagement with the fruits of fannish labor."[124]

Gift Economy

The non-profit production and circulation of amateur fan work is integral to media fan culture. Almost all fan work is freely shared with the community, with no price of entry. It is taboo in media fandom to put a price on fan fiction in particular. The non-profit exchange of fan work in media fan communities has been described as having the features of a moral economy of gift giving, a gift economy.[125] In a gift economy, exchange is qualified with cultural and social value, rather than quantified with a price such as in a market economy. Henry Jenkins wrote that "This distaste toward making a profit from fandom reflects less a generalizable political or economic resistance to capitalism than the desire to create form of cultural production and distribution that reflect the mutuality of the fan community. Fanzines are not commercial commodities sold to consumers; they are artifacts to share with friends and potential friends."[126] As Jenkins suggests, the fan work gift economy is limited to the members of the community, unlike a market economy, which is open to anyone with the means to pay. By means of exchange of gifts in a gift economy, "collective identity is defined *vis-a-vis* outsiders," that is, non-recipients of the communities gifts.[127][128] Journalistic dissemination of fan work outside of the self-selecting fan community, particularly to individuals in the media industry, is considered both an inappropriate kind of sharing and a violation of the community's privacy by many fans.

It would be incorrect to say that media fandom's gift economy is absolute, although it is persistent. Exceptions take place media fandom for fan art,[129] fan work that is printed at a cost, or in cases where fan work is produced in exchange for donations to charity.[130] There is tension between those who view fan work as the intellectual property of the individual creators, and therefore worthy of being sold, and fan work as product of and gift to the community.[131] Mel Stanfill describes fan work as being limited common property as opposed to the intellectual property of individuals; "it is not a pure commons, because not everybody is eligible to exploit it, but those who are on the inside can make use of it as completely as is allowed within the norms of the community," which are often under debate.[132]

The first person to describe media fan's practice of sharing fan work as consisting of a gift economy was a fan, Rachael Sabotini, in 1999.[133] The ideas introduced in Sabotini's essay have been embraced by many in media fandom as the descriptive, moral logic of their activities. Sabotini's cultural analysis has also been fruitful to the third generation of

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[124] Turk, "Fan Work."

[125] Cheal, *The Gift Economy,* 1-19

[126] Jenkins, *Textual Poachers,* 160

[127] Cheal, *The Gift Economy,* 18

[128] Turk, "Fan Work."

[129] Jones, "Fifty Shades of Exploitation."

[130] "Fandom and Profit," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Fandom_and_Profit
   "Fanart," Fanlore http://fanlore.org/wiki/Fanart

[131] Jones, "Fifty Shades of Exploitation."

[132] Stanfill, "Fandom, Public, Commons."

[133] Sabotini, "The Fannish Potlatch."

fan studies scholars.[134] Building off the foundational work of Henry Jenkins, who theorized fans as "textual poachers," and Hellekson and Scott's work on fan gift cultures, Bertha Chin reframes media fans as "textual gifters."[135] Her dissertation, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," describes the creation and sharing of textual gifts as one of the main mechanisms by which fans build social, cultural and symbolic capital in their micro-communities. Gift giving creates relational bonds between fans in fan micro-communities, but also creates social hierarchy between fans, especially between fans who are perceived to produce high value gifts and those who are not.

Media fans defend the gift economy as a community-building practice that benefits all media fans with a wealth of creative work, but also on the basis of economic and legal imperative.[136] It is a common belief among fans that non-commercialism makes fan fiction legal. This is based on an incomplete understanding of fair use in the United States where presence or lack of profit motive is one of factors that are used to determine fair use.[137] However, "while that perception has never been the law, it has largely reflected actual practice. Publishers will often forgo the legal resources where there is no illegal diversion of profits."[138] Gift culture as a response to the threat of legal action against transformative works will be explored in more detail in relation to FanLib later.

Historical and Technological Context

Media fandom has always been virtual. Helen Merrick describes science fiction fandom as a pre-digital virtual community: since the 1920's, science fiction fans have been conducting in the kind of many-to-many, abstracted interactions over time and space that are often only associated with online social networks.[139] "A familiarity with histories of fandom clearly reveals the cultural and historical precedents for the kinds of social interaction and communication that many critics attribute to computer-enabled virtual community."[140]

The original technology of media fandom was paper and ink. Today, while there are those media fans who still publish their fan work by mail and occasionally interact in person at media fan and science fiction conferences, the majority of media fandom activity is digital. The first digital fan communities flourished on Usenet and mailing lists

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[134] Fan studies scholar Henry Jenkins discusses three generations of fan studies with Matt Hills. The first generation established the binary of passive/active audiences and typically took an ethnographic, objectifying approach to the study of fans. Jenkins includes himself in the second generation of fan studies which pushed toward a more positive view of fan culture. He places Matt Hills as operating in the third generation of fan studies which is no longer constrained by the necessity to take a posture of defensiveness of fans and for which there is no longer shame associated with the academic's personal involvement in fandom.
Hills and Jenkins, "Intensities Interviews Henry Jenkins @Console-ing Passions, University of Bristol, July 7th, 2001," 10-11.
[135] Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters."
[136] Hellekson, "A Fannish Field of Value," 113–118, cited by Scott, "Repackaging Fan Culture."
[137] "Gift Economy," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Gift_Economy
[138] Ranon, "Honor Among Thieves," 444-445.
[139] Merrick, "'We was cross-dressing 'afore you were born!' Or, how sf fans invented virtual community."
[140]Ibid.

in the 1980's.[141] Coppa describes early digital media fandom as relying totally on "a core group of highly educated, science-oriented women."[142] "In the early to mid-1990's, running a mailing list was a relatively restricted thing; it required Majordomo or ListServ software and was generally run off a university server by someone who worked or studied there."[143] In the late 1990's services such as OneList and eGroups made the creation of new mailing lists more accessible to individuals.

Beginning the 1990's, tech-savvy individuals in many fandoms began creating and administering archives, meaning central repositories for fan fiction and occasionally other forms of fan work. Supporting archives were other websites, guides to fandom, whose purpose was to categorize and link archives, personal websites, names and contact information of fans, and other locations where fans and fan work could be found. Until fans developed of archive software that could automatically format and store stories in a database in the late 1990's, all fan archives were coded by hand by one or more fan archivists, who received, collected and published fan fiction on the archive. Archives like mailing lists were typically specific to one fandom, one micro-community of a large fandom, or one genre. The first or one of the first database-driven fan fiction archive that was inclusive of all fandoms and genres was Fanfiction.net (FF.net), created by programmer Xing Li in 1998.[144] Although FF.net is the largest and most well-known fan fiction archive today, it seems that a minority of media fans still use it as their primary archive. In 1999, one year after FF.net was launched, LiveJournal.com (LJ), a blogging website, was created.[145] Large numbers of media fans began to use LJ as their primary archive and method of communication starting in about 2001-2003.[146][147] LJ has had a significant role in media fan culture in that it is thought to have been responsible for bringing media fans from many relatively isolated micro-communities into contact, leading to cultural conflicts; Rebecca Lucy Busker attributes a boom in cross-fandom interaction and political awareness in media fandom in the 2000's to LJ's personal blogging service.[148]

Throughout the 1990's-2000's, Media fandom was greatly affected by failures and changes in the technology that media fans have used to create, store and share their communications and texts. Mergers, changes and closures of web hosts and other service providers that fans used resulted in the losses to the fan archives hosted on them.[149] Mailing lists could be deleted or abandoned by their administrators, "meaning that new members could not be approved to join in order to read the stories within."[150] The same thing could happen to archives, if the archivist were to disappear. Versaphile, writing on the impermanence and unfindability of fan texts, also discusses the issue of archival loss due to negligence and changes in infrastructure:

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[141]Versaphile, "Silence in the Library."
[142] Coppa, "A Brief History of Media Fandom," 54.
[143]Ibid, 53.
[144]Ibid, 57.
[145]Ibid.
[146]Ibid.
[147]Versaphile, "Silence in the Library."
[148] Busker, "On Symposia."
[149]Versaphile, "Silence in the Library."
[150]Ibid.

Archives could lose their central archivists, making maintenance and other access impossible; archives might move to new hosts or reorganize their structure, thus breaking countless links; and central archives might disappear forever, devastating a fandom by taking years of history with it in one fell swoop. Examples of this include the Smallville Slash Archive, which was for several years without an archivist, meaning that writers lost any control over their stories; the Wolverine and Rogue Fanfiction Archive, which changed its internal infrastructure, thus making hundreds of outside links invalid; and the Pretender fan fiction archive, whose unexpected disappearance all but destroyed the fan community surrounding it.[151]

Another risk to fan archives was the attention of professional writers and others in the media industry who perceive fan fiction to be infringement upon their intellectual property or a threat to their trademark. For the most part, the media industry has taken a permissive, "don't ask don't tell" stance with respect to fan fiction, however this has not been true in all cases.[152] In the 1990's to mid-2000's cease and desist letters were irregularly directed to media fan websites from the representatives of intellectual property owners.[153] Common wisdom dictated that these letters must be always complied with.[154] While they usually were, lest legal action be pursued, there is at least one example of a fan website---one among many *Harry Potter* websites which received cease and desist letters from Warner Bros. in the early 2000's---which did not comply with no consequence.[155] Nevertheless, the general tenor of media fandom is to be risk-averse.

In 2007, when FanLib was launched, LJ had been established as a main archive and site of interaction for many fandoms alongside LJ code forks, forums, archives, mailing lists and other websites and services, the majority of them managed by fans on rented servers. While the blogging format presents more insidious long-term preservation issues than centralized spaces, the blog's decentralization of fan archives meant that the community was less vulnerable to mass losses of text;[156] the greater obscurity and granular privacy features of blogging compared to fan websites may have also shielded fan activity on those platforms from media industry lawyers. By 2007, LJ had reached its highest point of popularity with fans and archives seemed to be in a slow decline.[157] Among fan-run archives and forums serving one fandom or micro-community each, there were a handful of archives that accepted all types of fan work from all fandoms, FF.net being the largest.

With the possible exception of FF.net, media fans had not been targeted as users by potential service providers. Most previous media industry attempts to bring fan activity and creativity into the tent of official websites had been designed with male science

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[151]Versaphile, "Silence in the Library."

[152] Ball, "Who Owns What in Fanfiction," 44.

[153]Ibid, 44-45.

[154] Jamison et al, *Fic,* p. 165-166

[155] "Restricted Section," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Restricted_Section

[156]Versaphile, "Silence in the Library."

[157] "The Impact of Blogging on Fandom," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/The_Impact_of_Blogging_on_Fandom

fiction fans in mind.[158][159][160] Media fans either designed their own websites, or else used technology intended for a general audience such as blogging and bookmarking services to create, store and share their texts. At the same time, media fan culture had been attracting increasing amount of attention both positive and negative from scholars, journalists and the media industry, a trend that not all fans were comfortable with, having had poor experiences with each in the past and wary of the vulnerability of their archives. It was into this environment that FanLib, a commercial fan fiction archive created by a marketing company that had built its reputation on designing promotional fan contests for its media industry partners was launched, intending to raise the profile of fan fiction and introduce fan labour to the media industry.

FanLib

"Our mission is to bring fan fiction out of the shadows and into the limelight."[161]

FanLib Inc. was the name of a marketing company founded by Craig Singer and Chris Williams, and David Williams in 2003 as a subsidiary of My2Centences LLC, a two-year old film production company.[162] Since 2003, FanLib Inc. had been organizing collaborative storytelling events with partners including CBS, Showtime, Harper-Collins and MSN.[163][164] FanLib Inc. made its name designing and facilitating promotional fan writing contests in order to boost fan engagement, marketing exposure, ratings and 'buzz.'[165] FanLib Inc.'s profile grew in 2006 when it invited fans of The L Word to write scripts for short scenes that fit certain content requirements. The fan-written scenes were voted on by fans, and the winners were edited by a staff writer and pieced together to form the final 'Fanisode.' "The genius of FanLib is realizing that fans can be happy just being recognized," Business Week wrote regarding the contest.[166] One grand prize winner among the fans who participated in the contest was rewarded with a shopping spree and a few hours with the creator of The L Word, but the real winners were FanLib Inc. and Showtime.[167] The week the competition started, "Yahoo!'s 'Buzz Log' reported a 26 percent increase in L Word-related searches, and Showtime announced the show's ratings climbed 51 percent over the previous season's."[168]

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[158] Busse, "Geek Hierarchies."

[159] Brooker, "Going Pro."

[160] See also obsession_inc, "Affirmational fandom vs. Transformational fandom," on the cultural and social differences between affirmational fans, (majority male, science fiction fans), who are sanctioned media industry and transformation fans (majority female, media fans), who are not, on account of their differing fan cultures.

[161] "About Us – Introduction," FanLib, captured May 21, 2007 by the Way Back Machine, https://web.archive.org/web/20070521221732/http://www.FanLib.com/aboutUs.do

[162] FanLib, "About Us – Company Bios," captured May 18, 2007 by the Way Back Machine, https://web.archive.org/web/20070518055027/http://www.fanlib.com/cms.do?page=aboutus/bios.html

[163] Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."

[164] Beck and Spignese, "FanLib Brings Fan Fiction into the Mainstream, Launches New Website with Major Media and Publishing Partners."

[165] William, "Case Study."

[166] Fine, "Putting The Fans To Work."

[167] Ibid.

[168] William, "Case Study."

In March 2007, FanLib Inc. launched a new website, a fan fiction archive known only as FanLib. FanLib was supported by 3 million in venture capital funding and had partners including HarperCollins, Penguin Books, Showtime Networks, Simon & Schuster, and Starz Entertainment.[169] FanLib's three founders brought to the table their extensive experience in digital marketing, e-commerce website development and filmmaking,[170] while "FanLib's investors and advisors include notable names from Hollywood and Silicon Valley, including film producer Jon Landau (Titanic), high-powered entertainment attorney Jon Moonves, and FanLib Chairman Anil Singh, former Chief Sales and Marketing Officer of Yahoo!."[171] The website was designed with two purposes in mind: to be a social networking website and archive for fan fiction writers, and to host FanLib Inc.'s marketing events. The archive users would serve as an established and engaged audience for the events, while the events and associated advertising would create returns for FanLib Inc. and its partners. Unlike most new fan fiction archives, which are grassroots endeavors, the launch of FanLib's revolutionary business model was noticed by new media and business news outlets.

In late March, FanLib contacted a few hundred potential users with personal invitations to join the FanLib beta website.[172] The chosen fans included prolific and popular users of Fanfiction.net, LJ, lotrfanfiction (a *Lord of the Rings* fan archive), and Fiction Alley (a *Harry Potter* fan archive).[173] FanLib did not enter open beta until April 8 2007 and passed by the notice of most of media fandom until mid-May,[174][175][176] at which point news of FanLib triggered outrage and boycott in media fandom and ultimately inspired the foundation of a non-profit organization with a mandate to, among other things, protect media fans from ventures like FanLib.[177] FanLib also gained infamy among media bloggers and fan studies scholars, who in almost every case lambasted FanLib as severely as fans were doing:[178][179][180][181][182] "They quickly became known throughout the technology and marketing blog-o-sphere as the model of what *not* to do when courting online communities. The only point of contention between the many vocal fic writers and bloggers seemed to be whether FanLib was actively evil or just offensively ignorant of their target audience."[183]

The most outspoken reactions against FanLib are associated with LJ media fans, but FanLib seems to have been negatively received in other media fan spaces as well,

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[169] Beck and Spignese, "FanLib Brings Fan Fiction into the Mainstream."

[170] FanLib, "About Us – Company Bios," captured May 18, 2007 by the Way Back Machine, https://web.archive.org/web/20070518055027/http://www.fanlib.com/cms.do?page=aboutus/bios.html

[171] Ibid.

[172] icarusancalion, "FanLib Invitation. One of the Select Few. Like hell."

[173] icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."

[174] "FanLib," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Fanlib

[175] partly_bouncy, "FanLib: One Year Later."

[176] The life_wo_fanlib community, a centralized place of discussion on LJ, was created on 20 May 2007.

[177] astolat, "An Archive Of One's Own," http://astolat.livejournal.com/150556.html

[178] Jenkins, "Transforming Fan Culture into User-Generated Content."

[179] Scalzi, "FanLib to Fanficcers."

[180] McNamara, "Internet Goes Nova Over Showtime, Starz, Moonves Partnered FanLib.com."

[181] MacDonald, "Fanfiction, Monetized."

[182] Cody and Ford, "What Businesses Learned in 2007 About the Digital Race."

[183] Li, "Fanfic, Inc.: Another Look at FanLib.com (1 of 2)."

including archive, forum and mailing lists communities.[184] In a survey of 200 fans solicited from a variety of "forums, message boards and blog communities," Caroline Ball found that "82% of fans surveyed stated that they would not publish at FanLib, largely because it is such a high-profile, well-publicised endeavour taking place in an environment where for almost forty years remaining low-profile has ensured survival."[185] A breakdown of the main social and cultural factors that contributed to FanLib's boycott by media fandom follows, with an emphasis on FanLib's perceived untrustworthiness. The factors, while conceptually intertwined, are divided into three sections, "U.S. Copyright and Fan Work," "Mainstreaming Fan Work," and "Gender and Economics."

U.S. Copyright and Fan Work

In an article about the 2006 Fanlib Inc. fan fiction writing competition, David Williams emphasized the benefits of "professionally controlled" fan labour for media producers, given contracts that would protect the media industry from fans claiming copyright for their creative contributions;186 "If, for example, someone submitted a script about a talking tulip, and months later, a singing daisy appeared on The L Word, there is nothing to prevent the submitter from claiming Showtime stole the idea."[187] Therefore, in order to participate in FanLib Inc.'s promotional contests, fan writers forfeited all rights to their submissions.

This requirements was not replicated per se in the Terms of Service (ToS) of the FanLib archive. In their ToS, FanLib claimed "a non-exclusive, worldwide, and royalty-free license to use, reproduce, distribute, and display the Submissions in connection with the Website."[188] But FanLib did not claim ownership of fan work published on its website, or responsibility for any legal consequences that might be meted out with respect to any fan work published on the website. Its ToS placed that burden on fans: "You shall be solely responsible for Your own Submissions and the consequences of posting or publishing them."[189] Moreover:

> You agree to defend, indemnify and hold harmless FanLib, its parent corporation, officers, directors, employees and agents, from and against any and all claims, damages, obligations, losses, liabilities, costs or debt, and expenses (including but not limited to attorney's fees) arising from: (i) Your use of and access to the Website; (ii) Your violation of any term of these TOS; (iii) Your violation of any third party right, including without limitation any copyright, property, or privacy right; or (iv) any claim that one of Your Submissions caused damage to a third party. This defense and indemnification obligation will survive these TOS and Your use of the Website.[190]

Fans interpreted these clauses in the ToS as FanLib claiming the right to commercially exploit their work, while at the same time denying any responsibility for the potential

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[184] Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 108.

[185] Ball, "Who Owns What in Fanfiction," 68.

[186] William, "Case Study."

[187]Ibid.

[188] "Terms of Service," FanLib, captured May 18, 2007 by the Way Back Machine, https://web.archive.org/web/20070518072246/http://www.FanLib.com/termsOfUse.do

[189] Ibid.

[190]Ibid.

consequences that could result due to FanLib's commercialization of fan work, such as a lawsuit for copyright theft. While the above clauses are not unique to the ToS of FanLib and similar language can be found int the ToS of other internet service providers, FanLib's ToS was uniquely alarming to fans in context, considering that FanLib's intentions were to profit from fan work.[191] Compounded with the burden of risk that FanLib's ToS put on fans, FanLib promised fans that they would be exposed to FanLib's industry partners.[192]

From the perspective of many in media fandom, the media industry partners which FanLib wanted to invite into the world of media fandom were each potential threats. To fans who had learned from experience or word-of-mouth to expect cease and desist letters whenever risk-averse media industry lawyers got wind of fan websites, the looming threat is legal action:

> One of the greatest fears in fandom is that it would only take one fan to go too far and cause one of the major media corporations or publishers to go beyond C&D letters in actual legal action. Should this ever occur it is likely that the resulting decision would have an enormous effect on the fanfiction community and irrevocably change its nature and structure forever.[193]

On account of the lack of case law with respect to fan fiction, it is feared that the 'wrong case' could establish a legal precedent against tolerance all un-licensed fan work in the future.[194][195] Many fans believe that fan work should be found to be fair use if that defense is ever taken to trial in the United States on the basis of being non-commercial, firstly and transformative, secondarily, as found in factor one of the fair use doctrine.[196][197] Legal scholars agree that some, if not all, fan work has a chance of passing the fair use test based on these and other factors.[198][199]

FanLib's practices, on the other hand, were not eligible for the first factor of the fair use defense, the one which fans would seem to rely upon most: "Under the first factor, the purpose and character of the use, fan fiction authors should ask themselves whether they are making *any* commercial profit from their stories. If the answer is yes, a fair use argument will be extremely difficult to make because courts are apt to say commercial use is not fair."[200] While non-commercialism is a non-determinate factor, it is a common misconception among fans and the general populace that non-commercialism is a fundamental requirement of fair use, and that any commercial fan work created without

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[191]icarusancalion, "Articling summing up FanLib."

[192] Hetcher, "Using Social Norms to Regulate Fan Fiction and Remix Culture," 1885-1887.

[193] Ball, "Who Owns What in Fanfiction," 67.

[194] Jenkins, "Transforming Fan Culture into User-Generated Content."

[195]Q, "Fanlib."

[196]cesperanza, "Dear Fandom: Could You Please Stop Saying That?"

[197] "Fair Use," U.S. Copyright Office, http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html

[198] Schwabach, "The Harry Potter Lexicon and the World of Fandom."

[199]Others, finding the fair use defense lacking, have argued for a categorical exception for fan fiction. See Pamela Kalinowski, "The Fairest of Them All: The Creative Interests of Female Fan Fiction Writers and the Fair Use Doctrine." Natalie H. Montano, "Hero with a Thousand Copyright Violations: Modern Myth and an Argument for Universally Transformative Fan Fiction."

[200] McCardle, "Fan Fiction, Fandom, and Fanfare," 469.

a license is in all cases not fair.[201] Furthermore, even though it is not the nature of the law, the practice of the media industry has been to crack down on perceived attempts to steal the profit value of their own intellectual properties by commercializing fan work. As Rebecca Tushnet put it, "Most content owners are still nervous about 'letting' other people make money using their works."[202]

Steven A Hetcher argues that among industry rights holders there is an uneasy norm of tolerance for non-commercial remix activities that has developed to balance out media fandom's norm of non-commercialism.[203] However, "If owners see the norm against commercialization starting to give way to a norm of tolerance [with respect to profiteering fan work], all else equal, they will be more inclined to take broad action against all unauthorized uses."[204] Not only was FanLib Inc. a for-profit business, they had launched with 3 million in venture capital funding. FanLib's intentions to create long-term, exponential business value out of fan fiction and its mainstream promotion of itself in this regard, combined with its solicitations to professionals in the media industries, not all of whom were friendly to fan work, read like a trifecta of risk to fans.[205] FanLib seemed to have all the potential to be the 'wrong case,' the one that could catastrophic consequences for media fandom in general.[206]

Regardless of whether or not fans were correct to expect a lawsuit, or whether fan work published on FanLib would have been found to be in fair use, any threat of legal action could have had collateral consequences. Defending fair use is prohibitively expensive for the average individual, even in cases where the fair use defense seems indisputably applicable.[207][208][209] "Facing a massive media conglomerate as an individual is an alarming prospect, and when you are creating noncommercial work, not just without a profit but often at your own expense, it's hard to accept that risk for yourself and your family."[210] Moreover "The standards for invoking the fair use doctrine are so vague that in the face of threats of legal action, a prudent fan fiction author would simply remove the offending work from the website."[211]A prudent web host would do the same. FF.net has a list of disallowed types of fan fiction, based on cease and desist letters and threats of legal action that it and other archives have received. Entire fan-run archives have been shut down due to the reception of cease and desist letters, and individual fans have similarly felt

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[201] Tushnet, "All Of This Has Happened Before And All Of This Will Happen Again," 30.
[202]Ibid, 16.
[203] Hetcher, "Using Social Norms to Regulate Fan Fiction and Remix Culture," 1887-1891.
[204] Ibid, 1891. Hetcher argues that the increasing popularity of remix culture will serve as a deterrent to frivolous lawsuits.
[205]astolat, "An Archive Of One's Own."
[206]telesilla, ""you come in here with your guns and your brush cuts...." (some personal thoughts on FanLib)."
[207] Lessig, *Free Culture*, cited by Hetcher, "Using Social Norms to Regulate Fan Fiction and Remix Culture," 1914.
[208] Ranon, "Honor Among Thieves," 444-445.
[209] Novik, "Testimony of Naomi Novik Before the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet," 6.
[210]Ibid.
[211] Ranon, "Honor Among Thieves," 423.

compelled to remove their work from circulation when they have been targeted for infringement.[212]

Media fandom's current reliance on web hosting and blogging service providers in particular makes fandom especially vulnerable to risk-averse censorship that is outside the control of fans and which may affect the entire community.[213] On a blogging website such as LJ, entire fan communities and years of community archives might be summarily deleted by the service provider for containing, or being suspected to contain, undesirable content. The latter situation occurred two months after FanLib launched and a week after rage over FanLib reached its highest point, abruptly putting censorship and the vulnerability of the entire community to legal gestures on every fan's mind. On May 28 2007, LJ administrators abruptly deleted about 500 LJ member accounts.[214] The deleted accounts had been identified based on controversial terms found in their profile 'Interests' list, such as "pedophilia" and "rape," but the journals had not been reviewed for illegal content before being deleted.[215] LJ had been approached by an anti-pedophilia group, who pressured the service provider to clean up its community of users, however LJ's method of doing so had collateral damage, notably including survivor support groups and media fans.

The event which became known as Strikethrough 2007, affected a *Harry Potter* fan work community, one of the largest communities on LJ, and the journals of a number of individual fans.[216] To give an idea of how quickly LJ media fans reacted, a LJ community, fandom_counts, was created to be a census for fans in order to demonstrate, to fans and to LJ, that fans were neither an insignificant nor an unorganized minority of LJ users. The community was created on May 30 2007 and, within the day 30,000 accounts had joined.[217] The majority of the deleted journals were eventually re-instated in the months following after being reviewed for illegal content. While LJ media fan users had rallied against FanLib on the whole, Strikethrough galvanized fans and validated their perceptions of the worst that could happen if their communities were targeted by media industry lawyers or the even service providers which they used to create and store their archives, of which FanLib wanted to be one.

Mainstreaming Fan Work
Media fandom values its privacy and obscurity not only due to cultural disparagement and legal sanctioning of media fan practices, but also on account of the creative and social independence that it affords media fans. With public recognition, comes pressure to conform to dominant cultural norms and standards. Nevertheless, there is tension between fans who seek recognition from and closeness to media producers and those who value distance and independence. The former preference has historically been associated with science fiction fans and the latter preference with media fans.218

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[212] Novik, "Testimony of Naomi Novik Before the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet," 6.

[213] Ibid.

[214] "Strikethrough," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Strikethrough

[215] Moellenberndt, "Livejournal Loyalty and Melodrama," 60-62.

[216] Ibid, 59.

[217] Romano, "The Demise of a Social Media Platform."

[218] Hills and Jenkins, "Intensities Interviews Henry Jenkins @Console-ing Passions, University of Bristol, 4-5.

FanLib's business model was directed to fans who were inclined to have their fan work recognized by individuals in the media industry, fans which happened to be a discouraged minority among media fans.219 It is the dominant viewpoint among media fans that industry creators, especially actors, should never be made aware of fan work or asked about it if it can be avoided; this principle is sometimes referred to as the "don't ask don't tell" rule or the "first rule of fandom."220221 Individuals who violate this boundary may be denounced by their fellow fans for their actions.222 Some fans, conscious of the taboos they challenge in their creative work, feel deeply responsible for the discomfort that their own and their fellow's work might cause, especially to the actors who portray their subject characters, should they discover or be introduced to fan work. Fans who violate the first rule of fandom may be shamed for both exposing the community to unwanted attention, and for potentially offending or disturbing creators if the fan work in question is violent, sexually or romantically explicit.[223][224] A minority of fans seek audiences for their fan work outside of the community, and may share their work and that of other fans with people in the media and journalism industries even at the risk of causing offense. Some of these fans may simply be new to media fandom and its culture, however this is not always the case.[225]

Based on FanLib's emphasis on its intention to bring fan fiction the mainstream, Fans hypothesized that FanLib's endgame was to attract new fans from casual audiences or "feral" fans who were not already participants in the culture of media fandom, and who may not have already internalized the importance of secrecy and the long-term benefits of independence from the media industry.[226] In particular, fans remarked that FanLib's advertisements and visual design seemed to be oriented toward young, possibly pre-teenage users.[227] Previously, David Williams had written that FanLib Inc.'s events were designed to generate profit for media producers by driving word-of-mouth outreach to new fans by stoking the enthusiasm of established fans with contests.[228] FanLib would continue with this trend, by bringing fan fiction to the uninitiated masses: "While fan fiction has existed for decades, FanLib is launching a new era by packaging it for mainstream audiences."[229] Implications that established media fans were not 'mainstream' enough for FanLib, and that there was something wrong with their practices, apparently in need of 'packaging,' offended some fans.[230] A 2004 My2Centences brochure about FanLib's writing contests cause an explosion of comment when it was discovered to promise rights holders that "as with a coloring book,

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219 Li. "Fanfic, Inc.: Another Look at FanLib.com (2 of 2)."
220 Larsen and Zubernis, *Fandom at the Crossroads,* 144.
221 Romano, "The Crumbling of the Fourth Wall."
222 Larsen and Zubernis, *Fandom at the Crossroads,* 144-146.
223 Brennan, "Fandom is Full of Pearl Clutching Old Ladies," 11-12.
224 Larsen and Zubernis, *Fandom at the Crossroads*, 116-117.
225Ibid., 146.
226caras_galadhon, "[FanLib] In Praise of Shakespeare's Sister--"
227 icarusancalion, "FanLib Invitation. One of the select few. Like hell."
228 Williams, "Case Study."
229 Beck and Spignese, "FanLib Brings Fan Fiction into the Mainstream, Launches New Website with Major Media and Publishing Partners"
230 Jenkins, "Transforming Fan Culture into User-Generated Content."

all players must "stay within the lines"[231] and that "Completed work is just 1st draft to be polished by the pros."[232][233]

As previously discussed, LJ's deletion of user accounts based on the poor public image given by their 'Interest's lists occupied the attention and anger of large numbers of fans a little over a week after news of FanLib fully broke on LJ. Although the My2Sentences brochure had been developed for FanLib Inc.'s writing competitions, fans suspected that their creative freedom would also be restricted on the FanLib archive in order for fan fiction to be made presentable mainstream audiences and FanLib's media industry partners. Fans began to hypothesize that fan fiction on FanLib would be censored based on a clause in the ToS regarding FanLib's right to "edit" content stored in the FanLib archive.[234] While the FanLib archive had no specific content restrictions not found in other terms of service----including restrictions on "obscene, vulgar, indecent, ... objectionable," or "tortuous," material---fans extended to the FanLib archive "the concern that as companies construct a zone of tolerance over certain forms of fan activities, they will use them to police more aggressively those fan activities that they find offensive or potentially damaging to their brand. … they argue that as long as some of their fantasies are being policed, none of them have the freedom of expression which drew them into fan culture in the first place."[235]

Lack of mainstream recognition, lack of tolerance from the media industry, and lack of access to professional modes of production are the price for creative freedom for individuals and communities that seek to push creative, cultural and legal boundaries with their work: "'Free' fan labor (fan works distributed for no payment) means 'free' fan labor (fans may revise, rework, remake, and otherwise remix mass-culture texts without dreading legal action or other interference from copyright holders). Many, perhaps even most, fans who engage in this type of production look upon this deal very favorably."[236] Prior industry attempts to engage fans by officially soliciting fan activity and labor in industry media spaces had typically been offered to fans at the cost of creative freedom and even rights to their work. In order to protect the moral and creative control of copyright owners over their intellectual properties, various content restrictions may be placed on the kind of participation that is invited in these mediated spaces, which include, among others, FanLib Inc.'s promotional events,[237] The Official Star Wars Fan Film Awards, LucasFilms fan domains, SciFi's Battlestar Galactica fan filmmaking competition, and, more recently, Kindle Worlds. Booker and Tushnet argue that these ventures have each failed with media fans on account of the gendered limitations and restrictions that they impose on valid kinds of participation and work products.[238][239][240]

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[231] Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."
[232] Scalzi, "FanLib to Fanficcers."
[233] "The Amazing Fan-Powered Media Event," FanLib.
    FanLib's marketing events brochure, while it was removed from the My2Sentences website some time after controversy broke, was saved by several individuals (including Mary McNamara, "Internet Goes Nova Over Showtime, Starz, Moonves Partnered FanLib.com.") and can still be found online. Copies can be found at: http://fanlore.org/wiki/File:FanLib_info.pdf
[234] angiepen, "Browsing the FanLib TOS."
[235] Jenkins, "Transforming Fan Culture into User-Generated Content."
[236] De Kosnik, "Interrogating 'Free' Fan Labour," cited by Stanfill and Condis, "Fandom and/as Labor."
[237]Some contests on the FanLib website had no content guidelines or limits.
[238] Brooker, "Going Pro."
[239] Tushnet, "All Of This Has Happened Before And All Of This Will Happen Again."

But to fans who are primarily interested in exposure and proving their ability to operate professionally within the industry, the same guidelines might be viewed as an assignment from potential employers and collaborators, a challenge to their creativity and ability to excel to the specifications of media producers.[241] The mainstreaming of fan work has usually been concomitant with its regularization, bowdlerization, and the oversight of rights holders.

Regardless of whether FanLib Inc. had the potential to intervene in transgressive fan work posted to the FanLib archive, the infantilization of fans and belittlement of their practices that fans read in the My2Sentences brochure and other public information sources was itself disturbing. Similar language to that found in the My2Sentences brochure was used in a press release, which stated that "The launch of FanLib.com represents the coming of age of fan fiction," implying that fan fiction was, as yet, the domain of the immature, in need of professional management in order to reach its potential.[242] Altogether, FanLib was characterized by critics on LJ as an attempt to beguile young users away from established media fan communities and their values of gift giving, community, and aesthetic experimentation,[243][244] to a space where they would be taught to value prizes, competition and the approval of outsiders, all to help FanLib "Produce consumer-generated media that is ready for the marketplace."[245]

Gender and Economics

As discussed previously, the value of fan work is not driven by market price and outsider recognition, but by its internal valuation as a gift to the community. Fans did not need the legitimacy and validation offered by FanLib, the media industry, or the market, fans argued, for their work to be valuable.[246] Will Brooker writes that even if FanLib's ToS had been better written and even if they had not made the community relations mistakes that they made, this fundamentally different understanding of the value and purpose of fan fiction would have divided media fans from FanLib:[247][248]

> FanLib's emphasis on "mainstreaming" fan fiction evokes the multiple axes of domination that constrain working conditions, and the normative assumptions of the "mainstream" seemed to persist unmarked in the company's willful ignorance of their repugnance to many fans. These assumptions include equivalences between market price and value, between value and public recognition, and between recognition and hierarchical authority, and, as Hellekson suggests, they are entangled with patriarchal and heteronormative coordinates of gender and sexuality.[249]

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[240] Russo, "Indiscrete Media," 147-149.

[241] Brooker, "Going Pro," 84, 89.

[242] Beck and Spignese, "FanLib Brings Fan Fiction into the Mainstream."

[243] caras_galadhon, "[FanLib] In Praise of Shakespeare's Sister--"

[244] telesilla, ""you come in here with your guns and your brush cuts...." (some personal thoughts on FanLib)."

[245] "The Amazing Fan-Powered Media Event," FanLib, http://fanlore.org/wiki/File:FanLib_info.pdf

[246] telesilla, ""you come in here with your guns and your brush cuts...." (some personal thoughts on FanLib)"

[247] Brooker, "Going Pro," 78-79.

[248] lilithilien, "Workers of the World Unite: An Old School Marxist Analysis of FanLib vs. Fandom."

[249] Russo, "Indiscrete Media," 226.

Gender was inextricably linked with criticism of the for-profit nature of FanLib's business and its motive statements. Karen Hellekson sums up the discourse of both fans and scholars, in which gender and these other axes are linked, when she introduces FanLib Inc. as "the attempt of (male) venture capitalists to profit financially from (female-generated) fanfiction."[250] FanLib's promises to fans that their work would be made mainstream and potentially even recognized by the media industry read to media fans as particularly masculine values, carrying with them the implicit suggestion that women's work (associated with the private and the amateur realms) requires the approval of men (associated with the public and the professional) in order to be legitimate, valid within the market economy, and valuable.[251] As one fan wrote, "I mean, what did they expect us (fandom) to say? 'Thank you, O Unknown Men With No Fandom Backgrounds, for bringing an air of legitimacy to our forty-year-old tradition of women's writing! Without you, why, we wouldn't have known what to do with ourselves! My, what a big TOS you have!'"[252] In general, professionalization of fan work is associated with male science fiction fans who are more likely than media fans to view fan work as a stepping stone to professional labor in the media industry.[253]

It is a common assertion that while the majority of science fiction fans are men, an even greater majority of media fans are women. The truism that media fandom is a female space been supported by academic research into media fandom demographics.[254][255] Fans have also conducted their own surveys: in a 2003 survey, 96% of fans self-identified as women.[256] Five years later in 2008, a survey completed on LiveJournal and Insanejournal, found the same percentage of women, 96%, but only 2% of fans self-identified as male, another 2% identifying as neither male nor female.[257] A 2013 survey of Tumblr and Archive of Our Own users found that 90.3% identified as female while only 4.2% identified as male, with more fans identifying as non-binary than male.[258] A 2010 analysis the information available on FF.net profiles is an anomaly among demographic surveys, finding that, of the 10% of users who independently volunteered

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[250] Hellekson, "A Fannish Field of Value," 117

[251] Busse, "Geek Hierarchies," 85, citing De Kosnik, "Should Fan Fiction Be Free?" 120-121.

[252] lizbee quoted by McNamara, "FanLib Part Three."

[253] That is, science fiction fans are more likely than media fans to be contracted to work professionally on the same creative franchises for which they created amateur, non-commercial fan work and become 'professional fans,' termed 'petty producers' by Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst. Media fandom includes many professional creatives as well, and it is a common argument that media fan work is fair use in part because it has social value as a stepping stone to professional creative practice. However, anecdotal information suggests that the majority of professional creators in media fandom produce professional creative works that have been disassociated from or which is unrelated to their non-commercial fan work. An increasingly common practice among media fans is "filing off the serial numbers," that is, obscuring a story's origins as fan work by changing the names and details before professional publication. On male fans for whom fan work has led to professional practice in the media industry in comparison to female fans, for whom it has not, see Will Brooker, "Going Pro," p. 84-86. On fan work as preparatory to independent creative practice, see Naomi Novik, "Testimony of Naomi Novik Before the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet," p. 3. On filing off the serial numbers, see Anne Jamison et al, *Fic,* 259-298.

[254] Ibid.

[255] Brooker, "Going Pro," 74.

[256] icarus, "Article summing up FanLib."

[257] Morrissey, "Fandom Then/Now: The Participants."

[258] centrumlumina, "AO3 Census: Masterpost."

their gender identity in their profile statement, a record 22% self-identified as male.[259] However FF.net is used by more communities than media fandom.[260] It is also likely that FF.net's mainstream reputation attracts more male-identified fans than media fan community spaces which are more obscure and coded as female, such as blogging websites.[261] Furthermore, on account of the fact that media fans are typically assumed to be female-identified, it is possible that fans of other genders may feel pressure to voluntarily declare their identity so that they are not regularly mis-gendered.[262]

In contrast to media fandom's membership, FanLib had not a single woman listed to its executive and advisory staff.[263] This immediately pegged FanLib as outsiders, while further investigation finds that FanLib's founders did not seem to include any self-professed media fans. FanLib's company bios emphasized the professional history and proven business acumen of its board members; while FanLib's founders clearly had familiarity with fan fiction, and claimed to be fans in their own ways, none claimed to produce or consume fan work, or to participate in media fandom specifically. Even if FanLib had not presented themselves and interfaced with the community in ways that immediately pegged them as outsiders, it is likely that FanLib would still have been afforded a much higher degree of relational distrust than an insider's attempt to launch FanLib would have been.[264]

As outsiders, FanLib was seen to have even less right than a fellow fan did to profit from fan work, which was a highly questionable notion in and of itself. That the FanLib's founders were both venture capitalists, hoping to build a business on the community's un-monetized practices, and that they were all men, portrayed as seeking to exploit a private community of women, was a pernicious and evocative ideological intersection of economics and gender which turned very much against FanLib's favor.[265] FanLib was viewed as a prototypical example of the systematic economic oppression and cultural appropriation of a marginalized community by a privileged group. As one scholar puts it, "The FanLib project tried to impose a male, commercial paradigm onto a female community that had established its own self-contained rules and currency; very much like a colonial army attempting to win the hearts and minds of an entirely different culture and mining its wealth in exchange for trinkets."[266]

The gender debate was not limited to the ideological realm. Advertisements which were released by FanLib were read as sexist by media fans, especially on LJ.[267] In general, the advertisements, one featuring a piñata and another a lucha libre wrestler, seemed to be targeted not at women, but at pre-teenagers, and likely male ones at that. One

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259 Gregg, "Posting With Passion."
260 "Fanfiction.net," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/FanFiction.Net
261 Driscoll, "This is not a Blog," cited by Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 10.
262 Sendlor, "Fan Fiction Demographics in 2010."
263 "About Us – Company Bios," FanLib, captured May 18, 2007 by The Way Back Machine, https://web.archive.org/web/20070518055027/http://www.fanlib.com/cms.do?page=aboutus/bios.html
264 Distrust within media fandom may even be extended to unfamiliar media fans who participate in media fandom outside of the respondent's own social circle. Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 109-110.
265 "Among the feminists, an attempt to make money off of women fanfiction writers with no compensation went over like a lead balloon." icarusancalion, "Article Summing Up FanLib."
266 Brooker, "Going Pro," 88.
267 Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters."

particular advertisement "left fans mystified and vaguely insulted."[268] It featured a thin man flexing his modest biceps in front of a pink background with the caption "Life without Fan Fiction." Juxtaposed with the first caricature, a very muscled man poses in front of a blue background with the caption "Fan Fiction at Fanlib.com."[269] The moral binary drawn between femininity on the losing side and masculinity on the winning side was not lost on fans, who questioned how FanLib could have been so ignorant and misled as to demographics of their audience.[270]

Following a firestorm on LJ about the above intertwined issues and others, Chris Williams responded to one of FanLib's critics, telesilla, on her LJ and told her to consider dialog open.[271] Telesilla opened dialogue with Williams in a new discussion post organized around FanLib's Frequently Asked Questions, which Williams had requested that she read.[272] Williams made his apologies to telesilla that he did not have the time to reply to discussion happening on her journal.[273] The next week, Williams granted an interview on the blog of Henry Jenkins, a fan studies scholar who has written one of the foundational texts on media fandom, *Textual Poachers*. While Jenkins does not claim to be a member of media fandom and is not considered to be one by fans, his relationship with media fans has always been positive.[274] Fans argued that Williams' choice of Jenkins over telesilla, long-time member of media fandom, was symptomatic of FanLib Inc.'s sexism and, as outsiders, their ignorance about the social dynamics of media fandom, and their lack of respect for media fans.[275][276][277]

At the same time, Jenkins likely seemed like the wiser choice to Williams. Jenkins, a transparently credentialed third party who commands respect both within and outside of media fandom, had offered Williams' a structured interview that was guaranteed to reach a wide audience. The alternative was entering into a conversation that might extend over days and weeks with hundreds, perhaps thousands of fans who might have flocked to telesilla's LJ and who were certain to overwhelm Williams' comments with their own in numbers. When asked by Jenkins why he had chosen to speak to Jenkins, but not telesilla and other fans directly, Williams responded that it was his perception that Jenkins had "dual citizenship" in fandom and academia. With respect to his choice to be interviewed by Jenkins, Williams also noted that Jenkins had promised Williams a fair hearing, suggesting that his trust in the ability of fans to have good faith and hear what he had to say had been shaken.[278]

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[268]icarus, "Article summing up FanLib."
[269]For a copy of this advertisement, see
http://ic.pics.livejournal.com/msilverstar/888431/7732/7732_original.jpg
[270]icarus, "Article summing up FanLib."
[271]mimbo [Chris Williams] in the comments of telesilla, "Meta/Rant: It's like deja vu all over again!"
[272]telesilla, "Meta: Questions about FanLib's FAQ; or Who With the What Now?"
[273]mimbo [Chris Williams] in the comments of telesilla, "Meta: Questions about FanLib's FAQ; or Who With the What Now?"
[274]angualupin, "Fandom means I get to meta as much as the next person."
[275]Ibid.
[276]caras_galadhon, "[FanLib] In Praise of Shakespeare's Sister--"
[277] Busse, "The Organization for Transformative Works: I Want Us to Own the Goddamned Servers."
[278] Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."

FanLib Reponds

For the most part, FanLib's response to fans expressed humility and openness to critique, and awareness of many of the mistakes that they had made in communicating with the community, however their responses stepped on more toes than they helped.[279] "I just want to say that we totally messed up with how we approached this community," David Williams began an apology to the lotrfanfiction forum. Co-founder Chris Williams expressed similar sentiments in his May interview with Henry Jenkins.[280]

Chris Williams encouraged interested individuals to look at the new ToS and FAQs, which had been rewritten with the community's criticisms in mind. "We want to be positive agents in this change by working with fans, media companies and rights holders," Chris Williams assured fans, "We are going to do whatever is feasible to assure people that posting on FanLib.com does not somehow add to their liability."[281] Clauses in ToS, such as FanLib's right to "edit" material posted to the website had been removed and clauses clarifying other issues were added based on both criticisms and misreadings of the ToS. Chris and David Williams, and jdsampson, an employee and user of FanLib, also made it be known that the ToS had been developed with good intentions towards fans:[282][283][284][285][286] FanLib did not claim to own the intellectual property rights to fan fiction posted on the website as had been claimed by some fans; FanLib's rights to "use, reproduce, distribute, display, and perform" fan work did not extend beyond the website's functions; FanLib did not intend to "edit" fan work on its website beyond excerpting quotes and summaries of highlighted stories on its front page; and all of these rights ended the moment the fan work was removed from FanLib by its creator.

Chris Williams public statements emphasized that FanLib was willing and able to improve based on feedback from the community, and that FanLib's intention to be a driver of positive change for fans was entirely genuine. In the Fanlib forum, he wrote in response to a fan:

> Not only do we worry about bringing the big media companies around but we worry deeply about the skepticism that we face with the fan fiction community. One thing I can assure you of is we are willing to take the heat and not hide from it. We are transparent and don't hide our mission and goals like some other sites. We look at every question from a media company as an opportunity to evangelize fan fiction even more and ultimately we have courage in our conviction that it is a good thing that should be encouraged and celebrated.[287]

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[279] See the comments of Susan, "FanLib.com."
[280] Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."
[281] Ibid.
[282] Ibid.
[283] "We took great pains to make sure this was all done properly and in a way that's good for fanfic authors," David B William in the comments of Susan, "Fanlib.com." Cited by icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."
[284] David B Williams in the comments of hadesphoenix, "?'s about the site itself," cited by icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."
[285] jdsampson in comments to yourlibrary, " The corporatization of fanfic?"
[286] David B William in the comments of hadesphoenix, "?'s about the site itself."
[287] Chris William in the comments of hadesphoenix, "?'s about the site itself."

FanLib's motive statement, to "become a venue for fans who want to showcase and share their work, discover great stories, get closer to the talent behind their favorite fandoms and participate in creative storytelling events," appeared with deviations multiple times in Williams' interview with Jenkins. However, by this point in time, fans who had been critical of FanLib in the first place already knew what product FanLib was offering, and had rejected it. Fans already knew how to share their work and find great stories, fans argued, the only talent they cared about getting close to was that of fellow fans, and fans already organized fan writing events, in which fans, not outsiders, were the only judges that mattered. Finally, the reiterated statement that FanLib wanted to help fans "showcase" their work and "get closer to the talent" continued to drive away fans who prefer an impermeable barrier between their online activities and the eyes of industry creators, as discussed previously. In part, Williams' defensiveness about the FanLib team's hard work and pure intentions backfired because fans had already rejected FanLib's motives, genuine or not, as media fandom's motives. Overall, Williams' comments cemented fans' belief that Williams and his associates did not really "get" fans or share their values. Moreover, William's reliance on repetition in his response to Henry Jenkins's questions---done intentionally in order to be comprehensive in every answer and avoid misunderstandings---read to fans as artificial and insincere.[288]

In responses to Williams on Jenkin's blog and elsewhere, fans reiterated their distrust of FanLib's credibility.[289] Despite heartfelt statements from FanLib's co-owners about their celebration of fan work and the personal sacrifices and investments they had made on behalf of fans, many fans felt that FanLib was fundamentally untrustworthy on account of its rhetoric which varied depending on whom its statements were directed to. FanLib's statements to fans about their motives were very different from the language they used when speaking to industry partners and the mainstream press. To fans, FanLib existed to celebrate and support their vital creativity and the unique culture of fan fiction;[290] To their media partners and the press, FanLib existed to help rights holders "harness" fans and create market value out of heretofore unmanaged consumer generated content.[291] Articles announcing FanLib like one that appeared in *Business Week*, entitled "Putting The Fans To Work: The media are trying to cash in on viewers' obsessions," arguably stoke fans' feelings of exploitation and suspicions regarding Fanlib's true loyalties.[292]

Chris Williams defended the My2Sentence brochure---which contained widely-quoted lines such as "Managed & Moderated To The Max" and "as with a coloring book, all players must 'stay within the lines'"---by arguing that it was an obsolete document, and that, in any case, the brochure was only relevant to FanLib Inc.'s marketing events, not to FanLib the archive.[293] This defense fell flat with fans, as the issue was not the

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[288]A poll of over 500 fans on LJ regarding how their opinions about FanLib had changed after Williams' interview with Jenkins found virtually no indication of changed views, with 60% choosing the option "Didn't your mother tell you that a man will say anything to get into your pants?" justhuman, "Fanlib update."

[289] Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."

[290]Ibid.

[291] McNamara, "Internet Goes Nova Over Showtime, Starz, Moonves Partnered FanLib.com."

[292] Fine, "Putting The Fans To Work."

[293] Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."

purpose of the brochure, but FanLib's rhetoric about fans which shifted in tone and content depending on whether FanLib was speaking to fans, or to the mainstream press and the media industry.[294][295] In article covering the highlights of FanLib's downfall, icarusancalion writes, "Fan reaction against FanLib was as angry and intense as if they had discovered a fraud."[296] The belief that FanLib was deceptive certainly affected fans perceptions of FanLib's actions and whatever FanLib's team offered in defense of their website.

Concomitant with accusations of double-dealing, FanLib was suspected to have engaged in deceptive practices. When a FanLib staff member identifying herself as being both female and a long-time fan came forward in a LJ community to discuss FanLib and address critiques and misconceptions, a few fans suspected her of being a false identity for one of the male board members.[297] Naomi, the name of the person who signed the invitations sent to a few hundred fans for FanLib's beta launch, was also thought to be a false identity, as no one had come forward claiming to be the Naomi in question.[298] Similarly, icarusancalion argued that the first fan writers who signed up to FanLib and posted the first fan fiction to the website were planted by FanLib itself as "seed" users, based on their unusual characteristics.[299] More seriously, FanLib was accused of asking new users for private information, including their FF.net passwords (used by a script that FanLib had written to make it easier for its users to import their stories from FF.net).[300] More than one fan reported that when they initially tried to sign up to FanLib they were asked for their mailing address and phone number.[301] Most of the above accusations were denied by David and Chris Williams in different forums.[302][303]

At the same time, FanLib's team suggested that media fandom was actually being deceived by the service providers which fans used without question. David Williams and a FanLib staff member each replied to fans who raised objections over FanLib's for profit status by remarking that LiveJournal, Fanfiction.net (FF.net), and other websites used for fan work, were not only for-profit companies, but "for-BIG-PROFIT."[304][305] Fans resisted the implication that FanLib was more transparent than the companies that FanLib called-out. LJ was considered to be a misleading comparison, because its stated intention to be a generic blogging website, not a fan fiction archive; what profit LJ gleans from fan activity is incidental.[306][307] A few fans proposed that FF.net was the "elephant in

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[294]See comments to Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."

[295] McNamara, "Internet Goes Nova Over Showtime, Starz, Moonves Partnered FanLib.com."

[296]icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."

[297] Brooker, "Going Pro," 78.

[298]icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."

[299]icarusancalion, "FanLib Invitation. One of the select few. Like hell."

[300] icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."

[301]Ibid, citing the comments of Susan, "FanLib.com."

[302]Ibid, citing David B Williams in the comments of Susan, "FanLib.com."

[303] Jenkins, "Chris Williams Responds to Our Questions about FanLib."

[304]David B William in the comments of Susan, "Fanlib.com," cited by icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."

[305]An assertion also made by jdsampson in the comments to yourlibrary, "The corporatization of fanfic?"

[306]Ibid.

[307]Primarily due to legal concerns, media fans have reacted badly to business models that seem to profit directly from fan labour, but passively accepted indirect profit from their activities on the part of for-

the room" of profit, but others challenged the notion that FF.net's advertising revenue exceeds the costs associated with running the site, which in the past has suffered for funds and experienced intermittent downtime because of it.[308][309] Fans also noted that, unlike LJ, FF.net has never identified itself as being a for-profit business.[310] Despite these differences, FF.net's history with media fandom offers an illustrative contrast to FanLib.

Fanfiction.net

FF.net has a rocky history and poor reputation among many media fan communities, but by all accounts it is the most popular fan fiction website in the world. Among fan communities on LJ, Fanfiction.net is often referred to as "the Pit of Voles" and castigated for the poor quality of fan fiction that is stored there, a state attributed to its young user community. Fanfiction.net is considered to be a threshold to media fan communities and first exposure to fan fiction on the web for many young fans on account of its accessibility and high search ranking.[311] Prior to 2002, when FF.net banned violent and sexually explicit fan fiction, only one third of FF.net's users self-identified as being under the age of 18.[312] In 2010 it was determined that, of the small percentage of users who volunteered their age on their user profile unbidden (only 8640), 80% identified as being between 13 and 17 years old.[313] While some media fans use Fanfiction.net, percentage unknown, it is considered to lie somewhat outside the acceptable zone of media fandom by others, who point out its differing etiquette and standards compared to their own fan communities.[314]

However FF.net was compared favorable against FanLib by fans who otherwise claimed to have a low opinion of the website; one of the FanLib protest badges documented on the Fanlore wiki page for FanLib reads: "FanLib: We make FF.net look *GOOD*." FF.net, like many much smaller fan-run archives, has had to struggle to remain online and economically afloat: Xing Li designed and built the website as a college student and supported it out of pocket on the servers of his employer, implementing advertising only when the website became too much of a burden on Li's resources. Although it seems that Li does not identify himself as a fan or visibly participate in fan culture beyond his role as the owner and maintainer of FF.net, Li had gained the status of insider or honorary insider on account of his long-term investment in FF.net with some fans.[315][316] Li had not had the same social capital when he first launched FF.net in 1998, but he did have the advantage of an inoffensive profile, a less self-aware and politically charged audience, and an innovative product that filled a need

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profit service providers whose primary function is not to serve as an archive for fan texts, including blogging websites such as LJ and Dreamwidth.

[308]partly_bouncy, "A look at some fandom based money numbers."

[309] Fanfiction.net at the time of this writing has been building value for over 15 years and is estimated to be worth 1.17 million USD by websiteoutlook.com.

[310]Iyore, "Why FFN isn't like FanLib: Profit, Risk and Exploitation."

[311]"Harry Potter had a lot of early activity on fanfiction.net, and as such, had a more peripheral connection with the main thread of media fandom, which at the time was centered on mailing lists."

"Feral," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Feral."

[312]Maryanne Murray Buechner, "Families: Learning Corner: Pop Fiction."

[313]Charles Sendlor, "Fan Fiction Demographics in 2010: Age, Sex, Country."

[314]Bertha Catherine LP Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," pp. 169-201

[315]Iyore, "Why FFN isn't like FanLib: Profit, Risk and Exploitation."

[316]icarusancalion, "Article summing up FanLib."

for fans, unburdened with any hidden motives or mission statements beyond filling that need.

Some of the offending clauses in FanLib's ToS are also found in FF.net's ToS, however the social and cultural context differs significantly. The contents of FF.net's early ToS are not known, however FF.net's current ToS includes a "worldwide, non-exclusive, royalty-free, transferable license to use, reproduce, distribute, display, and perform the User Submissions in connection with the FanFiction.Net Website," much like FanLib.[317] Unlike FanLib, FF.net has never betrayed an intention to do anything with the fan work submitted to its website other than store it. FF.net's ToS also holds users indefinitely accountable to "defend, indemnify and hold harmless FanFiction.Net … arising from … your violation of any third party right, including without limitation any copyright, intellectual property, or privacy right; or (iv) any claim that one of your User Submissions caused damage to a third party."[318] While FF.net's ToS denies any responsibility for legal action and transfers that burden onto fans much like FanLib did, FF.net is not thought to be in danger of triggering a lawsuit. While FF.net is known to have received cease and desist letters relating to specific types of fan work and complied with their requirements, it is assumed to have avoided more serious attention on account of its modest, self-sustaining profit margin.

Also similarly to FanLib, FF.net bans "hate crimes, pornography, obscene or defamatory material."[319] Rumors spread that FanLib might censor undesirable types of fan fiction or over-moderate of the quality of fan fiction despite its promises of inclusivity, however this possibility had already been realized with FF.net since 2002. Unlike FanLib, FF.net requires that fan fiction meet minimum content standards and explicitly bans certain kinds of legally problematic content. FF.net has remained sustainable by banning fan fiction that are especially at risk for legal attention, including fan fiction about real living persons, fan fiction including song lyrics, and sexually explicit fan fiction.[320] Although many fans recognize that FF.net must make these gestures in order to continue serving the community, FF.net does not actively police fan work posted to the archive; users are expected to report fan work for ToS violations and thereby draw it to the attention of FF.net moderators.[321] A rule unenforced is a rule that is not perceived to be a burden; FF.net's occasional purges of fan work which violate its ToS have triggered an unknown number of affected users to seek other archives. Thousands are reported to have dropped FF.net in 2012 when FF.net abruptly deleted around 62,000 stories for ToS violations; FF.net fans reportedly stressed the servers of Archive of Our Own and caused down time with their sudden influx of activity.[322]

Despite the impression given by the above, not all fans are opposed to content restrictions and moderation per se. Historically, certain types of fan fiction have been marginalized in media fandom and banned from most communities, including fan work

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[317] "Terms of Service," Fanfiction.net, https://www.fanfiction.net/tos/
[318] Ibid.
[319] Ibid.
[320] "Community Guidelines," Fanfiction.net, https://www.fanfiction.net/guidelines/
[321] FanLib's policy as well.
[322] "FanFiction.Net Adult Content Purge Felt Across Fandom Two Weeks On," WikiNews.

about real persons,[323] or homosexual relationships, known as slash, a genre that is now possibly the most popular in media fandom.[324] Although media fandom has trended toward tolerance and even celebration of previously taboo genres, some of the fan fiction types that FF.net bans, such as fiction about real persons and violent and sexually explicit fan fiction, are still contentious or explicitly banned in smaller fan-run communities, especially older fan communities which have been around since the early 2000's and before. Many fan fiction archives and communities have content guidelines, some of which would seem surprisingly strict considering the vehement opposition to the implication that FanLib would put limits on fans' creativity. While there has always been great amounts of inter-community conflict, the implicit rules and etiquette of fandom are based on community values, and enforced by community insiders, not professional moderators. The extreme negativity that was inspired by the suggestion that FanLib might be a censored space was not based on an fundamental opposition to content restrictions, even though media fandom had been developing toward favoring no restrictions for many years; FanLib's status as an outsider to the community meant that FanLib simply did not have the right to start applying its own imported rules and values to fan work. FF.net has born the burden of lost trust, lost users and great amounts of ire with every new restriction, moderation action, and change in policy. Xing Li allegedly received death threats for changes in archival policy in FF.net's early years.[325] On the other hand, Li and FF.net have also gained a significant amount of good faith even with fans who otherwise do not prefer the archive, due to its long-term persistence and reliability, having already served fans for a decade at the time of FanLib's launch.

Fan Lib's Last Success

> "FanLib.com was founded on the belief that fan creativity is a true art form that deserves a first-rate showcase for cultivation and celebration. Over the course of the past fifteen months, you have triumphantly confirmed this notion with an astonishing display of talent, enthusiasm, imagination and camaraderie.
>
> So, it is especially difficult to announce that FanLib.com will shut down on Monday, August 4, 2008."[326]

It is a common narrative that FanLib's failure to gain the trust of media fandom caused the ultimate failure of its business.[327] But by start-up standards, FanLib does not look like much of a failure at all. FanLib Inc. was sold to Disney for an unknown sum most likely numbering in the tens of millions, and co-founder Chris Williams was hired by Disney to manage new projects built on FanLib's infrastructure. Purely considered "as a money-making venture for a small group of wealthy white businessmen, it was a success: with $100 million to spend on acquisitions, Disney probably paid quite a bit more for FanLib than its initial investment of $3 million in venture capital."[328] Other web properties were acquired by Disney for 15 and 20 million USD in the same year.

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[323] Thomas, "Fans Behaving Badly?," 171-185.
[324] Morrissey, "Fandom Then/Now: Fan Engagement."
[325] partly_bouncy [Laura Hale], "Fan Fiction Archives."
[326] "FanLib Shutting Down," http://life-wo-fanlib.livejournal.com/48004.html
[327] For example, see Suzanne Scott, "Repackaging Fan Culture: The Regifting Economy of Ancillary Content Models."
[328] stewardess, "FanLib founders dance on its zombified grave: FanLib became Disney's Take180."

Incidentally, FanLib's sell validated fans' perception of FanLib as nothing more than a capitalist venture that would place the interests of fans secondary to its bottom line.

Furthermore, although FanLib did alienate the majority of media fans, an enthusiastic and loyal community of users mourned FanLib's passing when the website was shut down in August 2008. Six months after its launch, FanLib's membership was at 10,000 and growing according to Xiaochang Li.[329] When FanLib shut down, they claimed to have surpassed 25,000 members.[330] FanLib's infamous and thorough community relations implosion was well-documented by fans, fan scholars and other bloggers alike, raising the question of how FanLib succeeded in garnering a community from any of the fans it encountered at all. The answer goes back to the scope and diversity of media fandom, and generational fractures between 'new' fans and 'old' fans.[331] Li interviewed several prolific fan writers about their knowledge of the controversy surrounding FanLib, and found that "Those that had heard of it were not familiar with all of the arguments in detail and often accepted FanLib.com's contention that it was all a big misunderstanding."[332] Based on her conversations with these writers regarding their participation in fan communities on FanLib and elsewhere, Li theorized that FanLib attracted fans whose primary interests laid in the production of fan fiction and the reception of feedback, but who did not especially value interacting with other fans or conceive of fan work as an collaborative, community building activity. Li writes that the attitude of the fans she interviewed was particularly ironic considering that FanLib marketed itself as a Web 2.0 fan social network: "The problem, of course, is that, while FanLib.com employs a number of social technologies, it does not build a structure that accommodates social practices. For instance, the 'featured stories' are chosen not by other fans, but by FanLib.com staff, thus short circuiting the sense of an organic value hierarchy dictated by the writers and readers themselves."[333]

There have always been fans who are sympathetic to commercializing fan labour,[334] although media fan writers who have attempted to monetize fan work have typically been publicly shamed by the community. However, as the community grows with each generation of new fans, community norms are destabilized: According to Hetcher, as the popularity of fan fiction expands outside the boundaries of established media fan communities, "The sanctioning regime that creates costs for commercializing begins to lose its ability to drive cooperative behavior through sanctioning, interested-play and reputational effects within communities that are decreasingly close-knit."[335] Li writes that, for fans who do not engage with gift economy discourse "wherein value is created through engagement and exchange with other fans, the prizes and recognition system of FanLib.com then becomes just a logical, perhaps more lucrative, extension of

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[329] Ibid.

[330] stewardess, "Disney bought FanLib, according to Screen Digest."

[331] For a recent example of how new generations of fans tend to create their own spaces apart from establish fan circles, see Gavia Baker-Whitelaw, "How the Growing Generation Gap is Changing the Face of Fandom."

[332] Ibid.

[333] Li, "Fanfic, Inc.: Another Look at FanLib.com (2 of 2)."

[334] De Kosnik, "Should Fan Fiction Be Free?" 123.

[335] Hetcher, "Using Social Norms to Regulate Fan Fiction and Remix Culture," 1893.

receiving feedback and comments on fics - just another way to be rewarded for a job well done."[336]

Contrary to the above and the expectations and perceptions of some of LJ's critics that FanLib users were only interested in points and prizes,[337] comments from former FanLib users suggest that what FanLib users most cherished and missed was the friendships they had formed and the sense of community that had developed on FanLib. Whether and to what extent the majority FanLib users fit their stereotype can not be determined; those users who went on to seek each other out on other websites and re-connect after FanLib's closure are a self-selecting group for whom fan community is a driving motive and may not represent the majority of FanLib users. Nevertheless, these former users had consistently good things to say about FanLib, the inclusivity and positivity of the community they found and built there, and the openness of members to engage with fan work that they would not otherwise have been interested in.[338] Nor are there any indication that creative freedom was overly moderated on FanLib. One former user described it as the "fan site that gave birth to the best collaborative minds of the decade."[339] With respect to fans on LJ who had criticized FanLib, one former member allowed that criticisms of FanLib Inc.'s business might have been valid, but "it bothers me that they don't even seem to realize all the friendships that were built on FanLib - the sense of community and camaraderie that you could find nowhere else."[340] These sentiments of community as a driver for user loyalty echo the words of other media fan communities, including LJ; some fans argued that their sense of community and belonging was the reason they continued to use LJ and lobby for their rights as users after the events of Strikethrough 2007, despite their contentions with the service provider and the availability of alternative, explicitly fan-friendly services.[341] Focus on FanLib Inc.'s for-profit status, and the competitive, individualistic implications of FanLib Inc.'s storytelling contests arguably overshadowed FanLib's self-presentation as a community forum and social networking site, and the acceptance of FanLib as a veritable virtual home by some of its users.[342]

Very little information has been collated about the demographics of FanLib's users, their interaction with media fans on other websites during the years 2007-2008, nor whether the majority of them were active in fandom before joining FanLib or remained active in fandom after FanLib closed. After FanLib's closure, new communities were created on LJ, FF.net and websites for former FanLib users. It seems that most of these communities fell into inactivity within two years, but a small fan-run archive created by two former FanLib users is still semi-active in 2014.[343] Based on the anecdotes of a few, it seems likely that FanLib was particularly attractive to fans who did not feel included in established media fan communities as well as new fans. The comments of some FanLib writers to Li regarding their estrangement from LJ communities mirror the remarks of some early LJ adopters regarding mailing list communities: that they seemed exclusive,

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[336] Li, "Fanfic, Inc.: Another Look at FanLib.com (2 of 2)."
[337]topaz-eyes, "Fandom-for-profit, or why FanLib is IMHO not part of fandom."
[338] misskitten, "Fanlib closing."
[339]dr.jeanTre16, "Fanlib Dies; Creativity Lives On."
[340]auri_mynonys in the comments of misskitten, "Fanlib closing."
[341] Moellenberndt, "Livejournal Loyalty and Melodrama," 85-87.
[342]misskitten, "Fanlib closing."
[343]Fan Nation had 362 authors and 1760 members as of August 2014.

that they were not welcoming of newcomers, and that their unspoken rules and norms were intimidating, restrictive and confusing to newcomers.[344]

Failure to socialize with established fans is not necessarily indicative of a different original theory of fandom, but rather a symptom of the social unease of any newcomer to a social space rich with obscure terminology, practices and social hierarchies, in which membership itself may be exclusive and where perceived or self-identified outsiders may very well be met with distrust and suspicion. FanLib in 2007, like LJ in the early 2000's, was an unsettled space, where new fans and old fans who felt dissatisfied with established communities could build a community on their own terms at their own pace. Despite their feelings of alienation from other media fan communities, and the fears of those media fan communities that FanLib's users would not share their values, the post-mortem statements of the remains of the FanLib community suggests that FanLib users was not so different after all from other media fans with respect to their values.

Conclusions: Collaborationist Frontiers

In a series of blog posts, rewritten for a chapter of *Media Industries: History, Theory and Method*, Joshua Green and Henry Jenkins proposes that there are two competing models currently at play with respect to the media industry's orientation towards participatory culture: prohibitionist and collaborationist.[345][346] The models represent alternative responses to a disruption in the moral economy between the media industry and consumers, the result of an ongoing period of technological, economic and cultural disruption.[347]

> Some media producers adopt what we are calling a collaborative approach, embracing audience participation, mobilizing fans as grassroots advocates, and capitalizing on user-generated content. Others adopt a prohibitionist posture. Frightened by a loss of control over the channels of media production and distribution and threatened by increasingly visible and vocal audience behavior, some companies tighten control over intellectual property, trying to reign in the disruptive and destabilizing impact of technological and cultural change. Most companies are torn between the two extremes, seeking a new relationship with their audiences which gives only as much ground as needed to maintain consumer loyalty.[348]

Jenkins and Green cogently argue that a collaborationist relationship between the media industry and its consumers is both inevitable and desirable. "Engaging and promoting fan engagement offers media companies a more positive outcome than attempting the whack-a-mole game of trying to quash grassroots appropriation wherever it arises. Doing so also brings corporations into direct contact with lead users,

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[344] Chin, "From Textual Poachers to Textual Gifters," 106-107.
[345] Green and Jenkins, "The Moral Economy of Web 2.0 (Part One)."
Green and Jenkins, "The Moral Economy of Web 2.0: Audience Research and Convergence Culture."
[346]See also Jenkins, Ford and Green, *Spreadable Media*.
[347] Green and Jenkins, "The Moral Economy of Web 2.0: Audience Research and Convergence Culture," 221.
[348]Ibid, 214.

revealing new markets and unanticipated uses."[349] While FanLib is not a media producer, as a service provider FanLib was one in a line of collaborationist attempts to re-envision the relationship between fans and media producers. Despite their optimistic stance toward the future of collaborationist relations, Jenkins and Green use FanLib as an example of the "imperfectly aligned interests of media producers and consumers."[350]

FanLib's new collaborationist business model which was developed over a period of years can be seen as an attempt to repair the broken trust between the media industry and fans with a new moral economy based on FanLib's contractual offerings. Jenkins and Green describe FanLib's failure as the result of a "rift between the 'gift economy' of fan culture and the commodity logic of 'user-generated content.'"[351] While Jenkins and Green describe the prohibitionist media industry as the resistant party to the new, collaborationist world order which consumers demand, in the case of FanLib, the media producers which FanLib had collaborated were on board with millions of dollars in venture capital funding. "In 2007, the powers that be who once battled fanfic authors are ready to take a new approach. We are working closely with media companies and publishers so that this site can help lead the way," David B Williams said in the FanLib forums.[352] It was distrustful media fan community that declined to get in the new collaborationist boat.

Does FanLib represent a rejection of the collaborationist model by media fans? Perhaps not. Fans were not only distrustful of the media industry's ability to tolerate their activities without exerting control over whatever they took exception to, but also of FanLib's long-term relationship with the media industry. FanLib had taken the time to develop a relationship on an individual level with its industry partners and had developed the contracts to insure that their intellectual property would be protected. They did not take a similar amount of time to develop a relationship with fans and ensure that they, also, had a basis for trust. This unbalance suggested to fans that they would be systematically dis-privileged in the terms of FanLib's new moral economy. In the year leading up to FanLib's archive launch, a writing competition with a "industrial strength online user agreement and set of rules" was developed by FanLib for Showtime "after extensive revisions and consultations with Showtime's legal department."[353] This kind of sustained and reciprocal attention had not been paid equally to the rights of fans at the time of FanLib's launch, which fans duly noted and which they connected to FanLib's infantilization of fans such as apparent in their advertisements and the My2Sentences brochure: "While FanLib earnestly marketed to their advertising partners, they never attempted to get a buy-in from the fans themselves, seeming to assume that the fans would play along the way children will follow an ice cream truck."[354]

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[349]Ibid, 222.
[350]Ibid, 214.
[351] User-generated content is web content voluntarily created and shared by users that is leveraged to create economic value for the service providers and intellectual property owners which facilitate it's production. How and whether user-generated content is exploited labour is a point of conflict in Web 2.0 discourse. Ibid, 221. See also Abigail De Kosnik, "Interrogating 'Free' Fan Labor."
[352]David B Williams in the comments of hadesphoenix, "?'s about the site itself."
[353] Williams, "Case Study."
[354]icarus, "Article Summing up Fanlib."

FanLib's revolutionary business model was anticipated as a harbinger of a brave new world of industry co-option of fan labour and monetization of fan work.[355] Since its launch FanLib has been discussed as an archetype of the terms and conditions of this new world by fans and scholars. Certain types of fan work are increasingly granted legitimacy by the media industry, as long as fans submit to guidelines imposed on their work by restrictive licenses and terms of service, often sacrificing their intellectual property rights and control over their work. Paradoxically, collaborationist relations can create a new binary between that which is legitimate and allowed within the terms of the collaboration, and that which is illegitimate and prohibited. As suggested by Jenkins and Green, collaborationist and prohibitionist strategies may very well be two sides of the same coin: "Most companies today embrace some elements of both models, resulting in profound contradictions in the ways they relate to their consumers."[356]

Suzanne Scott writes that "FanLib remains the most histrionic example of an attempted (and failed) commercial co-optation of fandom, arguably overshadowing the discussion and analysis of more covert and complex instances of corporate attempts to construct their own fannish spaces for profit."[357] Arguably, FanLib is singled out because it was the most successful and well-developed attempt to monetize fan fiction: similar ventures have either failed, or been dismissed as irrelevant by media fans when they failed to thrive. Other, more subtle and successful commercial co-options of fandom may be overlooked and not perceived to be a threat to media fandom because they do not target media fandom per se, as Scott implies, but mainstream audiences. One borderline case that has drawn superficial comparisons to FanLib by fans and scholars is Kindle Worlds.

In May 2013, Amazon announced its new service, Kindle Worlds. Kindle Worlds is the FanLib that critics feared FanLib would become. Kindle Worlds is much more restrictive than FanLib, and represents much more thorough corporate take-over of fan fiction than FanLib ever attempted: "For one thing, copyright holders can set any limits they want on content, just as with tie-in novels, and can reject works at any time, and any work that pushes the boundaries is likely to be discarded. *The Wind Done Gone* would surely have been rejected at once. And by the terms of Kindle Worlds, any new elements effectively become the property of the copyright holder. If a Kindle Worlds writer creates new characters, they aren't allowed to take those new characters and write their own stories about them. If they do write a story that stands on its own, by publishing it in Kindle Worlds they have lost the right to make it commercially publishable separately, and they have lost the derivative rights."[358] Content published on Kindle Worlds must also be sold at a determined price of which the authors receive a cut, the rest being distributed to Amazon and the copyright holders.

Despite the fact that Kindle Worlds fully realizes some of the accusations lobbied at Fanlib, including that its promises of token returns were exploitative and that it would police content, the launch of Kindle Worlds was met with much less heat and

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[355] almostnever, "fanlib"

[356] Jenkins, "Prohibitionists and Collaborationists."

[357] Scott terms the co-option of media fan culture into user generated content packaged for a general audience the 'regifting' economy. Scott, "Repackaging Fan Culture."

[358] Novik, "Testimony of Naomi Novik Before the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet," 5.

controversy than FanLib. While there has certainly been notice and criticism of Kindle Worlds among media fans, so far it has not inspired nearly the same amount of anger and offense that FanLib did within its first two months. Kindle Worlds has similarities to smaller scale attempts to solicit licensed fan work on "official" fan websites for promotional contests and other events, such as those which FanLib Inc. facilitated for many years without any remark from media fandom before FanLib Inc. branched out into archival services. Perhaps these programs pass by media fandom because they are not designed with media fans in mind, do not promote themselves with media fans and certainly do not attempt to frame themselves as a new home for media fan work in particular.[359] Both media fans and other critics have even argued that it is misleading to consider works published with Kindle Worlds to be fan fiction at all, due to Kindle Worlds' restrictions on transformative creativity and its total alienation from the moral economy of the media fan community;[360][361][362] "This isn't Amazon figuring out how to make money off fan fiction; this is Amazon entering into a partnership with media properties to crowdsource officially licensed novelizations," Malinda Lo concluded.[363] Unlike FanLib, programs such as Kindle Worlds and official fan engagement websites, even when they target women, tend to be of no especial interest to media fans due to their implicit or explicit rejection of media fandom culture and its modes and genres of production.

Whether or not these websites perceive themselves to be excluding media fans in particular is arguable, however their website structure, functions and licenses are typically designed to moderate and disable the types of transgressive and transformative fan work associated with media fans.[364][365][366][367] As collaborationist enterprises, they come with certain prohibitions which implicitly exclude media fans. The type of fan activity which is supported by these websites is often implicitly gendered as well: "It has long been the case that male audiences are more valued and courted, but as media producers shape their definition of an ideal fandom, it is increasingly one that is defined as fanboy specific, or one that teaches its users to consume and create in a fanboyish manner by acknowledging some genres of fan production and obscuring others."[368] While Kindle Worlds licenses many 'worlds' which are marketed toward women such as romance novels, contracted or licensed fan labour is a mode of professionalized fan production that is particularly associated with fanboys (male science fiction fans). Dating back to the exclusion of the first media fans from the mentorship relationship between professional science fiction authors and their science fiction fans, direct professionalization and monetization of fan work has continued to be less available to media fans than their science fiction fan counterparts, while at the

[359] Booth in: Jenkins, Ford, and Green, with participants Booth, Busse, Click, Ford, Jenkins, Li, and Ross, "Online Roundtable on Spreadable Media," 153-154.

[360] Allen, "Kindle Worlds: The Economics of Crowdsourcing Media Tie-In Novels."

[361] inkstone, "the first post after I come back from vacation and it's about this. god, why."

[362] Franklin, "Kindle Worlds versus fanfic."

[363] Lo, "Amazon Tries to Monetize Fan Fiction; I Freak Out."

[364] Ibid., on some of Kindle World's content restrictions.

[365] Brooker, "Going Pro," on the content restrictions of LucasFilm's fan domains and the SciFi.com Battlestar Galactica Videomaker Toolkit.

[366] Novik, "Testimony of Naomi Novik Before the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet," 4.

[367] See also Tushnet, "All Of This Has Happened Before And All Of This Will Happen Again."

[368] Scott, "Repackaging Fan Culture."

same time media fans have tended to value and defend their creative independence, as discussed previously.[369]

FanLib much more than KindleWorlds and other projects straddled two worlds: media fandom, and the brave new world of licensed, moderated "consumer generated content" as found in KindleWorlds. FanLib was essentially caught between two stakeholders who were only ready to hear one of two very different views of fan work: fan work as transformative and free, and fan labour as a potential tool in need of proper wielding. FanLib Inc.'s shifting rhetoric must be understood in this context. On the one hand, the Fanlib archive was inclusive all genres and types of transformative fan work, on the other, it served as a home for FanLib Inc.'s ongoing marketing business. When critiqued for the terms of their storytelling competitions, FanLib representatives differentiated between the two parts of FanLib's business; they argued that the marketing contests had nothing to do with the archive. Fans also responded in ways that implied that they saw the two sides of FanLib Inc.'s business as practically incompatible in any case. As discussed previously, fans feared that FanLib Inc's marketing activities would draw attention to the newer side of FanLib Inc's business: copyright infringing fan work on the FanLib archive. While many in the media industry were permissive of fan work, others had a history of statements that suggested that they barely tolerated its existence, enough to make fans risk-averse. Fans also questioned whether FanLib Inc.'s ongoing marketing business would be differentiated from the fan archive host site by the courts, should legal action be brought against the FanLib archive for copyright infringement. Correctly or not, the marketing business, as the source of FanLib's income, was still seen as the core of FanLib, and the archive as the supporting structure: in other words, "A naked advertising agency wearing a fanfiction archive suit."[370]

Epilogue: An Archive of One's Own

While there has been much written about the future of media fandom's values and norms and their co-option by outsiders, and the tendency of mainstreamed fandom to leave female and queer media fans behind, there has been less literature about fan cultures which flourish on the boundaries of media fan culture and mainstream consumer culture. Periods of change in media fandom can be connected to large influxes of new fans, but not every new fan is a media fan: what of communities of new fans with no particular connections to the media fan community? Not every new attempt to monetize fan activity, whether for advertising and marketing purposes or as free labour, is a co-option of media fandom in particular; new audiences may be produced. Since before FanLib, collaboration-inclined departments in the media industry have been experimenting with new methods of licensing fan work, co-opting fan work, and harnessing fan energy for promotional purposes. As mentioned previously, these projects have typically been designed to target male fans and fans who view fan work as a means to professionalization, but rarely have they made allowances for the interests of media fans.[371372373]

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[369] Brooker, "Going Pro."

[370] stewardess, "FanLib is not a fanfiction archive? Huh?"

[371] "There are also important gender distinctions here in terms of what activities count once fandom goes mainstream — with the commercial industry finding it easier to absorb some of the collector or geeky aspects of male fan culture more easily than it can deal with the issues of emotion and sexuality that run through female produced fan fiction." Jenkins, "When Fandom Goes Mainstream…"

Increasingly, the audiences who are targeted as 'fans' by these campaigns are casual viewers and product users, mainstream audiences who have little in common with the niche audience known as fandom up until recently; this mainstreamization of fandom indicates not a greater acceptance of fan work as practiced by media fans, but a redefinition of the meaning of fandom and fan work itself. As Noah Berlatzky wrote about Kindle Worlds, "If 'fan fic' was the name of a genre and a community, it can now be the name of a marketing campaign and a marketing demographic. You could even say that Amazon is turning the term 'fan fiction' into fan fiction itself, lifting it from its original context and giving it a new purpose and a new narrative, related to the original but not beholden to it."[374] Just as fan work is rebranded outside of its context, so too is 'fandom.' Once the term for a unusually and even degenerately obsessive consumer, 'fan' now may be used to describe to any consumer who professes any amount of positive regard toward something. Brooker writes that "Academia must address this mainstreaming and redefinition of 'fandom,' where commitment and loyalty to a brand mean little more than clicking a 'Become a Fan' button and working up through the structured ranks of a website game. But what of those individuals who remain fans in the old-school sense, whose engagement with a text involves a different league of effort, energy, skill, and emotional investment?"[375]

I have argued that FanLib was particularly controversial and frightening because unlike almost every other attempt to market to fans with Web 2.0 tactics or to solicit fan labour, including Kindle Worlds, it was fully inclusive of media fandom. The idea that a commercial entity might succeed in sanitizing, monetizing, and popularizing the products of media fandom per se, quashing media fandom's unique culture in the process, inspires unease in fans and fan scholars.[376] Julie Levin Russo, in discussing FanLib Inc., writes, "This is perhaps the inverse of the concern expressed by Kristina Busse that the queerer aspects of fan culture will become increasingly marginalized and vulnerable in the course of its 'mainstreaming': what if, on the contrary, slash[377] or its ilk turns out to be commodifiable after all?"[378]

In the months and years following FanLib's launch, some fans and scholars began to question the taboo surrounding profit from fan work and the cultural benefits of a gift economy that allows no room for commercialization.[379][380][381] De Kosnik and others have suggested that, if media fans do not organize and enter the market on their own terms, the media industry and service providers such as FanLib will continuing developing content models to harness media fan labour and even fan genre's of creativity, such as

[372] Scott, "Repackaging Fan Culture."
[373] Russo, "Indiscrete Media," 150.
[374] Berlatsky, "Do Fans Really Own Fan Fiction?"
[375] Brooker, "Going Pro," 93.
[376] De Kosnik, "Should Fan Fiction Be Free?"
[377] A genre of fan work virtually exclusive to media fans. Slash is, broadly, fan work focusing on the romantic or sexual pairing of two characters of the same gender. As a genre it has distinct differences from mainstream gay and lesbian literature.
[378] Stein, Russo, Scott, Rehak et al, "Fandebate Revisited."
[379] cupidsbow, "Women/Writing 1: How Fanfiction Makes Us Poor, by cupidsbow."
[380] Bookshop, "I'm done explaining why fanfic is okay."
[381] De Kosnik, "Interrogating 'Free' Fan Labor."

slash, to their own purposes.[382][383] De Kosnik proposed that fan fiction was nearing a 'Sugarhill Moment,' a event where "an outsider takes up a subculture's invention and commodifies it for the mainstream before insiders do."[384] "Like a rogue green planet in an increasingly colonized system of shiny corporate worlds winking with advertising satellites and buzzing with traffic," media fandom rejected FanLib, but what hope does it have for the future, Brooker asks, and what would be the benefits of media fans monetizing their work on their own terms, before they are put on the defensive by the next capitalist encroachment?[385]

At the moment it seems entirely possible that non-commercial media fan culture will persist alongside commercialized fan cultures, even commercialized media fan culture, just as it has thrived in parallel with science fiction fandom. In direct response to the threat represented by FanLib, fan writer Astolat proposed a non-profit, fan-run archive, inclusive of all fans and all types of fan work. Collaborators and other interested parties from media fandom gathered, and together they began development. The archive project eventually developed into the Organization for Transformative Works (OTW), a non-profit organization run by fans in service of fans. The OTW launched the originally proposed the awaited archive, The Archive of Our Own (AO3), in open beta in November 2009.[386]

Unlike FanLib, the OTW did not seek to facilitate any collaboration or communication between fans and the media industry. Rather, one of the OTW's founding motives is protect fans from the exploitative ventures and the antagonism of outsiders by representing fans' interests as an organization and empowering fans with their services.[387] "The OTW adopted a multi-pronged approach, wherein several distinct projects run by volunteer committees synergistically intervene in fandom's shift toward the mainstream, supporting established practices and representing them to outsiders."[388] OTW resources to this end have included: AO3, a legal advocacy group, a peer-reviewed scholarly journal, a wiki of fan-written fan history, and a fan work preservation project.[389] While the relationship between the OTW's organizers and other fans has not been without its conflicts,[390][391] some virulent and ongoing, the legitimacy of the OTW seems to have been tacitly accepted by the the majority of media fans. As insiders, OTW's founding

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[382] De Kosnik, "Should Fan Fiction Be Free?"
[383] Brooker, "Going Pro," 94.
[384] Ibid, 199-120.
[385] Ibid, 94.
[386] Similarly, development of the Dreamwidth blogging service was instigated by ex-Livejournal staff partly in response to Strikethrough 2007. Dreamwidth, launched in 2009, is explicitly friendly to fans and many former fans using Livejournal have since moved to Dreamwidth. Dreamwidth is not the first fan-friendly blogging alternative based on Livejournal code, but it has been the most successful with fans in part due to a steady loss of trust in Livejournal beginning with the events of 2007, as well as the utility of its service. Changes in service have also affected fan's withdrawal from LJ: Livejournal's 2011 removal of comment subject lines forced some fan communities to move to other platforms in order to continue functioning at all.
Romano, "The Demise of a Social Media Platform," and "Infographic."
[387] Busse, "The Organization for Transformative Works."
[388] Russo, "Indiscrete Media," 240.
[389] Busse, "The Organization for Transformative Works."
[390] Ibid, 241-242.
[391] "Organization for Transformative Works," Fanlore, http://fanlore.org/wiki/Organization_for_Transformative_Works

board developed its services based on a more complete and nuanced understanding of the culture and needs of the LJ-based portion of media fandom in which it originated than FanLib, whose offered services were largely rejected as superfluous and unwanted. In numbers, AO3 seems to fall behind FanLib. While FanLib reached 18,000 users in ten months, AO3's growth has been artificially limited by a steady release of invitation codes, at times building up a wait list of months. A regulated number of invitation codes continue be released each day five years later due to limited server capacity.[392] AO3 reached 31,000 users just two years after open beta launch, in 2012. At the time of this writing in August 2014, AO3 clocks in with over 386,000 registered users.[393]

Study Conclusions

Jim Suderman

This study determined that any historical assessment of trust in cloud-based services will be complex and cannot be determined by simply by reviewing the growth or decline shown on graphs such as the Market Share of Visits produced by Priit Kallas' (above). Any apparent direct relationships between trust and service are unlikely to stand any serious scrutiny. Assessing trust in cloud-based services must, at a minimum, consider the perspective and the context of the user, the values (if any) held by the community of which the user is a part, and the framing of the service by the service provider.

It was beyond the scope of this study to comprehensively review the study of trust. However, from the sources examined, three broad facets of trust – calculated, relational, and cognition-based – provided a useful basis on which to consider cloud-based services, current and past. Calculated and cognition-based trust may be at the core of decisions to try a new service. In contrast, relational trust may dominate when trying a new service in situations where "everyone else is doing it," perhaps validating the theoretical concepts of Media System Dependency of perceived utility of online media and the perceived social utility of communicating with ideologically like-minded discussants. Likewise, it seems reasonable to think that trust decision points will become less pronounced through frequent use of a service, suggesting that relational trust may predominate as familiarity with the service grows.

All cloud-based services considered by this study were or are discretionary. It is also known that there are risks to availing oneself of the services, such as loss of privacy. So what makes users accept the risk? At a technological level perceived utility and perceived ease of use, identified in the Technology Assessment Model, influences the decisions to trust of users. However, users' broader social contexts may be more influential than the technology or even the personal disposition towards risk of an individual in the decision to trust. We as individuals also have "an almost compulsive desire to document the actual states of being and physical presence."[394] The broader

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[392] "AO3 Accounts and Invitations," Archive of Our Own, http://archiveofourown.org/admin_posts/230
[393] Roughly 125,000 less than FF.net in its fifth year. Sendlor, "FanFiction.Net Member Statistics."
[394] Young, *The Virtual Self,* 83.

context is reflected in the structural assurance, social influences, and familiarity elements identified in the Risk-Trust Assessment Model introduced by this study.

The study considered the role of the communities that emerge within an on-line service, including the values established within those communities and the influence of those values on user perceptions of the service providers. As with the complexity of comprehending the factors influencing the decision to trust of an individual user, communities emerging through on-line services are likewise complex and influenced by circumstance. Values may be common across one or more communities, as described in the fan fiction study, without being monolithic.

These facets helped understand the nature of the trust between users, including user communities, and the providers of cloud-based services. They also helped explore the trust between users and the user communities to which they belonged. All of the services considered by this study espoused some values, explicitly or otherwise, whether they related to editorial neutrality or objectivity (Wikipedia) or personalized social engagement (Facebook). Communities of service users emerged, thrived, fractured, and declined depending on the stability of the values of service provider over time and whether the values of the community of users itself came to be seen as too rigid or too opaque to new adherents to the community. This study was not able to clarify the degree to which communities influenced a user's perceptions regarding the ease of use and usefulness of the technology by which a service is delivered.

A limitation of the study is the narrow range of cloud-based services considered. The only services considered in any depth are those in the section on fan fiction. The potential range of cloud-based services is enormous and could include relatively passive services like Wikipedia, where no log-in or other user identification is required to access posted information, to niche services like that provided by Mendeley, a scholarly reference management service which requires users to establish an account, to Facebook.

Findings relating to privacy, although clearly a concern to users, were inconclusive in terms of the willingness of users to trust cloud-based services with their personal information. Even Google Buzz, where privacy concerns may be said to be central to the cancellation of the service, saw rapid growth while it existed. However, privacy was clearly a concern that affected not just trust in the service provider but also trust in the community of users, as illustrated by Kristina Busse' recommendation to exclude direct links in bibliographic citations for media fan fiction unless the author's permission has been secured. While privacy is frequently identified as a significant concern by users of many cloud-based services, especially those categorized as social media, users continue to use such services providing their personal information to do so – resulting in the so-called privacy paradox. The study did not consider whether privacy would become a factor for services such as that provided by Wikipedia if users had to log-in and establish a profile to it.

Some communities appeared to set a value on obscurity which, while clearly not the same as the legal conception of privacy, provides in interesting perspective on the willingness to trust others with personal information so long as those "others" are trusted to respect that intimacy. In the case of early communities on MySpace, the

obscurity of the information shared by users was lost, referred to as a "collapse of social contexts" by boyd and Ellison,[395] after the service became widely known through popular media and the number of users significantly increased. Obscurity also emerges as a community value in media fandom communities as a result of cultural disparagement, uncertainty regarding copyright law (and the inequality attendant on the resources needed to contest rights in the courts) as well as for "the creative and social independence that it affords media fans." (See above.)

The study examined risk exclusively from the user's perspective. While there are, no doubt, risks run by providers of cloud-based services, End User Licensing Agreements and contract terms are well-established ways by which service providers manage them. This study did not encounter any approaches or tools by which end users could manage risks to themselves. As such it was a finding of this study that the understanding of end user risks is less clear than it might be for understanding the risks of service providers. This study was also not able to establish criteria for weighing or assessing risks and the value of mitigating actions. Decisions to trust or accept risk, i.e., trusting that the assessed probability of the unwanted outcome is valid, are made by individuals, however much they may be influenced by peer pressure, familiarity, and technological simplicity.

The user communities or organizations that take shape in relation to cloud-based services provide essential context for assessing trust. The Fan Fiction Case Study makes this starkly clear when it describes the service provider FanFiction.net (FF.net) as "the most popular fan fiction website in the world" yet has a "poor reputation among many media fan communities," because the latter prefer "community spaces which are more obscure and coded as female, such as blogging websites." (See above.)

InterPARES 2 defines "organization" as "a social system that has an unequivocal collective identity, and exact roster of members, a program of activity, and procedures for replacing members." However, human networks, including those existing online, are not so clearly bounded. Yet these communities provide essential context for understanding content created and referred to within these networks. Although this study was not focused on the content created and accessed through cloud-based services, a preliminary or superficial diplomatic analysis was conducted on a "generic" social media post. The intent of this exercise was just to see what would emerge through that analytical lens. The conclusion of the analysis was that such records are narrative in nature because they are juridically irrelevant at the point of creation. In other words, while one may only be able to make a Facebook posting on Facebook, there is no legal requirement for any such posting. In other words, one could communicate with others in the community through other means if necessary and that there may be no need for any communication in the first place. However, the community may exist primarily as a support group and the immediacy and interaction provided by the technology makes a 'status update' of interest and value. Furthermore, the diplomatic concept of a record and reflected in the ontologies developed by

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[395] boyd and Ellison, "Social Network Sites," 215.

InterPARES 2 may have limited utility in less formal contexts. Lemieux and Cenfetelli's InterPARES 3 study of organizational culture found that what people considered a record within an organization can vary significantly, in some instances records are even called 'products.' The study further concluded that there "is no consensus amongst stakeholders on the important attributes of a record."[396] Therefore, it becomes clear that trusting in the content, i.e., records or data, connected with cloud-based services is significantly affected by the norms of the online communities that use them.

It is a fundamental principle of archival theory that the meaning of informational content (records, data) cannot be established without the context of that content. The perceived value of the content is influenced by the technology on which it resides and transmitted. Its value is also influenced by the communities which use network technologies to sustain themselves. This study has shown that the range of cloud-based services accessible to individuals can result in highly specialized communities. And the choice of technologies used by these communities is influenced by both the values of that community and the perceived values of the service provider. Establishing and maintaining trust in records and information maintained and exchanged via technological networks may depend on a more nuanced comprehension of context than has been defined as a minimum by InterPARES research to date.

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[396] Lemieux, Cenfettli, and Goh. "General Study 07 – Organizational Culture: Final Report," 30.

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