Heather Hood

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Dr. Jennifer Grouling Cover

Essay #3

<div align="center">Fanfart: Where Literature Can Lure Its Readers Towards…..*Twilight*</div>

Introduction

Fanfiction is not a recent phenomenon but the forms in which literature's readers are now expressing themselves has changed drastically over time because of technology. Readers of certain literature have been creating these alternative storylines for the books they have read and then have been posting these stories they have created onto their blog or other certain sites like deviantart.com[1] where they can express their creativity through stories. This is what would be considered to be fanfiction. What would be another way for readers, or fans, to express themselves creatively? This is where fanart would come in by taking the same idea of fanfiction but instead of using so many words, fans use more visual pleasing aspects to express themselves. Marjorie Manifold gives a better defined definition in her article "Culture Convergence or Divergence?" where she did a study over fanart and cosplay [2]and published her findings over this study. Manifold defines fanart as art created "directly or indirectly" on characters and/or settings from a "specific pop-culture phenomena" (Manifold 1). Is visually showing what a person sees in a text better than writing it? Can you get as much from the drawing as you can the image? While reading what people wrote is easier to get an understanding what the writer means vs. trying to figure out what an artist means by their image. Neither is better than the other because

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[1] Referred as DeviantART from this point on.

[2] Cosplay, as defined by Manifold, is "costume making, dressing, and posing as characters derived from pop-culture Phenomena" (Manifold 1). An example would be a person making their own Bella costume from *Twilight*, say a dress she wore in the movie or book, for a Stephanie Meyer book reading that was having a costume contest.

each offers two different ways for people to interact with the story, with each other, and with themselves. The definition of fanart by Manifold fits well with the topic I am going to discuss in this paper. In this paper I am going to observe and analyze how fans' fanart create a different portrayal of story, character, or scenes specifically dealing with the *Twilight* novels by Stephenie Meyer that were made into movies. After doing my analysis, I will remark on how this art might express the artists' feelings toward the subject from an outsider's point of view and how other items in pop culture factor into their drawings.

Method of Research: Narrative and Intertextuality

Philip Eubanks describes that a story and a narrative are two different forms of the same thing in Charles Bazerman and Paul Prior's "What Writing Does and How It Does It". The difference between a story and a narrative is, according to Eubanks, a story is "what happened" while a narrative is "the way what happened…recounted in words" (Eubanks 34). Eubanks goes on to discuss a method, one of the many included in Bazerman and Prior's book, on how to analyze a narrative (which includes a story). This method is rather simplistic in practice that one does not think it is a method at all and is sometimes the best to use: note-taking and categorizing. What it means to do is literally note-take over what was read and then categorize the notes or subject matter in a way that makes sense to the author and to their audience. This is one of the methods I used to analyze the images I found.

I unnoticeably found myself also using another method Bazerman and Prior included in their book: intertexuality. Bazerman describes intertextuality as being "the explicit and implicit relations that a text or utterance has to prior, contemporary and potential future texts… and how the current [source] positions and draws on other [sources]" (Bazerman 86). This basically

means how a text deals with and communicates with other sources or text. Mostly the art that used intertextuality used what Bazerman called "indirect quotation[3]" and "mentioning of a person[4]" (Bazerman 88). I use indirect quote and mentioning a person because a few of the images I found were deeply founded based upon other characters from other movies and shows but never mentioning the characters through text but visually, thus indirectly visually quoting another author and mentioning another character. This is another case where I take a method from Bazerman and Prior and twist it into a method that better fits my research.

I used these methods, but I had to deviate to conform to what it was I was analyzing: pictures/fanart. How I went about doing this method with a twist was first I started out looking for background information on art and stories and then moved on to finding information on fanart/fanfiction/fandom. I categorized my findings and took note on what I thought would fit the best with the ideas I had. This process follows much of what Eubanks described for a narrative analysis. When I was searching for fanart on DeviantART, I didn't do much note taking as but rather I focused on two specific categories within the *Twilight* fanart: defiance and conformance. All together I had chosen around ninety images and so I confined those images to around twenty-two and finally five to use in my paper. I chose these images because I felt they held what it was I was looking for the most: something different. The fanart had passion in them and I found they created a story that was different than *Twilight*.

After looking at the fanart, I saw that I had chosen images which defied what the novel/movie *Twilight*'s plot or storyline were by sometimes incorporating other pop culture

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[3] "Indirect quotation filters the meaning through the second author's words and attitude and allows themeanings to be more thoroughly infused with the second writer's purpose" (Bazerman and Prior 88).

[4] "Relies on the reader's familiarity with the original source and what it says. No details of meaning are specified, so the second writer has even greater opportunity to imply what he [/]she wants about the original" (Bazerman and Prior 88)

phenomenon. There were few places where intertextuality was used with images rather than text and that is where intertextuality was shaped to fit what it was I was looking at. These images that used intertextuality helped connect audience members who may not know about *Twilight* or like *Twilight* with each other. It is this type of connection, among others, that help create a fandom and a sense of community.

What is Fanart and *Twilight?*

Twilight became a big success after becoming a hit movie in 2008, three years after its success as a novel in 2005. Popularity came to Stephenie Meyer, Isabella Swan, Edward Cullen, Jacob Black, Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner, and the rest of the characters and actors of the *Twilight* novels after the movie was made and the second movie came out[5]. With this popularity came a huge fan base that grew with each movie so the fans obviously went out to read the books and made them even more popular than they were before. As *Twilight*'s popularity raised at the opportune time (or kairos[6]), an anti-fan base, who despised how the novels and movies portrayed things, arose in its shadows. These are the type of people, the anti-Twihards[7], I focused on when looking for fanart that depicted Twilight going in a different direction the novels, and ultimately the movies, went with the story.

Fanart is a derivative form produced by fanfiction. Fanfiction, or fanfic, is the more textual version while fanart has become the more visual product. They are one in the same, as Kerri L. Mathew and Devon Christopher Adams hint at in their article "I Love Your Book, but I

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[5] This continued with the third installment and recently with the fourth movie of the installment. *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part One* broke records to have the fifth best opening weekend with $139.5 million (Young). Since opening weekend, *Breaking Dawn* held the number one spot until the December 9, 2011weekend where it was overtaken but still made almost $8 million in sales, making its gross to date $259.5million (Box Office Mojo).

[6] Kairos is another way to express the opportune moment people or events experience. Kairos literally means the right or opportune time.

[7] This is not my own term.

Love My Version More…" (Mathew and Adams). Mathew and Adams describe fanfics as being "fiction written by fans, often teenagers, of novels…or other media… based in the worlds created by the authors" but the fans "extend, elaborate, or appropriate the text for their own purposes" to create their own version of the story (Mathew and Adams). This is a good, basic definition to what fanfiction is. Mathew and Adams go on to further discuss how the composition of fanfiction has now been blurred thanks to technology and that the definition of the word "composition" has changed from being "informal or formal writing meant to be read" to being broadened to include "not only print narrative, but also visual narrative--photos, drawings, graphic art, and vide" (Mathew, Adams). This group, visual narrative, would be where fanart falls under.

Fanart takes the same basic starting points of fanfiction, but rather than use text to create more text, fanartist use the text to create an image. This image could be something they wanted to happen in the book, movie, show, etc. or a detail they thought were idiotic, so to speak, that to make other people think about it they create a visual for people to see and be able to connect to easier, sometimes using intertextuality with other shows to connect to a wider fan base. This visual the artist is creating helps not only their audience understand how they see the text, but also how they (the artists) see the world of literature. "Visual responses to the written work enhance the cognitive response to reading" (Mathew and Adams). This basically means by extending their works than just the works of words, the reader/artist is not only interacting with the text by creating a visual but they are also learning to "discover new ways to make meaning of their reading" (Mathew and Adams). This applies to my research because the anti-Twihards are doing the same thing, just depicting how they see things in a negative way more so than positive.

***Fan*tastic Anti-*Twilight* Art**

The next two images[8] do a good job at incorporating

what I was mentioning before: intertextuality. The image

on the right is using the iconic DC [9]comic and movie

superhero Batman as well as his sidekick Robin. So what

do Batman and Robin have to do with *Twilight*? At first

glance there is nothing that would put those two pop

icons in the same sentence. Upon closer inspection, the

audience can see that Batman is slapping Robin, who is

supposed to be his loyal sidekick. What would cause

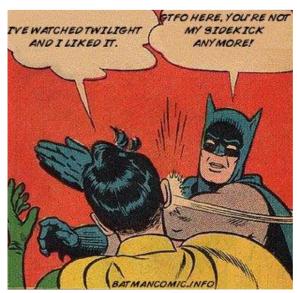such abuse? Here is where *Twilight* comes into play.

Image put on DeviantART by LexLight92

Robin says in his little bubble "I've watched Twilight and liked it." Batman response to Robin is

by smacking him and telling Robin that he is no longer his sidekick.

Batman's smacking Robin is significant but not as significant as what he says. By

sanctioning Robin by disowning him as a sidekick, Batman is showing his dislike for *Twilight*

and ultimately the artist's dislike as well. This brings to mind the stereotype that real men, boys

that want to be superheroes, don't or shouldn't like things like *Twilight* and if they do they

should be punished for liking such a thing. This is not just for men either but also pertains to a

girl as well. This image does a really good job at displaying how society, or people in a society,

can look at something like *Twilight* and isolate those people that do like things like *Twilight* and

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[8] This image and the following are not to scale.
[9] DC stands for Detective Comics, who published Bob Kane's character Batman in 1939 (Albert).

make it seem that like what people like are a bad thing when really they are just two different opinions on a subject.

The second image on the left goes right along with the Batman image in using characters from other franchises that people can use to connect what they are feeling towards those franchise and *Twilight*. In this image we see the largely recognizable characters Bella and Edward from the *Twilight* movies from the first movie's poster as well as the same text that is on the poster and associated with *Twilight*. Then a person looking at the image can see three other people or characters surrounding Bella and Edward. These three characters are Blade (a comic and movie character found in things with the same name played by Wesley Snipes), Buffy (the main character from the show *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* played by Sarah Michelle Geller), and Van Helsing (a movie character based on the character Abraham Van Helsing in *Dracula* played by Hugh Jackman).

What these three characters share in common is they are all a form of a vampire slayer. With this knowledge and with the words "the end[10]" put above all the characters, it is safe to come to the conclusion that these three "vampire slayers" are there to put an end to the vampires Edward and Bella- who eventually becomes a vampire. We can even take it a step further and

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[10] The words "the twilight saga" are also included in the larger picture. By putting "the twilight saga" on the photo helps to emphasize the artist projecting "the end" of *Twilight* as well as the characters Bella and Edward.

interpret that it is not just the end of Bella and Edward but the end of *Twilight* as well before any of the other installments. I say this because the image of Bella and Edward, font choice, and the color all suggest the first *Twilight* film. So we can interpret that the artist Krisza thought Twilight should have ended at the first book/film for the reasons that vampires don't sparkle or that Bella is too dependent on Edward to be realistic or just overall Twilight is too unrealistic to enjoy or connect with, which is how a lot of anti-Twihards feel and have expressed.[11] It is these types of things that create anti-Twihards because vampires have already been depicted throughout decades of writing and then Twilight comes and all the young generation thinks a vampire should sparkle or not drink human blood, the total opposite of what the normal vampire should do. This image projects a hope that most definitely won't come true: that *Twilight* would die off and let the true vampires come back who drink human blood, burn in the daylight, and are nasty all without sparkling in the sun.

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[11] This is my own interpretation and commentary based on what I have witnessed in the past about what has been said about *Twilight*. These are in my own words.

These next few images do not include other characters from another franchise, but rather they depict how *Twilight* could have gone in different directions in the story of

Twilight. The image on the left, drawn and posted by *mariposa-nocturna on DeviantART, shows tension between the Twilight characters Edward and Jacob through a series of boxes. For readers and watchers of Twilight that is nothing new because the story is about these two vying for Bella's love. What is different is how instead of trying to win Bella in the end, the two male characters go for each other, so one could say that the tension was actually sexual tension between the two. Yes it is all a day dream of Bella's but these still brings up the "gay" aspect that Stephenie Meyer probably never thought of her two male characters going. This is a common idea that has not just blown in with the Jacob and Edward characters, but

with other franchises such as *Harry Potter*. [12]

These pairings of male characters is interesting for artist to do because they are taking a stand against two different things: homophobia and the story itself. By representing big characters like Jacob and Edward as being "in love" with each other is going against what the actual story is about while at the same time telling those people that are not ok with people being gay to, in nice terms, to shut up because you can't know who is gay and who is not. They push that thought even further by using these big heterosexual males that females go gaga over. It is fascinating how intentions can be represented through different people's skills and thoughts.

Continuing with the theme of representing a theme differently, the image here on the right depicts a scene from Breaking Dawn. The scene is the birthing scene of Bella and Edward's half human, half vampire daughter Renesmee. The scene is very disturbing and this image here makes fun of just how disturbing that scene really was. In the novel/book Bella is not sitting up

Posted on DeviantART by *kyrn

all excited and saying anything let alone commenting on the child's teeth. The child is also not of

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[12] Harry is usually depicted to be in a romantic relationship with his best friend Ron or other male characters like Snape or Fred.

the scaly variety of monster, but the artist chose[13] to depict her in that way because that is how

the child is referenced as until she gets older, as well as how Edward sees himself in *Twilight*. To

add to the absurdity of the artist's scene is Edward's smiling with blood dripping down his

mouth and his sparkling. The way the artist sees this scene is all summed up at the bottom of the

image where there are three little puddles with a sign pointing at them saying "fans". These

images of fans could be taken two ways[14], but with how the image projects it is safe to assume

that the fans are melting because they cannot believe that Bella and Edward had a child, let alone a monster child. This image does a good job of showing how absurd a scene could be and how an audience can react to that absurdity, which is not something that is found in the other images.

This last image on the left, drawn and posted by ~VampireeChick on DeviantART, goes in another direction that the two previous images didn't go towards: gender reversal. This image tries

to imagine what Bella, Edward, and Jacob would look like and be named if they were the

opposite sex. Bella became Ben Swan, Edward became Eva Cullen, and Jacob became Jade

Black to the artist. The artist is making their own story by making Bella turn into Ben. This

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[13] My interpretation based on the drawing.

[14] The second way would be that they are excited that Bella and Edward had a child.

opens a whole different world for people to try to imagine what would happen. People could ask if Ben would act differently than Bella and choose Jade (Jacob) over Eva (Edward) because guys think differently than girls or could Ben and Eva have a baby like Edward and Bella did because now the female (Eva) is a vampire and supposed to be sterile? Artist- people who can write and/or draw- could explore these types of questions when people open these types of doors with this sort of thinking.

One thing to note is the heading goes along with the conformity of what the novels/movies are about and uses one of the lines from the series. But by going against what the story is actually about, two males vying for a female's attention, this image falls into my category of going against *Twilight*[15]. The artist does not follow the norm by changing the sexes of the main characters. When one thinks normally of a love triangle, there are normally two boys trying to compete for the girl's choice, much like in *Twilight*. By making reversing the roles, Twihards and anti-Twihards could see the artist making a statement that Bella acts more like the man in not making a choice between Jacob and Edward and stringing both, mostly Jacob, along until she made her choice. This would also make Jacob and Edward acting more like females than men.[16], upsetting the role a man should play.

Conclusion

There are many items that factor into creating a fanart visual that not only depicts the original idea behind the subject matter but adding to it a person's own point of view. Each of the images I included here in this essay, as well as the countless others that are on the internet and in

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[15] I did not go as to far as calling this image as part of the anti-Twihards because there is nothing to suggest that the image is anything more than curiosity to see how the story would have ended if the story was about 2 females fighting for a male.

[16] Once again this is a hypothetical idea that came to mind.

more personal notebooks, does a wonderful job of showing the many sides there are to *Twilight* or any other franchise out there. I focused more on the fanart that was against *Twilight*, but there is plenty of art that is in favor of *Twilight*. They still incorporate a lot of the same qualities as the anti-*Twilight* fanart I found; they use intertextuality to connect with a broader group, they create a scene for people to enjoy- be it from the novels/movies or one they created on their own to show what they hoped would have happened with certain characters. I found that a lot of people hate Twilight and wish some pretty bad things would happen to it but the images also produced a way to show not everyone agrees. This goes with every franchise that is made and includes any type of love triangle or feud. Future studies can explore those images that conform more to the story than against it and see if the two have the same core value or if other franchises have the anti-based fans like the Twilight series has. There the studies could explore the ways how these franchises deviate from the original story and creates a writer's/artist's own story. As Catherine Driscoll suggests, fanfiction and fanart is often represented as ''immature because of its undiscriminating and excessive investment in popular culture'' (Driscoll) but that never stops people from doing it and for other people to enjoy what people put up because at some point they were probably thinking along the same line or can relate to them. Fanfiction and fanart is going to be a constant part of a reader's life as long as authors continue writing and publishing books.

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