**Sex, Subversion and Bodily Boundaries: The Darker Side of Slash Fan Fiction**

Proposals are invited for essays exploring the depiction of (and engagement with) “non-normative” eroticism within online slash and femslash fan fiction.

Following the publication of Hellekson and Busse’s groundbreaking edited collection *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* (2006), academic interest in slash fiction has continued to document the evolution and development of the genre as a whole. It is generally proposed that slash fiction enjoys a simultaneous intertextual function – partly a subversive cultural dialogue and partly an unapologetically playful approach to literary convention – but a function which is ultimately more complex and nuanced than a traditional incorporation/resistance paradigm would suggest.

This collection aims to engage directly and explicitly with some of slash fiction’s less gentle aspects in order to explore the following question: in a text which not only deliberately creates but *maintains* unstable, unequal and ungentle paradigms, can the same critical frameworks that depict slash fiction as a valorised form of egalitarian romance still be applied? If a text refuses to moving towards the gradual equality and intimacy inherent within Romantic convention, can the ending only be an unhappy one?

This collection of essays aims to supplement existing fan academia with a small insight into what is an underrepresented but no less prolific or popular facet of slash fiction. With this is mind, proposals are invited for essays of c.8500 words exploring the following in erotic slash fiction:

- The exploration, portrayal and reception of BDSM encounters and relationships.
- The portrayal of cisgender characters which challenge heteronormative patterns of behaviour, either by non-compliance or by excessive performativity. Particular interest in the dynamics generated by two ‘butch’ or ‘girly’ characters in sexual scenes and how violence is used to regulate and code ‘unacceptable’ behaviours and desires.
- Xenofetishism and the treatment of alternative bodily configurations such as external breeding, hermaphroditic characters in slash fiction.
- Fame and infamy within fan writing; the perks and perils of having a reputation for pushing the boundaries.
- The treatment of trans* characters, non-binary gender, genderqueer and genderfluid characters in overtly sexual situations – both in canon and in fan texts.
- The portrayal of abusive behaviours, rape scenes and toxic relationships and the appeal of the themes.
- The treatment of and audience response to taboo relationships – incest, guardian/ward, underage characters and exploited characters.
- Discussions and debates within fan communities regarding explicitly non-normative sexuality within slash fiction as a whole, particularly in regard to participation in kinkmemes, Shipping Olympics, Kink Bingo, fic requests etc.
- Non-monogamy and non-monogamous characters and relationships, non-normative femininity/masculinity and any explorations thereof.

These lists are far from complete and should be taken only as a starting point, rather than definitive.

Generally speaking, texts under discussion should have been produced, published and released within the last twenty years, although if a text beyond this timeframe is particularly significant this can be
discussed - please do get in touch with your ideas. Source media includes but is not limited to: role-playing video games, webcomics, TV episodes and series, comics and graphic novels, novels and short stories, and films. Proposals are also welcome for essays exploring the unique deictic nature of slash fan fiction as an ongoing dialogue between canon, text and audience. Particular interest will be given to papers exploring how digital accessibility has contributed to its popularity as a genre, and the cultural impacts generated by the popularity of made-to-order fan fiction commissions, such as kinkmemes, Shipping Olympics, Kink Bingo, fic requests etc.

Final inclusion in the published volume will be subject to peer review.

Please send proposals of approximately 500 words plus a short biography to ashtonspacey@gmail.com by Wednesday 15th February 2017.