



DIPLOMARBEIT

Titel der Diplomarbeit

Slashing Harry Potter
The phenomenon of border-transgression in fan fiction

Verfasserin

Sigrid Sindhuber

angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, 2010

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:

A 190 333 344

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt:

UF Englisch

Betreuer:

Univ.-Ass. Privatdoz. Mag. Dr. Susanne Reichl

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank Univ.-Ass. Privatdoz. Mag. Dr. Susanne Reichl for giving me the opportunity to write my thesis on Harry Potter slash fiction, as well as for her constant feedback and advice which was very much appreciated.

The biggest thank you goes to my parents and family who not only gave me the opportunity to study in Vienna, but additionally always believed in me and never prevented me from following my dreams. Mama und Papa, danke für eure jahrelange Unterstützung.

A special thanks to all my friends (especially my former and current flatmates – including our addition from Hormayrgasse) for constantly listening to my ramblings about slash fiction (and actually managing to look interested) and for always trying to (and succeeding in) convincing me that I need some fun-time.

Last but not least I would like to thank all the authors who allowed me to use their stories in my thesis. Your work is very much appreciated – I hope I did it justice.

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Introduction

They smiled silently at each other. "If I tell you something, do you promise not to laugh at me?" Harry asked.

Malfoy snorted. "Of course I don't."

"I liked waking up next to you," Harry told him anyway. The widening in Malfoy's eyes made him wonder if he said too much too soon, so he quickly added, "Before you woke up too and flew off the handle, I mean."

Malfoy's eyes narrowed again, to even more than they were before. "At least unlike some other people in this room, I don't wake up homicidal," Malfoy drawled.

Guilt twisted Harry's insides at the reminder, and he felt his smile fade away, as if gravity suddenly enforced its hold on the corners of his lips. He opened his mouth to apologise.

"Instead of homicidal, I wake up homo," Malfoy interjected before Harry had the chance to speak. His voice was light again, and his dazzling smile sufficiently disarmed any discomfort his previous words caused.

Thank you, Harry thought, and kissed the tip of Malfoy's nose. It was cold, as always, but it was the only thing about Malfoy that still was, and for that Harry was grateful. "You went to sleep pretty homo too," [...] (Crossing the Canal, chapter 7)¹.

Don't worry! You did not miss the publication of another book of the Harry Potter series, nor did your eyes fool you. What you have just encountered is an example for Harry Potter slash fiction, which means fan-written narratives revolving around a same-sex pairing which is not presented within the original plot.

Slash fiction is a rather unknown phenomenon outside of fandom. My thesis, therefore, will try to give the reader an introduction into the complex world of fan fiction in general, with a special focus on Harry Potter slash fiction.

The first chapter will be an overview on fan fiction in general. To give an adequate account on the most important facts of fan fiction, I will not only try to give an appropriate definition, but also a first insight into the creative scope of this phenomenon. Furthermore, the three most prominent sub-genres will be defined within the second chapter. As fan fiction does not state a novelty within popular

¹ MushroomAnn: Crossing the Canal. http://www.fanfiction.net/s/3566308/1/Crossing_the_Canal, accessed 04/12/10

culture, as one might assume, the third chapter will deal with the history of this phenomenon, including the tense relationship between fan fiction and copyright.

The next chapter will solely focus on the sub-genre of slash fiction. Within this part of my thesis I will give an account on the most important studies on slash fiction up to the present day. Here, I will not only present the different approaches used to study fan fiction, I will also critically reflect on the particular outcomes and contrast them to each other.

After dealing with fan/slash fiction in general, the rest of my thesis will solely be dedicated to Harry Potter slash fiction. Therefore, the fifth chapter of my thesis will give an introduction to slash fiction within this fandom in general, including defining the structural organization of Harry Potter fan fiction by explaining the genres within the genre according to length, era, content and rating. In order to give a suitable introduction to slash fiction within the Harry Potter universe, the next part of this chapter will be dedicated to the most prominent and favourite slash pairings.

In the last two chapters of my thesis I will try to analyse selected slash fictions according to specific parameters. Chapter six will deal with the phenomenon of sexualisation within slash fiction, as well as the addressing of issues within Harry Potter slash fiction. Therefore, I will look at stories which include homophobia, HIV/Aids, same-sex marriage and male pregnancy. The last chapter is dedicated to the analysis of fan-narratives including more controversial issues, such as incest, bestiality and rape. It is important to highlight that my analysis will in no way focus on the authors' intentions and reasons for discussing such topics within their stories. It is my aim to present the reader of this thesis with an idea of how such issues and themes are presented within slash stories of the Harry Potter fandom.

1. Fan Fiction – Definition and Creative Scope

The world of fan fiction is an ever-changing phenomenon with endless possibilities. Therefore, it is not an easy task to give a universally valid definition of fan fiction without failing to capture the whole creative spectrum of this particular fan activity. In its simplest definition, the term fan fiction denotes narratives utilizing characters, settings and situation of pre-existing works from literary or other media sources such as books, TV shows, movies, comics or computer games. These sources are referred to as *canon*, which provides the authors with a particular universe which is then used to create new narratives of various lengths, accompanying or extending the original plot. There are literally no boundaries when it comes to writing fan fiction. Although the canon sets the most important facts to be used in newly fan-written works, there are no limits to the fan's imagination and creativity. The prominent characteristics of protagonists can be changed beyond recognition. Original settings or time-lines can be altered into alternative universes. Thus, authors of fan fiction have and use the possibility to remodel the original work according to their wishes and desires. This often results in fan work which cannot be simply defined as a sequel or a variation of given story lines but rather as narratives in themselves, using some features of an original text. The act of fan fiction therefore does not only celebrate the original work it is based on. Jenkins states that fan writers do not only reproduce the primary text but rework and rewrite it, as well as repairing or dismissing unsatisfying aspects while developing interests which are not sufficiently explored in canon (Jenkins 162). He further introduces ten ways to rewrite a television show:²

1. *Recontextualization*

Fans often write short pieces of fiction which could be best described as “missing scenes.” Those narratives give additional explanations for the character's behaviour and fill in the gaps missing in the original work. For the author this means to draw

² “Ten ways to rewrite a television show” can be found in *Textual Poachers*, p. 162ff. Even though Jenkins only focuses on TV shows, especially *Star Trek*, his findings are nevertheless valid for all kinds of media. For the purpose of my thesis I adapt Jenkins' statements to the Harry Potter fandom.

upon their meta-textual understanding of original characters including their psychology, motivations, history and cultural background.

As far as the Potterverse³ is concerned, an example here would be to write a piece of fan fiction which gives Draco Malfoy's thoughts while fleeing the school grounds with Severus Snape after the homicide of Albus Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince*.⁴

2. *Expanding the Series Timeline*

Primary texts often provide hints, suggestions or no information at all about the characters' backgrounds or futures. This fact invites writers to fully explore the past or future of the protagonists, yet with various motivations.

In the Harry Potter fandom, fan fictions which take place after the last book are very common and popular. Although J.K. Rowling, the author of the seven original Harry Potter books, did provide an epilogue revealing the future of the most prominent characters in her books, many fans of the series are less than satisfied with her story facts. As a result, numerous fan narratives with alternative events after Voldemort's defeat can be found in the fandom. Such stories normally are indicated with EWE, which is an abbreviation for "Epilogue? What Epilogue?".⁵⁶

³ abbreviation for Potter universe

⁴ The original Harry Potter series will further be cited as follows:

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: PS

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets: CoS

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban: PoA

Harry Potter and the Goblin of Fire: GoF

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix: OOTP

Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince: HBP

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: DH

⁵ The different types of stories relating to the various uses of the epilogue in Harry Potter fan fiction will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis.

⁶ A selection of fan fictions of various pairings belonging to the "Post-Hogwarts" or "EWE" section can be found on <http://homo-urbanicus.com/harrypotterrecs/harrypotterrecs.htm>

3. *Refocalization*

Although a large number of fan fictions focus on the original's protagonists, some authors shift their focus away from the central figures onto secondary characters. Such works give an in-depth psychological insight into secondary characters not given in the original texts. Through such narratives authors allow figures with minor roles to achieve their full potential, which was not further explored in the primary work.⁷

As the whole Harry Potter series focuses on the main hero, there cannot be a clear-cut differentiation between central and secondary characters. Although some characters have a more prominent role in the hero's life, such as his best friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, also many other figures exert an important influence on the story's main protagonist. Characters which are definitely marginalized are, for example, Harry's school mates, especially students sorted into other school houses than Gryffindor.

Especially in fan fiction the border between main and secondary character becomes blurry as the most popular pairings often include figures of both categories. As a result, a minor character in canon can be a main character in fanon.

4. *Moral Realignment*

This is perhaps the most extreme form of refocalization, as some works of fan fiction invert and simultaneously question the moral universe of an original character or the whole primary text. One possibility here is that the more complex exploration of the villain's psyche reveals that his or her true intentions are actually reasonable or justified. On the other hand, moral realignment can also mean that figures with original good qualities and characteristics suddenly become dark characters.

⁷ A variety of fics with seldom pairings can be found on <http://community.livejournal.com/hprarepairs/>.

In fandom such narratives are referred to as including "character bashing." As examples serve stories in which Albus Dumbledore is revealed as a scheming character who only cares for the achievement of his goals without actually caring for Harry's well-being.

5. *Genre Shifting*

A large majority of produced fan fiction has undergone genre shifting. Though the original Harry Potter series focuses on Harry's development as a wizard and his struggle against Voldemort, most fan narratives shift the balance between plot and characterisation by putting emphasis on the development of the characters and especially the character's relationships. Romance is not the only genre which is used in constructing fan stories, but it is by far the most common one. Stories revolving around relationships can also include other shifts, as they also may entail features like vampires, magical creatures⁸ of all kind or detectives. As an example would serve a "vampire!Harry"⁹ story.

6. *Cross-overs*

Cross-over stories use the universes of two original texts. Therefore, they do not only break the boundaries between genres and texts, but also between the different types of media from which fan fiction emerges.¹⁰ Especially authors active in two or more fandoms often are likely to use the possibility of writing crossover fics to bring together their favourite characters. Particularly in the Potterverse such stories can be very interesting, as they often show characters of the non-magical world dealing with and getting to know the magical world of Harry Potter. Therefore, authors have the

⁸ A selection of Harry/Draco fan fiction, in which one or both characters are some kind of magical creature, such as vampire or werewolf, can be found on <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/36569.html>

⁹ see Glossary „Adjective!Character“: This is used to highlight the most important characteristic feature of a protagonist for a particular story as well as to simply denote a basic characteristic.

¹⁰ As an example: <http://www.tthfanfic.org/CategoryChallenges-1-5/Harry+Potter.htm> – Harry Potter meets Buffy the Vampire Slayer

complex task to introduce “muggle” characters to the wizarding world in a comprehensible way. As this is a rather difficult goal to achieve, there is a relatively small number of Harry Potter cross-over fics available. The majority of stories written in this genre, however, are cross-overs with another book or TV show which also are of supernatural or fantastic nature.

A livejournal website solely dedicated to Harry Potter cross-over fic exchange is http://community.livejournal.com/crossover_hp/. Here stories can be found in which the Potterverse is mixed with shows like *Supernatural*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Star Wars*, *Doctor Who*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or *House*.

7. Character Dislocation

Character dislocation is an even more radical manipulation as characters are removed from their original settings and situations in order to be replaced in an alternative universe. Here the original characters only provide a basis for the newly created figures, as the dislocation may bring about a major shift in the protagonists' identity. According to the newly created universes, there are no limitations to the author's imagination.

In the universe of Harry Potter, the most radical dislocation of character can be found in non-magical AU¹¹ stories. In such stories, the magical world does not exist and is not of importance. But also stories where circumstances are very different from the original series are labelled as “AU.” A list of different kinds of such fan fiction with the pairing Harry/Draco can be found on http://www.alijot.net/hd_%20AU_stories.htm.

¹¹ abbreviation for “Alternative Universe”

8. *Personalization*

There are basically two possibilities for personalization of original works. The first are "Mary Sue" or "Gary Stu(e)" (Mary Sue being the female version, Gary Stu(e) the male one) stories, in which the author includes idealised images of herself or himself into his narrative. For various reasons, such fictions hardly are accepted by the members of a fandom, as authors of "Mary Sue" stories tend to insert a version of themselves that is altered to perfection. Writers often tend to put too much focus on their "Mary Sue" while simultaneously neglecting the main protagonist's story, which the reader actually wants and is interested in.¹²

The second possibility is to write a piece of fan fiction in which the characters of the original work come in contact with the world of the fandom surrounding their universe, for example, Harry finds a fan fiction on the Internet which includes graphic descriptions of him having sex with Hermione. Those narratives commonly are crack!fics which solely serve the purpose of amusement. The humour here is directed at the authors or the whole fandom itself.

9. *Emotional Intensification*

As in fan writing and reading emphasis is put on the characters' motivations, psychology and development, moments of narrative crises are of great importance and often serve as the primary features of fan works. Especially "Hurt/Comfort" (often used abbreviation: H/C) stories, one of the genres of fan fiction in which one character suffers from trauma to the body or soul and therefore needs to be cared for by another character, focus on such moments. Here, emotional intensification is also used to show the development of the relationship between those two characters by putting emphasis on the protagonists' inner feelings and turmoil. There is a large readership for "Hurt/Comfort" stories, as those narratives show how those normally clear-cut

¹² A livejournal page which solely focuses on Harry Potter fan fiction including Mary Sues is <http://pottersues.livejournal.com/>.

characters deal with dependency, vulnerability and strong emotions. Reasons why characters need to be cared for range from emotional and psychological trauma to abuse or rape.¹³

10. Eroticization

As active sexuality hardly is present in mainstream TV shows or books, fan writers often want to explore this particular feature of their favourite characters. Representation of sexuality ranges from mild sexual innuendo to explicit accounts of sexual intercourse.

The characters' engagements in openly sexual scenes are often just parts of well developed, plotty stories and serve as either representations of the development of a pairing's relationship or simply to entertain and arouse the reader. Stories which solely focus on explicit descriptions of sexual intercourse between two (or more) characters are termed PWP, which is short for "Plot? What plot?" or "Porn Without Plot." Such stories contain hardly any plot (if they do, it only serves the purpose of getting the characters to actually having sex together) but rather rely on the description of sexual situations.

Henry Jenkins succeeded to summarize the most common and important possibilities to reform source texts into fan-created fictions. As we've seen, those possibilities are further used to describe subgenres of fan writing according to the content of a text. However, the genre of fan fiction is primarily divided into sub-categories according to the sexual preferences (or lack thereof) of the main characters.

¹³ A site hosting recommendations for "Hurt/Comfort" stories of various fandoms is <http://hcrecs.livejournal.com/>.

H/C fics with Remus Lupin as main character: <http://community.livejournal.com/remuslupain/>
Harry/Draco H/C fics: http://community.livejournal.com/hd_hurtcomfort/

2. The three main categories: GEN, HET and SLASH

As already mentioned above, it is almost impossible to define fan fiction including all its creative scope. However, the complex universe of fan fiction, in its most basic categorization, is divided into three main categories: gen, het and slash.

2.1. Gen

“Gen” (short for general) denotes stories which contain no emphasis on a main pairing but rather stay focused on the plot itself. The same possibilities of re-writing as described above apply; however, the plot does not revolve around a romantic relationship between two characters. Thus, gen stories can be argued as the genre closest to the original, as it does not change the dynamics between the figures. Additionally, no sexualisation of characters takes place, which is the most basic feature in het and in slash fiction.¹⁴ As there is no sexual overtone, gen stories are suitable for readers of all ages. Slash writers and readers commonly use the term “gen” simply to identify stories containing no slash elements.¹⁵

2.2. Het

The term “het” (short for heterosexual) defines stories with one or more heterosexual pairings. In this category, stories of all ratings can be found. This means that het fan fictions can range from sweet romantic tales of falling in love to outright porn. The assumption that only slash fan fiction contains a lot of graphic sexual situations is wrong. Just like there are no limitations to imagination concerning the re-writing of texts, there are no taboos when it comes to the possibilities of sexual acts engaged by the characters.

¹⁴ Fan stories with homosexual pairings. Discussed at length in chapter 2.3.

¹⁵ A large selection of Harry Potter stories belonging into the gen category can be found on <http://fanfiction.mugglenet.com/browse.php?type=categories&catid=10> .

Of course, stories belonging to the het-subgenre of fan fiction can be found in the Harry Potter fandom. Often the pairings are epilogue-compliant. However, the stories with sexualised characters prefer unconventional pairings. Examples of pairings and the according numbers of stories which can be found on *Adultfanfiction.net*¹⁶ and *fanfiction.net*¹⁷ prove this assumption¹⁸:

Pairing	Adultfanfiction.net	fanfiction.net
Hermione/Snape	1664	5371
Hermione/Draco	1591	19060
Hermione/Harry	255	12147
Hermione/Lucius	211	194
Harry/Ginny	136	12126
Hermione/Remus	80	700
Hermione/Ron	63	12428

2.3. Slash

To “slash” a character is to place that character or figure in a homosexual relationship, regardless of the sexual preference in the original source (Youssef 11). The *Encyclopedia of Erotic Literature* defines slash fiction as follows:

Slash is homoerotic writing featuring characters borrowed from popular media. It is written almost exclusively by women, cannot be commercially published due to copyright restrictions and has flourished as an amateur art form since the 1970s. Most slash depicts two male media characters, though a small percentage is written about female couples. (Brulotte 1233)

¹⁶ www.adultfanfiction.net features het and slash fan fiction suitable only for adults from various fandoms including Harry Potter. There are no restrictions concerning possible sexual acts featured in fan stories.

¹⁷ This website, with a vast number of fan fiction from numerous fandoms, has stricter rules concerning the ratings of stories hosted. However, many M-rated (Mature – for adults only) stories still can be found on this site.

¹⁸ websites accessed on 03/03/10

The term “slash” originates in the Star Trek fandom of the 1970s and refers to the punctuation mark separating the male characters’ names, eg. Kirk/Spock (Jones, 80). Later all fandoms adopted the slash punctuation mark to label the romantic pairings of a story. As a result, also heterosexual pairings are cited similarly, eg. Hermione/Ron. Such heterosexual pairings are often listed as “other pairings” in the disclaimers of slash stories, which normally also include the warning “hetsex” if their sexual encounters are described in a graphic way.

In the original sense, “slashing” only referred to relationships in which the characters were heterosexual in the original sources. However, the term “slash” persisted, keeping its original meaning of homoerotic romance (Tosenberger: Homosexuality at the Online Hogwarts¹⁹ 186). Nowadays, also fan fiction written about canonical same-sex relationships is also referred to as slash. For example, fan fiction written about the TV show *Queer as folk*, which revolves around a clique of homosexual men and women, also belongs into the category of slash.

Slash fan fiction is a relatively unexplored phenomenon. Only members of fandoms are aware of its existence. However, the slash community is a subset of almost every contemporary fandom, may it be focused on books, films, animes or even music, sports or movie stars. Though fans participating in slash belong to a special group of a fandom, they still identify themselves generally as fans of the original (Youssef 11).

For my thesis I have chosen to concentrate on male/male slash, as the majority of slash stories in the Harry Potter fandom feature a relationship between male characters. female/female slash does indeed exist, though compared to slash fan fictions including the relationship of two men, the number of so called “femmeslash” or “femslash” stories is exceedingly small.

Many reasons have been given for the lack of stories featuring two female protagonists. Bacon Smith argues that “many slash fans declare they write about men together because men, holding power, can relate to each other as powerful equals”

¹⁹ will further be referred to as “Tosenberger HatOH”

(Bacon-Smith 249). This is of particular interest as the majority of slash writers as well as readers happen to be female. As slash fan fiction originated from TV shows of the 1960s and 70s, (eg. Star Trek, Blake 7, Starsky and Hutch) which, without a doubt, featured strong male rather than female characters, also Jenkins' observation is of interest:

The media simply does not provide the autonomous female characters needed to create a heterosexual romance between equals; fan writers have chosen the path of least resistance in borrowing ready-made figures, such as Kirk and Spock, to express their utopian visions of romantic bliss. (Jenkins 194)

Both statements are very much of interest, and further comments about why women write about male homosexuals will be discussed further in this thesis, but coming back to the reasons for the small number of written femmeslash, it is indeed true that the already mentioned TV shows of the 60s and 70s lack strong female characters.

Femmeslash has historically been quite rare until *Xena: Warrior Princess* premiered in 1995. The quite often suggestive homosexual relationship between Xena and her best friend Gabrielle resulted in a large amount of femmeslash. The subtextual instances, such as bathing together, inspired fan fiction authors to further explore this more or less platonic relationship. Additionally, this TV show was unique in its own sense, as for the first time, the hero (or better, the heroine) and the hero's sidekick were both women (Lo 2006).

Another famous TV show which resulted in a vast amount of femmeslash stories was *Buffy: The Vampire Slayer*, which was produced between 1997 and 2003. The show again featured three-dimensional female characters but also included the coming-out of Buffy's friend Willow, who fell in love with Tara. Therefore, a lot of Buffy femmeslash is about Willow and Tara's relationship, but also a considerable number of Buffy/Willow, Buffy/Faith and Buffy/Cordelia stories can be found (Lo 2006).

Nevertheless, neither the lack of female characters nor the absence of a female heroine does explain the marginalisation of femmeslash in the Harry Potter fandom. The canon does provide the fan fiction writer with strong female characters, such as

Hermione Granger, Ginny and Molly Weasley or Professor McGonagall, though they are lesser in number compared to the whole amount of male figures (Evans 21). Fan fiction including female characters as a part of the main pairing do exist, but femmeslash does not have such a large fan base as male/male slash fan fiction. This can be seen in the large amount of livejournal²⁰ communities dedicated to the most popular pairings Harry/Draco or Harry/Snape. Another indicator is the comparatively small number of female/female stories on Adultfanfiction.net in contrast to the amount of male/male stories (accessed 3/3/09):

- Slash male/male: 8291 stories
- Femmeslash female/female: 221 stories.

I would argue, completely isolated from all the other motivations for female authors to write about male homosexual relationships and their sexual component that, though a number of strong women can be found in canon, the plot nevertheless is focused on mainly male characters throughout the original Harry Potter series. All the females are rather treated as companions, but the main changes to the plot are brought about by the generally more developed male characters. It seems that the dynamics between male protagonists leave more space of exploration and is in general of more interest to authors and readers alike.

3. The history of (slash) fan fiction

The almost unlimited access to media and modern technology as well as the sheer amount of media produced nowadays not only ensure new universes open to be explored through fan fiction, but also the distribution of fan fiction itself. However, fan fiction is not a recent phenomenon.

²⁰ www.livejournal.com (often abbreviated LJ) allows the user not only to blog but also to form discussion forums as well as social networks. Current Harry Potter fandom is hardly imaginable without this website, as all authors either own their own LJ account and/or publish their stories on community sites.

As Abigail Derecho states in her article “Archontic Literatur – A Definition, a History, and Several Theories of Fan Fiction” (Derecho 62), there are three general assumptions on the origin and nature of fan fiction:

1. Fan fiction is as old as fiction itself, as it originated several millennia ago with myth stories. This is continued today through works by authors who identify themselves as fans as well as authors who do not write from within fandoms. Examples here would be the numerous variations and sequels surrounding the myth of King Arthur or Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.
2. Fan Fiction is a product of fan culture, which began either in the 1920s with Austen and Holmes societies, or in the late 1960s with Star Trek fan zines.
3. The third assumption states that the first argument is too broad while the second is too narrow. Other identifying traits of fan fiction might be expressed that would more accurately situate the genre within the larger field of literature. Derecho herself is of the opinion that this option is the third one. She further addresses the issues and problems of defining fan fiction if you don’t position it encompassing most of literature, nor as the consequence of a recent trend in audience response. Therefore she presents fan fiction as a subgenre of “derivative” or “appropriative” literature but replaces these terms and chooses to call this type of writing *archontic*. Here Derecho uses Derrida’s work “Archive Fever” (1995), in which he claims that “any and every archive remains forever open to new entries, new artifacts, new contents” (Derecho 64).

I personally, and so do many other scholars, favour the second argument, as I see the origins of current fan fiction especially in the *Star Trek* fandom, including its distribution of fan-written stories through zines. Although authors like Jane Austen and Arthur Conan Doyle have inspired fan works at an earlier time, I still favour the second assumption, as modern media and technology as well as the modern organisation of fandom had a major influence on the distribution as well as development of fan fiction and fandom in general.

Although there is some debate as to what was the first media fandom, there is no debate that it did indeed emerge from within science fiction fandom around 1966. The two SF shows struggling for the title of first media fandom are *Star Trek* and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E* (Coppa 43). Science Fiction fandom was generally based on conventions and fan zines. At such conventions, members of a particular science fiction fandom gathered to discuss their favourite TV show and topics of interest. The first *Star Trek* fan zine was *Spockanalia* in 1967, and was supposed to be a one-time thing. However, the second edition was published in 1968 while other *Star Trek* zines were already in print (Boys 9).

Initially, all stories published in zines belonged to the gen-category. This trend was changed in 1972 with the first edition of the zine *Grup*, which was the first *Star Trek* zine with adult stories. In the following years, numerous other adult themes zines were published. Nevertheless, the adult zines continued to be very controversial in fandom, as not all fans were in favour of the graphic descriptions of their favourite characters' sex lives (Boys 8).

But the world of fan fiction again developed in 1974 with a new addition to the "science fiction stories" and "relationship stories." In the third edition of *Grup* published in 1974, the first official slash fan fiction was published. Diane Marchant's "A Fragment out of time" tells the story about two nameless people, one male and one whose gender is not revealed, making love. In the next issue of *Grup*, Marchant stated that she intended the two people to be Kirk and Spock (Coppa 48). As already mentioned above, the term "slash" originates from the punctuation mark used to state the pairing (Kirk/Spock or K/S). Though still facing controversy, slash fiction became well established in 1978 with the publishing of the first K/S anthology zine *Thrust* (Boys 11).

Throughout the late 1970s and the 1980s, more and more TV shows (eg. *Starsky and Hutch*) were used as originals for writing fan fiction. Especially the debut of *Star Wars* in 1977 brought about a science fiction "explosion" in the late 1970s and early 1980s

which was triggered by shows like *Battlestar Galactica* or *Blake's 7*. Since the advent of K/S stories, slash became a subgenre of fan fiction writing in every fandom (Coppa 49).

By the 1990s, all kinds of TV shows and films were being slashed. But the advent of the Internet brought about great advantages for the already ever-expanding world of fandom.²¹ Most of the new fandoms that emerged in the early 1990s still developed their specific culture in the traditional ways (zines, letters, conventions). The online-movement of media fandom did not only make the distribution of fan fiction easier (although the first mailing lists and servers were very time consuming). Additionally, slash fandom was able to move out into the mainstream, as the Internet allowed for slash-specific lists which could be joined by fans that wanted to read homoerotic stories and also could be easily avoided by non-slashers (Coppa 54). The following years showed an explosion on fan fiction in all kinds of media as well as singers and movie stars.

Fan works including celebrities from the music or movie branch are so-called RPS- (Real Person Slash) stories. Especially successful boybands of the 90s inspired fans to create romantic stories including their favourite stars.²²

Coppa describes the recent situation of media fandom as follows:

Media fandom may now be bigger, louder, less defined, and more exciting than it's ever been. Arguably, this is fandom's postmodern moment, when the rules are "there ain't no rules" and traditions are made to be broken. (Coppa 57)

The first Harry Potter fan fiction was "Harry Potter and the Man of Unknown" by Gypsy²³, published on September 4, 1999 on fanfiction.net and belongs to the gen-category.²⁴ Although the advent of Harry Potter fan fiction-writing also started with stories belonging to the gen-category, there are still other significant differences to the development of earlier fandoms. The first book in the Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter*

²¹ The online organisation of HP fandom will be discussed in detail later in this thesis.

²² As an example serves fan fiction including the members of the famous boyband "NSync." An archive hosting NSync fan fiction: <http://www.nsyncfiction.net/archive/>

²³ Gypsy's stories can be found on http://www.fanfiction.net/u/5402/Gypsy_Silverleaf

²⁴ see: http://www.fanhistory.com/wiki/Harry_Potter_and_the_Man_of_Unknown, accessed 03/03/10

and the Philosopher's Stone, was published in June 1997 by Bloomsbury in London²⁵. About two years later, the already mentioned fan fiction by Gipsy was published on fanfiction.net.²⁶ The fact that this story, which was the forerunner for many to follow, was instantly published online indicated one of the most significant differences of Harry Potter fan fiction-publishing compared to the distribution of earlier fandoms.

As fan fiction, including the sub-genre of slash, initially circulated by way of self-published zines, it was available only to those who not only knew the right people in order to be put on mailing lists, but who also had the money to buy zines and/or attend conventions of their fandom. In other words, only adults were able to read fan or slash fiction. As the zines were edited to the preferences and limited resources of zine editors, authors of slash were restricted to the rules imposed on them according to the convention of the editor. As a result, writers of rather rare pairings hardly found a platform to publish their work and had difficulties to find an audience. The advent of the Internet brought great changes to fandom and especially the publishing of fan fiction, as it now was possible to upload any story of any pairing and genre without undergoing the step of editing. Anyone of any age now could obtain access to any story they wanted to read. The Harry Potter fandom was, so to say, born and bred on the Internet and therefore never experienced the editorial control of former zine-based fandoms.

The concurrence of the worldwide "Pottermania" and the advent of the Internet brought about a combination of an original text aimed at young readers with the development of modern communications technology. This not only encouraged readers to read fan works, but also to write stories of their own (Tosenberg HatOH 188ff).

²⁵ http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Harry_Potter_and_the_Philosopher%27s_Stone, accessed 08/03/10

²⁶ The fact that it took almost two years for the first Harry Potter fan fiction to find its way to the web cannot be taken as proof for the non-existence of earlier fics in this fandom. However, the mentioned work by Gipsy is commonly seen as the first fan-written story in this universe.

3.1. Fan fiction and copyright

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM ANNE ON "FAN FICTION"
Anne has posted the following message regarding fan fiction:

"I do not allow fan fiction. The characters are copyrighted. It upsets me terribly to even think about fan fiction with my characters. I advise my readers to write your own original stories with your own characters. It is absolutely essential that you respect my wishes."

This message can be found on the official Anne Rice web site.²⁷ As fan fiction uses characters as well as settings from original works written by others, the question of copyright infringement arises.

The first licensing acts of the 17th century were concerned about the protection of church, government and the commercial rights of printers. Not before the British Statute of Anne²⁸, the first copyright act in the world from 1710, was the concept of the author as an owner of copyright stated. As a result, the copyright holder, who does not necessarily need to be the author, has the right to control all derivative works of the original (Pugh 2004).

But Anne Rice was not the only copyright holder ever to accuse fans and fan websites of copyright infringement. Another example would be Paramount Pictures, including its parent company Viacom, pursuing fan-created Web sites of *Star Trek*. They accused many site creators of unlawful use of copyrighted material and threatened them with lawsuits. In response, some sites either removed offending materials or simply shut down completely (Consalvo 77).

Of course, this all entails an understandable commercial connotation. Authors like Anne Rice and other copyright holders make a lot of money from their stories and characters. Losing income over the (highly unlikely) event of officially published fan

²⁷ <http://www.annerice.com/ReaderInteraction-MessagesToFans.html>, accessed 02/03/10

²⁸ exact wording of the British Statute of Anne can be found on <http://www.copyrighthistory.com/anne.html>

fiction may only be one factor which leads to rejecting fan-written works, but without a doubt plays an important role. However, fan fiction authors resist earning income from their works. Many scholars of fan studies agree with Hellekson, who states that fan fiction has to remain “free of charge,” as well as “free of the social controls that monetization would likely impose on it,” as it is inherently a “gift culture” (De Kosnik 122). Even an organization by fans, the Organisation of Transformative Works, states their main goal as follows:

Our mission is to be proactive and innovative in protecting and defending our work from commercial exploitation and legal challenge, and to preserve our fannish economy, values, and way of life by protecting and nurturing our fellow fans, our work, our commentary, our history, and our identity, while providing the broadest possible access to fannish activity for all fans.²⁹

This entails that fan fiction must be free of charge in order to be available for everyone without the restraints of financial issues.

However, not all authors reject active fan production inspired by their original works. J.K. Rowling actually backs Harry Potter fan fiction and is flattered by the fact that fans take time to write their own stories based on her characters. Her primary concerns are that fan fiction should remain a non-commercial activity and that writers have to ensure that their stories are not obscene and credited to the author and not J.K. Rowling.³⁰ She is obviously not pleased about adult-themed fan stories. Nevertheless, she has never taken any legal actions against websites hosting Harry Potter fan fiction.

Rowling herself has proven that she is not only aware but supportive of fan fiction including its sub-genre slash. During an appearance at Carnegie Hall, Rowling herself revealed that while writing her Harry Potter books she imagined Albus Dumbledore, the headmaster of Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry, as a gay character. Immediately after her announcement she laughed: “Oh my god, the fan fiction” (Tosenberger 200). True to her word, slash fans started publishing works including

²⁹ taken from <http://transformativeworks.org/faq-277>, accessed 05/03/10

³⁰ taken from Waters, Darren: Rowling backs Potter fan fiction. In: BBC News Online, 2004. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/3753001.stm>, accessed 05/03/10

Dumbledore and his childhood friend Grindelwald (also known as *Grindeldore*) immediately after the release of the last book of the Harry Potter series.

Authors are very accurate in stating that only the story belongs to them, but not the characters and settings used to create it. Therefore, they add a *disclaimer* at the top of their fiction wherein they clarify this fact.

Examples of *disclaimers*:

Disclaimer: Non-commercial fanfic, done for the love, not any money.³¹

Disclaimer: Not mine. They are still JK Rowling's, lucky woman.³²

Disclaimer: All Harry Potter characters herein are the property of J.K. Rowling and Bloomsbury/Scholastic. No copyright infringement is intended. Also, I didn't write Taming of the Shrew either.³³

Disclaimer: I wish Harry Potter was my idea, but it's not. I borrowed it from JKR.³⁴

4. Theorizing slash – academic discussions

The majority of academic discussions and studies on fan fiction focus on finding possible answers to the question “Why slash?”. As slash fiction is mostly written by heterosexual females, academic discussions on the topic mainly study the possible motivations for writing about male characters in gay relationships. Especially early studies focus mainly on this aspect.

³¹ Ravenna C. Tan: Whoever keeps me. http://community.livejournal.com/hp_tarot/41178.html

³² Rurounihime: Waiting. <http://rurounihime.livejournal.com/32487.html>

³³ Pushdragon: Stung. <http://pushdragon.livejournal.com/48693.html#cutid1>

³⁴ MushroomAnn: Crossing the Canal. http://www.fanfiction.net/s/3566308/1/Crossing_the_Canal

Pornography for Women: Joanna Russ

The first ever written academic study on slash is “Pornography by Women, for Women, with Love” (1985) by Joanna Russ. This text can be found in her collection of essays “Magic Mommas, Trembling Sisters, Puritans and Perverts” and is a reworked version of her essay “Another addict raves about K/S,” previously published in the zine *Nome* #8 in 1985. As Russ’ work is situated in the feminist pornography debates of the 1980s, she focuses on explicit aspects of fan fiction as a kind of feminist pornography (Busse and Hellekson 17).

But slash stories further are of interest for feminist critics like Joanna Russ because they offer insights into female sexual fantasy. Russ finds notable differences between slash and pornography aimed at straight men, as the latter lacks the lovers’ personal interest in each other, the refusal to rush into an exclusive sexual relationship. Though there is no doubt about the significance of sexuality in slash stories, the emphasis lies more on the emotional element of sexual intercourse shared between two characters (Jenkins 192). Regarding to the question “Why sex between two males?” Russ states that heterosexual females actively writing slash results from their fantasies about heterosexual sex which is acted out via ostensibly male bodies (Russ 1985).

Russ herself was an active writer of slash at the time her essays were published. Therefore, her text was not only presented in mainstream, but also in fanish publications. Of special interest here are the differences between Russ speaking as a fan to fans and Russ addressing fellow academics. While in the zine version of her essay she claims that “intimacy is what K/S is all about,” she terms it “sexual fantasy” or “pornography written 100% by women” in her reworked version. Woledge draws following conclusion concerning this obvious shift of position:

Thus, even within mainstream academic writing, though the same gender blending is explored, feminine elements of “intimacy” are played down in favour of the more masculine idea of sexual “pornography,” a term Russ never once uses in her fanzine essay. (Woledge: *From Slash to Mainstream* 61).

Although most of the scholars studying fan fiction are actively involved in particular fandoms themselves, (eg. Henry Jenkins “outed” himself as a reader of slash fiction), it is not easy to draw a line between being a professional academic and being an avid fan. As Alexander Doty states in the introduction to *Flaming Classics – Queering the Film Canon* (2000), this also results from ignoring or hiding personal and cultural investments in academic writing out of fear that showing too much interest or fascination on a topic undermines the credibility as intellectuals (Doty 11).

Dealing with fandoms in an academic way while being an active fan yourself (just like me) also entails the great and also self-imposed responsibility and necessity to live up to the fandom-realities as perceived by fellow fans. Being an active fandom member, may it be as an author or reader, automatically brings about a different sensibility for the subject at hand than by just gaining an impression solely from the scholar-perspective. Here, of course, subjective feelings play a considerable role as well. As Lewis states in her introduction in “The Adoring Audience” (1992):

Perhaps only a fan can appreciate the depth of feeling, the gratifications, the importance for coping with everyday life that fandom represents. Yet we are all fans of something. WE respect, admire, desire. We distinguish and form commitments. By endeavoring to understand the fan impulse, we ultimately move towards a greater understanding of ourselves. (Lewis 1)

This very honest excerpt is aimed at an academic audience. Here she does not only manage to outline a fan’s devotion, but also the incomprehension to fandom which often accompanies academic studies and scholars (Youssef 7).

The reason why I am discussing the issue of being an academic as well as a fan is that I feel I belong into this group of people. Of course, first I was only a fan, an avid reader of slash fiction, before I decided to write my thesis on this topic. And it is this previously gained knowledge which makes me want to highlight that not all the theories and statements are true for every fandom and fan. Fandom is a complex phenomenon with almost innumerable possibilities and facets always adapted to the themes and characters of the source text used to create fan works. No text can capture everything about a particular fandom or fandom in general. Not all theories

and statements mentioned further in this thesis are valid for every fandom or every fan, the same holds true for my selection of topics and examples or findings in following chapters. I am in complete agreement with Noy Thrupkawe, who states in “Fan/tastic Voyage – A Journey Into the Wide, Wild World of Slash Fiction”³⁵:

“The more slash – and slash theory – I read, the more convinced I became that no one analysis could explain the varieties of slash, the bent of all slash writers, the political leanings, the gender fuckings, the story rogerings that happen on a daily basis on the Internet.”

A partnership between equals: Patricia Frazer Lamb and Diana Veith

The second academic writing about slash fiction was “Romantic Myth, Transcendence, and *Star Trek* Zines” by Patricia Frazer Lamb and Diana Veith’s, which was published in the book “Erotic Universe: Sexuality and Fantastic Literature” in 1986. Lamb and Veith put forward theories similar to Russ. They compare slash to romance novels and argue that slash stories are superior to porn, because its primary focus lies on the character’s relationship rather than on their physical connection (Boys 18).

They further argue that slash focusing on two male characters is an attempt at constructing a loving relationship between equals by reworking the conventions of romantic fiction. As this desired relationship is hardly possible in male-female romances who are dominated by patriarchy, it is unavoidable to break with heterosexual norms (Jenkins 193). Generally, women cannot envision an equal relationship between a man and a woman and thus find it difficult to imagine having a loving, supporting and equal (in every sense) partner. This results in a projection of all those unfulfilled desires unto the characters of *Star Trek* (Boys 18). According to Lamb and Veith, herein lies the main appeal of slash, as love between “real” equals is assumed to be possible only in the setting of *Star Trek* (Jenkins 193).

In order to assure the possibility of sexual equality, Lamb and Veith, as well as Russ, suggest that in slash fiction both male characters are either feminized or written as androgynous beings. This means that they each carry and mix the traditional masculine and feminine traits and therefore have the possibility to shift between genders. It is not a goal of slash to create special feminized versions of figures; rather it challenges the possibility of existing outside of categories in combining elements of masculinity and femininity. For Lamb and Veith, this results in the assumption that characters in slash stories can carry all stereotyped traits of either males or females at the same time without actually being linked to their sexuality or gender (Jenkins 193-194).

The political purpose of slash: Edi Bjorklund

A fan and academic, who agrees with Lamb, Veith and Russ that true love can only be found between two equals, is Edi Bjorklund, who published her article "Thinking about Slash/Thinking about Women" in the zine *Nome* #11 in June 1988. She further puts forward a feminist approach in stating that slash fiction serves a political purpose, as it actively includes the position against homophobia and sexism. Bjorklund believes that women make connections between their real-life experiences and slash by dealing and coping with the discrimination and issues they face in everyday life with the help of addressing them in their stories. For Bjorklund, slash does not represent a new way of women's writing. It is rather a means by which women may defy taboos and social conventions (Boys 19).

Gender blending in slash: Elizabeth Woledge

In her essay "From Slash to the Mainstream: Female Writers and Gender Blending Men," published in *Extrapolation* in 2005, Elizabeth Woledge nullifies the theories of Lamb and Veith, as well as Russ. Woledge is of the opinion that the pervasiveness rather than the transcendence of modern stereotypes enables gender blending (Woledge, 62). Therefore she believes Lamb and Veith's theory that slash "removes

romantic love [...] from the arena of gender discourse altogether” (241), as well as Russ’s statement that Kirk/Spock is “free of the culture’s whole discourse of gender and sex roles” (89) to be wrong. Woledge further states that the possibility of gender blending is only given in an environment in which certain attributes are clearly identified as either masculine or feminine. This relies on the belief that only the persistence of binary thinking enables us to perceive and describe heroes who combine binary opposites (Woledge 62-63).

The fan-scholar: Henry Jenkins

With his book “Textual Poachers – Television Fans and Participatory Culture,” Henry Jenkins established one of the central readings and theoretical approaches to fan fiction. Published in 1992, it is still one of the most influential studies in this field.

Theoretically, Jenkins chooses Michel de Certeau’s (1984) model which “emphasizes the process of making meaning and the fluidity of popular interpretation” (Jenkins 34) over Stuart Hall’s model which “suggests that popular meanings are fixed and classifiable” (Jenkins 34). In “Textual Poachers,” Jenkins comprehensively theorizes the field by drawing from audience studies with an emphasis on popular culture and television. He does not only include fan fiction and other fannish interpretive practices, but also considers songvids and filking³⁶

Jenkins presents his studies from a fan oriented point of view. In an interview he not only outed himself as a slash fan; his interest in slash stories also led to the realization of his bisexuality:

[...] I should say that fandom and writing about fandom have allowed me to come out as bi [...] It was when I confronted slash, when I read slash and found out that I really was getting turned on by this- - that this was not just a simple academic object of study- - and as I began to rethink fantasy in relation to slash and what it meant to have erotic fantasies and how one relates to

³⁶ A form of music created from within the science fiction or fantasy fandom, written, sung and performed by fans, eg. at conventions.

one's erotic fantasies, that I began to move away from a theoretical and abstract proposition - - that everyone is basically bisexual but culture shapes our sense of our sexuality into narrower terms, [...]³⁷

His personal interest in slash leads to a very fan based academic approach. His main motivation for writing "Textual Poachers" was his observation of former studies which he considered as sensationalistic and leading to misunderstandings about this subculture. He does not only want to "participate in the process of redefining the public identity of fandom" (Jenkins 7) and use his "authority to challenge those stereotypes"(Jenkins 7). Jenkins further states that "writing as a fan means as well that I feel a high degree of responsibility and accountability to the groups being discussed here"³⁸ (Jenkins 7).

His fan-oriented position also becomes clear by comparing his early work "Textual Poachers" to his later text "Normal Female Interest in Men Bonking: Selection from The Terra Nostra Underground and Strange Bedfellows,"³⁹ co-written with Shoshanna Green and Cynthia Jenkins. This text uses unedited statements of slash fans in order to discuss the various reasons for the ever-present question of "Why slash?"

In "Normal Female Interest," Jenkins again identifies himself as a slash fan while telling about his way to describe slash fiction to non-fans:

When I try to explain slash to non-fans, I often reference that moment in *Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan* where Spock is dying and Kirk stands there, a wall of glass separating the two longtime buddies. Both of them are reaching out towards each other, their hands pressed hard against the glass, trying to establish physical contact. They both have so much they want to say and so little time to say it. Spock calls Kirk his friend, the fullest expression of their feelings anywhere in the series. Almost everyone who watches that scene feels the passion the two men share, the hunger for something more than what they are allowed. And, I tell my nonfan listeners, slash is what happens when you take away the glass. The glass, for me, is often more social than physical; the glass represents those aspects of traditional masculinity which

³⁷"A Conversation with Henry Jenkins," Interview on the intersections of fan and academic criticism, for Taylor Harrison and Sara Projansky. In: *Enterprise zones: Critical Positions on Star Trek*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1997. <http://web.mit.edu/cms/People/henry3/harrison.html> accessed 03/20/10

³⁸ with „here“ Jenkins means his publication „Textual Poachers“

³⁹ will be further referred to as "Normal Female Interest"

prevent emotional expressiveness or physical intimacy between men, which block the possibility of true male friendship. (Jenkins in Green et al. 19)

This statement emphasises Jenkin's assumption that Fan's active engagement is not only motivated by fascination or adoration, but also by frustration and antagonism (Jenkins 23). He further states his notion of the counteraction of masculinity and sensibility in slash fiction. Jenkins draws upon the theories of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick,⁴⁰ who introduced the term "male homosocial desire" in order to discuss masculinity with special focus on topics like mentorship, male friendship, competition or rivalry in classic literature. Her definition of the term "homosocial":

"Homosocial" is a word occasionally used in history and the social sciences, where it describes social bonds between persons of the same sex; it is a neologism, obviously formed by analogy with "homosexual," and just as obviously meant to be distinguished from "homosexual." (Sedgwick 1)

As Sedgwick tries to reveal the subtext of male homosocial desire in classic literary texts, slash turns exactly this subtext into the dominant focus of the new, fan-created work (Jenkins 205). The retold scene of *Star Trek* in the passage of Jenkins' interview above, states a perfect portrayal of homosocial subtext, which inspires fans to write slash stories in which the characters are able to overcome the heterosexual boundaries of their relationship. In slash fiction, the conventional notions of masculinity are questioned by removing the barriers (the glass) blocking homosocial desire. It is through slash that the erotic notions of male friendship are unmasked and men are able to confront their fears from achieving intimacy (Jenkins 205).

The ethnographic position: Camille Bacon-Smith

In contradistinction to Jenkins' active approach to fandom stands Camille Bacon-Smith's "Enterprising Women – Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth," published in 1992. This work discusses fan fiction from a clear outsider's point of view.

⁴⁰ Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky: *Between Men. English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

By methodologically positioning herself as an outsider, Bacon-Smith intends to assure the reader of her being removed from her object of study, which simultaneously trades fan approval for the academic value of objectivity (Busse and Hellekson 18). She consciously criticises Jenkins' positive view on fandom as production, including his political and academic agenda. Therefore, Bacon-Smith's studies are not widely accepted by fans while Jenkins' work meets much more approval. She has not only been criticised for her position of the detached ethnographer, but also for her sometimes clear disapproval of certain activities and topics in slash fiction (Youssef 17).

Bacon-Smith uses an ethnographic approach to emphasize that fandom (in this case – again – *Star Trek*) is a female phenomenon. She does not only observe the slasher's position on her activity, but also the interaction between the women writing in this fandom. Bacon-Smith uses her interviews with a sample of women attending a slash convention in New England to characterize the community.

Declaring slash fiction to be some kind of female playground does bring about certain controversy. Although it is indeed still true that the majority of authors are heterosexual woman, focusing solely on this fact brings about critical voices among scholars as well as (and especially) authors of slash fiction. Also the fact that Bacon-Smith does not always manage to keep the objective view of an ethnographer, but draws quite personal and not always reasonable conclusions, is not in favour of the acceptance of her work. But the main problem is that Bacon-Smith analyses single statements and draws conclusions which she states as valid for all fans and fandoms. She fails in portraying fandom as a complex universe as well as in giving an account of the vast variety of fans and their individuality.

Another weak point is the privileged position of the hurt/comfort genre⁴¹ in Bacon-Smith's studies (Busse and Hellekson 19). It is in fact true that h/c stories are large in number and find many readers, but it is not without controversy to announce it as the

⁴¹ according to Bacon-Smith types of hurt/comfort stories are:
Get-'em stories (one partner is tortured in front of the other in order to get, for example, information),
Slave stories, Rape stories, Death stories and Resurrection stories

essential subgenre of emotional slash fiction writing, or, as Bacon-Smith calls it, “homoerotic fiction” (Bacon-Smith 228). She states that “as a researcher I found hurt-comfort the most difficult form to study. My own strong aversion to violence inhibited my early efforts at an unbiased analysis” (Bacon-Smith 255). She later comes to the conclusion that the large number of h/c stories are due to “the fact that pain was so pervasive in the lives of women that it lay like a wash beneath all of the creative efforts of a community they had made for themselves” (Bacon-Smith 270). Bacon-Smith’s conclusion to the ample distribution of stories in this genre presents one of the above mentioned critically viewed over-generalized assumptions. This excerpt underlies this notion:

Hurt-comfort fiction, as constructed in the fan community, is a complex symbol system for the expression of strong feelings that masculine culture defines as unacceptable. [...] At its least emphasized in the fiction, hurt-comfort represents such an obvious fact of life that readers, and writers like Shirley, do not even realize it is there (Bacon-Smith 270).

Layered Bodies: Constance Penley

In contrast to Bacon-Smith, who clearly states her subject position, stands Constance Penley’s contribution “NASA/TREK – Popular Science and Sex in America,” published in 1998, which is an expansion of her essay “Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Study of Popular culture” (1992). Penley manages to draw attention to her ambiguous situation as both fan and academic, as well as being an observer and a participant (Busse and Hellekson 19).

Penley, like Jenkins, uses Michel de Certeau’s theories and terms in order to describe the female writers’ motivation to create fiction based on already existing originals. With the term “Brownian motion,”⁴² de Certeau describes the tactical manoeuvres undertaken by relatively powerless which should result in resisting, negotiating or

⁴² The term „Brownian motion“ originally refers to the irregular jiggling movement of small particles suspended in fluids and is named after the botanist Robert Brown. Einstein gave a physical explanation of Brownian motion as the “cumulative effect of innumerable collisions of the suspended particle within the molecules of the fluid.” <http://users.soe.ucsc.edu/~chang/203/bm.pdf>, accessed 05/03/10

transforming the system. Such tactics do not serve the purpose of taking over the system. They are an opportunity to clarify the manoeuvre's position which is clearly marginalized. Certeau's theory is obviously implemented in fandom, as active fans do not only read, view and consume in tactical ways, but also produce their own "tactics" by delivering real products such as zines and art (Penley 104-105). Additionally, Penley thinks that "Slash fandom more than illustrates de Certeau's claim that consumption is itself a form of production" (Penley 105). This is achieved through fandom's self-organised apparatus of production, distribution and consumption.

Faced with the frequently asked question why especially females write about male/male relationships, she rejects Russ' and Lamb and Veith's assumption that the characters (Kirk and Spock) are not male but rather androgynous. Penley is convinced that "Kirk and Spock are clearly meant to be male" (Penley 126). She uses this newly found notion to gain a better understanding of the women fans' alienation from their own female bodies. Using such arguments it becomes clearly that Penley uses a feminist approach to slash analysis. Observing that the female body is still layered with negative meanings and simultaneously is used as a "legal, moral, and religious battleground" (Penley 126), female slash authors reject writing about perfect Amazons and instead opt for trying to write "real" men. At the same time she criticises the lack of strong female characters in television by establishing the fact that female characters in *Star Trek*, like Lt. Uhura or Nurse Chapel, are marginalized and stereotyped on the show (Penley 127).

Again agreeing with other scholars, Pensley is of the opinion that writing about an idealized gay male couple is perfectly understandable, as this allows a relationship in which love and work can be shared by two equals. She further matches gay men's bodies to their female opposites, as those too serve as legal, moral, and religious battlegrounds. With this she comes to the conclusion that fans of slash appreciate and solidarise with the efforts undertaken by gay men to redefine masculinity (Penley 129-130).

However, Penley's work has its limitations, as it only focuses on Kirk/Spock slash and does not cover other fandoms.

The texts by Jenkins, Bacon-Smith and Penley are the three central works on fan fiction and set the stage for more than a decade of studies. In later works, different approaches, such as media studies, psychoanalysis and anthropology were used and applied their theories to particular fandoms or texts (Busse and Hellekson 19). Although these three academic texts still cannot be avoided by anyone studying fan fiction and fandom, it is important to note, especially for the analysis of current fan activities that all three texts mostly deal with the pre-Internet culture of fandom. Even Penley's later "NASA/TREK" mentions that fans are "enthusiastic yet thoughtfully cautious about the new Internet fan culture" (Penley 116).

Academic studies of the following years

In the next decade, most studies focused on the interpretive component of fan fiction. Hence, fan-written stories were used to gain further, deep-rooted insight into the source text. The previously studied issues, such as the special appeal of slash including the exploration of sexual dynamics involved, now have a rather marginalised position in scholarly texts. Examples of such close readings of source texts include: *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *The Professionals*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *X-Files*, *Babylon 5*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Stargate SG-1* and *Harry Potter*⁴³ (Busse and Hellekson 20).

Also media related fields have published studies which had an impact on fandom and fan fiction studies. Further, a variety of essay collections and books focusing on a particular source text have been published which examine the fan's complex

⁴³ Bibliography in appendix

relationship to a specific TV series such as *X-Files* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*⁴⁴ (Busse and Hellekson 21).

Slash and Darwinism: Catherine Salmon and Don Symons

An example for a rather exotic approach for slash fiction study is Catherine Salmon and Don Symons' book "Warrior Lovers – Erotic Fiction, Evolution and Female Sexuality" (2001). The two evolutionary psychologists use their methodology for a theoretical approach to slash fiction and argue that slash is another version of women's erotic fiction. By declaring that there are differences between male and female mating psychology, such as the issue of being willing to have sex with strangers, they come to the conclusion, based on evolutionary history that women prefer monogamy because:

[...] during the course of human evolutionary history it was always adaptive for a man to copulate with any fertile woman (other than his close kin) as long as the risks were low enough, whereas it was never adaptive for a woman to copulate with just any fertile man (Salmon and Symons 40).

So according to Darwinian psychology, our hunter-gatherer forebears had different needs and priorities – males to have as many offspring as possible, females to find a stable environment for their offspring - which are still reflected in contemporary human psychology.

They further state that slash fiction rather focuses on the emotional than the sexual relationship between two characters. For them, this is the reason why women prefer erotic fiction to pornography, as it succeeds to fulfil women's erotic needs and desires (Salmon and Symons 61).

For Salmon and Symons, the reason why women may prefer stories including male/male relationships to mainstream romances, results from the fact that "some

⁴⁴ Examples of such publications include: Roz Kaveney's *Reading the Vampire Slayer* (2001), David Lavery's *Deny All Knowledge: Reading the "X-Files"* (1996), Rihannon Bury's *Cyberspaces of Their Own: Female Fandoms Online* (2005), and David Lavery and Rhonda Wilcox's *Fighting the Forces: What's at Stake in "Buffy the Vampire Slayer"* (2002).

women prefer the slash fantasy of being a co-warrior to the romance-novel fantasy of being a Mrs Warrior” (89).

I have to agree with Thrupkaew, who brings forward a critical voice regarding the fact that Salmon and Symons tend to explain the issue of gender in slash in a rather traditional and retrograde way. Although some readers and writers of slash indeed prefer to be co-warrior instead of Mrs. Warrior, it is still not without controversy to reduce slash to an “essentialist baby-making vs. gender-equality conflict” (Thrupkaew 2003) by simply ignoring other works of slash fiction which do not fit into this framework.

Reflecting their own writing practice: Kylie Lee and Susanne Jung

These two fan-centred essays are examples of self-reflecting fans who analyse themselves and their own writing practices. Including their own experiences in fandom and their own texts they try to draw tentative conclusions (Busse and Hellekson 21).

Kylie Lee’s text “Confronting Enterprise Slash fiction”⁴⁵ (2003) is a personal essay, in which the author not only tries to introduce the reader to fan fiction, but also gives a personal insight into her own understanding of slash as well as her personal reasons for writing in the genre of slash. Kylie Lee even chooses her pseudonym instead of her real name and the essay’s beginning is organised just like the header of a fic.

Kylie Lee certainly focuses on the sexual aspect of slash. Although she does discuss the above mentioned theoretical texts, the striking aspect of her essay lies within her personal statements about questions such as why she writes about Omale/male relationships or what status fandom has in her personal life:

When I tell people I write fanfic, I say, smiling, “I write in a genre called slash,” in complete confidence that they have no idea what I’m talking about. [...]

⁴⁵ Lee, Kylie: Confronting Enterprise Slash fiction. In: Extrapolation, Vol. 44/2003. 69-82.
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb1421/?tag=content;col1 accessed 01/28/09

Among my family, only my husband knows. Like many slashers, I have real life, and I have slash, and the two don't really meet (Lee 2003).

The insight into her own writing-practice presents the reader with an authentic account of the act of writing slash fiction. Lee states that for her personally writing slash is not like reading it. She reads for "the transcendent experience, for the emotional context the writer articulates, for the sex" (Lee 2003). Compared to her reading-practice, her act of writing is totally different. Lee declares that she approaches writing formally, including thinking about structure, literary devices, symbolism and trying to stay in canon. Additionally, she tries to give meaning to all sex scenes, as for her "sex has to advance the plot or reveal something about the characters" (Lee 2003). Lee also puts emphasis on realism when it comes to sex. With this she means describing sexual positions which are indeed physically possible or the natural fact that nobody is able to come twice in a row (Lee 2003).

At the end of her essay, Lee defies all theories and conclusions on the reasons for writing slash:

But the primary reason I write slash? That one's easy.
It just makes me so damn happy (Lee 2003).

Contrary to Kylie Lee, Susanne Jung's text "Queering Popular Culture: Female Spectators and the Appeal of Writing Slash Fan Fiction"⁴⁶ (2004), compares her own piece of fan fiction to current gender and queer theories:

[...] I am not able to read the story from an assumed reader's point of view. I can, however, in analysing my own work analyse the process of writing itself (Jung 2004).

For her analysis she primarily uses the feminist theories of Judith Butler, as well as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. Clearly, Jung bases her study on gender politics and analyses her own story according to her political impetus in writing it. She states that she intended

⁴⁶ Jung, Susanne: Queering popular culture: Female spectators and the appeal of writing slash fan fiction. In: Gender Forum Gender Queeries 8/2004. <http://www.genderforum.uni-koeln.de/queer/jung.html> accessed 11/28/09

her story to “depict a utopian society which had overcome our current straight/gay divide, a society beyond heterosexual norms” (Jung 2004).

As Busse and Hellekson have already announced, this essay is of importance as it shows that a lot of slash writers are actually aware of current gender and queer theories and use them consciously as the framework of their writing. However, Jung fails in theorizing her own subject position (Busse and Hellekson 22).

What do the fans say?

Not only contributions of academics and fan-academics give an insight into the complex world of fan fiction. Also authors and fans of slash continue to provide literature that often gives more insight into fandom than any academic study.

Fandom is not only a self-organized phenomenon. The interactive network of authors and readers also presents a platform for self-reflection and discussion of issues they encounter through their active participations as fans. As already mentioned above, Green, Jenkins and Jenkins used this fact and compiled their text “Normal Female Interest,” in which fans give answers to the most striking questions on slash fan fiction.

Additionally, websites like the Fanfic-Symposium (<http://www.trickster.org/syposium>) or the Organisation for Transformative Works (<http://transformativeworks.org/>) provide an open space for fan-written essays on topics concerning creative fan production.

An essay which gives answers to almost every question regarding women’s writing and reading of slash stories, is Dark Twin’s “Why do I like Slash? Plain Answers from a Het Woman”.⁴⁷ Although she states that “this is not about “Why Women Like Slash”, or “Why Heterosexual Women Like Slash”, this is about “Why I like Slash,” Dark Twin

⁴⁷ Dark Twin: Why do I like Slash? Plain Answers from a Het Woman. Published: 11/14/04
<http://www.trickster.org/symposium/symp164.htm> accessed 11/28/09

manages to put down valuable aspects and thoughts on this often raised question in academic discussion. Dark Twin came to the conclusion that although she found some answers in the material she has read within the fandom, she also encountered answers which did not make sense to her personally. As a result, Dark Twin gives twenty-three “non-answers” to why women like slash and adds a personal comment.

Just like Shoshanna Green and her co-authors Cynthia and Henry Jenkins, I also want to add explanations and thoughts of fans on the most frequently discussed issues in academic works. I am of the opinion that fans’ reflecting on their fandom-related activities contribute an additional insight as well as a new perspective to the academic discussion of slash fiction. No generalization is attempted, as the following quotations state the opinions of single individuals. Nevertheless, they offer a very profound and valuable understanding of slash and why it is mostly consumed by heterosexual females. I will pick up findings of formerly discussed scholars and contrast them with fan comments.

- Edi Bjorklund puts emphasis on the socio-political purpose of slash, as it promotes a position against homophobia and sexism.

[...] I’m not of the militant, man-hating kind, but I do believe in gender equality, [...] But slash as a political statement? Not me. If I wanted to get active politically, there’d be more efficient ways of getting the relevant people’s attention than spending hours, days and weeks at my computer reading fanfic, and occasionally typing up pieces of my own. [...] I don’t see my reading or writing of it as a contribution to promoting them.⁴⁸ On the contrary, I keep feeling guilty that I might actually be doing the male gay community a disfavour by writing of what I don’t know as if I did. (Dark Twin 2004)

Shell, an active member of fandom included in “Normal Female Interest” shares this notion:

[...] To say that there is no relationship between homosexuality and slash is absurd. To say that slash is just another name for homosexuality is equally absurd. We have appropriated men’s bodies and sexual activities for our own

⁴⁸ with „them“ she means „gay issues“

gratification. Sounds a lot like complaints about male porn made by women, doesn't it? I'm waiting for a demonstration by gay men where they carry placards complaining that we are using them as "relationship objects." [...] (Green et al. 25)

Interestingly, a different position is taken by a bisexual fandom member:

I am a lesbian, so some of my approach to slash is political – I want to see how a gay couple (of any gender) reacts to and is reacted to by their society. The stories that assume society accepts such couples without question are a lovely relief and often fun to read, since they can concentrate on the individuals and their relationship. [...] (Green et al. 25)

- Lamb and Veith: Slash featuring two male characters provides an possibility of constructing a relationship between equals by reworking the conventions of romance fiction, as such a relationship is hardly possible in male-female romances who are dominated by patriarchy.

That is certainly true, and I'm sure that's a big point why I like it. It's the most frequently quoted answer to the question that I've come across, too. A m/m relationship is free from the structural inequality that biology (and consequently, society) imposes on m/f relationships. In slash, the biological outset of the characters is exactly equal, and so is their perception in society (Dark Twin 2004).

- Lamb, Veith and Russ: In slash, male characters are feminised or rather androgynous beings in order to assure the possibility of sexual equality.

Again, I do think that there are instances where men in slash stories behave like women [...] When a man whines or whimpers or acts like a victim or loses his emotional shit because of one untoward word, he's not acting like a woman. He's acting like he's got a personality disorder or has had way too much caffeine on an empty stomach. When a man has reactive nipples, enjoys brushing another man's hair, or takes upwards of ten minutes to secure the consent of his bedpartner, then he's acting like a woman. and you know something? I don't really mind (Cortese 2004).⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Cortese, Janis: Eew, He's All Girly: Issues Surrounding Feminized Male characters. <http://www.trickster.org/symposium/symp140.html> Published: 02/03/04, accessed 03/28/10

I don't mean to re-write masculinity as *such*, nor do I mean to entirely re-write it in my fics. But in my fics, I'm free to create "ideal" characters and an "ideal" relationship – and part of the definition of my "ideal" is apparently that there should be more of an emphasis on female qualities (Dark Twin 2004).

- Penley: The lack of strong female characters in TV shows and other original sources results in m/m slash fiction.

[...] even if there were more great female characters, would I still be as interested in them as I am in the guys? Do I *want* more interesting female characters? Answer, plain and simple, no. I'm happy with the guys, thanks. Because no matter how great those female characters might be, they could never let me explore what I'm trying to explore through slash. Simply because they are *female*. *Like me* (Dark Twin, 2004).

Glasgow, one of the participants of the discussion in "Normal Female Interest" states:

I'm still bloody insulted by people in general insisting that I need "strong female role models." Some of us already have one. It's called a mirror (Green et al., 21).

In my opinion, Dark Twin succeeds in coming to a satisfying conclusion on this topic, stating that:

The whole question "why do het women like slash" is wrong altogether. Slash is read and enjoyed by lesbian women, gay men and bisexuals of both genders, too, so whether you like it or not is actually completely unrelated to your own gender and sexual orientation. [...] every gender and all sexual orientations have their own reasons for finding slash appealing. What exactly those reasons are for people outside of my own demographic group of het females, I cannot guess. But what I've come to understand as I was working my way through this is: I don't like m/m slash although I'm a heterosexual woman, I like it because I am. It makes perfect sense (Dark Twin 2004).

The presentation of the most important studies on slash fiction up to present day clearly illustrates a huge diversity in subjectivities and motivations. One of the most

prominent weak points of studies focusing on theories of why women write slash is the overgeneralisation of this issue. As I do not favour such theories and additionally aim to avoid generalisation, my analysis will solely focus on the story itself, completely ignoring the author's intentions or reasons for including a specific topic or theme in his or her story.

5. Harry Potter Slash

5.1. The genre within the genre – structural organization of Harry Potter fan fiction⁵⁰

After discussing fan fiction in general, including the academic work done on this topic, the following pages will focus on the specific conventions of structural organization in Harry Potter fandom.

Not only new fan fiction readers have to learn about specific terminology and structural settings in order to fully explore and understand the complex phenomenon of fan fiction. Also authors have to be aware of fandom-specific conventions and additionally have to be able to use them accordingly.

There are mainly five possibilities which can and are commonly used to divide particular fan fictions into different categories:

- According to length
- According to era
- According to content
- According to rating
- According to pairing⁵¹

⁵⁰ Although the title of this chapter says "Harry Potter Slash," a large number of terms and descriptions in this chapter are not solely used in slash fandom, but are valid for fan fiction writing in general. Therefore, I will use the term "fan fiction" for general observations, and the term "slash fiction" for slash specific phenomenon.

⁵¹ Main pairings and possible reasons for their popularity in slash will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.2.

These five attributes can always be found in the header of a fan fiction, as they not only give an idea of what to expect from the story, but also help to clearly define it as belonging to a certain category or sub-genre. Certainly, the facts given in headers also help readers to select stories to their liking from the vast number of fan fictions available.

As an example serves Ravenna C. Tan's header to her story "Whoever keeps me":⁵²

Title: Whoever Keeps Me (Part 1 of 3)
Author: Ravenna C. Tan
Type: Fiction
Length: 21,000 words total; This post: 5200
Main character or Pairing: Snape/Draco, Harry/Draco, Draco/Death Eaters
Rating: NC-17
Disclaimer: Non-commercial fanfic, done for the love, not any money.
Warnings: Voldemort-won AU. Canon-compliant thru HBP. Heavy dub-con. Torture, gang-banging, sexual slavery, angst.
Summary: Voldemort gives a disgraced Draco Malfoy as a slave to Severus Snape. Draco is resigned to his fate, until Snape collars Harry Potter as well.

5.1.1. According to length

In fan fiction, specific terminology is used for stories of particular lengths. The numbers and definitions given in this chapter can only be seen as guidelines, as there are no universally valid rules. The gathered information is therefore either taken from various websites or has been gained through my own observations and experiences as an avid reader of fan fiction. I also do not claim the list to be complete, as terminology may differ from fandom to fandom or author to author. However, the genres listed below belong to the most commonly used ones in fan fiction writing.

⁵² http://community.livejournal.com/hp_tarot/41178.html Further explanations on the content of the header and its meaning are given throughout the next chapters

Additionally, the following terms are not exclusive for Harry Potter slash fiction writing, but are used in many different fandoms.

Drabble

A drabble is a short story of exactly 100 words. Therefore, a drabble and a half has a word count of 150, and a double-drabble means a piece of fiction of 200 words. It is debatable if the title has to be included (Rana Eros 2004)⁵³.

Although the general rules for what can be called a drabble are quite clear and strict, not all authors follow these guidelines and also use this term for stories with a length of over 200 words. A broader definition for the term would be a short piece of writing, often only giving a stream of consciousness or a snap-shot. Further it can be said that the content of such drabbles require a certain knowledge about the fandom or universe, as it does not give a lot of plot or characterisation.

As an example serves Rurounihime's drabble "Crackers" (124 words):⁵⁴

Fingers brushed over his shoulder. "Show over, then?"
The refrigerator hummed. Draco smiled. "Patsy's a riot." He blinked in the darkness. "What I wouldn't give for a lighting spell."
"For any spell," Harry amended quietly.
"Ah, well." Draco stretched. Felt around for the remote and felt Harry's hand instead. "You want to turn it off?"
Instead of words, cool fingers wound with his. Guided his hand up. Draco felt Harry's cheek beneath his palm. "You alright?"
He felt Harry nod. Draco touched in the darkness, gentling his skin. Sweeping the faintest trace of wetness away. Harry swallowed. Draco brushed his lips, leaned forward, found them with his own.
"It's alright, Harry. We'll manage."
"I know." A sigh. The tiniest of smiles beneath his fingertips.

⁵³ Rana Eros: When Size Matters: Story Terminology as Determined by Word Count. 2004. <http://www.trickster.org/symposium/symp162.html> accessed 04/06/10

⁵⁴ Rurounihime: Crackers. <http://rurounihime.livejournal.com/116303.html#cutid2>, accessed 05/02/10

One-shot

According to harrypotterfanfiction.com, a one-shot “is a short piece of work, generally a single moment in time that is completed in no more than one chapter.”⁵⁵ However, in actual fan fiction writing, the length of a one-shot story can vary from 1000 to almost 20 000 words. The latter is often referred to as “long one-shot.”

Novella

A novella is a longer fan fiction with 17 500 to 40 000 words (Rana Eros 2004). Another term for this kind of story, which is rarely used in fandom, is novelette. Here again, the number of words can vary, as the given word counts are just guidelines and the author eventually decides to which genre the story belongs.

Novel-length

A fan fiction with novel-length is a long drawn-out story with over 40 000 words. Novel-length works are often published in single chapters, and then may be also referred to as “chaptered fic.”

There are a number of reasons why a long story is published in single chapters. The most common one is that authors are still working on the story and therefore only post one part of it at a time while currently writing the next chapter. Such fan fiction is also labelled as a “WIP” (abbreviation for Work In Progress), which indicates that the story is not yet finished and future chapters are to be expected.

⁵⁵ <http://www.harrypotterfanfiction.com/docs/terms.html#o>, accessed 03/29/10

Vignette

Although the categorisation of a story as a vignette does not simply rely on the number of written words but rather on its content, I still decided to put it under this section, as it is widely understood as simply a short piece of writing. However, the real purpose of a vignette is to present a “new insight into a character or the relationship between two or more characters” (Rana Eros 2004). Additionally, a vignette can focus on one aspect, mood, setting or object, and therefore is not only used for deeper characterisation of a figure. A vignette does not aim to tell a story, but rather is a snapshot in words.⁵⁶

In fan fiction writing, a vignette is often accompanied by a piece of art at the top and serves as further explanation of the scenario presented in the picture.

5.1.2. According to era

The classification of Harry Potter fan fiction according to era can be seen as a fandom specific categorisation, as it is directly connected to this particular universe.

Hogwarts era

Generally, all stories of this category are set during Harry’s attendance of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry⁵⁷. However, different sub-categories have to be taken into consideration, when trying to give a whole account of possible settings within this particular era.

As fan fiction writing in the Potterverse started before the publication of the last book, the plot in fan narratives, especially of earlier works, does not follow the events which

⁵⁶ http://www.ehow.com/how_2060077_write-vignette.html, accessed 04/06/10

⁵⁷ will be further related to as simply “Hogwarts”

take place in the originals and rather can be seen (especially now as the series is finished) as alternative continuations. This fact becomes additionally important, as a lot of authors were particularly inspired to write fan fiction after a new book of the series had been released. This results in additional comments wherein the date of writing is mentioned. Examples can be: “Post-HBP” or “Post-PoA”.

Of course, alternative continuations can be written long after the original book in question was published. Authors of such stories also indicate after which book the plot of their self-written work steps in. Moreover, changes to the original plot are indicated by describing in detail what was left out or which particular fact was altered. As an example here serves the often used possibility to hold on to characters which died in Rowling’s work, either by ignoring the original plot completely or by finding alternative story lines, in which the figure in question survives. Fiction of this kind is also often labelled as, for example, “canon-compliant through OotP,” which means that all facts of the first five novels including OotP are valid. The alternative story line therefore starts after the novel in question.

Special positions in the sub-genre of Hogwarts-era fiction have stories in which Harry attends his seventh year of school. In fandom there are two terms used to refer to such works: “Seventh year fic” or “Eighth year fic.”

“Seventh-“ or “eighth year” fan fictions solely originate from the authors’ fantasies, as, in the original plot, Harry decides to search for Horcruxes⁵⁸ instead of attending his last year at Hogwarts. Most of imaginary seventh/eighths year stories additionally belong to the post-war⁵⁹ genre, as they deal with Harry’s life at Hogwarts after his defeat of Voldemort. Generally, the reason for Harry’s return to Hogwarts is his wish to finish his education. Especially the post-war genre offers scope for creativity, as issues such as the reconstruction of Hogwarts or the rehabilitation of former Death Eaters like Draco Malfoy may be addressed.

⁵⁸ „The receptacle in which a Dark wizard has hidden a fragment of his soul for the purposes of attaining immortality.“ taken from: <http://www.hp-lexicon.org/about/sources/jkr.com/jkr-com-diary.html#8>, accessed 04/04/10, originally published in the no longer available diary of J.K. Rowling on www.jkrowling.com

⁵⁹ will be discussed later in this thesis

It is also important to note that any story set in Hogwarts during Harry's attendance belongs to the Hogwarts era, even if they don't consider the plot and events of the original novels.

A list of recommendations for fics belonging to this genre featuring the most prominent pairing in fandom (Harry/Draco) can be found on:

<http://karala.livejournal.com/8009.html>.

Post-Hogwarts

As the term already suggests, stories of this genre are set after Harry's time at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. But again, certain sub-genres have to be mentioned and discussed in order to record the whole spectrum of this special group of Harry Potter fan fiction.

The sub-genre of post-war fiction, as already mentioned above, is not a particular possibility of stories belonging to the post-Hogwarts category only. If a story is stated to be post-war, the reader can simply assume that the war is over and that Harry (or in rare cases another character) has defeated Voldemort. In this case, it does not matter if the story is set in Hogwarts or in Harry's life after school.

The most important distinction to be made in post-Hogwarts fan fiction is between epilogue compliant and EWE (Epilogue? What Epilogue?) stories.

The last chapter in the final novel of the original series titled "Nineteen Years Later,"⁶⁰ provides the reader with a future scenario which shows Harry and his friends on Platform 9 ¾.⁶¹ This epilogue clearly states the character's marital status:

⁶⁰ DH, 602ff

⁶¹ Platform 9 ¾ is a platform in Kings Cross Station, only visible to wizards and witches, from which the Hogwarts Express may be boarded on September 1st. see further:
http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Platform_9_3/4.

- Harry Potter is married to Ginny Weasley. Together they have three children: James Sirius, Albus Severus and Lily Luna.
- Ron Weasley is married to Hermione Granger. They too have children: Rose and Hugo.
- Draco Malfoy is married as well and has a son, Scorpius.

However, J.K. Rowling did not only use the epilogue to reveal the future of her characters. On her webpage she published following family tree:

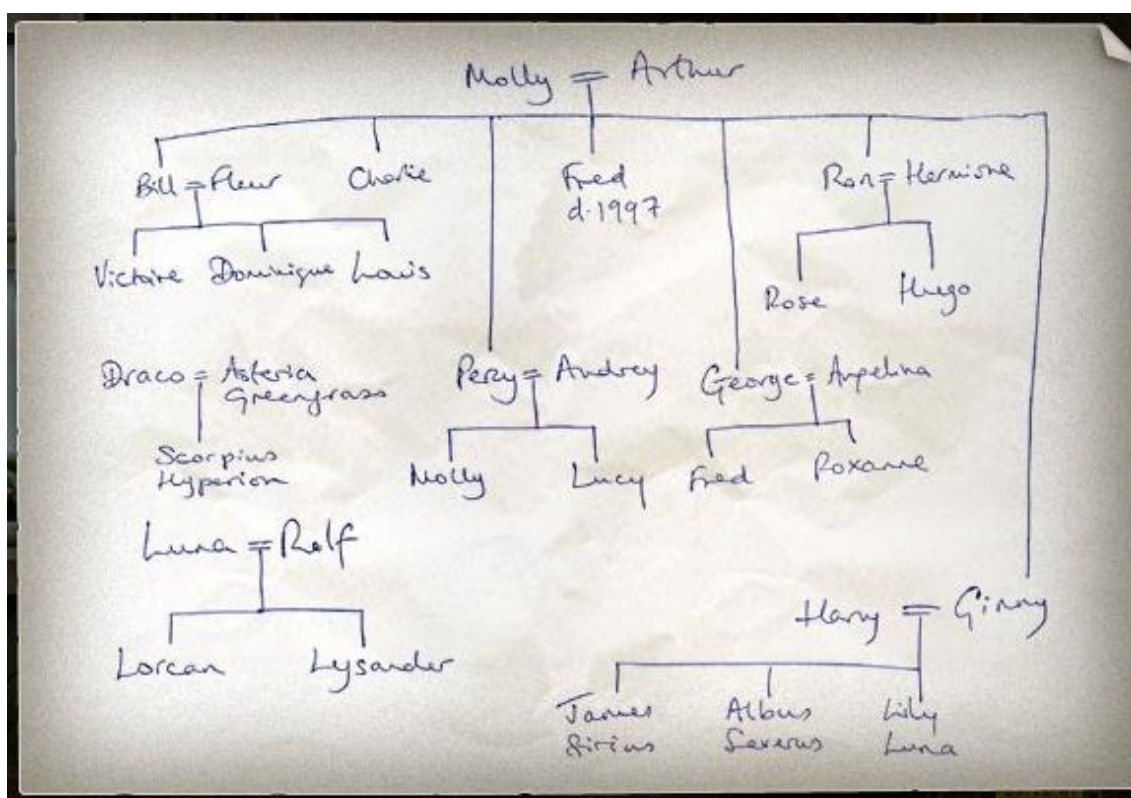


Image 1 <http://www.snitchseeker.com/gallery/displayimage.php?pos=-11259>, acc. 04/14/10

The revealing of the characters' marital status is of particular significance for slash fiction, as it (obviously) mainly focuses on romantic relationships between unconventional and non-canonical pairings, as no same-sex pairings are featured

within canon. Nevertheless, this additional information by Rowling still finds its way into slash fiction, for example within epilogue-compliant fics.

Fan writers are well aware of the facts given to them by canon and J.K. Rowling's additional information. Considering the epilogue, there are now two possibilities for authors when intending to write a post-Hogwarts story. Either they keep to the facts given to them in "Nineteen years later" and alter them to their wishes, or they completely ignore J.K. Rowling's idea of the characters' future and create their own.

Epilogue compliant stories stay true to canon and keep the facts revealed by J.K. Rowling's very last chapter. However, authors do not have to hold onto the exact storyline of the epilogue, which means, they simply stay true to the hard-facts while omitting this specific scene on Platform 9 ¾. Again, any alterations which may come to mind are possible. But generally it can be said that any slash fiction starting with Harry married to Ginny (or Ron to Hermione, etc. – depending on the pairing of the fan-written work) can be said to be epilogue compliant. Sometimes authors use the term "semi-epilogue compliant" in order to refer to stories which borrow only parts of the facts given by J.K. Rowling.

The second possibility for fan fiction authors writing a post-Hogwarts story is to completely ignore the epilogue including the predicted future of the characters. Stories of this kind are marked as EWE, which is short for "Epilogue? What Epilogue?".

The number of EWE stories is enormous, and they find a large readership. One of the main reasons for this development can be seen in the quite high number of fans disapproving of J.K. Rowling's ending of the original novels.

An extensive list of recommendations for Harry/Draco stories in the post-Hogwarts era (both epilogue compliant and EWE) can be found on:

<http://ceridwen.netsons.org/HPDMpostHogwarts.html>.

5.1.3. According to content

To give a well-arranged account on the possibilities of categorizing Harry Potter slash fiction according to content, I will make a difference between two types: genre and theme.

The term *genre* includes categories valid for fan fiction in common which are also used in Harry Potter slash fiction. These categories can be seen as describing the main theme or the overall type of a particular fan-written work.⁶²

AU (Alternative Universe)

A story belonging to this category is set in a canon alternate reality, which disregards one or more major elements present in canon. Although slash fan fiction focuses on pairings which do not exist in canon, they are not considered “AU” for this fact alone.⁶³ Harry Potter specific phenomena are “non-magical AU” stories, in which the whole magical world simply does not exist and therefore the characters live as Muggles⁶⁴.

Recommendations for “non-magical AU” Harry/Draco stories can be found on <http://foryourpleasure.dreamwidth.org/3053.html>.

Angst

Fictions including darker themes, as well as great emotional power or melodrama, are considered as including “angst”. Themes used in such stories can range from a hurtful and sentimental breakup to character death. Generally it can be said that “angsty” stories always involve an emotional rollercoaster ride for the characters, although the

⁶² Again, I do not claim this list to be complete. Nevertheless, the given categories belong to the most widespread in fandom and were selected for this reason.

⁶³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A632062#back7>, accessed 04/02/2010

⁶⁴ non-magical people

reasons for their feelings may vary and differ in their severity. However, it is also important to note that fan-written work belonging to this sub-genre may include seriously dark themes such as torture or rape. Often such stories are also referred to as “darkfics,” which additionally may feature a very dark version of a character.

A selection of recommendations for “darkfics” can be found on <http://curia-regis.livejournal.com/128950.html> (various pairings).

First Time

Especially in the early studies on fan fiction, stories belonging to this sub-category were often used to explain the dynamics of slash fiction writing, as they were prototypical for slash fiction created for the earlier fandoms such as *Star Trek* or *Blake 7*.

Henry Jenkins (1992) suggests that “First Time” stories involve four basic movements, each representing a point of transition between homosocial and homosexual desire (Jenkins 206):

- *The Initial Relationship*: A representation of the pair’s basic relationship as within the original series.
- *Masculine Dystopia*: The protagonist is still in denial and dares not to act on his erotic fantasies. He is also convinced that his partner does not share his feelings.
- *Confessions*: The tension between the two characters becomes almost unbearable. As a result, the “unspeakable” desires are communicated in either a verbally or physically way.
- *Masculine Utopia*: The previous confession leads to the longed for sexual intimacy.

Although a lot of slash fan fiction situated in the Potterverse could be analysed according to the four points mentioned above, the general significance of “First Time” stories has diminished compared to the importance of this sub-genre in classic

fandoms such as *Star Trek*. This may be explained through the fact that early fan fiction included pairings which already had a deep relationship (either as friends, work partners or both) in the original setting. Contrary to this phenomenon, Harry Potter slash fiction tends to focus on unconventional pairings (such as Harry/Draco or Harry/Snape), which do not have a friendly relationship in the original novels. Such pairings have to overcome different obstacles in order to engage in romantic relationships.⁶⁵

Fluff

A slash fiction labelled “Fluff” or “fluffy” refers to a light-hearted and often even kitschy story, which represents a very romantic and loving relationship between two characters, who commonly tend to use an enormous amount of endearments for their beloved. A variation of this sub-genre state fan-written works belonging to the “Flangst”⁶⁶ category, in which darker themes are included.

Hurt/Comfort – H/C

Such as the sub-genre “First Time”, “H/C” stories were of special interest to scholars studying early fan fiction, as this category states one of the prototypical variations of classic slash fiction. Anne Kustritz even states that “H/C” stories brought about the beginning of slash in general:

Within Star Trek fan fiction, a tradition had been established wherein authors explored the deep friendship between Captain Kirk and First Officer Spock. These stories usually were labeled “hurt/comfort” because they involved one of the characters being physically or emotionally wounded and then receiving comfort from the other. [...] Slash came about when authors began to use the

⁶⁵ will be explored further in 5.2.

⁶⁶ combination of „Fluff“ and „Angst“

hurt/comfort narrative to make Kirk and Spock's relationship sexual (Kustritz 371).

Nowadays, "H/C" stories still belong to the most frequently written type of fan fiction, and this also holds true for Harry Potter fandom.

There are many reasons for why authors and readers alike enjoy the concept of "H/C" stories. For one, there are endless possibilities for why one of the protagonists needs to be tended to by the other: serious physical and psychological maladies, disabilities, trauma (both physical and psychological), loss of friends/lovers, battle wounds, etc. Also, "H/C" gives the author a good opportunity either to bring together characters which would not talk to each other normally, or to actively introduce a minor character of the original as one of the protagonists of the fan-written work.⁶⁷

For examples of "H/C" stories with the pairing of Harry/Draco, see <http://thelana.livejournal.com/222648.html>.

"H/C" slash fiction featuring Remus Lupin can be found on <http://community.livejournal.com/remuslupain/>.⁶⁸

PWP

"PWP", short for "Plot? What Plot?!" or "Porn Without Plot", labels stories which include a graphic description of a sexual encounter. Here, the focus does not lie on the relationship between the characters but on their physical relationship and sexual acts.

The number of participating characters is not limited; as a matter of fact, a story only featuring one character masturbating also falls under the category of a "PWP". As common in fan fiction, there are no boundaries to what specific sexual acts the

⁶⁷ for further possible reasons, see <http://thelana.livejournal.com/222648.html>

⁶⁸ Especially the character Remus Lupin serves as an inspiration for many "H/C" fics because of his lycanthropy. Being a werewolf, including the status of an outcast, as well as the physical pain during and after a transformation, has led to a large number of stories dealing with those facts.

characters can engage in. There is no ultimate goal in presenting “realistic” sex, although special websites exist, on which authors can find tips for how to write realistic gay sex.⁶⁹

As already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there is also a second possibility to categorize slash fiction: according to theme. The sub-types belonging to this category can be said to be Harry Potter specific, as quite a large number of the following themes can only be found in the magical world of this universe. In order to give a clear overview on the most common themes (again, I do not claim this list to be complete) used in Harry Potter slash fiction, I divide them into four categories: Relationships, Healing, Magical creatures, and Jobs.⁷⁰

Relationships

Bond and forced marriage

Slash fiction including these themes often also belong to the “Magical creatures” category, as some magical beings are assumed to have predestined mates. To refuse bonding may result in lethal effects to both mates. However, bonds can also be formed for other reasons, such as slavery bonds in order to fulfil life debts.

Examples: Harry/Draco <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/71172.html>

Various Pairings: <http://painless-j.net/blog/2007/11/12/themed-list-bonds/>

⁶⁹ A popular website with this purpose: <http://www.squidge.org/minotaur/classic/eroc.html>

⁷⁰ based on Sulky Rhino’s rec list organisation: <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/23853.html>

Established relationship and Domestic fic

As the terms already suggest, such slash fiction deals with an already established relationship and therefore does not focus on how the two characters fall in love, but rather on their domestic life and the development of their union.⁷¹

As a sub-category to this theme may serve “infidelity fics,” as they imply an already existent relationship.

Harry/Draco: <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/49128.html>

Harry/Severus:

http://community.livejournal.com/snarry_a_day/tag/established%20relationship

Mpreg and children

Mpreg (short for male pregnancy) is a quite common but controversial phenomenon in slash fiction, as not all members of the Harry Potter fandom are in favour of this special theme. The reasons given for how it is possible for men to become pregnant are numerous.⁷²

However, mpreg is not the only possibility for a male couple to be parents. Most commonly, the characters have children from previous relationships with women. Another, but rather rare possibility is adoption.

Examples:

Harry/Draco: <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/37005.html>

Harry/Severus: http://community.livejournal.com/snarry_mpreg/

Various pairings: http://thempregarchive.yolasite.com/Harry_Potter.php and <http://painless-j.net/blog/2007/11/02/themed-list-mpreg-by-character/>

⁷¹ specific examples for stories within this genre can be found in chapter 6.3.

⁷² mpreg will be discussed further in chapter 6.4.

Magical creatures

This theme entails stories wherein at least one part of the main pairing is some kind of magical creature. Frequently used examples are:

Animagi

An Animagus (pl. Animagi) is a witch or wizard who can morph him- or herself into an animal at will. This skill can be learned and has to be officially registered.⁷³

The only known registered animagus in the original series is Prof. McGonnagal, who is able to morph into a tabby cat.

Known unregistered animagi are Sirius Black (big, black dog called "Padfoot"), Rita Skeeter (beetle), Peter Pettigrew (rat called "Scabbles"/"Wormtail"), and James Potter (stag, also called "Prongs").

One of the most common animagus form chosen for Harry is a cat (also referred to as "kitty!Harry"), which often results in rather sexual stories. Another widespread possibility are fan-written works featuring "ferret!Draco". This is directly inspired by a passage in GoF, in which Barty Crouch Jr. (disguised as Alastor Moody) transfigures Draco into a white ferret as punishment for attempting to attack Harry (GOF, 225).

Examples for ferret!Draco stories can be found on: <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/36812.html>.

Veela

Veelas are semi-human, semi-magical creatures reminiscent of the Sirens known from Greek mythology. The young, beautiful and blond-haired human women are magically seductive to almost all males. However, when Veelas get angry or have to defend

⁷³ further information: <http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Animagus>

themselves, they transform into rather ugly creatures with cruel-beaked bird heads and long wings which can launch fire balls from their hands.⁷⁴

In the original novels, this special species is mentioned two times:

- Fleur Delacour, the participant for Beauxbatons (school for wizards and witches in France) of the Triwizard Tournament and future wife of Bill Weasley, is said to be half-Veela.
- Hundreds of Veelas function as Bulgarian Team Mascots in the Quidditch Worldcup finale (GoF 116).

No specific information is given on the special traits of Veelas within the original narrative.

If used in slash fiction, Veela heritage is commonly granted upon the Malfoy family. This most likely results from their physical appearance (pale skin and blond hair). Although some facts are given within the original novels, a distinct understanding of Veela-traits exists in fanon. Although the overall physical appearance is taken from canon, slash fiction also assumes the existence of male Veelas, which are not mentioned in the original series. Typical characteristics for male Veelas according to fanon are (among others) the following:

- Has a predestined mate
- Forms a life-long bond with his mate
- Is able to bear children

Examples for various pairings in this category can be found on: <http://www.partial-eclipse.net/sortinghat/veela.html> and <http://irana.livejournal.com/471953.html>.

⁷⁴ see further: <http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Veela>

Vampire

The universal conventions for what defines a vampire also stay true within the Potterverse. Therefore, vampires are described as undead beings with fangs, which are used to puncture humans' necks so as to drink their blood.

Although vampires are mentioned in the original novels, they are not of great significance. The only member of this species actually present in the original plot is a vampire called Sanguini, who attends a Slug Club Christmas Party⁷⁵ in Harry's sixth year in Hogwarts (HB 295).

Contrary to Veelas, there is no clear-defined characterisation for vampires available in fanon. Nevertheless, it can be said that characters with vampiric traits tend to be sexualized, as especially their bite is commonly described as a very sensual experience.

Examples for vampire stories within the Potterverse can be found here: http://www.fanfiction.net/community/The_Vampire_Express/22917/3/0/1/ (various pairings).

Werewolf

According to Harry Potter Wiki,

A Werewolf is a human, who, upon the rising of the full moon, turns into a fearsome near-wolf. [...] they appear as normal humans, though will often seem to be ill as the full moon approaches. This condition is caused by infection with lycanthropy, usually occurring when a human is bitten by a transformed werewolf. There is no known cure, but the effects can be lessened with the Wolfsbane Potion.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Horace Slughorn creates the Slug Club to meet up with his favourite students.

⁷⁶ <http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Werewolf>, accessed 04/12/2010

Authors and readers of fan fiction alike gain a quite good knowledge on werewolves through the original series. However, two types of werewolf are described: Remus Lupin - a very present character in the novels - school mate of Harry's father, member of "The Order of Phoenix"⁷⁷, and later teacher at Hogwarts, is an example of how werewolves are able to live among wizards in spite of their infection. Contrary to Lupin, the dark character and werewolf Fenrir Greyback serves as a negative example of this species. He belongs to Voldemort's inner circle and kills humans without remorse. Generally, werewolves are looked down upon in wizarding society and have to face many prejudices.⁷⁸

The given facts of canon generally are accepted and actively used in slash fiction writing. However, slight changes or additions are always possible. A very common and frequently used additional feature is that werewolves have mates and form bonds, but rarely are the mates predestined or the bonds for life. Wolf-like characteristics often become apparent, as figures with lycanthropy, for example, tend to be overly protective of their mates and pack.

Stories evolving around this theme can be found on <http://painless-j.livejournal.com/85178.html> (various pairings).

Other magical creatures

The magical beings mentioned above are not the only ones for fan fiction writers to select from. Stories featuring rare fantastic creatures such as Elves, Dementors, or Centaurs, can be found on <http://painless-j.livejournal.com/88273.html#creature>. Authors may also create magical creatures on their own.

⁷⁷ "The Order of the Phoenix was a secret society founded by Albus Dumbledore to oppose Lord Voldemort and his Death Eaters." http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Order_of_the_Phoenix, accessed 04/18/2010

⁷⁸ more information on Remus Lupin and werewolves in Harry Potter in chapter 5.2.

Healing

As already mentioned above, stories of the hurt/comfort genre are very popular with authors and readers alike. Also Harry Potter fan fiction offers a lot of stories within this category. A special kind of hurt/comfort stories are narratives in which one of the protagonists suffers from illnesses or disabilities.

Illnesses and conditions

Possible illnesses can range from a common flu to addiction (e.g. to drugs or alcohol) or depression. Especially the magical component of the world of Harry Potter leaves much space for uncommon illnesses and diseases, such as lingering effects of curses or uncontrollable magic.

An often used condition within this category is depression caused by war-experiences. Here, characters are presented as not being able to find a normal routine in life and carrying invincible, psychological scars.

Disabilities

Another quite common practice within writing hurt/comfort fiction is presenting one of the protagonists with a disability. Here as well, characters can not only suffer from non-magical disabilities such as blindness or deafness, but also from magic-related disabilities like loss of magic.

Both, narratives including illnesses and narratives including disabilities, often also involve one of the characters as being a practising healer⁷⁹ (witches and wizards working as medics are either referred to as “healers” or “mediwizards”).

⁷⁹ Witches and wizards working as medics are either referred to as “healers” or “mediwizards”

Examples can be found on <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/49805.html>, as well as on <http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/37673.html> (Pairing: Harry/Draco).

Jobs

Slash fictions may also be sorted into categories according to the jobs undertaken by the protagonists. The most frequently used occupations within the magical world are:

- Teacher or other job at Hogwarts
- Auror⁸⁰ or other position within the Ministry of Magic
- Quidditch⁸¹ (player, trainer, owner of a team)
- Healer (for example, at St. Mungo's⁸²)

However, also more exotic and rather uncommon professions find a large author- and readership. As examples serve stories in which one of the protagonists works as a prostitute. The reasons for choosing this profession vary, however, in the case of Harry/Draco fiction, one of the most common reasons for Draco deciding to work as a prostitute result from his segregation from the wizarding world after the war against Voldemort.

A large selection of fan fiction including various kinds of professions can be found on:

<http://sulky-rhino.livejournal.com/23853.html> (Harry/Draco),

<http://painless-j.net/blog/themed-lists/> (various pairings),

http://community.livejournal.com/hd_career_fair/ (Harry/Draco)

http://community.livejournal.com/rs_career_fest/ (Remus/Sirius)

⁸⁰ "An Auror is a member of an elite unit of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement of the Ministry of Magic trained to capture Dark wizards and witches." <http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Auror>, accessed 04/06/2010

⁸¹ A wizarding sport played on broomsticks.

⁸² Short for St. Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries, a wizarding hospital in London. See further: [http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/St. Mungo%27s](http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/St._Mungo%27s)

5.1.4. According to rating

Every written work in the genre of fan fiction has to clearly state its rating in the header. Some archives do not specifically require ratings, nevertheless, they are becoming a solid component of fan fiction etiquette. Ratings do not only let the readers know what they are in for. Additionally they are an author's means to warn the reader of adult content. The most frequently used rating system is based on general American film guidelines and is used universally in every fandom:⁸³

G	Suitable for all ages.
PG	Mild implies sexual innuendo and vulgar language. May also include violence or serious topics.
PG-13	Story includes some violence, vulgar language and more obvious sexual innuendo. Sexual relations are only implied. Here, also more mature topics, such as drug and alcohol abuse, suicide or rape aftermath can be included.
R	Not recommended for minors, as R-rated stories include rather explicit sex, violence, rape or graphic torture.
NC-17 (also referred to as M, Adult or X)	This story is for adults only. Contains explicit sex and/or extremely graphic violence.

5.2. Main pairings in Harry Potter slash

The sheer amount of characters in the Potterverse serves as a large pool of possible slash pairings. This results in the fact that Potter fandom cannot be seen as a homogeneous group, but rather as a fandom of subgroups. Also the enormous number

⁸³ <http://web.archive.org/web/20080822041856/http://www.subreality.com/glossary/terms.htm#R>, accessed 11/6/2009

of fans participating in Potter online fandom (as authors or readers) basically guarantees that you will find a story according to your fan-fictional desires. This also implies that no matter how far-fetched your wishes and interests may seem, it is more than likely that you will find fellow-slashers who share your notions. Another fact which leads back to the large number of fans and variety of slash pairings is that Potterfandom lacks a dominant “One True Pairing⁸⁴.” Compared to classic slash fandoms - such as *Star Trek* or *The Professionals* - which dealt with television series already featuring a prominent pairing, the Harry Potter books present the fan with an enormous cast of interesting characters, which all have been slashed at some point (Tosenberger HatOH 191).

In a livejournal post, a fan called Dira Sudis introduces and describes a very interesting and intriguing model of three different kinds of slash pairings: buddyslash, enemyslash and powerslash.⁸⁵

She states that slash originated with stories exploring the relationship between two men who were “partners and friends who work together in an essentially egalitarian way and then wind up shagging. Call it buddyslash” (Dira Sudis 2007). According to Sudis, enemyslash refers to “the fight-fight-shag model” (Dira Sudis 2007), which essentially means slash between characters who are fiends or foils in the original narrative. The third and last possible model is powerslash, which describes a relationship between two characters of different social levels. As examples Sudis states teacher/student, master/servant or cop/prisoner dynamics (Dira Sudis 2007). I have to agree with Tosenberger, who is of the opinion that all three slashmodels are “highly visible in Potter fandom” (Tosenberger HatOH 192). This, of course, complicates studying Potter fandom according to the findings of early academic works on fan fiction, as they solely focus on the dynamics of buddyslash (Tosenberger HatOH 192). As a result, Harry Potter fandom again denies well-known theories of slash, as its most popular pairing – Harry/Draco⁸⁶ - belongs to the enemyslash category.

⁸⁴ abbreviated „OTP“ – will be further referred to as OTP

⁸⁵ <http://dsudis.livejournal.com/2007/12/16/>, accessed 04/06/10

⁸⁶ also referred to as „Drarry“

There are certain appeals which cause the popularity of “Drarry”-stories. As an enemyslash-pairing they have to deal with completely different issues regarding their relationship compared to pairings featured in buddyslash-stories. The innumerable possibilities and reasons for how two fiends overcome their differences and become lovers, make up the main appeal of stories within the category of enemyslash. However, not all Drarry-stories have to result in a loving relationship. Enemyslash-pairings have to overcome their differences and their animosity, at least long enough to have sex. Lingering dislike is therefore altered into unresolved sexual tension⁸⁷. The characters give in to their desires in spite of their established enmity, which may result in rather aggressive forms of sexual intercourse (Tosenberger HatOH 193).

Also the representation of Harry and Draco’s relationship within the original Harry Potter novels clears the way for this unconventional pairing in fanon. As slash fans are always on the look-out for possible slash pairings while reading the original novels, it is not surprising that Harry/Draco-shippers make up the largest group of Harry Potter slash fans. Especially the plot of HBP supports sensitised slash fans in their belief in this pairing. Throughout this novel, Harry is somehow obsessed with Draco and spies on him whenever possible, because of his conviction that Draco is up to no good. Within fanon, exactly this obsession often leads to desire or to the realisation that Harry has always been secretly in love with Draco, or – in the least – has always lusted after him. According to Tosenberger, the main problem for authors writing Harry/Draco stories before HBP was that Harry never sees Draco as more than a nuisance, while Draco always is obsessed with Harry in canon. In order to bring them together anyway, fan-writers used schemes such as potion or magical accidents (Tosenberger HatOH 198).

In my opinion, this quote taken from Aiofe’s story “Carpe Draconis” catches the complex dynamics in Harry and Draco’s relationship:

"We're not friends, Harry."

⁸⁷ In fandom, slash fictions including unresolved sexual tension are marked as UST (abbreviation for „Unresolved Sexual Tension“)

He sighed. *Is he going to go about that stupid prattle again? Honestly!* He thought in irritation. "If you're just going to go on about that crazy idea of yours that we can't be friends, well you can just-"

Draco continued to smile. "We're not friends. We can't be. Our rivalry has gone on for far too long for us to be proper mates. Besides, we're equals in every sense of the word and a friendship is not a bond of equals. One always follows the other. One is always indebted to the weaker. That's not us."

"If not friends then what are we?" Harry asked, exasperated.

Draco merely shrugged, took one last bite of his meal, stood up and sauntered off to the courtyard. His parting remark leaving Harry feeling even more baffled and mystified than he already was.

"Something else."⁸⁸

A fact which might be considered as a proof for the fandom-members' favour of Drarry-, and therefore enemyslash-stories, is the comparatively small number of narratives featuring the pairing of Harry/Ron. The search for Harry/Ron slash fiction on fanfiction.net results in 3 040 hits, while a total number of 15 360 Harry/Draco stories are hosted on the same site.⁸⁹ Although the pairing of Harry and Ron may seem as a typical example for buddyslash, one has to consider the presence of Hermione Granger as Harry's second sidekick. Ron therefore is not the only character Harry is closely attached to, as both – Ron and Hermione – are not only his best friends but also his closest allies in his fight against Voldemort.

The second most popular Potter slash pairing is Harry/Snape⁹⁰, which belongs to the powerslash category, and again defies the findings of early fan fiction studies focusing on buddyslash. Especially the forced intimacy of Harry and Snape in OoP inspired slash fans to write stories featuring this pairing. In OoP, Snape is assigned, much to his chagrin, to teach Harry Occlumency, a magical ability which should prevent Voldemort from reading Harry's thoughts. Throughout this learning progress, Snape constantly gains access into Harry's mind and is therefore able to read his most intimate thoughts. In one of their sessions, Harry conversely manages to gain access into Snape's mind and becomes a witness of his teacher's most secret and humiliating memory (Tosenberger HatOH 198).

⁸⁸ <http://community.livejournal.com/carpexdraconis/11777.html>, accessed 12/19/09

⁸⁹ Harry/Ron: http://www.fanfiction.net/book/Harry_Potter/3/0/1/1/0/1/2/0/0/1/
Harry/Draco: http://www.fanfiction.net/book/Harry_Potter/3/0/1/1/0/1/6/0/0/1/, accessed 04/23/2010

⁹⁰ also referred to as „Snarry“

The appeal of this pairing does not only lie within how those two characters manage to overcome their differences. As Snape teaches Potions at Hogwarts, Harry is not only his student but also his protégé. According to their different status, they have to mind certain rules and regulations. In my opinion, there is one main reason for the popularity of this pairing: Although, at first sight, Harry and Snape are an unconventional pairing par excellence (age difference, different social status), Harry's leading role in the fight against Voldemort still holds a possibility for them to have a partnership between equals. Harry's role in the on-going war may lead to an equalisation regarding status.

Another popular Potter slash pairing is Sirius/Remus, which is most often articulated as possibly canon (Tosenberger HatOH 196). One of the reasons often mentioned for this assumption is a Christmas present for Harry from both Sirius and Remus. Certainly it can be argued that this is a couple-specific habit.

As an end note it is important to state that the pairings mentioned above simply present the most popular (and for me the most interesting) ones in Potter slash fandom. Generally it can be said that every character has been slashed and stories with every possible pairing (no matter how unimaginable in canon) can be found. However, the particular connections between canon and fanon, originated by the special readings of slash fans, can be considered as the main inspirations and explanations for slashing characters.

6. Sexualizing Harry Potter - Addressing issues in Harry Potter slash fiction

As slash fan fiction deals with the homosexual lives of characters, it is no surprise that certain issues often faced by women and men interested in the same sex find their way into fan-writing. Especially the transgression into the wizard society of the Harry Potter universe and the special alterations made in order to achieve adaption to this world lead to creative and interesting treatments of topics such as homophobia or safer sex.

My analysis will focus on fan-written slash fiction. However, I first want to discuss the original novels according to the presentation of heteronormativity as well as interpretations which allow possible findings of homophobia and related issues within the narrative. The main argument for heteronormativity in Harry Potter is always the total absence of same-sex relationships. However, also other examples can be found.

Especially the character of Remus Lupin leaves space for such a discussion, as parallels can be drawn between werewolves and gay men due to their marginalized status in society. Additionally, there are certain similarities between becoming a werewolf and coming out of the closet as homosexual, as both lead to readjustment of familial relationships, as well as to a redefined and nouveau status in society. Lupin's accounts of the bigotry he has to face as a werewolf, specifically in regards to finding employment, can be compared to society-related difficulties faced by homosexuals. Lupophobia and homophobia therefore can be seen as synonymous, as both are founded upon fear of the Other. Surely it can be argued that to fear a beast which is not able to control his actions is more rational than homophobia. Nevertheless, the way Remus is treated because of his being a werewolf certainly resembles the treatment of gays in our society at least to some extent. Particularly the hysteria caused by the employment of a werewolf in Hogwarts can be seen as a link between the Lupin's problems within the novel, and prejudices in the same field of work often faced by homosexuals (Pugh and Wallace 267).

[...] So he [Snape] – er – *accidentally* let slip that I am a werewolf this morning at breakfast.”

“You're not leaving just because of that!” said Harry.

Lupin smiled wryly.

“This time tomorrow, the owls will start arriving from parents – they will not want a werewolf teaching their children, Harry. And after last night, I see their point. I could have bitten any of you ... that must never happen again.” (PA, 309)

Through this paragraph and the presented prejudices, the parallels between werewolves and homosexuals rather slip into the realm of pederasty and paedophilia.

Lupin himself mentions his inability to control his desires, which ultimately threaten the children of Hogwarts (Pugh and Wallace 268).

Another congruency found within the Harry Potter series is the possible parallel of lycanthropy and HIV/Aids, as both are diseases transmitted through the exchange of bodily fluids (Pugh and Wallace 268). Here again similarities can be drawn concerning the prejudices faced by wizards suffering from lycanthropy and humans suffering from HIV/Aids.

It is not valid to assume that all authors of fan fiction consciously deal with certain issues in order to raise awareness of gay people's situation in our society. Nevertheless, such topics frequently state one of the main themes in fan-narratives and are elaborated in detail. The link between heteronormativity and slash fiction is much more explicit compared to the parallels drawn between heteronormativity and the original novels. Slash fiction fills the gaps of the original novels, who fail to consciously address issues related to heteronormativity.

In the following chapters I want to discuss how particular issues are presented and dealt with in Harry Potter slash fiction. Therefore, I will use the content and quotes of selected narratives to exemplify the treatment of particular topics within slash stories.

The outcome of my analysis, as well as the sub-categories I formed in order to give a well-arranged account of possible representations of issues discussed in slash narratives, cannot be seen as a depiction without gaps. The sheer amount of Harry Potter slash fiction and the endless creative scope available to authors impede a universally valid analysis. Therefore, my aim simply is to give an introduction into the infinite possibilities of how such issues are encountered in Harry Potter slash fiction.

6.1. Homophobia

This is the ultimate embarrassment, the ultimate disgrace. The Malfoy heir was in love with Harry Potter. Forget the fact that he is also a convicted Death Eater and murderer, but Merlin, he's gay! (Salt in our wounds, Part VIII)⁹¹

The representation of homophobia in Harry Potter slash fiction is as manifold as in the "real" world. Bigotry against homosexuality (unfortunately) still states a common attitude within our society. Therefore, it is not surprising that many slash fiction writers feel the need to deal with homophobia within their stories. No general assumptions can be made on the ulterior motives of discussing this issue in slash. It can be argued, however that many authors decide to present homophobic notions within their stories in order to either create a wizarding world which is similar to ours, or to include a further focus to increase tension within the narrative. However, many authors opt to create a magical world in which homophobia is no issue at all. Within such fan-writings, being gay states no issue and does not have an impact on a wizard or witch's status in society. Slash stories which are set in such settings often contrast this non-homophobic wizarding society with the world of Muggles, in which gays have to face intolerance. As an example serves a conversation in Jinko's Harry/Draco slash fiction "Mansion built upon sand"⁹², in which Harry refrains from openly showing his affection to Draco during a trip to Muggle-London:

"Muggles...they're not quite as accepting of homosexuals as wizards are," Harry admitted, his hand grabbing at Draco's. "We can't exactly be all over each other without gaining unwanted attention." (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 16)

The question now arising is how homophobia is presented in Harry Potter slash fiction. Through my research and reading I came to the conclusion that there are generally two different concepts of homophobia: Collective homophobia and individual homophobia.

⁹¹ [http://www.fanfiction.net/s/5573596/1/Salt in Our Wounds](http://www.fanfiction.net/s/5573596/1/Salt_in_Our_Wounds), accessed 12/19/2009

⁹² [http://www.fanfiction.net/s/3918485/1/Mansion Built Upon Sand](http://www.fanfiction.net/s/3918485/1/Mansion_Built_Upon_Sand), accessed 12/19/2009

Collective homophobia

With the term “collective homophobia” I am referring to a distinct kind of homophobia within the universe of Harry Potter, which is based on specific beliefs and traditions of wizarding society. Commonly, slash fiction featuring this notion of homophobia relies on Pureblood traditions in order to justify the presented intolerance towards gays. Within such stories, Pureblood families are especially keen on maintaining their values and beliefs, as well as their blood status and family line. Homophobia therefore originates from the fact that homosexual pairs are not able to reproduce and therefore are refusing to continue their family line. An excerpt from Azhure and Wintermoon’s story “Per Solum Lacuna: By words alone”⁹³ serves as evidence for this notion:

I guess it is why I thought of myself as bisexual for the longest time. It doesn't sound 'so bad' when you couch it like that. The family will then at least know you might marry and raise many more pure-blooded children that way. Many pure-bloods have a real aversion to homosexuality. I'm not saying that they are all exclusively heterosexual - I'm proof enough of that, but most prejudices lie with the old blood. I'm trying not to sound elitist when I say that, but it is a fact. I'm not saying that it doesn't exist either - people can't help being the way they are, so many pure-blood wizards have hidden it, or made hasty marriage decisions to appease their families (Per Solum Lacuna: By words alone, chapter 17).

Of course, the degree of how these homophobic tendencies influence the lives of gay wizards varies. Some slash fictions represent a wizarding society in which old beliefs and values still are of great importance, but nevertheless are changing. Such stories do not present the coming-out of a character as a starting-point for many confrontations and issues:

There are those in the pure-blood community that may look down on you for it, since continuing the family lines has always been very important, but our world is changing (Choices of a Death Eater’s son, chapter 28).

⁹³ <http://archive.skyehawke.com/story.php?no=11966>, accessed 03/12/2010

However, also stories featuring worse cases of homophobia can be found. Furiosity's Drarry-slash story "Before peace"⁹⁴ serves as an example featuring a graver case of homophobia. Draco, in doubt about his sexuality, gets hold of some books with very controversial content:

Draco was carrying eight books now and his arms were beginning to feel the strain. Well, there was enough material to keep him busy for a while; he would just need to come back if he found nothing useful. He turned around, intending to head back to the study tables, when his gaze fell upon a book in the neighbouring section.

Prohibited Passion: Sexual Deviance Explained

Draco blinked and glanced at the surrounding books. *Homoeroticism in Wizarding Literature... Queer Today, Disowned Tomorrow... What To Do If Your Only Child Is Gay...*

What wizard doesn't live in terror of being ostracised? Our community is small and our numbers are dwindling every year; being a sexual deviant in today's world—

Draco frowned. Dwindling numbers? He checked the back cover of the book: published in 1643, reprinted in modern English three hundred years later. Fucking useless. He flipped a few pages forwards.

There are no magical or mundane means of curing sexual deviance. Heinrich Warsteiner writes, "it is a disease of the soul, and the only way to destroy it is to destroy the soul." The humble author behind this pseudonym -- who was born with the unfortunate condition and has successfully avoided notice -- begs to differ.

Draco's heart began to beat a little faster. Maybe this book wasn't totally useless.

Sexual deviance may well be a disease of the soul, but fortunately we are all in control of our souls. Whilst it is indeed impossible to remove unnatural urges completely, it is quite possible to suppress them so much that they only bother us in our darkest dreams. The most essential step is to eliminate all contact with members of the same sex...

Here again the reader finds gays' not being able to reproduce as the major catalyst for homophobia in the wizarding world. That Draco finds this book useful, although it has been published hundreds of years ago, leads to the conclusion that the overall attitude towards homosexuals has not changed. Additionally, the existence of such books in a school library does not leave any doubt on the general attitude towards queers in this specific universe. Nevertheless, as the plot continues, the reader learns that this specific kind of intolerance towards homosexuals is mostly present in the conservative

⁹⁴ <http://furiosity.livejournal.com/320046.html>, accessed 03/12/2010

Pureblood society, which still holds unto the importance of procreating in order to keep their pure bloodline.

Individual homophobia

With this term I am referring to homophobia featured in slash stories which is not resulting from a collective set of belief like discussed above. Homophobia therefore is not presented as an actuality of wizarding society in general, but rather as emanating from single individuals who openly voice their malevolence towards queers. No valid comparison can be made between the numbers of stories featuring individual or collective homophobia. Nevertheless, including a homophobic character into an otherwise open-minded wizarding society surely adds to the plot, as it triggers a certain amount of additional controversies and issues. This especially holds true if the homophobic character formerly was a close friend to the protagonist. As an example serves Ron as a homophobe who does not accept Harry's (or anyone else's) interest in men:

"And what's with Snape saying that Charlie and Moony are fags?" Ron demanded. "Neither of them is, are they?"

"You'd have to ask them, yourself," Harry breathed. He had never actually heard Ron's stance on homosexuality, and didn't like it.

Ginny was thinking the same. "What about two girls?" she asked.

Ron shrugged his shoulders. "That's fine," he confessed his opinion.

"You're pathetic."

"An arse isn't safe around faggots!"

"You aren't that irresistible," George informed his brother. "Actually, you're not irresistible at all. I highly doubt you're in any danger."

"Besides, as Harry said, he's the one Malfoy wants to shag, not you," Fred continued.

"It's Harry's arse that needs to be protected." (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 2)

Individual homophobia is not rooted on a special set of beliefs and attitudes. Contrary to homophobia based on Pureblood society's opinions, authors mostly tend to omit possible reasons for an individual character's intolerance towards homosexuals.

6.2. HIV/Aids – safer sex

In our society, HIV and Aids, as well as the protection from this fatal disease, are of constant topicality. Therefore, my observation that this issue is hardly addressed in Harry Potter slash is an interesting and surprising fact. Cosmic, a fan-writer who dealt with HIV/Aids in some of her stories, states in her author's notes at the end of the story "Until death do us part"⁹⁵:

I've been researching HIV/AIDS for another story I'm writing (original) and I realized as I read about it that there are very few stories about HIV in fanfiction, despite the fact that it is a huge problem in the "real world". Many, many stories feature a Hogwarts and/or world that is absolutely sex-crazed. Many authors like to make Harry and/or Draco sex-addicts. What this story is about is the what-if scenario. What if one of those men they go have sex with had HIV?

We see that authors are well aware of the lack of HIV/Aids in slash stories. Why authors writing in the Harry Potter fandom do or do not feel the need to include the use of condoms and HIV/Aids in their stories, may become clear through the further discussion.

Addressing safer sex, infection and treatment in the magical world of Harry Potter

As already stated above, HIV/Aids is not a common topic included in slash stories. As a result, safer-sex is hardly addressed. Of course, the wizarding world of Harry Potter leaves enough space for possible alternatives for condoms, for example special protection charms. Those often can be found in fan-narratives which do not opt for completely omitting this issue. However, safer sex can also be addressed in other ways. One possibility is to clearly define a physical difference between Muggles and magical folk. Another possibility is used in Jinko's story "Mansion built upon sand", in

⁹⁵ <http://www.cosmicuniverse.net/nw/myfics/hp/untilddeathdouspart.html>, accessed 04/21/2010

which Draco explains why wizards and witches do not have to care about protection while having sex:

[...] "You're such a Muggle. First of all, I'm used to it, so I'm not going to bleed. Secondly, us wizards have come up with cures to those Muggle diseases. AIDs, HIV, syphilis, they all mean nothing to us. Spells are used to cure them, however, so we can't exactly use them to cure Muggles." [...] (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 14)

So in this story, magic is the reason why witches and wizards do not have to care about sexually transmitted diseases. However, it is interesting to note that diseases like HIV or syphilis are clearly stated to be of Muggle-origin. As wizards have found cures in case of special spells, no one is at risk of getting infected with any sexually transmitted disease. However, slash stories can be found in which wizards and witches also run the risk of getting infected with HIV/Aids.

A Drarry story dealing with a positive character is "Knives out"⁹⁶ by charlotteschaos. This narrative includes the use of condoms for protection:

[...] "I'm positive," and turned around, shuffling his pants down and drew a leg out of them. Draco pressed his cheek against the cold, red metal door and gripped his hands over the top.
Harry blinked. "AIDS, Draco?"
"Shut up and fuck me, Potter. It's safe with that on." Draco's eyes lowered (Knives out, chapter 1).

Initially, the narrative does not use magical elements to deal with HIV/Aids. Later in the fic, Harry announces that "There are charms for that. I looked them up" (Knives out, chapter 3). Nevertheless, the issue is presented in a rather authentic way, including condoms as a common (nevertheless not 100% safe) possibility to prevent infection.

Another story dealing with HIV/Aids in a similar way is "Waiting"⁹⁷ by rurounihime. Here the issue is not addressed until the very end of the narrative when Harry and

⁹⁶ <http://www.sycophanthex.com/pureblood/viewstory.php?sid=668&i=1>, accessed 12/19/2010

⁹⁷ <http://www.fictionalley.org/authors/rurounihime/waiting01a.html>, accessed 12/20/2010

Draco want to have sex after going through the strain of suspense while waiting for Draco's test results:

[...] I saw him pull a small packet out of one pocket. He looked at it wonderingly for a long moment and I stilled, looked as well, let the silence flow over us both.

His eyes met mine, dark grey, blond hair falling over them in a soft wave. He licked his lips. "Harry, I know we're both completely clean but... I feel like I..." I nodded and clasped his hand, weaving our fingers together. "I know." (Rurounihime: Waiting)

The number of stories in which condoms are used as a means of protection is all but non-existent compared to the enormous amount of stories in which magic - in terms of spells – is either used for protection or is able to cure all Muggle-diseases. Magic may also provide special treatment. In “Knives out” Draco cannot be healed through magic. However, treatment against all symptoms is provided through potions which help him deal with negative side-effects.

Additionally, stories featuring positive characters cannot be healed or treated by an author-invented spell or potion, but ultimately lose their fight against this fatal disease can be found in the fandom. Cosmic's stories “Until death do us part” and “Heaven is a place nearby”⁹⁸ both belong to the “deathfic”⁹⁹ category, as they deal with the deaths of characters induced by Aids. Not even magic is able to cure the characters, as a matter of fact, both stories do not even mention this possibility. Here, being positive is dealt with in a rather authentic way as no magical elements are used in order to treat the symptoms of HIV/Aids.

An element which holds true for all fan fictions listed dealing with HIV/Aids is that all refer to it as “Muggle disease.” Therefore, HIV/Aids represents a negative element of our society which has found its way into the wizarding world. This becomes especially clear in “Knives out”, in which Draco was not aware of this danger because of his pureblood upbringing:

⁹⁸ <http://www.fictionalley.org/authors/cosmic/HIAPN01a.html>, accessed 12/20/09

⁹⁹ term to label fan fiction wherein a main character dies

"Well, you might just say that my lack of knowledge about Muggles bit me on the arse. Father always said that Muggles were filthy, diseased creatures. I just didn't realize how literal that was. Or maybe I did and I just didn't care" (Knives out, chapter 4).

In "Until death do us part" this issue is presented as follows:

The doctor asked if he would like a HIV test as well, and Draco had said yes, not knowing what the doctor meant.

Two weeks later, the results came back.

They were positive.

The world fell apart around them as Harry screamed at Draco, packing his things and leaving the apartment. Harry knew what the three little letters meant. Draco didn't" (Cosmic: Until death do us part).

Draco's ignorance of Muggle society leads to his predicament and adds another interesting aspect into a Harry Potter slash story featuring HIV/Aids.

6.3. Same-sex marriage/bonds

Same-sex marriage is a widely discussed and (unfortunately) still controversial issue in our society. In this chapter I want to focus on the multiple creative ways of authors concerning ceremonies and marriage in the magical world of Harry Potter.¹⁰⁰

When dealing with same-sex marriage in Harry Potter slash fiction, it is essential to point out the importance of so called "bonds." A lot of narratives feature rituals and life-styles which more or less equal our understanding of marriage and weddings, although they are not explicitly announced as such. In fandom, wizards and witches form bonds of various kinds, of which some will be discussed within this chapter. Especially the magical component of the Potterverse leaves an enormous space for creativity which is open to slash fiction authors. This particularly holds true as no specific explanations on bonds between magical folk (may it be wizard/with or magical

¹⁰⁰ I will not discuss the acceptance of same-sex marriages in the Potterverse. When a slash fiction features some sort of same-sex marriage it can be assumed not to be a specific issue in wizarding society. For more information on homophobia, see chapter 6.1.

creature) can be found within the original narrative. Author's, therefore, are able to use their whole creative scope in order to introduce different kinds of bonds.

Magical creatures - mates

As already discussed in 5.1.3., stories including some sort of magical creatures are very popular in Harry Potter slash fandom. Certain magical creatures do not only have special appearances or abilities but also are able or even forced to form bonds with sometimes predestined mates. For my analysis I've chosen narratives with different examples of magical creatures: Elves and Veelas.

In "A Consort's Loyalty"¹⁰¹ by desolate03, Draco as well as his father Lucius are elves. This fact does not only result in a special appearance of Draco and Lucius (pointed ears), but also has an effect on their love-life. Harry and Draco's union was prophesied by a seer a long time ago. Therefore, Harry is caught off guard, while it is no surprise for Draco that Harry is his predestined mate. Throughout the narrative the reader learns about this special bond alongside with Harry.

Within the narrative the relationship between the two "husbands" is clearly defined. One character holds the dominant role of the relationship (Harry) and is given the title "Lord." The character which serves as the submissive part (Draco) of the union is also referred to as "Consort." Additionally, this differentiation also clearly marks the respective roles in the bedroom:

[Lucius explains to Harry:] "This has to do with the bond and the vows you both took. Draco swore to submit to you, so when the bond formed it already established that Draco would be the submissive one in the relationship. The bond made him...how do you say, more inclined to be bottom, as well as making you more inclined to be on top." Harry narrowed his eyes thoughtfully.
"So, what your saying is that if we tried it the other way around, where I was on bottom, it wouldn't be pleasurable for either of us?"

¹⁰¹ http://www.fanfiction.net/s/2160465/1/A_Consorts_Loyalty, accessed 01/15/10

"Oh, both of you would derive some satisfaction from it, but it wouldn't be nearly as pleasurable no." (A Consort's Loyalty, chapter 6)

The bond is formed in a traditional ceremony, in which both parties pledge their allegiance to each other, and is afterwards strengthened by their first sexual encounter. As the bond needs time to settle, it is not possible for both of them to stay apart for a long time at first. Further, being bonded does bring about specific new abilities for both husbands:

"The bond that we form will be one of magick, body, soul, and mind. If you are not able to do wandless magic now, you will be after we are wed. We will be able to speak telepathically with each other; our empathy will be even greater or at least equal. Knowing how the other is feeling or if one is in danger is very important. Since our souls will bind to each other, we have to remain in some kind of contact; although, since I will be bonded to you instead of vice versa, I will be more inclined to just want to be near you, hence sleeping in the same bed." (A Consort's Loyalty, chapter 2)

To refuse the bond or the contact to your predestined second-half brings about physical effects. This is mostly presented through Lucius and Severus' complicated relationship as they never had the chance to participate in a ceremonial bonding. Because of their families as well as their roles in the wizarding war, Lucius had to neglect his special relationship with Severus:

"Because I was breaking my vows...the bond began to become painful. After I slept with Narcissa, pain and agony would course through me like fire. It was most unpleasant." He shrugged, "then Lord Voldemort wanted me...it just hurt." [...]

"Our bodies took a long time to adapt to the constant strain of our separation." Severus spoke up again. "I'm sure you always wondered why Lucius and I seemed to be covered from head to foot everyday, even in the summer, when it grew warmer."

[...]

"Well, the answer is that we could never stay warm." Harry cocked his head. "You will find that if you stay away from Draco for long periods of time, your body temperature will decrease, leaving you cold, and numb. Fire won't help, taking hot baths or showers won't help either. It would be like standing outside in the middle of winter with nothing on but a pair of shorts and a t-shirt." Harry's eyes darkened with sadness and anger (A Consort's Loyalty, chapter 7).

In her story, desolate03 manages to give a detailed account of a special bond within the possibilities of the magical world of Harry Potter, and – most importantly – in her self-created universe of “A Consort’s Loyalty.” Aspects used by desolate03 are quite common in slash stories featuring magical creatures which include predestined mates (e.g. predestined mates, physical effects of bonds) which can also be found in Jinkos’ Harry/Draco story “Mansion built upon sand” featuring Draco as a Veela. Jinko uses a very clever technique in order to teach the reader on Veelas: Throughout the text (mostly at the beginning of a chapter) we find quotations from an imaginary book on Veelas, which is later revealed as Draco Malfoy’s work called “*Veela Mateship: Destiny’s Devious Sense of Humour*” (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 25). The very beginning of the story gives a general introduction to this magical creature:

When a Veela is born, he or she is given a soul mate. This soul mate mightn't be born, or even conceived at the point of the Veela's birth, but nonetheless, he or she is given a mate. The day before his or her seventeenth birthday, the teenaged Veela begins the single most excruciating process of his or her life (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 1).

As the story discussed beforehand, this story as well features a magical creature with a predestined soul mate. However, the way how Draco learns about his soulmate is presented in a completely different way. In Jinko’s story the Veela undergoes a painful and exhausting transformation in three steps: First, the Veela’s body changes according to his or her soul mate’s sex. In Draco’s case, his body becomes more feminine, as his soul mate (Harry) is of the same sex. On the second day of the transformation, the Veela will be haunted by images of his or her mate until the image becomes clear. Once the soul mate is known, Veelas who previously caused harm to their mates will feel all the pain he or she has caused. On the final day of the transformation, the Veela will develop his or her wings under great pain (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 1).

By giving this detailed description on Draco’s transformation, Jinko draws a picture of a creature which wholly defines itself through the bond to his soul mate. Therefore, the bond between Draco and Harry is particularly strong, which finds representation throughout the story. Especially the second step of the transformation is of particular

interest for this enemyslash pairing, as Draco has to suffer from his former relationship with Harry at the very beginning of the story. This can be seen as the atonement for his behaviour towards Harry, and simultaneously makes room for his unquestionable devotion, as:

Once a Veela knows his or her mate, he or she will do absolutely anything to obtain his or her love and be bound to him or her until death. A Veela cannot harm his or her mate, have sexual activity with someone other than his or her mate (after the Veela has discovered whom his or her mate actually is), and will otherwise be completely loyal to his or her mate (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 1).

This story also features severe physical effects for Veelas who are not able to be in contact with their mate. Draco suffers terribly from his mate's absence, for example, he loses control over his legs and has to use a wheelchair. Finally, in the last chapter, Harry and Draco perform their bonding as it is required for Veelas:

A Veela binds with his or her mate when the couple consummates the relationship. When the two copulate, an exchange of blood is necessary for the Veela and the mate to be fully one, connected through mind, body and soul. This is traditionally done through an oral exchange after bitten in the crook of the neck. Not only does this invoke the bond, but also it leaves a scar as a sign that the two were officially bound for all eternity. There is nothing known that can break such a bond between two entities (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 1).

In the Potterverse, blood always states a powerful ingredient for anything magical, may it be a potion or the exchange of it during a bonding or wedding ceremony. Used in such ceremonies within fanon, it almost always states a finite union between two characters, which means that there is no chance of dissolving the bond without fatal consequences.

Forced bonds

Especially with enemyslash pairings, a forced bond is a useful trick within a narrative, as it results in more plausible ways and explanations on how two characters – formerly

enemies or fiends – overcome their issues and develop their relationship. The two characters have to get involved and deal with their feelings towards each other. This, of course, helps the author to develop a plot involving a romantic relationship between two figures who initially feel nothing but hate for each other, as no explanation for their change in attitude has to be given but the spell or potion which resulted in a bond. On the other hand, this story-line offers a vast creative playground for the author, which is another reason why stories including forced bonds find many readers and authors. However, not in all cases the bond is formed without the character's consent. In order to show both possibilities, my analysis will focus on two narratives which represent this distinction.

Anna Fugazzi's Harry/Draco slash fiction "Bond"¹⁰² serves as a representation for stories in which the characters are bonded without any effort on their part. Here a special spell is used in order to bring about a forced union between Harry and Draco. This can almost be considered as a classical way to form a relationship between these two characters, as this story-line can be found in many Drarry stories.

Right in the very beginning of the story, Harry and Draco find themselves in the hospital wing of Hogwarts and learn about the reason for the state they are in:

"Boys," Dumbledore said slowly, "I'm afraid you've been... well, bonded."
Silence.

"What?" Malfoy said weakly.

"A bonding spell was on a door you both went through, set to go off in the presence of high emotion. When you walked through it, you were arguing about something, and..." (Bond, chapter 1)

This fan fiction deals with a bonding spell which equals marriage in the world of wizards. Professor McGonagall explains:

"In the wizarding world, a marriage is not a marriage until a bonding spell has been cast, binding the two spouses together. Normally this is done voluntarily, much the same way that Muggles make vows-" [...] "-but unlike Muggle vows, a bonding spell imposes certain behaviour on the spouses. And unlike Muggle

¹⁰² <http://www.fanfiction.net/s/2493456/1/Bond>, accessed 04/01/10

vows, a bonding spell can be cast as a curse, without the consent of the two parties. It is of course absolutely illegal to cast such a curse, but it is still binding on the parties." (Bond, chapter 1)

With "certain behaviour" she refers to the husband's predicament that they can't influence their coercion to behave like spouses. Therefore, Anna Fugazzi uses a magical instrument in order to force Harry and Draco to get along with each other. There is no way out, as "only the caster can break the spell" (Bond, chapter 1). Normally, this doesn't state a problem as the bonding spell is performed voluntarily by the spouses. In Harry and Draco's case, the spell was cast as a curse and can't be resolved on their part. It is indeed an interesting concept regarding marriage the author decided to use for her slash fiction. Although there are some parallels to our society's understanding and traditions of weddings, she includes magical aspects to enforce and force the union of Harry and Draco. Compared to the concept of marriage in the Muggle world, marriage in the Potterverse is presented as a stronger and much more defined entity.

A story which does not only give a completely different reason for the bonding of two characters but also includes a special mate-concept of werewolves is McKay's "For Life,"¹⁰³ featuring Remus Lupin (werewolf) and Severus Snape as the main pairing. Being held captive by Death Eaters¹⁰⁴ Remus Lupin gets a cell inmate who turns out to be Severus Snape. As full-moon approaches, Remus instantly recognizes the Death Eater's intentions: after his transformation he cannot prevent himself from killing Severus. The situation seems hopeless and their fates sealed. However, Remus remembers that werewolves supposedly refrain from hurting their mates. After having sex with each other, Remus would be able to recognize his own scent on his mate – in this case Severus – and would refrain from harming him. However, this bond entails a life-long union:

[...] To mate with a werewolf is to be bound to it and it to you for the rest of your life. That much is fact: werewolves can choose to bind themselves to their partner until death. We don't have to, and most of us don't, but we can." Severus blanched and shook his head. "Can the bond be broken? What exactly does it mean to be bound?"

¹⁰³ <http://remembrall.slashcity.net/viewstory.php?sid=155>, accessed 04/01/10

¹⁰⁴ followers of Voldemort

"No, the bond can't be broken except by death," Remus answered quietly. "To be bound means..." [...] "It means you and I would have to be together. Not every minute of every day, of course, but I would need to be with you. In your physical presence. I would need to touch you. Not sexually, necessarily, but physical contact of some kind. If we were separated for a lengthy amount of time, I would begin to pine for you. [...] Like a devoted pet deprived of its owner. If you died, or if I were kept from you long enough, I would die." (McKay: For Life)

Not finding an alternative solution to escape the predicament they are in, they both agree on performing the mating-ritual. Here again, an exchange of blood is necessary in order to make the bond complete. This concept is even intensified as the ritual requires this exchange to take place during sex:

"Because it's a mating ritual in the literal sense," Remus replied [...] "The biting is the culmination -- the climax, if you'll forgive the term -- of what the sex act builds up to. Each step is necessary to create the bond." (McKay: For Life)

As this story presents the bond between a werewolf and a wizard, the ritual also carries some special characteristics which can be clearly identified as resulting from the animalistic features of this magical creature. Through the act of biting and the simultaneous exchange of blood, the werewolf marks his mate and vice versa. Additionally, the werewolf has to mark his mate through his scent, which, in this case, means another bodily fluid (semen). It seems that in this case, the fact that Remus is a werewolf dominates the author's idea of forming a union - which has to be particularly strong – and outweighs the need for creating a ritual which resembles a ceremony in our world.

6.4. Mpreg (male pregnancy)

Male pregnancy, or the commonly used abbreviation mpreg, serves as one of the best examples for the often stated fact that there are no boundaries to the possibilities in fan fiction writing. Additionally, slash stories including mpreg are especially interesting, as authors are not only required to draw upon their creativity, but also have to manage

to find plausible explanations for how a male is able to conceive and give birth. Although slash fiction featuring mpreg have been written in all fandoms since the advent of fan fiction in general, it is still a rather controversial issue. Not all active authors and readers of slash are in favour of this distinct idea and many avoid such narratives.

One of the most frequent difficulties faced by authors of mpreg slash fiction is finding a unique, new and creative way of how to make male pregnancy possible. The magical component of the Potterverse indeed is of assistance, as it opens a space of infinite possibilities. However, Harry Potter slash fiction writers encounter other challenges:

Mpreg is getting harder and harder to write, and this in a fandom that actually makes it pretty darn easy, as fandoms go. For example, I don't write Mpreg in my CSI fics because the show is set in a pretty down-to-earth realm, unlike Harry Potter, Merlin, Highlander to a certain extent, and even Supernatural. All of those fandoms provide writers with an element of magic or at least... something not quite human, and therefore not completely subjected to human physics. And then it's just a question of deciding on an original way of impregnating a guy, haha.

That's the tough part. I have been in many, many conversations with coffeejunkii [another well-known writer in the Harry Potter fandom] wherein we just toss out idea after idea, trying to find one that hasn't been done to death or even been done at all, but with so many writers in the Mpreg sub-genre, it's extremely difficult to find something that hasn't already been done. Depending on the tone you are going for, you either need a "plausible" (within the fandom's physics) explanation, or no explanation at all. I like the challenge of trying to come up with something new, of explaining why Harry or Draco is about to give birth in such a way as to make it believable, so to speak.¹⁰⁵

As already announced by Rurounihime, there are endless possibilities to impregnate men in Harry Potter slash fiction. My analysis, therefore, only states an introduction into the world of mpreg in Harry Potter by exemplifying a limited account of how this theme is dealt with in slash fiction. I will particularly focus on the explanation of the two most basic steps of pregnancy: conceiving and giving birth.

¹⁰⁵ taken from an E-Mail send to me by Rurounihime, received 04/07/10 - for complete E-Mail see *appendix*

Mpreg due to characteristics of magical creatures

Magical creatures are not only used to describe special kinds of bonds and relationships (see further 6.3.). As magical creatures are not necessarily subjected to human physique, they are likely to be featured in stories including male pregnancy. To demonstrate how male pregnancy of magical beings is described in slash fan fiction, I will (again) use desolate03's "A Consort's Loyalty", as well as Jinko's "Mansion built upon sand", which both have already been discussed regarding the topic same-sex marriage/bonds in Harry Potter slash fiction (chapter 6.3.). As already stated in 6.3., Draco belongs to the species of Veelas in "Mansion built upon sand". His body did not only become more feminine in order to complement his male mate. Additionally, he has grown a womb which gives him the ability to conceive children. Despite of his lack of female genitalia, Draco's womb functions exactly like any other woman's, including monthly periods:

A Veela with a womb will suffer the exact same pain as any other with a womb. Menstruation occurs within all Carriers, however without blood. As an ovum expires, it is returned to the lining of the womb, rather than washed out with it as it is in other humanoid races. The ovaries, however, still contract, if the Veela is of mixed human and Veela blood. This is because of the human traits that Veela shares. A pure blood Veela would never feel the menstruation process occurring, and would never know that it was occurring (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 14).

Desolate03's universe presents Veelas which are able to conceive via anal sex. Although it is not clearly defined within the narrative it can be assumed that Draco also grew some essential parts which enable fertilization after ejaculation during anal sexual intercourse.

Generally it can be said that starting a family is one of the main issues within this story, as giving birth is of utmost importance for all Veelas. This fact is highlighted throughout the story, but is especially obvious in chapter 19. Here, Harry performs an abortion on their first child (as Harry is the sire, he is able to perform abortions through focusing his energy on the growing foetus):

Draco's eyes widened. "The only way you can prevent me from having this child is by you aborting it yourself. You can't seriously tell me that you're willing to kill your own baby." The hand on his tummy started to burn. "Harry! You're not really going to..?"

"I'm sorry," Harry muttered, pressing his lips to Draco's collarbone. "Please don't hate me for this..."

"Stop it, Harry, please." Draco tried squirming away from the hand. "I need this baby."

"Snape told me this was all that I needed to do. He said it wouldn't hurt you physically." Tears started to cascade Draco's face as he turned his head from side to side. "Please don't...please don't...I can protect our baby from anyone-anything-but you." [...] For the first time in what felt like forever to Harry, Draco turned to look at him. "I can't wait that long. I really can't." He looked, to Harry, like the epitome of pain. "I don't know how I'm going to make it this time, Harry. [...] This one meant the world to me." More tears spilled. "Please, change your order. Let me kill myself..." (Mansion built upon sand, chapter 19).

Although the whole story constantly gives detailed description on the characteristics of Veelas, it does not give the actual facts of how male members of this species give birth.

The second story –as well already discussed in 6.3. - featuring a magical creature which is able to give birth, is Jinko's "A Consort's Loyalty." As Draco belongs to the magical realm of Elves and has the status of "Consort" – resulting from the bond to his "Lord" Harry – he is able to conceive. The same holds true for Lord Lucius and his Consort Severus. Contrary to the formerly discussed story, Jinko does not give clear explanations on physical conditions which enable males to be impregnated. Not until Severus is about to give birth, does the reader learn about the necessary changes a male body has to undergo in order to conceive and give birth:

"His body was not given time to make preparations for having this child. Though a man cannot essentially give birth as women do, even his body will go through changes to prepare, to make it easier to perform the cesarean section to his body. The child and or children are protected in a magick womb that is started at conception and grows with them. At the time when the wizard or Elf goes into a natural labor, that womb will slowly disappear leaving the babies unprotected yet ready to be delivered." Claudius looked up at Draco with fearful eyes, "because Severus was forced into labor because of strenuous circumstances the womb didn't gradually disappear, it ruptured,

not only that but he is a full month early, these are complications no one has ever had to deal with." (A Consort's Loyalty, chapter 17)

Not only the Consorts Draco and Severus are capable of bearing and giving birth to children. A talk between Harry and Lucius reveals the possibility of male pregnancy for wizards:

"I was wondering, am I also able to get pregnant?" Lucius blinked in surprise and then smiled.

"I believe you can. I'm sure the Potter's are one of the few wizarding bloodlines where the males can get pregnant, yes, it is possible, [...] (A Consort's Loyalty, chapter 6).

Within the story, no indication can be found which states a difference in male pregnancy between wizards and magical creatures. "A Consort's Loyalty" not only serves as an example for the possibility of mpreg in connection with magical creatures. It further sets an example for a fan-created universe, in which male pregnancy can be regarded as normal within wizarding society.

A slash fiction featuring a pregnant male magical creature without describing this as a "natural" ability is busaikko's "Ten Aprils."¹⁰⁶ This story is of particular interest, as it uses explanations and concepts on male pregnancy which are completely different to those illustrated above. One of the most striking differences is the reason for Remus Lupin's pregnancy:

"Scaeva¹⁰⁷ never saw himself as a butcher. He simply wanted to direct the evolution of wizardkind. He had the oddest interpretation of Darwin," Remus said pensively. "Following the Humane Treatment of Lycanthropes Act and the sterilisation of all female British werewolves, Greyback began a correspondence with Scaeva concerning his experiments with male pregnancy." [...] "Greyback freed Scaeva from the hospital two years ago. It didn't make much of a splash in the newspapers here -- people were much more concerned with the rising tide of terror at home. Well." Remus sipped at

¹⁰⁶ <http://archive.skyehawke.com/story.php?no=13144>, accessed 01/15/2010

¹⁰⁷ Decimus Scaeva is an original character by busaikko, who is famous for his experiments with male pregnancy.

his tea. "Greyback turned Scaeva himself and gave him free rein to try and find a way to breed werewolves." (Ten Aprils, chapter 1)

Remus was held captive by Greyback and used in the described experiments with werewolves and male pregnancy. He indeed is expecting a child. This is a very special take on mpreg in Harry Potter slash fiction, as it not only involves a theory of our world (Darwinism), but further does not entail any sexual acts in order to achieve pregnancy: "Men don't get pregnant through sex. It took magic, very dark and very wrong" (Ten Aprils, chapter 3).

Mpreg due to spells/curses

Another quite common method in order to create plausible explanations for male pregnancy is the invention of specific spells. Often enough such spells are used as curses, and therefore may also lead to unwanted pregnancies.

A story which includes this story-line is Rurounihime's "Coming to terms,"¹⁰⁸ featuring Harry and Draco as the main pairing. The author uses another method of introducing male pregnancy into slash fiction: The reader does not get any specific information on the curse and its exact effects on Draco's body. Rurounihime's explanation for the lack of description:

In Coming to Terms, I left the explanation fairly vague: an encounter with a bad set of spells combined with a drunk night for Harry and Draco is what did it, so it was a complete accident, unpredictable for either character, especially if they really aren't thinking about the possibility in general. Freak of nature, you might say, wrong time and wrong place, that kind of thing.¹⁰⁹

Throughout the story, the reader does not get the impression that pregnant wizards are unheard of in this universe. The healer treating Draco does not give any indication that a pregnant wizard is a nouveau curiosity. True to her method of creating an

¹⁰⁸ http://community.livejournal.com/hd_inspired/13311.html, accessed 01/15/2010

¹⁰⁹ taken from an E-Mail send to me by Rurounihime, received 04/07/10 - for complete E-Mail see *appendix*

mpreg-story without giving away too much details, Rurounihime also refrains from giving a specific account of the birth of Harry and Draco's daughter.

Other magical possibilities

As the magical world of Harry Potter offers an infinite number of possible explanations for male pregnancy, not only magical creatures or spells are used for slash fiction belonging to the mpreg category. An example which deals with two different possibilities for gay wizards to become parents is emphathic_siren's Drarry story "Sperm Cow."¹¹⁰

Calling in an open life debt, Draco demands Harry's sperm in order to produce an heir. With the help of a delicate fertilization ritual, Draco and Harry's genetic material is combined and put into an "incubox" in which the baby will be conceived and grown. By introducing this "incubox," the author uses a rather exotic way for wizards to become parents, as this magical tool allows fertilization outside of a human body. Nevertheless, this method does not omit sexual components. To ensure the ritual's success, Harry has to reach his climax through manual stimulation performed by Draco. Although the author at first introduces this special way of fertilization, she eventually changes her concept, as Harry eventually finds himself pregnant because he managed to redirect the fertilization on himself. So again we are presented a slash story including a pregnant wizard.

7. Transgression of boundaries in Harry Potter slash fiction

My further analysis will focus on themes featured in slash fiction which might be considered as controversial. Although this analysis still deals with the sexualisation of Harry Potter, the following discussion focuses on more dubious sexual acts and

¹¹⁰ http://community.livejournal.com/hd_inspired/6811.html, accessed 01/24/2010

preferences presented in slash fiction within this fandom. Discussed topics will be: incest, bestiality and rape/non-con/dub-con¹¹¹.

At this point it is important to state that my analysis will neither focus on why authors decide to include these themes in their stories, nor why many readers enjoy such narratives. It is not my aim or mission to deal with the authors' intention or the readers' preferences. Further, I neither will include a moral discussion referring to the themes listed above nor will I render a judgement to any degree. My analysis will solely focus on how and to which extent these topics are presented in Harry Potter slash. Again, my analysis cannot be considered as a complete study of this topic. It only serves as an introduction to these specific sub-categories of Harry Potter slash fiction.

7.1. Incest

Incest, which refers to members of a family engaging in a sexual relationship, has a lot of fans in the Harry Potter fandom. Although most stories featuring incestuous relationships belong to the PWP-category and therefore mostly focus on sex, also narratives with more elaborate plots can be found. This sub-category of slash fiction also knows no boundaries to the authors' imagination who hence have infinite possibilities in order to make an incestuous relationship plausible. In general it can be said that incest stories always feature some kind of explanation for the presence of a particular pairing within the narrative. For my analysis I have chosen a sample of slash fictions which are representing certain notions often encountered within narratives including incestuous relationships.

¹¹¹ dub-con: short for dubious consent
non-con: short for non-consensual

Most popular pairings

The most popular families used for fan fiction of this kind are the Weasleys (referred to as Weasleycest) and the Malfoys (referred to as Malfoycest). Although, in Weasleycest, incestuous stories with all members and possible pairings engaging in sexual acts can be found, the most popular pairing by far is George and his twin Fred. Stories featuring this pairing are also referred to as "Twincest." The deeply shared bond between George and Fred even within the original novels may be a reason for the large amount of Twincest slash fiction. Additionally, this pair is always described as sharing everything, so it may be considered only natural that they also share their sexuality and express their feelings towards each other in a physical way as well. In wolfiekins' story "Fine"¹¹² Ron states:

" [...] They do this all the time at home. They don't care if anyone sees them. Except Mum. And Dad. And Ginny."

This notion is actually featured in many Twincest stories. Therefore, the special relationship between George and Fred is mostly only a secret to their parents and little sister. The Weasley brothers are frequently presented as much more open towards this pairings (or are sometimes even involved in an incestuous relationship as well). But of course, this all leads to generalisation which should be avoided here. Overall it can be said that stories featuring every possible pairing within the sub-category of Weasleycest can be found.

Another family frequently used in narratives featuring incestuous relationships are the Malfoys. Their different status in the wizarding world as well as their traditional Pureblood-attitude serves for additional creative space to make such a relationship plausible. This statement will be put forward later in this chapter. The most popular pairing within Malfoycest is Lucius/Draco. Adding a sexual notion to this father-son relationship serves as one of the most frequently used possibilities within incestuous Harry Potter slash fiction.

¹¹² <http://www.thequidditchpitch.org/viewstory.php?sid=3638>, accessed 04/20/10

Incest as a means of sexual education

Incest as a means of sexual education is particularly common within Malfoycest. Especially their traditional attitudes and their feeling of belonging to the highest class within wizarding society often translates into the fact that Pureblood wizards not only have to excel in their careers, but also have to be efficient in the art of sex. Aisling's story "Pureblood Tradition"¹¹³ picks up this idea:

"Draco, son," Lucius swallowed, "on a Pureblood's 17th birthday they become of age, which means they are legally allowed to be sexually active. Which means they should still be virgins, are you?" He asked, with narrowed eyes. Draco blushed again but nodded. "Good. Anyway, when they turn 17 they are instructed, you could say, by the parent of which ever sex the child prefers. In your case, it will be me. Do you understand so far?"

Draco nodded, "so it is a little like sex education?" At his parents blank looks he added, "Dumbledore was talking about bringing in a sex education class next year, because there have been two pregnancies so far among the Mudbloods. It's disgraceful how they aren't forced to follow our traditions." He sneered.

"No, it won't be like that Muggle class. They will tell you things; how to use 'protection' of the Muggle kind; how to seek help should your 'protection' fail, all rubbish I assure you. The Tradition is much more..." Lucius trailed off.

"Demonstrative," Narcissa added with a small smirk. Draco's eyebrows knitted together.

"I will, as part of the Tradition, be required to show you any aspect of intercourse you wish to know." The elder blond tucked a strand of his platinum blond hair behind his ear before continuing. "As your mother said, it will be demonstrative. Think of it like a practical exam. You may ask me anything, and I will show you." (Pureblood Tradition, chapter 1)

This story states incestuous relationships as not avoidable within Pureblood society. To follow the old traditions and attitude therefore means that parents are obliged to teach their children first-hand. Especially interesting in this story is the contrast made between Muggles and magical folk. Throughout the text, Muggles and muggle-born witches and wizards are discriminated because of their ignorance towards the traditional ways.

¹¹³ <http://www.thesilversnitch.net/tss3/viewstory.php?sid=3645>, accessed 04/20/10

As traditions are in no way reflected or disputed, Draco engages in the special sexual education carried out by his father without complaint. However, Draco and Lucius' sexual encounter lasts longer than the one night required for the education of Draco. Additionally, their father-son relationship develops into a relationship between lovers.

Another Malfoycest story featuring Lucius/Draco is "Daddy, teach me"¹¹⁴ by confessionssmut. Although this narrative also uses sex as a means of education, the conditions and given reasons are completely different to the story discussed beforehand. Further, other notions common within slash fiction including incestuous pairings can be found in confessionssmut's work.

After a bad dream, Draco (aged 11) comes into his father's room and asks if he can stay the night. Lucius agrees readily. While holding his son in his arms, his special love for Draco becomes apparent:

Sighing in pleasure as smooth skin slid against smooth skin, Lucius wrapped an arm around the boy, pulling him closer so that he could feel the lump that Draco's genitals made. Lucius had secretly desired his only son from the moment he turned nine and asked him if it was normal if the thing between his legs became hard (Daddy, teach me, part 1)

This excerpt reveals that the sex which will occur is not rationalised through traditions or any other fact specific for the wizarding world. As Lucius has been secretly lusting after his son for quite some time now, he is more than willing to answer Draco's question "How do men have sex with other men?" (Daddy, teach me, part 1) by means of first-hand education. So one topic - which has not been discussed so far - introduced in "Daddy, teach me" is paedophilia. Lucius' preference becomes obvious throughout the narrative, as there are numerous references to Draco's smaller appearance (e.g. "tiny erection", "small hands"). Also, the characterisation of Draco leaves no doubt that he is still a minor. Especially his way of speaking can be clearly defined as infantile and naïve. This excerpt does not only give an example of the focus on Draco's smaller appearance as well as his naïve language:

¹¹⁴ http://community.livejournal.com/hp_squick/45380.html, accessed 04/20/10

Gently the young blond encircled the raging erection in his small hand barely covering a third of the large dick and began to slowly run his hand up and down the length.

“Your [sic] so big, daddy!” Draco exclaimed, eyes wide as he turned slightly to look at his father (Daddy, teach me, part 1)

Another difference to the story discussed beforehand states the fact that Draco is the initiating force. Through his behaviour he downright encourages Lucius to give into his desires. Further, he willingly accepts his father as his lover and teacher of sexual pleasure.

7.2. Bestiality

Bestiality – which means sex with animals – within Harry Potter slash fiction does not mean a wizard or witch having a sexual relationship with an animal per se. It rather refers to magical folk engaging in a sexual relationship with a wizard or witch who is able to transform into an animal. Slash fiction labelled as including bestiality therefore normally means that a character has intercourse with a wizard or witch with the animagus ability. It may be assumed that the presence of characters with such specific abilities serves as a creative trigger which enforces the exploration of this particular possibility.

Sex with magical creatures

Regarding this rule, the most common bestiality fics feature either Remus Lupin (Moony), who transforms into a werewolf at every full moon night due to his infection, or Sirius Black (Padfoot), who is an animagus and is able to change into a big black dog by free will. A story featuring Harry in a relationship with both characters mentioned above is “Of Wolf and Man”¹¹⁵ by Maeglin Yedi.

¹¹⁵ <http://www.skyehawke.com/archive/story.php?no=675>, accessed 04/21/10

Because of a curse, Remus is no longer able to transform himself back to his human form and is therefore forced to keep in his werewolf form. As Moony, he starts a sexual relationship with Harry, who is living with him and Sirius. Here it is important to state that Moony and Remus are not exactly the same person. Although the human mind is present while being transformed, Remus is not able to control the wolf. This is of significance as not Remus but Moony initiates a physical relationship with Harry:

"Um..." said Harry, not sure if he should say anything at all or just pretend he didn't just wank while his former professor in disguise had obviously been watching him [Moony sleeps in Harry's room]. But before Harry could make a decision about how to act, Moony pushed his head under the covers, and then there was something warm and wet stroking across his softening prick (Of Wolf and Man, chapter 1).

Harry and Moony's sexual encounters are in no way non-consensual, as the young wizard willingly seeks out the pleasures given to him by the werewolf and even falls in love with him. However, it is no surprise that Remus – back to his human form after finding a way to remove the curse – is not pleased that Harry gave in to the wolf's advances so willingly:

"How could you, Harry?" Remus croaked, pale fingers tightening around Sirius' arm. "How could you let Moony do that to you?"
It ached, and it would never go away again. Harry felt anger rising, bitter and poisonous, and he gritted his teeth and narrowed his eyes against the itch and the pain and the fury that possessed every cell of his empty body. "I didn't do anything. You started it!"
Sirius looked startled by Harry's words, and he stopped stroking Remus' hair, looking down at his lover in utter confusion. "What is he --"
"That wasn't me!" Remus tried to pull himself up, but was obviously still too weak to support himself. So he leaned on Sirius' shoulder, gleaming eyes fixed on Harry. "As if I would ever touch you like that." (Of Wolf and Man, chapter 3)

The main reason for Remus's anger, however, is not simply the fact that Harry let himself be seduced by Moony. It turns out that Harry has been infected with lycanthropy: "His rectum! Harry got infected through his rectum because he's spent the last three weeks letting Moony fuck him!" (Of Wolf and Man, chapter 3). This way of getting infected may serve as a sublime example for the discussion at the beginning

of chapter 6 in this thesis, as parallels can be drawn between the infection with HIV/Aids and lycanthropy.

Later in the story, Remus and Harry again find to each other and start a relationship in which Sirius joins in. As the universe around this love triangle is explored further in the sequel “To see the human soul take wing”¹¹⁶ this relationship does not only lead to threesomes in which all participants are in their human form. Bestiality, therefore, plays a major role within this narrative, as all three characters living in this special relationship have the ability to transform into an inhuman form.

Magical deformation of the body due to curses

The Harry/Draco slash story “Let it be enough”¹¹⁷ by seleneheart presents a rare example of bestiality in slash fiction, as it features a character who is not a magical creature or animal, but has partly turned animal-like due to a dark spell. Exploring this possibility makes this narrative a very interesting and rare exploration of bestiality in slash fiction. Commonly, bestiality only refers to sex with beings who are totally transformed, which normally also entails a non-human mind to take over the figure. But in this case, the character only deals with physical changes which are limited to a certain part of his body.

Harry and Draco are living in an established relationship. Draco gets hit by a dark spell and therefore grows tentacles out of a wound on his stomach. This story holds true to its categorisation under “Sexualising Harry Potter” as Harry’s discovery of Draco’s new assets immediately results in a sexual act including the tentacles:

While Draco prepared him, two tentacles caught Harry’s wrists and held them in place beside Harry’s head. He tested them, but again found that he couldn’t free himself. He moaned in delight.

¹¹⁶ <http://archive.skyehawke.com/story.php?no=4619>, accessed 04/21/10

¹¹⁷ <http://seleneheart.110mb.com/stories/letitbeenough.html>, accessed 04/22/10

Two more tentacles pressed his legs open and others explored his erogenous zones that Draco knew well. Harry's body was jerking and heaving, straining for the completion he'd feel when Draco was inside him.

"I'm ready, I promise," he begged. "Just fill me."

Draco laughed and draped Harry's knees over his arms, pushing inside with one smooth thrust. Harry was so excited by what was happening to him that his body opened easily and Draco bottomed out inside him.

Draco fucked him with an easy rhythm, not hurrying, and the tentacles touched Harry everywhere – threading through his hair, sliding across his armpits, circling his cock. He was lost and drowning in the sensation of so much stimulation. To his shame, Harry came in nearly record time, but the flesh wrapped around his prick kept squeezing, not letting him deflate completely (Selenaheart: Let it be enough).

It can be argued that this story does not belong to the sub-category of bestiality. Even the author does not add "bestiality" in the header for her story. In her warnings she only mentions "tentacles." Nevertheless, I decided to add this story in my analysis, as it is a great example of the infinite possibilities within Harry Potter slash fiction. Further, tentacles obviously do not belong to the conventional human body and therefore fall under the category of bestiality, even though Draco does not show any other animalistic features.

Other "beasts" – curiosities

As fan fiction is a phenomenon of infinite possibilities, it is not surprising that also other curiosities can be found within the sub-category of bestiality. A story which does defy any possible generalisation of bestiality featured in Harry Potter slash is "Draco's first pet"¹¹⁸ by literaryspell. This narrative does not include a transformed human having sex with a wizard. Here, a common, harmless pet for children living in the wizarding world – which has also been mentioned in the original novels – is used and sexualised in order to be part of this fan-written work.

¹¹⁸ http://www.fanfiction.net/s/5820993/1/Dracos_First_Pet, accessed 04/21/2010

Harry makes Draco a present in form of a “Pygmy Puff.”¹¹⁹ Draco is not aware of the fact that this present comes with a twist: The behaviour of this Pygmy Puff has been magically altered in order to serve as a magical sex toy. There are quite a number of slash fictions available which also use the magical component of the Harry Potter universe in order to create special sex toys. However, combining this idea with the concept of the Pygmy Puffs adds to this story’s special value within the sub-category of bestiality:

"Oh, gods, oh, gods," Draco chanted—he couldn't close his eyes again if he tried. The tongue on that *thing* was inside him! *Inside his penis!* Nothing should ever, *ever* be there! He stared and gaped but it didn't stop. After a moment, the puff pushed even more tongue inside, and a burning sting assaulted Draco's cock—he was afraid to push it away, though—what if it grabbed hold somehow?

Besides the sting, there was a faint stretching sensation and a very real pleasure—the deeper the thing went into him, the more intense the pleasure became. He couldn't explain it—he hoped he'd never have to. The puff's tongue was slick and *long* and just kept going inside him. Horror and awe kept him still as his urethra was filled with inch after inch of tongue. Draco was fully hard now, his hips bucking very slightly into the sensation (Literaryspell: Draco’s first pet).

This story does not only deal with a rare curiosity within bestiality fics. Additionally, the sexual act performed by the Pygmy Puff states a curiosity in itself, as male urethral penetration cannot be considered a sexual practice commonly written about in slash fiction.

7.3. Rape/non-con/dub-con

The nearly countless number of existing variations of these themes in Harry Potter slash does not allow a categorization according to certain parameters as used in my

¹¹⁹ A Pygmy Puff is a miniature Puffskein [A Puffskein is covered in soft, custard-coloured fur and spherical in shape], sold in Fred and George Weasley's shop Weasleys' Wizard Wheezes at 93 Diagon Alley in London. They are sold from cages and come in various shades of pink and purple, in the girls section of the shop. see further http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Pygmy_Puff and <http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Puffskein>, accessed 05/04/10

analysis of the topics already discussed. Therefore, I will try to give an introduction on how these themes may be interpreted and used within Harry Potter slash fiction.

Rape, which is synonymous for non-con, is featured in numerous stories of all pairings within Harry Potter slash. Looking back on the content of my thesis so far, it is unavoidable to assume that rape often serves as an issue within narratives belonging to the hurt/comfort genre. This assumption can be considered as true. However, also many slash stories exist which particularly focus on rape from a quite different point of view. While it can be said that rape stories belonging to the hurt/comfort genre mainly deal with the aftermath of sexual abuse, other stories put emphasis on the act of rape itself. Of course, the reasons and the intentions for rape given in fan-written works are manifold.

A rape-story including the theme of sex slaves is “Whoever keeps me”¹²⁰ by Ravenna C. Tan. Here, Draco was given to Severus Snape by Voldemort to serve him in every possible way. However, it is not Severus who abuses Draco. As a slave, Draco is given the status of being below any other wizard and is therefore available for every guilty pleasure of all Death Eaters. For this reason, he is raped constantly by other followers of Voldemort:

At some point they opt for Incarcerous, cords binding my limbs to the table, though hands still touch me here and there. I am lucky to be face down on the wood where my cock and nipples are protected from their whims. As it is, my back is an inviting expanse...

But it is my asshole MacInnis wants and he seems to have convinced the crowd that it is the one dish on the menu they ought all try. I swallow hard as my destined use for the evening seems inevitable (Whoever keeps me, chapter 1).

Another story also featuring the topic of sex slaves “A soft spot for lost causes”¹²¹ by helenish, features Draco and Ron as the main pairing. Although both narratives additionally belong to the hurt/comfort genre, the latter does not include graphic descriptions of the rape situation and solely focuses on the aftermath.

¹²⁰ http://community.livejournal.com/hp_tarot/41178.html, accessed 04/28/10

¹²¹ <http://helenish.livejournal.com/95642.html>, accessed 04/28/10

Ron finds Draco disoriented and almost unconscious in a Death Eater cell and rescues him. He allows Draco to stay with him during his recovery and immediately recognizes his strange behaviour:

He was naked by the time Ron was in the doorway, shoulders shaking, panting, and as Ron watched, he scrambled out of the bed and crawled across the floor to kneel in front of him and put one careful hand on his thigh.

"Please," Draco said. "It's a bad dream," Ron said. "You've been rescued." [...] then he lost track of his thoughts entirely as Draco leaned forward and pressed his face against his thigh, turned his head and rubbed his cheek against Ron's cock, through his undershorts.

"No," Ron said. "You don't—"

"Please," Draco said. "Fuck me," and then he made a low, horrible noise in the back of his throat, his whole body twitching. [...]

"Fuck me," Draco said, "Please. Fuck me, I want you to, I need you to split me open—"

"Now, just—Draco," Ron said. Draco stilled for a minute, staring up at him; his pulse was quick and uneven under Ron's fingers.

"Fuck me," he mumbled.

"yes, right, I know, shh—"

"Fuck me," Draco said, frantically, rolling his hips under Ron's desperate hands.

"I get it," Ron said. "You don't have to—say that."

"I'm a slut," Draco said earnestly. "I can suck your prick, I—"

"How about not," Ron said. He was blushing to the tips of his ears, his shoulders felt hot and miserable, this fucking, fucking war, he thought [...] (Helenish: A soft spot for lost causes).

Further into the story we find out that Draco has been used as a sex slave and cursed with a spell which makes him lose his mind unless he is sexually stimulated until he achieves orgasm. The combination of the sex slave theme and this specific spell presents a duplication regarding the sexualisation of the Potterverse. Additionally, it adds another humiliating fact to Draco's predicament, as he has to seek out Ron for sexual completion in order to overcome the side-effects of the curse.

The next story - also featuring Draco and Ron as the main pairing –which deals with rape according to different criteria than the narratives discussed above is “Beg me for it”¹²² by Icarus.

Icarus presents an AU story in which Lucius Malfoy is the Minister of Magic and the whole wizarding world is subjected to the reign of Death Eaters. One day, Lucius asks Ron to save his son, who has betrayed Voldemort and therefore will be executed if he does not show obedience towards Ron. He has no other chance than to take Lucius’ orders without knowing his exact function within this rescue. Arriving at the scene, he immediately recognizes his task: He has to rape and humiliate Draco in front of a whole stadium full of Death Eaters. Nevertheless, this narrative does not describe a rape similar to the ones stated above. As Ron has to fulfil his “duty” in order to save Draco, he is not a willing participant in the rape. Further, he tries to make it as comfortable as possible for Draco by guiding him through with non-vocalised hints and a great deal of pretending:

Another inch and Draco screamed bloody murder and whimpered, almost crying. That was it. No more of this. He couldn't take it, and neither could I. Okay... time for brilliant plan number three: Acting 101. I nipped Draco's shoulder to get his attention. He was panting horribly. He looked around at me, his eyes dilated, and I mouthed: Fake It! Draco nodded emphatically. I put my hand on his arse and guided it in time with my thrusts, so he was basically moving in the same direction as me. I made a point of moving a lot, to cover what we were doing. Oh, and I moaned theatrically. "Oh God, oh yeah... yeah, oh, Yeah!" (Icarus: Beg me for it)

Although Ron’s abuse of Draco cannot be seen as rape as such, as he does not want to hurt him intentionally, the story clearly belongs to the sub-category of rape-fiction, as also non-graphic descriptions of former rapes are referred to within the story.

The last story I want to use for my analysis of rape within slash fiction states a narrative which does not only feature sexual abuse, but also the already discussed themes incest and incest with the purpose of sexual education. “Choices of a Death

¹²² <http://www.thequidditchpitch.org/viewstory.php?sid=781>, accessed 04/28/10

Eater's Son"¹²³ by Iyiint serves as an example of combining those aspects in order to achieve the most extensive effect possible.

The story follows Draco's struggle with dealing with the constant physical and sexual abuse inflicted upon him by his father for most of his childhood. This narrative especially manages to present the psychological consequences rape victims have to suffer from. This becomes particularly clear through his distorted perception of his father and his father's intentions:

"It wasn't really rape. I mean, we've done it before, he was just rough this time" [...] (Choices of a Death Eater's Son, chapter 19).

"I just wanted him to love me," the blond sobbed. "I wanted his approval and he was happy when we were...together. He even bought all those brooms for the team because he liked what I did for him." (Choices of a Death Eater's Son, chapter 20).

Additionally, another aspect already discussed in the analysis of incest in slash fiction which is also featured in this story is incest as a means of sexual education according to Pureblood traditions. Contrary to the previously discussed narratives, however, this story does not present a consensual participation of Draco. Here, Lucius uses this excuse in his trial, in which he is charged for the crimes he inflicted on his son:

"Draco is expected to produce his own heirs. It would be remiss of me not to give him a well rounded sexual education to assure that the Malfoy line continues." [...]

It is also, so I'm told, still practiced by those of pure blood and is a basic tradition and right of their culture." (Choices of a Death Eater's Son, chapter 48)

This use of trying to explain incest by stating it as a means of sexual education cannot be compared to the similar usage within the stories discussed above. This time, Lucius' statement illustrates a farce rather than an explanation, regarding the pain he inflicted on his own son.

¹²³ http://www.fanfiction.net/s/4337938/1/Choices_of_a_Death_Eaters_Son, accessed 04/29/10

Dub-con – short for “dubious consent” – stands for stories featuring sexual acts in which the consent of one of the participants is left in doubt. This means that it is unclear in how far the particular character is a willing participant in the sexual encounter. It is not easy to find a clear definition for dub-con, as it rather states a topic which can be placed somewhere between rape and consensual sex (often including denial or self-deception regarding the pleasure received during dubious sexual treatment). No clear line can be drawn in order to give a satisfying and universally valid definition on what dub-con entails in its entirety. Additionally, the manifold use and interpretation of dub-con by authors including these issues in their stories, leaves another space for analysis.

As an example for a story including this topic serves “We’re not right”¹²⁴ by letmypidgeonso. This Harry/Ron slash story shows a Harry devastated because of his godfather’s death and Ron not being able to deal with Harry’s behaviour. The story reaches its climax when Ron no longer manages to ignore Harry’s odd behaviour (Harry masturbates and comes with Ron’s name on his lips) and forces himself upon his friend:

"Is this what you want?" Ron demanded in a quiet yet undeniably angry voice. When no answer came, he removed his fingers, guided his throbbing cock to Harry’s entrance, grabbed his shoulders, and pushed his way in steadily until he could go no further.

After what might have been twenty seconds or ten minutes, Ron set a brutal pace, gripping Harry’s hip with one hand and yanking his hair back with the other. All Ron could hear over the rush of blood in his ears was a quiet litany of "please, please" coming from Harry. He had no idea whether Harry was begging him to stop, or to go harder, faster, *deeper*; he knew he should care, but found that, at that moment, he didn’t in the slightest. He could no longer stop his body's brutal thrusts, even if he wanted to.

This narrative presents an example of dub-con as Harry’s true emotions do not become clear throughout his sexual encounter with Ron. Even though Harry whispers “I love you” to Ron before he leaves his bed, the reader is still left in doubt regarding Harry’s true feelings.

¹²⁴ http://community.livejournal.com/bestmates_xmas/15732.html, accessed 04/28/10

Throughout this chapter I dealt with themes included in Harry Potter slash fiction which might be considered as rather controversial. However, not only many authors decide to write stories dealing with such issues; they obviously also find a large readership. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, it is not my aim to discuss the authors' possible reasons for writing about such themes. As a matter of fact, this would only lead to generalisation, which should be avoided when discussing the phenomenon of slash fiction.

Conclusion

Above all, this thesis wanted to give a first insight into fan fiction in general and Harry Potter slash fiction in particular. By discussing the most relevant studies on fan fiction as well as its history and explaining the most basic features of Harry Potter slash fiction, the reader will have gained a fundamental knowledge of this particular fan-created phenomenon.

Contrary to most former studies on fan fiction, I did not opt to analyse the writers' motivation for creating specific slash fiction. My aim of solely focusing on the written texts resulted in a first insight into the uncountable possibilities which can be explored via this particular fan activity. My analysis of Harry Potter slash fiction according to certain contents and themes does not only give an account of how these topics are dealt with in Harry Potter slash fiction, but again shows the large creative scope available to authors of this fandom. The sheer amount of production within Harry Potter slash fiction as well as the discussion of every imaginable topic within the fan-written narratives leads to the conclusion that there are no limitations to imagination and no themes too exotic or too extreme to be included within slash fiction stories.

Especially the last chapter of my thesis deals with topics which can be considered as transgressing boundaries. Again it has to be mentioned that the unlimited creative scope of slash fiction of course does entail the possibility of including themes like rape or incest, as fan fiction presents the author with an infinite space available for exploration. In how far this can be viewed as "transgression of boundaries" might be considered to be depending on subjectivity. This certainly holds true regarding the fact that slash fiction in itself might be considered as a transgression of boundaries, as it does not only entail alterations to the original plot, but additionally revolves around a same-sex pairing not presented within canon. No general statement can be made according to this issue, as the tolerance towards particular themes varies from fan to fan. Therefore, I did not deal with the more dubious contents in Harry Potter slash in a judgemental way. My aim was to give an account in how far and in what ways authors deal with and explore topics such as male pregnancy or bestiality in order to, again,

exemplify the unlimited possibilities of topics which are actualities of Harry Potter slash fandom.

It goes without saying that J.K. Rowling's original novels serve as the fundament for the previously often discussed unlimited possibilities within slash fan fiction. The magical world she invented is not only adapted but also altered by slash fiction authors in order to create new narratives. Furthermore, all novels of the Harry Potter series constantly serve as inspiration for authors to further explore the possibilities of this specific universe. This not only resulted in alternative versions of particular story lines presented within the original narratives, but also led to slashing of certain characters in fanon. Although fan-written stories can be considered to state narratives on their own, the importance of J.K. Rowling's novels and the world presented within remains unquestioned.

In the end, I can only hope that my thesis does not only serve as an introduction into the fascinating world of fan fiction and, in particular, slash fiction, but additionally initiates further examination of this intriguing part of popular culture.

Glossary

/	<p>Two letters, names or the initials of characters separated by / denote the pairing(s) of a story. For example: Severus/Draco, S/D, or SS/DM.</p> <p>The term <i>slash fiction</i> originates from this particular use, as this practice was used to derive same-sex relationships back in the zine-days of Fan Fiction(K/S – Kirk/Spock was the most prominent pairing then). Now this is practice is also used for heterosexual pairings, for example Harry/Luna, H/L, or HP/LL. In Harry Potter fan fiction the one-lettered version is not used due to the amount of characters.</p> <p>Also used to indicate the participants of sexual situations. For example: M/M/M: a threesome with males only M/F: a heterosexual pairing</p>
!	see <i>Adjective!Character</i>
A/A	see <i>Action/Adventure</i>
A/N	see <i>Author Notes</i>
Action/Adventure	This term simply refers to a story with an adventurous and action-filled story line.
Adjective!Character	<p>This is used to highlight the most important characteristic feature of a protagonist for a particular story as well as to simply denote a basic characteristic.</p> <p>Examples: bottom!Harry, snarky!Draco, angry!Ron</p>
Adult	A story which contains themes not suitable for children. This term is mostly used in reference to stories with explicit sex scenes, but also graphic violence.
Alternative Universe Alternative Reality	<p>This term is used to warn the reader that this piece involves major changes to the original story line of the Harry Potter series (see <i>Canon</i>).</p> <p>Example: Lilly Potter managed to flee with Harry and therefore is still alive.</p>
AN	see <i>Author Notes</i>
Angst	A fan fiction with great emotional power and melodrama.
AU/AR	see <i>Alternative Universe</i>
Author notes	Additional comment, explanation or information before or after a story by the author.
BDSM	Bondage, Domination, Sado-masochism. Not a fan fiction specific term, but used to inform readers of BDSM relationships or acts.
Beta	The act of a beta(reader).
Beta(reader)	A person who edits a piece of fiction upon the request of an author. This act involves checking up on the grammar, spelling and general setup of a story. One special request might be to britpick (see <i>Britpicking</i>).
Beta version	A first or rough draft of a story.
Blackcest	Members of the Black Family (Sirius, Regulus, Narcissa,

	Andromeda, Bellatrix, Nymphadora) in incestuous relationships.
Britpicking	The special act of a betareader to remove Americanisms in order to stay in the British setting of Harry Potter according to language.
Canon	History and characterisations established by the original series of Harry Potter books. (compare <i>Fanon</i>)
-centric	Characterises a story centred almost completely around one character. Example: Ron-centric
Challenge	An idea or a plotline suggested by readers and taken up by one or more authors. Often combined with competitions or fests (see <i>Fest</i>).
Challenge fic	The result of a challenge.
Chan(slash)	This term defines a slash story wherein one member of the pairing is under the legal age of consent, which usually means between 13 and 18 years of age. This can be quite common in stories wherein Severus Snape is in a romantic relationship with one of his students. For example: Severus/Draco.
con	Short for consent. In fan fiction 'consent' refers to sexual situations and relations to which all involved parties agree. (compare <i>Non-con</i> , <i>Dubious-con</i>)
CoS	Short for <i>Chamber of Secrets</i> .
Crackfic	A funny piece of fan fiction which is either pure parody or does not make sense at all.
Crossover	A fiction wherein another universe crosses into the Potterverse (see <i>(-)Verse</i> and <i>Potterverse</i>). Possible combinations can be Harry Potter with the TV show "Queer as folk" or "Lord of the Rings."
Dark(fic)	This term refers to fan fictions which are depressing, unpleasant or sad. Also used for stories in which one of the protagonists has a very dark character. Such fan fictions also include markers such as 'Dark!Harry' (see <i>!</i> or <i>Adjective!Characters</i>)
DH	Short for <i>Deathly Hallows</i> .
Disclaimer	Disclaimers usually can be found in the header of the story and states that characters, settings and all other features of Harry Potter do not belong to the author but to J.K. Rowling and Warner Bros. The purpose of disclaimers is to avoid copyright infringement.
Drabble	A piece of fiction written in no more than a hundred words. Such stories often only follow streams of consciousness or give snapshots.
Drarry	A composition of Draco and Harry which indicates that these two characters will be the main pairing in this story.
Dubious-con	In this story the consent given for sexual acts is not really clear. Such stories mostly change into con stories. Examples: Violent sex which is nevertheless enjoyed by both parties or a sexual situation starting out as rape but continues to be a consensual

	relationship. (compare <i>Con</i> and <i>Non-con</i>) Can also be called "semi con."
Epic	Epic indicates a long drawn out story.
Epilogue compliant	A fan fiction which considers the content of the epilogue by J.K. Rowling. (compare <i>EWE</i>)
EWE	Short for 'Epilogue? What Epilogue?' This story totally ignores the content of the Epilogue found at the end of the final Harry Potter book. Many authors and readers of Harry Potter slash fiction were not happy about how Rowling ended her series. Writing EWE stories is one of the possibilities to deal with the disappointment. (compare <i>Epilogue compliant</i>)
Fandom	All fan activities surrounding an original, including fan fiction, fan art, communities, forums, conventions, etc.
Fanon	Fanon are ideas and changes to the original series which are accepted by a larger part of the fan base, seen as mostly realistic and considered authentic. For example: Draco being handsome, Harry having very strong magical powers.
First time (story)	A fan fiction in which one or both of the characters have sex for the first time. Sometimes also used referred to the first sexual encounter with a character of the same sex.
Femmeslash	This term stands for a story that is based around or features a romantic relationship or sexual situation between two female characters. Examples would be Ginny/Hermione or Luna/Tonks.
FF or F/F	Short for 'Fan Fiction.'
Fic	Frequently used abbreviation for "fiction."
Filk music	A form of music created from within the science fiction or fantasy fandom, written, sung and performed by fans, eg. at conventions.
Flangst	A combination of angst and fluff (see <i>Angst</i> and <i>Fluff</i>)
Fluff	Fluff means a light-hearted, saccharin story, often including extensive use of endearments and pet names.
Gary Stu(e)	An obscenely perfect male character with above-average good looks. Hardly ever seen as good contributions to a story line.(compare <i>Mary Sue</i>)
Gen(eral)	A fan fiction labelled gen(eral) is suitable for readers of all ages as there is no sexual overtone. By slash readers this term is used to denote "not slash." (compare <i>Het</i> and <i>Slash</i>)
Gender bending	In a story with this theme, one of the male characters will either turn into a woman or a hermaphrodite with both female and male genitalia.
GoF	Short for <i>Goblet of fire</i>
H/C	see <i>Hurt/Comfort</i>
HBP	Short for <i>Halfblood Prince</i>
Het	Fan fiction involving a heterosexual pairing. Such stories may vary from romantic tales of falling in love to outright porn. It is

	wrong to assume that only slash fan fiction can be highly pornographical. (compare <i>Gen(eral)</i> and <i>Slash</i>)
Hogwarts-era	Stories set during Harry's attendance of Hogwarts.
Hurt/Comfort	Here a character suffers from trauma to the body or soul requiring another character to tend to them. Such stories often bring about a change in the characters' relationships and therefore often turn into slash.
IC	Stands for In Character. This means the characters all remain canon.
Lemon	This term is used to indicate graphic sex scene or for whole stories with gratuitous sexual encounters. The rating here would be NC17/M or X. (compare <i>Ratings</i>)
Lime	A fan fiction including non-explicit sexual situations. Rating: R (see <i>Ratings</i>)
Love/Hate	A type of fan fiction wherein the characters either go from hating to loving each other or have a strange and sometimes violent love/hate relationship. Such stories can include violent sex scenes.
Lurker	A person who is a member of a forum or discussion group but does not participate actively.
M/M	Stands for Male/Male and is another way to indicate a slash fan fiction. (also see /)
Manon	A story derived from the information given by the movies or a particular scene in one of the movies. (compare <i>Canon</i>)
Malfoycest	Members of the Malfoy Family (Lucius, Narcissa, Draco) in incestuous relationships.
Mary Sue	The female version of <i>Gary Stue</i> . Mary Sues are often used by authors to write themselves into the world of Harry Potter. Generally not considered as good characters.
Mpreg	Stands for 'male pregnancy.'
MWPP	Short for Moony-Wormtail-Padfoot-Prongs (Remus Lupin, Peter Pettigrew, Sirius Black, James Potter) aka the Marauders. A story labeled MWPP deals with the time period while Harry's parents and their friends attended Hogwarts.
Non-con	This term means 'non-consensual' and denotes a fan fiction with the element of rape. (compare <i>Dubious-con</i> , <i>Con</i>)
Novella	A work of fan fiction with about 17000 to 40000 words.
Novel-length	A very long fan fiction with over 40000 words.
NWS	Not Work Safe. Serves as a warning for fan art which should not be viewed in public places as those pieces often show explicit sexual situations.
OC	Short for Original Characters. The author added on or multiple characters which do not exist in canon (see <i>Canon</i>).
One-shot	A short piece of fan fiction which usually only deals with a moment in time and only consists of one chapter. 'Longer one-shots' can consist of up to 10 000 words.

OOC	Stands for Out Of Character. Characters behave in a totally different manner than would be expected from either canon (see <i>Canon</i>) or fanon (see <i>Fanon</i>).
OOTP or OoP	Short for <i>The Order of the Phoenix</i>
OTP	Stands for One True Pairing and refers to the favourite pairing or only ship (see <i>Ship</i>) in the Potterverse (see <i>Potterverse</i>) which does not have to be canon (see <i>Canon</i>).
Pairing	The combination of two characters.
PoA	Short for <i>Prisoner of Azkaban</i>
POV	Short for Point of View. A story or part of it told from the perspective of only one character.
Plot bunny	The basic idea for a new story line. Often plot bunnies are swapped between authors or suggested by readers who want to read the whole story of their plot idea.
Poemfic	A fan fiction centred around a poem or a poem itself.
Post-Hogwarts	Fan fictions set after the graduation from Hogwarts. Here often the war has not ended yet.
Post-War	Stories set after the war and the defeat of Voldemort.
Potterverse	This term indicates the general body of the original work. (see further (-)Verse)
Prequel	A story which takes place before the books or a specific fan fiction.
Pre-slash	A story exploring a potential same-sex relationship without actually initiating it. Often such stories end with only the perspective for a possible future relationship.
PS	Short for Philosopher's stone (American form: Sorcerer's stone SS)
PWP	Short for "Plot? What Plot?" or "Porn Without Plot," used for stories which mainly focus on a sexual encounter between two or more characters.
Rating	The rating tells the readers what they are in for. It also depicts the suitable age for a particular story. Most ratings are based on the American Film rating. G: Suitable for all ages. PG: Mild implied sexual innuendo, mild violence and vulgar language. PG-13: Some violence, vulgar language, more obvious sexual innuendo and implied sexual relation. Here also some mature topics such as suicide, drug/alcohol abuse or rape aftermath can be included. R: Not recommended for minors. Includes rather explicit sex and graphic torture or violence. NC-17/M/Adult/X: For adults only. Story includes explicit sexual situations and/or extremely graphic violence and torture.
Review	A comment left by the reader of the story. Can include praise, criticism or certain views which may cause discussions.
RPG	Stands for Role Playing Game.

RPS	Short for Real People Slash. Stories written about non-fictional characters, for example actors or musicians. One or more 'real people' can also be included in a universe (see <i>(-)Verse</i>) or vice versa.
Sequel	A story which takes place after a particular fan fiction. Here the plot is further put forward.
Seventh year	A fan fiction set in Harry's seventh year at Hogwarts, which he did not attend in canon due to the ongoing war with Voldemort. Can also be referred to as "Eighth year."
Severitus	A fan fiction in which Severus Snape turns out to be Harry's father.
Ship	Short for relationship and denotes which pair of characters are in a romantic relationship. Also used as follows: "Which ship are you into?" This means, which pairing (see <i>Pairing</i>) do you prefer? Persons only reading a particular pairing are called "shippers."
Slash	A fan fiction involving romantic or sexual relationships between two characters of the same gender. (compare <i>Gen(eral)</i> and <i>Het</i>) Technically this term stands for both male and female same-sex pairings, but it is mostly used for male homosexual relationships. Stories about lesbian pairings are known as femmeslash (see <i>Femmeslash</i>).
Smut	Smut is a story which revolves around sexual situation without much plot. It is also used to describe sexual encounters of a pairing in a plotty story.
Snupin	A composition of Snape and Lupin which indicates that these two characters will be the main pairing in this story.
Songfic	A fan fiction based on or inspired by a song.
Spoiler (warning)	A note that the story may contain information from the original books which you may not have read yet.
Squee	A high-pitched loud sound of delight. Often used in reviews like this: *squeeee.*
Squick	Squick is a term referring to themes or topics of fan fiction an unacceptable for an individual and therefore will not read a story involving them. Common squicks are: rape, mpreg (see <i>Mpreg</i>), incest
TBC	Short for To Be Continued. Found at the bottom of a story to tell the reader this story will be continued in one or more other parts. Mostly found at the end of works in progress (see <i>WIP</i>).
Triosmut	Stories including a threesome of Harry, Ron and Hermione.
Twincest	Stories featuring a romantic or sexual relationship between the twins George and Fred Weasley.
UC	Stands for Unconventional Couple and describes pairings that would never be involved in canon for various reasons like age difference. For example: Hermione/Snape, but also all slash pairings like Draco/Blaise.
UST	Short for Unresolved Sexual Tension. A term for obvious

	chemistry but also tension between characters who are (not yet) romantically involved. Such stories often end with the “relief” of the characters’ tensions.
(-)Verse	Short form of universe, or added as a suffix to any fandom title to refer to the whole body of the original work. For example: Potterverse (see <i>Potterverse</i>).
vids	Stands for fan made music videos for any media fandom (see <i>Fandom</i>).
Vignette	A very short story which general features an internal monologue. Often accompanied by pictures at the beginning and the end of it.
WAFF	Warm and Fuzzy Feelings. A light and happy piece of fan fiction which will only make the reader feel warm and fuzzy.
Weasleycest	Members of the Weasley Family (Arthur, Molly, Bill, Charlie, Percy, Fred and George (see <i>Twincest</i>), Ron, Ginny) in an incestuous relationship.
WIP	Short for Work In Progress. This story will be continued.
Yaoi	Images or erotic stories of gay encounters which are usually for adults only. The term originally was used for mangas and animes. In fan fiction yaoi also denotes stories with explicit sex scenes with hardly any plot. The Term is an acronym for the Japanese phrase “Yama nashi, imi nashi, ochi nashi” (“Without climax, without meaning, without resolution”). Some fans also joke that it stands for “Yamete! Oshiri ga itai!” (Stop! My ass hurts!) Another expression for PWP (see <i>PWP</i>).

See further

<http://unknowableroom.org/416/1>

<http://www.harrypotterfanfiction.com/docs/terms.html>

<http://fanfiction.mugglenet.com/tips-terms.php>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A632062#back7>

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Mail by Rurounihime, received 04/07/10

Hiya! Okay, here goes...

I'll say this up front: Mpreg is getting harder and harder to write, and this in a fandom that actually makes it pretty darn easy, as fandoms go. For example, I don't write Mpreg in my CSI fics because the show is set in a pretty down-to-earth realm, unlike Harry Potter, Merlin, Highlander to a certain extent, and even Supernatural. All of those fandoms provide writers with an element of magic or at least... something not quite human, and therefore not completely subjected to human physics. And then it's just a question of deciding on an original way of impregnating a guy, haha.

That's the tough part. I have been in many, many conversations with coffeejunkii wherein we just toss out idea after idea, trying to find one that hasn't been done to death or even been done at all, but with so many writers in the Mpreg sub-genre, it's extremely difficult to find something that hasn't already been done. Depending on the tone you are going for, you either need a "plausible" (within the fandom's physics) explanation, or no explanation at all. I like the challenge of trying to come up with something new, of explaining why Harry or Draco is about to give birth in such a way as to make it believable, so to speak.

In Coming to Terms, I left the explanation fairly vague: an encounter with a bad set of spells combined with a drunk night for Harry and Draco is what did it, so it was a complete accident, unpredictable for either character, especially if they really aren't thinking about the possibility in general. Freak of nature, you might say, wrong time and wrong place, that kind of thing. In another fic, I've delved into the physical abilities that present themselves in magical being-human hybrids, and that's a common trope in Harry Potter Mpreg. I've written one series about potions usage in keeping the fetus alive inside a male body, and that led to some wonderful opportunities to explore exactly why Mpreg isn't common for wizards: it's really dangerous.

When you look at the different methods of Mpreg, I think it becomes clear that they reflect real life in a lot of ways: accidental pregnancy and having to deal with the decisions that follow is absolutely part of real life, as are problematic births, carrying to term, handling a newborn, and parenting in general. The twist is that you put a guy in the role of child bearer, and that is just golden for a storyteller, because the emotional

and mental repercussions are rife with possibility. I know a lot of people are offended by the idea of a man taking the woman's role in this way, but I have never seen it as a takeover, not when it's done well. It's a way to explore a character, to challenge characters and readers, as well as common conceptions about society and gender roles.

I must say, I am not fond of the womanization of male characters that tends to crop up in Mpreg. Being pregnant does not usually change your gender identity, so I don't see why it should change the guys in such a radical way either. The real enjoyment I get out of writing Mpreg comes from putting Harry or Draco into that situation, as they are, and figuring out how they will react, how they will cope. And then there are the issues of societal acceptance, which I really haven't gone into very deeply in my fic... but personally, I could go either way. I think Mpreg makes for a nice societal metaphor for the odd one out, the monster, the scapegoat, the witch hunt, etc, etc. Because, let's face it, guys don't get pregnant, and if humans tend to fear what they don't understand, then a plausible reaction is ostracism, physically or mentally. Or both. So there's that level of stress to play around with, and on top of that, we've got the whole gay angle, which is still a big point of contention in many modern societies, so if you choose to make the Wizarding World prejudiced against Mpreg, then you have the possibility of playing with two different sets of bigotry at once, and I find that intriguing.

I think Mpreg in Wizarding society is not all that common, but it is a possibility. I can't ignore the way I cringe when I come across plot elements that are too convenient in the works I read, so it's important for me to at least have a plausible explanation in my own head, whether it comes out in detail within the story or not. This is due to how I react when I read, and if something feels really forced or just too "hand of god", it totally removes me from the story and I have trouble taking it seriously. So I try to avoid that (within reason, because this is Mpreg, after all, so there has to be a little bit of leeway built in).

Hope that works...

~Ru

Abstract

Slash Fan Fiction, als ein besonderes Genre von Fan Fiction, stellt ein eher unbekanntes Phänomen dar und ist dennoch eine der meist verbreiteten Fanaktivitäten der modernen Popkultur. Dabei verwenden Fans die Charaktere und Settings aus einem bereits vorhandenen Original (zum Beispiel Buch, TV-Show, Film) und um basierend auf diesem Hintergrund neue Texte zu kreieren. Das Besondere dabei ist, dass zwei im Original heterosexuelle Figuren in der von einem Fan verfassten Slash Fiction eine homosexuelle Beziehung eingehen.

Wie oben bereits erwähnt handelt es sich bei Slash Fiction um ein relativ unbekanntes Phänomen das meist nur Fans bekannt ist. Aus diesem Grunde soll meine Arbeit als eine Einführung in die komplexe und vielschichtige Welt von Fan Fiction mit besonderem Bezug auf Harry Potter Slash Fiction sein. Es wird nicht nur versucht einen generellen Überblick zum Thema zu bieten. Die Auflistung der wichtigsten Fakten über Fan Fiction, sowie der Versuch einer angemessenen Definition sind dabei unumgänglich. Dabei wird nicht nur auf das gesamte kreative Spektrum sondern auch auf die entsprechenden Unterkategorien dieses Phänomens eingegangen, die für eine umfassende Einführung ins Thema unumgänglich sind. Eine ausführliche Zusammenfassung der bisher veröffentlichten wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten zu Slash Fiction soll einen Einblick in die verschiedenen akademischen Zugangsarten gewähren.

Der Hauptteil dieser Arbeit besteht aus einer Analyse von speziell ausgewählten Beispielen von Harry Potter Slash Fiction. Das Ergebnis bietet nicht nur eine Darstellung der Sexualisierung von Charakteren, sondern es wird auch auf die explizite Verarbeitung von bestimmten Themen in Harry Potter Slash Fiction eingegangen. Dabei werden Slash Fictions analysiert, die Themen wie Homophobie, HIV/Aids, gleichgeschlechtliche Partnerschaften und/oder „male pregnancy“ beinhalten. Einen besonderen Punkt stellt hier die Analyse von Texten dar die eher kontroverse Themen wie Inzest, Sodomie sowie sexuellen Missbrauch beinhalten.

Lebenslauf

Angaben zur Person

Name:	Sigrid Sindhuber
Nationalität:	Österreich
Geburtsdatum:	16. März 1985
Geburtsort:	Waidhofen/Ybbs

Bildungsweg

seit WS 2004	Universität Wien Lehramtsstudium Germanistik und Anglistik/Amerikanistik
1999 – 2004:	Höhere Lehranstalt für wirtschaftliche Berufe, Stadt Haag, NÖ
1995 – 1999:	Hauptschule Seitenstetten
1991 – 1995:	Volksschule Seitenstetten