Bowling Green State University

ScholarWorks@BGSU

Ray Browne Conference on Cultural and Critical Studies

2021: Considering Conclusions: What Do We Learn When We Unpack the Popular?

Mar 5th, 12:00 AM - Mar 6th, 12:00 AM

Ray Browne Conference for Popular Culture Studies 2021 Program
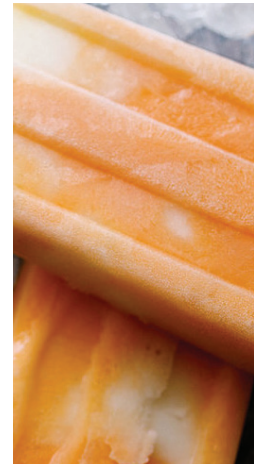
Bowling Green State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/rbc

Ray Browne Conference for

POPULAR CULTURE STUDIES

Considering Conclusions:
What Do We Learn When We Unpack the Popular?

March 5-7, 2021

Access the conference schedule at:
bgsu.edu/raybrowne

To individuals with disabilities, please indicate if you need special services, assistance or appropriate modifications to fully participate in this event by contacting Accessibility Services at access@bgsu.edu or 419-372-8495. Please notify us prior to the event.

PRESENTED BY

BGSU® | **Popular Culture**
SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

WELCOME!

Welcome to the 2021 Ray Browne Conference for Popular Culture Studies, **Considering Conclusions: What Do We Learn When We Unpack the Popular?**. We are so glad to gather, virtually, with you this weekend to continue the Bowling Green State University tradition of unpacking the popular together.

This year's conference solicited presentations from any scholar who defined what they examined as popular. Conference organizers asked these scholars: What do you unpack, what are you looking for, and what have you found? Among the display the conference would collect, organizers hoped presenters and attendees might explore the connections between their individual insights, answers, and contributions and acquire a sense of 'the popular' that contemporary popular culture studies scholars imagine.

Our conference programming highlights nearly forty voices and opens with a panel, **Unpacking Popular Media and Identity: From Disney to Horror**, which unpacks the popular to discover prescriptive schemas. After a panel, **Wrestling with the Popular: Form and Performance**, which seeks the dimensions of performance via the popular, we pause for a social hour Jeopardy game with cruise director Shane Hesketh. Round one, **2020 in Popular Culture**, will tour the past year, and round two, **Classic Popular Culture**, honors the legacy of pop culture legend Alex Trebek.

We close our first day with a look at unpacking a popular which fills boxes and files – a tour of the Louisville Underground Music Archive with Dr. Heather Fox and a look at the Ray and Pat Browne Library for Popular Culture Studies Hoppenstand collection with John King.

The second day of our conference begins with a panel, **Gender and Sexuality in the Popular: Beyond, Between, Within**, which interrogates the possibilities within the popular. Our conference keynote speaker, Dr. Jeremy Wallach, considers the **Failures of Popular Culture Studies** and suggests a way forward for a field of studies that can often be caught between the limits of making a study of objects-not-worthy-of-study and a dramatic call for such a making a study of.

After a lunch break our conference continues with a panel, **Redefining the Popular: Audience, Fans, and Adaptation**, which discovers reading and the reader anew. The second day closes with a panel, **The Overlooked Political Power of the Popular**, which observes political consciousness within the popular.

The last day of our conference begins with a panel, **Finding Empathy in the Popular: Personally and Globally**, which finds bridges of exchange and understanding within the popular. In the panel that follows, **Current Culture Research by the Faculty and Staff of the Department of Popular Culture and BPCL**, BGSU faculty and staff share works in progress which unpack signs of life, genre, mass media, popular mediums, and fandoms.

After lunch we consider a panel, **Memory and Authenticity in the Popular**, which unpacks the nature, authenticity, power, and dangers of popular memories. Our conference concludes with a panel, **Unpacking "Comfort Food" During the Pandemic: Finding Discomfort/Comfort Through Foodways**, which highlights the creative power a globe produces with the everyday popular.

We are certain that you will find scholarship and scholars who inspire and impress among these panels – and we hope that you might also find a new collaborator, mentor, or friend.

On the BGSU campus, popular culture studies has always been a field-in-the-making, a conversation which welcomed a globe of scholars to discover the insights just beyond traditional boundaries in the knowledge of neighbors. This practice expands categories of genre, questions translations, and reveals lively users, language, and meaning.

Fifty-four years after Dr. Ray Browne arrived on the BGSU campus, popular culture studies scholars unpack video games, tribute bands, and pandemic loaves. What do they learn? I'd venture they learn life resists dissection and reports. I expect the energies of those who unpack the popular fuel both a conviction that keeps tidy close readings open, and a practice of storytelling and active listening that encourages the professional collection and study of culture. Perhaps the unpacking of the popular is the communion of a globe of peoples, a communion between a globe of individuals? Certainly the unpacking and popular at this weekend's conference will be an experience full of sparks of inspiration, webs of understanding, and the first moments of many a-something-new.

DR. RAY BROWNE

Dr. Ray Browne – the OG BGSU popular culture studies champion – founded the Popular Culture Association, Journal of Popular Culture, Center for Popular Culture Studies, Bowling Green State University Popular Press, the Ray and Pat Browne Library for Popular Culture Studies, and the Department of Popular Culture.

The conversations, scholarship, and collections Dr. Browne encouraged continue today in the events, publications, and courses these communities assemble.

Popular culture is the voice of democracy, democracy speaking and acting, the seedbed in which democracy grows. It is the everyday world around us: the mass media, entertainments and diversions. It is our heroes, icons, rituals, everyday actions, psychology and religion – our total life picture. It is the way of living we inherit, practice, and modify as we please, and how we do it. It is the dreams we dream while asleep. — Dr. Ray Browne

2020-2021 Popular Culture Scholars Association
Oladoyin Abiona,
   Public Relations Officer
Judy Clemens-Smucker, President
Samantha Deckard, Secretary
John King, Sergeant At Arms
Emma Lynn, Treasurer
Cheyenne White, Vice President
Leda Hayes, Graduate
   Student Advisor
Dr. Jeffrey Brown, Advisor

The Executive Officers would like to thank and recognize conference committee members: Shane Hesketh, Zamirah Hussain, Alex Kostrzewa, Joe McManis, and Haley Shipley.

Sponsored by / Co-Sponsors
Ray and Pat Browne Library for
   Popular Culture Studies
University Libraries
School of Cultural and
   Critical Studies
Stoddard & O'Neill Fund
Graduate College

Special Thanks to
Dr. Nancy Down
Stefanie Hunker
Dana Nemeth
Stephen Ammidown
Beka Patterson
DeeDee Wentland
Amy Davidson
Department of Popular Culture
American Culture Studies Program

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Day One – Friday, March 5, 2021

1:50 p.m.
Welcome Remarks

2-3:00 p.m.
PANEL 1 - Unpacking Popular Media and Identity: From Disney to Horror

But Like All Dreams, I'm Afraid This Won't Last Forever: Framing Young Womanhood through Fantasy Circumscription and Adult Prescribed Gender Roles in Early 1950s Disney Animated Films
Joseph V. Giunta

I thought I killed Joey Cusack: Unpacking the Identity Crisis in David Cronenberg's A History of Violence
Shane Hesketh

Borrowed from Way Back When: Postwar Japanese Popular Music in America Through the Lens of Philip K. Dick's The Man in the High Castle
Robyn Perry

Social Identity, Etiquette Education, and Marriage: The Interpellation of Feminine Success and The Narrative Formula of Pretty Woman
Amanda Taylor

3:15-4:00 p.m.
PANEL 2 - Wrestling with the Popular: Form and Performance

Wrestling with the Pandemic: The Performance of Professional Wrestling During COVID-19
Jules Patalita

Wrestling Through the Aperture: Editing, Cinematography, and Ideology in the Golden Age of Professional Wrestling
Nick Canada

WWE and Saudi Vision 2030: Professional Wrestling as Cultural Diplomacy
Adam Nicholas Cohen

4:15-5:15 p.m.
SOCIAL HOUR: Join us for a game of Jeopardy
Hosted by Shane Hesketh

5:30-6:30 p.m.
Creating and Utilizing Popular Culture Archives with Dr. Heather Fox and John King

Day Two– Saturday, March 6, 2021

10:20 a.m.
Day 2 Welcome Remarks

10:30-11:45 a.m.
PANEL 3 - Gender and Sexuality in the Popular: Beyond, Between, Within

Orville Peck's Outlaw Country Camp: A Parodic Interpretation
Zamirah Hussain

Masculinity and Sport: An Analysis of "The M.V.P." in the Television Comedy Schitt's Creek
Judy Clemens-Smucker

Like a mailbox? - A Critique of Hegemonic Gender in Amazon's The Tick
Dylan Miller

Letting Go of Labels in TV's Queer Utopias: Aspiration or Erasure?
Jinx Mylo

A Wonder of a Woman: Wonder Woman's Musical Themes as Persuasive Text
Anna DeGalan

12-1 p.m.
Keynote Speaker Dr. Jeremy Wallach
Failures of Popular Culture Studies

1-2:15 p.m.
LUNCH BREAK

2:30-3:30 p.m.
PANEL 4 - Redefining the Popular: Audience, Fans, and Adaptation

Genre is Dead. Long Live Genre: A Romance
Michaela Hansen

To Hell with the Canon: How Fanfiction is (Re)thinking Authorial Intent, Textual Ownership, and the Postmodern Condition
Frankie Krutsch

Literary Hobbits and Hobbits of Action: Redefining The Hobbit in Peter Jackson's Film Adaptation of Tolkien
Alexander Long

On a Dante Rollercoaster Ride with the Seven Deadly Sins: What Sandbox Simulation Video Games Accomplish for Literature Enthusiasts
Britton Seese

3:45-4:45 p.m.
PANEL 5 - The Overlooked Political Power of the Popular

Tomorrow's Incubator: Advertising & the Cultural Feedback Loop
Adriana Mariella

She/Her Petition for Peace, Safety + Security
Shenee Simon

What Happens to Popular Culture in Authoritarian Societies?
Dr. Christopher Leary

Political Activism on TikTok
Emma Lynn

Day Three - Sunday, March 7, 2021

10:20 a.m.
Day 3 Welcome Remarks

10:30-11:30 a.m.
PANEL 6 - Finding Empathy in the Popular: Personally and Globally

Fiona Apple's Shifting Personal and Political Narrative in Fetch the Bolt Cutters
Kelly Cole

Colors from Nigeria: Unpacking Ankara Fabric
Oladoyin Abiona

Life Itself: Studying the Popular Through Roger Ebert's Empathy Machine
Dr. Britt Rhuart

I want to sing some other way: Stryper and the Personal Paradoxes and Freedoms of Christian Heavy Metal for One Rural Ohio Girl
Haley Shipley

11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.
PANEL 7 - Current Culture Research by the Faculty and Staff of the Department of Popular Culture and BPCL

In Support of the Deer: The Dancing Women of Maanada Mayilada
Dr. Kristen Rudisill

The Amsterdam Sign Project
Dr. Matthew Donahue

Lucy, you got some 'splainin' to do. What are we doing in the funny papers?: The Lost I Love Lucy Comic Strip and the Rise of TV Comics
Dr. Chuck Coletta

Women and Femininity in the Superhero Pulps: Nita Van Sloan in the Spider Pulps
Dr. Nancy Down

1-2:15 p.m.
LUNCH BREAK

2:30-3:45 p.m.
PANEL 8 - Memory and Authenticity in the Popular

Even Better than the Real Thing? Constructions of Public Memories of Heritage Rock Music
Dr. Patricia Webb

Music For the People: Quests for Authenticity in Detroit Rock from Punk to the Garage Revival
Benjamin Thomason

Collectibles in the Collection: Pop culture Realia in Special Collections
Joseph McManis

Nostalgia and the Physical Book
Cheyenne White

Consider the McNugget: Exploring How Popular Texts Recast the Past and Memory of War
Tyler Wertsch

4-5 p.m.
PANEL 9 - Unpacking "Comfort Food" During the Pandemic: Finding Discomfort/Comfort Through Foodways
Dr. Lucy Long
Jerry Reed
Minglei Zhang

5 P.M.
Conference Closing

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Failures of Popular Culture Studies
DR. JEREMY WALLACH

Popular culture studies has spent so much time either defensively justifying its existence or celebrating itself that fundamental contradictions in the field remain unaddressed more than half a century into its existence. My presentation outlines my own 25-year intellectual journey navigating a course between the Scylla of critical arrogance and the Charybdis of uncritical fannish enthusiasm. I conclude by asserting that I have found the only way forward to be to acknowledge fully the political context in which we work, in which most forms of popular culture are openly and mercilessly derided, and our own subject positions as both scholars and active participants in popular culture broadly defined.

Dr. Jeremy Wallach is Professor of Popular Culture in the School of Cultural and Critical Studies at Bowling Green State University. A cultural anthropologist specializing in popular music and globalization, he has written or co-written more than thirty research articles; co-edited, with Esther Clinton, a special issue of *Asian Music* (2013); and authored the monograph *Modern Noise, Fluid Genres: Popular Music in Indonesia*, 1997-2001 (Univ. of Wisconsin, 2008; Indonesian Ed., Komunitas Bambu, 2017). In 2011, he co-edited, with Harris M. Berger and Paul D. Greene, the collection *Metal Rules the Globe: Heavy Metal Music around the World* (Duke). In 2013 he chaired the organizing committee for the landmark BGSU Heavy Metal and Popular Culture International Conference. A co-founder and former chair of the Society for Ethnomusicology Popular Music Section, Dr. Wallach has given research presentations in Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and throughout North America. His writings have appeared in *Ars Lyrica, Asian Music, Ethnomusicology, Indonesia*, the *Journal for Cultural Research*, the *Journal of Popular Music Studies, Journal of World Popular Music Studies, Popular Music History, Wacana Seni Journal of Arts Discourse*, and numerous edited volumes and reference works, including the recently-published *Bloomsbury Handbook for Rock Music Research*.

Creating and Utilizing Popular Culture Archives
DR. HEATHER FOX AND JOHN KING

Join Dr. Heather Fox and John King for a look at the popular culture archive as a resource, profession, and research practice.

Dr. Fox will discuss the motivations and structuring of the Louisville Underground Music Archive, which is an archive of Louisville regional punk music ephemera covering five decades. King will discuss the Ray and Pat Browne Library for Popular Culture Studies Hoppenstand collection, an ongoing print and media collection, with over 20,000 items, and now celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Heather Fox is an associate professor in Archives & Special Collections at the University of Louisville where she is one of the members of the Louisville Underground Music Archive Project team. Heather has participated in the Louisville music scene since she started playing rhythm guitar in Juanita, a feminist garage rock band that has been together since 1992. Their most recent show was February 22, 2020, and they cannot wait to get back together.

Ray and Pat Browne Library for Popular Culture Studies Graduate Research Assistant John King is an archivist with 20 years of experience in private and non-profit libraries and archives. Mr. King also collects, produces, and releases regional music, which has been included in public and private archives, including the University of Louisville Music Archive and Western Kentucky University Archive, and disseminated around the world on five continents, including Antarctica.

PCSA CHAMPION
BEKA PATTERSON

PCSA would like to recognize the contribution Beka Patterson makes to popular culture studies at BGSU. From day one — and sometimes far before — Beka is the point of contact for the School of Cultural and Critical Studies popular culture studies practitioners. In Beka these students find the advice, counsel, and encouragement to understand 'that' idea, write 'that' paper, and become 'that' scholar. Beka is the heart of our SCCS family and with her popular culture studies finds itself well planted and nourished.

Beka Patterson is the Graduate Program Secretary for the School of Cultural and Critical Studies. After working out of her home office for 15 years as an administrative assistant for a small women owned training and mentoring company, Beka came to BGSU in 2006 to work for Online and Blended Learning Programs. In 2012, she joined the School of Cultural and Critical Studies. As the graduate program secretary she is committed to student success including their intellectual and personal growth. Her goal is to connect students with needed resources and information to help in their success and to support them during their time at BGSU. In 2019, Beka Patterson received the Best of Arts and Sciences Award from BGSU's College of Arts and Sciences.

ABSTRACTS

PANEL 1 - UNPACKING POPULAR MEDIA AND IDENTITY: FROM DISNEY TO HORROR

"But Like All Dreams, I'm Afraid This Won't Last Forever": Framing Young Womanhood through Fantasy Circumscription and Adult Prescribed Gender Roles in Early 1950s Disney Animated Films
Joseph V. Giunta | joseph.v.giunta@rutgers.edu

Popular constructions of children onscreen for decades were impressions of moral edification and circumscribed fantasy, with young people long believed to be passive vessels of innocence granted commensurate agency only upon entering adulthood. Disney, a world where it is sometimes difficult to separate fantasy from reality, has attempted to represent their perceived 'universal childhood' for decades, dependent upon the timelessness of childhood with their 'timeless classics.' In these cinematic narratives, occasions of genuine subjectivity by young protagonists are repeatedly contained, delimited, or proscribed by the film's conclusion, instead favoring a maintenance of the normative status quo. As powerful agents of socialization, children's films allow audiences to be transported to fantasy worlds, fulfilling dreams of escapism and wish fulfillment, while also delineating said fantasy within pedagogic and moralistic structures. In this presentation, I will analyze three Disney animated films from the early 1950s – *Cinderella* (1950), *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), and *Peter Pan* (1953) – and how their protagonists' didactic quests uphold both adult constructions of childhood and adults' worldviews by advocating for particular sociocultural principles. Each of these films' young female protagonists, either without parents or with parents substantially removed from their narrative tales, utilize their intrinsic childhood innocence to resolve their respective conflicts. However, adult and authority figures' sacralizing of childhood innocence reign over these popular pedagogic narratives crafted for the consumption of young people, even without their explicit presences within the animated tales, resulting in a reinforcement of the discursive role of children as figures of innocence, playfulness, and wonder.

"I thought I killed Joey Cusack": Unpacking the Identity Crisis in David Cronenberg's *A History of Violence*
Shane Hesketh | shaneth@bgsu.edu

While David Cronenberg is mostly known for his groundbreaking entries in (and creation of) the body horror genre, the most ideologically stimulating work in his oeuvre is arguably 2005's *A History of Violence*. Initially the story of a family man (Tom Stall, played by Viggo Mortensen) in small-town Indiana forced to defend his diner against violent robbers, the film takes a twist when a Philadelphia mobster arrives following the incident and accuses Tom of actually being Joey Cusack, another violent mobster who had fled Philadelphia decades before. While Tom initially denies the accusation, he eventually admits to being Joey, and what follows is an identity crisis in which Tom questions whether or not his current identity is a façade and if he's still Joey Cusack after all this time. In this paper I will unpack the various intricacies of both identities through the examination of dialogue and Viggo's acting in order to determine when in the film Tom Stall is calling the shots and when Joey Cusack is. Through the utilization of Bart Beaty's film reader David Cronenberg's *A History of Violence* (and mainly refuting his claim that Tom Stall never really existed) and performing a close textual analysis of the film, I will be able to show that the Tom Stall persona was not a fabrication, and Tom only reverts to his Joey identity in two key scenes out of desperation, showing that he actually is the reformed family man he claims to be.

"Borrowed from Way Back When": Postwar Japanese Popular Music in America Through the Lens of Philip K. Dick's The Man in the High Castle
Robyn Perry | rpperry@bgsu.edu

Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* was published in October 1962, a decade following the end of the American Occupation of Japan. The main character of this alternate history novel, Robert "Bob" Childan, owns an American antique shop in San Francisco where he often does business with very high-ranking Japanese individuals. At a point in the novel, Childan comes to the "realization" that the Japanese, as powerful as may be, cannot truly produce anything for themselves: they only steal and replicate.

Less than a year following the publication of this novel, during the summer of 1963, Kyu Sakamoto would become the first Asian recording artist to have a #1 hit in the United States with his song 「上を向いて歩こう」 ("Ue o Muite Arukō"), bastardized by western countries' record labels as "Sukiyaki," a nonsense word that sounded Japanese. Following World War II, America went through a "Japan craze" while Japanese artists started to play various genres of western popular music, which would evolve into rock and roll. Postwar Americans viewed the Japanese as being unable to produce anything on their own without relying on imitation or cheap replication. The popular music of postwar Japan (rock and roll) fell into this pattern of being viewed as cheap imitations of western greats and therefore would not be able to become big in the west, save for when it was orientalized to fulfill Americans' and westerners' Cold War-era, orientalist and exotifying fantasies and desires.

Social Identity, Etiquette Education, and Marriage: The Interpellation of Feminine Success and The Narrative Formula of Pretty Woman
Amanda Taylor | agtaylo@bgsu.edu

One problem with the message of films targeting women and girls is that marriage is the goal of feminine success regardless of personal or social identity. Predicated on Louis Pierre Althusser's notion of interpellation and the hail of dominant discourse in the context of gender and media, this study looks at the top grossing romantic comedy *Pretty Woman* to outline the narrative formula of the female protagonist disruption of social identity. Understanding the role that social etiquette education plays in the construction of identity and how the female protagonist resolves their newfound social identity were the inquiries that drove this study. A qualitative content analysis of the script of *Pretty Woman* found that the identity shift that occurs in the female protagonist as a result of the social etiquette education is not resolved in the end of the film. Instead, the emphasis of social etiquette education was the romantic relationship and social identity of the male deuteragonist.

PANEL 2 - WRESTING WITH THE POPULAR: FORM AND PERFORMANCE

Wrestling with the Pandemic: The Performance of Professional Wrestling During COVID-19
Jules Patalita | jmpatal@bgsu.edu

With COVID-19 still tearing through the world, requiring people to stay inside as a result, entertainment's ability to distract audiences and immerse them into a different reality is more important than ever before. Yet COVID has not only changed the lives and patterns of ordinary people, but also the stars that we see on our televisions. Between the product they create and the performances they give, few entertainers have been affected as drastically as professional wrestlers, such as those working for WWE or AEW. A sort of improv theatre mixed with gladiatorial MMA, professional wrestling has been part of the American pop culture for almost a century now, with its peak in the 90s still being ridden today by the industry. Unfortunately, so much of what makes professional wrestling's identity relies on the live crowds in attendance, something made impossible for the last year. This proposal looks to examine, from a cultural studies and performance studies stance, how both the weekly televised show as well as the performance of the wrestlers themselves has been abruptly changed by COVID-19, as well as how wrestling companies have adapted in stages over time to the new reality of the world. connection and community.

Wrestling Through the Aperture: Editing, Cinematography, and Ideology in the Golden Age of Professional Wrestling
Nick Canada | ncanada@bgsu.edu

This paper functions as a call to understand professional wrestling as a cinematic experience. By analyzing the production practices of the World Wrestling Federation throughout the "Golden Age of Professional Wrestling" (1980's-early 1990's), I explore techniques and editing and cinematography as well as their ideological implications in American professional wrestling. Given that little to no literature has directly addressed the historical television production practices utilized in professional wrestling, this paper focuses as an intervention between what has predominantly been written about professional wrestling, television, and culture. I situate this paper in line with and as a response to J.J. Mondak's "The Politics of Professional Wrestling." Rather than understanding professional wrestling performers such as Hulk Hogan as a symbolic representation of neoliberalism, this paper explores the construction of neoliberal wrestling icons through industrial and productional forces created by and through the dominant ideology of Ronald Reagan's America. To augment my argument, I utilize the scholarly works of Althusser, Lewis, Cormack, and Fiske.

WWE and Saudi Vision 2030: Professional Wrestling as Cultural Diplomacy
Adam Nicholas Cohen | ancohen@bgsu.edu

In 2018, World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) produced and aired two live pay-per-view wrestling events in Saudi Arabia. This article looks at the political economy behind the production of these two wrestling events. What is not widely known is that these pay-per-views are part of a state-sponsored, ten-year agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and WWE, under the umbrella of a large economic development plan known as Saudi Vision 2030, launched on April 25, 2016, with the aims of reducing the country's reliance on oil while liberalizing its economy through the developments in infrastructure construction, recreation and tourism. By focusing on the role of sport mega-events in the context of generating a "nation branding legacy," this article investigates the limitations of WWE's presence in Saudi Arabia as an effort to promote economic growth and social change.

PANEL 3 - GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THE POPULAR: BEYOND, BETWEEN, WITHIN

Orville Peck's Outlaw Country Camp: A Parodic Interpretation
Zamirah Hussain | zamirah@bgsu.edu

Orville Peck is a relatively recent emerging country artist, known for his secret identity, uniquely recognizable visual aesthetic, and melancholic crooning. Arguably, Peck is most known for both being an openly gay artist in country music, with lyrical content and music videos reflecting homoromantic notions. I interrogate how Orville Peck's persona can be considered a postmodernist parodic interpretation of camp, specifically manifested through a negotiation of authenticity, aesthetics, and the cowboy outlaw mythos.

Situating Peck further into this discussion are the three facets of his persona, the troubadour, outlaw, and leading lady, as they represent in different ways how these elements can be tangentially seen in country music's history. Popular discourse about camp prioritizes artificiality but incorporating country music and validating it through cowboy outlaw aesthetics causes Peck's persona to be more layered than Sontagian artifice or Adornian kitsch allows for. Following in the steps of his primary inspiration and icon, Dolly Parton, country derives part of its authenticity from a constructedness, an artificiality that is best seen in the personas that populate country music across subgenre.

Peck's parodic camp can directly translate to validating queerness and experiences of marginalized groups through the meaning of the outlaw country mythos. This is at the core of the postmodern parodic interpretation of camp, as the personal connection to the aesthetic and where it is situated within a genre that generally considers queerness as transgressive makes the entire persona and endeavor into a reclamation strategy for a marginalized identity.

Masculinity and Sport: An Analysis of "The M.V.P." in the Television Comedy Schitt's Creek
Judy Clemens-Smucker | clemej@bgsu.edu

The world of sport is filled with examples of what we expect men to embody: power, strength, confidence, competitiveness, and privilege. Every Sunday during football season we see this enacted as helmeted, padded, male specimens take the field to batter each other, fight off injury, and celebrate victory through dramatic rituals. We are reminded of it every time we see a fight break out among men on the basketball court, the hockey rink, or the soccer field. We see it when men leave play with an injury, only to return moments later, despite pain or physical danger. Our culture is populated with images of hegemonic masculinity not only in these real sports events, but also in film and television which glorify the male body, the violence of sport, and the commoditization of male privilege and behavior. Movies such as *Rocky* and *Bull Durham*, television shows like *Friday Night Lights*, and myriad football movies display the performance of masculinity in American culture. However, if one searches hard enough, one can also find examples which parody hegemonic masculinity within sport, and which highlight the humor in our culture's expectations and beliefs, examining this behavior through fictional narratives. Comedic texts such as the Canadian show *Schitt's Creek* find space to reveal our society through a lens of irony and laughter, pointing out the ways in which hegemonic masculinity need not be the only culture expected of men in sport.

"Like a mailbox?" - A Critique of Hegemonic Gender in Amazon's The Tick
Dylan Miller | mrdylan@bgsu.edu

The past few decades have brought superhero media into the mainstream, and with it a broader number of texts that look outside the limited points of view generally present in the genre. However, the reaction to films like *Wonder Woman* and *Captain Marvel* have proven that there is still a certain sense of entitlement amongst speculative fiction fans to media that appeals to the historical dominance of the cisgender heterosexual middle class white man as the lens through which such texts are written and understood. Ben Edlund's *The Tick* is what Peter Serafinowicz (who plays the titular hero in the 2016 live action show) calls a "reconstruction" of superhero tropes, and each rendition since its inception in 1986 has used this reconstruction to provide commentary and critique on the genre's particular view of gender.

Superhero media is hyper-gendered, taking hegemonic notions of gender and reinforcing them in excess. This provides context for *The Tick* to interrogate the way we gender others coercively and unconsciously through the essentialist signifiers associated with that binary. There are three characters from the 2016 show - the amnesiac do-gooder Tick, the Atlantean Lobstercules (Niko Nedyalkov, voiced by Liz Vassey), and the artificial intelligence Dangerboat (Alan Tudyk) - that this presentation will use as case studies for discussing how the social construct of gender is insufficient for describing our experiences and actively harmful in its limitations.

Letting Go of Labels in TV's Queer Utopias: Aspiration or Erasure?
Jinx Mylo | jmylo@bgsu.edu

Queer representation on television has come a long way since Joe Biden claimed *Will & Grace* had done more to educate the American people about gay people than almost anything else that had been done so far. Openly queer characters exist across networks and streaming platforms, and some of them are even played by queer actors. A number of recent shows have portrayed one form or another of queer utopia, hoping to show where we could go as a society rather than showing where we are right now. One of the approaches to this is the avoidance of explicitly labeling characters while making it clear that queer sexuality abounds, as in the SYFY show *The Magicians*. In comparison, *Schitt's Creek* embraces frank discussion of labels and chooses a lack of homophobia for its utopian element. Unpacking the ways in which these two shows depict and describe queer characters and relationships allows us to assess the success or failure in each approach, and determine if they they are providing aspiration or erasure.

A Wonder of a Woman: Wonder Woman's Musical Themes as Persuasive Text
Anna DeGalan | annad@bgsu.edu

While superheroes have dominated American popular culture in recent years, audiences and fans have enjoyed their featured films and television shows without acknowledging the, often, blatant persuasive messaging found in the lyrics of these superheroes' musical themes. This study investigated the persuasive messaging behind the musical themes for DC Comics' character of Wonder Woman and the importance of persuasive messaging within popular culture. Using theories found within persuasion methods and textual analysis, this essay provides an examination of the television introduction theme for Wonder Woman (1976) and Sia's (feat. Labrinth) "To Be Human" from Wonder Woman (Jenkins, 2017) as examples of the thematic development of Wonder Woman's themes and what the encoded message found within the lyrics is saying about the heroine in terms of gender norms, gender roles, feminism, characterization, and what it means to be a hero.

Genre is Dead. Long Live Genre: A Romance
Michaela Hansen | michaelahansen44@gmail.com

Romance novels on Netflix; true crime podcasts; adaptations of adaptations; and girls playing chess — as the lines of genre blur, how do the distinctions serve us? And do they? From the original two: comedy and tragedy, distinguished only by their endings, to the diversity of possibilities available to us now, the makers of media propose that genre is a blurred distinction, appropriate only, and occasionally, for marketing. With the influx of adaptations available on streaming services, specifically romance novels brought to screen wearing the trappings of Jane Austen and *Grey's Anatomy*, how do we translate genre throughout adaptations? And is it useful?

The rise of book adaptations to streaming services, like *Virgin River* and *Bridgerton*, provide media makers with a pantheon of ready-made worlds, and viewers with hours of binge-able shows. For decades the "high" novel has found its way to the screen, but rapacious demand has brought the "low" to the forefront — "genre," long the anathema of literary elitists is in high demand. The distinctions of genre, both "high" and "low," no longer serve the media, or the marketers because genre is an outdated structure imposed on art that knows no boundaries.

To Hell with the Canon: How Fanfiction is (Re)thinking Authorial Intent, Textual Ownership, and the Postmodern Condition
Frankie Krutsch | marymk@bgsu.edu

In 1967, Roland Barthes published his famous essay "The Death of the Author," suggesting that allowing authorial intent to reign supreme on the texts they write is limiting, unnecessary, flawed. In 1997, FanFiction.Net – an archive for fan writers from across the globe to share their literary interpretations of various media – launched onto the Internet, allowing audiences to reign over the texts they consume. The utilization of the World Wide Web to archive, distribute, and engage with these metatexts has proven revolutionary for fans and fandom: these personal re-imaginings of the stories in video games, television, movies, and other media have taken the Internet by storm, and have proven time and time again that, as Barthes said, "a text's unity lies not in its origins, but in its destination."

The nuances and norms of how fanfiction is crafted and shared have had long-ranging impacts on how fans interact with each other and the media they enjoy, and have created a culture that is entirely unique, ever-changing, and wholly subjective. This presenter looks to explore the nuances of how fanfiction as a phenomenon across the web have proven the theorization of poststructuralist and postmodern scholars old and new, to craft a genealogical understanding of how online fan texts have evolved over the past twenty-odd years, and to examine the cultural impact and validity of all fanfictions – good, bad, and out-of-character – as they relate to contemporary notions of literary criticism.

Literary Hobbits and Hobbits of Action: Redefining The Hobbit in Peter Jackson's Film Adaptation of Tolkien
Alexander Long | alexanderclong@gmail.com

This presentation argues that in the process of adapting Tolkien's children's novel, *The Hobbit*, to suit the needs of an action film trilogy intended for both young and adult audiences, Peter Jackson changed Bilbo Baggins from a literary hobbit to a hobbit of action, which necessarily changed the entire pedagogical function of Tolkien's novel. Bilbo is a literary hobbit in the novel, and, as such, makes his way through the narrative by means of reading people, objects, and situations. Framing

the main character this way, Tolkien teaches his young audience how to read and the value of being a good reader. Conversely, Jackson's attempt to stretch the narrative arc far enough to fill a feature film trilogy caused an increased emphasis on the action elements of the film. Though visually stimulating, this decision resulted in a major casualty, changing the very essence of Bilbo Baggins. This paper does not forward an evaluative claim as to the movies' relative success or failure as movies, but it does make the claim that by adapting the epic narrative to action-film style, Jackson essentially eliminates a major function of Tolkien's novel. I contend this case study has significant implications for genre-crossing adaptations of popular narratives more generally and offers an initial approach to engaging the questions of what is gained and what is lost by such endeavors.

On a Dante Rollercoaster Ride with the Seven Deadly Sins: What Sandbox Simulation Video Games Accomplish for Literature Enthusiasts
Britton Seese | bseese@bgsu.edu

As the presentation's title states, my research explores the implications and outcomes of using sandbox simulation video games to bridge Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* to a 21st century literary audience. Inferno's plot takes Dante himself and the Roman poet Virgil on an odyssey throughout the realms of Hell to reach enlightenment. While the poem manifests itself through countless adaptations, (i.e., video games), the Inferno receives little representation through sandbox simulation video games. These creative video game formats encourage the player to construct a world based on prior knowledge. Connecting literature to video games, I uncover the ways in which video games aid creative learning and a need to make literature, especially medieval literature, more interdisciplinary and accessible. I incorporate two examples of the Inferno in such video games. In one of his YouTube videos, the personality GrayStillPlays uses the video game Planet Coaster (Frontier Developments plc, 2016) to create an Inferno themed rollercoaster. I use the Inferno and the depiction of the Seven Deadly Sins into building a themed house and people in The Sims 4 (Maxis and The Sims Studio, 2014). In Dante's understanding of Hell and its inhabitants, these players construct a modern adaptation based on Dante's creativity and of their own. What I discovered in such a close reading and virtual artistry of the Inferno through sandbox simulation video games is that people of all backgrounds, academic or not, contribute to an ongoing conversation to a piece of literature that was produced centuries ago.

PANEL 5 - THE OVERLOOKED POLITICAL POWER OF THE POPULAR

Tomorrow's Incubator: Advertising & the Cultural Feedback Loop
Adriana Mariella | adriana.mariella@gmail.com

In this presentation, I argue that despite being perhaps the basest of all popular culture from a critical or artistic perspective, advertising may well contain more information to unpack about contemporary pop culture than any other medium. This isn't just because a single ad is generally more ubiquitous than any TV show, movie, or image, but because the fears, hopes, base desires, and prejudices of a culture live, die, and metamorphose in the arena of advertising, which simultaneously draws from culture and creates it. I've found that the future of consumerism and the tide of culture can be predicted in the subtext of ads, while the most accurate zeitgeist of the past can be reconstructed in the same way. Because of my unique position — half academic, studying the narratives and cultural phenomena that advertising creates, and half brand strategist, responsible for putting those narratives out into the world for some of the country's biggest brands — my work doesn't just unpack final, consumer-facing advertisements, but also benefits from unpacking the analysis of culture that advertising agencies and

marketing departments undertake in order to produce them. Both aspects contain vital information for understanding not just where we've been and where we're going, but also the cultural forces that get us there. In this presentation, I would interrogate the levels of the mass media landscape in which we live through the terrain and techniques of advertising, uncovering not just trends, but more importantly the inner workings of pop culture itself.

She/Her Petition for Peace, Safety + Security
Shenée Simon | shenee@thesimonsaysgroup.com

When we unpack the popular, we discover the TRUTH. Pop culture is a mechanism to unmask and unveil the truth in a way that is more acceptable, understandable, tolerable and digestible. A dance between coercion and consent, the narrators, actors and agents on a quest for decoloniality. (Maldonado, Torres) The purpose of this work is to suggest that pop culture is a disruptor and truth teller on the cusp of transforming communities and minds. Centering two opposing interpretations of America's anthem, Francis Scott Keys' "Star Spangled Banner" adopted as our national Anthem in 1931 and Jill Scott's "My Petition" written in 2004. "As a soul artist, Scott captures the essence of soul music, but reinterprets and transforms soul music to embody the personal yet collective experience of many blacks of the post-Civil Rights generation" (Scott, Chloe) Jill Scott's 2004 "My Petition" as a source of pop inspiration and culture. Continuing the work, legacy and ethos of the civil rights era to modern day Freedom Fighters and Black Lives Matter activists. Research grounded in positionality as a Black woman in my twenties when this song was released, to the present day as a Black mother raising Black children with my own personal petition for truth, justice, peace and security for myself and my children. Critical analysis of lyrics identifying the relationship and discourse between pop and traditional colonial patriarchal culture. Literature review to include works by Berry, *A Black Women's History of the United States*, Maldonado Torres' *Seventh Thesis*, bell hooks and Gloria Anzaldua.

What Happens to Popular Culture in Authoritarian Societies?
Dr. Christopher Leary | cleary@qcc.cuny.edu

Bowling Green's Popular Culture website frames popular studies in a way that I largely agree with: we study "those aspects of national and international culture which have the most impact on a majority of the population." This approach, however, must be revised when we study authoritarian societies, where state propaganda often has "the most impact on a majority of the population." For example, the dictator of Turkmenistan recently unveiled an enormous statue of his dog at a busy intersection in the capital city. Yes, the statue will have a substantial impact on the people of Turkmenistan. However, the work is neither by the people, of the people, nor for the people, and therefore is not popular culture.

What, then, does popular culture look like in authoritarian societies? What happens to it? In order to suggest a menu of possibilities, my presentation will rely on journalism from the international pages of *The New York Times*. For example, *The Times* has reported extensively on Ugandan singer Bobi Wine, currently contending for the Ugandan presidency against an authoritarian incumbent. Between 2007 and 2016, Wine's subversive songs escaped scrutiny from the ruling elite because of a gaping disconnect between Ugandan elites and ordinary people. With his songs playing in nightclubs and on cassette tapes, his popularity grew exponentially, and the ruling elite responded too late.

In short, my presentation will describe circulation of popular culture on the margins, in unsupervised spaces of otherwise authoritarian societies, as well as moments when popular culture catches fire.

Political Activism on TikTok

Emma Lynn | emlynn@bgsu.edu

The age of the internet has brought about many unique ways for global interaction and collaboration. The social media app TikTok provides a unique set of video and audio editing features that allow users to interact with each other and collaborate in unprecedented ways using videos between fifteen and sixty seconds long. This has led to distinctive new ways for users to engage with politics and social justice. In this paper, I identify several distinct mechanisms through which TikTok users express their political ideologies and advocate for social justice that are uniquely only possible via TikTok. I focus on TikTok's Stitch feature and audio borrowing capabilities and the way they are utilized to either support or undermine the political ideologies and social justice advocacy of others, specifically when it comes to the Black Lives Matter movement, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2020 presidential election. While TikTok may not be starting revolutions, it is certainly a popular culture product that is being used as a stepping stone for users to begin exercising their civic imagination. Ultimately, I argue that through TikTok's features of Stitch and sound borrowing, users from all points on the political spectrum are engaging in politics in unique and innovative ways that are only made possible through these contemporary digital technologies.

PANEL 6 - FINDING EMPATHY IN THE POPULAR: PERSONALLY AND GLOBALLY

Fiona Apple's Shifting Personal and Political Narrative in Fetch the Bolt Cutters

Kelly Cole | kcole@bgsu.edu

On April 17th, 2020, singer-songwriter Fiona Apple released *Fetch the Bolt Cutters* through Epic Records with her fellow producers and collaborators Amy Aileen Wood, Sebastian Steinberg, and David Garza. This album was released nearly a month into the COVID-19 pandemic and amidst the 2020 election campaign season. *Fetch* has been heralded as one of her most experimental albums to date and even received a perfect score of 10 on Pitchfork. The prevalent sonic elements of the album are the use of percussion, improvisation, and distinct shifts in vocal timbre and register. *Fetch* is a culmination of Apple's past and present experiences; it demonstrates how she uses her personal struggles and self-disclosure to make bigger political statements.

As a survivor of sexual assault, the subject matter in Apple's art has been overtly political from the beginning of her career to present day. Still, Apple's activism and personal creed have developed significantly since the release of her first album *Tidal* in 1996. What distinguishes *Fetch* from previous releases is how the musical content of the album and the production process portray Apple's relationships with women. In this paper, I will show how Apple has moved beyond the ideals of 90s Girl Power feminism to an intersectional lens. I will use select musical examples and critical reception to discuss how Apple's response to her critics and journey of self-healing led to her creating an album that builds community and creates feminist dialogue through lyrical, sonic, and literal modes of expression.

Colors from Nigeria: Unpacking Ankara Fabric

Oladoyin Abiona | oabiona@bgsu.edu

Through the lens of Greg Urban's *Metaculture* (2001), this study unpacks the Ankara fabric in Nigeria. Ankara is a brightly colored wax print fabric that originated from Indonesia (though manufactured by the Dutch) but has today become a household name and inseparable part of the culture of Nigerians (this applies to most countries in Africa, but my focus is on Nigeria). How did this "visitor" from Indonesia recreate itself in Nigeria? What cultural value(s) does it embody that makes it remain relevant and maintain its newness? What role does globalization play in this? Answers to these questions espouse that cultural materials like the Ankara in Nigeria maintains its newness because of its hybridity which allows it to change and adapt to present realities. At every turn made in Nigeria, Ankara reveals itself in different forms of patterns and designs, each telling a story and taking on a life of its own. First is its relevance as a symbol of motherhood and community. Secondly, as a highly commercialized product that allows display of talents and creativity, it ambivalently signifies class on the one hand and breaks the wall of class boundaries on the other. Furthermore, the importance of Ankara extends beyond the geographical boundaries of Nigeria to become a symbol of national identity and pride in diaspora. Lastly, an originally Indonesian, "traditional" Nigerian fabric, Ankara has become a presence in the international fashion scene as one of the foremost fashion fabrics in the world, a blend of the local and the global.

"Life Itself": Studying the Popular Through Roger Ebert's Empathy Machine

Dr. Britt Rhuart | brhuart@bgsu.edu

There are many reasons to study popular culture, as it is a topic which has a lot to teach about society. Besides the obvious benefits of studying popular culture as a reflection of surrounding cultural mores and changes, one of the main reasons to study the popular, especially in film, is to grow one's own empathetic tendencies. Famed film critic Roger Ebert once said, "For me, the movies are like a machine that generates empathy. If it's a great movie, it lets you understand a little bit more… It helps us to identify with the people who are sharing this journey with us. And that, to me, is the most noble thing that good movies can do." My presentation will expand on Ebert's central thesis of understanding people of a variety of backgrounds through the study of film. To achieve this, I will examine three major character archetypes in film: the hero, the antihero, and the villain. For each, I will use a variety of films and characters to show how Ebert's statement about learning another's background is useful for expanding one's own empathetic responses. In movies that really dig into the human experience, we can grow and learn, not only as scholars, but as people "sharing the ride." I will also show that well-developed characters can shed light on Ebert's thesis, whether they are good people or not, but more so because we understand them as fellow travelers on the ride.

"I want to sing some other way": Stryper and the Personal Paradoxes and Freedoms of Christian Heavy Metal for One Rural Ohio Girl

Haley Shipley | haleyes@bgsu.edu

Christian heavy metal music occupies an unconventional space – it has been said that rejects, subverts, and appropriates heavy metal musical for its own form of Christian missionary work. An analysis of the band Stryper challenges these restricting assumptions about the genre of Christian heavy metal. Their musical style blends together metal elements with that of the choral aspects of hymns. Stryper also challenges the idea that Christian metal is constrictive as I looked at them through the lens of my mother's experience with the band. Coming of age in rural Ohio during the 1980's, she was taught in church that heavy metal music was the tool of the Devil. Stryper offered her a less confining form of Christianity that allowed for her own sense of freedom and self-exploration. This rural, working-class lens of analysis opens up a new door to how we understand Christian heavy metal by highlighting a story that never would have been told otherwise.

PANEL 7 - CURRENT CULTURE RESEARCH BY THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POPULAR CULTURE AND BPCL

In Support of the Deer: The Dancing Women of *Maanada Mayilada*
Dr. Kristen Rudisill | rudisik@bgsu.edu

Maanada Mayilada (The Deer Dances and the Peacock Dances) debuted on Kalaigner TV in 2005, completing its tenth season in 2015, making it the longest running (and one of the earliest) reality dance competitions in Tamil. Contestants are grouped into threes: male and female dancer plus choreographer. This team competes, wins, and loses together. The face of the show is Kollywood choreographer Kala Master, who has worked on thousands of songs in various language film industries and has directed and judged MM from its beginning as well as judged for other dance reality shows. The all-female panel of judges (with the exception of one male in Season 8) evaluates the choreography and dancers as they score each team out of 10 each week. There are at least a dozen Tamil reality dance shows that have aired in the past fifteen years, many with multiple seasons, but *Maanada Mayilada* is special in that it showcases both dancers and choreographers, creates a family atmosphere, emphasizes support for female dancers, works hard to instill in participants an understanding of what is needed to thrive in the film industry, and helps promote their careers in that space.

In this paper, I argue that the structure, choreography, and judging on *Maanada Mayilada* work together to support and promote female contestants. Compared to many other shows, this one has a focus on professionalism that deemphasizes personal narrative, downplays rather than creates drama, and avoids female embarrassment. Women who are themselves successful in the film industry coach dancers on how to use the camera to their advantage and how to position themselves as heroes or heroines in these paired dances. While the films themselves focus on the hero, with the female lead in more of a supporting role, this television show entirely consists of male/female song-and-dance sequences and necessarily privileges women in a way the larger film industry does not.

The Amsterdam Sign Project
Dr. Matthew Donahue | mattdon@bgsu.edu

The Amsterdam Sign Project is Dr. Donahue's latest ethnographic study in Amsterdam, Netherlands and is tied to the field of "Sign Studies" and "Commercial Archeology."

The field of "sign studies" and "commercial archeology" has gained in popularity with books related to signs in different cities in the United States as well as with the academic organization the Society for Commercial Archeology as well as the Journal for Vernacular Archeology. There have been case studies in New York, Chicago, Las Vegas and Los Angeles to name a few. I am including some examples of book publications that have been published on signs and "commercial archeology" in different cities as an example of this field of research.

For this particular project, Dr. Donahue traveled to the city of Amsterdam, Netherlands and took over 3000 photographs of business signs in the city. This presentation will highlight the field of "commercial archeology" and highlight Dr. Donahue's body of work titled The Amsterdam Sign Project.

Lucy, you got some 'splainin' to do. What are we doing in the funny papers?: The Lost I Love Lucy Comic Strip and the Rise of TV Comics
Dr. Chuck Coletta | ccolett@bgsu.edu

I Love Lucy, the definitive television sitcom, debuted on October 15, 1951, and quickly secured an audience that has endured for nearly seven decades. The series was both television's first program to be filmed for broadcast and the first to achieve an audience of 10 million viewers. As Lucy and Ricky Ricardo appeared on television sets across the nation, they also were seen on numerous items of related merchandise. Retail outlets carried *I Love Lucy* clothes, furniture, toys, games, and even Lucy Lingerie. Among the most popular items were collectibles like comic books, which were published by Dell Comics from 1954 to 1962. However, the comic books were not the Ricardos' first venture into the "funny pages." The *I Love Lucy* comic strip debuted on December 8, 1952, in 132 newspapers. It was written by Lawrence Nadel and illustrated by Bob Oksner. The comic strip offered a mix of "gag a day" installments as well as several week-long continuities focusing on a single humorous topic. Most notably, the strip showcases a different version of one of the most memorable television events: the birth of Little Ricky.

This presentation intends to contextualize the relationship between television and newspaper comics during the 1950s. During that decade, over 150 daily newspapers went out of business. In an attempt to attract and maintain readers, newspapers increased the practice of adapting strips from other media. Over the next decade, the use of TV shows as a source of materials for comic strips and comic books became increasingly popular. This presentation shall also discuss how the *I Love Lucy* comic strip serves as a set of "lost episodes" for this landmark situation comedy.

Women and Femininity in the Superhero Pulps: Nita Van Sloan in the Spider Pulps
Dr. Nancy Down | ndown@bgsu.edu

In this paper I want to look at one particular heroine, Nita Van Sloan, who was the Spider's companion in crime. Nita came from an aristocratic family who lost most of its money in the Great Depression. She became engaged to Richard Wentworth, the Spider. Nita was not one to meekly sit on the sidelines, but was an active participant in the Spider's crusade against crime. Yet, in many ways, she reflects 1930s femininity and the changing roles for women after the Great Depression. She could even be considered a proto-feminist. By looking at other primary materials from the 1930s (women's magazines in particular) I want to explore how Nita as a character fits into the cultural history of women's roles in this time period.

PANEL 8 - MEMORY AND AUTHENTICITY IN THE POPULAR

"Even Better than the Real Thing"? Constructions of Public Memories of Heritage Rock Music
Dr. Patricia Webb | patricia.boyd@asu.edu

Heritage Rock is big business. Heritage rock "enshrines particular rock musicians of the late 1960s and early 70s not merely as sub- or counter-cultural icons, but as key contributors in the essential character of the late twentieth century culture per se and an integral aspect of the way in which this era of history is to be remembered, represented, and celebrated" (Bennett, 2008, p. 266). Internationally, a nostalgic desire to experience live performances of heritage rock bands proliferates, despite that many of those bands are now defunct. This trend has led to a rise in tribute bands, groups that emulate a single band or musician onstage. The goal is to bring heritage rock to life.

Unpacking interviews with fans, critics, and band members, I argue that instead of merely memorializing the original bands' historical performances, tribute bands participate in the construction of an interpretation of heritage rock not based on historical evidence (drawn from YouTube videos and other bootleg recordings) or on personal memories of concerts attended; rather they are shaped by what Homan (2006) calls "Hits and Memories radio's" stripped down, ahistorical revisioning of the original bands' history.

I unpack reactions to Led Zeppelin tribute bands that indicate these revisionings' negative impacts. Disdainful of extended guitar solos and live improvisations, fans urge tribute bands to play "the hits," as determined by "Hits and Memories radio" definitions. The "Hits and Memories radio" approach offers a stripped down version of the band's rich history through erasing the homages to African American blues musicians that Led Zeppelin routinely included though extended guitar solos and improvisations in their performances.

"Music For the People": Quests for Authenticity in Detroit Rock from Punk to the Garage Revival
Benjamin Thomason | thomaba@bgsu.edu

KISS honored Detroit with the title "Rock City" in 1976 for being home to influential proto-punk bands like MC5, Alice Cooper, and Iggy Pop and the Stooges, as well as national hit makers like Motown Records, Ted Nugent, and Bob Seger. By the late 1970s however, this had largely disappeared as bands broke up or moved out of the city. My research focuses on the underground rock scenes who's passions kept Detroit worthy of the title of Rock City, beginning with the early punk scene of the late 1970s run out of a gay bar and former disco club called Bookies on 6 mile just west of Woodward Avenue.

This scene was quickly succeeded by the hardcore punk scene in the 1980s made up mostly of teenagers from the surrounding suburbs of Metro Detroit, based out of run-down storefronts, bars, and clubs in Cass Corridor just south of Wayne State University. This small angst fueled group founded one of the most influential indie-rock record labels of the U.S., Touch and Go Records, and were instrumental in inspiring the garage rock scene of the 1990s and early 2000s, which birthed the White Stripes. Using oral history, fanzines, and documentaries, I argue that these independent rock musicians and fans were driven by a politics of aesthetic and economic authenticity to create alternative culture producing systems and spaces that was non-exploitative, socially and musically progressive, and long-lasting.

Collectibles in the Collection: Pop culture realia in special collections
Joseph McManis | mcmanij@bgsu.edu

Every special collections library has its fair share of realia, consisting of non-paper items accessioned along with book and paper collections. In many ways these materials are looked down on, as borderline unusable to reading room patrons. When we think about use in the context of libraries, we understand that books are objects that can be used with relatively little stress to the book as an object. Realia presents a more difficult question of use, however. Objects are created to be used, and when we replace their context of use with that of the library, how do we create new use for them? For example, if a collection holds the pencil of a famous writer, what is its use? The library is unlikely to want to use the pencil, though it may still function as a writing instrument. In the case of pop culture collections and the toys they hold, can the original collectors use of them as toys be replicated? Can they reveal a more robust view of the individual collections that make up the institutional collection? This paper seeks to examine how realia in popular culture collections can be used to contextualize individual collections in a more holistic manner- bringing realia, papers, and books together in a re-envisioning of their original collection status. The paper will look at book collecting and object collecting separately, and attempt to merge these viewpoints on collecting, specifically in the context of popular culture collections and special collections libraries.

Nostalgia and the Physical Book
Cheyenne White | crwhite@bgsu.edu

Books are part of our everyday cultural landscape. We read them, travel with them, buy and share them. More than that, though, we live with them. While people are often most conscious of their relationships with books through the act of reading, the paper book as an object has a significant influence on people's emotions, experiences, and identities.

The book as we know it today is the codex: a block of pages bound between two covers or boards, a design that has undergone little change in hundreds of years. As a physical object, the book has a considerable power over people's emotional experiences: of time and space, identity, and memory. Nostalgia plays a large role in our fondness for physical books; "old book smell" is often spoken of affectionately by book lovers. Research into scent-evoked nostalgia shows that it is emotionally powerful not only through involuntary evocation of memories but also by serving psychological functions related to self-continuity, positive affect, and finding meaning in life. Books are powerful in identity construction as well as memory maintenance — connecting people to loved ones, historical times and traditions — as well as allowing individuals to create, to some extent, an ideal self. By exploring books as physical objects, it becomes clear that book collecting and bibliomania, as well as the fervor for bookstores as spaces, are integrally tied to the power of material books to influence the emotions and experiences of those who interact with them.

Consider the McNugget: Exploring How Popular Texts Recast the Past and Memory of War
Tyler Wertsch | twertsc@bgsu.edu

What exactly is a McNugget? We assign it connection to traditional chicken products, though by volume a McNugget may contain as little as 45% chicken meat, the remaining mass consisting of bones, connective tissues, skin, sugars and preservatives. In the end, it is McDonald's assertive statement that it is, in fact, chicken that allows us to frame it as such, though from a removed standpoint the nuggets function as a simulacrum that expresses the absence of chicken as much as its presence. Even so, they are addictive, satisfying, and extremely high-selling products.

Memory in popular culture functions somewhat similarly – out of a complex slurry of past events (rather than ground chicken meat), texts emerge that package events with high emotional salience (rather than preservatives), all so these texts laden with popular memory can be produced and consumed on a massive scale. Texts that deal with American war memory, such as games like those in the Call of Duty franchise or films in the Rambo series, combine recast the past in ways that speak to our anxieties while legitimizing extant power structures and ethnonationalist perspectives through careful use of violence and narrative. In the pattern of scholars like Viet Thanh Nguyen, I am particularly interested in how presentations of conflicts in these texts explicitly draw upon previous, real-world trauma reaching as far back as the Cold War in order to generate affect and ascribe additional context and meaning. In doing so, I will explore how the American memory functions in an environment where even the past can, and routinely is, commodified.

PANEL 9 - UNPACKING "COMFORT FOOD" DURING THE PANDEMIC: FINDING DISCOMFORT/COMFORT THROUGH FOODWAYS

Dr. Lucy Long | lucyl@bgsu.edu
Jerry Reed | rjerry@bgsu.edu
Minglei Zhang | hartbullock@psu.edu

One response to the Covid-19 pandemic in the U.S. was to turn to comfort food. As food consumed to relieve stress, the genre was promoted in popular media as a way to deal with the anxieties, fears, and inconveniences caused by the pandemic. Observations of social media suggest that the idea resonated with the American public. While some people claimed to find comfort through comfort food, there actually seemed to be a great deal of discomfort around food in general and around the activities connected to food.

In order to explore the ways in which food was being used emotionally, I developed a virtual ethnography, Finding Comfort/Discomfort Through Foodways During the Pandemic. This ethnography divided foodways practices into seven areas: production, procurement, preservation, preparation, presentation, consumption, and cleanup/disposal and also explored contexts and concepts around those practices. Collaborating with a team of five researchers, we conducted over 60 virtual interviews with individuals across the nation and from at least five other countries. These interviews identified many of the discomforts being experienced by individuals during the pandemic, but also recounted creative ways in which individuals found or created comfort through food. The project included a virtual symposium and an online exhibit (www.foodandculture.org).

This presentation will describe the findings of this project and will discuss its implications for critiquing not only the concept of comfort food, but also the relationships mainstream America has with food.

The Ray Browne Conference for Popular Culture Studies is an annual graduate student organized conference that invites participants to consider the study of popular culture as an approach, proposal, and practice.

The Ray Browne Conference for Popular Culture Studies is presented by the Bowling Green State University graduate student organization the Popular Culture Scholars Association.

The Popular Culture Scholars Association (PCSA) encourages the study of popular culture among the greater BGSU community; supports the professional development of BGSU POPC MA students; and links undergraduates, graduates, educators, and outside scholars in conversation.

BGSU. BELONG. STAND OUT. GO FAR.
A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD.

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY