

Post-Object Fandom: Television, Identity and Self-narrative

By Rebecca Williams

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Fandom is generally viewed as an integral part of everyday life which impacts upon how we form emotional bonds with ourselves and others in a modern, mediated world. Whilst it is inevitable for television series to draw to a close, the reactions of fans have rarely been considered. Williams explores this everyday occurence through close analysis of television fans to examine how they respond to, discuss, and work through their feelings when shows finish airing. Through a range of case studies, including The West Wing (NBC, 2000-2006), Lost (ABC 2004 -2010), Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997-2003), Doctor Who (BBC 1963-1989; 2005-), The X-Files (FOX, 1993-2002), Firefly (FOX, 2002) and Sex and the City (HBO, 1998-2004), Williams considers how fans prepare for the final episodes of shows, how they talk about this experience with fellow fans, and how, through re-viewing, discussion and other fan practices, they seek to maintain their fandom after the show's cessation.

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Editorial Review

Review
In this erudite and absorbing study, Rebecca Williams argues that endings are a crucial starting place for understanding fandom. A must read for fans and scholars alike, Post-Object Fandom makes a significant contribution to fan and media scholarship with its strong theoretical background and emphasis on moments of transition in fan identity. Eschewing a typical single fandom analysis, Williams uses a multi-fandom approach to reveal the universality of finality. From regeneration to resurrection, this is a book about conclusions that you won't want to end. Paul Booth, Associate Professor of Media and Cinema Studies, DePaul University, USA, and author of Digital Fandom and Playing Fans Rebecca Williams's Post-Object Fandom uses the idea of endings to expertly interrogate the deeply personal relationships fans can have with TV series and their characters. This important contribution to fan studies brings together philosophical, psychological, and textual concerns, all explored through the specific lens of fan responses to endings. Her focus on one particular aspect of the shows allows her to broaden her theoretical and practical inquiries as she offer important insights into varied fan responses. Her wide-ranging examples and methods allow her findings to amend existing investigations into fan identities. Kristina Busse, Founding Co-editor of Transformative Works and Cultures, and co-editor of Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet (2006), Sherlock and Transmedia Fandom (2012), and The Fan Fiction Studies Reader (2014) An important contribution to fan studies, audience studies, and television studies in the digital age, this book explores how devoted viewers deal with TV shows' (un)intentional endings, transmedia continuations, and uncertain industry hiatuses. Always inspired and acute in her analysis, Rebecca Williams tackles a range of case studies from Doctor Who to Friends to The West Wing. Post-Object Fandom is such a good read, you simply won't want it to end. Matt Hills, Professor of Film and TV Studies, Aberystwyth University, UK

About the Author
Rebecca Williams is Lecturer in Communication, Cultural and Media Studies at the University of South Wales. She has published on television fans and audiences in journals including *Continuum, Popular Communication, Television & New Media, Popular Music & Society,* and *Participations* and recently edited *Torchwood Declassified: Investigating Mainstream Cult Television* (2013).

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