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FANFICTION AS A LITERARY TEXT:
a narratological study of fanfiction writing

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*Believing in even the possibility of a
happy ending is a powerful thing, but
living with that kind of belief... that's the
most powerful thing of all. That's hope.*

(Once Upon a Time)

RESUMO

Esta monografia tem como objetivo principal a análise de *fanfictions* através de uma lente literária para fornecer ferramentas para análises narrativas desse gênero e, conseqüentemente, ajudar a mapear como as *fanfictions* expandem os *storyworlds* e enriquecem os arquivos de outras obras, a fim de responder à pergunta: ‘Como funciona o processo de escrita de *fanfiction*, especificamente em universos alternativos?’ Para tanto, investigo as especificidades de *fanfiction* e *fandom* como parte do que Jenkins (1992; 2006) denomina convergência e cultura participativa. Além disso, *fanfiction* é considerada literatura arcôntica neste estudo, termo proposto por Derecho (2006) a partir das noções de arquivo de Derrida (1995). *Fanfictions* alteram as características centrais de *storyworlds*, ou o cânon, conforme Klastrop and Tosca (2004), para criar entradas no arquivo. Esses conceitos estão relacionados à narratologia funcional, a fim de compreender os processos narrativos que causam interesse nos leitores, estimulam o engajamento e a expansão dos *storyworlds*. Sternberg propõe as bases para a narratologia funcional em seu trabalho seminal intitulado *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (1978) e discute os princípios dos elementos expositivos, sua ordenação temporal e outras estratégias narrativas que resultam em lacunas narrativas e geram os três efeitos universais de curiosidade, surpresa, e suspense para o leitor. *Fanfictions* exploram essas lacunas narrativas para expandir os *storyworlds* existentes. No presente estudo, essas teorias são aplicadas à análise de *The D(evil) Wears Prada* (2017), uma escrita minha de *fanfiction* que combina a série de televisão *Era Uma Vez* (ABC, 2011) ao filme *O Diabo Veste Prada* (FRANKEL, 2006) para iluminar as discussões teóricas apresentadas e apontar como a narrativa de *fanfiction* se estrutura de forma análoga à de gêneros literários consagrados e de maior prestígio cultural.

Palavras-chave: *Fanfiction*. *Fandom*. Narratologia Funcional. Literatura arcôntica. Cultura Participativa. *Era Uma Vez*. *O Diabo Veste Prada*.

ABSTRACT

This monograph has as its main objective the analysis of fanfictions through a literary lens to provide the tools for narrative analyses of this genre and, consequently, to help map how fanfictions expand existing storyworlds and enrich other works' archives, to answer the question 'How does the process of fanfiction writing work, specifically in alternate universes?'. For this purpose, I investigate fanfiction and fandom specificities as part of what Jenkins (1992; 2006) denominates convergence and participatory culture. Moreover, fanfiction is considered archontic literature in this study, term proposed by Derecho (2006) through Derrida (1995)'s notions of archive. Fanfictions alter the core features of storyworlds, or the canon, as defined by Klastrup and Tosca (2004), to create new archive entries. These concepts are related to functional narratology, in order to understand the narrative processes that interest readers, encourage engagement and the expansion of storyworlds. Sternberg proposes the groundwork for functional narratology in his seminal work entitled *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (1978) and discusses the principles of expositional elements, their temporal ordering, and other narrative structures that result in narrative gaps and generate the three universal effects of curiosity, surprise, and suspense for the reader. Fanfictions explore these narrative gaps to expand existing storyworlds. In the present study, these theories are applied to the analysis of *The D(evil) Wears Prada* (2017), a fanfiction writing of my own that combines the TV series *Once Upon a Time* (ABC, 2011) to the film *The Devil Wears Prada* (FRANKEL, 2006) to enlighten the presented theoretical discussions and to point out how the narrative in fanfiction is structured similarly to established literary genres that have greater cultural prestige.

Keywords: Fanfiction. Fandom. Functional Narratology. Archontic literature. Participatory Culture. *Once Upon a Time*. *The Devil Wears Prada*.

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1 INTRODUCTION

I first discovered fanfiction when I was thirteen, mindlessly scrolling through Instagram pictures of the television series *Once Upon a Time* (2011). There were endless posts of fans who would write parts of short fanfics in the description of pictures. It was not difficult to jump to the conclusion that what I was seeing would be available elsewhere, because surely more people were writing things like this. The rest, as they say, is history.

Social media was well-established back in 2013 and continues to be this way nowadays. Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and others promote a much more pronounced and instant involvement of fans with the media being consumed. Before the ascension of the Internet, fans would individually, quietly, and passively consume content, or so it was perceived; fans actually interacted with one another and discussed media products through letters, organized conventions, fan magazines, and so on. There was a significant expansion of television programs around the 1960s, and *Star Trek* may as well be the first community of fans that rewrote shared media and created zine culture. As Hellekson and Busse (2014) attest in the introduction of ‘The Fan Fiction Studies Reader’, these fans took inspiration from science fiction literary conferences for their own conventions and fanzines, spaces where these first specific responses to media texts were born. Once the possibility of organizing and interacting more profoundly in specific communities became faster, so did the circulation of fanworks in general and especially fanfictions.

The interaction with media — films, literature, television shows, video games — became more participatory, active, and interactive between fans and those who produced it. The need to fix and poach texts became stronger and this resulted in a significant change in ways to relate to media and stories in general. As the relationship between fan and product changed over the years, so did the resurgence of studies that tried to better understand fans as a cultural process as well as the productions of fanworks. I grew up immensely enjoying literature, and finding fanfiction opened a new world of possibilities — it was possible to see myself represented in realities that might not be in the source text. Later on, this encouraged me to write fanfiction as well.

My biggest interaction with a media product is undoubtedly *Once Upon a Time*, more specifically through the subdivision in this fan community for those who wanted to see two of the show’s main characters together, Emma Swan and Regina Mills. Fanfiction opened a gateway to be more than just a consumer of a product that did not listen to its fans and instead actively participate and create narratives that were not being told otherwise.

Since my adolescence I have been part of fandoms. For the longest time, this was a secret pastime — like many fans, there was this sense of shame that permeated these spaces. Reading fanfiction for over nine years and then writing fanfiction for at least six of those made me notice the possible similarities between narrative studies of other literary genres and fanfiction, especially during my time at university. However, I also noticed the lack of fanfiction studies that would *analyze the works themselves* in their compositions. And so, there was this initial motivation to share the importance of fanfiction not only as a cultural prospect but also a literary one. As a fan reader, fan writer, fan vidder and now fan scholar, I felt it would be fruitful to bring my own fanfiction to present its narrative processes as a way of enlightening this discussion.

The aim of this work is to study fanfiction operating through a literary lens, more specifically by analyzing a fanfiction through narratological tools to demonstrate possible resources for narrative analyses of this genre. As a consequence, this might help map how these narratives expand an existing storyworld and enrich other works' archives. Fanfiction has been studied as a topic for many years now as a cultural phenomenon, since it is an abundant space for participatory culture to occur, but more recently it has gained space as a literary genre and an artistic practice deserving of study. The purpose here is to raise the question: 'How does the process of writing fanfiction work, specifically in alternate universes?' taking the archontic literature concepts proposed by Derecho (2009) based on Derrida (1995)'s definition of archive, revisited by Ribeiro (2018) for fanfiction. The concepts from Deleuze and Glissant reintroduced by Derecho are also fundamental for this approach, studied through my fanfic that combines the storyworld of *Once Upon a Time* (2011) and the film *The Devil Wears Prada* (FRANKEL, 2006) entitled *The D(evil) Wears Prada* (2017). This fanfiction is then analyzed through functional narratology means, to show how this writing process — most times intuitive and unconscious — can occur.

The second chapter presents the theoretical background for this case study. The review includes notions specific to fanfiction and fandom spaces (PUGH, 2005), which are a part of participatory and convergence culture (JENKINS, 1992, 2006; TOFFLER, 1980), while considering queer readings and its relation to fanfiction, for the studied fandoms in this work resonate with the LGBTQIA+ community (NORDIN, 2015; HELLEKSON; BUSSE, 2014). It also addresses the constitution of storyworlds — canonic or otherwise — through their three core elements: mythos, ethos, and topos (KLAstrup; TOSCA, 2004). Fanfiction is then perceived as an archontic literature that alters inventories, shifts notions of hierarchy, and accuses the silences promoted by the source text (DERECHO, 2006; DERRIDA, 1995;

RIBEIRO, 2018). The chapter ends with a section that considers a functional narratological approach for the case study and presents concepts — *fabula*, *sujet*, exposition, gaps, effects, narrator types, focalization — that are fundamental to the understanding of fanfiction as a narrative and a literary text (STERNBERG, 1978, 1990, 1992, 2006, 2011; HERMAN; VERVAECK, 2005).

The third chapter introduces *Once Upon a Time*, a TV series that poses an interesting case of appropriation of and expansion on existing fairy tales but which will be approached here as a canon on its own, an archive expanded on by the fanfic analyzed. Then, the subsection focuses on the two characters, Emma Swan and Regina Mills, that constitute the *Swan Queen* fandom, highlighting their dynamics and their (im)popularity within the broader *Once Upon a Time* fandom as a queer relationship that did not happen in the actual show but still had a big following that fought for representation and accused the show of queerbaiting their fans.

The fourth chapter presents the 2006 film *The Devil Wears Prada*. As this media product provides the setting and main events for the fanfiction, the first subsection presents and contextualizes the film, while the second subsection analyzes the main parts that were later appropriated and expanded on the fanfiction.

The fifth chapter presents a qualitative analysis of my fanfiction *The D(evil) Wears Prada* as a literary text that merges two media products to create an intersection to their archives. The analysis draws on the concept of archontic literature as well as on the principles of functional narratology to enlighten the processes of worldbuilding and fanfiction writing as creative forms of fan engagement and literary expansion of existing fictional canons.

Lastly, some final considerations are provided regarding the employment of functional narratology to elucidate structures and resources that fans use to expand archives through narratives. Following that, there is an overview of the writing process of this work, and other possibilities for analyses are discussed, both for fanfictions that merge media products and for those that only appropriate one canon. Finally, I wish to contribute to Fanfiction Studies, proposing new and relevant discussions for fanfiction writing analyses and for fanfiction in general, applying functional narratology concepts.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 FANDOM SPACES AND FANFICTION

It is impossible to dissociate fanfiction from its community — the community of fans, more commonly known as ‘fandoms’ or ‘fanbases’. Fandoms are spaces that invite participation, discussion, and creativity. What Jenkins (1992, 2006) discusses how convergence culture can be applied to fandoms. Firstly, according to Jenkins, convergence means:

the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want. (JENKINS, 2006, p. 02).

That, combined with consumers’ active participation driven by the need to socially interact with other people about the media being consumed helps illuminate why fandoms and fanworks are so abundant nowadays. Participatory culture, therefore, assumes that the reader/fan will interpret the messages left behind by the author, and not just passively receive the information given (JENKINS, 2006). In this work, the term ‘reader’, combined with ‘fan’, implies the relation that most of these fan readers have with these works: the one of *prosumption*, term coined by Alvin Toffler in his book *The Third Wave* (1980) when studying the new capitalist economy between what he calls the Second Wave (Industrial Age) and Third Wave (Information Age) – a combination of production and consumption that came back with force around the late 1950s. As mentioned before, with the ascension of the internet and technology, people’s participation became more active, and that meant the lines now are often blurred between the two processes. This, in turn, means that several fans will consume media and also produce for it; will read fanfiction, and also write their own, for instance.

There are multiple functions that can be assigned to fan readers at once. We read and we comment on works; we analyze the storyworlds, we write for them, we make art for them, and the list goes on. Ultimately, fans will navigate towards what calls their attention and, if they cannot find what they were looking for in a specific media product, it is very likely that the “missing element” will be discussed amongst other fans and an intervention or active appropriation will take place (JENKINS, 1992). Reader, in this case, is not a passive term any longer.

Fanfics are an inevitable part of most fandoms, though not the only fanwork that is fostered in these spaces. Fandoms are constantly creating and consuming new artistic content,

be that fanzines, fanvids, fanarts, and so on¹. Fandoms have changed significantly in the last fifty to sixty years: back then, fans were more likely to concentrate in one fandom and participate in convention and zine culture. Nowadays, people are very likely to be fans of more than one media product. There are fandoms for books, films, television series, videogames: if someone has wondered about ‘what ifs’² concerning any given media product, it is possible that something has already been created based on it.

Specifically in the case of fanfiction, it can be conceptualized as a narrative written by a fan as its name suggests. Pugh (2005) understands fanfiction as “fiction based on a situation and characters originally created by someone else” (p. 09); in other words, fans pull characters and/or an existing storyworld from an existing media product — in this case study, from *Once Upon a Time* — and create new storylines for it. These are then published online, usually in specific platforms designed for this purpose, such as *Archive of Our Own*³ or *Fanfiction.Net*⁴.

However, such definition is somewhat limited, as it does not take into consideration the specificities of the genre, nor does it give fanfiction the proper treatment as a literary one. These narratives have their own rules, though sometimes they may not be easily noticeable and not agreed upon as a consensus. I bring Hellekson and Busse (2014) and their perception of fanfiction while relating it to participatory culture and prosumer fans: “Thus, we look here at fan fiction as historically situated in the last forty years, tending to respond to a specific form of media texts, and encompassing a specific amateur infrastructure for its creation, distribution, and reception.” (p. 07)

Fan readers will, more often than not, go after interesting plots, good characterization, and good literary style, a trait that encompasses both accuracy and creativity in language use. Finding works that master all three criteria at the same time is not an easy endeavor, and often a compromise is made. Because at the same time this is highly subjective, as it is surrounded by a multitude of interpretations. Regardless of that, Pugh (2005) mentions that the “one aspect of canon that is not usually up for alteration is the nature of the characters. To some fanfic writers, these are the most important aspect of their fanfic universe and of any story set in it” (p. 65). Therefore, the universe the characters are thrown into does not matter if they are still believably themselves, though keeping in mind that this is a very personal choice for each fan

¹ Magazines, videos, art made by fans for fans.

² This question has become popular in media products nowadays. A good example is the TV series on Disney+ entitled ‘What If...?’, that explores events in the Marvel Cinematic Universe and creates a multiverse of infinite possibilities.

³ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/>. Accessed Oct. 2022.

⁴ Available at: <https://www.fanfiction.net/>. Accessed Sept. 2022.

reader and writer. As long as the story is captivating enough, the new entry may be consumed, because “many fans come to value the sheer diversity of versions of the same characters and situations.” (JENKINS, 2006, p. 256). Fanfiction, then, is at the same time an individual and collective experience.

As fanfiction is the writing that builds on films, television series, video games, and other media products, it regards its source material as *canon*. Not necessarily ‘classics’, as is expected from the conceptualization of the term in literary studies, but the inaugural narrative or source from which fanfiction writers appropriate elements, situations and characters to create something new. In other words, canon can be defined through the concept of transmedial worlds proposed by Klastrup and Tosca (2004):

[...] abstract content systems from which a repertoire of fictional stories and characters can be actualized or derived across a variety of media forms. What characterises a transmedial world is that audience and designers share a mental image of the “worldness” (a number of distinguishing features of its universe). The idea of a specific world’s worldness mostly originates from the first version of the world presented, but can be elaborated and changed over time. Quite often the world has a cult (fan) following across media as well. (KLASTRUP; TOSCA, 2004, p. 01).

According to the authors, three core features compose all transmedial worlds. The first one is *mythos*, which is composed by the conflicts and battles of the world, as well as its characters. It is the “backstory of all backstories — the central knowledge one needs to have in order to interact with or interpret events in the world successfully.” (*ibid.*, p. 04). The second one is *topos*, composed by the context with a general space and time attributed to it, or, in their words: “*what is to be expected from the physics of and navigation in the world*” (*ibid.*, p. 04). The last feature is *ethos*, constituted by the ethics, both explicit and implicit, and morals of the world; how the characters are supposed to behave in the world. Klastrup and Tosca further explain it as the way “the good and the bad behave, and what behaviour can be accepted as ‘in character’ or rejected as ‘out of character’ in that world.” (*ibid.*, p. 04). In fanfictions, as mentioned earlier, the *ethos* is often the one writers try to keep as intact as possible.

Fans either take canon — or the three core features — into consideration or disregard it partially as it suits their needs; abandoning all three features is too risky, since fans might not recognize the work as a fanfiction anymore. Sometimes, a phenomenon occurs: a major alteration to the canonical core features (*topos*, *mythos* and *ethos*) is proposed through fanfiction and, if acknowledged by the fan community, it becomes part of a fandom’s canon, or *fanon*. For example, it is considered fanon for *Once Upon a Time* that the grandmother from *Red Riding Hood*, Widow Lucas, is called Eugenia Lucas in fanfictions, though there is no indication in canon as to her actual first name; everyone calls her Granny in the TV series.

Within fandoms, the involvement with canonic media products often leads to shipping, a term derived from the word “relationship”. It is essentially the fans’ wish to explore the possibilities of a romantic and/or sexual relationship between two or more characters from the canon (be it fictional or real-life). There was, for the longest time, a prominence of heterosexual pairings, as Pugh (2005) attests, though this has changed over the years, attested by the AO3 Ship Stats by a user named *centreftheselights*⁵. Today male slash covers the largest portion of the top 100 pairings on Archive of Our Own since 2013, when the data started being collected.

Scholars and fanfiction readers defined these pairings as ‘slash’ for the longest time (M/M or F/F, hence the name), though recently the notion of slash has gone beyond homosexual pairings. The newer generations of readers do not categorize the same way, mostly because of Archive of Our Own’s tagging system that places any type of relationship between a slash (X/X). However, since queer pairings have their own specific communities and face different challenges, especially when they are not canon, I will use ‘slash’ as a distinction between heterosexual and queer ships.

Slash pairings are, generally, not canon, though representation in media has increased over the past few years — in 2021, according to the research *Where We Are on TV Report* by GLAAD⁶, 12% of characters were LGBTQ on TV series, an increase of 2.8 percentage points from the previous year. Swan Queen, a femslash ship derived from *Once Upon a Time*, was one of the most popular F/F ships for several years across several different platforms, and was not a canon pairing. On this, Hellekson and Busse (2014) postulate that pleasure, power, and subversion are the propellers of shipping practices.

In addition to an increased awareness of the realities of male gay experiences, fan fiction now directly addresses its own online spaces and their queer components—not just in the stories but also in the readers, the writers, and their interactions. Nowadays, slash can be deeply embedded within a self-defined queer space, neither fantastically creating nor idealizing yet othering gay men but rather writing multiple genders and sexualities as reflections and fantasies of the complex, diverse community of readers and writers. (HELLEKSON; BUSSE, 2014, p. 80).

At the same time, the importance of slash pairings also come from its queer readings being proposed as a *possibility* inherent to the text. While queer representation in media has increased over the years, there are still many media products accused of *queerbaiting*, a much-debated term nowadays. Not all slash pairings are victims of queerbaiting, and some are not

⁵ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/series/1209645>. Accessed at 5 Oct. 2022.

⁶ GLAAD is an american NGO that was founded in 1985. It analyses LGBTQ diversity in media, specifically television series in the United States. Available at: <https://www.glaad.org/whereweareontv21>. Accessed at 8 Oct. 2022.

identifiable as such or are contested. On this matter, Nordin (2015) proposes the difficulty of properly defining queerbaiting, being a controversial topic for media studies. Citing Doty⁷, Ambjörnsson⁸ and other hermeneutic points of view, Nordin explains that assuming that all readings are equally valid can be a problem when the text does not *show* the representation it has insinuated. Hermeneutic interpretations “can also be the politics of what interpretations might be voiced” (NORDIN, 2015, p. 65), and when related to queerbaiting and media, this can be applied to which meanings are spread and which are erased. In a time where queer representation is now possible, where deniability and erasure become harder to justify, queer and straight allies will point out the heterosexism and exploitation practices of producers. And so, while a relatively new term for scholars and queer theory in general, queerbaiting can serve as a form of activism and accusation of these practices that attempt to exclude other readings.

Queerbaiting can be considered to be about how producers use visual signs to hint and tease representation and then one could argue representation is there because fans claim to see it, but on the other hand representation is considered to not take place because in the end it is denied. So it is about how visual signs of representation are claimed by the producers never to have been there in the first place, that these are not signs, denying conventions and “it’s obvious”-attitudes. (NORDIN, 2015, p. 53).

For the case study in chapter 5, it is important to address other features that are particular to fanfictions. While some authors write stories set completely in canon as missing scenes — it is very common in the Swan Queen fandom to have tags and/or summaries that tell the reader in which season the fanfic is set —, others may prefer completely different alternate universes (AUs). For *Once Upon a Time*, this could mean fanfics set in fairytale land, fanfics that alter the characters’ behaviors in one specific scene, or fanfics that, like *The D(evil) Wears Prada* and many others, combine two storyworlds. The latter invites the debate as to the differences between AUs and crossovers. Since the fanfic of my corpus uses the topos and mythos from one and assimilates it into the other, instead of having the *Once Upon a Time* characters interacting with those from *The Devil Wears Prada*, I will consider it an AU. More often than not, AUs are just as popular as fanfics set fully in canon.

2.2 ARCHONTIC LITERATURE

As a fanfiction reader and writer for many years now, learning about the concept of archontic literature only solidified the views I already had — and so do most fans — regarding

⁷ DOTY, Alexander. *Making Things Perfectly Queer*. London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.

⁸ AMBJÖRNSSON, Fanny. *Vad är queer?* Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 2006.

fanfiction and archiving. Part of this, perhaps, comes from the internalized self-awareness fan readers and writers have that these are additions to an existing storyworld that do not negate it and instead expand and produce more for it. Authorship, legality, originality, and creativity have been brought into question for a long time, not solely in Fanfiction Studies, although fanfiction has received harsh criticism in these aspects. It is often common to wonder whether fanfictions are not simply copies of an original work — especially when they refer too closely to the source text — that did not need to exist. What most recent studies try to show is that fanfiction has its own value as a cultural, social, and political process.

Abigail Derecho is a scholar who has studied fanfiction and fandom practices for years now. In “Archontic Literature: A Definition, a History, and Several Theories of Fan Fiction”, a chapter published in the book *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* in 2006, Derecho discusses an approach to fanfiction that helps resignify the relation that was the standard for so many years when it came to most fan practices; that fanfiction resulted in a lesser product, a ‘cheap’ copy of an original placed in a much higher regard. Alternatively, the author emphasizes an approach that considers fanfiction as art.

To do so, the author borrows the term ‘archontic’ to classify what she calls *archontic literature*. This adjective comes from Derrida’s 1995 *Archive Fever*, a work in the psychoanalysis field that has possible applications in several others, such as the one Derecho found for fanfiction. An archive, according to Derrida, is a notion more than a fully fleshed concept; an inventory, one that dynamically accumulates impressions and deconstructs itself as new registries redefine it. (DERRIDA, 1995).

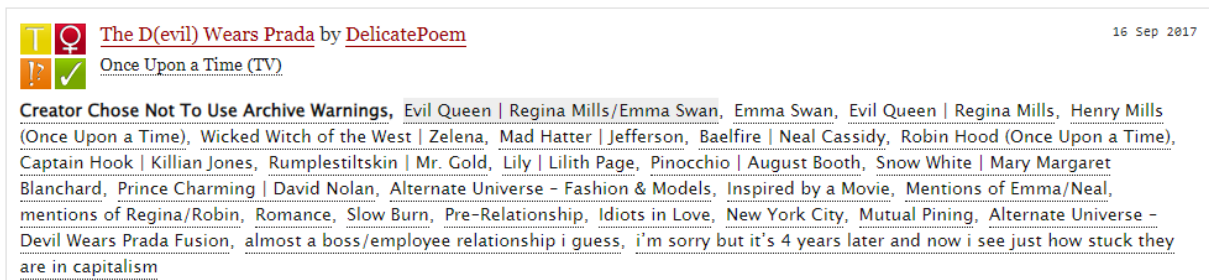
Derecho (2006, p. 64) claims that archontic literature is “composed of texts that are archival in nature and that are impelled by the same archontic principle: that tendency toward enlargement and accretion that all archives possess.” This notion of archive as something that is constantly expanding, never complete and never closed, is very productive for fanfiction and for fandoms in general.

Unlike ‘derivative’ and ‘appropriative’ labels that might suggest one imitates the original or steals from it and judges the “relative merits of the antecedent and descendant works” (*ibid.*, p. 64), archontic implies a different relation between texts. One whose prominent feature is to add and expand the source text’s archive without violating its boundaries, with the reminder that “every addition to an archive alters the entire archive.” (*ibid.*, p. 70).

There is also a distinction to be made between *intertextuality* and *archive*. For Derecho, drawing from Kristeva (1980) and Barthes (1981), intertextuality is inherent to all literary works, a condition of any text that will quote without quotation marks in an unconscious

manner, whereas fanfiction and other archontic texts “enter the archive of other works by quoting them *consciously*” (DERECHO, 2006, p. 65, emphasis added). This is a process that is done overtly, as fanfics explicitly show their references to preexisting texts, pointing to the characters and narrative elements taken from the source text.

Figure 1 - AO3’s Tagging System



Source: Archive of Our Own (2022).

As shown above, this appears in the headers, tags, and even the location of fanfics, which are usually published in fandom-specific websites such as Archive of Our Own. In this case, even the title itself, “The D(evil) Wears Prada”, references the source material. Next to it, my pen name/username. Right under it, there is the fandom in which the work is archived. The tagging system in AO3 also expresses this idea of quotations, for relationships first, followed by characters, and then additional tags such as “Alternate Universe - Devil Wears Prada Fusion” that categorize the archive entry.

After defining fanfiction, Derecho provides an overview of the history of archontic literature, emphasizing the way archontic writing has been used as a “technique of social, political, or cultural critique in the hands of what John Fiske (1992) drawing on Pierre Bourdieu, calls ‘the culture of the subordinate’ (32)” (DERECHO, 2006, p. 66). For Derecho, archontic literature has attracted underrepresented groups who seek representation and “adequate means of expression” (p. 67). Generally, most media fanfic authors are women, and although this division has become nebulous with Internet anonymity, women are still the majority. (HELLEKSON and BUSSE, 2014). In relation to this, Pugh (2005) mentions a few reasons why people write and read fanfictions. While it has to do with intriguing characters and storyworlds, writers especially consider this a “genre in which they could best address their concerns and write the kind of fiction they wanted.” (PUGH, 2005, p. 219).

Derecho also borrows two concepts from Deleuze to assist her understanding of fanfiction writing as a creative process that 1) “undermines conventional notions of authority, boundaries and property” (p. 72); and 2) functions as a literature of the subordinate. Not only

that, it shakes the status quo of supremacy of the source text, giving space for the text that comes after it to be regarded as something worthy in the archive.

The notion of “repeating with a difference” comes from Deleuze’s 1968 *Difference and Repetition*, in which he argues that repetition does not necessarily mean an exact replication, because there will be differences, even if subtle. These repetitions make the new addition to the archive affect the first work but not in a way that excludes it: instead, they resonate together and “the reader thus notices the similarities and differences, however great or small, between them.” (DERECHO, 2006, p. 73).

Derecho (2006, p. 74) argues that this resonance and the repetition with a difference in the case of archontic literature “gives the smaller work meaning and significance, and no longer does its length or stature matter”, meaning that no matter the size, the proposition or how original the new work is deemed to be, it still has its value. This shifts notions of hierarchy between the original and the addition.

In the case of “The D(evil) Wears Prada”, besides its title that already resonates with David Frankel’s almost homonymous film, it is possible to postulate that the fanfic is a repetition of the film’s plot with the difference of characters and elements brought from *Once Upon a Time* (2011). This resonance is conscious, as is the case with fanfiction, and invites the reader to look for what makes the work unique as well as what makes it similar to the source text(s).

The second concept that Derecho takes from Deleuze, very prolific for the case of fandoms with many narrative gaps, is that of virtualities/potentialities: “Deleuze claims that there is a set of virtual realities, or possibilities, or potentialities, that exist at the same time that our actualities exist.” (DERECHO, 2006, p. 74). And so, since the virtual is not opposed to the real and is, instead, opposed to the actual, both the virtual and the actual are *real* simply for *being* fully what they are. What Derecho argues is that, because both realms exist, virtualities can be turned into actualities for fanfiction: “Archontic literature assumes that every text contains a wealth of potentialities that variations of the text can then make actual.” (p. 74), and these will be just as real as the actualities previously presented.

In this particular study, we have a fanfiction that takes place in an alternate universe after posing the potentiality within the source text (*Once Upon a Time*) of displacing the characters into a different storyworld and thus actualizing it. Similarly, it poses the potentiality of the events narrated in *The Devil Wears Prada* taking place with characters from another fictional storyworld, actualizing the source film. Along with that, it pairs different characters

from what was in the canon and disrupts both archives in this sense by actualizing these possibilities.

Finally, Derecho borrows from Glissant's 1990 *Poetics of Relation* the concept of relation, which "can and should take place, Glissant claims, not only between people, but between nations, between objects, between ideas, between words." (2006, p. 75). For Glissant, an ethical world is one where there is equality to parts and wholes when it comes to privilege; one where changes mean chaos, and chaos means a constant flux that does not allow for something permanent and unmoving.

Fanfiction and archontic literature in general never stabilize the archive, since it constantly expands, receiving additions and alterations. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that fanfictions automatically make this interplay — between influences — consciously, for they do not allow for rigidity to be reached. As Derecho concludes:

[...] it also requires that people be conscious of the play and remain vigilant, guarding against the possibility that the play will cease and become fixed and rigid. The nature of fan fiction, the way that fan fiction operates, adheres to this requirement automatically. To write and to read or study fanfic is to admit that the text is never stable, that virtualities inside source texts are perpetually in the process of becoming actualized, that between texts within a given archive there is repetition with a difference, and that the interplay between the texts can never be solidified and stilled, for fear of losing the difference, the spark, the chaos that is invention and innovation. (2006, p. 75).

While Derecho advanced the discussion of fanfiction as a literary genre that has its own specificities as well as its own artistic and philosophical implications, Luciana Ribeiro (2018) argues in their doctoral dissertation entitled "Fanfiction: Reescritas Arcônticas" that Derecho does not reach the full potential of Derrida's *Archive Fever* for fanfiction discussions. For this reason, the scholar actualizes Derrida once more, stressing three relations within the concept of archives that apply to fanfictions as well: between archive and archon, archive and death drive, and archive and technology.

Ribeiro adds to the relation between source text and new archive entries the place they are archived in, as well as the archons themselves, those with the hermeneutic authority to produce and to take care of these places — for fanfictions, the online spaces. The fans and fanfiction writers are, then, the archons, who not only protect and maintain the spaces, but also "take for themselves the power of interpreting and reinterpreting those texts, continuously — the primary, inaugural texts; and the ones that emerge from these texts." (RIBEIRO, 2018, p.

97)⁹. As stated before, fans know that their practice is one of archiving and understand they have the responsibility, as a community, to maintain the archive spaces. And, of course, for fanfictions, the archon not only conserves the archive but also revolutions it as it affirms the original texts or subverts it (or both). The archive is kept alive through affirmation and transformation simultaneously.

When it comes to archives, Derrida (1995) defines the death drive through Freud's psychoanalysis. The death drive has two other names attached to it: aggression drive and destruction drive. This is what acts on and against the archive, and "it always operates in silence, it never leaves any archives of its own." (DERRIDA, 1995, p. 13). Archives, then, have two operating factors in them. They are places of memory and also of silencing and forgetfulness. Therefore, while there is an archive desire, there is also a radical finitude implied, that is, "there is no archive fever without the threat of this death drive, this aggression and destruction drive." (*ibid.*, p. 19). Related to fanfictions, this means, in social and political terms, everything that "our archives have excluded, always excluded, keep excluding, silencing people that are not in compliance with the system." (RIBEIRO, 2018, p. 102)¹⁰. The official archives, thus, do not want to show certain realities; people of color and the LGBTQIA+ community are often erased from media products, for instance. Fanfiction fights against the death drive, when fan archons create their own transformative archive entries because of this desire of memory and repetition (with differences).

The last relation Ribeiro brings is between archive and technology. For Derrida, the new technologies implicate a transformation in the limits between private and public spheres. New ways of archiving, such as the fanfiction websites, modify the systems operations and property rights, offering transformations that are, ultimately, political. Considering that archontic literature is what it is because of participatory culture, this became possible because of the barriers that were shaken once new technologies got consolidated and prosumers became more abundant. It is what Ribeiro describes as "the producers are losing power over their collection since, in the scenario of the fanfiction phenomenon, fans make a creative use of these archives. Patronage control mechanisms are weakened." (RIBEIRO, 2018, p. 109)¹¹. Fanfiction is not

⁹ "que tomam para si o poder de interpretar e reinterpretar tais textos, continuamente — os textos primeiros, inaugurais; e os que surgem a partir desses textos."

¹⁰ "[...] nossos arquivos têm excluído, sempre excluíram, continuam excluindo, silenciando sujeitos que não estão em conformidade com nosso sistema."

¹¹ "As produtoras estão perdendo poder sobre seus acervos uma vez que, no cenário do fenômeno da fanfiction, fãs fazem um uso criativo desses arquivos. Os mecanismos de controle da patronagem estão fragilizados."

just rewriting, but also archival in nature because it implies this community effort with specific places to keep them safe.

Often, fans do not even want to destroy the originals. They wish to celebrate it in their fanworks while being critical of the source material. This facet of the relation is also important. Ribeiro calls it a resistance or protest archive:

Derrida described the archive exhaustively, but he did not consider the archives that resist the system itself, the archive itself: a kind of resistance archive, protest archive. In the case of this research, texts that don't necessarily work to destroy inaugural works, but rather to criticize them, report them, express the desire of a collectivity that does not see itself represented and that, therefore, sees the necessity of rewriting (reword, repeat with a certain difference, in another context) and archive (save, record, print its experience). The resistance archive or protest archiveo — that is, fanfiction operating in this logic — does not work to destroy previous fiction, but to indeterminate it, challenge its truths and, at the same time, strengthen and enrich the life of the work. (RIBEIRO, 2018, p. 106)¹².

Therefore, for Ribeiro, the repetitions with a difference, the relations and the potentialities also reveal a fan archon that maintain the spaces where the archontic literature is archived as they act on the source texts and reinterpret them. New technologies permit bigger archives to be created. When Derecho said that archontic literature is attractive for minorities, it is because they constantly fight against the death drive that the original archive has in it, while this active participation in the archives shows that “[t]he archive is a dead weight if it cannot be accessed and creatively manipulated.” (RIBEIRO, 2018, p. 109)¹³. And so, as much as archive producers may want to silence certain groups, this in turn kills the original archive, because fans are not there to expand it.

2.3 FUNCTIONAL NARRATOLOGY

Functional narratology, as its name implies, aims at analyzing the functions performed and effects produced by different narrative structures and resources. The book *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (1978), one of Meir Sternberg's most famous seminal works, proposes this approach for the first time. A scholar at the Tel Aviv University, Sternberg has contributed tremendously to the narratology field. One of his first concerns was to show

¹² “Derrida descreveu exaustivamente o arquivo, mas não considerou os arquivos que resistem ao próprio sistema, ao próprio arquivo: uma espécie de arquivo-resistência, arquivo-protesto. No caso desta pesquisa, textos que não necessariamente trabalham para destruir obras inaugurais, mas sim para criticá-las, denunciá-las, expressar o desejo de uma coletividade que não se vê representada e que, por isso, vê necessidade de reescrever (redizer, repetir com uma certa diferença, em outro contexto) e arquivar (guardar, registrar, imprimir sua experiência). O arquivo-resistência ou o arquivo-protesto — ou seja, a fanfiction funcionando nessa lógica — não trabalha para destruir a ficção anterior, mas para indeterminá-la, pôr em cheque suas verdades e, ao mesmo tempo, fortalecer e enriquecer a vida da obra.”

¹³ “O arquivo é peso morto se não puder ser acessado e manipulado criativamente.”

that, unlike what the structuralist narratology believed, it was impossible to categorize every text the same way in internal and external processes without imposing a limited range of applicability to it.

The author defines a narrative as “composed of myriads of motifs, that is, basic and contextually irreducible narrative units.” (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 08). Thus, the fundamental core of the functional narratology theory associates the narrative with the effects, functions and resources put together in the structure. There is a fluidity in the categories Sternberg presents, which reinforces the notion that it is impossible to establish fixed locations or formats for certain elements to happen from text to text.

A literary text is the result of a vast number of selective and combinational decisions that determine its particular structure, both as regards its formal and semantic patterns and its rhetoric, the complex of devices and strategies which bring the meaning of the work home to the reader and manipulate his reactions. (*ibid.*, p. 33).

On that account, there are two processes that work together: the decisions made by the author and the reception from the reader. These processes are further explained by Sternberg as the way information is organized in a narrative, emphasizing that the different possibilities for ordering affect the structure and so are impossible to determine in the same fashion for every single work (STERNBERG, 1978, 2011). And, according to his Protean Principle, “any effect can be produced by an infinite number of forms, and any form can produce an infinite number of effects. It works both ways. [...] Many forms relate to one effect, and one effect to many forms.” (STERNBERG, 2011, p. 40). The organization and presentation of narratives can be studied through flexible terms that transcend the boundaries of genre and take all kinds of structure into consideration.

In order to do so, the first terms Sternberg (1978) introduces as key principles to the dynamics present in narratives are of *fabula* and *sujet*, which are borrowed from the Russian formalists. The *sujet* is the disposition and structure of motifs or, in other words, the way they are presented when the reader first encounters the story, through the decisions made by the author. While the *fabula* is the chronological sequence of motifs into which the reader reassembles progressively and retrospectively depending on the *sujet*. These two principles differ from one another in their mode of existence:

While the *sujet* is the finished artifact before us, the text as actually molded by the artist, the *fabula* is essentially both an abstraction and a reconstitution. It is an abstractive pattern in that it does not contain all the elements, groupings and dimensions that make up the *sujet* [...]. And the *fabula* is also reconstitutive in that it results from the reader's reconstitution of *sujet* components according to a preconceived, “natural”, logical-chronological frame of reference, the deviations from

which in the sujet highlight the modes of presentation chosen by the work. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 10).

Sternberg argues that it is necessary to utilize these two levels to properly distinguish the function of the *exposition* in the narrative, which is responsible for introducing the reader “into an unfamiliar world, the fictive world of the story, by providing him with the general and specific antecedents indispensable to the understanding of what happens in it.” (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 01). Therefore, exposition is the process of laying out those core elements of the storyworld which Klastrup and Tosca (2004) name *mythos*, *topos*, and *ethos*.

The exposition is always at the beginning of the *fabula*, but it does not necessarily have to be at the beginning of the *sujet*, which is a result of the different possibilities in the order of presentation. The location, therefore, of the expositional elements can be preliminary or delayed depending on the author’s motivations and how they wish to impart the information that composes the *fabula* at the risk of losing the reader’s interest if it is not exciting enough. For fanfictions, it is arguable that since the reader already has a lot of previous knowledge about the characters, for instance, most of the exposition will be delayed and distributed. Otherwise, the reader may question why they are receiving that information again. These location choices for the expositional elements, in turn, generate gaps that can either be temporary or permanent as the chronological order of presentation is deformed.

The temporary gaps are the ones that the text opens and eventually closes explicitly and, as a general rule, satisfactorily. The author chooses to withhold a piece of referential information, creating the gap; draws the attention to the gap and the change of reconstitution of the *fabula*; and closes the gap at an opportune moment that keeps the chronological sequence deformed for the reader.

In fact, every literary work opens a number of gaps that have to be filled in by the reader through the construction of hypotheses, in the light of which the various components of the work are accounted for, linked, and brought into pattern. Different gaps or systems of gaps may, however, vary in several important respects: some can, for instance, be filled in almost automatically, while others require conscious and laborious consideration; some can be filled in fully and definitely, others only partially and tentatively; some by a single, others by several (different, conflicting, or even mutually exclusive), hypotheses. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 50).

There can be a problem, however, when these gaps are permanent. Again, while temporary gaps depend on the *eventual* communication of an incident, being present in the *sujet* because of an artificial creation from the author, permanent gaps are present both in the *fabula* and the *sujet*. This because the reader cannot reconstitute the *fabula* if the process of

combination and displacement that produces the sujet is not sufficient. We shall explore how the narrative gaps can be a large contributor to the emergence of fanfiction in a moment.

Firstly, it is essential to mention the three effects that are deeply related to the order of presentation of the fabula as well as the functions they have in the text. Because it is the narrative resources — such as narrative gaps in the fabula and/or sujet — being employed to propose certain universal effects that move the narrative. The organization of the order is, thus, always directed toward the three universals and various other effects attached to them. (STERNBERG, 2011).

Sternberg further analyzes these concepts in a series of three works entitled *Telling in Time* (1990, 1992, 2006), detailing the universals as: curiosity or retrospection, which keeps our minds thinking about something from the past while we move forward; surprise or recognition, which works by the withholding of something in the telling until there is a belated disclosure of the gap and the information is revealed; and suspense or propection, which is when we are uncertain about something that will happen in the future and so construct and alter possible scenarios for the actual outcome of the event. Through the Protean Principle these effects can affect narratives simultaneously.

About the narrators themselves, I borrow the terms from the structuralists Herman and Vervaeck (2005) who in turn borrow from Genette¹⁴ to define narrator types. The narrator can be *extradiegetic* when the narrator stands above the narrated world, meaning they occupy the highest place in a hierarchy, with *intradiegetic* narrators – those who tell a story inside the story – being a step below. Fanfiction is mostly written in third person, generally with one or more extradiegetic narrators that have no other narrating agent above them, though this is not a rule. Besides that, the narrator involvement in what is narrated can be *homodiegetic* if they have experienced what is being narrated, and if they have not, they are *heterodiegetic*. Even more specifically, there are *allodiegetic* and *autodiegetic* narrator types. The first refers to those narrators that are only a witness to events, and the latter to main characters or protagonists when they play central roles in the narrative. Fanfictions usually make use of homodiegetic and autodiegetic narration to be in the character's minds and to show more of their thought processes.

¹⁴ Genette, Gerard. Discours du recit: Essai de methode. In *Figures III*, 65-282. Paris: Seuil, 1972.

_____. *Fiction and Diction*. Translated by C. Porter. Ithaca ny: Cornell University Press, 1993.

_____. *Narrative Discourse*. Translated by Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980.

_____. *Narrative Discourse Revisited*. Translated by Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.

_____. *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. Translated by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

Related to that, focalization plays a part in generating gaps and the universals. Herman and Vervaeck (2005, p. 70) explain it as “the relation between that which is focalized – the characters, actions, and objects offered to the reader – and the focalizer, the agent who perceives and who therefore determines what is presented to the reader.” The focalizer’s position determines the position of the focalization, and this can be external when the focalizer remains outside of it, or internal, when they are part of it. The matter of stability – fixed or variable – determines how many characters perceive the events being presented. To conclude this point, narrator types and focalization can manipulate the reader in the choices made in the sujet.

The transformation of the fabula into a sujet implies there will be narrative gaps, and these generate the three universals — curiosity, surprise, and suspense. And that is from where most fanfiction is born: the exploration of the temporary or permanent gaps caused by a combination of these effects, usually through retrospection and connected to its potentiality. Fanfiction explores these gaps and expand the storyworld (or archive). So when, for example, a situation in a narrative is not given proper attention — be that in any type of media product — or when it affects a character negatively but without serious consequences, fanfiction writers fill in the gaps with their own narratives.

Fanfiction requires the analysis of a narrative (or more than one narrative, in the case of alternate universes like *The D(evil) Wears Prada*) to constitute a new one. Thus, fanfiction writing will make use of the fabula and sujet of other narratives and create its own motifs, organized in a specific reordering of the fabula into a sujet, with its own exposition, and its own gaps (the ones in the end of chapters are commonly known as cliffhangers in fanfictions). It is a literary process in which the author chooses the best resources to generate the master effects which will grip readers and make them advance the narrative.

For the writing of fanfictions set in canon, it is easier to pinpoint a moment from the reconstructed fabula and alter and expand upon the narrative gap, more often than not overlapping with other events and irrevocably changing them in what is called canon divergence. In these cases, the exposition is usually limited to informing the reader the exact point of the fabula from which the new sujet departs. Because, as Pugh (2005, p. 173) attests, “Exposition is largely irrelevant and information can be conveyed via very brief allusions which will mean more to the ‘canon’ audience than they would to outsiders”. The text should plunge into the fictive present and weave exposition naturally into the action proper, because it is very unlikely that the reader/fan will not know the characters, and to assume otherwise is a mistake new fanfiction writers often make.

For the writing of fanfictions set in alternate universes that transpose the characters from one storyworld into a different topos, a complete remodelling of the fabula may be necessary, such as when characters from medieval times are thrown into a modern setting, for example. A closer look at the narrative might be required if the fanfiction is borrowing from a secondary consolidated storyworld, such as what happened in the creation of *The D(evil) Wears Prada*. It was necessary to introduce elements of the topos, mythos and ethos from a different media product in order to merge two distinct storyworlds successfully.

In other words, a fanfic that merges two storyworlds may have to resort to further exposition because the collective intelligence of one fandom does not include information of another canon. As a fanfiction born within the *Once Upon a Time* fandom, fans do not necessarily know anything about *The Devil Wears Prada*, and the same would happen the other way around. So the exposition in such fanfics has to take into consideration the degree of collective intelligence about the fabulas merged. There is a dynamic intersection of repertoire between both archive entries, and fans from one archive may learn about a different archive only through this transference. Differently from other types of fanfiction, then, these types of alternate universe fanfics will entail more exposition since the characters' backstories and relationships may differ from canon entirely (a great way for authors to produce the effect of curiosity, surprise, and suspense by generating gaps).

3 ONCE UPON A TIME

3.1 WELCOME TO STORYBROOKE

The fanfiction analyzed in chapter 5 of this work is part of the broader archive of *Once Upon a Time*, a fantasy drama television series produced by Adam Horowitz and Edward Kitsis that aired from 2011 to 2018. The series' can already be considered an exercise of expanding an existing archive, because its premise is to be a modern adaptation of fairy tales.

What attracted most viewers to the show is most likely the subversion of the preliminary exposition expected when it comes to these fairy tales created by the Grimm Brothers and owned by Disney. As the show itself states in the recap for the first season: “[...] every storybook character you’ve ever known is trapped between two worlds” (*ONCE UPON A TIME*, 2011, emphasis added), the viewer is invited and thrown into this fictive world with prior information that is not fully contained in the work itself, though the series renders new expositional presentations for these storybook characters.

However, there are six seasons plus a soft reboot for its seventh season that expand the show’s own storyworld. This means that a very significant number of characters are introduced and require the careful expositional treatment since there is usually a divergence from previous conceptions — viewers are unable to reconcile the Snow White from fairy tales with the show’s version, for example. Besides that, it is an extensive series, which contributes to the narrative gaps found through the *sujeet* as the delayed exposition manipulates the spectator and generates the three effects. In addition, the multiple *fabulas* transformed into a very convoluted *sujeet* would constantly *retcon* events from previous seasons/episodes. All of this might explain why there are so many fanworks being created to this day, and not just within the subdivision of the Swan Queen fanbase.

Most of the series alternates between two storylines: the Enchanted Forest (fairytale land) in flashbacks; and the contemporary world of 2011 in a fictional small town. The Evil Queen (Lana Parrilla) from *Snow White* casts a curse gifted by Rumpelstiltskin (Robert Carlyle) that transports a significant part of the Enchanted Forest to the fictional small town of Storybrooke, in the Land Without Magic or the real world. This curse would ensure they all lived unhappily, with no recollection of their past lives and stuck in time with false memories instead. Snow White (Ginnifer Goodwin) and Prince Charming (Josh Dallas), after learning of a prophecy from Rumpelstiltskin that their infant daughter would be destined to break the curse as the Savior, send her through a portal to protect her from the curse.

Emma Swan (Jennifer Morrison), their daughter, grows up in foster care as an orphan, with no knowledge that the fairytale world is real. Socially vulnerable and without financial prospects, when she is seventeen she gives birth in a juvenile detention center. Knowing she cannot provide for the baby, she gives him up subsequently; Regina Mills, mayor of Storybrooke, ends up adopting him.

Ten years later, Henry Mills (Jared Gilmore) knocks on Emma's door and claims to be her son. She takes him back to Storybrooke and meets Regina, with whom Henry has a troubled relationship now that he believes she is the Evil Queen whose curse Emma is supposed to break. Emma gets attached to him and decides to stay in Storybrooke, and as soon as she does, time starts moving again in the small town, slowly weakening the curse.

The story unravels until Emma breaks the curse at the end of the first season. From there, Regina starts fighting for her redemption in the following seasons and Emma must learn what it means to have a family and so many friends after being alone for so long. Right from their first meeting, there is a common interest between Emma and Regina, and their conflict and dynamics, firstly as adversaries, spurred fans on to see the potential between them.

3.2 THE SWAN QUEEN FANDOM

Once Upon a Time derived several different fandoms within its own, usually related to both canon and non-canon ships. One of these ships, arguably the most popular online despite being non-canon, was the relationship between the characters Emma Swan and Regina Mills, eponymously named Swan Queen (SQ).

The ongoing research by *centreftheselights* for AO3 Ship Stats showed that, between 2013 until 2020, Swan Queen was in the "Overall Top 100" of the most popular pairings with new entries on the website, considering the total number of works for each year¹⁵. It is the second most popular femslash ship in 2022¹⁶, and between 2017-2019 still had around two thousand new documented works added to the archive¹⁷. In 2013, two years after the show had aired but before its third season in September, the pairing was already positioned 78th¹⁸ on the list. In 2014, number 51¹⁹, a few months before the fourth season, and number 40²⁰ in 2015, after season four had aired. Around the last seasons of Once Upon a Time, SQ was the 27th in

¹⁵ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/series/1209645>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

¹⁶ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/40795074/chapters/102219456>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

¹⁷ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/19963579/chapters/47258407>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

¹⁸ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/16911123/chapters/39731004>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

¹⁹ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/16939224/chapters/39802950>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

²⁰ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/16939503/chapters/39803838>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

the Top 100 for two consecutive years, in 2016²¹ and 2017²². There is no data for 2018, which is when the final season of *Once Upon a Time* ended, but in 2019 the pairing had only decreased 8 positions, to number 35²³. In 2020, SQ was still in the 41st²⁴ place, and in 49th²⁵ place in 2021. In 2022, the data up to August 4th shows that in the “Overall Top 100”, SQ is still number 51²⁶. Of course, since 2019 the number of works posted yearly has decreased significantly, but there are still daily updated works in the tag besides events that promote fandom creation well after the show’s ending on May 18, 2018.

What these numbers can possibly attest is that 1) this exponential growth saw its peak around the time seasons five and six were being aired, which are considered by Swan Queen fans and some parts of the larger fandom the moment where the show lost itself narratively; 2) since there are narrative gaps that allow fans to fill in through the reconstruction of the fabula, fanworks quickly became plentiful for Swan Queen, with 14803 works²⁷ tagged as Regina/Emma on Archive of Our Own²⁸, at least fifteen-thousand more on Fanfiction.Net²⁹, and Brazil has its own tag for it on Spirit Fanfiction with at least 200 pages of fanfictions³⁰; 3) despite some anti-slash fans and the lack of support even from some actors³¹, Swan Queen kept expanding the archive and taking an active participatory stand that fought against the power of the cultural producers.

On this last note, it is important to recall the death drive at play when certain groups question the supposed stability and rigidity of the archive. The original archive tried to delete Swan Queen several times, be that with the negative interactions mentioned above or in the show itself. Fans became to notice there was a high possibility that they were being queerbaited as the subtext became too strong but was never confirmed. Many researches on these subjects (femslash and queer reading/queerbaiting) will include Swan Queen as a major example. One

²¹ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/16966566/chapters/39874710>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

²² Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/16976706/chapters/39900885>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

²³ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/19963579/chapters/47258239>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

²⁴ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/25671457/chapters/62325097>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

²⁵ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/32940190/chapters/81752386>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

²⁶ Available at: <https://archiveofourown.org/works/40795074/chapters/102219135>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

²⁷ Available at: https://archiveofourown.org/tags/Evil%20Queen%207C%20Regina%20Mills*s*Emma%20Swan/works. Accessed 10 Oct. 2022.

²⁸ AO3 is the easiest out of the other fandom platforms to gather sufficient data from, though it does not exclude Fanfiction.Net, Tumblr and other spaces that might also have a significant amount of works just for Swan Queen.

²⁹ *Once Upon a Time* has 53.2k works on Fanfiction.Net, and 15.3K are set as Emma and Regina as a pairing. The tagging system is not as consistent.

³⁰ It is not as easy to filter on Spirit Fanfiction.

³¹ Because it is not within the scope of this work to debate about this issue specifically, Ribeiro (2021) in Chapter 5 “Swan Queen Fandom: Formação, Labor e Economia” is recommended for an overview on the kind of behavior the fandom went through.

of the main arguments for queerbaiting was that if their storyline was between a heterosexual couple, it would be classified as a romance. Not only that, but as Nordin (2015) summarizes:

[...] the producers of *Once Upon a Time* queerbait with the characters Emma and Regina, the biological mother and the adoptive mother of Henry who they both have referred to as “our son” and he calls them both “mom”. The initial conflict in the TV show is a custody battle between the two women who fans’ have claimed are a metaphor for a divorced lesbian couple. Later episodes have had them join forces to create powerful magic and together save their son. (p. 26).

Regina and Emma had scenes that showed their love for one another without ever uttering these words – they were willing to sacrifice their own lives for the other repeatedly and wanted to make sure the other would have a happy ending. They would even parallel other heterosexual couples in the series, such as Snow White and Prince Charming. Even before Regina and Emma were friends, there were scenes where the physical distance between them was very minimal, as shown in the still below, where it seemed like they were going to kiss.

Figure 2 - Regina and Emma in Season 1, Episode 5



Source: Still from *Once Upon a Time* (2011).

As the seasons went by, however, storylines that were clearly meant for Regina and Emma together got pushed to other characters; both women would not be in close proximity in scenes any longer; romantic interests that had no significant connection to them got inserted in the story in an effort to destroy this part of the archive. In the still below, Regina tells Emma that if it comes down to it, Emma has to be willing to kill Emma to protect everyone else; it is an emotionally charged conversation that has them standing far away from each other so no possible implications can be made from it.

Figure 3 - Regina and Emma in Season 6, Episode 04



Source: Still from *Once Upon a Time* (2011).

The aforementioned premise that connected Emma (protagonist) to Regina (antagonist) in the first season — and in subsequent seasons the polar opposites aspect remained — as well as both equally being Henry’s mothers in later seasons, resonated especially well with LGBTQIA+ people, although numerous fans and fan-scholars have said that the show “accrued numerous charges of racefail and queerfail from its viewers.” (PANDE and SWATI, 2017). This is because throughout its seasons it would not give significant roles to people of color and, when it did, they either had a tragic demise as villains or were secondary characters in the main storyline. As for queerfails, the show did not address Mulan’s bisexuality until its fifth season (she first appeared in season two for a few episodes) and still kept it ambiguous; also in season five, they included a storyline between Ruby (Red Riding Hood) and Dorothy from *Wizard of Oz*, but they were side characters whose stories did not majorly affect the main storyline, nor did they appear after that episode. In the show’s last season, the soft-reboot season seven, Alice (from *Alice in Wonderland*) and Robin (Robin Hood’s daughter) get together and have several parallels with Swan Queen, but by then it was too late for the show to redeem itself after queerbaiting Swan Queen shippers for at least five years.

Despite all of that, at its very core, the show had a familial configuration that did not perpetuate the heteronormative message spread on the surface. It is important to point out that the canon had a very strong anti-adoption storyline in the early seasons and combined with Regina being coded as Latina and a woman of color, a large part of the fandom fought against the problematics of it. For more on Regina’s race and ethnicity, since some fans perpetuate colorblind approaches to canon because of the way exposition was presented, Pande³² and Swati

³² Rukmini Pande is an academic and fan who studies intersectionality and racial, cultural, and ethnic identity in media fandom. Her dissertation entitled ‘Squee from the Margins: Fandom and Race’ is also a good reference for this subject.

(2017) expand upon these issues in the Swan Queen fandom on their article entitled “‘Yes, the Evil Queen is Latina!’: Racial dynamics of online femslash fandoms”.

The connection between Emma and Regina goes beyond one of the Savior against the Villain, though the trope of enemies to friends to lovers played a big part in the initial interest in their interactions. Their dynamic always led to discussions about dichotomous views and how they overlapped: race, poverty and wealth, insider raised as an outsider and immigrant raised as an insider, orphan and abusive parent, and so on. It is common to find that Swan Queen shippers often analyze the emotional responses from both Emma and Regina as individuals and in the relationship, as they were part of the main characters, ergo the most developed, with seasons of history, character growth and development, importance, purpose, and build up between them.

And so, there was not only a desire for the characters to be together, which means a larger arsenal of potential alternate universes becoming actualized without the need for canon, but also a desire to explore their dynamics within canon and to actualize the subtext already present. There are several fanfics set in actual canon that expand on narrative gaps first to consequently change the order of presentation and unite the two characters.

4 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

4.1 THE FABULA OF THE SECOND STORYWORLD

The second storyworld to which the case study relates is *The Devil Wears Prada*. It is a 2006 comedy-drama film directed by David Frankel, produced by Wendy Finerman, and based on Lauren Weisberger's *The Devil Wears Prada* from 2003. The film is centered around Andrea "Andy" Sachs (Anne Hathaway), a young aspiring journalist newly graduated from Northwestern University, as she moves to New York and surprisingly lands a job at *Runway* magazine, a world-renowned fashion publication, despite knowing nothing about fashion or about Miranda Priestly (Meryl Streep), the Editor-in-Chief of one of the most popular Elias-Clarke Publications magazines.

Because the film is a screen adaptation of Weisberger's book, it borrows from the fictionalized experiences of the author's tenure as an assistant to Anna Wintour, the Editor-in-Chief of *Vogue* Magazine. In a review from *Entertainment Weekly* in 2006, Karen Valby calls the book an "ingeniously titled, tiresomely self-entitled roman à clef"³³, whose protagonist's single-minded goal of criticizing Miranda's impossible tasks did not seem to show the inevitable character growth in a strenuous job. In the film adaptation, countless reviewers have also said that "Meryl Streep's brilliant performance as Miranda Priestly, Andrea's new boss from hell and Editor-in-Chief of *Runway* magazine, brings to the viewer an exceptionally complicated individual, albeit one who is portrayed as extremely controlling, cold, and narcissistic." (VISSER, 2007, p. 39). Unlike the villainous portrayal in the book, Miranda Priestly is afforded much more depth in the film, which might be one of the reasons the movie is still so popular after sixteen years.

The film is mostly set from Andrea's perspective as she navigates her new job as Miranda's second assistant while her relationship with her boyfriend, Nate (Adrian Grenier), and her friends, Lily (Tracie Thoms) and Doug (Rich Sommer), start crumbling. When Andrea begins at *Runway*, she is considered a misfit by her peers because of her lack of "style or sense of fashion", according to Miranda, and she has no respect for the world she is now inserted into. Andrea only wants this job because of the caveat that if she lasts a year working for Miranda, she can get a job at any magazine she wants. Before she acknowledges that there is something to learn from this cut-throat industry and from Miranda's demands, Nigel (Stanley Tucci), Miranda's second-in-command, acts as the main expositional figure to impart knowledge to an

³³ Available at: <https://ew.com/article/2006/12/12/devil-wears-prada-4/>. Accessed 4 Oct. 2022.

unknowing Andrea. Her conversations with him help change her opinion on Runway and on Miranda as well.

Andrea: Okay. You think my clothes are hideous, I get it. But, you know, I'm not going to be in fashion forever, so I don't see the point of changing everything about myself just because I have this job.

Nigel: Yes, that's true. That's really what this multi-billion-dollar industry is all about anyway, isn't it? Inner beauty. (FRANKEL, 2006, 20 min 51 s).

Both Nigel and Miranda point out to Andrea that the fashion industry is more than just clothes and accessories — it is placed in an economic chain whose final judgements come from Miranda and that involve several different people. In the infamous cerulean monologue scene, in which Miranda admonishes Andrea when she belittles the choice between two belts, that in Andrea's opinion, “look exactly the same”, this lesson is imparted to her in front of her colleagues:

Andrea: I'm still learning about this stuff, and—

Miranda: This... *stuff*? Oh, okay. I see. You think this has nothing to do with *you*. You go to your closet, and you select, I don't know, that lumpy blue sweater for instance, because you're trying to tell the world that you take yourself too seriously to care about what you put on your back, but what you don't know is that that sweater is not just blue, it's not turquoise, it's not lapis, it's actually cerulean. [...] [T]hat blue represents million of dollars and countless jobs. And it's sort of comical how you think you've made a choice that exempts you from the fashion industry when in fact you're wearing a sweater that was selected *for* you by the people in this room. From a pile of *stuff*. (FRANKEL, 2006, 23 min).

After a particularly difficult demand Andrea is unable to fulfill, she complains that she would like her work to be recognized by Miranda. Nigel shows her she is only deigning to work at Runway for something she considers superior, thus not really trying to succeed. Andrea begs him for a makeover to show she is willing to compromise and become part of Runway's world. She changes her appearance to be acknowledged and dependable in her job.

Andrea focuses on being the best assistant possible; eventually, she starts outperforming Miranda's first assistant, Emily Charlton (Emily Blunt). All these choices build up to realizations about who Andrea aspires to be in her personal and professional life, and what she is willing to sacrifice to get what she wants. Miranda notices the changes in commitment from Andrea and rewards her with the choice to go to the Paris Fashion Week shows instead of Emily, who had been anticipating the trip for months. This causes a rift between Andrea and Emily that is only mended when Andrea gives her Paris clothes away to the first assistant at the end of the film.

In Paris, Miranda divulges to Andrea that she is getting divorced, for the first time appearing vulnerable on screen as she cries about the injustices her daughters, Caroline (Colleen

Dengel) and Cassidy Priestly (Suzanne Dengel), are going to face because of the negative press. Later that same night, Andrea defends Miranda and her position of power as a woman at dinner with a writer, Christian Thompson (Simon Baker):

Andrea: Okay, I just want to say that yes, there are things Miranda does that I don't agree with, but—
 Christian: Come on, you hate her, just admit it to me.
 Andrea: No—
 Christian: She's a notorious sadist, and not in a good way.
 Andrea: Okay, she's tough, but if Miranda were a man, no one would notice anything about her except how great she is at her job. (FRANKEL, 2006, 1 hour 26 min).

Andrea spends the night with him and finds out the next morning that Irv Ravitz (Tibor Feldman), the chairman of Elias-Clarke, plans to fire Miranda that afternoon at a luncheon, and replace her with Jacqueline Follet (Stéphanie Szostak), who Christian explains is “a lot younger than Miranda” and “has a fresher take on things”. Andrea tries to warn Miranda, afraid that “Miranda will be devastated”, but Miranda sends her away.

Miranda orchestrates in the luncheon that Nigel's dream job go instead to her rival, Jacqueline Follet, to guarantee that the coup against her fails — without letting him know in advance. Andrea must confront her own values and the choices she has made after she finds out in the car with Miranda that she already knew and sacrificed Nigel without any consideration. When Miranda compares the two of them and declares that “Everybody wants to be us”, Andrea realizes she is not ready to accept that nor to compromise others for her own gain, like she did with Emily to go to Paris. She walks away from Miranda and leaves her job opportunities behind.

Back in New York sometime later, Andrea apologizes to Nate for her behavior, and they reconcile with tentative plans of dating again. Later the same day, Andrea is interviewed at a newspaper and the editor tells her he phoned Runway for a reference, and Miranda's answer was that of all the assistants she had ever had, Andrea was one of her biggest disappointments, but that he would be an idiot not to hire her. The final scene in the film is between Andrea and Miranda as Andrea passes by the Elias-Clarke building and waves at Miranda as she gets into a car. Miranda does not acknowledge her but smiles to herself once in the car.

It is, ultimately, a film that mirrors two women in different stages of life and shows the decisions they must be willing to make in order to move up the work ladder and stay on top in a capitalist patriarchal world. It discusses notions of femininity, ageism, work ethics, class, and gender, to name a few.

4.2 APPROPRIATING THE FILM IN THE NEW NARRATIVE

What is canon to *The Devil Wears Prada*? When I was composing my outline for the fanfiction that drew from this storyworld, there had to be an adaptation from one media product to the other, keeping in mind the mythos, topos and ethos of both storyworlds. As mentioned in section 2.2, there is a potentiality inherent to any source text, which can be actualized in innumerable ways. *The Devil Wears Prada* has its own fabula, its own exposition, and its own effects resulted from the generated gaps.

In fact, the film has its own fandom as well. While not the focus of this work, it is important to point out that the ‘Mirandy’ fandom — Miranda Priestly and Andrea Sachs femslash pairing — has been around since the film was released in 2006. Being an older fandom, its fanworks are spread over several different platforms; some have already been migrated from LiveJournal³⁴ and Fanfiction.Net to Archive of Our Own. There are 2748 works on AO3³⁵ and new ones released at least once a week. While not an extremely active fandom, there is still interaction and participation happening.

For comparison, the appropriation of the mythos, topos, and ethos of *The Devil Wears Prada* for the Mirandy fandom is likely to be different from the appropriation happening in an alternate universe fanfic for a different fandom. For instance, there will be significantly less expositional elements necessary in a Mirandy fanfiction that maintains all three core features (canon) before expanding on them. Fans will already expect that either the events will take place in the middle of the fabula, while Andrea is still working for Miranda, or will be set after the fabula ends. When the core features are appropriated in a different storyworld, however, this is not expected at all. As Sternberg (1978, p. 03) explains, “[...] unusually careful expositional measures are required in order to prevent any possible confusions and to effect the factual and normative adjustments that are peculiar to the work.”, and so the expositional material necessary will differ greatly.

³⁴ A digital platform whose primary focus is to be a blog, journal or diary while promoting interaction between people. It was often used as the archival space for fanfictions, though this practice has dwindled with the ascension of Fanfiction.Net and AO3. Available at: <https://www.livejournal.com/>. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

³⁵ Available at: https://archiveofourown.org/tags/Miranda%20Priestly*s*Andrea%20Sachs/works. Accessed 5 Oct. 2022.

Table 1 – The three core features in *The Devil Wears Prada*'s fabula

Mythos	Topos	Ethos
<p>Real world locations and people with the addition of a fictionalized fashion magazine and its famous Editor-in-Chief. Andrea wants to be a journalist and works at Runway as a second assistant; the fashion world is not to be taken lightly; Andrea's hometown is Ohio; [...]</p> <p>Decisions about what is more important between personal and professional spheres.</p> <p>Characters: Andrea, Miranda, Nigel, Emily, Nate, Lily, Doug, Caroline and Cassidy (Miranda's daughters), Stephen (Miranda's second husband), Irv Ravitz,...</p>	<p>New York City, Runway offices, Miranda's townhouse, Andrea's apartment; Paris, fashion shows, hotels; fashion industry; 2006, nearly a year starting from March [...]</p>	<p>Miranda is cunning and narcissistic; Andrea starts at Runway being very naïve about the hierarchy, implicit rules, expected social climbing and avarice in the fashion and business world; Andrea does not accept having her behavior compared to Miranda's; Andrea and Miranda are proud and workaholic people; Andrea will act like she has no choice in her actions; [...]</p> <p>Unwillingness to sacrifice personal goals; good versus bad work ethics; challenges women face in the workplace; [...]</p>

Source: The author (2022).

The table above showcases a few of the elements present in the core features of the fabula. Thus, *The Devil Wears Prada*'s canon involves, in its mythos, characters specific to that fabula, such as Andrea and Miranda, a famous fashion magazine, and personal conflicts. Its topos is mostly set in New York City in 2006, which implies different technologies at use and a state of the world set before the Great Recession; the fashion industry itself takes a central position in the storyworld. In its ethos, Andrea is confronted by different values from the ones she has, such as the expected social climbing, and she has to decide how to behave.

Upon creating the fanfiction, a choice was made regarding the fabula from the film: it seemed important to retain several core elements from the fabula when writing the fanfiction that would explore how the characters from *Once Upon a Time* would react once set in this world, especially Regina and Emma. Therefore, many resonances take place and repeat scenes and events from the film, though there are major differences that solidify this as a new entry for both archives.

5 ANALYZING THE FANFICTION

It is recurrent in the Swan Queen fandom for fan writers to imagine Regina and Emma in other media products. My motivation for writing this particular alternate universe came from not finding a complete story with this premise. The fanfiction named *The D(evil) Wears Prada* is part of both the *Once Upon a Time* and the *The Devil Wears Prada* archives³⁶. I wrote this fanfiction in 2017 as part of the second edition of *Swan Queen Supernova*³⁷ under the pen name DelicatePoem.

Figure 4 - *The D(evil) Wears Prada* on Archive of Our Own

The D(evil) Wears Prada by [DelicatePoem](#) for [CynthiaER](#), [msthavens](#) 16 Sep 2017

[Once Upon a Time \(TV\)](#)

Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings, [Evil Queen | Regina Mills/Emma Swan](#), [Emma Swan](#), [Evil Queen | Regina Mills](#), [Henry Mills \(Once Upon a Time\)](#), [Wicked Witch of the West | Zelena](#), [Mad Hatter | Jefferson](#), [Baelfire | Neal Cassidy](#), [Robin Hood \(Once Upon a Time\)](#), [Captain Hook | Killian Jones](#), [Rumplestiltskin | Mr. Gold](#), [Lily | Lilith Page](#), [Pinocchio | August Booth](#), [Snow White | Mary Margaret Blanchard](#), [Prince Charming | David Nolan](#), [Alternate Universe - Fashion & Models](#), [Inspired by a Movie](#), [Mentions of Emma/Neal](#), [mentions of Regina/Robin](#), [Romance](#), [Slow Burn](#), [Pre-Relationship](#), [Idiots in Love](#), [New York City](#), [Mutual Pining](#), [Alternate Universe - Devil Wears Prada Fusion](#), [almost a boss/employee relationship i guess](#), [i'm sorry but it's 4 years later and now i see just how stuck they are in capitalism](#)

In the illustrious Runway Magazine set in New York, where the ruthless and powerful Regina Mills reigns as the editor-in-chief, Emma gets more than she bargained for when she lands the job as Regina's second assistant. If she manages to last for a year working for her, it will set her up to work anywhere in the publishing world — she can finally become a journalist.

Among renowned brands, fashion shows, parties and chaos, a deeper understanding blossoms between them. When decisions are made in Paris Fashion Week, they find that being separated in New York won't really work if they've got Henry Mills amidst them.

[EDITED IN 2021]

Part 1 of [designer clothes & hot coffee](#)

Language: English Words: 54,039 Chapters: [9/9](#) Collections: [1](#) Comments: [167](#) Kudos: [469](#) Bookmarks: [98](#) Hits: 12950

Source: Archive of Our Own (2022)³⁸.

The D(evil) Wears Prada was edited in 2021 to reflect a more mature writing style, with a few new additions to the fabula. As mentioned before, the title already indicates the repetition — the film of the same name — and the difference — “(evil)”, a nod to Regina Mills’ Evil Queen moniker in *Once Upon a Time*. The fanfiction is part of the “designer clothes & hot coffee” series, with “*Reunion Wears Prada*” (2018) as a sequel and “*you put your arms around me and i'm home*” (2019) as an unfinished small addition after the events of the second story. The tags point out the pairing, which places it in the Swan Queen fandom more easily, and rest of the tags are completely optional, though they provide more detail to potential readers.

³⁶ On Archive of Our Own, it is only tagged as part of “*Once Upon a Time (TV)*”, however, since it is not a crossover. The tag “*Alternate Universe – Devil Wears Prada Fusion*” indicates the other storyworld.

³⁷ An event for Swan Queen where writers and artists collaborate. This version of the challenge means writing a fanfiction with at least ten thousand words to be delivered around a six-month deadline. In the middle of this process, an artist is matched with the writer so a piece of art can be created for the fanfic.

³⁸ Published at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/11918721/chapters/26934138>. Accessed 6 Oct. 2022.

Table 2 – Chapters in The D(evil) Wears Prada

Chapters	Word count
1 - february 2006	13841
2 - march 2006	8684
3 - april 2006	2608
4 - may 2006	6899
5 - june 2006	4076
6 - july 2006	3016
7 - august 2006	3575
8 - september 2006	6975
9 - october 2006	3329

Source: The author (2022).

As the table presents, the chapters follow a somewhat straightforward chronology, from February until October 2006. It is the order presentation of the exposition that differs the most from the chronology, though we will focus more on these aspects of the narrative later. The word count for the chapters is not defined at all, though it increases significantly whenever the important events in the fictive present must move the narrative.

The first chapter is the longest in the entire fanfiction, which is due to the fact that it lays out most of the exposition needed for the presentation of the storyworld. We are introduced firstly to Emma, one of the protagonists, as she prepares herself to leave for her interview at Elias-Clarke Publications and talks to her boyfriend, Neal, about this being her last chance to prove she can stay in New York. Human Resources gives her two possible magazines to interview for, and she chooses Runway for its pay despite not knowing anything about the magazine. She meets Lena Green, Regina's first assistant, who immediately judges Emma to be unsuitable for the position.

However, Regina is arriving earlier than expected, so Emma is told to stay and wait. She briefly meets Jefferson Hatter, Regina's second-in-command, but he is more worried about Regina's impending arrival. As chaos reigns in the office, we shift perspectives to Regina, who is already in full 'work mode' even before stepping into the office. After a set of instructions to Lena, Regina decides she will interview Emma, and they meet for the first time. Emma lands the job.

We navigate from Emma and Regina's perspectives to show Emma's first day at work and to be presented to the backstory of the world. Emma gets coffee and runs errands, Lena

organizes Regina's schedule and gets to attend Paris Fashion Week in the fall. Until Emma has proven herself, Lena is the one who has to deliver the Book — the mock-up of the current issue — to Regina's townhouse each night so she can make notes. In addition, Regina does not call her by her name, instead using Lena's. She does not distinguish her, because Emma is not part of Runway yet.

Pulling from *The Devil Wears Prada*, the exposition follows the same premises for this day, though there is no 'cerulean speech'. This choice was made deliberately, after considering that Emma would not act the same way as Andrea did. Furthermore, the major purpose of the monologue in *The Devil Wears Prada* is to better ascertain the importance of Runway and of fashion to spectators and to Andrea. In the fanfiction, this can be done more intimately through Regina's perspective and through Emma's perceptions of the work being done.

Emma has dinner with her friends and boyfriend, who is in disbelief that Emma got the job: "Wait, wait, wait. Let's go back to the beginning. You got a job at a fashion magazine?" Neal's tone matches the shock on his face." There is a brief section summarizing Emma's first week of working at Runway. She seems to be a little more accustomed to the fast pace of the job: "Lena wasn't kidding when she said being Regina's assistant was not child's play." The chapter ends with both women missing Valentine's Day because of work. Neal is upset, but does not complain outwardly. Regina, however, fights with Robin once more, who was left alone in the restaurant waiting for her again. He does not respect her job, accidentally saying that what she does is play dress-up while he rushes out of important meetings.

In chapter two, Emma's parents pay her a visit — in *The Devil Wears Prada*, it is just Andrea's father who does so. Here, Mary Margaret and David, her adoptive parents, visit from Storybrooke, mostly because they are worried that she has not been sleeping enough. We learn that David had wanted her to pursue a career similar to his sheriff job in their small town. Emma is adamant this is the right path for her, because "[...] Being Regina's assistant could be my ticket to anywhere in the publishing world...take Lena, for example. She's going to Paris in a few months with Regina, and she'll get to meet writers and editors! [...]". Regina calls her in the middle of dinner, wanting to return home from Miami to her son's poetry recital. Emma does not manage to get her a flight back because of the weather, and Regina's disappointment with herself has her admonishing Emma the next day for not accomplishing the impossible demand. Leaving the office in a rush before Regina can see her tears, Emma stops by Jefferson's office. He tells her:

[...] "You must take this job seriously, something you're not doing. That might be a good start. You shouldn't even be thinking about belittling Regina's job, you know

why? Do you have any idea how hard that woman has battled to be where she is today? When she started, she was young. A woman trying to climb the ladder? Full of misogynistic racist men? There was no support. They wanted to see her fall. Seven years later, she's still running the ship. Is she ruthless? Of course she is. But if she backed down only once, there are hundreds of people lurking, eager to take her job."

Emma decides to throw herself into this world she does not think she belongs to, letting Jefferson help her with her appearance and clothes. Regina is not unaffected by these changes:

That's... Emma. Of course it is Emma, who else would be organizing her office? Regina stops herself before she looks over her shoulder to examine more in depth. But it doesn't look like Emma at all. Her hair, no longer lifeless and stiff, nor held by an elastic band in a loose ponytail, now flows down her back in soft curls. She is even wearing heels confidently. There's a... radiance that was not there yesterday.

Chapter three circles around a specific event. Emma, in her rush to get to the office before Regina does, distractedly boards the elevator with someone. It turns out to be Regina, who does not ride the elevator with anyone, but she interacts with Emma like this is a normal occurrence. Lena and Jefferson both question it when they have dinner together a week later. They all agree it must be due to Regina's unpredictability.

During chapter four, Regina gives Emma her final test to see if she is ready for the more complicated demands of the job. To do so, she calls in the middle of Emma's dinner with Neal, August, and Lily — who throws Emma's phone around as a joke before Emma takes it from them, angry at their antics — and requests Emma get famous designer Merlin Knight's sketches for the fall collection at a party. Emma meets Killian Jones there, a journalist that Emma admires greatly, but who uses the opportunity to flirt with her and to tell her she will not survive long being Regina's assistant. This, in turn, increases Emma's stubbornness.

The next day, Emma accompanies Regina to the preview of Merlin's designs. Regina is impressed with Emma's anticipating of her demands and finally calls her Emma deliberately. "Casting her mind back to the day's events, it's actually not difficult to see why Regina decided to finally begin using Emma's name and to give her the responsibility for the Book at the same time — Emma has earned it." Emma must deliver the Book to the townhouse. There, she meets Henry, Regina's son, who is confused by Emma's presence there instead of Lena's. He is upset because Regina and Robin are fighting again, and Emma cannot help but stay for a little bit with him. However, she witnesses the last part of their argument, and Regina is furious and embarrassed. Emma nearly quits the next day, when Regina gives her a never-ending list of tasks to complete, but decides to stay when not even Neal believes she has what it takes to get it all done. All her life, Emma has fought to prove herself, and this is no different. Ultimately,

Regina does not fire her, but it alludes that something deeper is going on that Regina does not wish to reveal.

Regina is *powerful*. Regina doesn't have weaknesses. So why does she feel weak for allowing Emma to continue as her assistant? What changed, besides a few completed demands?

She takes a sip of her coffee absentmindedly, gently rocking her chair as she contemplates her questions. Usually, the answers come promptly, but there are no solutions today.

Neal and Emma have their first argument because of her job, since he had wanted to celebrate her leaving and she decided to stay instead.

“Of course I’m the same! I’m still the same person! I still want the same things.” She still wants to work in publishing. That hasn’t changed.

“No you’re not. Look at you!” He motions to her as if making a point, and Emma crosses her arms.

“Come on. I’m the same Emma, only with better clothes. I thought you liked them.”

“I like the old clothes,” he mutters. When Emma doesn’t budge, he sighs. “Whatever. It’s your job.”

“Damn right it is. I don’t go around complaining about your job. Why is it that mine is different?” Just because she wants to succeed, it’s not worth it?

The lines between them are blurred further in chapter five, when Emma proposes she can take care of Henry for the night since his nanny is unable to do so. Ever since the day Emma did not ignore him when she first delivered the Book, they started bonding. Another piece of the puzzle becomes known to Emma: he was also adopted, just like she was. They begin exchanging e-mails occasionally. Emma is constantly thinking about Regina and Henry. One evening, Regina calls for Emma to deliver the Book directly to her in the house and asks for Emma’s opinion on something. They go over the details for a while, and that night Emma recalls “The way she looked as if she knew the world, and might share some of it with Emma.” Likewise, Regina realizes Emma is quite attractive:

Regina finds herself drinking in her assistant’s features. Emma is even more attractive up close.

That’s a dangerous thought.

A few days later, while working with Jefferson in the storyboard room, Regina sees that Emma is wearing the fake leather jacket again, and tells Jefferson to get her a better one. Jefferson, by then, has realized this is not normal behavior for Regina — her ethos has shifted

— and tries to confront her about the clothes and accessories she keeps giving Emma without Emma's knowledge, but is quickly shut down.

Emma is required to help Regina in Runway's Benefit event in July. It is usually the first assistant's job, but Lena is feeling sick, so Emma has to help her. There, Mr. Gold, the chairman of Elias-Clarke, makes an appearance again, accompanied by Fiona Fayette, who Regina had mentioned previously she hated.

The secondary plot gets revealed, because one week later Regina has had a meeting earlier in the day with Fiona. In the film, this reveal that Miranda is going to get fired is only revealed when Christian tells Andrea. However, since we are following Regina's thoughts and actions through an autodiegetic narrator, it was impossible not to mention her plans before Paris.

To make matters worse, she had to deal with Fiona. The meeting she had with her was worth the pain, however, since it was the only way to ensure Regina's plan gets put into motion. Who does Mr. Gold think he is, trying to go behind her back to remove her from Runway? No, it will not do. It wouldn't surprise her if his reasoning for it showed his more nefarious thoughts about her. Too brown. Too engaged politically and culturally.

Regina then blackmails Emma into accepting to go to Paris instead of Lena. If she does not go, it means she is not serious about her future. Emma is included in the best team now and cannot give it up. She accepts after some hesitation, though it fills her with dread that she will have to tell the news to Lena.

In chapter seven, Emma gets Henry art supplies for his birthday, which does not go unnoticed by Regina, who compares it to Robin's impersonal money gift. Towards the end of the month, it is time to tell everyone about Paris. Regina pressures Emma to tell Lena about the trip, but Lena has been on a car accident. Thus, Emma feels justified to go instead, since Lena's broken leg will not heal on time. Lena is very upset with Emma, who has put herself first.

"I-I didn't... I didn't have a choice! She was going to fire me," Emma says, ignoring Lena's spot-on assessment.

"I don't care, you should have said no! You don't even— I can't believe... The worst part of all this is that you've been... For all I know, you probably lied the whole time. 'Oh, hi, I'm Emma Swan, I don't care about fashion! I want to be a journalist,'" she mocks, poorly imitating Emma with a high-pitched tone. Then, she lets out a bark of laughter with an edge so sharp Emma winces as if cut. "It's so unfair..."

"Lena..."

"Don't." She says, staring at the ceiling now, apparently refusing to look directly at Emma with her watery eyes. "Just go away."

While August is supportive, Lily is angry at Emma for seemingly having forgotten about her friends after she started the job. Similarly, Neal does not agree with her choice to go to Paris. He accuses Emma of putting Regina ahead of everything else. They break up.

Chapter eight starts with Regina finding out about Robin's infidelity. The topos changes to Paris, which comes as a reprieve for both Regina and Emma, who are somewhat on friendly terms. Towards the end of that fashion immersion week, Emma meets Killian Jones again, who asks her out for dinner. Before she attends it, Regina reveals to Emma in her suite she is getting divorced, devastated that Robin has done this to her on the most important week in her calendar. Emma ends up leaving the dinner with Killian early, annoyed with him for being rude about Regina.

One big difference from the film's fabula is this: Emma does not spend the night with him. Instead, she goes to find Regina in the soiree she was attending and asks her: "We can pretend. For the rest of the night. We can walk around Paris, forget about everything. What do you think?" In the morning, Emma wakes up because of Killian's phonecall. He reveals the plot to remove Regina from Runway, offering her a position in the new Runway Mr. Gold is proposing. Emma tries to warn Regina, without success. In the luncheon, it is revealed to Emma she already knew about the plans, and Emma decides she has to leave Runway.

She can't stay. Not if she'll be just as easily cast away if convenient. No, she wouldn't be able to handle that. What Regina did to Jefferson could be her in a few months. Hell, in a few days, even. Regina means a lot to her, and she can't lose her.

(She loses her all the same.)

Mirroring a line from *Once Upon a Time's* canon — "We make our own fate." —, Regina compares the two of them and tells her that just like she chose herself first between her and Jefferson, Emma did the same to Lena. Emma leaves.

The last chapter concludes the first installment. Emma, back in New York, talks to Neal after a few days. They reconcile, though Emma says their relationship is over, admitting to herself in her thoughts that her heart belongs to someone else. She feels guilty for leaving the way she did. Similarly, Regina admits to herself she likes Emma: "And as much as she tries to lie to herself, she knows Emma leaving was the worst outcome imaginable for everything she had to do in Paris." Emma gets a new job at a newspaper partly because of Regina's reference. They cross paths on opposite sides of the street. Emma waves at her, and Regina's answer is to smile back.

On Emma’s birthday, Henry reunites them. Emma, worried because he arrives at her apartment by himself to give her a gift, decides he has to bring him back to Regina. The story ends with Regina inviting Emma for dinner.

The process that took place to create the fabula/sujet summarized above was one of combining both canons — and its three core elements — to compose the exposition and, subsequently, the fabula of the narrative. A reader who chooses to read a Swan Queen and The Devil Wears Prada fanfic might expect direct nods to the film while also keeping the ethos of Once Upon a Time in it and the resonances to its canon. In the matter of adaptation, then, from one media to another, I unconsciously asked myself which aspects of The Devil Wears Prada were important to be actualized. For the creation of this alternate universe that did not carry over the characters themselves from the film, the features from its canon were mentally categorized and choices were made to define which parts from the fabula were necessary in the new rendition.

Table 3 – The three core features in The D(evil) Wears Prada’s fabula

Mythos	Topos	Ethos
<p>Real world locations and people with the addition of a fictionalized fashion magazine and its famous Editor-in-Chief. Emma wants to be a journalist and works at Runway as a second assistant; the fashion world is not to be taken lightly; Emma’s hometown is <i>Storybrooke</i>; Emma is adopted; Regina’s parents come from Puerto Rico; [...]</p> <p>Decisions about what is more important between personal and professional spheres.</p> <p>No magic.</p> <p>Characters: Emma, Regina, Jefferson, Lena, Neal, Lily, August, Henry (Regina’s son), Robin (Regina’s second husband), Robert Gold...</p>	<p>New York City, Runway offices, Regina’s townhouse, Emma’s apartment; Paris, fashion shows, hotels; fashion industry; from February to October 2006 [...]</p>	<p>Regina is cunning and calculating; Emma starts at Runway being very naïve about the hierarchy, implicit rules, expected social climbing and avarice in the fashion and business world; Emma does not accept being compared to Regina’s behaviors; Regina is proud and workaholic; Emma is stubborn; [...]</p> <p>Unwillingness to sacrifice personal goals; good versus bad work ethics; challenges women (and women of color) face in the workplace; falling in love with someone you cannot have [...]</p>

Source: The author (2022).

The mythos was altered in a few ways, as exemplified in the table above. For the mythos, all the characters are from Once Upon a Time, instead of The Devil Wears Prada, which inevitably changes some aspects of the backstory, such as Emma’s hometown being Storybrooke, which is taken from Once Upon a Time’s canonical topos and greatly featured in

the sequel. The topos has several settings that are like the film's, for they are central to the general knowledge present in the mythos. To conclude, the ethos combines the ethics expected at the job and fashion industry to the behaviors expected from Regina, Emma, and the other Once Upon a Time characters due to facets from their canon personalities.

These elements are presented through delayed and distributed exposition in the sujet, with the intent of generating temporary gaps that will be resolved later in the narrative. The fanfiction has two extradiegetic, homodiegetic, autodiegetic narrators (or POV³⁹ in fanfiction terms), Emma and Regina, alternating between them in the presentation of events in third person. There are a few instances of intradiegetic narration such as in e-mail exchanges between Emma and other characters. The internal variable focalization causes some temporary gaps as well. This changes the reconstitution of the fabula. All of these gaps, in turn, result in the three universal effects in bigger and smaller degrees.

The curiosity effect is the most prominent one, considering there are two levels of curiosity at play because of the layer that the addition of elements from a different canon add. Therefore, there is a 'narrative' effect, associated to the fabula/sujet relationship: readers are curious about previous events that constitute these versions of Emma and Regina, or they are curious about some information that is alluded to but not clearly disclosed in the new sujet. The same type of curiosity every narrative can generate. For instance, in the first chapter it is mentioned that "Regina almost had a one-night stand once in a moment of weakness six years ago, shortly after everything changed." — what happened six years ago? In the second chapter we learn more about Regina, both in Emma's perspective as she searches her up on the internet, mirroring the curiosity the reader is feeling as well about Regina's past — "She's a bit prickly and can be downright mean if she so wishes, Emma's not so sure now there's not more to it than just callous words and a distant persona." — and, later, in Regina's perspective:

Lying in bed with Robin a few hours later, Regina pretends she isn't the cold-hearted "Evil Queen" or "Regina Mills, the editor-in-chief of Runway". Sighing dejectedly as Robin rolls over and covers her with his arm across her midsection, she closes her eyes and paints the blissful picture of a woman with no significant burden on her shoulders, no disappointments to her son, and no fights with a husband that she was never in love with in the first place. She looks happy, this woman. She smiles and laughs joyfully; never a dull moment besides her loved one and her little prince. So in contrast with the Regina that lets a single tear fall unbidden to the pillow, mourning her losses and foregone opportunities, even after six years...

While a few expositional gaps close, such as understanding better why Regina mentions to Robin in the first chapter that Henry's been having issues with maths: "It's like a test, and

³⁹ Point of view.

Robin fails again: Numbers are his area of expertise, but he does not offer to help. Not when he's like this. (Regina's already realized he's never really interested in hearing about Henry.)", which might signify now that Robin does not play a big role in Henry's life and is not his father figure (which is confirmed in chapter four, when Henry corrects Emma for assuming Robin is his father, and in chapter five, when Henry opens up that he was adopted before Robin was in the picture, generating surprise). However, more gaps are generated. In chapter one, Regina argues with Robin more than once, and a reader might assume that at some point their relationship stopped working. In chapter two, it is revealed she might have never loved him in the first place, as shown in the excerpt above — though Regina contradicts herself in Chapter 8 — and it is confirmed there was a first husband through Emma's perspective:

When it gets to Regina's personal life, there's very few information. Emma wonders if that's on purpose. Probably. Regina's mother was Puerto Rican, her father was Puerto Rican and Filipino. Regina was born in New York. Then there's a gap. Her son, Henry, is mentioned, and the fact she married Robin in 2002, two years after her first husband passed away. (*The D(evil) Wears Prada*, Chapter 2).

The chronology in the fabula arranges itself a little bit better after this, and a few questions remain in this retrospection: Why did she marry him, despite supposedly not loving him, only two years after she lost her husband? Who is Henry's father?

There is another level of curiosity functioning at the same time, which one might say lies in a metafictional level, in the sense that readers want to check how the new plot aligns with the existing canon, whether it expands it from existing gaps, retcons it, what parts of the core features come from both media products. Still about Regina's exposition, in *Once Upon a Time*'s canon Regina wants to marry Daniel, the stable boy from her estate when she is young, but Cora, her mother, interferes and kills him so Regina would become Queen. This is a big part of Regina's backstory, because Snow White is the one to tell Cora that Regina is planning to run away with Daniel. Cora wants Regina to ascend in life more than anything, because, as a peasant, she had to fight a lot to climb the social ladder and marry a noble.

Since the fanfiction does not consider the fairy tale land canon, Cora does not kill him, and Snow White (Mary Margaret) does not have any connection to Regina before meeting Emma. Instead, we find out in Chapter 8, when Regina discovers Robin is cheating and confronts him, accidentally code-switching to Spanish in his presence, that Regina married Robin to keep her mother happy after Daniel passed away. Robin tells her, "You know I can't understand you when you start with this. It's unfair, Regina." (Chapter 8), and Regina, in her vulnerability, at long last shares more of her past with the reader, and how cultural assimilation has hurt her deeply, echoing *Once Upon a Time*'s canon but still using surprise as an effect.

Therefore, the two levels of curiosity are happening at the same time: the narrative curiosity and the metafictional.

She can't recognize him. She allowed herself to love him despite everything, and in exchange? He felt she was never enough. Perhaps she isn't.

Something ugly unfurls in her stomach, and she places a hand on it like it might stave off the discomfort as she's faced with the bitter truth, and this time there's no hiding from it. The man she agreed to marry to appease Mother never wanted the whole. Only the parts that were convenient. Is that why Mother chose him?

The parts that tell the world her family is Puerto Rican and Filipino, those were easily discarded. Hidden.

And she unwittingly played that part quite well.

There are other echoes to *Once Upon a Time's* canon, especially its mythos and ethos, that slowly shift the fabula and generate the metafictional curiosity as well as surprise when the hypotheses are tensioned against the actual exposition provided. These range from: Emma's yellow Volkswagen making an appearance in the story; Storybrooke existing in this storyworld; Regina's moniker being 'Evil Queen'; Regina gifts in secret a higher quality leather jacket to Emma, whose signature item in *Once Upon a Time* is a red leather jacket; to Emma's past in the foster system. Other resonances are in characters' motivations, like Emma deciding to fight for the chance of landing the job by fearlessly telling Regina what she thinks, announcing she has always worked very hard (to prove herself, since she was a foster system child). Or when Regina mentions that "Regina cannot lie — she has missed a challenge. Novelty. Her routine, while varied in terms of opulent events and appointments, has become monotonous." — reminding the reader of canon Storybrooke when time was frozen, and every day repeated itself until Emma entered the town and things began to change.

As mentioned before, more exposition than the usual for fanfictions is necessary; even if readers supposedly know *Once Upon a Time's* canon, the characters' backstories and relationships in *The D(evil) Wears Prada* differ to accommodate the other storyworld combined, like the fact that in this fanfiction Emma is not Henry's biological mother at all, to avoid creating a near-impossible situation of fate that the lack of magic cannot explain away easily.

The effect of suspense occurs, for instance, in the elevator scene from chapter three summarized earlier. Emma receives a message telling her Regina's arriving early, which means Emma is somewhat late. Emma ends up boarding the elevator with her by accident, and neither she nor the reader know how Regina will react to having to share the elevator, and so create possible outcomes for it. Afterwards, when Regina simply gives tasks to Emma, our minds still

think about these events, generating curiosity as to Regina's uncharacteristic behavior, and surprise when the withholding of this information is dealt with only to generate more curiosity about Regina's own scattered thoughts.

Emma is different. And so attuned is she to Regina's demands yet Regina never fails to be pleasantly surprised. No one has ever anticipated her needs like this. It is certainly inspiring, never knowing what to expect from a new interaction with her.

Maybe that is why Emma was not fired today, which is just a little bit concerning for the possible implications. But surely not... Regina's not... That would be absurd. It's just that Emma's a good assistant. That's all there is to it.

Unlike *The Devil Wears Prada's* canon, this is a romance between Emma and Regina, even if still "Pre-Relationship" as the fanfic tag attested. Several scenes, besides the ones that already had undertones of that in the film's canon, are added to better reflect that and to show their slow realization of their — unprofessional — feelings for each other, as well as internal thoughts from both of them. This also generates suspense, since readers are uncertain about how this shift in their relationship will happen outwardly, considering that the characters are in a work environment with a power imbalance, Regina is married and Emma has a boyfriend, to name a few hindrances. But there is enough textual confirmation being provided throughout the narrative through the two perspectives that give the reader the ability to construct possible scenarios for this to happen.

Even so, Emma leaves Runway in chapter eight, so before reading chapter nine the reader may ask: Are they even going to get together? How are they going to reconnect? Once that is solved, through Henry's showing up at Emma's place, there is the addition of more narrative gaps when Emma brings Henry home and the fanfiction ends with "'Hello, Emma.' [Regina's] voice trembles slightly, heart jumping to her throat, but she hopes at least her expression gives nothing away, not yet, as she musters the courage to say, 'Would you like to accompany us for dinner?'" — gaps which are temporary but were permanent until the sequel's release the subsequent year — unwittingly generate more suspense and the reader is left to construct hypotheses. Besides that, the metafictional curiosity in this last scene revolves around the most emblematic canon reworking, as it mirrors the first time Regina and Emma meet in canon, when Emma returns Henry to Storybrooke in the first episode of the season. To conclude, there are multiple gaps constantly being generated in writing and these in turn enable more possible entries in the archive.

6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Fanfiction is a social, cultural, and political contemporary phenomenon. It is also literature, one that assumes a rewriting process through an archontic relation. The objective of this work was to investigate some of the processes involved in fanfiction writing, to show that it is, in fact, a literary endeavor that creates important relations to the source text, here specifically applied to an alternate universe that merged two storyworlds. By applying functional narratological concepts from Sternberg as well as Klastrup and Tosca's theory for transmedial worlds constituted of mythos, topos, and ethos, this can hopefully show that fanfiction can also be narratively intriguing and more than just a copy of a source text.

This work was divided into four sections. The first one presented the theoretical background, contextualizing fanfiction as a participatory practice in fandoms that shifts paradigms of hierarchy between texts, since it is an archontic writing. After that, an overview of functional narratology was presented and related to the process of fanfiction writing. The next two sections presented the storyworlds from the fanfiction to be analyzed in the final section, emphasizing the importance of stories within archives that try to exclude and silence other represented realities — the death drive of archives. Finally, the last section discussed the writing process of my fanfiction *The D(evil) Wears Prada* through a narratological analysis and investigated how these concepts build the narrative.

The ideas proposed by functional narratology were fundamental to study fanfiction as a whole and, specifically, its writing processes. Sternberg proposes a deeper understanding of the functions employed in several different formats and generating multiple instances of curiosity, suspense, and surprise. As the transformation of a fabula into a sujet implies that narrative gaps will be created, this becomes the main motivator responsible for the creation of fanfictions: writers will explore these gaps and create their own narratives from them. Narratology also shows that fanfiction is a genre with its own specificities beyond its cultural role. The exposition is usually distributed and delayed, since fanfictions can do without some of the elements in the core features. This because fanfiction assumes a collective intelligence of that specific storyworld, and a repetition of parts of the mythos and topos, for instance, can diminish the fan reader's interest in following the narrative. At the same time, as presented in the fanfiction analyzed, when the alternate universe merges two worlds, more expositional material will be necessary.

In applying Sternberg and Klastrup and Tosca's theory to an analysis of *The D(evil) Wears Prada*, it was possible to investigate how readers might perceive the narrative through

the effects being generated. There are two effects of curiosity that function together: a metafictional curiosity, concerning canon stabilities and instabilities, and a narrative one. As the delayed exposition created narrative gaps, these two curiosities cause the reader to keep thinking about the narrative past — e.g. Why is Regina known as the Evil Queen in this storyworld? Does it have to do with her canon background or is this new information? Was Emma adopted in this world? How are they going to get together? — heightening interest in the unfolding of the narrative. The reader creates different hypotheses for the future events while the disclosure of information is delayed, and once the gaps are filled and information is revealed, this increases the effect of surprise. At the same time, suspense is at work, as readers are uncertain about the future of Regina and Emma’s relationship and construct possible scenarios for them to be together, for instance.

It was noticeable that there are two processes involved in fanfiction writing: one of identifying the fabula of the source text along with its core features, expositional modes, and gaps that generate the three universals, and one that is very related to literary creation and utilizes the manipulation of exposition and ordering to generate gaps that intensify the suspense, curiosity, and surprise and, therefore, compose a new narrative. In this case study, this identification step happened both for *Once Upon a Time* and for *The Devil Wears Prada*, the latter being the main inspiration for the fabula.

Thus, fanfiction is a genre that at the same time reinforces the source material and instigates a revolution in the archive by repeating with differences and destabilizing notions of hierarchy. The archive remains open because fandoms through participatory culture do not let it stagnate. *The D(evil) Wears Prada* showcases this as it closely follows several elements from the mythos, topos, and ethos but still criticizes the originals and expand their archives. It indeterminates both source texts and proposes other discussions to the TV series and the film, such as the intersections of class and race in workplace environments.

Functional narratology can be an important tool for Fanfiction Studies, particularly to investigate fanfictions as a literary text. Further research on the subject could hopefully inspire more recent studies related to fanfictions and, specifically, about the writing process itself. Likewise, this could help map which narrative functions are used unconsciously by fanfiction writers and categorize them. There could be a focus on fanfictions that alter canon not through the addition of another storyworld to it, but instead by retaining more elements of the core features and diverging from them, as it requires a different choice of canon aspects. Additionally, on the basis that this constitutes a literary text, these narratological concepts and others can serve as tools for more fanfictions’ analyses.

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