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So, go ahead panelists and we were starting the recording, let's see.

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Recording to the cloud. Okay.

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OK, panel, it's yours.

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Alright, well I'm thank you for this. Thank you all for coming to this panel should be an interesting exercise. Um, it's a truth universally acknowledged that a high a high profile adaptation of a text to cinema TV will boost public engagement with the

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text and an academia, that's often taken as a cue to start offering undergraduate courses on the texts offered in the understanding that students fans of the, of the annotations will want to look at the original.

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Now, our objective here today isn't to reject that notion, but it is to observe some complications with it.

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And to do that we've assembled, we've assembled a panel of people who all have experience teaching fantasy texts which have been have been adapted to the screen in the Jacksonian era, and alphabetical order we have here we first have Paul tankard Dr Paul

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Tanka is an associate professor of English at the University of Otago in Geneva New Zealand, where he teaches composition creative non fiction and fantasy literature.

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His research interest in the essays and journalism of the long 18th century have produced several publications, most notably his annotated collection facts and interventions selections from the journalism of James Boswell, in which he presents a wide

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closely annotated selection of both worlds of both worlds journalism.

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The great majority of which has not been published since the 1700s.

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He also brought to light Mary further and Mary forbids correspondence with jr Tolkien and her illustrations to the Lord of the Rings which

which token claims made him think and illustrated edition of The Lord of the Rings might be a good thing to cover

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the, the JK Rowling side of the, of the equation that we have Professor Lana Lana whited, who is editor of the ivory tower and Harry Potter and of critical insight into the critical insights series volumes on the Harry Potter saga, and the Hunger Games

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trilogy.

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She's currently preparing a second ivory tower volume covering all of JK Rowling's fictional works.

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Dr wise it is professor of English and director of the Boone on his program at Ferrum College in Virginia.

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Her most recent book is murder. In fact, death and disillusionment in American true crime novels, a work in which she traces the conventions of fact based crime fiction and works such as Truman Capote it's in cold blood, placing such fiction, in a broader

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context of American literature, and to cover the mountain side of the equation we have myself Joseph Rex young.

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I live in Geneva New Zealand, where I pursue my research interests in the intellectual history of post enlightenment supernatural literature.

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My most notable publication today is my 2019 book, George RR Martin and the fantasy form in which I link Martin Song of Ice and Fire novels, to the fantasy tradition of the Inklings by demonstrating their common near romantic impact.

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I've also published similarly on the words of Dr Edison, they explored into medieval fantasy readings of contemporary Polish surrealism.

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And I've taught at universities in New Zealand, Joni and bosnia-herzegovina.

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And I would get more work done if I didn't have to spend so much time on Joe application.

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So what's going to happen now is. Each of us is going to produce eight or 10 minutes of discussion of all our experiences teaching these, these chicks in the age of adaptation, and then they will be a bit of a postscript for me.

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And then we will throw the floor open to questions.

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But I'm we're starting with me.

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And as I as I taught token and Lewis and Pullman various students approached me and asked me when I was going to start talking about Game of Thrones.

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And I always said I wasn't teaching Game of Thrones I was teaching A Song of Ice and Fire. This is a literature course not a media studies course. I said, You're watching the AV versions of these texts was not going to cut it.

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So finally, the mountain classes roll around and I entered the theater to discover that about three quarters of the class were wearing Game of Thrones t shirts and I thought, excellent.

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That's exactly the kind of of engagement, we want to see. Um, but as I started bouncing questions off the class that became increasingly apparent but very few of them had actually done the reading.

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And after class one student in a game of thrones t shirt came and approached me and unexplained he hadn't done the reading, because he was worried about spoilers for the TV show.

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Now the. That's a horror story in itself, but the the kicker here is that the reading night assigned was booked one of Martin's novel series, and the TV episodes based on that novel had gone to air five years previously.

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The student achievement he hadn't actually watched any of the show, um, he just enjoy the enjoy the fan sites he enjoyed the memes on the fan sites.

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And I said enough to buy the T shirt, and he noted excitedly and told me a joke about Game of Thrones which you'd read online.

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And that sadly isn't an isolated incident I had a student in New Zealand, who described herself as a game of thrones Uber fan.

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And when I asked her who her favorite character was she said Diana Rick, who plays one of the secondary characters in Game of Thrones, um, when I press the student further she couldn't actually named the character that Diana replayed, and she admitted

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she hadn't actually watched any episodes of the show she just watched the scenes that had done in a Reagan them on YouTube, and that was the extent of her engagement with the show, and that made her a game of thrones fan.

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Now I mentioned these horror stories, not to complain but to diagnose the problem here. As I see it, the issue here isn't that people would rather watch the show, than read the book.

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The issue here is that both of these students received the primary exposure to the story, not through Martin's books or through Benioff and vices show, but via the activity of other fans, and that they seem to to value association with those fans ahead

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of actually consuming the object of their affections whatever that whatever medium that that you know that takes place it.

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And I don't think this is a particular help for teachers of literature.

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Now I don't have an incisive answer to this problem. But I do have a theory about how it emerged, the onset of the, of the Jacksonian age the age of large scale AV adaptations of fantasy lit coincides roughly with the massive spells Libby internet as

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a source of information. Google was was launched in 1998, when Peter Jackson was filming the First Lord of the Rings movie.

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And I think the negotiations for over the film rights of the first Harry Potter book we're underway.

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And by the time big fantasy adaptations started to hit the theaters at the beginning of this century, the general public was getting into the habit of using of using Google of using the internet.

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And once you find if you google Jr. Tolkien or Harry Potter isn't the narratives are in prose or on video.

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What you find is fan sites.

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And, and, and most of those fan sites are chiefly revolved around online
humor, they revolve around your means and and jokes and so forth, and
humor is fun everyone likes a laugh.

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And that's such a lot of the reception of these narratives in the
Jacksonian era gets inflicted through this this sort of humorous
engagement with with with the, with the material by other fans.

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And what the Internet has done, I believe, is it's turned fandom from a
consequence of a private connection with, with a text into a public act,
almost as a clown act of sorts.

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the young men in Germany, afraid of spoilers for example I have no doubt
loves what reading wearing his Game of Thrones t shirt, so he can show
everyone what a huge nerd he is because people find know it's funny
fandom it's itself fandom in the abstract

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is now as sort of codify double aspirational performance of public state
of being. What you are a fan of is almost a secondary concern.

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Now what's going on here I think is what I call the Keith Richards
effects. The cannibalization of discourse by its comedic elements. Right
now I can promise you, somewhere in the world, somebody who's standing in
the water cooler getting a big laugh

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won't have any response for that because they probably haven't heard any
Rolling Stones albums, they just find the band's reputation funny.

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And I think internet internet era fandom is seem particularly prone to
this effects. In 2014, the moderator of an icon HP Lovecraft fan site
actually shut down the forum function of the site, because all they had
for months was jokes about tentacles not

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discussion of HP Lovecraft stories, um, you know the central activity, it
seems of revival you're a doctor who fandom seems to be less watching the
show than then swapping jokes about how Alex can't claim stairs.

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Internet era fandom. I think often seem to be more icing the cake, you
know, it's a myth con was just a weekend long concert by the not really

fun with con players, you know, which would be funny but I think we can agree probably rather limited in scope

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and Game of Thrones in particular seems to have been espoused mostly as something to tell jokes about. And if you chief objective is to get a lot by saying in Game of Thrones everybody dies, you don't actually need to watch the show you certainly don't

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need to read the books. I think I've found the hardest thing about studying Martin for the last five years or so has been finding anyone much whose love of this of this era defining critically acclaimed multimedia phenomenon has actually moved them to

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sit down and ever watch any of it it's it's quite hard to find actual literate Game of Thrones fans.

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Um.

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Now, I don't want to be misunderstood here is calling out fake fans that's a pretentious and then a noxious thing to do. And I don't want to dismiss grass grass roots fandom because Good things come out of fandom is the metabolic society for a start.

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But I think what we're up against here if we want to capitalize on the publicity of the Jacksonian era isn't people who prefer movies two books are problem I believe is the mutation of fandom for personal states to a public online act.

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That's not a holy negative development, but it does seem to complicate matters.

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Um, so I wonder, Lana How do you feel about that in relation to, to, to, rolling fandom.

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You know I've spent a lot of time thinking about that question since you initially asked me Joe and I think I would say that rolling fandom has largely been enhanced by the internet.

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I had not let me give a little bit of context before I go back to that answer. I had not given a lot of thought.

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Prior to preparing for this panel to the way that the release of the Harry Potter books and films, really overlaps very closely with the

development of the internet I looked at some data about the development of the internet and I found that in 1997 when

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Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was released only about 18% of households in the United States had internet service and by 2010 when the last Harry Potter film adaptation was released, almost 75% of homes in the United States had internet.

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I think that's almost the whole story about the influence of the internet on Harry Potter fandom i mean i think in some ways the Harry Potter series may be the crossover saga for internet fandom just because of the way the dates correspond corresponded.

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I went back to an essay by the only contributor to have an essay besides myself in the ivory tower and Harry Potter who will also have an essay in in the second book and that is Becky Bora, who wrote an essay about fan culture in.

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In the first book is called apprentice wizards, welcome, and it involved a lot of primary research on Becky's part and also kind of a survey of the context of a fan culture studies at that point.

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In Becky's so she talks a lot about Henry Jenkins book textual poachers, which was published in 1991 and if you don't know that book I highly recommend it because it's really important text about fan culture in particular.

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Jenkins uses the term participatory culture, which I think is probably better than any other term, I could come up with for describing the way that Harry Potter fans and really has grown over the course of the saga but.

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But as I said Becky's essay was published in 2001, the year 2000 was really the watershed year in the release of the Harry Potter series because

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scholastic in the United States Scholastic's net three and a half million dollars on the hype leading up to the release of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, that created the bookstore at midnight experience, which really, I think, had an effect on

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the whole cosplay aspect of the Harry Potter series.

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And at that particular time.

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I think most of us are probably aware there was a lag of a few months
between the publication of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone in
England, and the appearance of Harry Potter and the philosophy and the
Sorcerer's Stone in the United States the

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time when scholastic was acquiring the rights during that time period,
the nine year old son of an America Online executive who had read the
Harry Potter series who was one of the first readers to be really active
on message boards, was posting all the

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time on America Online about Harry Potter. Consequently, largely through
the influence of his father, I suppose, America Online started a Harry
Potter channel keyword Harry Potter and and even when that particular
area of America Online was not highlighted

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on the home screen when AOL users logged in, it continued to have a kind
of the steady, to have kind of a steady presence.

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They beat this, it was a special feature in the families channel on AOL,
just a couple of other dates that I think are relevant to this. The
PlayStation wasn't introduced until 1994 so it was very new.

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At the point when the Harry Potter series. When the Harry Potter books
began to be published the Xbox didn't come along until 2000 and very late
2000 November, 2000 actually.

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So I think young people at that point we're not immersed in gaming
culture or in online gaming culture to nearly the same extent that they
are now.

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That was not even really building yet when the novels, began to be
published. And so I think the Harry Potter series had time to grow as a
text based fandom.

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Prior to the omnipresence of the internet, but when the internet came
along, especially early on with message boards and people beginning to
organize conferences.

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I think the the fandom continued to grow at that point, I mentioned that
Becky Bora, who was the author of the essay in the ivory tower and Harry
Potter has written a kind of an updated approach to fan studies and Harry
Potter.

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One of the things that Becky says in that essay that really resonates
with me and that I think is true for my students in a course that I teach
called Harry Potter and the hero myth, not a course exclusively about the
Harry Potter novels, but of course

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which really uses those novels as kind of a touchstone.

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It continues to be true for me that the students who are really devoted
fans of the Harry Potter series have almost to a person come to the
series first from the books and not from the films.

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I am probably getting an increasing number of students who know the
series, only from the books or who experienced, I mean, only from the
films sorry, or who've experienced the films first, and then the books,
but I think I could probably correlate the

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grades in my class with the students with the highest grades probably are
the ones who came to the series from the texts and the ones who who may
be, choose to write about in their projects to write about lots of other
works like Percy Jackson series,

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or, or perhaps Fellowship of the Ring which we also read in the course,
or a Hunger Games novel, the students who are not as devoted to the Harry
Potter series, they tend to be the ones who did not come to the series,
initially from the books.

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I wanted to pose a question that comes directly from Henry Jenkins work
that I thought about a lot since I began planning these comments. And in
order to do that I want to read a short quotation.

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And this is from textual poachers again the date of that book is 1991.

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Jenkins rights, and he's been talking at this point about the fact that
in fan studies in the 1980s and 1990s. There was a lot of experimentation
with different methodology about fan studies Henry Jenkins own work is
based very much on on television and

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he looked at a lot of British TV series like the Avengers and Doctor Who,
and some American fantasy series of the beauty and the beast TV series
with Linda Hamilton and Ron Perlman Twin Peaks

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night.

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Dark Shadows I think he looks at some of their series, so he's been talking about the way that the methodology of fan study changes in the early 1990s.

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And then he writes central to this move has been the recognition that there is no privileged position, from which to survey a culture.

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Rather, each vantage point brings with it both advantages and limitations, facilitating some types of understanding. While blinding us to others.

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I think that's a statement that we could really take also in discussing the different approaches of those who come to a series from the texts, and from screen adaptations the question of whether there's a privileged position.

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and I'll tell you for myself personally, you know, I tend to come down on the side of the text I spent a lot of time recording Harry Potter podcasts and listening to Harry Potter podcast podcasts, I think to a person my friends who were really serious

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Harry Potter scholars would say that they perceive the Harry Potter cannon.

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To be the seven novels the seven original novels of the series, and they view the film adaptations.

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As imaginings of those novels as

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interpreted interpretations of those novels.

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So you know for myself I come down on the side of saying there is a privileged position and it is the position that begins with the checks.

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But I think that question about how the different vantage points, bring with them advantages and limitations and facilitate some types of understanding well perhaps blinding us to others.

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I think that's important. I was having a conversation with a friend.

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Just yesterday about the fact that often if we try to watch a film adaptation especially an adaptation of a work in a series, without familiarity with the checks, we may be incredibly confused I remember taking my father in law with with my sons when

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they were little to see the adaptation of Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, he was terribly confused, partially because he had not seen your previous Harry Potter film and partially because he had no familiarity with the checks.

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So obviously, we may experience gaps and we try to watch an adaptation we're not familiar with the material that's being adapted, but I was also interested in the question of whether you can make the same argument that there are ways in which the film

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experience is helpful in reading the text and the friend that I was talking with suggested that with regard to character. Sometimes it's easier, especially if you're reading a novel that's really busy that has a lot of characters maybe an ensemble, sort

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of cast, having seen the film adaptation in some ways can help you to kind of keep the character straight and the example that she cited was the Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan which has a dual layer, layer of mothers who are American immigrants and daughters

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who are Chinese American born in the United States.

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For me with the Harry Potter series, I would say maybe the one aspect of the film experience that I might like even more than the books is watching Quidditch because I really liked seeing that traumatized on the screen, and in some ways it gives me kind

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of a sense of the danger of that experience in a way that I don't get it from the printed word, so I think that question about whether there is a privileged position with regard to the bifurcation that we're discussing today.

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I think that's an important question. And then the other one that I would, that I would ask you to continue to consider is whether perhaps the Harry Potter series is the crossover saga, for what we're saying about internet based fandom.

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I think it may be,

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Over to you.

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Thank you, Lana, and thanks very much Joe.

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And I should say that this is we're currently employing a medium here
that I'm not entirely familiar with and reflecting on this medium has
contributed to my reflecting on a question Joe's question which is, which
is really a question.

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A question I think about media, and as Joe, Joe said I spend quite a bit
of my time teaching teaching essays and creative nonfiction writing and
I'm constantly trying to place my, the genre that I teach in the midst of
the genres that the more sort of

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readily understandable with creative writing. On the one hand and and
academic writing on the other. And we're just creative nonfiction sort of
falling in.

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In this and I see genres as being essentially media themselves kinds of
media. And that, I think that that Marshall McLuhan's insight from back
in the 50s that the medium is the message is, is an insight that we we
constantly at risk of losing sight of

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because the resemblances between things across media are always so
obvious to us know so imaginatively engaging, and yet we know that at a
certain level.

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takes mediated through some entirely different technology is essentially
a different kind of thing and the, the connections between them. I think
connections that need to be grasped imaginatively that only the human
mind would be capable of grasping.

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You know I technology is not going to see a hard copy of The Lord of the
Rings.

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And, and the movie version is being in any way similar, because it
requires interpretation to actually to actually appreciate that.

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As someone who's been reading The Lord of the Rings myself since I was
about 16 which is clearly an increasingly long time ago. It's taken me a
while to catch on to the fact that you can consider yourself a fan of The
Lord of the Rings and not have actually

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read the book, and I was surprised by that in sort of recent years. When I started teaching fantasy.

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One of the things that you could assume, was that the students had read The Lord of the Rings you weren't sure what else they'd read they might never read Mormon gospel they might never get to see, but they would certainly read The Lord of the Rings.

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Now Harry Potter is more likely to be the shared fantasy reading experience.

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And as students of the grading. Our students experience of the Lord of the Rings is more like likely or at least just as likely to be the films, rather than the book or, or books over the decade, the experience of reading, and I think we need to think

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about how these what these different kinds of takes, Zoo, it's the experience of reading The Lord of the Rings that has over the decades generated music and drama and posters and clubs and audio books and scholarship Scholarship Of course, ended ended

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goes on doing so

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What, what a Peter Jackson's films generation left to their own devices well they've generated a culture of their own, of course.

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And it's a culture of which I'm clearly less aware than I am of the culture that's been generated by the books, but its culture. Culture that consists of exhibitions and T shirts networks, full of stuff on the internet gags and lists and images and gossip,

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that the internet circulates.

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And here in here in New Zealand, of course, the films are generated tourism, for which we're all very grateful.

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Tall canes Lord of the Rings has Tolkien has generated no tourism force.

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Peter Jackson has generated the tourism, but I'm not sure that the finish interest in the movies is is actually an interest in fantasy, the things that I that I find, say typically on Pinterest, an interest in the actors in the films, what they look like,

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you know who's a hunk and who isn't. Who's your favorite. Is it Orlando
Bloom is it Viggo Mortensen stills from the film with films with jokey or
facetious captions which plays into what Joe was saying, inspirational
quotes.

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Man, anecdotes, or inside of our accounts, about the filming and stuff
about the costumes and the artifacts, etc. Now, that in some ways this is
sort of reminiscent of the Tolkien fans who are devoted to the languages,
need to be a bit hesitant about

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this so I've got friends who are devoted to the language is not an
interest that I share because my brain is not wired that way.

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And it's an interesting talking completely understood.

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But if you read these letters he also found as a little bit worrying that
people could immerse themselves in the AP phenomena of the text.

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In the same way that he found sort of dangerously attractive.

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And I think the reason he uses that expression as aware of the danger
with regard to himself, is that it leads away from the story, rather than
into the story and that's the big distinction that that I would make.

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Now most literary academics like ourselves have have interests, which can
readily be described as Spanish.

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Perhaps the most notable of those are editing and editing of texts and,
and bibliography and Bibliography begins with the quintessential
essentially nerdy activity of book collecting, which I'm pleased to see
in the backgrounds for Joe and Lana and myself

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is a is a hobby that is in no danger of dying anytime soon. You can put
texts of you're talking collection up on Pinterest as well with all of
those other things and people do their their little shelves of the
history of Middle Earth and all the different

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editions they've got of the Lord of the Rings. I could do that too if I
wanted to, but there's something in me that really doesn't want to
indulge this.

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And it's a book collecting isn't essentially scholarly interest in a way that I think, sharing filming memes isn't really.

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And I would argue that in this way that it's, it's easy for people in film studies to to mock or deprecate readers interest in infidelity criticism as it sometimes referred to as assessing a, an adaptation solely by its fidelity to a literary original

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and you can see why this is offensive to film studies, people because even to acknowledge your literary origin, seems to detract from the artistry of the film, and the sense of it's makers as creatives.

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I would defend fidelity studies I I think any interest in fidelity however basic it may be, which did you like better, the film or the book involves being concerned about at least two versions of the same text.

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So that is inevitably an interest in story in a way that putting up names of your fav favorite actors. On the one hand, and then even have a book collecting all the other.

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They're not necessarily an interesting story.

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This is particularly the case when considering two texts in different genres such as the book of the Lord of the Rings and Peter Jackson's films. The Book of the Lord of the Rings and Peter Jackson films and Ralph Bakshi cartoon book of the Lord of the

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Rings but it's actually so rough back she's cartoon and the forthcoming Amazon mini series, because the story is what exists, across across the media.

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And this, as I say this strikes me as being the beginning of scholarly interest of critical interest in the in the best sense of the word. the impulse that's manifest in the time on a formula for literary topics of compare and contrast, which is used

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in every exam and every essay, it's, it's a summary of what we ask our students to do to reach an informed judgment. By comparing and contrasting two things, and in on fairy stories.

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Tolkien observes that something fundamental defenders he is lost by visual presentation. When people are not required to imagine, and the closest I can get to explaining what this loss is, is to suggest that the detailed representation of Marvel's inevitably

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leads to treating the story as a vehicle for the visuals, rather than the visuals, as a vehicle for the story, which is what interests are either a very stories, and a writer who writes on fairy stories, the dependencies, to the Lord of the Rings, the

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pre history the languages the genealogies, etc. They take readers more deeply into the world of the book they are yes they are rather geeky, but a geek of the dependencies to the films that dependencies to the films are just as geeky, but they don't take

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That depends these films are just as geeky, but they don't take the viewers more deeply into the story oriented Middle Earth if you look at the dependencies to the films and I still haven't got through viewing them or they take you into the nuts and bolts

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of filmmaking of storyboards of costumes and props design of locations and sets etc.

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poking you better than to preoccupy his readers with distracting visuals even in the books.

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And one thing that's always interested me is that Sarah is a character in the films in a way that he's not actually a character in the book.

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We were hardly two minutes into the films, when we see sour on appear, visually represented on the screen. He is a character in the films. He's not depicted in the books at all We never go into his office sorry sanctuary or he's private sanctum or, you

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know, wherever he he sits up at the top of Berra do pulling the pulling the wings off bets or something.

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He doesn't appear he's only ever talked about.

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And, but the film requires to depict him. And therefore, reduces our opportunities to imagine, or consider the Bell Rock in the film.

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Now, in, in both texts in the book it's described as being of man shape. Maybe

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it has a blade it's got a whip. There's a shadow IT shadow is said to be like wings.

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It has nostrils, or bleed.

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It can step and it can leap. And then later it appears to actually have weeks, rather than have things that are like wings. Tolkien hasn't made up his mind about that. I find that interesting.

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I find that interesting. But the film doesn't have these sorts of maybes these, these indecisive things where there's room for for the imagination of the audience.

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The film satisfies the imagination, rather than expanding or stimulating it.

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So I think really the best thing that can happen to the Lord of the Rings.

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Is that like the novels of Jane Austen all the plays of Shakespeare and I think the Lord of the Rings is absolutely up there with with those texts that the Lord of the Rings will go on being made into films, or TV series, or song cycles or video games

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or bubblegum cards or whatever, media that we cannot yet imagine hyper hyper real experiences of one sort or another, but it will be the book that will be made into those things not Peter Jackson's film, or, or other versions because they will be superseded,

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they will go out of date in time, so that every decade or so there'll be a new pop cultural representation of the film of the cup representation that will be for the many that will drive the few back into the arms of the book.

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Now, that depends on people being able to continue reading books, but that's a discussion for another time.

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Right. Well, I'm sorry.

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Over to you, Joe.

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Right. Okay. Well, um, I think these are all valid points. One thing I just like to conclude with is just a quick story that I had about a very positive experience teaching, teaching Martin.

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Earlier this year, as I searched for a regular academic gig I'm keeping my hand and running medical humanities electives, which are short courses on humanities subjects which are taught to medical students to give them some sense of how, you know, university

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outside med school really works. And last year I taught Martin and I got a lot of blank stares and the story about the Diana rig fan I just gave you earlier today, which was really disappointing.

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This year I offered a creative writing course geared towards the construction of fantasy narrative, and to give a broad look at the genre I decided for each of the four sessions I would divide the class up into four separate groups and I would get each

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of the four separate groups to do a separate reading for each for each session.

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So we ended up covering 16 different authors.

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Over the course of the course and we talked about how the four authors we looked at in any given week used to particular technique for writing fantasy.

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And the students absolutely love this they talk they ask questions they approached me for details of authors then come across before they were amazed by era Listen, they were they were very impressed by hook Merlis they, a lot of people wanted to read

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her.

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And as the course went on I discovered that several of these students were actually doing all the readings, not just the ones that were assigned for each class so they were settling themselves with about 100 pages a week of extra, extra reading in addition

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to the mid school workload, which was remarkable.

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And you know, then their assignments were great and the couple of them have approached me in the, in the supermarket to tell me how much they enjoyed the class.

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So, this is the most fun I've had behind the lectern and years.

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Now here's the thing the reading included token rolling in motion, and it's in this class, specifically about the token rolling and margin fans really started coming out of the woodwork.

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I used the story of the nearest hatching our dragons as an example of romantic disposition and about half the class did the reading, and they were really excited by it and those had already read Martin, I came away from it saying they wanted to read them

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again. And those who hadn't read them said they were going to, because they understood what was going on in that story now.

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Now I'm not sure what the secret was here, but it's worth noting that this particular course was organized by idea rather than by author we were examining authors as practitioners of compositional and expository techniques, rather than as objects of study

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in their own right, and as such I wasn't leading very hard on any one author. Okay.

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And, you know, that actually seemed seemed to work rather well you know we had a good old chat about about pollutes notion of romantic healing, as evidenced by the nearest those dragons and a lot of the bandwidth in that, in that, in that discussion was

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taken up with two guys who would be stressing during med school by going back through Game of Thrones together, and they both said that we're now going to read the books now because they understood the techniques that what Martin was using.

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And I think that's Mission accomplished. I think that's building engagement with literature through the through, but by harnessing the the the enthusiasm for the adaptations.

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And I think it was accomplished by leaning quite gently on fan enthusiasm don't go into class you know waving waving, you know, the Game of Thrones doubles and saying right we're all going to be enthusiastic about this now.

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Yeah, we were looking at ideas and we were showing how ideas, you know, carry through between texts.

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But I've taken up a lot of the bandwidth here and we don't have a lot of time left past we should throw the floor open for questions now.

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So, I'll do, I'll. Does anyone else have any questions

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or comments.

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Sure, I'll grab the floor, i. So, I find these topics really fascinating as somebody that did come to talking right around the time of the Peter Jackson movies, the fine line to walk for me here is always between trying to get people engaged in the primary

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text and and gatekeeper. And so I, you know, that is the the very fine balance to walk. So, if for any of the panelists to pick up, how, how do you approach that and make sure you know that you're respecting people's experience with the material in a

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way that will hopefully engage them with it further rather than push them away a

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Lot of old you have anything to add.

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Not just yet.

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Can we just want to say a little bit more about what you mean by gate keeping their Do you mean insisting on fidelity to the text, not necessarily the idea that I'm talking about and maybe not everybody might experiences but me spending a lot of time

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on Facebook I absolutely do would be, you know, the idea of like a true fan right like you need to know this much about this property in order for me to consider you, you know, a valid fan or whatever kind of thing so, so it's a matter of making sure

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that you're still engaging those people that might have more tenuous grasp on the primary text.

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Without yeah without potentially pushing them away or alienating those people. I may be starting way back from, from an answer to this but one of the things that I like about all the fantasy works we're talking about today is that these are such varied

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worlds that I think readers find lots of ways in, and their reactions can be very idiosyncratic.

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And I frankly find at least in the classroom that students are generally respectful of different kinds of approaches, I think, in the Harry Potter framework, and maybe also in Game of Thrones with the idea of the various houses that's kind of a concept

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that those series have in common, although they use it in different ways.

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I think that kind of lends itself to an exploration of individuality and the way that various kinds of qualities combined in any particular individual.

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I'm not sure whether this is a related point but one of the things I really have enjoyed about being involved in Harry Potter studies is its appeal to readers over a very broad demographic, particularly with regard to age.

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And I think initially I looked at some statistics when I was preparing to do this today. I looked at some statistics about sales of the first three Harry Potter books I should I think something like 30%, of those sales were to readers over the age of

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obviously those kinds of statistics are hard to break down because you can't know how many of those readers might be buying the book for a child, but, but, you know, the fact that readers of the series, tend to be across a very wide age demographic is

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interesting to me. My perception is that there are also series that appeal to both male and female readers despite the fact that JK Rowling did use initials on the cover of the books because she was concerned that a and a male protagonists because she

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was concerned that boys don't read books with with female protagonists, I think that helps to account for the, for the number of series, especially in the early 21st century involving a dual protagonists are kind of a trio as in the Harry Potter series

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not a protagonist, but a very major characters. Paul I don't know about you but when I was growing up I think a lot of my friends tended to see the Lord of the Rings as maybe more a guy thing I mean I had a lot of female friends who were English majors

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and and to a person they had the same story about not really having been able to get into the Lord of the Rings as young readers, but having come back to it later on, often maybe in their, in their 30s or even early 40s I know that was certainly true

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for me, but it may just be my perception.

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I don't know that I've actually got a response to about the Lord of the Rings being being a guy thing, but I think perhaps, it gave, but perhaps it gave boys, sort of permission to indulge the sort of the speculative kinds of aspects of the nature rather

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than sort of just reading things that were sort of more sort of serious, because, and this, perhaps connects with what I was about to say that there is a seriousness to the Lord of the Rings, that, that end to all the texts we've talked about that, that

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I think it's back to what was not Joe was saying at the very beginning, and I tried to say, in, in my little presentation before which was possibly a little bit too scripted for this particular medium which I still don't quite understand.

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But where my remarks about the Bell Road, for instance, now I find that when I sort of look at the that particular aspect of the text in in the class the Bell Road works really quite well on the screen or at least it's sort of memorable built delving

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into how Tolkien handles that and seeing those uncertainties.

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The class, the classes find those uncertainties moving and interesting and sort of profound. And that's sort of what I meant them to be it's that rather than like Tim was saying, sort of shutting the gates and saying well this is the only way in which

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you can interpret the text.

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Talking leaves the gates open for the, and that's, that's sort of what we like about it that he even with sort of important aspects of the text like you know the presentation of Sarah.

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Talking leaves the gates open for us to figure out the Bell Road for
ourselves. And I think that's something that we find sort of exciting
about it and so the if there was a question asked in the chatter about,
you know, does the bell rang his wings or

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not, which I now understand to be quite a tired topic, but that was
awesome. You can see it's tired because it's insoluble because talking
does leave the gates open because he wants us to imagine so everyone's
got their answers to that end, people are

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people are excited that this takes that they can invest themselves in
still leaves is still a vast Canvas upon which you know you can operate
very profoundly.

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Sorry, Tim.

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I have to break in here. It's a wonderful discussion, and you can take it
to discard.

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We are over our time, and I appreciate all the discussion and all the
questions. And thank you very much. Thank you very much for our panelists
and thank you very much for those who attended.