

## Editorial 3

**Dr. Jesús SEGARRA-SAAVEDRA**

University of Alicante. Spain. [jesus.segarr@ua.es](mailto:jesus.segarr@ua.es). <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9420-5258>

**Dr. Tatiana HIDALGO-MARÍ**

University of Alicante. Spain. [tatiana.hidalgo@ua.es](mailto:tatiana.hidalgo@ua.es). <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4599-5876>

**Dr. Paul-Julian SMITH**

City University of New York, Graduate Center. United States. [psmith@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:psmith@gc.cuny.edu).  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5224-8564>

### Television series as a multidisciplinary object of study [Editorial]

#### *Las series de televisión como objeto de estudio multidisciplinar: de la ficción televisiva a la ficción multiplataforma [Editorial]*

We like to be told stories. And to tell them. Good and bad, better or worse. Stories comfort us, make us strong, transform us. They make us knowledgeable and allow us to make things known. Stories teach us and free us, go beyond us and entertain us. Would it be possible to live without stories? Audiovisual discourses, over the years, have highlighted the art of storytelling, something that literature began and that the audiovisual has improved. There is no audiovisual without a story, and from that story, which will mark the future of the product, the development, production, execution and transmission will emerge. But, without a doubt, there is no discourse without a story.

Television fiction, for its part, is an essential narrative tentpole in the heritage medium but also in the development of video-on-demand platforms. Although it is true that cinema was the narrative medium par excellence, in the 21st century after premieres of serial fictions such as *The Sopranos* (HBO, 1999), *The Wire* (HBO, 2002) or *Breaking Bad* (AMC, 2008), fiction was positioned as a narrative format capable of applying the canon of audiovisual language in an impeccable way and bringing it closer to the needs of the television medium. Such was this phenomenon that television series progressively migrated towards a cinematic language, internalizing creative and productive canons, but also aesthetic and narrative conditions, giving rise to true cult products and blurring the line that separates cinema from serial fiction. It is evident, then, that series have provided the television medium with the necessary engine for its consolidation as a cultural medium, with a much deeper and more canonical contribution than other products or formats.

In these times, and in view of the rumor of the death foretold of the third Golden Age of television fiction—which was re-emerging at the beginning of the 21st century—the number of products, platforms, channels, production companies, specialized services and the global supply of series and fiction-related titles is overwhelming. In academia the interest in audiovisual serial fiction as an object of study is growing considerably; and it represents a line of research that is increasingly established, in a way that complements disciplines related to media education or literacy. Specific lines, research groups and knowledge transfer proliferate in this area. PhD and specialized research projects related to television fiction and related content are being developed. The number of doctoral theses and scholarly articles that address the phenomenon from different perspectives is also increasing exponentially. Against all odds, everything seems to indicate that the third Golden Age of television fiction is not only not in decline but seems to be in a state of audiovisual consolidation never before seen (or even imagined, after the criticism of remakes or reboots which triggered the prediction of the creative death of serial fiction).

And so it is that in the academy the interest in audiovisual serial fiction as an object of study is growing considerably, and it involves a line of research that is increasingly established, in a way that is complementary with disciplines related to media education or literacy. Proof of this has been the reception of this special issue "Television series as an object of multidisciplinary study: from television fiction to multiplatform fiction", whose call for papers was open until August 1, 2022. 56 texts were received, from 106 people (61.7% female and 38.3% male) with a co-authorship rate of 1.9 people per article. After a rigorous review process, based on the reports that were received six articles have been selected. Questions such as science, feminism, various social groups, diverse representation or the expansion of fiction to other products and formats are the underlying themes treated by this special issue and that undoubtedly plot the essential guidelines pursued by lines of research related to television fiction.

María-Isabel Menéndez-Menéndez and Marta Fernández-Morales begin the special issue with "**Queen against pawn: feminine genius in The Queen's Gambit**", an article in which they develop a feminist analysis of the orphaned chess player, suffering from emotional problems and dependence on both drugs and alcohol, the main character in *The Queen's Gambit* (Netflix, 2020), who represents a turning point in the stereotypical depiction of women in television fiction.

Eduardo Carcaboso-García, Samanta Flores-Jaramillo, Rocío Gómez-Crisóstomo and Javier Trabadela-Robles are the authors of "**Use and distribution of scientific allusions in the fiction series. The case of The Big Bang Theory**", an investigation in which media and scientific dissemination are merged with audiovisual fiction, despite the scarce representation of these areas both in series as such and in their scripts. For this article they focus their attention on the first five seasons of *The Big Bang Theory* (CBS, 2007-2019), studying the scientific allusions included in the series and their relationship with the formative function attributed to audiovisual products.

María-José Higuera-Ruiz is the author of "**Review of trans representation in Spanish television fiction. Analysis of the television series Todo lo otro (HBO Max, 2021)**", a text in which she analyzes the evolution of the way in which the transsexual community is represented in Spanish television fiction and focuses attention on Dafne, a representative of the trans community in the television industry who has managed to attract political and social attention, as well as to promote the fight against transphobia.

Within the multidisciplinary approach of the special issue, the contributions that analyze series from an educational perspective stand out. Proof of this is "**Go!azen transmedia series. Education in values and treatment of diversity from an media education perspective**", the article authored by Leire Junguitu-Angulo and Sara Osuna-Acedo in which they focus their attention on the case study of the transmedia series *Go!azen* in which the treatment of values, morals and diversity make up a series suitable for use in class for purposes of social awareness.

Rodrigo Elías-Zambrano, María-del-Mar Ramírez-Alvarado and Gloria Jiménez-Marín are the authors of "**Image and representation of stereotypes and archetypes in Spanish television audiovisual fiction: from Cites to El Pueblo as cases of media education in series**", an article that identifies the trends in audiovisual representation represented in the plots and characters of these two case studies, from the perspectives of the stereotype, the archetype, media education, and gender.

Finally, Luis-Miguel Pedrero-Esteban, Raúl Terol-Bolínches and Alfredo Areense-Gómez close this special issue with "**The podcast as a sound transmedia extension of audiovisual fiction**", an article in which they analyze the fifteen podcasts produced in Spain related to series that were released on television channels and VOD platforms from 2015 to 2021. This is a sound content conceived as transmedia stories with which the production companies intend to disseminate audiovisual fictions through their stories, characters and contexts.

Those of us whose names appear as authors of the editorial of this special issue appreciate the hard work carried out by all those who reviewed the large number of texts received, as well as that undertaken by the editorial team of *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, from its editor to those who review citations, bibliographical references, lay out and circulate the texts, among many other editorial activities.

This special issue is part of the research project arising from the Vice Rectorship for Research and Knowledge Transfer of the University of Alicante entitled: "Online fiction on demand: production, content and interaction in Spanish series on streaming TV platforms (2016 -2019)" (GRE 19-10).