



The Fandom of David Bowie

Everyone Says "Hi"

Toija Cinque
Sean Redmond



palgrave
macmillan

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Toija Cinque
Faculty of Arts and Education
Deakin University
Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Sean Redmond
Faculty of Arts and Education
Deakin University
Melbourne, VIC, Australia

ISBN 978-3-030-15879-8 ISBN 978-3-030-15880-4 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15880-4>

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Cover image: dpa picture alliance/Alamy Stock Photo
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Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

For my big sisters, Helen and Fiona, for introducing me to the wonder of David Bowie. Those Bowie albums that went ‘missing’ from your bedroom: I still have them ...

Sean Redmond

For my dear friends across time, places and in fandom, Dimity (Stower) Barlow and Peter Green. And my brother, Stephen—thank you for not throwing all my David Bowie books away when I moved out of home!

Toija Cinque

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge Deakin University and the School of Communication and Creative Arts for the support of our research. In particular, we are indebted to Geoff Boucher for championing our field-work and for providing us with research grants to complete the work.

We want to extend a special thanks to all the David Bowie fans—our fellow space cadets—who patiently and enthusiastically completed our survey, attended our Focus groups and answered our questions. It has been our privilege to experience how amazing you are. This book is for you.

Chapter 4 ‘Lazarus Rises: The Migrant Fandom of David Bowie’ first appeared in the *Journal of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music*, vol 6, no., 1. 2016: 7–24.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: ‘We’re Just the Space Cadets, and He’s the Commander’

OVERVIEW

Everyone Says “Hi”: The Fandom of David Bowie explores the way that fans reflect upon their identification with, and connection to, this seminal figure of contemporary art and culture. Built from the stories and memories that self-defined Bowie fans shared with us, the book is a journeyed account of individual life stories and collective fan practices, revealing the way Bowie existed as a figure of renewal and redemption, lining these collated recollections with hopeful, desiring and enchanted reflections. *Everyone Says “Hi”: The Fandom of David Bowie* also critically assesses this fandom, showing how Bowie navigated individual traumas and loneliness, his outsider status resonating with those on the margins of society, marginalised often because of their gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity.

In this book we seek to find Bowie in the streams of fandom that swell around him, including harvesting nostalgic fragments, recollections (via personal interviews), memorabilia, diaries, letter writing, collective and communal gatherings, and artistic impersonation. Within the context of contemporary changes to the media landscape, the book will also assess the nature of the present digital conversations taking place about David Bowie and the fan interactions that emerge on social media. Finally, and perhaps rather uniquely, the book assesses Bowie’s own fandom and the fandom of the authors, who draw upon auto-ethnography to make personal sense of what he means to them. By the end of the book we will have

seen the remarkable influence that David Bowie has exerted over those who gladly call themselves his space cadets.

MIXING METHODS, THEORIES AND STORIES

The idea for this book started by way of a chance conversation before a dreary work meeting, where we discovered we were both Bowie fans and agreed on how little there was written about him at the time, particularly from a fan's perspective. In a very direct way, this conversation and the route it took mirror the mixed methodological and theoretical approach we have since taken here. First, we began our conversation with our very own fan stories, in effect adopting the storying the self approach to memorial work. This approach draws on a,

Model of the self as 'storied' and of culture as both moulded and moulding through the personal stories of individuals... It extends the idea of 'culture' and media beyond the organizational structures of, say, the culture industries, broadcasting or the published media, into the everyday modes in which we express and construct our lives in personal terms, telling our own stories. (Finnegan 1997: 69)

The emphasis on 'writing the personal' (Probyn 2011) has also been central to the epistemological and political interventions of popular culture theorists and those interested in 'hearing' the stories of the marginalised and politically disenfranchised. Connected to this approach is the recognition that researchers also have stories to share and in a way that democratises the empirical process—no one story is more important than the other—and through shared storytelling, experiential equivalences and thematic 'clusters' emerge. Through storying the self, we find out about how people directly experience their own, often marginalised, subject positions, and within this context, we found out how important David Bowie is to the modern narratives of selfhood our respondents shared with us.

Second, our different academic backgrounds meant that we approached the question of fandom through different critical entrance points, recognising and embracing these differences to foster an innovative mixed methods approach. However, this fusion approach to the research design is not simply to do with having both qualitative and quantitative data at our disposal but through the mechanisms that data are collected, organised and interpreted. Through this 'triangulation' or 'multiple operationalism', we follow

Denzin (1978) who identified four types of interlocking data gathering and interpretation:

- a. data triangulation or the use of a variety of sources in a study;
- b. investigator triangulation or the use of several different researchers;
- c. theory triangulation or the use of multiple perspectives and theories to interpret the results of our study; and
- d. methodological triangulation or use of multiple methods to study Bowie fandom.

The project design of *Everyone Says “Hi”: The Fandom of David Bowie* involved five central data gathering methods. First, self-defined Bowie fans were asked to respond to an online questionnaire. These fans were recruited from within our peer network, through wider fan networks, and by a call to participate, circulated across media, screen and cultural studies listservs. Entitled, *Turn to Face the Strange: The Fandom of David Bowie*, the online questionnaire was composed of 16 questions and offered in both English and Japanese languages (see Appendix A). Answers to the questions produced both qualitative and quantitative data (see Appendix B). The questions were designed to elicit both factual and descriptive responses and to allow and enable participants to emotively story their memories, recollections and interests. For example, ‘Question 15. Do you have a cherished piece of David Bowie memorabilia?’ was designed to not only have respondents recall these favourite items but to allow us to gauge the level of affective attachment they had through the way they remembered them—the word choices, the scene setting and the personalisation. The question would also allow us to count ‘items’ if we so desired to see if repeated forms of memorabilia were cherished.

Second, focus groups were held in seven international locations during 2016: Melbourne (February), Tokyo (June), London (June), Amsterdam (June), New York (July), Berlin (September) and Lisbon (September). Each focus group comprised of between 5 and 30 people and lasted for approximately 60 minutes. Participants were invited to respond to questions about David Bowie’s star image, music and art, and the role it plays (has played) in their lives. Participants were also asked to bring a special piece of memorabilia that they were invited to speak to, but not compelled to discuss. For the London, New York and Tokyo focus groups, participants were drawn from those who had previously completed the online survey and

who had indicated a willingness to do so, furnishing us with ‘deeper’ or ‘extended’ data. For the Amsterdam and Lisbon focus groups, these took place in 2016 as part of academic conferences: the former the *3rd International Celebrity Studies Conference: Authenticating Celebrity* (28–30 June) at the University of Amsterdam, and the latter the *David Bowie Inter-art|text|media* CEAUL/ULICES–University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies *Conference* (22–24 September) in Portugal. The participants for the Berlin focus group were lifelong friends of Sean. To ensure anonymity and alleviate denotive meaning that might arise from any names assigned to the participants, albeit that they be false, all the quotations drawn upon in this book are referred to by random alphabetical letters and/or numbers.

Our reasoning for the organisation of these focus groups was as follows: London, New York and Tokyo are key locations in Bowie’s own mythology, and the intention was that these locations would draw out pilgrimage-type conversations. Amsterdam and Lisbon were chosen because they were a part of conferences with an interested sample population, and because we wanted to draw into our study the role of the Aca-Fan. Berlin was chosen for two reasons: it would allow Sean to undertake his own pilgrimage, being a key Bowie location, and it would allow him to gather with his friends to assess together their own life stories.

We also felt that the focus group method (and the questionnaire, for that matter) would allow us to draw upon narrative and storytelling, which Laurel Richardson (1990: 183) observed, ‘is the best way to understand the human experience because it is the way humans understand their own lives’. As Bochner (2012) contends,

Scholars taking “the narrative turn” pointed inquiry toward “acts of meaning” (Bruner, 1990), focusing on the functions of stories and storytelling in creating and managing identity; the expressive forms for making sense of lived experience and communicating it to others; the entanglements that permeate how interpersonal life is lived and how it is told to others; the reflexive dimensions of the relationship between storytellers and story listeners; and the canonical narratives that circulate through society, offering scripted ways of acting.

Third, we employed auto-ethnography, ‘a form or method of research that involves self-observation and reflexive investigation in the context of ethnographic field work and writing’ (p. 43). Carolyn Ellis (2004) defines autoethnography as ‘research, writing, story, and method that connect the

autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political' (p. xix). It was this latter connection which allowed us to move from the personal to the cultural that particularly interested us.

The point of convergence in our cultural analysis is on fan interactions as being broad and accounting for the myriad of ways that the wider social struggles (in which a number might feel themselves to have a stake) are brought to the surface. Richard Schickel gestures that there are two interlocking fantasies embedded in the life of a star. On the one hand is the 'dream of autonomy' whereby the star lives a life uncompromised by obligation (Schickel 2000: 255). On the other hand is the familiar 'dream of intimate, almost familiar connection' (Schickel 2000: 255). An important narrative here is around the affective role that stars play so we turned then to the in-depth analysis by Gregg and Seigworth (2010) in which Clough (2010: 206) conjectures that the challenge of affect theory, against every other form of inquiry, is to show how 'bodily matter' bears 'information'. The sheer delight of fans witnessed at a Bowie concert might attest to this claim. The allure was to unravel the existing and mutual relationship between 'our star [man]' together with his associated textual objects including '*neo*-communicative contexts', and the receptive individual or fan. Indeed, the intricate dialectic of culture conjoins and reemerges texts and bodies as components in a code that suggests a wide range of messages.

Remaining constantly evocative, however, is the notion of 'star' because they dramatise the search for identity temporarily suspending everyday reality and introducing new possibilities into human imagination (Stevenson 2006). Moreover, stars have cultural resonance (Vincendeau 2000: viii). With an upward trajectory, the star reaches evocative iconic status upon their fame becoming prevalent through the modulation of their cultural meaning, significance and values that correspond with and reflect key changes in society (Holt 2004). Eagar and Lindridge (2014: 304) considered arguments like punctuation marks in time to describe David Bowie's iconicity as 'an emergent process as his symbolic meanings [have evolved] over various time periods from counter-culture musician and as a symbol of sexual ambiguity (1970s), to mainstream musician and aging rock star (1980s and 1990s), and finally into the merging of Bowie and Ziggy as a unified cultural icon (2000s)'. Woodward's (2017: 505) apropos discussion adds further to the deeper contemplations swirling around Bowie:

The Ziggy Stardust jumpsuit that Bowie wore in 1972 when he performed on the popular BBC television show *Top of the Pops* became not only iconic

but also part of the Bowie myth. In [Roland] Barthes's writing text is plural as well as singular and different meanings are interwoven (1977). Bowie embodies the interrelationship between image, music and text and his significance has become immediately recognizable whatever form it takes, the jumpsuit, carnivalesque make up, or cool Fedora, the white shirt and the suit. The figure of Bowie has been appropriated in different cultural fields and crosses the boundaries between genres. For example, the myth of Bowie transgresses not only heteronormativity and hegemonic binary logics of sex and sexuality, but also different cultural domains. Different cultural components combine to produce the cultural figure and Bowie's mythological status but myths are reproduced, reformed and reconstituted with impact upon other cultural terrains.

This capacity for his meanings to transubstantiate across time, place and cultural contexts denotes that David Bowie is no longer tethered to a particular time or setting and is absorbed as significant into the weft of society (see Boorstin 1964). This can of course be layered with complexity when the star seeks to shed light on a particular sociocultural issue such as that raised in Bowie's music video 'Let's Dance' (*Let's Dance*, 1983) for example. But, the 'Let's Dance' song was interpreted as personally powerful for Indigenous affairs editor for *The Guardian* Australia, Stan Grant (2016, n.p.) who recalls that for them: 'It was 1983 and I was at university when I first saw the film clip. Here was a music superstar featuring my own people, putting Indigenous faces on a world stage ... it contained a message that resonated with us: "when all is against you, what else can you do? Put on your red shoes and dance the blues!"' (also see Chapter 2 for a more critical reading of the *Let's Dance* music video). Here is a parallel to the timeless existential work of Albert Camus' *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1955), a work that takes storytelling as method to impart to readers the profound philosophical ideal that no matter how unbearable one's life might give the impression of being, it is still worth it for them to stick around to see what happens next. 'The Next Day' if you will, to be playing off Bowie's 2013 track and album title of the same name. At the level of the individual fan, emotional growth and subsequent active agency may be developed. For Daniel Cavicchi (1998: 59), fandom is emotionally experienced and 'a *process of being*' whereby the star performer acts not as a particular possession or even an activity but as 'a continuing presence to which they [the fan] may turn again and again'. Not in a regressive, going backward sense but instead, moving forward.

Our fourth approach in *Everyone Says "Hi": The Fandom of David Bowie* is marked by a set of intersecting theoretical positions: first, it draws heavily on cultural studies when defining human subjectivity and individual identity; second, it draws upon subcultural theory and the media-specific work done on pop music, stardom and fandom; third, it draws on psychological aspects of the self, including a concern with trauma and desire; finally, it draws upon phenomenology and affect theory to get to the emotions and affects that the authors think cannot be simply read off language and representation. The book draws these sometimes-competing positions through a process of entanglement and de-entanglement, looking to see and hear in fans' responses the complete human sensorium.

From one important perspective, the book draws from the subtlety of Sara Ahmed's notion of 'stranger fetishism' (2000) to better capture the ways that the consumption of a cultural icon (such that David Bowie is) can work to make the strange familiar or one in which the stranger's relationship is based on closeness, proximity, perhaps even incorporation (p. 4). Otherness and strangeness here are, not tied to simple us/them binaries, but is rather an alien alterity that shifts sides and folds into itself. For Bowie fans, the desire for the Other, for the strange, may radiate out from a Western cultural centre that is lacking, and which stems from a need that is about owning both the exotic Other, and devouring or ingesting them so that their energy becomes (y)ours. Of course, Bowie's Japonism and his huge Asian fan base complicate the Western/Eastern dichotomy. It is through an analysis of David Bowie fandom that the book is able to explore broader spatial and cultural intersections of place, race and identity.

Ratiocinating from a slightly different angle, in David Bowie a number of our participants often saw something of themselves and individual sensibilities being mirrored; he a like-minded entity for certain shared human subjectivities. As participant MC stated during our focus group in Lisbon: 'People have never been OK with me, my clothes, hairstyle, my focus on objects and Bowie was a route to understand different things'. Where this fan's perceived weirdness made them feel at times adrift from those around them, David Bowie was comfortably nestled in the recesses of their heart affording them emotional fortitude.

Finally for this book, in addition to our other methodological and theoretical approaches, we undertook an analysis of online Bowie fan sites and Facebook pages, alongside the analysis of data furnished through Twitter. Twitter hashtag research specifically involves searching Twitter for tagged tweets, collecting these tweets and using a range of analytic methods to

interpret and display the data. Such research assesses how people are using the platform to communicate and interact with its content. A systematic Twitter search process used the most commonly occurring David Bowie-related hashtags, previously determined through repeated scans of Twitter, as follows: #Bowie, #David Bowie #Blackstar. Because data can be difficult to collect retrospectively from Twitter, a six-month period between 2015 and 2016 was initially chosen to begin gathering data for the 2016 release of the *Blackstar* album as part of the preparatory research for this book. As it turned out, it was also the time that David Bowie died. Following the quantitative analysis, tweets about Bowie identified as being written by fans/or images posted by fans at the time of David Bowie's death were further analysed by their linguistic or image content which formed a narrative coding. We explore how digital content shared publicly on this popular social platform can generate meaningful data for scholarly analysis in the context of David Bowie online fan cultures. The focus is because the digital sphere holds a place in the primary function of remembrance and documentation. Increasingly important aspects of stardom and celebrity in contemporary societies find an interplay between fans and stars engaged in the digital mediasphere.

BOWIE DATA

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire aimed for a participation rate of at least 100 people to enable the research to have statistical power and for extrapolation purposes. We had a meaningful response: 292 completed the questionnaire, which was advertised across Bowie fan sites and newsletters as well as academic listservs such as MECCSA, the Fan Studies Network and the Cultural Studies Association. The questionnaire notifications went out in January 2016.

The survey data were processed using SPSS and NVivo. We found that 58.3% of our respondents identified as female, 40.3% identified as male, with 1.4% not specifying their gender (see Table 1.1). In terms of sexual orientation, 70.3% identified as straight, 14.5% identified as bisexual, and 11.3% identified as gay (see Table 1.2). Two facts potentially emerge from these results: Bowie has a larger female fan base and those identifying as non-straight are higher in proportion to sexual orientation statistics generally, although one's sexual orientation is found not to be static and shifts with age (see David Spiegelhalter 2015). That Bowie would have a

Table 1.1

Self-declared gender of participants responding to the *Turn to Face the Strange: The Fandom of David Bowie* online survey

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Female	165	58.3
Male	114	40.3
Not specified	4	1.4

Table created by the authors

Table 1.2

Self-declared sexuality of participants responding to *Turn to Face the Strange: The Fandom of David Bowie* online survey

<i>Sexuality</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Straight	199	70.3
Bi	41	14.5
Gay	32	11.3
Other	11	3.9

Table created by the authors

Table 1.3

Self-declared race/ethnicity of participants responding to the *Turn to Face the Strange: The Fandom of David Bowie* online survey

<i>Race/ethnicity</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
White	61	21.0
Caucasian	59	20.3
White British	25	8.6
Unassigned	11	3.8
British	4	1.4
Chinese	4	1.4
White Caucasian	3	1.0
European	3	1.0
Other	121	41.6

Table created by the authors

high gay/bi/queer fan base is not surprising, of course, and as we will see through the data gathered, Bowie's own sexual orientation and play with gender binaries opened him up to non-normative fan readings.

Respondents were drawn from right around the world but with the majority coming from Europe, North America and Australasia. As outlined in Table 1.3, our data finds that in terms of racial diversity just over 50% of our respondents identified as White, Caucasian or white British, and over 40% identified as non-white.

The racial and ethnic diversity of the participants was something that we felt demonstrated Bowie's international appeal, confirming again how his

star image offered positive and progressive entry points for those on the supposed margins or periphery of dominant white culture.

The Focus Groups

As noted above, the participants for the New York, London and Tokyo focus groups were drawn from the questionnaire pool. For the Amsterdam and Lisbon focus groups, conference delegates were asked to sign up to the session and were then emailed with the broad details of how they would be run. For the Melbourne focus group, participants were recruited through listserv communication, flyers and Bowie friendship networks. All these focus groups were organised around a loose set of questions (see Appendix C), and as we note above, delegates were asked to bring a piece of Bowie memorabilia with them or to share knowledge of a cherished Bowie memento, if they had one. The workshop rooms, which took place in universities and/or libraries, were ‘dressed’ before the respondents arrived: Bowie photographs were visible, PowerPoint slides of his many star images were shown on rotation, and Bowie music was played. Our intention here was to humanise the encounter, to create an affective space for sharing. The Berlin focus group was differently constituted and run: it took place in a hotel room around a coffee table, where Sean and his friends shared personal memories of their growing up together, and how they viewed David Bowie.

DATA ANALYSIS

As we note above, the analysis of the data involved both triangulation and the utilisation of different theoretical writing to make sense of the responses that we received. The analysis of the data was led by the ‘voices’ of the respondents, something we were committed to ensuring. We wanted Bowie fans to speak and feel and for these affective registers to be the melodic chorus that harmonises the findings of this book. Nonetheless, we looked for patterns and repetitions across the data and sought to complement these voices through comparative and narrative means. Where qualitative data clearly showed relational clustering, we used that, developing a layering approach to the findings. Nonetheless, the quotations that were drawn upon had to be selective: as can be seen from Appendix C, we had a wealth of material to draw upon. The voices of the fans led us ultimately to structure

the book in the way that we have, something that we will now briefly discuss.

CHANGING CHAPTERS

The Fandom of David Bowie: Everyone Says “Hi” has nine interlocking, entangled chapters. Each Chapter stands in their own anthemic right, but dialogue with the next, and so forth. Each chapter is built out of themes and stories, each contributing to the bigger narrative—what types of fandom does David Bowie call forth and crystallise. Some chapters explore a wide canvass, such as the question of identity in Chapter 2, while others focus closely on a salient theme, such as migration in Chapter 3—both these chapters are locked together in an affective membrane.

The nine chapters provide a cross-cutting, rhizomic journey, albeit one that begins with an entangled overview of how fans identify with him and with what fandom is. The book then turns to undertake a critical analysis of Bowie fandom, drawing upon such key concepts as participatory culture, subcultural group formation, selfhood and sexuality, otherness, desire, the parasocial, the carnival, immersion and mimicry, liminality and transgression, and emotion and affect.

CHAPTER 2: THE FANDOM OF DAVID BOWIE

In this chapter, the central deposits of fandom are defined and then outlined in relation to how fans affectively identify with David Bowie. Drawing on scholars such as Henry Jenkins and Matt Hills, the chapter sees Bowie fandom as a positive and creative set of formations, practices and processes, and Bowie fans as powerful indicators of the potentiality and possibility of fandom. This chapter sets up the core themes and findings of the research, alongside an integrated definition of what fandom constitutes, which is then be taken up in the rest of the book.

CHAPTER 3: STORIES OF DIFFERENCE AND OF AWAKENINGS

This chapter explores the way our respondents wrote and spoke about how David Bowie impacted upon their identity and sense of self, and the empowerment he often gave them through his representations and performances. Here, we find stories of difference emerging, either framed through culturally empowering narratives of gender and sexual transformation, or around

discourses of outsiderdom and alienation, which our respondents suggested Bowie provided escape from and a ‘home’ to arrive in. We also find narratives of awakening and sublimation where Bowie—his body—gave people experiences that were heightened and charged, electrifying and liquefying their being-in-the-world.

CHAPTER 4: LAZARUS RISES: THE MIGRANT FANDOM OF DAVID BOWIE

In this chapter, we focus upon the ways that ‘migrants’ in Melbourne have used David Bowie to story and make sense of their arrival to Australia, often as refugees or as people looking for a better life. We argue that Bowie’s alternative and outsider status resonates keenly with people who find themselves ‘strangers’ in a new land. Lyrically, musically and in terms of star representation, Bowie becomes the figure through which migrants navigate themselves through new cultural and social environments. This part of the research is focused upon the 1970s Italian and Greek migrant community in Melbourne, Australia, with links and conversations to other groups in the other four cities under exploration.

CHAPTER 5: BOWIE CONTAGION

In this chapter, we explore two interlocking themes: first, the way memories are called upon to manage and imagine fans relationship to, and identification with, David Bowie. Second, the chapter examines the way that David Bowie memorabilia contextualises and provides anchor points for fan identifications, becoming a ‘home’ or ‘contagion’ of treasured objects that are embodied and self-narrated. As Hoelscher and Alderman suggest, ‘people now look to this refashioned memory, especially in its collective forms, to give themselves a coherent identity, a national narrative, a place in the world’ (2004: 348–349). We will look at two forms of memory, personal and collective, private and communal, although as our work suggests, memory shifts, folds into itself, so that it is very often personal and shared, private and collective, as soon as it is ‘told’.

CHAPTER 6: BEING THERE/BEING HIM

This chapter’s focus is on how David Bowie embodies the symbolic complexities of artistic and cultural forms in critically important aural and visual

ways. His creative works have adroitly positioned specific narrative frames whereby his fans find room to contemplate and assemble their identity positions through imagination. In this chapter, the book explores the nature of David Bowie's performances with a specific purpose to examine closely instances in which fans themselves metaphorically and physically 'perform' (as) David Bowie either in professional and social contexts or in domestic and personal ways and the authors seek to meet these performances in real-life and 'live' encounters. In this chapter the authors find that because there is no 'definitive David Bowie', multiple interpretations are therefore rendered possible as a result. David Bowie presents fans with a range of reflexive resources that become useful for a multitude of ways of sustaining a coherent sense of self-identity. Here, the chapter probes some of the important ways that fans adopt, transcode and extend various Bowie star images or personae. There is a resulting flow 'within/without' whereby Bowie seems to be felt from *within* the body by resonating with/in his fans, and *without* as fan perform in tributes, wear costumes, dress up, form ideological affinities and engaging in overarching joyful celebration.

CHAPTER 7: ACA-FANS ON TRACING BOWIE STARDOM FOR BEING AND BECOMING

This chapter applies notions of aca-fandom built in and around star and celebrity figures (Hills 2002, 2012; Jenkins 2012) to draw on the stories of participants attending and presenting at academic conferences focused on David Bowie or celebrity. We search here for how Bowie's work has been interacted with, shared, translated and interpreted particularly by aca-fans. The use of auto-ethnographic methods to allow our fellow aca-fans to 'story' their own reactions to David Bowie enables us to delve into the types of emotional responses or tendencies that are stirred by Bowie fandom in/for a professional life. Here, we perpend the ways aca-fans' interlinked feelings and memories are traced back and forward, emotionally entwined in remembrances of Bowie and intimately shared for what their fandom might have contributed to their professional practice via being and becoming.

CHAPTER 8: BOWIE NETS AND ONLINE INTERACTIONS

This chapter explores the ways that fans have been provided with an interpretative framework for their inner-contemplation and creativity through

Bowie fandom online, raising questions of the value of stars and their art for individual ‘becoming’ or positive self-actualisation. Precisely because the star performer can establish an intimate connection with a willing individual, a fan can be affected positively (and sometimes negatively) as they navigate their way through key life moments. A relationship is able to form between the celebrity/star performer and a listening body who might self-identify as ‘fan’ as they closely connect virtually to an experience of a particular medium, a particular materiality and a particular cultural phenomenon that matters. This chapter uses a non-intrusive methodology to specifically question the role and use of the Internet and social media by David Bowie and his fans for their shared experiences online and the multi-layered nature of creative practices or shared stories that emerge therein. In this chapter, we locate these intertextual links and cultural echoes for the expansive dialogic matrix in which they function and are used by his fans online.

CHAPTER 9: GHOSTLY PILGRIMAGES

‘Time may change me’; tracing time takes not a realist’s view of temporality, but exists in a circularity of continually folding back upon itself. Here, we find spaces to reinterpret our memories, feelings and experiences and all the intervals in between. In this chapter, we give thought to how David Bowie is an artist who always is/always was, futuristic and nostalgic, always present in memorial motifs and haunted places through time and the temporal. With reference to Jacques Derrida’s neologism, ‘hauntology’, we focus on fans’ tracing of times and places for the conversational rhythms, for the physical journeys through memorial spaces and of cities associated with David Bowie. Here, we find pilgrimage to live events and locations as recalled by the fans, offers deep exploration of their motivating circumstances and desires.

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION: EVERYONE SAYS ‘GOODBYE’

In this conclusion, we gather the threads of the book together to reflect upon the articulations of Bowie fandom and to summarise what it tells us about the present conditions of social life. We suggest that storying fandom leads us not to micro-conclusions about everyday life alone, but to the myriad of ways that individuals traverse the messy politics of the global world. We will conclude the book with fans’ stories and our own. Sean reflects on not finding Bowie’s Château du Signal (situated next to