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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

With the continued sponsorship and backing of the A-Kon leadership and the excellent contributions of the authors contained in this volume, we are back! FANS 8 was a stunning success with a larger number of both presenters and audience members, now encompassing 37 states and 23 countries. As always, fandom psychology was heavily represented, but we also had contributions from areas like language and linguistics, fandom activities, and the sciences. Further, for the first time ever, we presented a series of panels dedicated to professional development and pedagogy.

In the ongoing danger of the COVID-19 pandemic, with at least two other major global diseases spreading as I write this, we did all in our power to keep our people safe. This included full masking of our staff and presenters, frequent use of hand sanitizer, and the use of telepresence technologies, as is only fitting for a neomedia organization. Many of the videos from these presentations are now available on our [YouTube](#) channel. The first video is an updated version of Helen McCarthy's work on cosplay history and is well worth your time as are all the presentations. The International Anime Research Project, headed up by Dr. Stephen Reysen of Texas A & M University at Commerce is well-placed as is a panel on

Fandom of Color led by Dr. Angela Drummond.

In respect of this and other contributions to our group's fields of study over many years, it is my pleasure and privilege at this time to welcome Dr. Drummond as the newest member of the FANS Committee.

Finally, FANS honors its own. Since our last conference and publication, two former staffers have passed. Ryan Warner and Keith Henson z"l have not formally been part of the FANS family for several years now, but remained our friends and helpers in other ways. Their contributions in the early period of our organization cannot be ignored or minimized. They will be missed. May their memories be a blessing.

Jay Pustějovský Bennett
Chair, Fandom and Neomedia Studies
Association
Editor-in-Chief, *The Phoenix Papers*



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