

## **Bethan Jones: "Advocate of Mass Murder for Fun and Profit": Negotiating Celebrity Political Affiliation Through a Conservative Moral Framework**

Joss Whedon has often been lauded for his tendency to speak vocally about the things in which he believes: his desire to see strong female characters; his commitment to equality; his support of charitable organisations. His recent donations to Planned Parenthood, however, have generated a backlash from conservative fans, with many rejecting their fandom of Whedon and his texts. Work on moral antifandom (Gray, 2005), has often tended to focus on liberal criticism as it supports a move towards equality, rather than prioritising conservative critique which can be sexist, racist or homophobic. Thus feminist critique of Whedon for *Avengers: Age of Ultron* highlights the positioning of Black Widow as monstrous due to her forced sterilisation as symptomatic of the way women are treated in film, with the intention of improving the depiction of women in future films. Far less work has been done on conservative antifandom by scholars.

In this paper I analyse the response to Whedon's support for Planned Parenthood and the move from fandom to antifandom by those opposing his actions. I question the extent to which Whedon is policed by fans who argue that the celebrity's job is to entertain rather than share their political leanings, and suggest why this conservative antifandom should also be studied by scholars. I also examine how people who still identify as Whedon fans but disagree with his stance negotiate their fandom.