

TRANSMEDIA ENTERTAINMENT



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About me...

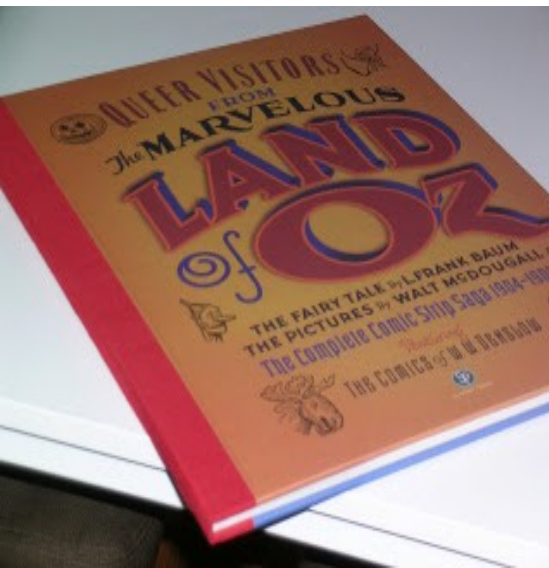
BATH
SPA
UNIVERSITY

- Dr Matthew Freeman
- Senior Lecturer in Media Communications
- Director of the Media Futures Research Centre
- Bath Spa University, UK



My Research...

- International media industry studies
- Production cultures across media, time, and countries
 - Transmedia storytelling/production
 - Media branding/commodification
 - Media and cultural history



Course Context

Throughout the world people now engage with stories across multiple media, following the adventures of *Doctor Who* television to the Web, exploring the Batman universe across cinema, television, comics, and more. This phenomenon, branded 'transmedia storytelling' by Henry Jenkins in 2003, has since gained both significant academic and industry presence over the last decade or so. The media industries have since developed sophisticated tools for allowing entertainment to play out seamlessly across media platforms.

Course Rationale

The proliferation of entertainment across multiple media platforms is indeed now so commonplace that it is important to fully understand its workings and implications. Across this course we will analyse and explore different concepts, practices and models of transmedia storytelling, providing you with expansive examples of the role of transmedia entertainment in today's media culture and industries. We will consider the underlying characteristics of all transmedia stories, before exploring its potential histories as well as a number of key themes of transmedia – including branding, promotion, technology, participation, and globalism. The course will be structured around explorations of transmedia's past, its present, and its future, altogether providing you with an understanding of the forms, roles and impacts of our contemporary transmedia culture on everything from technology to storytelling, from industry to audiences.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Explain the concept and characteristics of transmedia storytelling.
- Describe the values and roles of transmedia as a contemporary practice of the media industries.
- Analyse the forms of transmedia entertainment across different genres, assessing the textual, economic, cultural and audience implications.

Monday

- Lecture 1: Transmedia Introductions: Industry, Technology, Narrative
 - Reading: Jenkins, H. (2006) 'Searching for Origami Unicorn: *The Matrix* and Transmedia Storytelling', *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press, pp.93-130.

Tuesday

- Lecture 2: Transmedia Conceptions: World, Character, Author - Promotion, Brand, Continuity
 - Reading: NO READING.
- Lecture 3: Transmedia Histories Part I: Early 20th Century: Industrialised Consumerism
 - Reading: Freeman, M. (2014) 'Advertising the Yellow Brick Road: Historicizing the Industrial Emergence of Transmedia Storytelling', *International Journal of Communication* 8, pp.2362-2381.

Wednesday

- Lecture 4: Transmedia Histories Part II: Late 20th Century: Brand Hollywood
 - Reading: Grainge, P. (2007) 'Media Branding and the Entertainment Complex', *Brand Hollywood: Selling Entertainment in a Global Media Age*. London: Routledge, pp.44-66.
- Screening: *The Greatest Movie Ever Sold* (2011)

Thursday

- Lecture 5: Transmedia Futures Part I: Digital Participation
 - Reading: Tepper, A. (2015) 'Lizzie in Real Life: Social and Narrative Immersion Through Transmedia in *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries*', *Film Matters* (Spring), pp.45-51.
- Lecture 6: Transmedia Futures Part II: Transnational and Global Perspectives
 - Reading: NO READING.

Today...

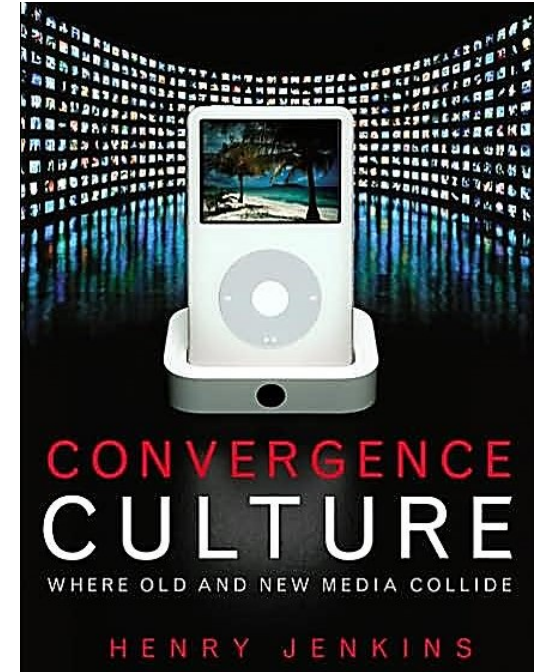
- What is transmedia storytelling?
- Industry context of transmedia storytelling
- Transmedia as global storytelling
- Transmedia's observed codes of conventions

What is transmedia?

Transmediality:

- “The increasingly popular industrial practice of using multiple media platforms to present information concerning a single fictional world through a range of textual forms.” Elizabeth Evans (2011)

What is transmedia storytelling?



Transmedia storytelling: Stories that unfold across multiple media platforms, with each medium making distinctive contributions to our understanding of the world, a more integrated approach to franchise development than models based on urtexts and ancillary products.

Henry Jenkins,

Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide
(New York: New York University Press, 2006), p.334.

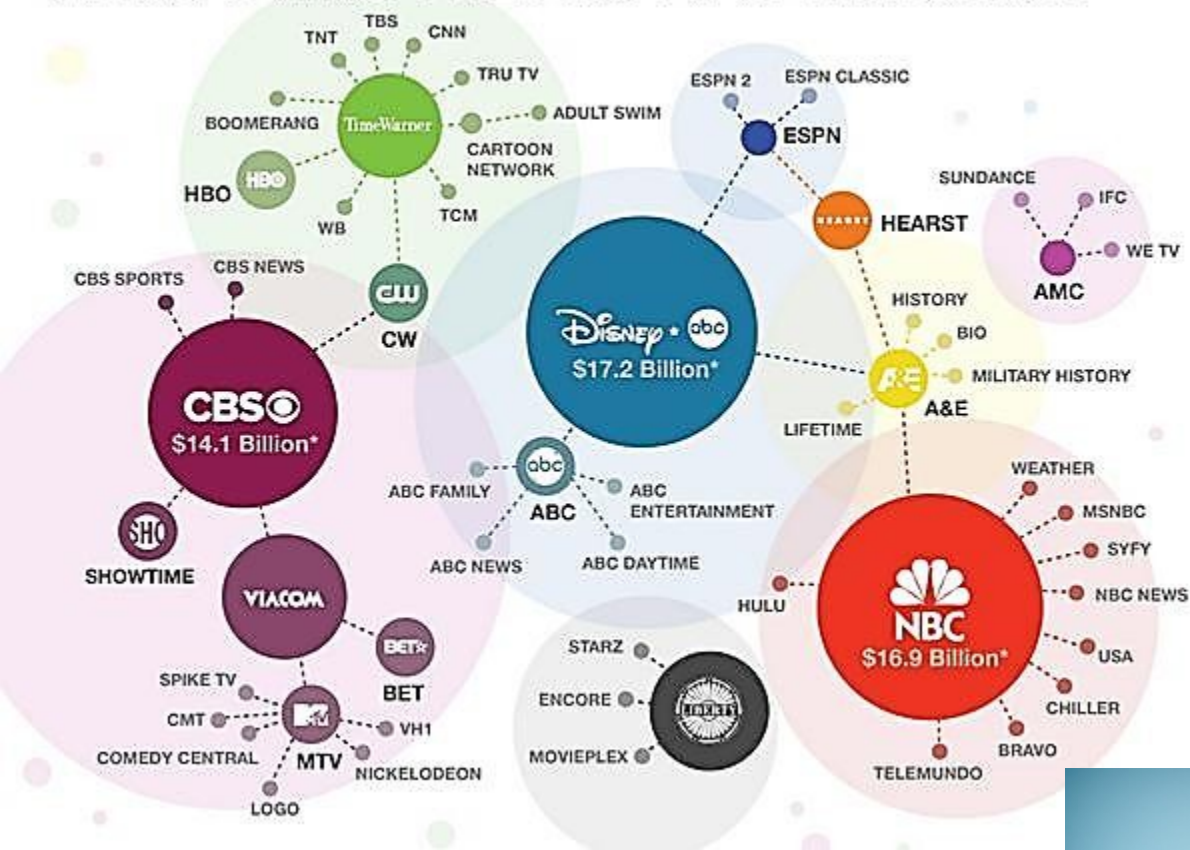
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9uX_65IFpY

‘Transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience ... In *The Matrix* franchise, key bits of information are conveyed through three live action films, a series of animated shorts, two collections of comic book stories, and several video games. There is no one single source or ur-text where one can turn to gain all of the information needed to comprehend the *Matrix* universe.’ (Jenkins 2011)

Transmedia Context

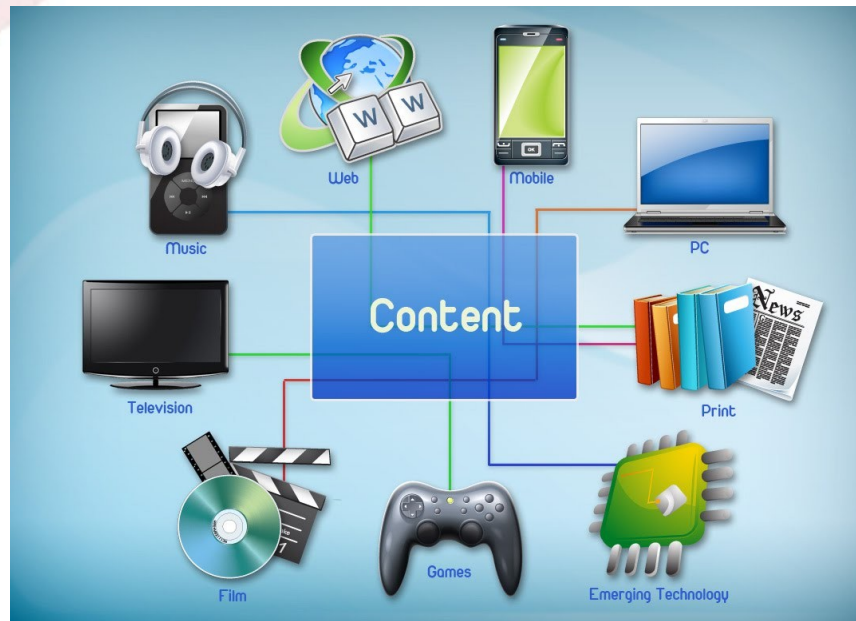
- So why exactly does transmedia even exist?

Q WHO OWNS THE BIG TV NETWORKS?

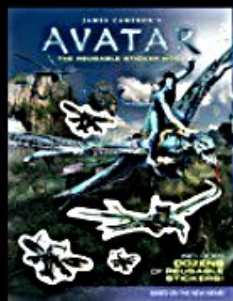


Contemporary Industry Context

- (1) Industrial Convergence
- (2) Technological Convergence



	News Corporation:	Time Warner:	National Amusements:		NBC Universal:	The Walt Disney Company:
			Viacom	CBS Corporation		
Cable:	Fox Movie Channel Fox News Channel FX	CNN TNT Cinemax HBO	MTV Networks BET Networks	Showtime	Bravo MSNBC Syfy	A&E Lifetime ESPN
Production and Distribution:	20 th Century Fox, Fox Searchlight Pictures, Blue Sky Studios	Warner Bros. Entertainment	Paramount Pictures, MTV Films	CBS Television Studios, CBS Home Entertainment	NBC Entertainment, Universal Media Studios, Universal Pictures	Touchstone Pictures, Pixar, Walt Disney Studios
Television Networks:	Fox Broadcasting Company (Fox network) Fox Sports	The CW (joint venture with CBS Corporation)		CBS, The CW (with Warner Bros. Ent)	NBC	ABC
DBS:	BSkyB, FoxTel					
Publishing:	Harper Collins, News International, <i>The Wall Street Journal</i>	Time Inc.		Simon and Schuster		Disney Consumer Products
Online:	Myspace, Hulu	NASCAR.com, CNN.com	Atom Entertainment	CBS Interactive	Hulu, iVillage	Disney Interactive Media Group
Parks and Resorts:					Universal Studios Hollywood	Disneyland Resort Tokyo Disney Resort



Books



Videogames



AVATAR



Web Portals



Toys

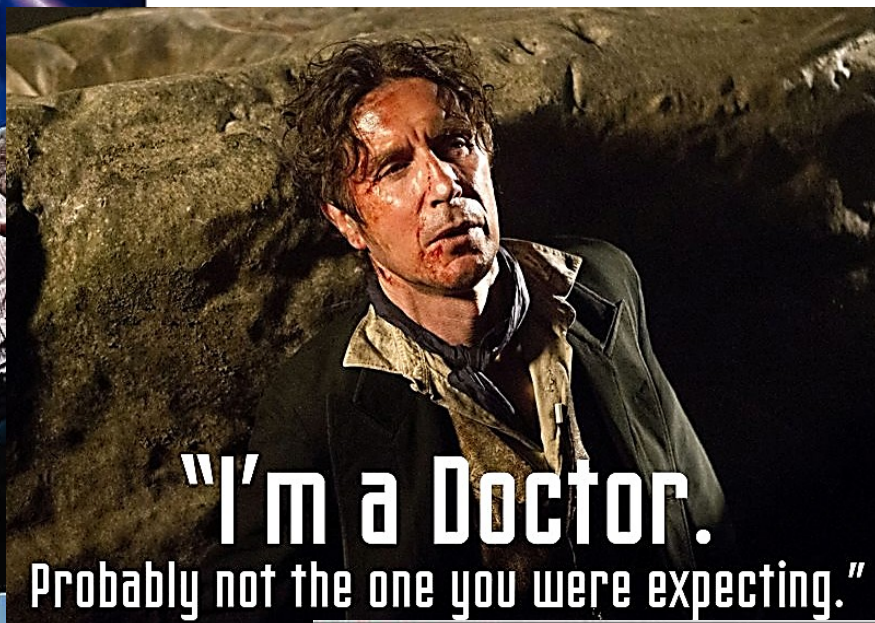
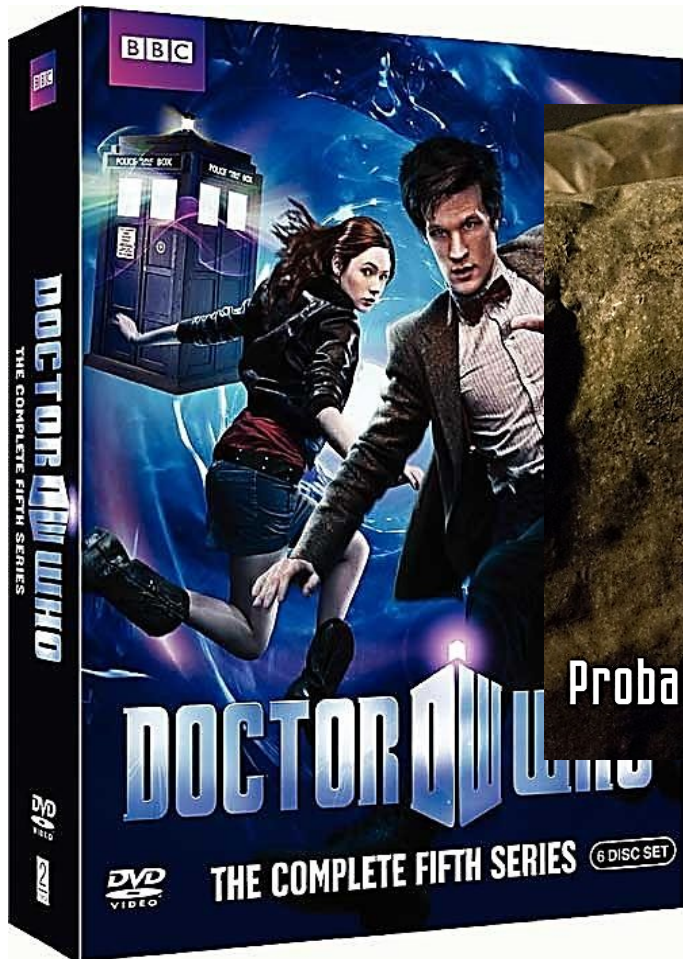


- 'Creating Blockbuster Worlds'



Starlight Runner Entertainment





Doctor Who - Series 6
6. The Almost People



Questions to consider...

- Are transmedia stories about re-engaging the same audience over and over again?
- Or are transmedia stories about engaging different audiences at different times via different media?
- Which ones do you instinctively classify as ‘UK media’, or ‘US media’, or, if any, ‘global media’?
 - Do any seem like American products? Why?
 - Do any seem like they’re targeting a specific country?
 - Do any seem like they’re targeting global audiences?

Global Case Study – *Avatar* (2009)

Box Office Gross

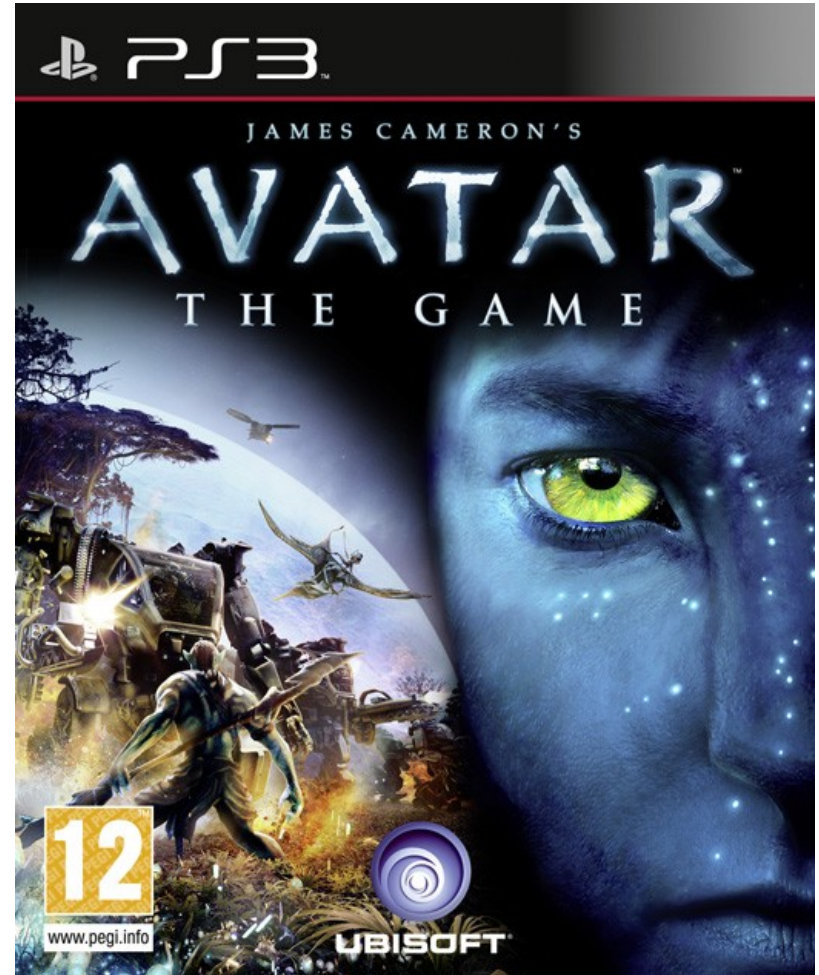
- \$3 billion (approx.): 27.3% (USA)
72.7% (rest of world)



How 'American' is *Avatar* (2009)?

- Based on watching the trailer for *Avatar*, which aspects “feel” American and which aspects feel more universal? Consider:
 - Actors, language, production style
 - Genre type, story, characters
 - Themes, visuals, sound, etc.

Transmedia – *Avatar: The Game*



- Based on the trailer for *Avatar: The Game*, what nationality of audience(s) do you think the makers are trying to attract? (i.e. US? Global?). Consider:
 - Themes, visuals, language, genre

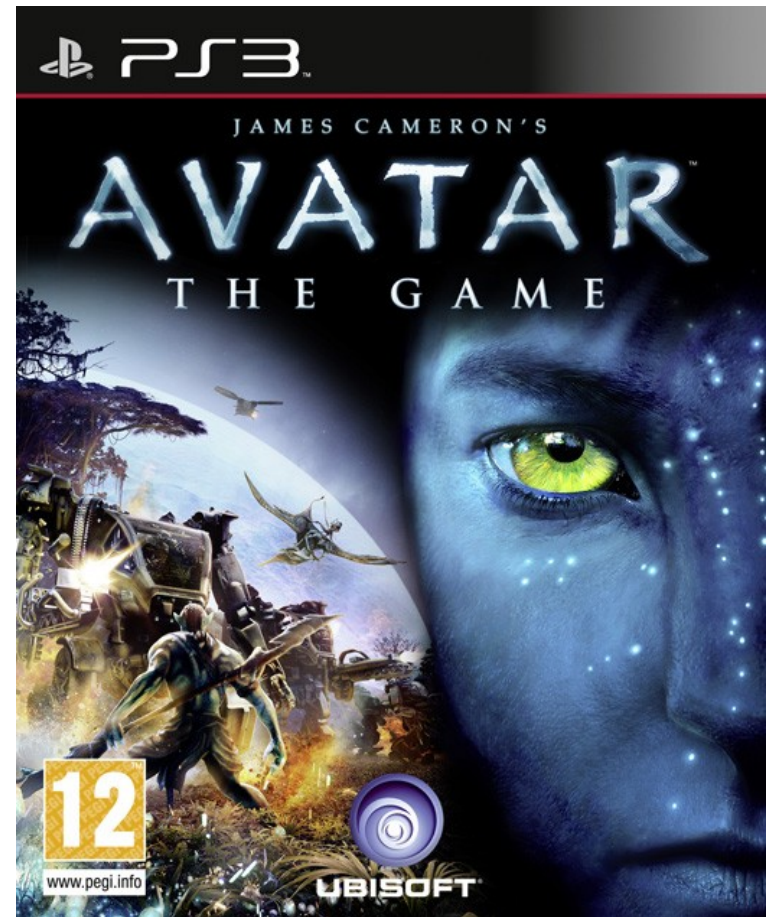
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xw5lV0KgW20>

Avatar: The Game (2009)

- *Avatar: The Game (2009)*

Global Sales Percentages

- 53.0% (USA)
- 36.3% (Europe)
- 10.7% (rest of world)



What, if anything, does this show...?

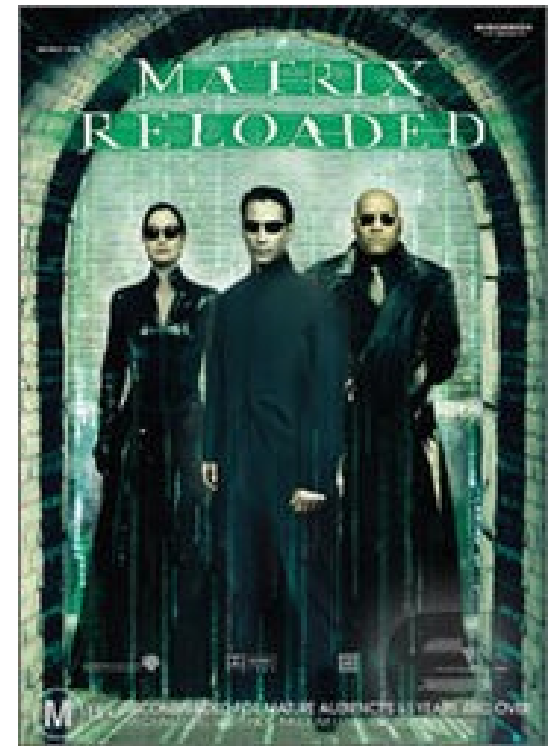
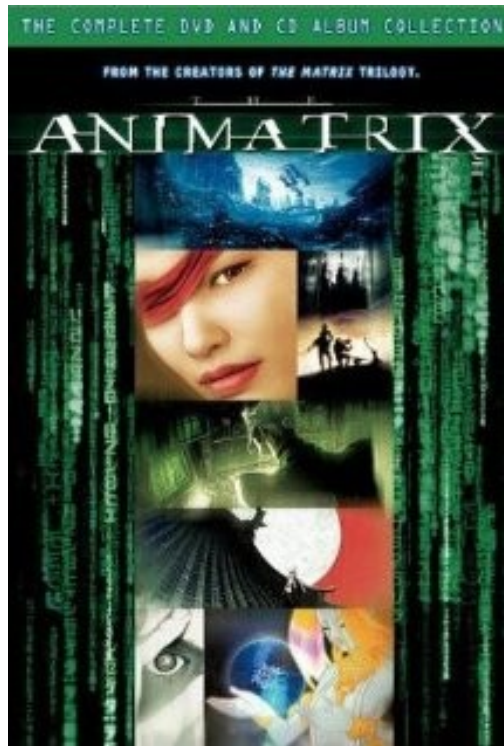
Does the transmedia *Avatar* example suggest that:

- Transmedia is key to engaging wider audiences?
- Games are a less global medium than film?
- US audiences are drawn to video games?
- Global audiences are drawn to sci-fi film?
- Non-Western audiences prefer watching imaginary worlds to playing inside them?
- Story themes of colonization, war, and love transcend media and travel internationally?

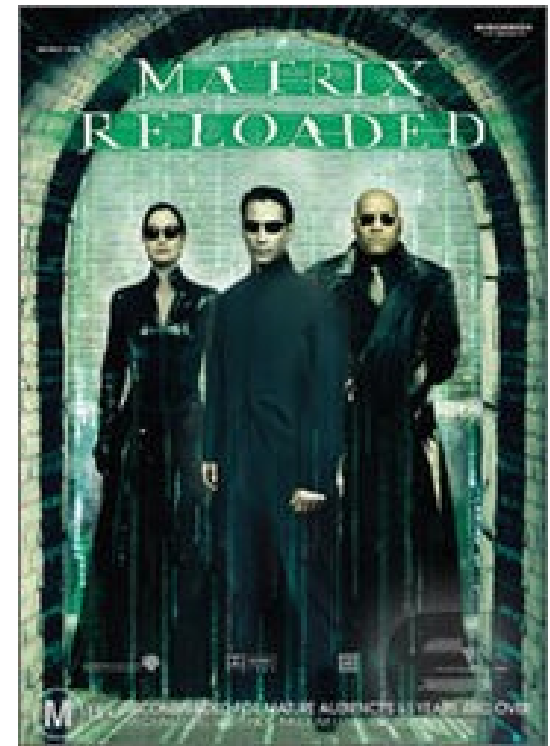
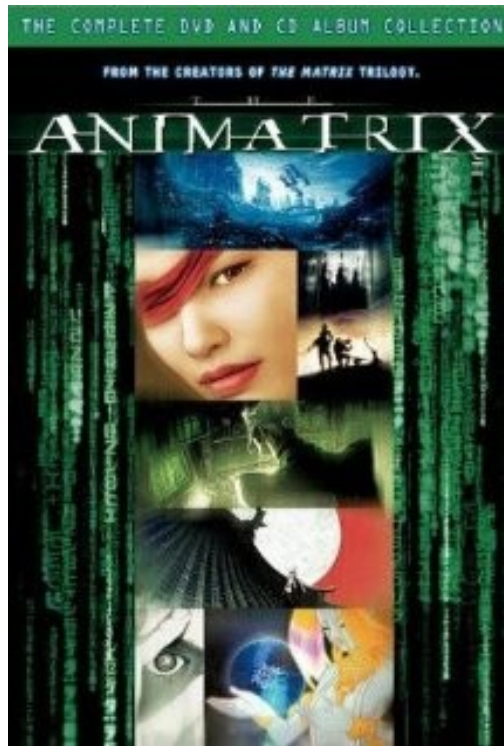
Characteristics of Transmedia

- What are the basic codes and conventions of transmedia storytelling according to scholars?

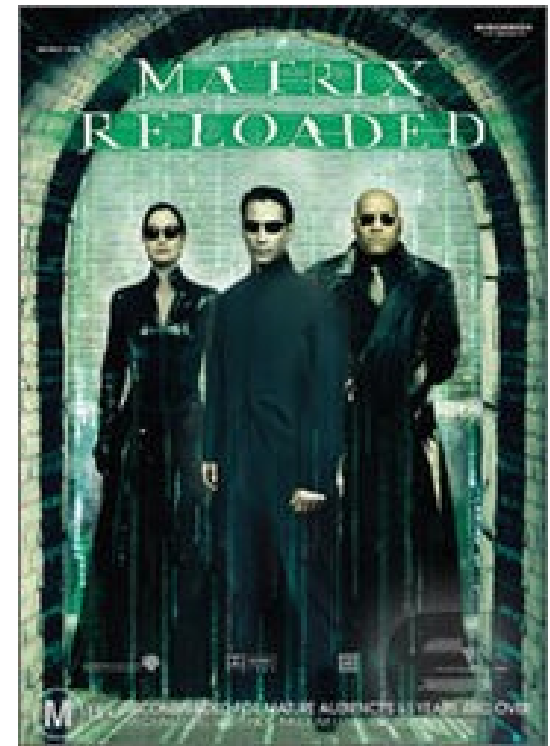
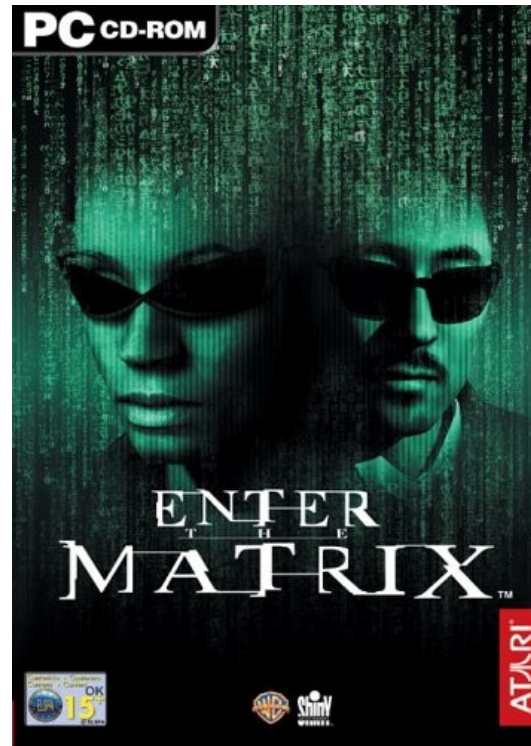
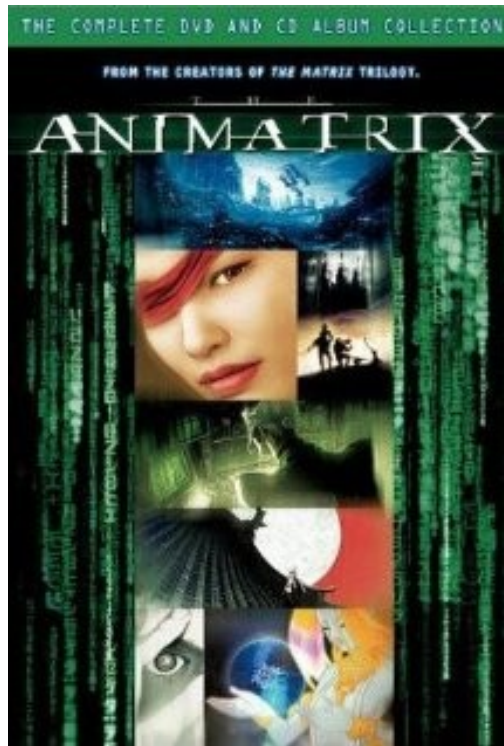
Transmedia Storytelling: Narrative Coherence



Transmedia Storytelling: Authorial Coherence



Transmedia Storytelling: Temporal Coherence



What are the benefits of creating transmedia entertainment that is so narratively, authorially and temporally coherent?

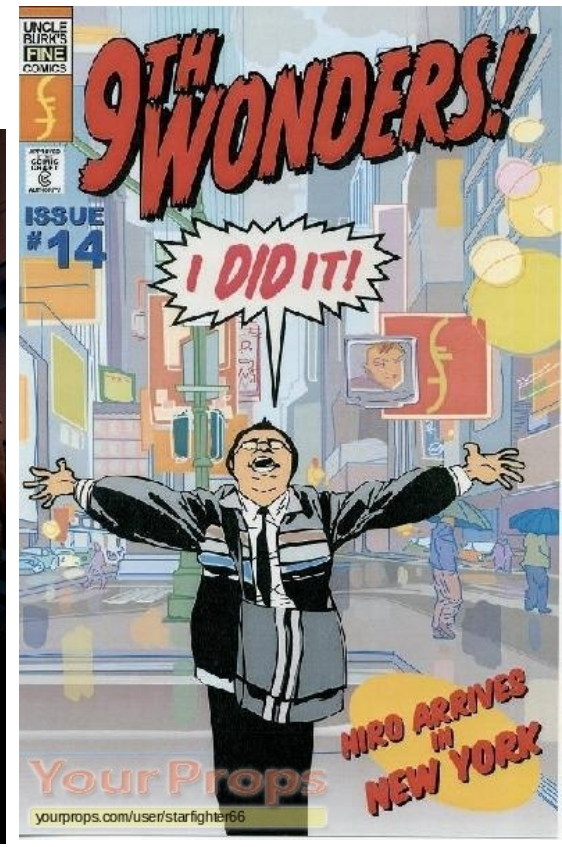
- Encourages engagement with a wider range of media texts and consumer products associated with a specific entertainment
- Multiplies the potential profits for industries
- Increases loyalty from audiences and consumers by rewarding the engaged viewer

Transmedia codes and conventions

- (1) 'a network of intertextuality' (storytelling)
- (2) 'collectability' (branding)
- (3) 'accelerates the growth curve of the commercial system' (cross-promotion)

Marsha Kinder, *Playing with Power in Movies, Television, and Video Games: From Muppet Babies to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1991).

Intertextuality (storytelling) *Heroes* (2006–2010)





Collectability (branding) Harry Potter



Commercial system (cross-promotion)



Gotham City Chronicle

Friday, November 18, 2011 | PAGES ON THIS PAGE: 1 | 11:00 AM

BATKID SAVES CITY

Hooded hero nabs Riddler, rescues damsel in distress



The elusive Batkid caught on film

By Clark Kent

Gotham City was saved from apparent devastation when a vigilante who performed the city from my last public memory.

Strongly clothed in dark armor, a cape and pointy ears mask, this was

he person who made all with the 10th floor of the city tracks. This reporter has learned that about 10 minutes before the masked crusader — dubbed "Batkid" after his cryptic status and unusual attire — stopped a bus on the main highway.

After writing the infamous Riddler as the primary villain in the final stages of Gotham's collapse.

"There are not the family kind of just any hero," Mayor Ed Lee said. "This is the work of a 10-year-old hero, one that we are proud to call a resident of Gotham."



Caped crusader crushes crime

By Brenda Starr



The Penguin's plan to hide among the penguins at the Academy of Sciences exhibit was promptly foiled when Batkid recognized the villain's green aviator.

It's safe to say that the vigilante who has made his name as the hooded hero of Gotham's population seems to have walked on Batkid's heels. In fact, the vigilante seems to have walked on Batkid's heels. In fact, the vigilante seems to have walked on Batkid's heels.

Batkid's secret revealed at last

By Perry White



Batkid revealed.

Penguin can't hide from the Batkid

Kidnapper's hideout discovered in plain sight



By Lois Lane

The truth of Batkid's true identity has finally been revealed. The truth of Batkid's true identity has finally been revealed. The truth of Batkid's true identity has finally been revealed.

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Dangers of transmedia storytelling?

- What are some of the potential pitfalls and dangers for the media industries in asking audiences to cross multiple platforms?

Dangers of transmedia storytelling?

- Audience fatigue
- Confusing/incoherent narratives
- High production costs – risk
- High expense for audiences
- Extra emphasis on production coordination

What to take away from today...

- Transmedia storytelling is about **continuity, coherence and depth**
- Stories become **storyworlds**
- Audiences become gatherers of media
- **Intertextuality** (story), **collectability** (branding), and **cross-promotion** (commercialism)
- Transmedia is key to engaging wider audiences

What's coming up...?

- Lecture 2:

‘Transmedia Conceptions: World, Character, Author – Promotion, Brand, Continuity’

- Lecture 3:

‘Transmedia Histories Part I: 20th Century Consumerism’