



# Today...

- Exploring the history of transmedia storytelling
  - Pre-historical histories?
- Industrial history in the USA
  - Industrialisation --- modern advertising
  - Consumer culture --- licensing
  - Media regulation --- war propaganda

# Learning Objectives

- EXPLAIN the core industrial developments that led to historical transmedia storytelling
- DESCRIBE the practices of historical transmedia
- ANALYSE the different forms, strategies and manifestations of transmedia in the past

# Pre-historical transmedia?

- ‘The narrative of Jesus Christ has been passed down across many centuries through a complex combination of the written word, drama, religious paintings, stained-glass windows, other symbolic icons, and so forth’ (Roberta Pearson)
- ‘Oral traditions drawn in the visual artistry of pottery and mythological narratives of Ancient Greece might be an ancient incarnation of transmedia storytelling (Derek Johnson)

# Historicizing the industry of transmedia storytelling

- *Why* is transmedia a form of promotion?
- *Why* is transmedia about branding?
- *Where* did its production practices come from?
- *When* did the ethos of transmedia consumerism first emerge – and *how*?



Transmedia  
Storytelling Circa  
1900-1920

INDUSTRIALISATION

- Mass production
- Mass communication
- Printing technologies
- Modern advertising



Transmedia  
Storytelling Circa  
1920-1940

CONSUMER CULTURE

- ∞ Franchising
- ∞ Merchandising
- ∞ Licensing



Transmedia  
Storytelling Circa  
1940-1960

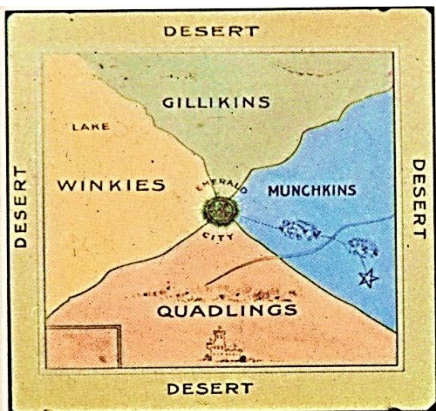
MEDIA REGULATION

- ∞ Propaganda
- ∞ War Films





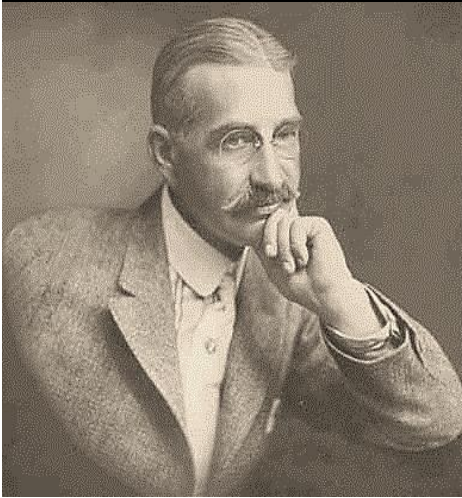
MOTION PICTURES



FAIRYLOGUE TOURS



BOOKS



## COMIC STRIPS

The Scarecrow looks at a ball of twine for being a thoughtless pig.

The Cowardly Lion, who is really a lion, is being chased by a wicked witch.

Thinking over the ropes for an all-plunged into the lake.

The Tin Man is being chased by a wicked witch.

## NEWSPAPERS

### The Ozmapolitan

EMERALD CITY—LAND OF OZ

No. X-32 5TH DAY—3RD PERIOD—REIGN OF OZMA Vol. Q

<p><b>A SWELL DINNER</b></p> <p>The Mayor of Emerald City is giving a splendid dinner to the guests of the Emerald City Hotel.</p>	<p><b>YIELDS CONSENT</b></p> <p>The Scarecrow has yielded his consent to the Emerald City Council.</p>	<p><b>EXCURSIONS TO ST. LOUIS</b></p> <p>The Emerald City Council has decided to send an expedition to St. Louis.</p>	<p><b>WILL LEAVE SOON</b></p> <p>The Scarecrow will leave for the Emerald City soon.</p>
<p><b>RETURNED WITH THANKS</b></p> <p>The Emerald City Council has received a letter from the Scarecrow.</p>	<p><b>A GREAT DISCOVERY</b></p> <p>The Emerald City Council has discovered a new way to the Emerald City.</p>	<p><b>RETURNED WITH THANKS</b></p> <p>The Emerald City Council has received a letter from the Scarecrow.</p>	<p><b>WILL LEAVE SOON</b></p> <p>The Scarecrow will leave for the Emerald City soon.</p>

## DOROTHY'S CHRISTMAS TREE

Written and Illustrated by W.W. DENSKOV, with art by W.W. DENSKOV. Illustrations of 'The WIZARD OF OZ' Copyright 1964 by W.W. DENSKOV.

The Scarecrow is being chased by a wicked witch.

The Cowardly Lion is being chased by a wicked witch.

The Tin Man is being chased by a wicked witch.

The Scarecrow is being chased by a wicked witch.

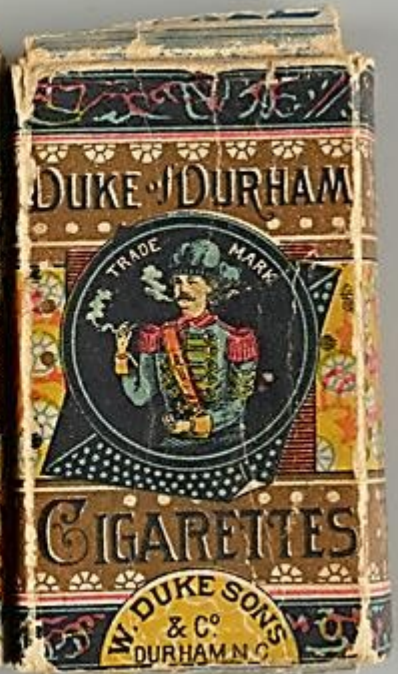
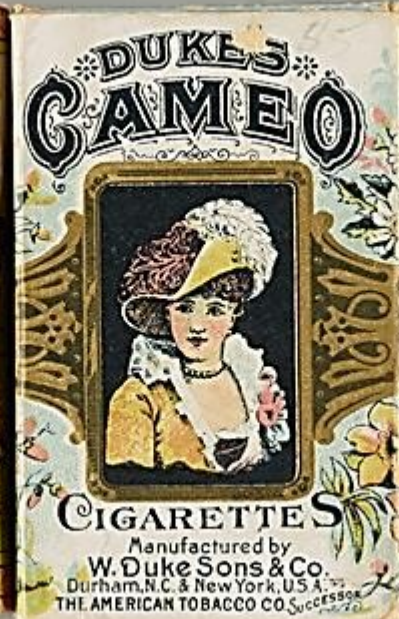
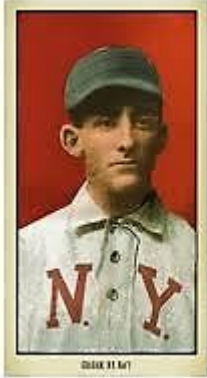
The Cowardly Lion is being chased by a wicked witch.

The Tin Man is being chased by a wicked witch.

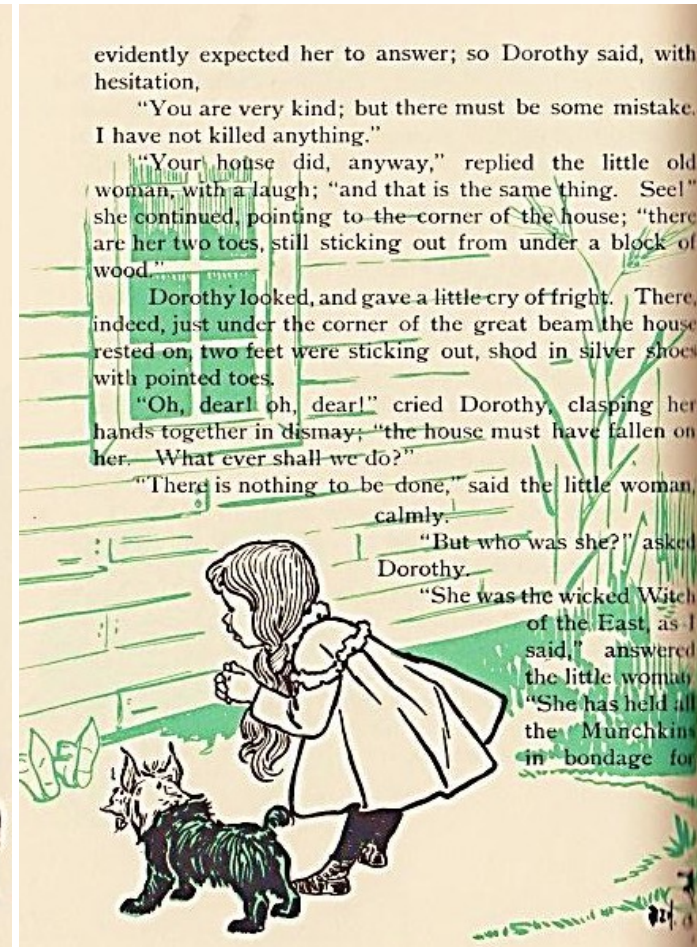
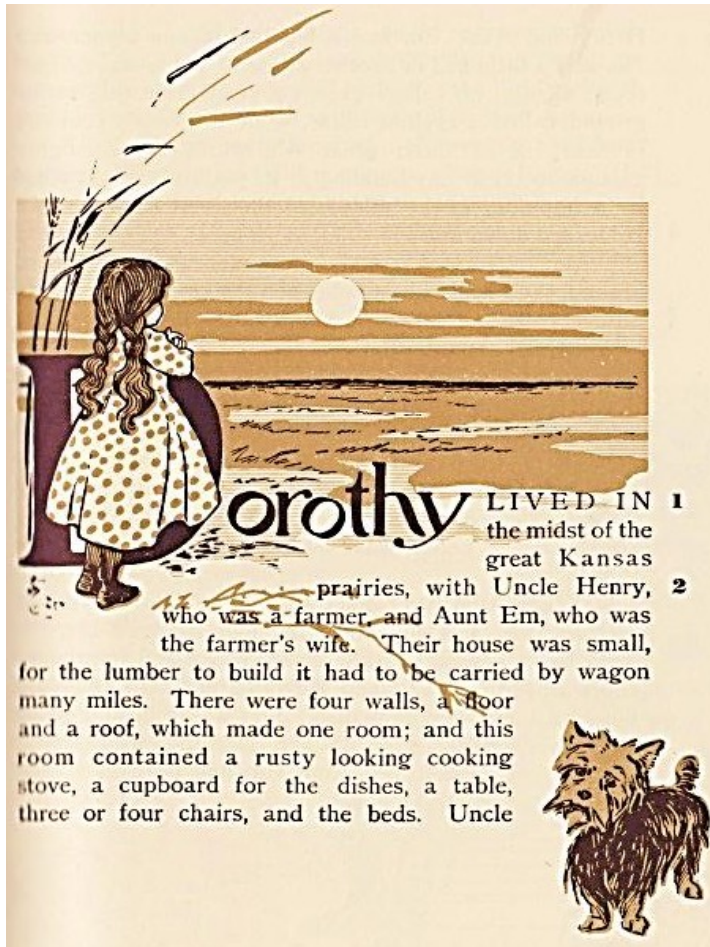




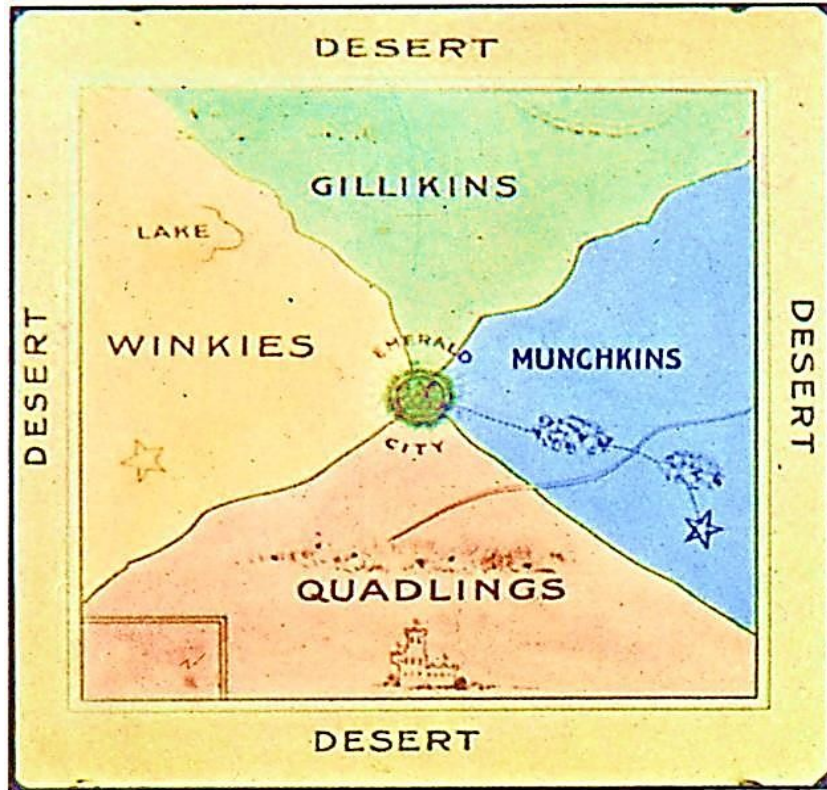
# Cigarette cartons and cards



# The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (1900)



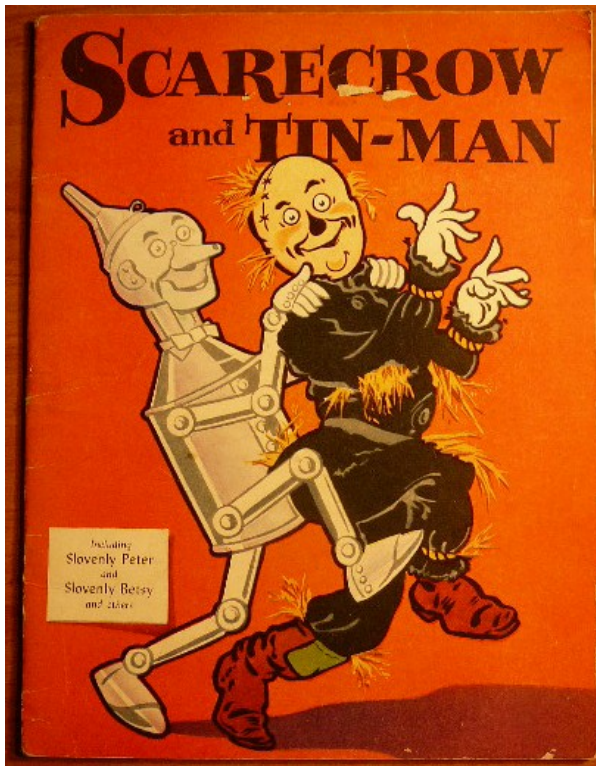
# Printed maps as transmedia



‘Authors started to use maps in particular ... for establishing the imaginary world as a virtual space consistent in all its details... a geography of the imagination.’ Michael Saler (2012)





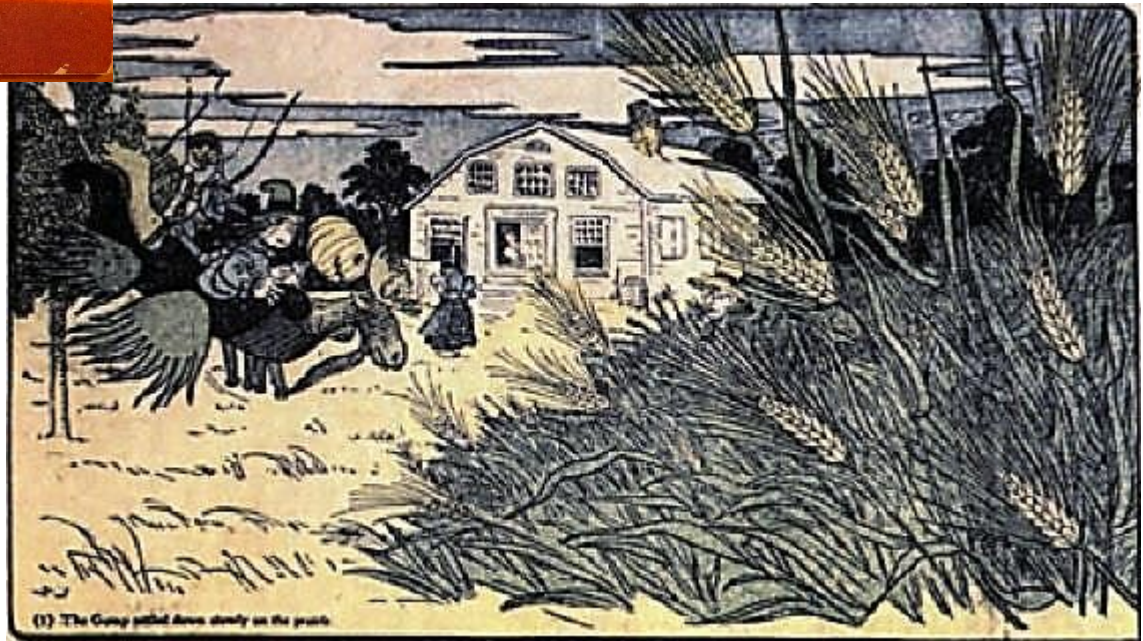


FROM THE LAND OF OZ  
TO THE UNITED STATES

HERE THEY COME!

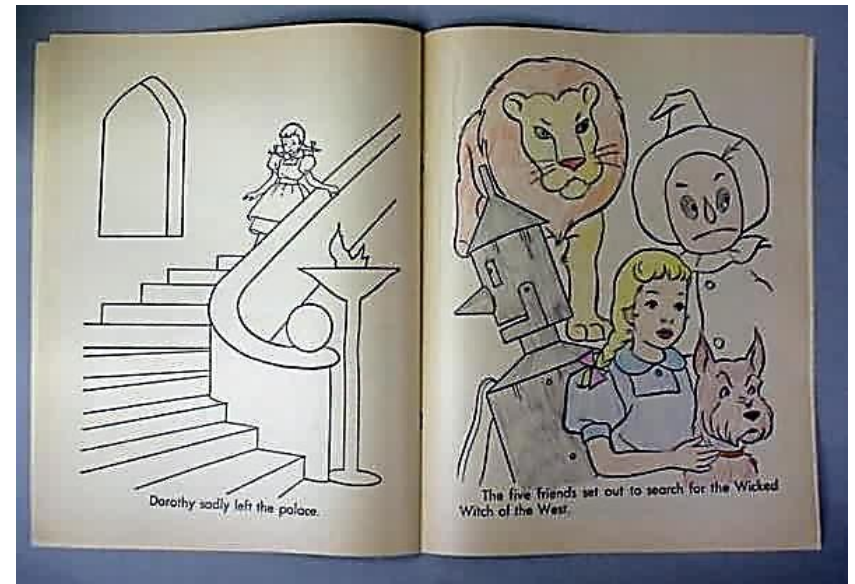
THE SCARECROW AND TIN WOODMAN  
JACK PUMPKINHEAD, THE WOGGLE BUG  
THE ANIMATED SAWHORSE AND THE GUMP.  
THEY ARE ON THEIR FIRST VACATION AWAY FROM  
THE EMERALD CITY AND THE LAND OF OZ. THEY WANT  
TO ROMP WITH THE CHILDREN OF THE UNITED  
STATES. OUR GLAD NEWS COMES TO THE NORTH  
AMERICAN AS FOLLOWS:

Proclamation Extraordinary



- “Certainly the comic pages expand our sense of what the characters of Oz are like ... and yet Baum first thought of these comic pages purely as a way of promoting his new book.”
- Peter E. Hanff, former President of The International Wizard of Oz Club

# *The Wizard of Oz (1910)*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpV29YZ7Ksw>



# Transmedia as money loser?

- “Mr. Baum had sought to follow the whimsical “Wizard of Oz” series with other productions along the same line, in which fairies and hob-goblins ran riot in motion pictures. The venture has Mr. Baum oppressed by the debts contracted in trying to exploit his creations and has now sought the relief of the bankruptcy courts.”
- ““Wizard of Oz” Bankrupt,’ *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1916, p.16.

- “Promotion has almost nothing to do with developing or expanding an established narrative like the transmedia storytelling of the digital era.” David Kushner (2013)



# Stepping stones of entertainment

- ‘My youngest boy collects empty match boxes. The fact that they are all of the same kind makes no difference to him, but in that he shows the true spirit of the collector and of the reader. The really great purpose of fiction is, as I see it, that it is like stepping stones of entertainment. The reading of fiction motivates one’s mind to flow to its next stepping stone, just like a collector of match boxes, and, lo, a new world will be opened to him.’
- (Edgar Rice Burroughs, 1923)

# Using films in business...

- By the mid-1930s, magazines were publishing articles about how to 'use films in business', offering tips for how motion pictures could be integrated as part of the interiors of shops so as to increase sales
- 'Coolerator consumer picture' - *Husbands Are Good For Something*. The film was 'intended to close the gap between consumers being *aware* of our product and them becoming *specifically interested* in it and thus eventually *sold* on Coolerator advantages'
- 'A good film is known by the merchandise it sells'

# ...Turn to licensing in 1918

- A strategy of spreading a product or service beyond the confines of one manufacturer, who issues 'the rights to manufacture products' under management' (Jenkins 2006)
- Licensing was the logical response to the rise of consumer culture: 'As a professional practice, licensing is linked with the development of mass culture industries and advertising agencies at the turn of the 20th century.' (Santo, 2009)

# TARZAN – 1920s/1930s



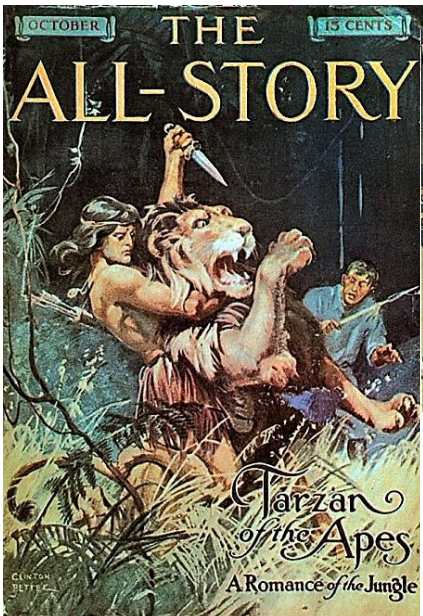
MOTION PICTURES



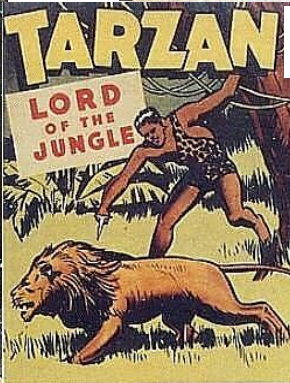
COMIC STRIPS



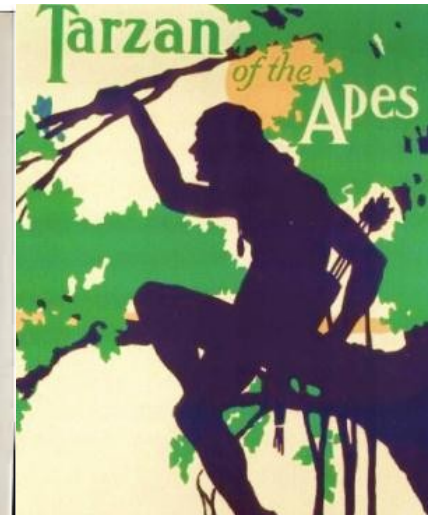
RADIO SERIALS



PULP MAGAZINES

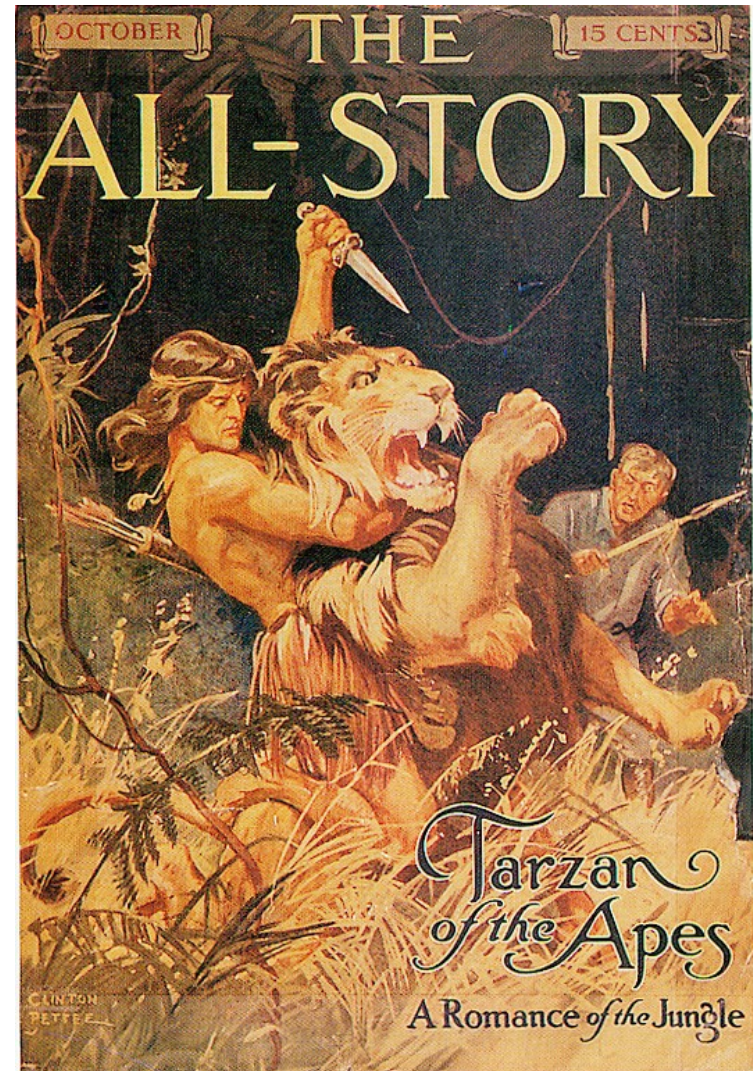
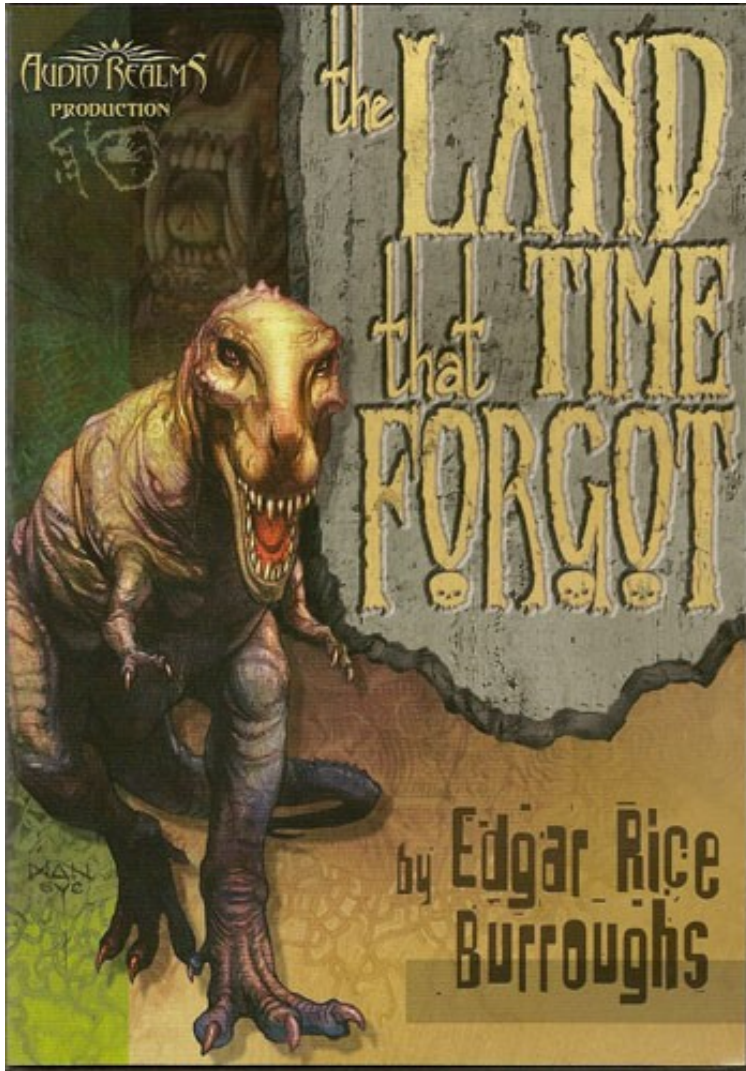


MERCHANDISE



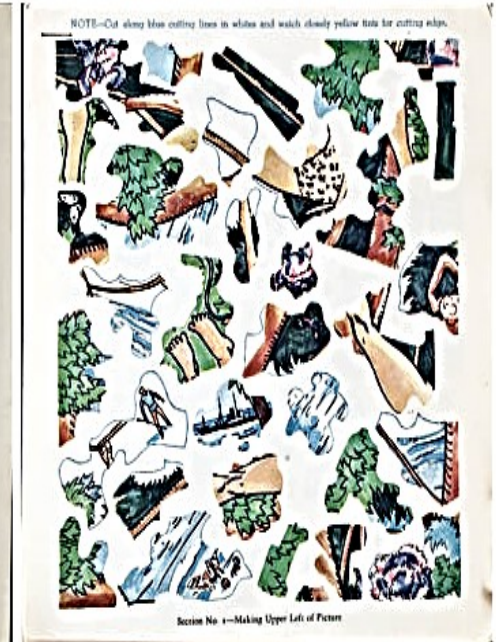
NOVELS

# The 'Burroughsian Universe'





# Tarzan merchandise





# The importance of radio

“In the face of severe social upheaval radio must serve to preserve our population ... We must know and honor the same fictional heroes, love the same songs, and realize our common interests together.”

- Merlyn Aylesworth, then head of NBC,  
1930

# Mass consumerism, public demand and the want of 'more' stories



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ll0PPD0NKhA>

“Since those simple days of twenty years ago, when I blithely gave away a fortune in rights that I did not know existed, many changes have taken place, bringing new rights with them. Today I am closing a radio contract covering the presentation of my stories over the air. What a far cry from second magazine rights.”

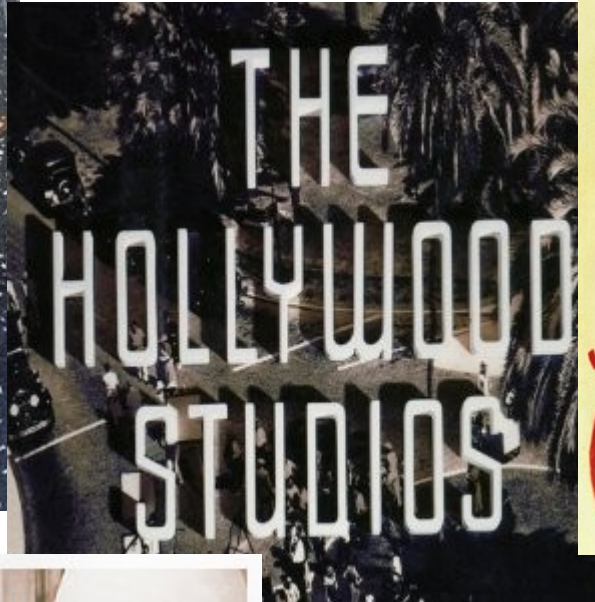
“Perhaps in my radio contract I shall insist upon the reservation to me of the interplanetary rights. Why not? Radio rights and sound and dialog rights would have seemed as preposterous twenty years ago.”

- Edgar Rice Burroughs, “Protecting the Author’s Rights,” *The Writer’s 1932 Year Book & Market Guide*, p.160.

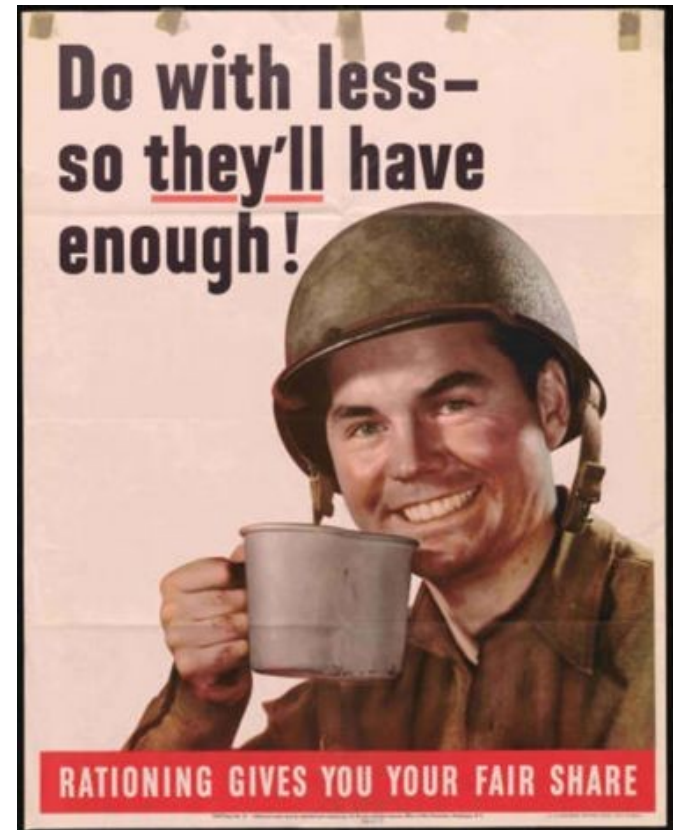
# Tarzan incoherence?



# U.S. 1940s



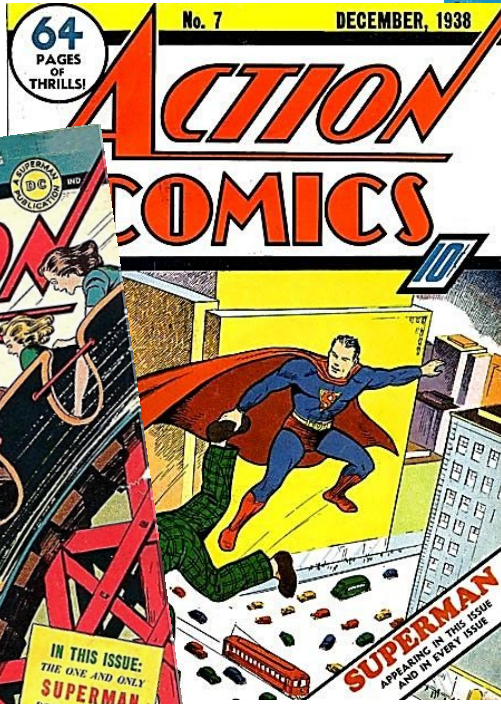
# Office of War Information (OWI)





# Rosie the Riveter





‘More Americans spend more time listening to radio programs than they spend doing anything else, except working and sleeping.’

– William C. Ackerman, Columbia Broadcasting System, 1945

As of 1940, 82.8% of American families owned a radio.

As of 1944, 88.9% of American families owned a radio.

As of 1945, 90% of American families owned a radio.

– Decennial Census

**SUPERMAN**  
ON RADIO



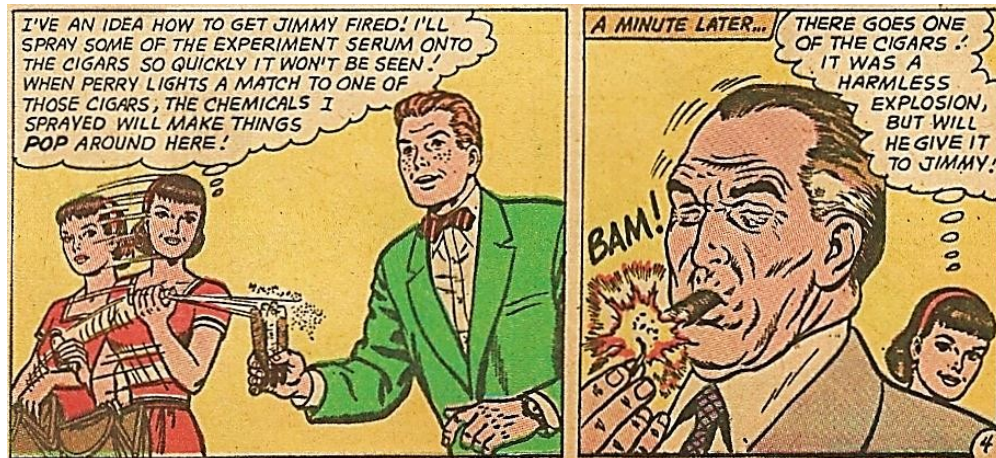
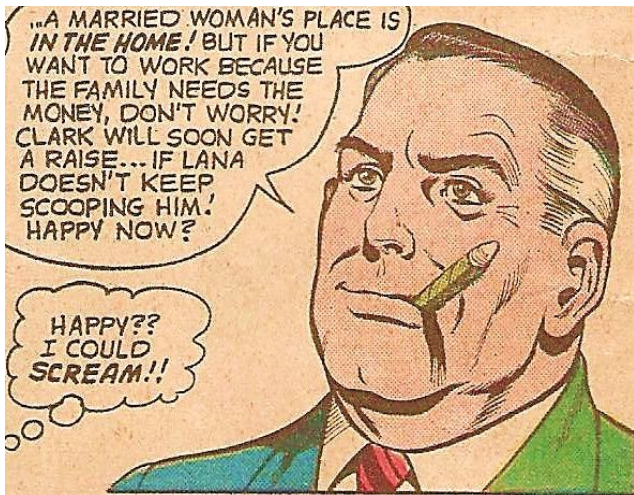
*The Adventures  
of Superman*



“Superman is going over there to Germany, Italy and Japan, and he’s going to clean them up!” insisted Donenfeld, presiding genius of the Man of Steel.’

‘I have hopes that he’ll bring Hitler and Mussolini to this country and set them down in New York’s East Side. He’ll sweep the world for democracy!’

– Harry Donenfeld, quoted in “The Laugh’s on You and Me,” *The Washington Post*, October 22, 1940, p. 19.





# *Superman* (Paramount, 1941-1943)







## Superman in cinema



## Superman in comic books

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjdnCC6n4xk>

‘A hero that can fly elicits a stronger sense of power, pride, and protective reassurance.’

– The Office of War Information on Superman editorial

‘Parents who haven’t been keeping up with Superman may not be aware of the high moral tone pervading his exploits, or aware that a serious-minded government committee, led by the OWI including educators and psychologists, instruct on editorial policy.’

– Catherine Mackenzie, “Movies – and Superman,”  
*The New York Times*, October 12, 1942, p.22.

‘[...] market tie-ups’ [...] Superman’s radio serial opens up an opportunity for theatres playing Superman shorts, who can try for promo announcements at breakdown time.’

— “Planet? Radio Wave? No – It’s Superman!,” *Variety*, June 24, 1942, p.12.

‘Superman’s popular cartoon stories will be used in connection with the radio program as well as with the mags and newspaper features.’

— “Inside Stuff – Radio,” *Variety*, February 24, 1943, p.30.

# Like *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012)?



## GOTHAM OBSERVER

GOTHAM CITY      GOTHAM CITY'S DAILY NEWSPAPER      ONE DOLLAR

### HARVEY DENT DAY FESTIVITIES PLANNED

By BROOKE CAESAR

**GOTHAM CITY—** With Harvey Dent Day rapidly approaching, numerous celebratory and commemorative events have been planned in and around Gotham City for the city's annual holiday.

The event was officially announced by Mayor Garcia after District Attorney Harvey Dent, a hero to the people of Gotham City, passed away in a tragic accident.

In addition to the parade that typically accompanies the event, Mayor Garcia has announced a number of other official happenings including, but not limited to, a paid holiday for all city employees.

This year's Harvey Dent Day comes amidst questions regarding Batman's whereabouts. Many hold the masked



**DISTRICT ATTORNEY HARVEY DENT IN 2008**

vigilante responsible for Dent's death, though authorities have never announced their efforts to make an arrest. While Batman still tops the Gotham City Police most-wanted list and the case remains open, little is known and there have been no recent developments.

Other events scheduled surrounding Harvey Dent Day this year are a memorial Gotham Rogues inter-team scrimmage, an official charity gala at Wayne Manor, and a 21-gun salute performed by top members of the Gotham City Police Department.

When asked for comment, Police Commissioner Jim Gordon was quick to praise Dent's positive impact: "He's been the guiding light for Gotham City ever since his passing. Few men have ever left a more lasting effect on the quality of our fair city. His legacy is strong—but even today, District Attorney Dent is sorely missed."

■ Harris Re-aligns with Rogues ..... B1



# What to take away from today...

- Transmedia storytelling is **not** necessarily dependent on contemporary convergences
- Instead, transmedia is a product of mass **industrialization** and **consumer culture**
- Transmedia is about crossing borders, but it also needs strong industrial **regulation**
- Transmedia's history suggests that it has a clear **socio-political function**... *more to come!!*

# What's coming up...?

- Lecture 4:

‘Transmedia Histories Part 2: Brand Hollywood’

- Screening:

*The Greatest Movie Ever Sold* (2011)