

Lecture review on a research topic

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The research topic I might focus is to observe the trend of Transmedia world, at a period yet to come up with a specific object, the trend of transmedia storytelling during art production process may seem a good aspect to pitch on.

In order to gain an overall understanding to the concepts of transmedia storytelling, the first source I read is an article covering through the general introduction of transmedia function at the aspect of media production. The article is a journal from International Journal of Communication, the *Transmedia Storytelling: Implicit Consumers, Narrative Worlds, and Branding in Contemporary Media Production* by Carlos Alberto Scolari.

The journey starts with a theoretical reflection on “Transmedia Storytelling” from both the perspective of integrates semiotics and a narrative to the context of media study areas. Which gives an instruction to deal with the conceptual chaos around Transmedia Storytelling by going through definitions from reviewing lectures, listing example of the Matrix brand and guiding the research object from text to subjects.

The article keeps developing analysis how these new multimodal narrative structures create different implicit consumers and construct a narrative world. The analysis includes a description of the multimedia textual structure created around the Fox television series 24. Finally, the article analyzes transmedia storytelling from the

perspective of a semiotics of branding and end up with an open discussion on transmedia consumers. An interesting method to analysis the subject I have never considered using is to build up a structure of from an existing case (The Fox television show 24), which may definitely help me to observe the effectiveness of transmedia production within a specific case study.

After a fully understanding toward concepts and functions of Transmedia Storytelling, the second peer-reviewed source I read is an article on observing the trend of transmedia storytelling phenomenon. The *Media Technologies, Transmedia Storytelling and Commodification* (2007) written by Göran Bolin.

The article launches on the phenomenon of medias that has been central to the reshaping of the media landscapes over the past two decades. After taking a quote from a classical study in urban anthropology from the 1920s, which indicates the society is living the era of greatest rapidity changing in the history of human institutions that new tools and techniques are being developed with stupendous celerity. The author thus indicates the core standpoint of his research topic as below:

What it (the rapidly change) proposes and points to is the very modernization process – and the constant need to analyses contemporary technical, social and cultural phenomena as they appear around us.

To support the statement of rapidly changing, the author listed lecture references on aspects of technological convergence and institutional integration. And eventually, by giving the example of *The Matrix*, the powers of transmedia do structure the

entertainment industry, as well as the viewer, reader, listener reception, are based on the very combination of converging technologies and diverging texts and narratives.

(P.247)

The third article I look in is *Transmedia Storytelling, Corporate Synergy, and Audience Expression* by Leigh H. Edwards. In this excerpt from a P.h.D researcher of Florida State University, the author touches on audience participant of Transmedia Storytelling production as stated:

This article argues that transmedia storytelling evidences competing trends, exemplifying corporate synergy on the one hand while allowing for audience-generated participatory culture on the other hand (p.1).

A method that Edwards uses in the research is analysis key examples, which include online interactive reality television and crowdsourced music videos. Before coming into the key examples of television industry, the author generally gives a strong evident of a commercial transmedia storytelling brand, the Harry Potter “Examples of the rise in multi-platform texts include the Harry Potter franchise, which began as novels by J.K. Rowling, expanded into a film series, Web tie-ins, novelizations of the film versions, smart phone apps, and even a theme park.”(p.2) to support the standpoint of competing trends and how the fans interact with the productions.

The author then gives a detailed example of a reality television show, The Kardashian, which products a series production including DVDs for sale, behind the scenes Specials, clip shows, and featured wedding specials Event brand with several

reality shows starring by Kardashians (p.3). After giving the specific productions of the show, the author gives a database of the profit value the show made, a family pocketing \$65 million in 2010 alone, more than 165,000 signatures and a quote from a fan of the show to evident the statements.

After going through excerpts touching on the trend of transmedia storytelling aspects, I decide to look into the practice uses of this relevant new production. Thus, the next book I read is *using comics to construct your Transmedia storyworld* by Tyler Weaver. More likely a field guide toward transmedia storytelling practice of comics, the book introduces transmedia production as a whole and the effectiveness by an overall introduction and a case study of *ABC's castle* within the first and second part. The author then launches on the third part, "comics and Convergence", within this chapter, the context examines the mixture of comics with titular film, games and animation and focus on a question:" What are the strengths of each medium and how can the particular storytelling conventions of the comic medium augment those strengths and fill in where they are lacking?" (p.3).

This chapter covers with three aspects of Convergence, film, animation and video games as transmedia production of a comic feature. Within each of the aspect, the author analysis at least two case studies and one thought experiment to observe each production type. Three films, *Superman Returns*, *Star Trek*, *The fountain* are analyzed as the object of film production, while *Batman: The Animated Series* and *The Incredibles* serve the practice of animation, the video games *Halo* and *Batman Arkham City* stands represent of video game products.

After reading through Weaver's book, the methods he uses for research notice me the essential position of case study method may provide toward transmedia storytelling productions, the last article I read focuses directly into two case studies, which is *Two Successful Transmedia Case Studies: The Blair Witch Project (1999) and The Devil Inside (2012)* by JT Velikovsky. In order to make a comparison and thus to give evident of transmedia storytelling effectiveness, the author provides data of average feature film investment return (373%) with *The Blair Witch Project (41,383%) and The Devil Inside (9,966%)(p.1)*. The main questions that Velikovsky grapples with in this entire article are "how much did their (the two feature films) transmedia elements contribute to their success in finding such a wide audience, and therefore, to their record-setting box office attendance? What exactly makes a successful transmedia property?" (p.1).

In order to solve the questions, the author uses statistic analysis and online observation to study the objects. Beside analysis the two feature films, Velikovsky as well observe and discuss other form of well profit transmedia relevant products, the subjects involve novel, game, TV show and film. As the author stated "By analyzing how the top 20 audience reach/production budget films (and their related transmedia) were created, combining techniques from the disciplines of narratology, sociology, psychology, philosophy and cultural studies, transmedia storytellers may discover more effective storytelling techniques."(p.13), after analysis both database and the relevant product as a whole, the author then develop a Creative Practice Theory into a form of a general model to answer the question.

References

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