The Transmedia Journey - Understanding Audience Engagement with Multiplatform Television

Elizabeth Evans
transmedia storytelling
transmedia distribution
transmedia marketing
transmedia branding
transmedia franchises
transmedia merchandise
transmedia paratexts

transmedia what? ~ storytelling: henry jenkins

narrative ~ authorship ~ temporality

case study: defiance ~ limitations ~
case study: doctor who ~ journeys & trajectories
“integrating multiple texts to create a narrative so large that it cannot be contained within a single medium” (Jenkins, 2006: p95)
Transmedia Storytelling: Narrative

• Hyperdiegesis (Hills, 2002)

“What television lacks in spectacle and narrative constraints, it makes up for in depth and duration of character relations, diegetic expansion, and audience investment”

(Jeffrey Sconce, 2004: 95)
Transmedia Storytelling: Narrative

- Hyperdiegesis
  - Genre
  - Characters
  - Events
  - Locations
  - Iconography

- Series level vs Episode level

case study: doctor who ~ journeys & trajectories
Transmedia Storytelling: Authorship

- Complexity of transmedia creativity
- Licensing vs Authorship
- Institutional Policy
- 360 Degree Commissioning

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Transmedia Storytelling: Authorship

• Complexity of transmedia creativity
• Licensing vs Authorship
• Institutional Policy
  • 360 Degree Commissioning
• Branding
  • Programme
  • Broadcaster

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Transmedia Storytelling: Temporality

- Television’s flow
  - Weekly schedule
  - Episode & series
- Transmedia storytelling exploits gaps

Case study: Doctor Who ~ journeys & trajectories
“Although these journeys may pass through different places, times, roles and interfaces, they maintain an overall sense of coherence; of being part of a connected whole. They are steered by the participants but are also shaped by narratives that are embedded into spatial, temporal and performative structures by audiences”

(Benford and Giannachi, 2011: 230)
Transmedia Audiences: Trajectories

- Experience is varied and multiple
  - Time, space, technology, form
- Audience agency
- Management of transitions
Case Study 1: Doctor Who (BBC)
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Case study: Doctor Who ~ journeys & trajectories

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Case Study 1: Doctor Who (BBC)
Case Study 2: Defiance (SyFy)
Case Study 2: Defiance (SyFy)
The Limitations of Transmedia

- Difficulty of constructing transmedia narrative
- Dominance of television
The Limitations of Transmedia

• Difficulty of constructing transmedia narrative
• Dominance of television
• Transmedia engagement?
Any Questions?

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References

Benford, Steve & Giannachi, Gabriella (2011) *Performing Mixed Reality* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press


Transmedia Storytelling Examples

- Doctor Who (BBC)
- Defiance (SyFy)
- Buffy the Vampire Slayer (WB/UPN)
- Britannia High (ITV)
- Skins (Channel 4)
- Paralympics 2012 (Channel 4)
- Once Upon a Time (ABC)
- Star Trek (Paramount)
- Lost (ABC)
- Heroes (NBC)
- 24 (Fox)
- Spooks (BBC)