

“More Interaction, More Story, More Lore”: Motivations Related to Game-centric Transmedia

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ABSTRACT

Transmedia research has in the past been mainly interested in defining transmedia and examining transmedia franchises that have their starting point in movies and TV-series. However, there are multiple transmedia constellations that have a game as their starting point and this paper concentrates on two of those, *Defiance* (Trion Worlds, 2013) and *Quantum Break* (Remedy Entertainment, 2016). The survey data from these two examples was analyzed by using constructivist grounded theory-informed approach in order to find out what motivates audiences to consume or avoid game-centric transmedia.

Ten categories related to consuming game-centric transmedia and five categories related to avoiding it emerged from the data. The motivations to consume game-centric transmedia had a strong focus on narrative aspects. The results differ from earlier transmedia audience studies and suggest the need for more game-centric transmedia audience studies, where the core text is a game instead of a television show.

Keywords

Transmedia, game-centric transmedia, digital games, *Defiance*, *Quantum Break*, motivation

INTRODUCTION

Transmedial storytelling is a process where parts of the same storyworld are told through different media. Ideally, every medium contributes meaningfully to the whole (Jenkins 2007). Usually, transmedial constellations have one starting point from where the expansion starts. It can be a movie, a TV-series, a book, a comic book or a game. These starting points are called core texts. The two cases examined here represent transmedia storytelling, where two different media are both core-texts.

Defiance (Trion Worlds 2013) is a massively multiplayer online action shooter game and a TV-series that were developed at the same time by Trion Worlds and TV-channel Syfy. It was marketed as transmedia because both the game and the show had transmedial content during the first and the second season of the show. For example, during episode missions, the player character could meet the characters from the show and help them to achieve certain goals. Competitions allowed one player to appear on the show in a wanted-poster and another got their player character added to the show for a few episodes. Other transmedial properties included various

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promotional codes for the game and webisodes that were available at the *Defiance* website at the time.

Quantum Break (Remedy Entertainment 2016) is an action adventure game from Remedy Entertainment published in 2016. During the so-called junction points, the player can control the actions of the main antagonist and make a choice between two different outcomes. *Quantum Break* was marketed as transmedia because after this choice is made, a 20-minute episode of digital series is played where the story revolves around the other antagonists of the game. The choices made in the junction points affect both the episodes shown and the game played after the episodes. In addition to the series, there is a novel called *Quantum Break: Zero State* that is sold separately.

The motivation for this study comes from the fact that studies that have a game as their core text seem to be in the minority. Yet game developers are interested in experimenting with transmedial content and thus it is an important new area to study. But in the end, the players and the viewers are the ones that will decide if these experiments will be successful. That is why I am concentrating on the perspective of the player and watcher and the motivations to consume or avoid game-centric transmedia.

The Defiance and *Quantum Break* have a very different take on their respective transmedial properties. *Defiance* relies on separate content: TV-series was broadcasted by an American TV-channel Syfy and the game was available to purchase through several retailers. *Quantum Break*, however, has combined the game content and TV-content in such a way that they can be consumed seamlessly. Nevertheless, both styles offer the players a chance to affect the storyworld. This makes them interesting case studies related to consumer motivations and showcasing the special nature of game-centric transmedia.

TRANSMEDIA DEFINITIONS AND RESEARCH

The definition of transmedia storytelling by Henry Jenkins is as follows:

“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. Ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story.” (Jenkins 2007).

Klastrup and Tosca have outlined a concept of transmedia worldness (2004) and supplemented it with networked reception of users (2006). They have also made a model of transmedia experience that consists of worldness, platform and user/consumer directedness (2018). Harvey (2015, 185-190) has collected his many transmedia case studies together and has formed a taxonomy of transmedial relationships. Those relationships describe who is in charge of the transmedia project: holder of the intellectual property rights, users or some other interested parties. Jens Eder (2015, 73-78) sees that there are three overlapping areas of transmedial constellations: transmedial advertisement campaigns, transmedial core multi texts and transmedial follow-up communication such as fan fiction and merchandise. These examples show that transmedia is not a simple term and it can mean several different types of relationships and strategies.

Most of the transmedia research seems to concentrate on movies and television series but there is some game-related transmedia research as well. It includes, for instance, studies that examine certain games as transmedia extensions of other media (Evans 2008 ; Schröter 2015; Simons 2014) and studies that inspect games as the starting

point of transmedia constellations (Fuchs 2013; Mittell 2012; Veugen 2016). In addition, there is research devoted to alternative reality games (Evans et al. 2013; Stenros et al. 2011) and even some studies that inspect transmedia games and play through a broader lens (Kennedy 2018). However, very few of those studies have researched the topic from the perspective of the player/user and even rarer is research that combines the player perspective to transmedia constellations that have a game as a starting point.

Both of those aspects are important when we are discussing game-centric transmedia, as those can shed some light on the particularities of transmedia games. For that reason, I am inspecting my results in the discussion part of this paper in the light of three previous research that has games as transmedial extensions of other media. Nele Simons has concentrated on the audience reception of transmedia and cross-media aspects of different TV dramas. Experiential activities, such as video games and interactivity that provides a way for the viewers to interact with the show and make meaningful contributions, were defined as both cross-media and transmedia (Simons 2014). Elizabeth Evan's audience study was about the fans of a British television series "Spooks" and their experiences with the two sets of computer games related to the series (Evans 2008). Felix Schröter investigated the relationship between transmedial storyworlds and games. This was done by inspecting the world of George R.R. Martin's book series "A Song of Ice and Fire" and comparing it to three different video games set in the same world (Schröter 2015). Comparing these examples to user motivations and aspects of game-centric transmedia can illustrate the differences of these approaches.

Game-centric transmedia

Although there are examples of game-related transmedia research, it isn't systematic and there doesn't seem to be a clear definition to it. At this point, a working definition of game-centric transmedia is in order.

My definition of game-centric transmedia is as follows:

A mode of transmedia storytelling, where a game is either a core text or a co-core text of a media constellation.

Core text refers to a particular piece of media that acts as the starting point of the experience. In co-core text different parts of transmedia have been created simultaneously or are intertwined in such a way that it is impossible to say which one of those was the starting point.

Defiance TV-series and an action MMO were released at the same time. The game had episode missions that featured characters from the series and the consequences of some of those missions were felt in the series. The players were also able to compete for a chance to have their face in a wanted poster and their player character as a minor character in the series. In *Quantum Break*, the TV-like content is embedded in the game and it explores the actions of the antagonists of the game. The player's choices affect the content of the series and the events of the series are felt in the game. Because of the temporal and spatial closeness of the different parts of *Defiance* and *Quantum Break*, it is impossible to say what medium acts as the core text of the media constellation. Thus the special nature of these examples should be taken into account in the definition and co-core text is my attempt to do just that.

This definition excludes games that are not the core text of a transmedia constellation, so it should not be used when talking about games that are extensions to movies, TV-

series, books or comic books. As the definition emphasizes the storytelling in transmedia, it also excludes fact-based educational transmedia projects.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Survey

As the player communities are international, I wanted to reach players from as many countries as possible. An online survey is easy to distribute and promote via different websites and social media. It is also easy and quick to fill out and send. Interviews would have been a good way to supplement the survey data, but that was outside of the scope of the research as this article is based on my Master's thesis. Both surveys had multiple choice questions and open questions to fill out. The multiple choice answers were designed to provide data that contextualizes the answers of the open questions, for example, background info and information about the consumption habits of the respondents.

The *Defiance* survey was made using Google forms, it was open from April 2016 to May 2016 and the total number of answers was 89. The survey was divided into four parts and included questions about the watching and playing habits of *Defiance*, the transmedia aspects of *Defiance*, questions about attitudes and consumption of other transmedia products and the respondents' gender, country, year of birth as well as scaled questions about being a fan and a gamer.

A clear majority of the respondents were males from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. Women made up 15 % of the respondents and options "other" and "rather not say" each was 5 %. Age of the respondents varied greatly, the youngest being 15 and the oldest 67. Majority of the respondents were in their twenties, followed by persons in their forties and thirties. Most of the respondents were fans of either the show or the game, seen all of the three seasons, played over a hundred hours of the game and considered themselves gamers. A majority were interested in other games that combine different media with the game and a slight majority had consumed other entertainment besides *Defiance* that combines different media.

The *Quantum Break* survey was also made using Google forms, it was open from December 2017 to February 2018 and the total number of responses was 65. The survey included questions about the playing and watching of *Quantum Break*, questions related to the transmedial properties, questions about the *Quantum Break: Zero State* novel, attitudes, and consumption of other transmedia products and background info such as gender, year of birth and country.

Most of the respondents were males from the United States, Finland, Canada and the United Kingdom. Women made up 12 % of the respondents and "rather not say" option was chosen by 3 %. The option "other" was not selected at all. The youngest respondent was 16 and the oldest 46 years old. Majority of the respondents were in their twenties, followed by persons in their thirties. The majority of the respondents had completed *Quantum Break*, watched the digital series once or multiple times and had not read the *Quantum Break: Zero State* novel. A majority of respondents was interested in other games with transmedia extensions and a clear majority of those that had played *Quantum Break* would like to play more games that have digital series as part of the game.

Constructivist grounded theory-informed approach

The reason I chose grounded theory-informed approach as my methodology is related to the nature of my research. Grounded theory is considered a good method when

there is not a lot of previous research on the topic and that is the case here. Choosing a qualitative method instead of a quantitative gives more voice to the audience of game-related transmedia and sheds some light on how they perceive it. The qualitative coding of open answers puts more emphasis on the free expression of respondents than multiple choice questions do.

Salisbury and Cole (2016, 6-7) address three different types of grounded theory: Glaserian, Straussian and Constructivist grounded theory that is outlined by Charmaz. These three types of approaches are beneficial and applicable to a new field such as game research. In relation to game research, grounded theory is valuable in tackling individual researcher’s research questions, as a framework to structure projects during their whole lifespan and creating new categories and concepts in respect to a new field. Glaserian grounded theory is concerned with finding a single category that explains a certain phenomenon. The resulting theory is a hypothesis concerning that one category. Straussian grounded theory attempts to form a model on how several variables interact with each other. Constructivist grounded theory “might yield a set of conceptual descriptions with an emphasis on the concerns of the domain actors, backed up by transcripts, personal narratives, and explorations of the possible meaning of those concepts.”

Grounded theory is sometimes met with a degree of skepticism since it is not clear what variant is used and how the results were reached. Thus it is important to state the decisions and compromises so that the choices can be made without the fear of being criticized as not doing “true” grounded theory (Salisbury & Cole 2016, 12). I am following Constructivist grounded theory but complementing it with Saldaña’s pragmatic style. Saldaña’s “The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers” is not loyal to any particular research genre or methodology and promotes pragmatist paradigm (Patton 2002, 72) that acknowledges that the keyword for methodology is appropriateness instead of a certain dogma. Some of the coding methods can be used in conjunction with each other if the researcher does not go overboard by using too many or the ones that are not compatible with each other (Saldaña 2009, 2, 45-47). As I am using both Charmaz’s and Saldaña’s advice on coding, I am calling my method constructivist grounded theory-informed approach.

I started the coding process by using in vivo codes to the data. In this coding method, the researcher finds words or phrases from the data that in their opinion seem to need highlighting and marks those words beside the text by using quotation marks. It is suitable for all qualitative studies and especially for those who are just learning to code (Saldaña 2009, 74-77). In vivo codes can aid in retaining the meaning of respondents’ deeds and opinions as well as help find utterances that “condense and crystallize meanings” (Charmaz 2006, 55-57). Using in vivo coding allowed me to get an overview of the data and find remarks that felt important from the point of view of my research questions.

<p>Did you feel the series added something to the game experience? Please elaborate</p>	<p>In Vivo</p>
<p>Mostly some nice background info and a couple of storyline gaps filled or misconceptions straightened. Didn’t watch all of it, so maybe there was something more.</p>	<p>“background info, gaps filled”</p>

Table 1: In Vivo example.

In addition, both data sets were then coded with a style called evaluation coding. Evaluation coding can arise from the comments of the respondents or the evaluative viewpoint of the researcher. The example provided by Saldaña was an amalgam that had aspects from magnitude coding (to indicate if the respondent made a positive (+) or a negative (-) comment), descriptive coding (to mark down the topic) and in vivo coding (to mark down the evaluative comment) (Saldaña 2009, 97-100). This kind of amalgam approach felt suitable for my data as the survey asks the respondents to provide opinions on several aspects of the game in question. The responses had a lot of evaluative remarks.

Did you feel the series added something to the game experience? Please elaborate	In Vivo	Evaluation coding
Mostly some nice background info and a couple of storyline gaps filled or misconceptions straightened. Didn't watch all of it, so maybe there was something more.	"background info, gaps filled"	+information: nice background info +story: gaps filled, misconceptions straightened

Table 2: An example of evaluation coding.

After the second round of first cycle coding, I moved onto the second cycle coding methods, namely focused coding. In focused coding, the researcher uses the most important or recurrent codes from the initial coding phase to categorize the data. Moving to it is not a straightforward procedure though and it can trigger the researcher to study the earlier data once more (Charmaz 2006, 57-58).

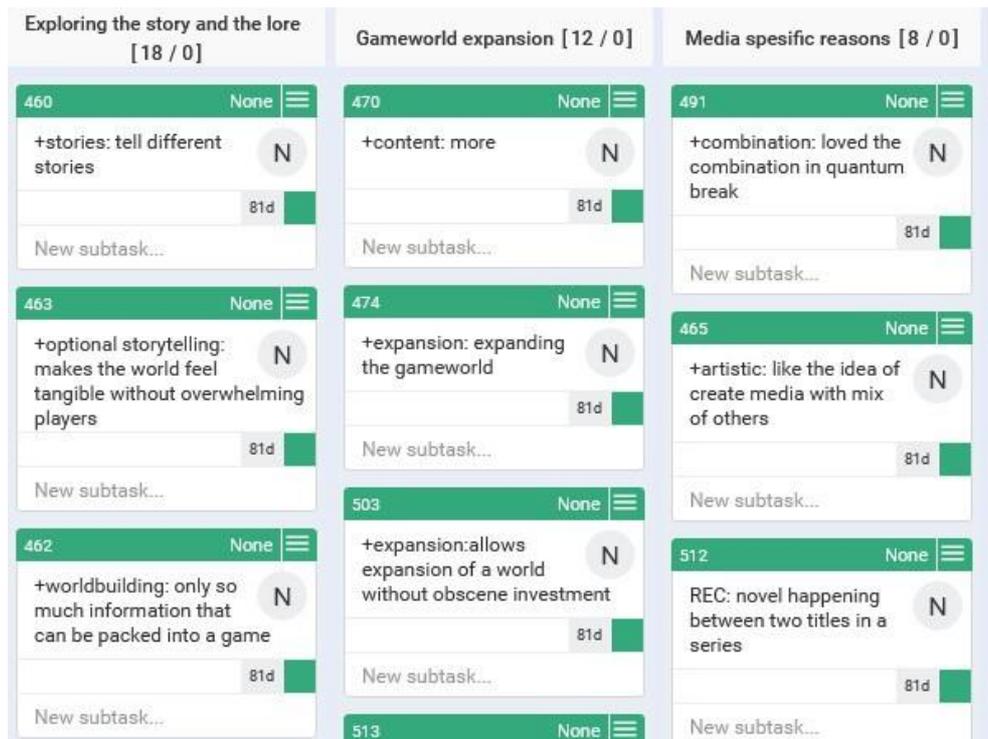


Figure 1: An example of focused coding,

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990, 97), the fractured data from earlier coding is assembled in a new way by connecting categories and subcategories by axial coding. Charmaz has not used axial coding as formally as Strauss and Corbin, but she has formed subcategories and showed the links between a category and subcategories. According to her, those who favor “simple and flexible guidelines”, don’t need axial coding (Charmaz 2006, 61). I used the forming of subcategories as a way to identify different aspects of the categories, but only in a couple of cases. It helped me to make sense of a couple of cluttered categories, for example, a category that I named “Media related reasons”.

After tentative categories have been formed, theoretical sampling is needed to expand and fine-tune the categories. This is done by gathering more data related to the categories and their properties for the purpose of achieving saturation. When gathering new data doesn’t produce new properties or theoretical observations anymore, saturation has been achieved (Charmaz 2006, 96, 113). I argue that the *Quantum Break* dataset can be seen as theoretical sampling. The *Defiance* dataset was gathered and analysed earlier as part of my Bachelor’s thesis. That provided seven categories that described the motivations to consume game-centric transmedia material. I wanted to explore these motivations some more, so a question related to those was included in the *Quantum Break* survey and the motivation factors are part of my research questions. The *Quantum Break* survey, however, contained more than questions related to the refining of motivational categories, so I can’t claim that the survey is purely theoretical sampling.

RESULTS

The results chapter has been divided into two parts. The first part introduces ten categories related to motivations to consume game-centric transmedia, along with quotes from the respondents. The second part introduces five categories related to motivations to avoid game-centric transmedia, also with quotes from the respondents. The categories were formed by using the data from both surveys.

Motivations to Consume Game-Centric Transmedia

Motivations to consume
Influencing the storyworld
Exploring the storyworld
Storyworld expansion
Media related reasons
Previous experiences
Quality of the product
Variety and novelty of transmedia
Immersion
Connection between the different parts
Genre and franchise preferences

Table 3: Ten motivations to consume game-centric transmedia

Influencing the storyworld

“Because it makes you feel like you're a part of the crossover.” (Male, age 45, Defiance survey)

Game-centric transmedia gives players and watchers opportunities to influence the storyworld. According to the respondents, it can provide a feeling that the players have helped the characters, that they are part of the storyworld and that they have opportunities to feel involved.

In addition, it gives the opportunity to play as or with the characters the consumers have fallen in love while watching the show and gives options to mold the story to one's liking. Some respondents also felt it was important to get to engage and interact with the storyworlds they like.

Exploring the storyworld

“If a game, for example, doesn't give all the answers to all the questions that it brought up, a tv-series about the same game (before or after the events of the game) could be one way of answering them.” (Rather not say, age 16, Quantum Break survey)

According to the respondents, game-centric transmedia provides an opportunity for the player to explore different storylines and plots, the world where these stories take place and the lore of the world. They can learn more about the world and characters, dig deeper into aspects they are interested in and find out what happened before, after or during the main story from another perspective.

In addition, respondents felt that game-centric transmedia can answer questions left open in the game, provide alternative stories and character background, help to understand the characters and the world better, flesh out the lore and delve into things that are only mentioned in the game.

Storyworld expansion

“More interaction, more story, more lore. When a universe is opened up, it leaves more stories to be had.” (Male, age 39, Defiance survey)

This category is related to the previous but merits its own entry. Game-centric transmedia expands the storyworld that the gamers love. According to the respondents, there is much more content to consume and a broader world means more stories. The respondents like that there is more content available, the world is ever expanding and they can continue their journey that has started in another medium.

According to them using other media is a fun and engaging way to expand the universe, there is an opportunity to inflate the scale of the universe, diversify the stories and it adds dimension to the world.

Media related reasons

“There's only so much information that can be packed directly into a game in cutscenes or conversations, everything has to be relevant to what is happening right then. Things like books or graphic novels is a nice way to provide optional storytelling which makes the world feel more tangible without overwhelming players.” (Female, age 23, Quantum Break survey)

Several respondents understood the limitations of games as a medium. According to them, in transmedia extensions the story is not limited by game mechanics and players are not overwhelmed by exposition. The expansion of the world can be done

with lower costs, the audience does not get bored because of the repetitiveness of one medium and the things that cannot be included in the game for various reasons can be explored elsewhere.

In addition to the limitations of a particular medium, this category includes a love of a certain medium or media mix. Some of the respondents just love novels or graphic novels and would like to see the world of the game in one of those forms. A few people appreciated seeing the world they love in other media and saw the media mix as an art form of its own.

Previous experiences

“Because I’ve enjoyed the Defiance stuff enough to want to try others” (Female, age 31, *Defiance* survey)

As the experience with *Defiance* or *Quantum Break* was positive, some respondents wanted to try out other similar transmedia constellations. One person loved the combination of a game and a digital series in *Quantum Break*, another liked what QB did and was interested in seeing how it could be done in other ways, third one would rather see a QB sequel than some other developer’s game-centric transmedia because it might not work as well as Remedy’s approach.

In regards to *Defiance*, one respondent liked the content of enough to try out other game-centric transmedia, another thought that *Defiance* was a step in the right direction but others could do better.

Quality of the product

“If I have assurance beforehand that the extensions are canonical and they will enhance my enjoyment of the game through characterization or world building consistent with the presentation in the game.” (Female, age 30, *Quantum Break* survey)

Several respondents felt that transmedia extensions affect positively to the quality of the product. According to them the extensions add depth and ownership to the games, reinforce the depth of the lore and provide a richer story as well as more elaborate plots and lore.

On the other hand, the quality was not seen as an automatic aspect of transmedia. Some of the respondents stated an interest in transmedia products only if those were well made. The extensions should be canonical, have well thought out cross-references or have consistent presentation across different media. One person stated that the extensions should be done carefully and responsibly. A bad example used in the response was how Disney discarded the Star Wars expanded universe and a good example was Halo’s tie-in books.

Variety and novelty of transmedia

“They give you options in how you want to experience that story - hands on (video game) or sit back and chill with the show” (Male, age 19, *Defiance* survey)

According to the responses, game-centric transmedia provides alternatives to gameplay and different ways to participate in the experience. It also allows players to experience the story in various ways as well as permits them to interact and engage with the world in diverse means.

In addition to variety, the novelty of game-centric transmedia was an aspect that attracted the respondents. They stated that it is something new and different, a unique experience and a new way to experience content.

Immersion

“It allows for further immersion in the game world.” (Male, age 28, *Defiance* survey)

Some respondents felt that a combination of media helps them to be immersed in the gameworld. Immersion was seen as a fun, exciting and easily available aspect of game-centric transmedia that the respondents liked.

However, the respondents did not always explain what they meant when talking about immersion. Only a couple responses touched upon the meaning of immersion for the respondents. One person said that the feeling of being part of the world was total immersion, another stated that other media helps him to feel more immersed in a game through the eyes of other characters and helps him to roleplay his character better.

Connection between the different parts

“Always interesting to observe connections, allusions and other links between different mediums and how those mediums affect each other.” (Male, age 41, *Defiance* survey)

Some respondents were fascinated with the connections between media and how they affect each other. One person was excited to see how the examination of one medium can lead to finding secrets in another, other person liked how in expanding world the storylines are conjoined and interlinked, the third one felt that game-centric transmedia could lead to interesting changes in the game.

Genre and franchise preferences

“The genre is a huge part, ie. let’s say there was a RPG-tv cross-over set in Downton Abbey show, I wouldn’t play that... or watch it. It wouldn’t interest me. But things like a GoT RPG probably would.” (Male, age 30, *Defiance* survey)

For some, it was very important that the transmedia was related to the genre or franchise they liked. The quoted commenter seems to be interested in more fantastical genres and a period drama would be undesirable. Another respondent would be interested if the game-centric transmedia in question would be related to a franchise he enjoys.

Motivations to Avoid Game-Centric Transmedia

Motivations to avoid
Lack of quality
Previous experiences
Lack of opportunities
Lack of interest
Dependency on other media

Table 4: Five motivations to avoid game-centric transmedia

Lack of quality

“Unless they get the crossover right which in the case of Defiance, they were close, but not close enough, there doesn't seem to be much point.” (Male, age 44, Defiance survey)

Some respondents had doubts about the quality of transmedia projects. They thought that the different parts could get each other's way, the crossover might be executed badly and there would too many compromises in the development.

Previous experiences

“Because usually they are bad... Assassin's Creed, Defiance and Halo for example.” (Male, age 27, Quantum Break survey)

Some respondents felt that transmedia projects are usually a disappointment, do not deliver the kind of connection between the different parts they promise and are just optional stories to consume that do not add to the whole experience. One person stated that he is only familiar with bad movie/game examples, another felt that Trion Worlds ruined game-centric transmedia for him.

Lack of opportunities

“Since I am not a US citizen I think other cross contents would lack the "same time" experience, for example seeing shows maybe one year after the game started in EU.” (Male, age 47, Defiance survey)

Some felt that not every consumer would have the same opportunities to enjoy the transmedia content. Everyone does not have the equipment needed or time to invest in the game-centric transmedia. What is more, temporal requirements shut out everyone not in the same time zone, if the transmedia project requires engagement during certain times.

Lack of interest

“Never really had a game that was that great that made me want to.” (Male, age 17, Quantum Break survey)

Some of the respondents were not interested in game-centric transmedia as they spent little time gaming, did not play at all or wanted to concentrate on one game at a time. A few respondents favored games over television, preferred to consume the story in the form of gameplay or desired an interactive world.

In addition to these gameplay related preferences, the responses showed that some felt game-centric transmedia is just not that interesting or their cup of tea.

Dependency on other media

“Story, told in the game, should be full and understandable from playing the game only.” (Male, age 28, *Quantum Break* survey)

Some of the respondents did not feel comfortable being dependent on other media. According to the respondents, the story told in one medium needs to be understandable on its own and they do not want to depend on another media to get the whole story.

One person felt that makers of transmedia force the consumers to buy several pieces of media and spreading different pieces of the same story over different platforms makes the experience watered down. Others stated that having a crossover beyond small nods makes the world smaller or that they prefer games to be games and shows to be shows, instead of relying on each other.

DISCUSSION

My results are in stark contrast with Simons' (2014) results. As her results showed lackluster reactions related to cross- and transmedia, she analyzed the motivation to watch TV drama. The main motivations of her respondents were entertainment and relaxation. Only a minority of respondents mentioned immersion, involvement or insider knowledge and the overall attitude towards deep immersion was negative. Most of the respondents did not see TV drama as a storyworld that could be interactive, were not interested in contributing to the story and were not looking for deep immersion (Simons 2014, 2233-2235).

However, the majority of the respondents of my surveys were interested in game-centric transmedia and had actually consumed several transmedia extensions related to games besides the ones linked to *Defiance* and *Quantum Break*. Motivations to consume game-centric transmedia related very strongly to contributing and interacting with the storyworld, as well as being immersed in it. All in all, the motivations of my respondents were more varied than Simons' respondents.

This might be because of the different focus Simons' (2014) study. Her focus was on the television drama and the heavy users of it. The focus of *Defiance* and *Quantum Break* surveys was on game-centric transmedia and the respondents were mainly gamers. Games demand different kind of activity than watching television and gamers might be more open to experiences of immersion and a particular kind of interaction with media, the kind that demands effort. Another difference in the focus was, of course, the fact that my respondents were people that had already played and watched these transmedia experiences, while Simons studied the media use habits as those were unfolding in the form of TV diaries.

The results of the *Defiance* and *Quantum Break* surveys also diverge a bit from the result Evans (2008, 209-210) got on her study regarding the viewers of *The Spooks* TV series and *The Spooks* related games. She found out that although the viewers wanted to meet the characters they knew from the series and affect their stories, they wanted at the same time separate themselves from the characters in the game.

According to Evans, they don't want to become part of the series but to have control over the characters. She positioned the players in Murray Smith's second version of engagement with characters: "We as the audience imagine what another person must feel like in their situation, without a moment confusing ourselves with that other person" (Smith 1995, 80).

Some of the answers to the *Defiance* and *Quantum Break* survey suggest that might not be the case with game-centric transmedia. Under the "Influencing the storyworld" category there were two answers from the *Defiance* survey that related to the relationship between the player and characters:

"It explores the lore and makes it more interesting. Also fun to play as characters that you like" (Male, *Defiance* survey)

"Interest to have a universe where you can enjoy watching idealistic heroes thrive and be as well able to play with those or as a equal into the same universe" (Male, age 23, *Defiance* survey)

TV-series component is strong in these answers and those infer that the respondents would first form an attachment to the characters watching a show and then would like to play as them or side by side with them in a game.

"Immersion" category also had one response about seeing the world with different eyes and roleplaying a character:

"If there are other media that explain/tie-in the lore with the game, it makes me feel more immersed in the game through the eyes of other characters and allows me to better role-play my character in that world lore." (Male, age 28, *Defiance* survey)

Roleplaying is also brought up in the *Quantum Break* survey but in another context. When asked if the respondent was happy the way junction points affected the episodes, a couple of answers talked about roleplaying and being the character:

"They felt interesting. However making decisions on behalf of the antagonist was also a bit weird... Only worked, in my opinion, if you role-played the decision." (Male, age 33, *Quantum Break* survey)

"I love getting to be Paul and get in his head a little bit." (Male, age 22, *Quantum Break* survey)

Playing as or with characters they like, immersion through the eyes of a character, roleplaying and being a character all speak of a deeper connection with the transmedia characters. These respondents do not keep themselves separate from the characters and welcome the idea of "confusing themselves with the other person" as Smith (1995, 80) puts it. One possible explanation for these different yearnings compared to Evans' research might be the different groups the questions were aimed. Evans' study concentrated the fans of Spooks television series and my surveys targeted mainly gamers.

My respondents were very interested in game-centric transmedia, had consumed it even beyond those transmedia constellations that were the subject of my surveys, were motivated to consume those because of various reasons, including immersion and influencing the storyworld, and did not necessarily want to keep a distinction between themselves and the characters.

These actions differ from earlier transmedia audience studies such as Simons' and Evans' and suggest the need for more game-centric transmedia audience studies, where the core text is a game instead of a television show. It might also be fruitful to study transmedia where the core text is a TV-show from the point of view of the gamer if the particular transmedia offers content in the form of games.

What is more, the motivations to consume game-centric transmedia appear to be heavily concentrated on narrative. Character backstories, plots, overarching main story, the lore of the world, different perspectives and choices are all very important to players. Schröter (2015, 65) claims that as video games have started to influence the conventions of other media, game-like narratives and storyworlds have become more popular. He sees that the transmedial storyworlds that employ game logic are especially fitting to have a game as its transmedia extension.

According to Schröter (2015, 80), a storyworld follows game logic "if the algorithm that organizes the settings, characters and events can be described in terms of rules, outcomes, goals, and conflicts instead of narrative persistence, realism or character psychology." He also states that transmedial storyworlds are "especially prone" to have game-like characteristics (Schröter 2015, 70).

But if this is actually the case, the consumers of game-centric transmedia will probably not be very pleased with transmedial storyworlds that employ game logic. Based on the answers to my surveys, in the case where a game is a core or a co-core of the transmedial storyworld, the players and viewers seem to be very interested in the character psychology and narrative persistence.

"The series can give different perspectives to the story. Just like in Quantum Break, I learned to like Paul Serene more because of the series. While I was watching it I understood why Serene was the person he was." (Rather not say, age 16, Quantum Break)

If we take another look at the experiences *Defiance* and *Quantum Break* provided, we can find more comments related to characters.

"It was a great way to tell the bad guys side off the story. It helped me understand the consequences but also to understand the bad guys, and care for them as well. I saved Charlie for example because the show made me care about him, and in the end I didn't want to kill Paul because I could understand him too." (Female, age 41, Quantum Break survey)

"One thing I did always find to be at odds was Nolan's attitude in the game versus in the show. In the game, Nolan is very self-centered, looking out for himself and Irisa at the expense of any/everyone else. In the show, once he is introduced to the town, he seems to truly care about the fact that its inhabitants are about to be wiped out by the Volge, and can't bring himself to just leave (where the Nolan in the game probably would)." (Male, age 35, Defiance survey)

In the responses related to episode mission and overall crossover content of *Defiance*, some commented that the episode missions were just glorified fetch quests, boring and repetitive and the player character was just a faceless ark hunter. The episode missions seem to represent game logic, as the missions are very goal oriented, repetitive and features a character that is also goal oriented. These aspects, however, are seen as negative by some of the respondents. Negatively perceived aspects along with the fascination on character psychology and narrative featured in the responses

to my surveys seem to suggest that game logic, as Schröter (2015, 80) presents it, is not a desirable trait in game-centric transmedia among the respondents.

The motivations to avoid transmedia did not include any surprises, but it is important to note that if the developers pay more attention to the accessibility, they might attract more consumers. In Simons' (2014, 2230) study, some respondents mentioned the time difference and how the in-character tweets were already out of date by the time they had access to the episodes. The respondents of the *Defiance* survey had similar complaints regarding the competitions and codes that offered in-game rewards. The time and skill requirements for participating in the competitions were too much for several players, some also said that their country was not eligible. In regards to the promotional codes, one person stated that the only way to get the codes outside of the United States was to have someone from there to tell them the codes.

Simons' (2014, 2229-2230) study also mentions that some of the respondents were not even aware of the transmedia extensions. The results regarding *Defiance* competitions and codes as well as the *Quantum Break* novel echo this. Even though the respondents would have been interested in participating in the competitions or reading the book, most were unaware of their existence or found out about the competitions too late. This might also be a possible reason for the lack of *Assassin's Creed* (Ubisoft Montreal 2007) novel readers in Veugen's (2016, 13-14) study.

The availability of transmedia materials is an important factor to consider as well. Is the series only broadcasted in certain countries? Do players with family and jobs have equal opportunities to attend? These aspects of access are important things to consider if a transmedia project truly wants to be global and available for all that are interested. Of course, these are complex matters that are dependent on money and legal matters as well.

CONCLUSION

My research question was "What motivates respondents to consume or avoid game-centric transmedia?" Ten categories related to motivations to consume game-centric transmedia emerged from the data along with five categories related to motivations to avoid it.

Motivations to consume	Motivations to avoid
Influencing the storyworld	Lack of quality
Exploring the storyworld	Previous experiences
Storyworld expansion	Lack of opportunities
Media related reasons	Lack of interest
Previous experiences	Dependency on other media
Quality of the product	
Variety and novelty of transmedia	
Immersion	
Connection between the different parts	
Genre and franchise preferences	

Table 5: Motivations to consume and to avoid game-centric transmedia

The motivations to consume had a strong focus on narrative aspects and there were several mentions of immersion and identifying with the characters in the data. These results are in stark contrast with previous research by Simons (2014) and Evans (2008) and suggest that the consumers of game-centric transmedia may have distinct differences in motivations compared to those who are heavy users of TV-drama or fans of a particular TV-series.

The respondents that answered my survey were interested in game-centric transmedia, had consumed varied game-centric transmedia constellations, were motivated to consume those because of various reasons including immersion and influencing the storyworld, and did not necessarily want to keep a distinction between themselves and the characters. These actions differ from earlier transmedia audience studies such as Simons' (2014) and Evans' (2008) and suggest the need for more game-centric transmedia audience studies, where the core text is a game instead of a television show. All in all these fifteen categories can give some insight on what the consumers feel like they are getting from game-centric transmedia and what they are not.

As my surveys were framed in a context of *Defiance* and *Quantum Break*, the answers related to other transmedia might have been influenced by this. Thus it would be interesting to see if a motivation to influence the storyworld comes up in relation to game-centric transmedia constellations that have only books and graphic novels as extensions. Because the surveys were mainly aimed at those who were gamers by formulating the questions in a certain way and spreading the link in game-related forums, the survey may not have reached casual viewers, gamers and transmedia users. Furthermore, women and other gender identities were in the minority amongst respondents in both surveys.

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