The Impact of Participatory Experience on the Audience

by Josephine Rydberg-Lidén and Mathias Noschis
The Impact of Participatory Experience on the Audience

by Josephine Rydberg-Lidén and Mathias Noschis
The Impact of Participatory Experience on the Audience
by Josephine Rydberg-Lidén and Mathias Noschis

Forskningsprojekt

Stockholms dramatiska högskola 2013
Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts 2013

Grafisk form: Fräulein Design

Cover illustration credit: Guudmorning! via Flickr
(https://www.flickr.com/photos/kristiand/3223920178/),
modyfied by Mathias Noschis, under Creative Commons licence.

© 2013 Författarna och Stockholms dramatiska högskola
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innehåll</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions, Honing in on Participation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context: The Transmedia Scene</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Film Industry</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Media Studies</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmedia/Crossmedia</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating models</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research question</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A new audience measurement model</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Monitoring</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the new model</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thanks

In the autumn of 2012 we applied to SADA for a research grant part of the development funds eligible for staff and former students (sv: konstnärligt utvecklingsmedel). The application described a very ambitious project with a large budget. Fortunately the board had the sense to turn this application down and instead encouraged us to take a more moderate course in regards to both spending and research. We’d like to take this opportunity to thank the board for saving us from ourselves. We have had a varied and interesting journey with this work and have managed to gather a debt of gratitude to many more people along the way. So thank you all for sharing your insights, doubt and encouragement; Barbro Smeds, Christopher Sandberg, Marianne Persson, Tinna Joné, Fredrik Oldsjö, Elisabeth Möller, Jasmine Lyman, Josefin Westborg, Annica Waern, Real Dragkhar, Ronan Lynch, Tim Bosje, Alex Vladi, Michel Reilhac, Ruta Boguzaite and the Lithuanian Media Desk, Asta Wellejus, Simon McAllen, TorinoFilmLab, ISIS. We are most grateful.

Mathias Noschis & Josephine Rydberg Lidén
April 1st 2014
Introduction

In the preliminary plans for this work we stated our opinion on how measurements about participatory storytelling, transmedia intellectual properties (IPs) & alternate reality games (ARGs) for instance are often missing the point, especially from a creator’s point of view. Measurement is usually conducted with instruments taken from a different kind of media consumption, mostly that of film ticket sales or TV-ratings. We would argue that a participatory experience has a different kind of impact on its audience and that impact needs especially adapted tools to be measured and understood correctly.

"We believe that to get an idea of the real impact (or lack of) of i.e. transmedia, we need to make adjustments in how we measure and capture that different experience.

We think that the correct measuring of participation and the imprint it has on the audience, emotionally and in changed consumer behaviour is important and impossible to measure... We aim to paint a picture with different techniques, interviews, personal experience, marketing measures.” (Jo and Mat research plan 2013)

This work doesn’t offer a finished formula for how to correctly measure impact on participatory audiences regarding their personal experience and its correlation to statistics. I does show our efforts in mapping the territory and make some conclusions about where it would make sense to go next. After entering the discussion in this field we have a much clearer idea of how such a formula could be developed.

It has been, perhaps not so much a joint academic collaboration, as an on-going argument, between the two writers. We come from different backgrounds and have different objectives, which has always been apparent, also in the work before you. Noschis coming from the professional background of film marketing and buzz analysis, and Rydberg-Lidén from a personal experience of participative storytelling and transmedia as an expansion-method for films. Noschis has provided the insights and reasoning on statistics and measuring
techniques whilst Rydberg-Lidén has tried to convey a sense of what is different about transmedia (focusing on participatory aspects) compared to film and television. The idea being that the one would know how and the other what to measure. After much negotiating we are still not at the point of synthesis but can calculate a well qualified guess to as how such a synthesis could be made.

We have taken a look at existing measuring techniques and come up with some conclusions of how they could be altered. The alterations are based on what we learned from personal experiences, our own and that of people interviewed.
Transmedia had me at hello. In 2009 I experienced a moment of epiphany as I sat listening to a case study by this American chap\(^1\), it turned out to be a very definite turning point for me and the start of a journey into all things transmedia. The chap was called Lance Weiler and he had taken his independently produced feature film (\textit{Head Trauma}) and created an immersive experience about it, so that with all the extensions, games, happenings and interactive designs surrounding it, it was like a story world you could stay in and inhabit. On leaving the cinema you didn’t have to leave the story, you could just follow it on to the next platform (online this time). This story talked back to you, as if you, a mere mortal member of the audience, existed in the story world too and could play a role in it. I was in love.

The idea of these participatory story additions fitted me to a T and even though I didn’t experience this project myself, I had a pretty good idea of what it would feel like. With a background in amateur theatre and LARPing\(^2\) I well understood the joy of creating a character to fit a story and to create an extension to oneself. The feeling of being immersed in a story world gives a shimmery glow to reality even when you carry on doing your day to day routine. Because anything \textit{might} happen, the mere possibility of drama and action gives a charge to also the most mundane activities even when nothing much actually occurs. A walk in the woods is much more exciting if there could be orcs in ambush around the next bend in the road. Playing a Killer-game back in 1992, I experienced suspense on a daily basis just traveling to work and lectures, simply because there was a possibility that I was being followed. So in paying very close attention to Lance Weiler telling us about how his \textit{Head Trauma}-project had interacted with the audience and followed them home, I listened very much with the ears of someone identifying with that audience, longing to try it in order to repeat and what I had experienced previously whilst LARPing and elaborating on that experience.

\footnote{Lance Weiler, Head-trauma. This talk is very similar to the one I listened to in Rotterdam: \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8NiPEOihJA}}

\footnote{Live Action Role Playing (sv. Lajv)}
A scene from 1992:

Götaplatsen Gothenburg, October late afternoon

I had just set up a meeting with a Carl from one of the enemy-teams. We were all divided into teams of hit men trying to take each other out in a game of “Killer”. Carl and I had just started dating so the meeting had an air of a romantic rendez-vous as well. We chose the location because it was a big open space and difficult to set a trap. Which I did. I dressed up my cousin to look like me, she arrived early and stood waiting in the square. I lay in ambush with my plastic suction dart gun behind the concert hall. This was a gamble but the path behind there is a little known short cut and I judged that Carl who had lived in Gothenburg all his life would think this a safer escape route than any of the more obvious roads leading to the square.

Carl arrived, looked around carefully and walked up to my cousin, as he came close enough to see it wasn’t me, he started and ran straight for the path were I was hiding. I stepped out at the last minute, aimed and pulled the trigger. It would have been a glorious kill but sadly, being a lousy shot, I missed; he escaped only to take me out the next day. Still, Mata Hari was never more proud of her work.

Listening to the American case study I realised that not everyone in the room with me felt the same excitement. Most questions afterwards focused on possible revenue streams and how to protect the IP if people/audience would get carried away and start messing around with the story. Not surprising perhaps since the attending audience consisted mainly of film producers and distributors at the Rotterdam Film Festival Lab. I participated as an MA student of a film producing course myself but couldn’t care less about the revenue streams for all I could think about was the possibilities for story soaked experiences: participatory, immersive, story driven, experience. That to me was, and still is, the philosopher’s stone, perfect fix and white whale all rolled into one.

So for my next MA in Film Producing (2009–2010) I was eagerly chasing the transmedia trail. I picked it up at the yearly event Power to the Pixel Forum in The Company P, Fourth Wall Studios, the academic writings of Henry Jenkins and
Christy Dena. I became a student and participating follower of the transmedia scene and was biting my nails in anticipation waiting for the big breakthrough project. In his key-note talk at the Cross-Media Forum in 2011 Michel Reilhac pointed out that we are all waiting for the project that would do to transmedia what *Avatar* did to 3D or *Big Brother* did to reality TV. The breakthrough into the mainstream. I looked around but couldn’t see any likely candidates among the projects I came in contact with. Many projects presented online and at industry events claimed to be very successful, but none of them were anything like my perfect fix of participatory, immersive, story driven, experience. And how many of you can tell me the story lines of *Cloud Chamber*, *Granny Dances on the Table* or *The Spiral*? Have you even heard of these projects’ existence?

I started to feel that the transmedia successes nobody had heard of was a bit of a problem.

I also had another problem to ponder:

One of the ground-breaking projects was *The Truth About Marika*[^3] in 2007, produced by the Swedish public broadcaster SVT and The Company P. It was a drama series and a participation drama; it had converging storytelling fragments on mobile, TV, online, reality events etc. It was nominated for prizes around the world and did win an interactive Emmy. Marie Denward wrote a dissertation on it and SVT executives are still invited to speak at international events about it. But was it a success? SVT didn’t think so. In an interview I did with Hans G Andersson, the head of SVT Interactive, in 2010 he made it clear that they had very little interest in following up on the experiment because it hadn’t attracted a very great number of viewers.

I felt very strongly that this reasoning was missing the point. By measuring and treating participation drama as if it was the same as what we are used to, i.e. more traditional drama created for a passive, lean back audience, SVT had missed the point. Just like my fellow producer-students at Rotterdam Lab had been doing, asking the wrong questions.

Drama that includes participatory elements not only feels different, it plays on a different set of its audience emotional response and motivating drive. It is by its nature a different beast.

My friend and fellow transmedia-event nomad Mathias Noschis also had a problem with these self-appointed successes. He does not share my enthusiasm for story immersion experiences but always has an open mind and curiosity about finding new ways to market and spread films to new audiences. We were constantly debating whether or not we “believe” in transmedia. This may sound strangely theological but in the film industry it is an on-going argument. Since the film industry is in crisis, because people watch more films and drama series than ever before but not in the same windows and via the same viewer-distributor agreements as 5–10 years ago, the industry is ready to clutch at any buzzword straw. For a couple of years there was a feeling that transmedia could save producers and fill in the audience gap left by empty cinemas and failing business models. 5 years down the line I think it is safe to say that transmedia has not filled this gap. Transmedia and film is not always an easy fit and there are no standards for creating a transmedia extension to a European art-house film or documentary feature. As this has become more evident a lot of film people are getting bored with transmedia as it is seen as all buzz and no business. And, telling producers I work with transmedia, I nowadays often get the question whether I really believe in that stuff. Treating transmedia as a rescue pod for independent film producers was never the purpose of the exercise and I still have faith in transmedia, not as a film industry support mechanism but as a tool for expanding the story and for enabling participation. The purpose of transmedia is participatory, immersive, story driven, experience.
Definitions, Honing in on Participation

Looking at different transmedia projects presented at various events and workshops, I became more and more convinced that the secret was in the participatory elements, fully aware that other definitions tend to focus more on the converging story fragments and how they relate to each other in spite of being spread out over multiple platforms.

The Rydberg-Lidén definition of transmedia is very restrictive; *Transmedia is a story that takes the audience across several platforms and allows them to interact with it.* To my mind, transmedia storytelling requires participatory elements, otherwise it is simply multi-media.

These are the two legs transmedia stands on:
- multiple platforms each presenting its own respective bit of media converging with the others to make a larger whole;
- room for interactivity where the audience can play around and act within the story world.

Furthermore, to make it interesting, the participation should be allowed to such a high degree that it can affect the story. This excludes for instance branched narratives such as most video games, where you can affect your own user journey but not affect or co-write the story. Most of these games are structured as very complicated hypertext trees, no matter how many pre-existing branches you choose to explore in the tree you still cannot grow or inoculate your own addition.\(^4\)

So as a consequence of this definition transmedia makes the audience active and challenges the idea of the relationship between audience and creator as equivalent to that of sender and receiver. Transmedia is dialogue rather than monologue, and the audience needs to be in a lean forwards, active position, moving from platform to platform and responding to story elements. Arguably the

---

\(^4\) MMORGs with PvP settings as well as all games using a sandbox model without sharding are naturally excluded from this generalisation.
experience of reading, listening or watching doesn’t always feel passive. There can be a lot of internal activity and experience that is both intellectually and emotionally engaging. For the purposes of this text and the general discussion on transmedia however, we call it passive. Simply because the work doesn’t require the audience to act in any other way than as a receiver, whilst works with interactive components require the audience to take some kind of action within the frame of the narrative above and beyond that of buying a ticket.

Because participation especially to the point of co-creation changes the roles for creator and participant a lot of transmedia pioneers have coined the phrase “those formerly known as the audience”.
Methods

This was our starting point, a feeling participation is worth exploring and that established rating models are ill suited to assess the impact of transmedia stories, either on a mass scale or an individual one. The first thing we set out to do was to check my own assumptions about participatory experience against other people’s, and for that we decided to do some interviews.

We decided early on for a qualitative approach regarding interviews and gathering data. A quantitative approach would simply not be possible within the time and budgetary restraints of this study.

Parallel to conducting interviews we continued to attend industry events to present our ideas and test them, we chose three events representing three different discussions. These discourses are organized into roughly three different areas (with lots of overlaps and loans from neighbouring industries): film, transmedia/cross media and intermediality academia. There are also very relevant conferences and talks about transmedia aimed at PR-agencies, online and interactive, and of course game studios. But as we had time and budget restraints to adhere to we settled for honing our arguments in the first three. And so we visited Crossmedia Zen in Vilnius, a conference on audience design at the Venice Film Festival and Rethinking Intermediality in the Digital Age in Cluj-Napoca.

Our travels with the study on impact and how to measure it, started with Vilnius in June (2013) were we were invited to talk at the Crossmedia Zen event hosted by the Lithuanian Media Desk and the newly formed Film Centre. In September we talked at TorinoFilmLab’s Alumni meeting at the Venice Film Festival and finally in October we visited Cluj-Napoca and the conference Rethinking Intermediality in the Digital Age hosted by University Sapientia and organised by ISIS5.

Three very different events and each time we had to adapt our presentation and re-think what we were doing. Along with the interviews, these presentations and following discussions with people from different fields of expertise along with self-reflective thought, is what has shaped our thoughts and the conclusions we now present.

5 International Society for Intermedial Studies
Context: The Transmedia Scene

In the Film Industry

This scene of transmedia might need a little further explanation. Most of you will be aware that a lot of the film industry is like a huge traveling circus, film workers travel a yearly tour from the Berlinale to Cannes, then Venice after the summer, sometimes with a detour to Toronto, or Sundance, or for the documentary crowd to Amsterdam, Leipzig and Sheffield. All of these festivals and markets have seminars, talks and various efforts aimed toward educating the industry in best practices, new technologies, etc. During the last five years or so they have all offered something for the transmedia curious. Other words used in the title to these events can be converging media, cross-media, multi platform, 360°, and so on. To a European film producer, these concepts are often presented as a means of cutting out the middleman and finding funding and distribution opportunities in direct contact with the audience/buyer. To the producers it is also about the direct contact with the audience, as a way to create expectation around the film, start a fan-base and perhaps a discussion about the process of film making or the content of the film at hand. It is talked about as a democratic alternative and much is made of successfully distributed films via peer-to-peer systems or crowd funding campaigns that overshot the expected budget goal. It can be very democratic, it can certainly be an alternative route for both directors and producers, but it is no short cut. And one peer-to-peer distributed film does not make an immersive, participatory story driven experience.

To most film workers this isn’t a problem, since a lot of the time they are not chasing participatory, immersive, story-driven, experience, but just a different way of doing what they have always done: funding, shooting and distributing film. They are not interested in changing the nature of the beast, simply in finding other ways to feed it. The transmedia toolbox offers lots of interesting DIY opportunities to the proactive producer and director but it doesn’t fix what is broken in the existing system (crumbling business models and under-financed productions).

---

Engaging audiences is a skill in itself and not to be handled carelessly. Just because people can see and pay for your film doesn’t mean that they will, working with audience engagement is as hard as working with gatekeepers and commissioners, only instead of trying to persuade a limited oligarchy to buy in to your idea you are trying to persuade a whole audience, when addressing the crowds there are a lot more people to convince.

**In Media Studies**

In Europe scholars are reluctant to talk about transmedia but if you research the works on intermediality it is very much the same debate as the one Henry Jenkins fronts in the US. Other academics like Marie Laure Ryan have written extensively on narratology and how different media fragments relate to make a whole larger than the sum of the parts. This debate seems very focused on technicalities and the ever on-going struggle with definitions. Though Ryan writes about cognitions as part of the intricate way in which we understand transmedia there is very little focus on the perception or experiential side of reading these texts. Lars Elleström writes about 4 modalities and Joachim Paech still persists that the media can be anything, a means for conveying a message but never a thing in itself (thus causing the other academics to smile patiently and then carry on as they were).

Elleström writes:

“I believe that intermediality cannot fully be understood without grasping the fundamental conditions of every single medium and these conditions constitute a complex network of both tangible qualities of media and various perceptual and interpretive operations performed by the recipients of media. For my purpose, media definitions that deal only with the physical aspects of mediality are too narrow, as are media definitions that strongly emphasize the social construction of media conceptions. Instead, I will emphasize the critical meeting of the material, the perceptual and the social.”

The emphasis on cognition in Ryan’s writing and on perception in Elleström’s keeps me struggling with the concept of intermediality thinking that my interpretations on transmedia should be informed by this and not only explained in the light of behaviouristic psychology or anthropology in spite of my firm basis in lived and felt experience. Though not even in this educated discourse will sharp minds agree on a definition of *das ding an sich*.

This academic discussion is in Europe organised to a great extent by ISIS (International Society for Intermedial Studies)\(^8\) and is very much a growing field with bi-annual conferences and plans to start a regular publication dedicated to papers on intermediality.

**Transmedia/Crossmedia**

Some transmedia events and conferences stand on their own without piggybacking on a film festival. Such as the previously mentioned Power to the Pixel, CrossVideo Days, Crossmedia Zen, TEDx Transmedia in Rome or one off events, and workshops often sponsored by the MEDIA Programme.

A lot of the time these event focus around case studies and what can be done, a kind format built around cases of best practices. Very seldom do these best practice-talks offer any hard facts about how to measure the success of the projects. Producers who attend do so to find new ways for funding and distribution and in order to be prepared for tomorrow’s industry, when transmedia has made its big breakthrough into the mainstream. It is very much a film and TV oriented discussion but usually with guests invited from the games industry, academia or other areas seen as worth mining for gold. And we who participate all plan, develop and innovate in the hope that tomorrow we shall wake up to find the rest of the world a little more like Canada.

Canada’s Media Fund has a requirement that new content for TV is produced with converging media streams. Producers can apply for funding for converging and experimental content and software. This makes Canada the Promised Land in transmedia circles\(^9\).

---

\(^8\) ISIS [http://lnu.se/research-groups/isis?l=en](http://lnu.se/research-groups/isis?l=en)

\(^9\) [http://www.cmf-fmc.ca/funding-programs/overview/?setLocale=1](http://www.cmf-fmc.ca/funding-programs/overview/?setLocale=1)
Rating models

Both in the eyes of the audience and amongst professionals of the audiovisual industries, ratings play a key role in the measurement of the success or failure of a certain programme, channel or film. James Cameron’s film Avatar is better known for breaking every record at the international box office than for its reviews or the awards it collected. Likewise, newspapers and blogs publish weekly, monthly or yearly a list of the most successful TV or radio programmes, analysing the increases and decreases in the market share of a certain channel against its main competitors. Ratings are also at the heart of the monetisation of advertising revenue for TV and radio channels, allowing to assign a price to a certain advertising break.

At the moment, there is no broadly recognised ratings model in the transmedia industry. The success or failure of a transmedia IP is, most of the time, measured only through critical criteria rather than numeric ones. At conferences, pitching sessions or in specialised publications, results are usually expressed as absolute values (a certain number of unique users or an average duration spent by the users enjoying the experience) rather than relative ones. This means that anyone not familiar with the specific market of the presented IP won’t be able to develop their own opinion on the matter. In addition to this, these results are often presented by one of the authors of the IP or experience who has a clear interest in showing their own work in a good light.

We see two main consequences to the lack of a broadly recognised ratings model in the transmedia industry. On one hand, it makes it harder to establish any type of comparison between similar formats or IPs and to understand which one was more successful. On the other hand, it stops the transmedia industry from establishing successful monetisation models to become self-sustainable. In the current state of things, brands are very reluctant to invest in participatory IPs because they can’t measure accurately their return on investment. We therefore believe that the establishment of a standard rating system would allow to open transmedia IPs to a broader audience of people looking for safer experiences than early adopters. It would also build bridges between authors and private funders interested in exploring new creative or artistic forms.
Before opening the discussion on a ratings model for the transmedia industry, it seems useful to reason on the existing ratings models used in other audiovisual fields. This will allow us to identify key variables that play a role in the effectiveness of such a model. It will also enlighten the usage made by professionals and the general public of such models. We have decided to focus on three ratings models used in the film and TV industry:

- The TV viewing ratings;
- The box office;
- The IMDB user vote.

As they are currently used in most, if not all, Western countries, the TV viewing ratings are based on a sample of households representative of the general population. These selected households are equipped with a box set which records whether this household’s TV set is on and which channel it is tuned to. The data is then sent in real time to a centre, which aggregates and processes it. A standard statistical analysis allows to give results. These results consist in figures which explicit how many people or households were watching a certain TV programme or channel at a certain moment in time, out of all the people watching TV in that moment. This means that TV ratings are expressed in both absolute terms as well as through relative figures. This can be clarified through the example of a football game, which was watched by 20 million people for a market share of 40%. In this example, the reader immediately understands that 50 million people were watching TV in that moment from which 20 million were watching the football game.

When analysing the strengths and weaknesses of that model, we find the following information. There seem to be two main strengths to the TV viewing ratings:

1. The combination of absolute and relative values allows us to compare different programmes (“programme X was the most successful programme of the year”) as well as TV channels (“channel A has an average share of 25% over the whole year”).
2. The TV viewing ratings model is easily understandable by anyone, both outside the circle of industry professionals and outside the group of statisticians.
On the other hand, the model seems to have two main weaknesses:

1. The TV viewing ratings are based on statistical approximations from a small number of representative households. This means that the error margin can be significant for smaller figures, such as for specialised cable channels with limited viewership. While the model is very effective for the current market leaders with significant market shares, it loses relevance with the evolution of the TV industry and the multiplication of channels.
2. Because the viewing data needs to be processed through statistical analysis, the viewing figures cannot be obtained in real time. The TV viewing ratings model can be considered complicated to implement and is certainly an expensive system. Current technological evolution suggests that this could evolve positively in the future and that this model would become more cost-effective and probably more accurate as well.

The second rating model taken into account for this analysis is the standard measure of success and failure in the film industry: the box office. The box office is a combination of one or two absolute figures stating the number of viewers and/or the financial gross profit of a certain film over a period of time. In its most common expression, the box office is used on a weekly basis to compare different titles that were available in cinemas during that week. An example of such usage would be that “Film X came first at the box office this week with 200,000 viewers and 1.6 million euro against film Y which grossed only 900,000 euro”. The box office is also used to measure the overall success of a film over its whole theatrical lifecycle. In such case, the total box office is obtained by adding up national box office results as in the following example: “Film Z grossed 50 million dollars in North America out of a total of 90 million worldwide”.

While the box office is an absolute standard amongst film industry professionals, it can be analysed in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Its main strengths are:

1. On a national level, the figure stating the total amount of viewers is very clear and understandable by anyone. It allows effective comparison between titles.
2. On an international level, the figure stating the gross profit of a film is a
precious tool to measure the overall success of a film. It is also a powerful way to keep into account the huge differences in average ticket price between different territories.

3. The system is automated and most territories, including all so-called key territories, have implemented a simple structure to measure box office.

4. The system is applicable to all territories, small or big, and is adapted to any typology of films, from Hollywood blockbusters to smaller arthouse films.

However, the box office has also some weaknesses and limitations, in particular the following two:

1. The gross profit figure is misleading for the general film audience outside film industry professionals, in particular when compared to production cost. This is best explained with an example: Film A had a production budget of 3 million euro and grossed 5 million euro at the box office. While this may seem like a good result, the reality is more complex and requires better understanding of the reality of the film industry. When taking into account the distribution and marketing costs, as well as the exhibitor’s share, it is likely that the producer will only receive approximately 1–1.5 million euro. They will therefore be far from recouping their initial 3 million investment and will probably consider such a box office figure as disappointing.

2. The box office only focuses on the theatrical release without taking into account any profit from ancillary channels, such as home entertainment, VOD and TV releases. While, for some films, it is reasonable to consider that the profit from other channels is proportional to the theatrical box office, this doesn’t apply to all films. This is particularly true for genre films (horror, sci-fi, action) and documentaries. The box office introduces therefore a distortion in the way viewers and the industry consider the success or failure of a film based on the genre.

The development of internet and the emergence of social media and the web 2.0 have made it possible to receive direct recommendations from other users
bypassing traditional opinion leaders such as journalists and film critics. The market leader of online film databases is IMDB.com (short for Internet Movie DataBase), a website owned by Amazon. IMDB offers its registered users the opportunity to rate films on a 1 to 10 scale symbolised by yellow stars. This votes are then aggregated into a user average for each film. The result is made of two variables: the total number of votes and the average vote. The website also offers a more detailed view depending on demographics of the users (male/female, age brackets). In the past decade, the IMDB user vote average has become a new standard and it is now widely used by both filmmakers and viewers to assess the quality of a film. IMDB itself uses it to classify films, in particular in its “Top 250 films of all times” list.

Such a rating model has the following strengths:

1. Despite a relatively complicated algorithm, the IMDB user vote average is extremely easy to understand by both professionals and simple viewers. The star symbol has been used for long enough to be a widely spread and clear visual device.
2. The system is entirely automated and doesn’t require any human intervention after the initial implementation.

On the other hand, the IMDB user vote average also has some limits:

1. Only IMDB registered users can rate films. It is reasonable to believe that IMDB registered users aren’t representative of the overall population or even of all film viewers. This means that there is a distortion between a film’s average rating and the general opinion on that same film.
2. For most non-English titles as well as arthouse films, the number of votes per film can be relatively low, with sometimes only a dozen votes. In those cases, the average vote cannot be considered representative since the error margin is very high and a single user can impact the average significantly. It is therefore right to observe that the IMDB user average loses some of its relevance for those titles that are have only reached a limited audience.
An analysis of these three very different rating models shows how every model faces challenges. In particular, it seems possible to identify three key variables, which seem to play a role in the effectiveness of a rating model. It is therefore possible to say that a successful and effective rating model should try to combine the following three characteristics:

- **Easily understandable**: In order to become a standard, a rating system cannot require complex explanations. It appears quite clearly in the previous analysis that systems, which are only understandable by professionals, get a limited spread. It is therefore important for a rating model to be clear and simple.

- **Applicable to a broad range of cases**: Films can be divided into arthouse and mainstream films, into several genres or into different nationalities. In the same way, TV channels can be nationwide general entertainment channels or specialised cable channels. The rating models analysed previously seem mostly adapted to larger properties and to market leaders rather than to smaller, more independent players. However, this is often a strong limitation of those models as it makes them only applicable to some projects rather than to the whole range of the market. It seems therefore important for a rating model to be applicable to as many cases as possible in order to be able to really compare all titles with the same scale.

- **Automated**: Some industries face such financial challenges that they can have complex rating models, which require large investments to be implemented. However, such models are hard to adapt to the evolution of the industry and can easily become out-dated. On the other hand, entirely automated models tend to be easily adaptable to any market with a more elastic approach. It seems therefore reasonable to say that such automated models are more effective in an ever-changing environment.

These three variables will be used to assess the effectiveness of the rating model for participatory experiences developed later in this document.
The main purpose of the interviews was to define a proper research question. So we used our pre-existing prejudice and experience to formulate a list of questions that would cover a variety of angles honing in on the feel and impact of participation. From this we hoped to be able to decide what would be worth pursuing in further research. This was in accordance with the message from the research unit at SADA that had agreed to fund this our quest for knowledge.

We wanted to interview people who had participated in story driven experiences related to a film or TV-series. We wanted to find people “once removed” from ourselves, i.e. with no personal connection to us. To begin with this proved difficult so the first two interviews are with people I have met. After reaching out to a friend in an ARG-gaming community however volunteers were easier to find. We are using six interviews all made with people who have much or only a one-time experience with LARP and/or ARG. We tried to follow the same list of questions with everyone and keep questions as open and neutral as possible. I did find it unexpectedly difficult, and had to make a conscious effort to hold back from trying to make friends or to bond with the people I was talking to.

The interviews were all done over Skype and recorded, most of the time with cameras turned off and only using audio communication after an initial and brief greeting.

The questions was a variation on the list below:

1. Please describe your participatory experience.
2. What got you to decide to take part in it?
3. Did it feel like you or a different character taking part?
4. Did it feel at any point it wasn’t you but the character taking part in it?
5. Have any of those feelings stayed with you after the experience?
6. What would you compare it to? Going to the theatre/ reading a novel/ writing/other?
7. How did you relate to the other participants?
8. Did you share the experience anywhere on social media?
9. Did you feel like you actually were in that universe/that it was real?
10. Would you like to do it again?
11. Would you do anything differently?
12. Have you dreamt about it? Has it stayed in your subconscious?
13. Has this experience changed your behaviour in any way?
14. Can you give me three words that come to mind when thinking about the experience?
15. What are the biggest differences with the non-participatory experience?

Every interview was then discussed between Noschis and myself, how to interpret certain answers? Should we rephrase something? Ask completely different questions, use a different tone of voice etc. We had some wonderful contradictions, indicating that there is still a hesitation about talking about gaming experiences like LARPs or ARGs, a hesitation related to the social stigma associated with geeky behaviour or getting carried away. There were also some findings that echoed my own experiences of being immersed in storytelling works, the rush to collaborate around strategies, of thinking up characters and being allowed to add to a story. Themes of agency and socialization would reoccur.

Scene from May 2012:

_The great procrastinator. I procrastinate, maybe because I’m secretly afraid to succeed, maybe because I’m lazy and hate doing any actual work. 20 minutes before the first Skype-interview I prepare:_

1. Brush hair
2. Put on make up
3. Put on earrings
4. Find computer
5. Look through the questions

...in that order.

In this little self-observation it is evident that I’m affected by this little participatory exchange as much as any gamer or person interviewed. It is an often repeated
fact that what we study may be affected and react or change simply from being observed but it is also true that it changes the thinking and behaviour of the observer. Even before the interaction begins. Trying to sift out anything remotely objective from this subjective mess of interactive relational mess isn’t easy, but we persevere. Hoping that observing the messiness will somehow lessen it or help the analytical gaze to cut through it.

The people interviewed were very reluctant to say they were affected by the interaction, as proved by their saying they never felt like they were someone else, or that they’d changed their behaviour in any way. Almost all interviews show a consistent trace of contradiction on this topic. Perhaps because it makes them sound like they are slightly out of touch with reality or simply not very stable of mind. But a closer look at the answers given suggests that in fact they do feel different and change their behaviour. Acting as a character, or even as yourself but with new set of motives and drives emanating from a story structure rather than your own reality is likely more than not going to change your behaviour in some ways.

“– Did you dream about it after the experience?
– No I haven’t dreamt about it. On the plane back I had this experience of dozing off, not being sure if I was still on the Monitor Celesta (space ship BSG universe) or on a plane.” – INTERVIEW 1 (A.H)

Even as I’m affected in my behaviour by the reality of doing interviews, interacting with a story will cause you to do different things and think different thoughts to what you would have done normally. This is true of everything of course, whether it be simple reality of part of a work of art such as a transmedia experience. The difference is a story gives you a certain direction for your actions and other responses. A story is used to frame and shape your reactions and to give them a certain purpose. Because transmedia storytelling requires the audience to take an active part, it automatically makes the audience responsible for what comes out of the story. Perhaps this feeling of being responsible also plays a part in wanting to put an emphasis on your own sobriety and to distance yourself somewhat from any too prominent signs of immersion.
Findings

Doing the interviews and listening to them afterwards we found that some aspects varied from person to person but much was shared. Some of it is rather self evident other things a little more surprising, both kinds are worth keeping in mind for those who ever plan to create their own participation-based stories. Our main behavioural findings can be divided in to four categories:

1. **Impact**, in a participatory experience the impact happens primarily on an intrapersonal level.
2. **Resistance**, participants feel an inherent resistance before taking part in a participatory experience and before openly communicating about it.
3. **Initiation**, the behavior and motivation is different to initiates compared to non-initiates. Non-initiates, or newbies, will need clear rules, are worried about making mistakes and generally a little shy in a new environment, the more experienced participants are keen to push the boundaries, their own and as well as those of the story.
4. **Exit**, the emotional impact peaks just after the fact, at the closing of the event, and fades after a few weeks.

So much of the value of interaction pointed out by our interviewees lies in the successful collaborations and social connections with others. Just as in my recollections of LARPing, it's doing it together that is half the fun, but what happens between participants doesn't necessarily feed back to the puppet-master/producer, and they hardly ever have a way of measuring or evaluating it.

If a method for better understanding and evaluating the interpersonal and social rewards of a participatory storytelling could be agreed upon, this would greatly improve creator’s chances of designing better experiences in the future.

Maker-spaces and lab like environments like a triple helix model for the arts might be the right place to get to work on these issues. If left to only commercial interests there is an obvious risk of only finding out where, how and when it is most effective to advertise.
Scene from 1997, Gothenburg Inner City:

I am walking home from work late in the evening, it is dark and a light drizzle diffuses the light through my glasses. I have just created a vampire character in an effort to join in an existing campaign of Masquerade with some friends. She is old and powerful, with certain abilities of mind control not even her family is aware of. I walk the streets not looking for potential dangers and would be attackers, like I normally do with my keys clenched in fist like an inbuilt knuckle-buster with spikes. I walk the streets owning them, and feeling like a predator looking for prey. I have nothing to fear as I am stronger than any human in sight and could squash them like flies. I decide not to, but I could if I wanted to.

Apart from being silly and potentially dangerous indulging in such hubris and escapist imagination, this is interesting as evidence of impact. The point is that the character, and its story, completely changed my perception. No one else was involved, no interpersonal or social exchange, just me and the story (me in the story), made all the difference to my perceived reality. I have no recollection of what the character was called, actually playing her or taking part in any Masquerade-events, simply the intoxication of indulging in a story world that granted me great powers.

It has echoes in some of our interviews as well:

“Oh I can dig myself in. If it is a good story. You feel you can put yourself in that world... My persona doesn’t change, it gets added to, if that makes sense... explore your boundaries and step over them in a safe environment.”

DRAGKHAR

To the people we interviewed this is the goal of engaging in a participatory experience, a part from cracking the code, completing the mission or solving the puzzle, the feeling of agency and of being immersed in the storytelling is an indicator of quality. To someone in an ARG it is important to feel to play one’s part of chipping in to help the quest at hand, which brings both social rewards and a sense of fiero\(^\text{10}\) when achieved. So in fact the feeling of altered self
perception that many interviewees where so reluctant to admit to and that was most evident in their contradictions, is in fact part of the ultimate goal. It is the feeling that people are looking for when signing up for the next experience, the poison causing the addiction. If it is lacking it is seen as a lack of quality to the story or its execution.

10 Fiero, the feeling of success, of winning and wanting to throw your hands in the air. *Reality is Broken* J McGonigal
Research question

Are traditional audience measurement models applicable to formats with a participatory element?

Considering all elements analysed in the previous paragraphs and the specificities of participatory experiences, it is impossible to give a straight answer to this question. Existing audience measurement models seem to introduce many elements that are perfectly applicable to formats with a participatory element. However, existing models seem to completely overlook one key element in participatory experiences: the impact. It seems therefore possible to answer the research question by saying that existing models need to be adapted in order to measure the audience of formats with a participatory element. These models need to be integrated with a new variable.
In order to develop our own audience measurement model, we have decided to use an existing traditional model as basis. Literature is full of such models, we have chosen the model developed by Webster, Phallen and Lichty.\footnote{Webster, James G., Phalen, Patricia F. and Lichty, Lawrence W., \textit{Ratings Analysis: Theory and Practice: The Theory and Practice of Audience Research}, London, Routledge, 2003 p. 185}

We have seen earlier the strengths and weaknesses of such a model in analysing passive viewing experiences. Now, how does such a model apply to participatory IPs? We have identified two aspects that aren’t taken into account in such a model:

- First, as seen through our questionnaires, we have strong reasons to believe that the impact of participatory experience is stronger than the impact of non-participatory experience. However, this traditional model considers each and every pair of so-called eyeballs exactly in the same way. If for example programme C includes a participatory element while programme A requires pure passive viewing, the model won’t measure the major impact of C on the audience and will only discover that A had a broader reach than C amongst the population.
Second, some participatory experiences are for a limited number of participants. This means the total number of viewers/users cannot exceed a certain number. The traditional model has no way of expressing that, and a low number of participants is just seen as a failure.

Both these observations suggest that the traditional audience measurement model requires a new dimension in order to be applicable to participatory experience. And this new dimension should be the impact itself.

In order to measure this impact, we suggest to use social media monitoring. Our interviews have shown how users of participatory experience do tend to share such experience with their network through social media. Analysing these messages could give a good idea of the impact.

We therefore suggest to include social media monitoring results onto a traditional audience measurement model through two variables: quantity and sentiment. With quantity, we intend the number of messages that were published on pre-identified social media platforms over a period of time. With sentiment, we intend to classify these comments onto three categories: positive, neutral, negative. In the following model, the sentiment is expressed through a visual device of three colours (green, grey and red), while the quantity is measured through a number.

Noschis and Rydberg-Lidén (2013)
Social Media Monitoring

Social media monitoring is commonly used as a marketing tool by film distributors, TV broadcasters and any brands interested in the perception of their products or services. It exploits the huge quantity of free information available through the web 2.0.

In terms of empirical methodology, the first step is to set a frame for the monitoring by identifying on which websites and social media platforms it will be performed and by setting a timeframe. The actual monitoring is then done by researching all the comments on a certain topic through keywords, by classifying them onto positive, neutral and negative, and by performing statistical analysis of the result.

We report here an example of a social media monitoring performed in Italy in 2011–2012 for a film called *This Means War* (production: 20th Century Fox):

![Evolution of the buzz over time (Noschis 2013)]
Sentiment depending on the main topic of the comment (Noschis 2013)
Limitations of the new model

As we have seen previously, in order to be effective, an audience measurement model needs to be automated, applicable to a broad range of cases and easily understandable. The objective of this paragraph is to measure whether our new audience measurement model does follow these three criteria.

Automated

At the moment, there are automated buzz monitoring software available on the market. The market leader, Radian 6, is used by many major corporations in their everyday marketing efforts. However, these software are particularly adapted to analyse a large amount of data but lack the necessary accuracy for smaller amount of data (such as in the previous example of buzz monitoring). They also tend to work well in English but their performances drop dramatically in the analysis of non-English language comments (if that option is supported at all). There are however good chances to believe that the technological evolution will make these tools more powerful and accurate in a relatively short period of time.

Applicable to a broad range of cases

This is probably the hardest variable to satisfy fully with a simple model. As we have seen earlier, many models seem to be very effective with so-called mainstream projects whereas they lose relevance with smaller arthouse projects. For the reasons stated earlier, this seems to be the case with our model as well. In addition to this, participatory experiences can take many different shapes and formats and it is hard to imagine today what authors will create in the future. In order for transmedia projects to be comparable between each other, it would be necessary to find a standard model that can adapt to all, or at least most, participatory formats. By measuring the impact through a one-dimensional variable such as sentiment, our model does apply to most current formats. However, it is impossible to predict whether this will be the case for future creations.
It is also important to mention here how today social media isn’t used similarly by all demographics. Some categories are over-represented compared to the general population. We can therefore expect that our model will tend to give better results for those experiences that are targeted at those categories of users. In particular, so-called nerds tend to be higher social media users than older women. An IP made specifically for the first group would probably appear more “successful” than an experience aimed at the latter if our model was applied to measure the impact.

Easily understandable

An easily understandable model would mean that its results could be communicated to the general audience. One element that doesn’t seem to be easily understandable in the new model is the term neutral. While it has many significations in the everyday language, most people struggle to understand what it means exactly in this context. It has two meanings: without any positive or negative element; partly positive and partly negative. The latter is certainly not intuitive and requires an additional explanation.

Another aspect that makes the model hard to understand is the use of absolute values. Is a quantity of 500 comments good or bad? Can the creators be happy or should they be desperate? Should the producer commission a new episode or stop the series here? All these questions cannot be answered if the figure cannot be read properly. In order for this absolute value to be understood, there need to be benchmarks that are set over time. In the same way as gross box office in film is used for comparison (“Film X grossed half of Film Y”), we can expect the quantity variable to become more and more relevant with time.
Assumptions

Let’s make some assumptions about participation.

Participatory experience is stickier than passive. Meaning the impact of taking part in a story is greater than passively reading/watching one.

People like to share their thoughts on social media.

But does that infer that the impact of participatory experience should generate different (greater?) measurable on social media (mentions, shares, likes etc.)?

A Scene from March 2013:

*Gothenburg, Mine Sweep Småland “The Monitor Celestra” game II, international LARP in the sci-fi world of Battlestar Galactica. I’ve been watching Battlestar Galactica episodes and spinoffs since January, trying hard to become a fan or at least initiate in preparation for this very hyped and much anticipated LARP.*

We are all lost in space, about 300 of us traveling through a series of hyper-jumps trying to shake of the cylons in pursuit. We have lost sight of the rest of our little fleet of refugees.

Our ship The Monitor Celestra is under Caprican command. I’m a priestess from a Tauron minority group, supposedly in a good position to hear confession and gather information to barter with or inspire hope in others. Some of my drug-dealing enemies are much more fun to hang out with than my pious allies. Not to mention the charming and monochromely red cylon hallucinations that will whisper terrors and seductions in your ear if invited. I just can’t bring myself to care for the fate of my priestess. Instead I really want to know which characters the delegation from Disney Imagineering are playing, and why they have come. My feet are cold and my “tattoos” are smudged.

I huddle in the canteen where it’s warm and sit down next to the heavily armed Caprican mercenary my Tauron priestess is meant to despise, asking if he has anymore of that “moonshine” to go around, and if it will thaw my feet.
Immersion doesn’t always happen even in the best curated situations. Ironically, real live interaction is sometimes a barrier to immersion simply because you carry with you your physicality, still in a normality and the room, space and time parameters of drama can only be faked or stretched to a certain extent. That stretch can be supported by props, scenography etc. but ultimately it is your perception that is the place for the mise en scène.

There are a number of universities and companies occupied in developing and testing tools for measuring the impact of stories. Google analytics and Google trends offer some free tools and insights in how to use them at Google Academy, MIT Open Doc Lab and the Harmony institute to mention a few. Using these tools when launching your project will generate a vast databank on audience behaviour and analysing the trends before and after may give some indication on general impact in measurable awareness about a certain topic for instance. But even qualitative methods used are very crude still and based on psychological formulas like IQ-test or the like which do not take context of surrounding or the individual into consideration.

Kat Czech from NFB (National Film Board Canada and director of award winning interactive documentaries):

“Big data and Google are not interested in our opinions anymore. They are only interested in our behaviour, so that they can then make decisions based on our behaviour. This takes away our agency of telling our own story.”

So we need to sharpen out tools and also broaden their spectrum of investigation. It is not enough to simply measure what people do but we need to start thinking about why they do it and how it feels.

The tool “Impact Space” is one step nearer to a wider spectrum of investigation; it is currently undergoing beta-testing and will be out this spring. It is a fermium model application developed by the Harmony Institute.

12 http://www.interactivefactual.net/q7-impact/
“There needs to be a tool that is focused for storytellers to understand impact beyond that of numbers...” 13 – CLINT BEHARRY, DESIGNER AT HI

So, there are a large number of measuring efforts focusing on behaviour, some of these are connected to basic psychological testing (i.e. IQ tests). There is also a lot of research focusing on the modalities of text and other media and their connectivity under the label transmedia. However the understanding of participatory experience is still a map with huge white areas. Kat Cisek (director of many award winning interactive documentaries, NFB) says she still prefers one-to-one interviews when she wants to assess the impact of her work. The whiteness on the map can be coloured in partly by expanding studies such as this and theoretical work with a firm footing in psychology, behavioural sciences, statistics, intermediary studies etc. but in order to create an epistemology that has relevance to creators as well as scholars there needs to be more work along the lines of practice as research. So was it when Bourdieu broadened the basis for observation and sociological theory by including poetry and so was it 20–30 years ago when theatre scholars honed and cultivated the field of reception studies. Transmedia scholars have a job to do especially in the field of practice as research. The focus needs to be on various facets of the participation experience; personal (internal), intrapersonal relationships and relating to the story. Practice as research (konstnärlig forskning) gives a comprehensible method to start untangling this complicated web of experience and interactions. A purely academic/theoretical method would have to include expertise from to many fields to make it anything but cumbersome and challenging to synthesize (statistics, behavioural science, psychology, intermedial studies, dramaturgy, just to name a few).

In their book The Eye of the Theatre (Teaterögon 1986, Sautner, Isaksson, Jansson) the authors place a lot of emphasis on the expectations and social behaviour of the audience and pointing to the reception as an integral part of the art of theatre, without the audience it simply isn’t theatre, is in the meeting between audience and performance that theatre happens.

13 ibid
Transmedia scholars have cause to lay the grounds for their own field of reception studies, learning from the lessons made by their colleagues in the field of theatre and adapting to the interactive storytellers unique space that creates both unique individualistic and mass-consumer/participation basis. It can be argued that also the theatre goer is an individual and that the internal feeling of the experience is always unique but in a transmedia story the separation between experiences is not only created by different personalities but quite likely by space and time. Still it is clear that sharing the experience is a huge motivation to a large part of the participatory audience and when they often point to relationships formed from a shared experience as one of the lasting benefits of i.e. ARGs. Herein lies major difference in behaviour and motivation to that of theatre goers, which is social in the sense that people like to go to the theatre with friends but not in the sense that new relationships are formed as a result of sharing the experience.

Another area adjacent to that of transmedia reception studies is media theory that hones in on fandom, a discipline that investigates both fandom as a collective subculture phenomenon and the individuals personal motivation. Perhaps it is in this context a transmedia reception studies would find the analytical soil the most fertile but fandom studies don’t always include participation and hardly ever to the point of co-creation. There is a clear hierarchy inbuilt in the creator-fan relationship existing around most IPs. Even though fans may often play around with user generated story-lines or re-enact as certain characters it is only by a very rare exception that these interactions are recognised by the IP-owners and made visible in the official canon of the IP.

A lot of theoretical nuggets can be mined from the field of fandom studies to adorn also that of transmedia reception studies. How the individual experience relates to the collective one for instance or how phenomenology is defined and “knowing” a certain story as opposed to just being aware of it and how this is added to by “imagined shared memories” that make up focal points in the canon and adds cred to those fans who possess the real memory. As one person said in the build up to the LARP Monitor Celestra, “I know it is going to be one of those epic LARPS that everyone talks about, like Carolus Rex was. I missed that, I’m not going to miss this”.

ASSUMPTIONS
We saw in the introduction how this research started from our own concerns regarding transmedia as it is created and measured today. Did this research answer these concerns? It probably didn’t completely, but it certainly clarified the field.

The first part of the research shows how there are ways to analyse the impact of participatory experience on the audience. There is definitely a need for more qualitative and quantitative research focused on getting into the heads of the audience in order to understand and analyse where, how and when the impact of participatory research happens. Another finding of the first part is that there are strong reasons to believe that the impact of participatory experience is stronger than the impact of non-participatory experience.

For instance, intrapersonal findings must be collected by creators for future development work.

The second part of the research seems to be showing how there still is a long way to go before a model will become a standard in the industry. There is a risk of this standard model not to be adapted to all formats, and in particular to be only applicable to larger, more mainstream, formats. For this reason, there is a need for professionals and scholars to get involved in the field and to take part in the development of this future model.

As a general conclusion for this research, it appears quite clearly that the audience isn’t taken enough into account amongst transmedia and participatory media professionals and scholars. The need for a stronger involvement isn’t only for commercial purposes but also for artistic and creative purposes.

This research is only a first step in the direction of putting the audience at the heart of creation. Other steps will be necessary. In particular, there is a real need for a thorough analysis of one empirical case from an audience point of view.
The upcoming *Treasures*, by the Company P, could be an interesting candidate for such a study. There is also a need for prototyping so that the model presented in this paper can be tested and improved. And last but not least, there needs to be a strong effort put into asking the question of the audience in every possible situation where transmedia professionals and/or scholars meet: in pitching events, training workshops, academic conferences and festivals.
Bibliography

Alasuutari, Pertti, *Rethinking the Media Audience*, London, Sage, 1999


Dena, Christy (Supervisor: Prof. Gerard Goggin), *Transmedia Practice: Theorising the Practice of Expressing a Fictional World across Distinct Media and Environments*, Sydney, University of Sydney, 2009


Hubner, Laura (Edited by), *Valuing Films: Shifting Perceptions of Worth*, Houndmills, Palmgrave Macmillan, 2011


Links

Henry Jenkins blog:  
http://henryjenkins.org/

Sandra Gaudenzi blog:  
http://www.interactivefactual.net/

iDocs homepage:  
http://i-docs.org/  

Linkoping’s universitet & ISIS homepage:  
http://lnu.se/research-groups/isis?l=en
The Impact of Participatory Experience on the Audience

by Josephine Rydberg-Lidén and Mathias Noschis