



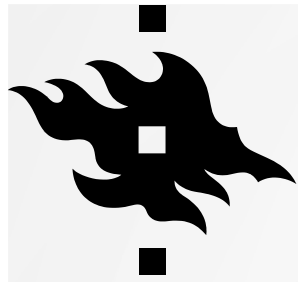
THE FUTURE OF NARRATIVE THEORY IN THE DIGITAL AGE?

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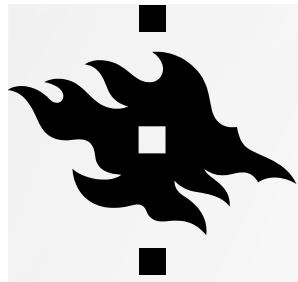
DIGITAL TURN AND NARRATIVE IN MEDIA

- Digital turn has mostly escaped the attention of narrative theorists
 - Emphasis on verbal narrative structures and strategies, content that can be deemed fixed (*narrative text* as “a thing”)
 - Concepts and overall understanding of narrative *in media* are based on works as printed or otherwise clearly definable artefacts
- Digital age challenges this emphasis, and a trends with more broadly defined base on narrative in media are emerging
 - transmedial narratology (eg. Kuhn & Thon)
- However, the crucial role of the computer has been, so far, ignored



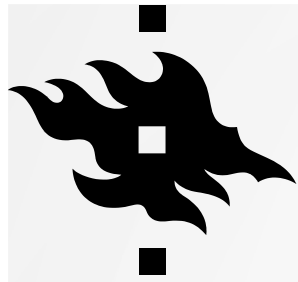
CONVERGENCE AND HYBRIDIZATION

- Computer as a new environment for storytelling
- Convergence paradigm: “old and new media” interacting in ever more complex ways (Jenkins)
- Hybridization: media languages acquiring new properties and becoming richer (Manovich)
- The two layers of transmedia
 1. The “superficial” level of various platforms
 2. The layer of software, computer as a “metamedium” (see Kay)
 - the properties of digital media are defined by the particular software as opposed to solely being contained in the actual content



INSTANTIATION AND ARCHIVE

- Computational media objects as “ a new norm” (McHale)
 - Open-ended content to be manipulated and made sense of in various ways that possess the same significance than any other
- Database gaining authority from “culture-defining stories”, global explanations rooted in data analysis (see Hayles)
- However, the phenomena must be anthropomorphized
 - Databases calling for a narrative interpretation
 - In media: an interplay between a single instantiation and the archive of many possibilities
- The separation of content from both its presentational form and material instantiation (postindustrialism, see Liu)



TOWARDS OPEN AND MULTIFORM

- Towards a more communal and multiform view?
 - Bardic tradition as a model for storytelling in computational media (Murray)
- A shift from the model of transmission – and, especially, transmission of *complete* messages – towards the model of circulation and manipulation of content
- People are now seen “shaping, sharing, reframing and remixing media content in ways which might not have been previously imagined” (Jenkins et al.)



CONVERGING NARRATOLOGY?

- Narrative theory becoming divergent and various, “multiple *narratologies* instead of one – a separate narratology for each medium and intermedium” (McHale)
 - Instead, the various theories could converge or hybridize in a similar way that contemporary media has done
 - This would be useful especially in the study of today’s transmedia
- The biases I discussed must be addressed first, though (i.e. emphasis on content; unconditional structures; the model of transmission)



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THANK YOU!

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<https://convergingresearch.wordpress.com>