Examining documentary transmedia narratives through *The Living History of Fort Scratchley* project

Susan Kerrigan
University of Newcastle, Australia

JT Velikovsky
University of Newcastle, Australia

Abstract

Non-fiction transmedia draws on the same definitions as fiction transmedia (PGA, 2010), which accepts without dispute the reference to 'fictional story worlds' (Jenkins, 2007; O'Flynn, 2012). By drawing attention to this grammatical oversight, we will review non-fiction transmedia literature, highlight the success of Go *Back to Where You Came From* (O'Mahoney, Australia, 2011) and provide a detailed analysis of the production of the *The Living History of Fort Scratchley* project (DVD documentary, i-doc, website, booklet, 2004–2008) against Henry Jenkins' seven transmedia principles (2009b). This detailed analysis applies transmedia 'fiction' criteria to 'non-fiction', challenging transmedia's explicit reference to fictional story universes.

Introduction

Transmedia narratology interrogates the relationship between narrative and media by extending themes, characters and story worlds across two or more media platforms.[1] Jenkins argues that 'a transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole' (2008: 97–98). The definition most frequently cited for

Corresponding author:
Susan Kerrigan, School of Design Communication & IT, University of Newcastle, ICT Building, Rom 3.53, University Drive, Callaghan, New South Wales 2308, Australia.
Email: susan.kerrigan@newcastle.edu.au

transmedia is the 2010 Producers Guild of America *Code of Credits* definition, which describes transmedia as tripartite (involving three or more media) fictional narratives (PGA, 2010: online), where an overall 'franchise' would describe all media relating to one story world or story universe (e.g. *Star Wars*). As Jenkins argues, 'each franchise entry needs to be self-contained so you don't need to have seen the film to enjoy the game, and vice versa' (2008: 98). Transmedia practitioner Jeff Gomez argues that 'Transmedia narrative is the technique of conveying messages, concepts and themes to a mass audience through systemic and concerted use of multiple media platforms' (2013: online). These descriptions explain narrative extension and marketing practices that may be used to create a transmedia franchise, traditionally based on fiction films, novels or other fictional media.

Documentary transmedia researchers have defined *non-fiction* transmedia using the works of Jenkins (2003–2009) and the Producers Guild of America (2010) and, in doing so, have accepted the definitions reference to 'fictional story worlds' (O'Flynn, 2012; see also: Jenkins 2007).[2] The authors acknowledge that the acceptance of fictional story worlds when defining non-fiction and documentary transmedia may be an oversight, nonetheless it is an oversight that is worth addressing. Documentaries are defined as being the 'creative treatment of actuality' (Grierson, 1933: 8). Documentary narratives are interrogated by Bill Nichols' (2001: 99–138) six documentary modes of representation (poetic, expository, observational, participatory, reflexive and performative). Documentary film-makers negotiate and mediate cultural and creative forces (Kerrigan and McIntyre, 2010) to produce documentary products that conform to 'the variable, open-ended dynamic quality of the form itself' (Nichols, 2001: 26). Whilst journalists are bound by codes of ethics to report facts using unbiased techniques, Nichols argues that:

> A documentary practitioner should be able to debate social issues such as the effects of pollution and the nature of sexual identity and explore technical concerns such as the authenticity of archival footage and the consequences of digital technology. (2001: 25)

Whereas a transmedia documentary project maintains the theoretical underpinning of the documentary form, O'Flynn argues 'a transmedia documentary distributes a narrative across more than one platform, it can be participatory or not, can invite audience-generated content or not, tend to be open and devolving, though not always' (2012: 144).

In Australia, an outstanding example of non-fiction transmedia emerged in 2011 with the three-part reality television (TV) series *Go Back to Where You Came From* (O'Mahoney, Australia, 2011). In the book *Hidden Innovation*, Cunningham (2013: 103) argues that 'the program led to arguably a greater social awareness of the complexities and alternative perspective on the asylum seeker debate'. Cunningham falls short of calling these works transmedia but he does argue that the series 'departs radically from the traditionalist documentary mode and takes greater risks with its form and content' (Cunningham, 2013: 102). Here we argue that *Go Back* complies with the non-fiction transmedia criteria because it delivers six unique media forms which all address the same story universe of the Australian asylum seeker debate through a reality TV series, live TV forum, social media, educational package, interactive online game and TV format rights.

Using a second Australian transmedia example, *The Living History of Fort Scratchley* project (2004–2008), which was a community project created with local council support that enabled the repackaging of the diverse histories of Newcastle's historic site Fort Scratchley, we apply Jenkins's seven transmedia storytelling principles and argue that the *Fort Scratchley* project complies as a non-fiction transmedia story universe because it is comprised of these transmedia components,

namely, a documentary film distributed on DVD (Kerrigan, 2008b), an interactive documentary (i-doc) distributed via the Web (Kerrigan, 2008a) and a historical booklet (McIntyre and Eklund, 2008) – and also a fourth component – the curated historical Fort Scratchley physical site itself, which is an essential element that 'completes' the Fort Scratchley transmedia experience. An analysis of how these non-fiction transmedia forms comply with Jenkins's seven principles of transmedia (2009) will provide clarification that the non-fiction narrative form can be extended in a non-commercial (not-for-profit) way – compared to fictional media – yet still comply with transmedia characteristics, where 'the intrinsic properties of the medium shape the form of narrative and affect the narrative experience' (Ryan, 2004: 1). It will also be argued that a *physical location*, like the actual Fort Scratchley historical site can be included as part of a non-fiction transmedia story universe, and that any documentary transmedia definition can and should accommodate physical sites/venues where historical events occurred and, therefore, where stories can be experienced.

Transmedia literature review

Media theorist Henry Jenkins used the term 'transmedia storytelling' in his 2003 article in the MIT *Technology Review* (Jenkins, 2003), with the origins of 'transmedia intertextuality' customarily being traced to 1991,[3] where Marsha Kinder examined how the narrative of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* expanded from comics (1984) to TV (1987), video games (1989) and a feature film (1990). Kinder argued that pre-cinema-going children 'learn that movies make a vital contribution to an ever-expanding supersystem of entertainment, one marked by transmedia intertextuality' (Kinder, 1991: 1). The extant literature confirms that terms used to describe transmedia narratives have been in flux over the last few decades, as Christy Dena (2009) argues in her PhD thesis, *Transmedia Practice: Theorising the Practice of Expressing a Fictional World across Distinct Media and Environments.*

The term transmedia has often been conflated with terms like 'cross-platform' and 'multi-platform', and notably Screen Australia have provided a definition of terms in their *Program Guidelines* (2011), which differentiates between linear, cross-platform, multiplatform, single platform and transmedia.[4] As Dena (2009) demonstrates, historically, media and game theorists have described transmedia in the following ways: 'cross-sited narratives' (Ruppel, 2006); 'distributed narratives' (Walker, 2004); 'very distributed stories' (Davenport et al., 2000); 'pervasive games' (Montola, 2009); 'distributed experiences' (McGonigal, 2006); 'superfictions' (Hill, 2001); and, of course, Henry Jenkins's 'transmedia storytelling' (Jenkins, 2006; see: Dena, 2009: 2–3).

The Producers Guild of America's *Code of Credits* (2010) defines transmedia with regard to *fictional* story worlds:

> A Transmedia Narrative project or franchise must consist of three (or more) narrative storylines existing within the same **fictional universe** on any of the following platforms: Film, Television, Short Film, Broadband, Publishing, Comics, Animation, Mobile, Special Venues, DVD/Blu-ray/CD-ROM, Narrative Commercial and Marketing rollouts, and other technologies that may or may not currently exist. These narrative extensions are NOT the same as repurposing material from one platform to be cut or repurposed to different platforms. (PGA, 2010: online, boldface emphasis added)

It is important to note that while the PGA *Code of Credits* defines transmedia as *fiction*, and occurring across *three or more* media platforms, others who define transmedia argue that transmedia practice is possible with 'more than one' media mode (Dena, 2009: 32). Emphasizing the finer detailed characteristics of transmedia, Dena argues that 'transmedia projects are characterised by

the expansion, not adaptation, of a story, and that they involve an emphasis on canon and continuity' (2009: 24). Jenkins supports this argument that *adaptations* are not transmedia storytelling:

> For many of us, a simple adaptation may be 'transmedia' but it is not 'transmedia storytelling' because it is simply re-presenting an existing story rather than expanding and annotating the fictional world. (2009a: online)

Transmedia definitions have emerged and developed from the need to describe the storytelling relationship between multiple media platforms that develop one canonical story universe. It is also noted that sometimes transmedia scholars and practitioners including Jenkins and Gomez use the term 'story world', whilst the PGA and Screen Australia guidelines use the term 'story/fictional universe'; there is potential scope for confusion here. Our preference is to use the term *story universe* (e.g. The *Harry Potter* story universe contains multiple story worlds, and those story worlds contain multiple characters).

Media theorist Ivan Askwith (2003) analysed and identified *The Matrix Reloaded* (2003), its companion video game *Enter the Matrix* (2003), *The Animatrix* DVD of nine animated film shorts (2003) and the third feature film in the film trilogy *The Matrix Revolutions* (2003) as being an example of transmedia (Askwith, 2003: online). Other classic *fiction* transmedia storytelling includes examples such as the feature films *Star Wars* (1977–), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992–), *The Blair Witch Project* (1999–), *The Dark Knight* (2008–) and TV series *Dr Who* (1963–), *Star Trek* (1966–), *Twin Peaks* (1990–), and *The X-Files* (1993–) (Velikovsky, 2013: 82–89).[5]

Jenkins states in *Convergence Culture* (2008) that 'A transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole' (2008: 97–98). Jenkins also argues that transmedia storytelling *challenges* the idea of a 'unified experience', which is systematically developed across multiple texts (Jenkins, 2009b). Using seven principles or characteristics, Jenkins describes the transmedia experience as containing *spreadability vs. drillability*, *continuity and multiplicity*, *immersion vs. extractability*[6], *world building*, *seriality*, *subjectivity* and *performance* (Jenkins 2009b, 2009c: online)

Jenkins (2009) also summarizes these seven principles into three key transmedia elements, namely, cultural historical practices, commercial industries and fan communities. Jenkins states that:

> transmedia connects to historical cultural practices and thus can draw insights from historical and critical writing on those practices … the study of transmedia narrative should reconnect with the study of commercial industries and fan communities to be able to really understand the dynamic being created by these interventions. (2009c: online)

With the final element being that most transmedia experiences 'point to new spaces for creative experimentation' (Jenkins, 2009c: online).

In addition to the above definitions, there are a number of useful published guidelines for transmedia producers, outlining practical strategies for sustainable transmedia production, including Gomez (2007)[7], Bernardo (2011), Phillips (2012), online resources that include transmedia 'bible' creation templates (Hayes, 2011; Pratten, 2010) and the weblog *Transmedia Activism*,[8] while other articles present a taxonomy for transmedia (Harvey, 2011) and further clarification around transmedia definitions (May, 2011).

It can be argued that all these resources also potentially apply to *non-fiction* transmedia.

Zaluczkowska (2011) undertakes an ethnography study of multiplatform/transmedia production of *The Alexander Wilson Project* (2012; hereafter, *AWP*). Zaluczkowska's work, though it provides an examination of a fictional story universe is relevant to this analysis because of the ethnographic approach used to investigate transmedia production. A similar approach was used on the *Fort Scratchley* project (Kerrigan, 2011). Zaluczkowska argues that from the point of view of a creator of transmedia that it is 'necessary for the writer to be focused on the production process and the technological aspects of this process in order to understand how [the] product is created and functions in this new environment' (Zaluczkowska, 2011: 83–84). *AWP* is part of the 'Sheerport' transmedia story world created by UK company Bellyfeel and is described as 'a high-impact interactive entertainment thriller series' (Zaluczkowska, 2011: 86). An analysis of the production process of *AWP* allows Zaluczkowska to assess its success against the following four competing transmedia criteria: Gomez' (2007) eight defining characteristics for transmedia narrative; Jenkins' (2009b) seven principles of transmedia storytelling; Davies' notion of 'granular content' and Lipman's (Brand, 1989) five corollaries to his definition of interactivity (Zaluczkowska, 2011: 93–98). Zaluczkowska concludes by arguing that in order to pursue these transmedia opportunities, screenwriters 'need to become more adaptable in their approach to writing' and 'they need to feel able to work productively and directly with their audiences on unfolding story material', so that they can 'create and maintain vast database information about their worlds and find navigational tools to help their audiences digest the material created' (Zaluczkowska, 2011: 99).

This wealth of academic and practitioner-focused material provides 'a higher-level approach that seeks to understand the nature of creative practices that utilise more than one distinct media, and environments' (Dena, 2009: 4). Therefore, it is surprising that the transmedia literature focuses almost exclusively on fictional worlds, giving the appearance that non-fiction transmedia is academically – and professionally – uncharted territory. As transmedia commentator David H Deans of *Transmedia Newswire* weblog[9] stated in a 2013 review of *A Creator's Guide to Transmedia Storytelling: How to Captivate and Engage Audiences Across Multiple Platforms* (Phillips, 2012):

> I'm waiting for an author to address the uncharted territory of non-fiction related commercial transmedia content development. Documentaries are a genre worthy of further exploration. To date, it remains the key area of our craft that would benefit from some equally instructive guidance. (Deans, 2013: online)

Non-fiction transmedia

Non-fiction transmedia is an extant and ever increasing phenomenon, given such examples as *Madonna: Truth or Dare* (1991, aka *In Bed With Madonna* outside the USA),[10] *The Corporation* (2003),[11] *Farenheit 9/11* (2004),[12] *Super-Size Me* (2004),[13] *March of The Penguins* (2005, aka *The Emperor's Journey*, UK);[14] *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006–),[15] the *Paradise, Purgatory and Hellhole: A History of Pyrmont and Ultimo* i-doc (2005–2010), *First Australians* (2008),[16] *Religulous* (2008),[17] *Chimpanzee* (2009),[18] *Garbage Dreams* (2009),[19] *Highrise* (2012–), and with the participatory non-fiction documentary *Sandy Storyline* winning the 2013 *Tribeca Film Festival* Bombay Sapphire Award for Transmedia and noting also that the Tribeca Institute funded six transmedia non-fiction projects in 2012.[20]

Non-fiction transmedia projects are also increasingly linked to education, public service, social change and cultural diversity agendas, especially in countries that have strong public service media traditions like Australia and Canada.

A Canadian example of non-fiction transmedia is *Highrise* (2012–) produced by the Canadian National Film Board, it is a 'multi-year documentary experiment about the human experience in vertical suburbs around the world' (Cizek, 2013: online). The *Highrise* website[21] presents a combination of six analog and digital transmedia (Cizek, 2013: online). *Highrise* director Kat Cizek argues that the criteria used for definition for interactive digital documentaries are complicated because it can incorporate performance in real-time installations (Cizek, 2010–2011, cited in O'Flynn, 2012). From the United States, Pardo (2011) cites *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006) as a transmedia documentary and also a prime example of transmedia activism, given the Al Gore travelling PowerPoint slide show, TED talks, and related books and websites (Pardo, 2011: 19).

In Australia, the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS TV) broadcast the three-part reality TV series *Go Back to Where You Came From* (O'Mahoney, Australia, 2011), which became SBS's most popular programme of 2011 (Cunningham, 2013: 103). The premise of the series was to take six ordinary Australians on a life-risking 25-day 'refugee journey in reverse' (SBS, 2011: online). The non-fictional transmedia included:

- *Go Back to Where You Came From*, a three-part reality TV series (series 1 in 2011, and series 2 in 2012), which was hailed as a 'genre bender – a high–concept social documentary using populist reality-TV *Survivor*-style techniques of central casting and profiling a "team" put together to undergo a severe test in an exotic locale' (Cunningham, 2013: 102). The six Australians met refugees living in Australia and they then retraced the journeys of those refugees, going back to Africa and Jordan where participants met the relatives of the Australian refugees they were originally introduced to in Australia.
- *Go Back to Where You Came From: The Response*, (SBS: online) – a live TV forum-style event with the six featured 'reality' participants, wherein their families and friends answered questions and continued the Australian refugee debate. The purpose of this program was to highlight how the TV series affected the participants' views on the refugee debate.
- Social media – the Twitter hashtag *#GobackSBS* trended number 1 worldwide during the first series broadcast,[22] and thousands of Australians discussed the programme in online forums (Cunningham, 2013: 103).
- The *Refugee Week Teaching Resource*[23] produced by the Refugee Council of Australia and Amnesty International, which has been distributed free to every secondary school in Australia (SBS Annual Report, 2010–2011: 31).
- The *Asylum: Exit Australia* online interactive game that uses facts and statistics about difficult refugee journeys to simulate real asylum seekers' journeys (Cunningham, 2013: 104).
- Various 'TV Format Agreement' sales to the United States, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and South Africa (Cunningham, 2013: 104)

These three works – *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Highrise* and *Go Back* – are exemplary cases of non-fiction transmedia that illustrate how the dynamic documentary and non-fiction forms can be used to tell factual multimedia stories. This supports the argument that documentary transmedia content does more than present linear journalistic reports; it allows for deeper discussion and public debate of complex issues and allows the audience to engage and participate in story universes to create their own narrative experiences.

Factual-based media forms are continually emerging and include interactive documentaries, augmented reality (AR) games and experiences.[24] Karen Schrier developed a historically focused AR game *Reliving the Revolution* (2005), set at Lexington, USA, where the first shots of the

American Revolution were fired. Her study around gameplay found 'that *Reliving the Revolution* and similar AR games can enhance the learning of: (1) historical name, places, and themes; (2) historical methodology and the limits to representations of the past; and (3) alternative perspectives and challenges to ''master'' historical interpretations' (Schrier, 2005: 2).

O'Flynn notes that interactive documentaries, or i-docs 'can be web-based or created as a physical installation but it is a discrete contained work encountered on a single platform, and in earlier examples, tends to function as a closed database' (O'Flynn, 2012: 144). Examples of *physical installations* can be found as permanent exhibitions in museums like Sydney's Powerhouse Museum exhibition of *Paradise, Purgatory and Hellhole: A History of Pyrmont and Ultimo* (2005, 2010), which was once a physical museum exhibition, and now resides online as an i-doc (PowerhouseMuseum, 2010: online). The Web offers more than just another platform to deliver documentary content, because i-docs are designed as databases containing fragments of content:

> wherein unique interfaces structure the modes of interaction that allow audiences to play with documentary content. The story or stories are encountered as a changeable non-linear experience, the narrative or storyline is often designed as open, evolving and processual, sometimes including audience created content. (O'Flynn, 2012: 142)

These documentary forms confirm that transmedia documentary possibilities can accommodate both analog and digital forms, including linear documentary films, historical books, i-docs, AR games/historical tours, serious games, serious alternate reality games, performances and/or real-time installations. A combination of any two (or more) of these media can and have been used to create non-fiction transmedia, thus bringing a whole new understanding to Grierson's statement that documentary is the 'creative treatment of actuality' (Grierson, 1933: 8).

Drawing on these understandings of documentary transmedia, the rest of the article will argue that *The Living History of Fort Scratchley* (2004–2008) project that was created using an auto-ethnographic approach (Kerrigan, 2011: 33–42) can also be deemed non-fiction documentary transmedia.

The Living History of Fort Scratchley project as transmedia

'*The Living History of Fort Scratchley*' research project (2004–2008) is comprised of four elements:

1. *Fort Scratchley: A Living History*, an i-doc (Kerrigan, 2008a).
2. *Using Fort Scratchley – Re-deployed*, a documentary DVD (Kerrigan, 2008b).
3. *A Living History of Fort Scratchley* (McIntyre and Eklund, 2008), an illustrated historical booklet.
4. Fort Scratchley, Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, the physical historical site itself (1882).

The Fort Scratchley transmedia project began in 2004 when the Newcastle City Council (NCC) approached history and communications academics from the University of Newcastle, Australia (Kerrigan, 2011: 3–4), as they identified a need for various media products to be created in order to educate the community about the rich and layered history of the Fort. The NCC's aim was to create media products that could be sold at the site, to provide tourist income to reinvest in the Fort's upkeep and to retell the diverse histories of the Fort through multiple documentary media products. Working

on a limited budget (AUD$10,000), the research team committed to a Living History methodology, primarily using oral history interviews to tell historical stories. Two media products were created, namely, a short historical documentary and a 5000-word illustrated historical booklet.

The booklet *A Living History of Fort Scratchley* (2008), authored by historians Dr Julie McIntyre and Dr Eric Eklund, was designed to provide a simple message about why Fort Scratchley is an important historical site. The booklet includes 40 historical images of the Fort, and its narrative is underpinned by three significant facts about the Fort:

1. 'it's the only coastal installation, or shore battery, in Australia to have returned fire on an enemy vessel in time of war'
2. 'it has many layers of history and meaning'
3. 'the role it plays today. From the 1980s, the site has become central to festivals, events and celebrations such as ANZAC day, and Australia Day'.

(McIntyre and Eklund, 2008: 4)

The booklet also contained a timeline, displayed across the centre page, highlighting 20 historical events from 1797 to 2008 (McIntyre and Eklund, 2008: 20–21).

The DVD *Using Fort Scratchley – Re-deployed* (2008) contains the 53-min video documentary *Using Fort Scratchley* (Kerrigan, 2008b) and also 33 minutes of DVD Extras; like the historical booklet, it was aimed primarily at Fort Scratchley site visitors including schoolchildren, and its narrative was designed to be viewed both before and after a visit to the Fort. The documentary had the following two key narrative objectives: firstly, to retell, using archival material and oral history interviews, the true story of the night of the 8 June 1942 when Fort Scratchley fired on a Japanese submarine and secondly to explore the historical role the site has played in non-military community activities. Multiple communities have used the Fort site, and the documentary therefore accounts for Awabakal aboriginal lore, convict coal mining activities, military and maritime use of the headland and more recently the Newcastle theatrical community's use of the site for plays. A visual montage was designed to illustrate multiple communities' uses of the site and the physical changes that the site has undergone, using illustrations and archival photographs with the names displayed over the corresponding images such as Captain Allan's Hill, Flagstaff Hill and Colliers Point (*Using Fort Scratchley* (2008), min: 14.34–14.54). The DVD Extras include 10 additional videos, primarily for the military and Fort Scratchley enthusiasts who wish to listen to extended interviews with the oral history participants Jim Cannon and Jimmy James. There is also a video tour of the Tunnel Complex, filmed under simulated 1880s era lighting conditions, where oil lamps were used to light the darkened tunnels (Kerrigan, 2011: 97).

The third media element of the project was an online i-doc, *Fort Scratchley: A Living History* (2008). The i-doc was funded through a grant and reused the timeline concept presented in the booklet. Beginning in 1797, there are 66 historically significant dates presented on an interactive timeline. A Flash media database contains the timeline events, made up of 151 photos and paintings, 62 video clips, and 83 newspaper articles and documents (Kerrigan, 2011: 119). The i-doc offers Web users eight choices to explore the media, including six pre-set narrative tours, called 'highlights', 'Awabakal', 'coal mining', 'military', 'maritime', and 'theatre'; a 'complete' tour of all the media; and the option for users to create a customized tour of their own version of the Fort's history by accessing the timeline. Certain timeline events are shared between the relevant tours. The i-doc showcases the additional historical documents and illustrations collected as part of the project's research, which could not be included in the authored DVD.

The fourth (transmedia) storytelling component is the Fort Scratchley site itself, a significant historical site built in 1882 and vacated by the military in 1972. Ownership of the site was managed between federal and local governments with one key issue being the cost of maintaining the site's historical buildings and tunnels.[25] The Fort's restoration and refurbishment was a cultural production that included discussion about the Fort's multiple narratives and involved the Fort Scratchley Historical Society, Newcastle City Council, architects, builders, contractors and cultural heritage organizations. The site's various historical narratives were interpreted by these groups for the benefit of future site visitors, with the restoration work designed to promote the Fort Scratchley franchise to the general public. In June 2008, when the AUD$10 million Fort restoration was complete, the Fort Scratchley transmedia products (the DVD, the booklet and i-doc) were launched publicly.

Transmedia theorists Gomez, Dena and Jenkins have all argued that 'one (person) or a small number of visionaries are responsible for developing and protecting the original content' (Dena, 2007: online; Gomez, 2007: online; Jenkins, 2008: 108).[26] This brief description of the Fort Scratchley project above demonstrates that there was an overarching 'Living History of Fort Scratchley' transmedia project, providing the 'small number of visionaries' who produced authored media works that remained faithful to the original cohesive vision.

Analysis of the Fort Scratchley project against Jenkins' seven criteria of transmedia

In this comparative analysis, Jenkins' seven principles of transmedia will be used to assess the four different media components of the Fort Scratchley project to determine whether they all comply with these transmedia characteristics.

Spreadability versus drillability

Spreadability is about 'accumulating eyeballs', and this criteria is satisfied through the Fort Scratchley transmedia forms, such as the historic site tours, booklet, DVD, website and the i-doc. *Drillability* is achieved through taking a guided tour of the physical site, watching the two DVDs or choosing one of the eight 'virtual' tour options on the i-doc. Accessing the Fort's history in any or all of these ways encourages a longer term engagement and a 'vertical descent into [the] text's complexities' (Jenkins, 2009b: online).

The i-doc's website statistics from 2011[27] also empirically demonstrate both *spreadability and drillability*, with 16,782 visits since 2007, and revealing that more than 50% of users average 8 min and 19 seconds on the site, with 1590 users exploring the site for between 5 min and 15 min and 357 of them actively using the site for more than an hour. It is also noted that 48.3% of users choose not to explore the website within the first 2 min. The top three nationalities visiting the site (in ascending order) have been Australia, the United States and Japan, and this usage pattern has been consistent since the official launch of the website in 2008.

Continuity and multiplicity

Navigating the Fort Scratchley transmedia reveals the *continuity* of historical facts, providing coherent and plausible accounts because they were all created from the same historical facts and oral history accounts by the same project team. An example of both *continuity and multiplicity*

occurs with the retelling of the 1942 Japanese submarine attack on Newcastle, for example, the booklet has a text version of Jim Cannon's oral history account of his experiences firing on the Japanese submarine, whilst the DVD has Jim's recorded interview with some overlaid footage and animation, and more oral accounts from Stan Newton, a soldier who was injured by a Japanese shell. The i-doc includes both these accounts, along with newspaper photographs of the damage caused by the Japanese shell attack and also an additional explanation from Searchlight Commander Bill Harvey who explains how they used the searchlights to catch a glimpse of the submarine before it escaped. These additional points of view contribute to the multiplicity of the franchise (Jenkins, 2009b: online), which is consistent with the Fort Scratchley central storyline/story world/ story universe.

Immersion versus extractability

A guided tour of the Fort, including its buildings and tunnels, offers a genuine *immersive* experience, with the tunnels tour being a noted highlight for tourists. The sophisticated underground tunnel system was originally built to allow the safe passage of ammunition from the store to the gun emplacements. In the *Fort Scratchley* DVD Extras and on the i-doc, a viewer can view a 'walk-through' of these candlelit tunnels in 1880s style; this experience is exclusive to the audio–visual medium, as it would in fact present a health and safety risk to have tourists walking through the tunnels in such low-light conditions. Experiencing the tunnels as they were originally/ historically intended provides an *extractable* element that can be thus purchased (on DVD) – or, experienced via an online visit to the i-doc. Both options provide a 'take-home' memento, where site visitors can 're-experience' a walk through the tunnels. Therefore, both transmedia *immersion* and *extractability* of the Fort Scratchley project can be satisfied through these various components.

World building

Transmedia production must develop worlds that have their own 'logic, practices and institutions' (Jenkins, 2009c: online). Compared with fiction, this is possibly much easier to achieve with *factual* content that draws on historical accounts of places and past times that already have their own logic, practice and institutions. In the Fort Scratchley project's case, there were at least five 'worlds' that needed to be illustrated – the Awabakal, coal mining, maritime, military and theatre – with the military and the maritime worlds arguably providing the most compelling or fascinating stories and additional characters for many audiences. From the maritime history is Captain Allan, one of Newcastle's longest serving harbour masters. Allan lived on the headland and because of this, the headland became known as Captain Allan's Hill. His story also invites a deeper explanation of Fort Scratchley's role in guarding the Newcastle harbour, which was one of the most profitable coal-exporting ports in the early 1800s of the Australian colony. Notably the Australian military has a similar claim to 'ownership' over the headland, named after Sir Peter Scratchley who designed the Fort. The military have detailed stories about the types of guns that were housed at the Fort, including the smooth-bore muzzle-loading guns, rifled muzzle-loading guns, hydro-pneumatic guns called 'disappearing guns' and the 6-inch guns, which can be seen at the Fort today. The annual firing of the 6-inch guns on ANZAC day helps to keep the military institutional practices alive, even though the military officially decommissioned the Fort in 1972.

Therefore, the Fort site itself is a real-world physical space that represents access to other worlds and narratives 'which intersect in some way with our own lived realities' (Jenkins,

2009c: online). These worlds are closely linked to the principles of immersion and extractability since they 'represent ways for consumers to engage more directly with the worlds' (Jenkins, 2009c: online).

Seriality

The Fort Scratchley story has its own internal logic, for example, most tourists are attracted to the military aspects of the site because of the name, however the communities who were part of the history of the Fort represent a *serial* – an 'unfolding story' – where each community's story offers 'chunks of meaningful and engaging story information' (Jenkins, 2009c: online). This allows for the dispersal of the story or spread of information 'not simply across multiple segments within the same medium, but rather across multiple media systems' (Jenkins, 2009c: online). An example of a self-contained story is the discovery of the first convict-made coal mineshafts in Australia; these old mineshafts had for decades been encased by the Fort's concrete retaining walls. In 2006, the Coal River Working party found maps of the convict mine entrance and began exploratory work to determine the location of its mineshaft. By drilling through the Fort's concrete wall and sending in a small telescopic camera they were able to locate some of the original mine's tunnels. This drilling activity was also filmed and was included in the documentary as one of the 'asides' that deviates from the main Fort Scratchley story. Indeed the rediscovery of the convict mineshafts are not included in the historical booklet, as they were seen as a 'separate storyline', too removed from the central history of the Fort.

The multiplicity of the Fort's historical stories and therefore its *seriality* means that it is possible to consume these stories in a non-linear order. For example, someone could read about the maritime use of the site, which would also overlap with the military use of the site, and *vice versa*. Notably, with historical sites such as the Fort, it is their comprehensive timelines of history that give the stories their linearity.

Therefore, it is also interesting to note that initially, Jenkins argued for the *non-linear* nature of transmedia entertainment experiences (Jenkins, 2006: passim) – but he later suggests that more work needs to be done to 'understand the sequencing of transmedia components and whether, in fact, it really does work to consume them in any order' (Jenkins, 2009c: online). In the case of the Fort Scratchley transmedia, all are certainly modular, or 'stand alone' and non-order dependent, yet also clearly combine to form a cohesive, unified whole; they were designed to be consumed in any order, allowing one media product to complement, expand and endorse the others.

Subjectivity

Transmedia *subjectivity* focuses on exploring extended aspects and dimensions of the story universe/holistic narrative, which includes events or characters that can broaden the timeline and introduce secondary characters and perspectives. The oral history approach used on this project certainly enabled *subjectivity* and allowed for the voices of 'new' characters to be heard. For example, Del deGlorian lived near the Fort and was a young woman at the time of the Japanese submarine shelling. Her oral history interview revealed information about the shell damage to the neighbourhood and led to another interview with her neighbour who was able to produce photos of the street, showing how the terrace houses had been damaged by exploding shells. So too, Professor Bryan Maynard retold stories about the Awabakal aboriginal tribe's inhabitances of the Newcastle harbour foreshore and their use of the headland as a fishing lookout. These

stories were able to be brought to life in the project's transmedia content by including convict artist Joseph Lycette's 1820s paintings of the Awabakal clan's hunting and fishing during the early days of the colony.

Revealing these *subjective* perspectives provides backstories and insights into the *seriality* of the multiple communities who have used the Fort and the multiple characters who represent those individual – and shared – experiences. Tapping into these subjectivities gives multiple perspectives on how the Fort was used and viewed by the different communities.

Performance

Performance criteria are satisfied through the following two transmedia components: firstly, in the 1990s, there were the theatrical groups Zeal Theatre and Footlice Theatre Company who staged productions at Fort Scratchley. Footlice presented childrens' shows such as *Good Knight, Good Knight* (Keir, Australia, 1994) and *Pigs Do Fly: A Cautionary Tale* (Keir, Australia, 1993), and Zeal presented traditional plays like *The Circus of Doctor Moreau* (Anderson, Australia, 1994) and *The Emperor's New Clothes* (Nantsou, Australia, 1993) in various rooms, tunnels, and on the Fort's parade ground, sometimes with audiences moving around the site to experience the next act. Zeal Theatre also created original theatrical works; for example, *Limeburners* (Nantsou, Australia, 1991) presented a history of Newcastle, whilst *Butcher Boat Race* (Nantsou, Australia, 1995) presented a maritime perspective. Audiences who attended these performances were experiencing the theatrical story universe of Fort Scratchley, and they often in turn became transmedia 'fans' of the Fort Scratchley universe.

Another (non-theatrical) *performance* component currently allows the general public to visit the site and take a guided tour to experience the tunnel complex and the Fort's guns being fired during the annual Australia Day (26 January) and ANZAC day (25 April) celebrations. Fort Scratchley fans are active in their participation, and many also film the firing of the guns, and some have uploaded their filmed experiences to YouTube (Various, 2013: online). These all confirm that the Fort Scratchley fans also share an online space, where they make their own contributions to the transmedia story universe. Jenkins argues, 'Fans will consume a series and then design spaces for their active participation' (Jenkins, 2009c: online), and Jenkins also describes performance opportunities as existing through two cultural groups, namely, cultural *attractors* and cultural *activators*. Joining the volunteer organization, the Fort Scratchley Historical Society allows 'fans' to go a step further and become a cultural activator, and they are then in a position to participate in the upkeep and caretaking of the Fort by being actively involved in the Fort's Historical Society.

In summary, having matched Jenkins' seven transmedia principles would suggest that the '*The Fort Scratchley Living History* project' qualifies as transmedia.

Discussion

This case study notes that the Fort Scratchley transmedia story universe has considerable 'overlap' of the multiple story worlds across the various media – and this raises the question about the differences between 'transmedia' and 'multiplatform' work. Government film-funding organization Screen Australia (2011) states that multiplatform is 'content created to exist on different platforms in different forms (e.g. a television program with a website delivering separate audiovisual content; a feature film with an associated game)' (ScreenAustralia, 2011: online). Indeed, it could

be argued that the three Fort Scratchley media elements (DVD, website and booklet) were created as *multiplatform* pieces, as they were conceived in 2004, before the term transmedia became as widely used and defined (Dena, 2009; Gomez, 2007; Jenkins, 2006).

However, Screen Australia's (2011) transmedia definition allows us to defend the position argued above, given that transmedia is 'storytelling across multiple forms of media, with each element making distinctive contributions to a user's understanding of the story' (ScreenAustralia, 2011: online). So whilst it is true that each *Fort Scratchley* media component may not present a 'totally different story world' within the Fort Scratchley story universe, each media product *extends and expands* the scope of these story worlds by introducing different (though, frequently also over-lapping) characters and historical events through different media. These overlaps are a necessity to maintain historical accuracy but also address Jenkins' *continuity versus drillability* criteria by pro-viding a 'new' way of accessing the depth of the story universe. The transmedia component that provides an obvious crossover between all elements of the story is the Fort itself, that is, the historical curated cultural site. Therefore, the Fort's significant and distinctive contribution to a user's understanding of the complete story universe is acknowledged by this transmedia analysis. This echo's O'Flynn's (2012: 144) argument that physical installations can be dubbed transmedia.

The *story universe consistency* can be demonstrated in the 'transmedia experience'. A simple example would be – by reading the historical booklet you are not able to watch video; on the DVD (video) you cannot see the detail of the first hand-drawn map of Newcastle Harbour, but when closely exploring and inspecting the hand-drawn maps made in 1771 via the i-doc, participants are experiencing each media's distinctive contribution to the story universe. This reinforces the notions from whence the concept of transmedia emerged – from Kinder's *transmedia intertextual-ity* (1991), Kristeva's notions of *intertextuality* (1966) and back to Bakhtin's 1934 notion of essen-tially the same concept, that is, *dialogism* (Kinder, 1991: 1–2).

In summary, the Fort Scratchley project can be described as a non-corporate/not-for-profit transmedia franchise comprised of four media, one of which is the actual culturally curated histor-ical site. This 'documentary transmedia' work also complies with Grierson's original definition of documentary as being the 'creative treatment of actuality' (Grierson, 1933: 8).

Analysis findings

A review of contemporary transmedia discourse and historical literature has presented a number of contested criteria – or controversies – in the domains of transmedia research and practice that are worth highlighting and that may well require further, deeper investigations from non-fiction trans-media scholars. For consideration are:

> First, the number of media components necessary for the term transmedia to be used is incon-sistent; Dena argues for *two or more* (Dena, 2009: 32), PGA states *three or more* (PGA, 2010: online), noting that sequels and adaptations are not transmedia and are, more sim-ply, 'franchising'. There needs to be some conclusive decision made by the field about how many elements are required to satisfy transmedia definitions.
>
> A second anomaly in the discourse is that not *all* transmedia practice is transmedia *storytell-ing* (Dena, 2010: online) because, for example, certain cross-media, such as games and AR historical tours that extend a canonical universe may comprise a *transmedia experience* but may not intentionally contain a 'story' or a 'narrative' per se.[28]

> A third anomaly in the current discourse on transmedia is the apparently interchangeable terms used as overall descriptors; sometimes 'story universe' is used, whilst at other times 'story world' is used. More consistency in the terminology is arguably desirable, and we would recommend using 'story universe', to describe the *whole* story universe, for example: the *Harry Potter* or *Star Wars* story universes; and examples for non-fiction transmedia, would be the *Go Back*, or the *Highrise* story universes; and by contrast, a 'story world' might describe one of the *Harry Potter* books, or one of the *Star Wars* movies. By comparison, in *non-fiction* – for example, with the Fort Scratchley project – the Military and Maritime story worlds both contribute to the entire *Fort Scratchley* story universe.

Transmedia definitions to date have therefore primarily emerged, evolved and developed out of the creation of media that expand *fictional* story worlds through narrative extension/expansion and franchising opportunities, where users experience content across multiple media platforms. Documentary or non-fiction transmedia may also not always be able to adopt or include the same structural 'master design' used for a transmedia game component, where say, getting a high score 'unlocks' or introduces another story in another media, but – because documentary is based on factual accounts and actual personal experiences, and/or social and cultural beliefs – it does have more opportunities to portray real-life characters, places and stories/histories that can be used as part of a larger transmedia experience. The example given here confirms that in order to 'fully' experience the Fort Scratchley transmedia project, it is necessary for an audience member to also visit the historical site, where the actual Fort itself can be seen as a central 'character' in the Fort Scratchley story – and therefore, the site makes 'distinctive contributions to the user's understanding of the story universe.' A further example can be taken from the *Go Back* transmedia, where an understanding of refugees and asylum seekers' plights is predicated on geographic, political and culturally specific information. Allowing Australians to be more informed about the global issues facing asylum seekers and the often life-threatening circumstances those asylum seekers faced in their own countries is a persuasive expositional technique that may change individual opinions about social and political issues. Presenting this story information to the Australian community through a multiple media delivery strategy – reality TV, live TV debate, educational material, social media and formatted TV rights is indisputably an example of transmedia whether either the 'two or more media' or the 'three or more media' definition is adopted.

Conclusion

Go Back (2011) and *The Living History of Fort Scratchley* (2004–2008) are both documentary transmedia works. The detailed analysis of the Fort Scratchley project confirms that its media production adheres to Jenkins' 'seven principles of transmedia' (2009), and being a non-fiction work, it also brings some of its own unique characteristics and terms to the scholarly debate on non-fiction transmedia, that is: 'non-commercial'. These initial tentative findings will need to be verified by further research and analysis of other non-fiction transmedia case studies to confirm their sustainability and validity. In conclusion, we find that an accurate definition and description of contemporary transmedia practice that includes reference to fictional and *non-fictional* transmedia story universes are necessary.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. Dena's (2009) PhD dissertation on transmedia practice defines it as two or more media, although the PGA (2010) guidelines for Transmedia Producer currently define fiction transmedia as three or more media.
2. Jenkins (2007) in 'Transmedia Storytelling 101': 'The extension may add a greater sense of realism to the fiction as a whole (as occurs when fake documents and time lines were produced for the website associated with *The Blair Witch Project* or in a different sense, the documentary films and CD-ROMS produced by James Cameron to provide historical context for *Titanic*). See: http://henryjenkins.org/2007/03/transmedia_storytelling_101.html. See also, Velikovsky (2014) 'Two Successful Transmedia Film Case Studies: *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) and *The Devil Inside* (2012)' at http://storyality.wordpress.com/2013/11/18/storyality-96-transmedia-practice-a-collective-approach-2014/
3. In fact, Kinder first referred to 'transmedia intertextuality' in a 1990 Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference paper: 'Animal Masquerade and Transmedia Intertextuality: or, Why I Love Being a Turtle' (Kinder, 1991: 217); personal communication, 1 February 2014.
4. Screen Australia's definitions for interactive, multiplatform, transmedia, and single platform can be found on their website: http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/funding/allmedia/definitions.aspx, accessed 22 July 2013.
5. The format of an 'open-ended' date of last publication indicates that the transmedia works are currently ongoing transmedial narratives.
6. Jenkins uses the example from the first feature-length documentary Nanook of the North (Flaherty, USA 1922) to illustrate that the documentary helped to introduce the Eskimo Pie to the American confectionary-buying public.
7. Gomez noted that transmedia design ideally includes that: (1) one (person) or a small number of visionaries who are responsible for developing and protecting it should originate the content; (2) the cross-platform element of the project should be planned early on or from the start of the project and should not be tacked on afterwards; (3) the product should use three or more platforms; (4) each platform needs to be specific and introduce the audience to new story elements that expand the world; (5) a single-vision story world – one world but many platforms; (6) the need to avoid fractures in the story world; and (7) effort is vertical through the company; (8) audience participation elements. (Gomez, as reported on The Producers Guild of America, New Media Council, New York Chapter weblog, 2007) http://pganmc.blogspot.com.au/2007/10/pga-member-jeff-gomez-left-assembled.html
8. See: http://transmediaactivism.wordpress.com/
9. Transmedia Newswire weblog: http://geobrava.wordpress.com/
10. *Madonna: Truth or Dare* (1991, aka *In Bed With Madonna* outside USA). Transmedia comprised of the feature-length documentary, the 1990 'Blond Ambition' world live concert tour, the Official Tourbook, the biography *Life with My Sister Madonna* (2008) by Christopher Ciccone and the movie *Dick Tracy* (1990).

11. *The Corporation* (2003): http://www.thecorporation.com/. Transmedia comprises the feature-length documentary film, the free soundtrack (http://archive.org/details/kpu101), the website (http://www.thecorporation.com/), the 'Occupy Your Future/Campaign 4 Corporate Harm Reduction' online community activism group (http://www.thecorporation.com/index.cfm?page_id=18), film study guides and books: *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*, and *Childhood Under Siege: How Big Business Targets Children* and the 'Occupy Your Future' t-shirts and posters.

12. *Farenheit 9/11* (2004) (http://www.fahrenheit911.com/). Transmedia comprises the feature-length documentary film, the website, *The Official Fahrenheit 9/11 Reader* book, the Teacher's Guide booklet.

13. *Super-Size Me* (2004) website now closed, but formerly: http://www.supersizeme.com/ and see the archived version at: http://web.archive.org/web/20040810035457/, http://www.supersizeme.com/. Transmedia comprises the feature-length documentary film, the (former) website (http://www.supersizeme.com/), the *Burger Man* game (http://web.archive.org/web/20040806063716/ and http://www.supersizeme.com/burgerman.htm), the documentary soundtrack and graphic novel *Supersized: Strange Tales From A Fast-Food Culture* (2011) (http://www.darkhorse.com/Books/16-784/Supersized-Strange-Tales-From-A-Fast-Food-Culture-TPB).

14. *March of The Penguins* (2005, aka *The Emperor's Journey*, UK), http://empereur.luc-jacquet.com/index_flash_ang.htm. Transmedia comprises the feature-length documentary film, websites (http://www.nationalgeographic.com.au/marchofthepenguins/ and http://empereur.luc-jacquet.com/index_flash_ang.htm), books (adults and kids versions), video games (GameBoy Advance, Nintendo DS, website games, e.g. *Save The Egg*: http://www.nationalgeographic.com.au/marchofthepenguins/game/), desktop wallpaper and 'Making of' documentary on the DVD gift set: *Of Penguins and Men* (2009).

15. An Inconvenient Truth (2006) http://www.takepart.com/an-inconvenient-truth Transmedia comprises: the feature-length documentary film; books (both the adult and children's versions), the website and the Al Gore PowerPoint slide show.

16. *First Australians* (2008) http://www.sbs.com.au/firstaustralians/ Transmedia comprises: a seven-part historical documentary series, a book, a community outreach program and the SBS website (including 203 mini documentaries).

17. *Religulous* (2008): http://www.lionsgate.com/religulous/. Transmedia comprising the feature-length documentary, the website, the physical location 'Creation Museum' and 'The Holy Land Experience'.

18. *Chimpanzee* (2009): http://disney.go.com/disneynature/chimpanzee/#/movies/chimpanzee. Transmedia comprises the feature-length documentary film, website, book, T-shirt, mug, iPhone case and plush toys (http://disney.go.com/disneynature/chimpanzee/#/movies/chimpanzee/products/cpz_digital).

19. *Garbage Dreams* (2009) http://www.garbagedreams.com/. Transmedia comprises the feature-length documentary film, the online game (http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/garbage-dreams/game.html) and the website.

20. *Sandy Storyline* Tribeca film festival award for transmedia (2013): http://www.sandystoryline.com/about/. See also: http://transitiontransmedia.wordpress.com/2012/08/29/tribeca-film-institute-funds-six-transmedia-non-fiction-projects/

21. The *Highrise* (2009–) website: http://highrise.nfb.ca/

22. See: 'Look Who's Judging Now' (Granfeld, 2011): http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/2766994.html

23. See: http://www.refugeeweek.org.au/resources/kit.php

24. It should perhaps be noted to avoid possible confusion, augmented reality games and alternate reality games are not the same thing, though they can be.

25. The Newcastle Maritime Museum and the Fort Scratchley Historical Society shared possession and use of the site until 2004 when federal government restoration work began. Newcastle City Council was officially handed control of the site in 2008.

26. Jenkins notes, 'So far, the most successful transmedia franchises have emerged when a single creator or creative unit maintains control' (2008: 108).

27. FortScratchley.org website usage statistics obtained in 2011 from: http://www.fortscratchley.org:2082/awstats.pl?month=all&year=2011&output=main&config=fortscratchley.org&lang=en&framename=index

28. See Dena's thoughts on the PGA, 2010 Transmedia Producer Code of Credits guidelines (with regard to 'transmedia' vs. 'transmedia storytelling' – and media such as games) at: http://www.christydena.com/2010/04/pgas-transmedia-producer/

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Author biographies

Susan Kerrigan is a senior lecturer and the Bachelor of Communication programme convenor at the University of Newcastle, Australia. Her teaching and research is informed by her past professional practice as a TV producer/director for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. She teaches the screen production courses in the media production major for the communication programme.

JT Velikovsky is a doctoral candidate in film/screenwriting/transmedia at the University of Newcastle, Australia. He is an award-winning screenwriter and also a director, producer, and designer in the fields of film, games, TV, comics and digital media.