USCSchool
of Cinematic Arts
Media Arts + Practice Division

Designing and Writing Transmedia Narrative, Spring 2022, 4 units
Monday 1:00 – 3:50 pm
Professor Vicki Callahan
Email: vcallahan@cinema.usc.edu
Office: SCI 101 G
Office Hours: Monday: 4:00-5:00 pm and Thursday: 2:00-3:00 pm
and by appointment, office hours will be on Zoom
Sign up via Calendly: https://calendly.com/vcallahan

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the possibilities of transmedia, or cross-platform storytelling in a variety of genres, from advertising/marketing/branding, social marketing, blockbuster and indie media, to documentary and social change campaigns. Although the term, "transmedia," has been subject tofluid definitions and even one might argue obsolescence, we find ourselves surrounded with transmedia frameworks and strategies on a daily basis. While we will look at projects that employ transmedia strategies across the spectrum, we will be focused, in the main, on those outside the high-profile franchise models. We offer an expansive look at transmedia and encourage students to imagine the ways in which fiction and non-fiction storytelling might be transformed.

In this class we will define, design, and write transmedia narratives in consideration of the many possibilities the form offers. Students will be asked to work, either individually or in small groups, on a project of their own selection, fiction or non-fiction, using 3 platforms of their choice. By the end of the semester, the students will have created the basic story framework andcharacters, design, and user experience that implements the core concepts of transmedia storytelling.

Please bookmark these two sites for our class

Blackboard – syllabus and weekly assignments posted

Google Shared Drive – **where you post your assignments**

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0AE2xrw3vyaHEUk9PVA

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIAL

*Gene Luen Yang, *Avatar: The Last Airbender, The Promise Part 1* (online vendors, e.g.,Amazon)
*All other readings will be available via links or pdf on our course site.
*Students will be required to rent a few films available via streaming services but many will be screened in class or available online (in part depending on our online|in person status)

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Curation (Group Project) #1	10%
Story/Topic #2	10%
Narrative Strands #3	10%

Basic World Design and Moodboard #4	10%
Diagram/Mind Map #5	10%
Platforms/Timing/User Journey #6	10%
Final Project/Story Bible/Presentation	20%
Presence/Peer Review/Prep	10%
Final Reflection	10%

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY

No late work is accepted beyond the stated deadlines unless there is good cause. Please speak to me about issues related to deadlines.

Presence, Participation, and Community: Our class is a space to discuss, create, and provide feedback in a supportive context. We encourage you to go deeply into the what and why of your story/project and our sessions are designed to help facilitate your process. Our class depends on group work, ongoing feedback, and community building, which makes your attendance and contributions key. Join us in class. If you miss a class, please notify me email (with IML320 in the subject line) and be sure to get any notes and assignments from your colleagues. This allows me toengage with you about the ideas and creative possibilities of the class rather than logistics. Please exchange contact information with at least two other students to facilitate this process. We also cover subject matter that is often provocative and can challenge our worldviews. Lively debate is expected and encouraged with all points of view welcome. Our conversations are grounded in love and respect for our colleagues. Research, imagination, and careful analysis are the foundations onwhich we build community.

Content Notice: The work in our class involves the engagement of material that can at times be difficult, painful, or stressful to encounter. We may at times deal with issues of oppression acrossrace, gender, class as well as other areas of oppression (e.g., ethnicity, age, nationality, disability)with the intent to understand our current context and future possibilities. I will do my best to provide warnings whenever I can. If for some reason, you want or need to miss material due to the topic or approach, please connect with me to consider alternatives.

Statement on Fair Use: Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. MAP seeks to apply a reasonable working definition of fairuse that will enable students and instructors to develop multimedia projects without seeking authorization for non-commercial, educational uses. Four factors that should be considered whendetermining whether a use is fair: (1) the purpose and character of use, (2) the nature of the copyrighted work, (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. In general, we regard the reproduction of copyrighted works for the purposes of analysis or critique in this class to be covered by the principle of fair use.

Citation Guidelines: All projects will need to include academically appropriate citations in the form of a References section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The References area is either included in the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to yourproject. We will be following the KAIROS style guide for citation purposes in this class [http://www.technorhetoric.net/styleguide.html]. Kairos uses a modified APA format, whose general guidelines and many specific examples you can find here: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

==WEEKLY SCHEDULE (Subject to change)==
Please consult our Blackboard site for the week for the most
current information, assignments, and due dates.

==Jan 10, Week 1: Intro to Course==

In class:
Intros: View and Discuss:
Ayoka Chenzira, "Revel in the Physical"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKAPya4lF_M

In class read:
 *Henry Jenkins, Intro to Transmedia Storytelling 101,
http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2007/03/transmedia_storytelling_101.html
 *Elena Cresci "Lonely Girl 15, "How One Mysterious Blogger Changed the Internet"
https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/jun/16/lonelygirl15-bree-video-blog-youtube

View and Discuss:
Art of the Heist: http://campfirenyc.com/work/audi-art-of-the-heist
(Campfire)
Westworld https://campfirenyc.com/work/hbo-the-westworld-experience
(Campfire)
Why So Serious?
https://42entertainment.com/work/whysoserious
Conspiracy for Good: http://conspiracyforgood.com/index.php
LonelyGirl15: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-goXKtd6cPo (first 2 episodes, season1)
Awkward Black Girl: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIVa9lxkbus (first 2 episodes ofseason)

Bandersnatch trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNw9DAwp2Kk

Half the Sky, clip and website, book excerpt

https://www.usaid.gov/halfthesky

https://www.usaid.gov/halfthesky/mobile-games

https://www.bookbrowse.com/excerpts/index.cfm/book_number/2345/page_number/1/half-the-sky#excerpt

Week 2, Jan 17, Martin Luther King Day, Holiday

For Week 3:

Read:

- Karen Swallow Prior, "The New Old Way to Tell Stories, With Input from the Audience,"*The Atlantic,* October 18, 2013 http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2013/10/the-new-old-way-to-tell- stories-with-input-from-the-audience/280682/
- Henry Jenkins, Transmedia 202, http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2011/08/defining_transmedia_further_re.html
- Robert Pratten, Getting Started in Transmedia Storytelling, Intro and Understanding Transmedia Storytelling, pgs 1-39. (Pdf, in resources area)
- Jake Kring-Schreifels, "Blair Witch at 20: Why It Can't Be Replicated" https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/30/movies/blair-witch-project-1999.html

View:

- *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KisuGP2lcPs, Episodes 1 - 4 and some of the related materials linked through Prior article*

Explore:

March Kleinshanz, The Blair Witch Project Mythology
https://screenrant.com/blair-witch-project-mythology/

***Prep for Exercise #1 will be due in class next week

Jan 24, Week 3: What is Transmedia?

Exercise #1 in class (group)

Screen in class:
The Blair Witch Project
In class, read:
Maya Zuckerman, The Why of Transmedia
https://www.provideocoalition.com/the-why-of-transmedia/

Due for Week 4:

- Robert McKee, "The Story Problem," (pdf pages 11-17)
- What is the Hero's Journey Archetype, https://blog.reedsy.com/heros-journey/
- Jeff Gomez, The Collective Journey
    https://blog.collectivejourney.com/why-is-this-happening-d1287d5ee4ee
    https://blog.collectivejourney.com/the-heros-journey-is-no-longer-serving-us-85c6f8152a50

> *https://blog.collectivejourney.com/when-it-comes-to-story-youre-not-getting-it-f6e1f20006f1*

- One selection from Fan Fiction on *Prometheus*

https://archiveofourown.org/works/search?utf8=✓&work_search%5Bquery%5D=prometheus

View:

- *Prometheus* Transmedia Campaign,
  https://www.behance.net/gallery/14357945/Prometheus-Transmedia-Campaign
- Peter Weiland, Ted Talk 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQpGwnN3dfc
  Suggested, not required: Susan Mackey-Kallis, "The Perennial Journey Home" (pdf in resources)

==Jan 31, Week 4: Story: The Hero's Journey and Emerging Story Possibilities==

Screen: *Prometheus*

==For Week 5:==

Read:

- Jeff Gomez, Collective Journey, "Regenerative Listening,"
  https://blog.collectivejourney.com/the-secret-to-new-storytelling-regenerative-listening-5250c65b6391
- Maya Zuckerman, *https://medium.com/regenerative-narrative/the-great-becoming-part-001-8d6588f1efd5*
  and
- https://medium.com/regenerative-narrative/the-great-becoming-part-002-92c2825d19cc
- Michon Boston, "On PBS, Old Photos Tell New Stories,"
  https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/12/arts/television/family-pictures-usa-pbs.html

View:

Family Pictures, Thomas Allen Harris: https://www.pbs.org/show/family-pictures-usa/
(Episode 2, Detroit, rent via Amazon or free if you have PBS or Hoopla).
Website: https://fpu.wpengine.com

Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/FamilyPicturesUSA/

Prepare: Story Idea, Exercise #2 Due

==Feb 7, Week 5: The Collective Journey, Story Session – Story Idea Workshop==

Discuss *Family Pictures*

Workshop Exercise #2, Story Idea

In class view:

Walking Dead, Season 1, episode 1
The Walking Dead, https://www.comicextra.com/the-walking-dead/chapter-1
The Walking Dead Fan Fiction, https://www.fanfiction.net/tv/Walking-Dead/

==For week 6,==

Read:

- Khaliah Reed, "Fan Fiction as Performative Criticism: Harry Potter Race Bending"
- Neils Nessen, "Black Panther Transmedia"
- Ruth Anne Reid, World Building 101, https://thewritepractice.com/world-building-101/
- "Fantasy World Building" https://nybookeditors.com/2017/07/fantasy-world-building-101-create-breathing-world-fantasy-novel/
- **View:** "The Case for Fan Fiction"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdDIMOehLm8&feature=youtu.be

Feb 14, Week 6: Of Worlds and Moods and Fans

Screen: Black Panther **In class:**

*Guest, Khaliah Reed, PhD candidate, English Literature on fan fiction

Feb 21, Week 7, President's Day, Holiday

For week 8,

Read:

- Pratten, Developing a Participatory Story World, pgs 76-89 (pdf)
- Gene Luen Yang, *Avatar: The Last Airbender, The Promise Part 1*
- *Avatar: The Last Airbender* fan fiction (select one)

https://archiveofourown.org/works/search?utf8=✓&work_search%5Bquery%5D=last+air bender

- Lori Kido Lopez, "Fan Activists and the Politics of Race" pdf
- *How to create great mood boards for your project, https://blog.pond5.com/23909-setting-the-mood-how-to-create-great-mood-boards-for-your-project/*

Feb 28, Week 8: Mood Board
        Screen In Class: Avatar: The Last Airbender, Season 1, Episode 17, 2006.
Exercise # 3, Mood Board Workshop
For Week 9

Read:

- Robert McKee: The Structure Spectrum
- Janet Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck* excerpts, read parts I and II
  http://www.altx.com/ebr/ebr7/7mur.htm
- Kamal Sinclair, Selection from "Making a New Reality":
  https://makinganewreality.org/the-high-stakes-of-limited-inclusion-8c11541829f6

View:

- Question Bridge: http://beta.questionbridge.com

- About the film, *Collisions*: http://www.collisionsvr.com/about-the-film
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *The Danger of a Single Story, (for those who didn't view in Zuckerman)*

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

#4 Narrative Strands Due

<mark>**March 7, Week 9: Making a New Reality; Writing New Histories:**</mark>

<mark>**Exercise #4 Narrative Strands Due**</mark> Discussion
Mind Map basics
VR views: *Collisions; We Live Here, Send Me Home, Arthur Ashe* (if available)

<mark>**Spring Break, March 13-20**</mark>
<mark>For Week 10</mark>

Read:

- Robert Pratten, Writing Interactive Transmedia Narratives, Chapter 6 (through 6.4)
- Laura Hudson, "Twine, The Video Game Technology for all"
  https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/23/magazine/twine-the-video-game-technology-for-all.html

View:

- Select any two of the Twine examples from the Arcade at the end of the NYTimes article
- Illya Szilak, *Queerskins: A Novel,* http://www.queerskins.com/ (there are trailers for 2VR projects, go to novel and past intro page into the novel. It is pretty lengthy so go through what you have time/interest for. It is an amazing project and the story is worththe time to go through.
- <mark>Mind Map Exercise #5 is due in class</mark>

<mark>**March 21, Week 10: Designing the Intersection of Storylines**:</mark> <mark>**Mind Map, Exercise #5 Due**</mark>
In class, view VR Queerskins VR

<mark>**For Week 11**</mark>

Read:

- *"Transmedia Activism" Henry Jenkins and Lina Srivastava (3 short posts)*
  http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2016/01/telling-stories-lina-srivastava-talks-about-transmedia-activism-part-one.html
- http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2016/01/telling-stories-lina-srivastava-talks-about-transmedia-activism-part-two.html
- http://henryjenkins.org/blog/2016/01/telling-stories-lina-srivastava-talks-about-transmedia-activism-part-three.html
- Aggie Ebrahimi Bazaz, "Border Crossing and Genre Bending, An Interview with Jesikah MariaRoss (pdf in weekly assignment) or here: *https://aggiebazaz.com/border-crossing-and-genre- bending-a-conversation-with-jesikah-maria-ross/*
- *Robert Pratten, Appendix 2, Transmedia for Change*

View:

- Explore work of jesikah maria ross http://jesikahmariaross.com
- *Priya Shakti*: https://www.priyashakti.com/

March 28, Week 11 Activism

Guest: Jaime Lopez, PhD student, Urban Planning and Development, Price School of Public Policy

VR: *Traveling While Black*

User Journey Workshop

For Week 12, User Journey, Exercise #6, due in class

Read:

- Robert Pratten: Chapter 5 "Audience" and Sec 6.4 to end of chapter
- Review Final Project Guidelines!

April 4, Week 12: How is your story experienced? Platforms and User Journeys

Exercise #6: User Journey Due

View in class:

Euphoria, trailer, make up videos and website:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR4Pxgnm-GA

https://www.hbo.com/euphoria

And Interactive, branching, Storytelling

Downtown Browns: http://downtownbrowns.weebly.com

For Week 13

Read:

Pratten Section 7, Content Strategy

Work on Project/Storybible

April 11, Week 13: Individual Meetings on Projects during class time

Work on Final Project/Storybible

April 18, Week 14: Work on Final Project - Project Feedback Session

For Week 15

Work on Final Project/Storybible and Presentation – due in class

April 25, Week 15: Final Project Presentations, Storybible Due Peer Review in class

Exam Week: Final Course Reflection during your course examination time) due

COVID-19 Information for On Campus Activities

USC has COVID-19 and health protocols requirements for in person | on campus attendance.

Please consult the USC COVID-19 resource center website for the latest COVID-19 testing and health protocol requirements. Requirements are continuously updated so please check frequently. Students are expected to follow the University's Expectations on Student Behavior.

Students should also stay informed with the "We Are USC" portal: https://we-are.usc.edu/students/

Course Policies and Additional Info/Resources:

Academic Conduct:
Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Statement on Fair Use:
Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. Projects are produced with fair use doctrines in mind using its four pillars: (1) the purpose and character of use, (2) the nature of the copyrighted work, (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. Generally speaking, this means you must only use as much of a copyrighted work as is necessary to make your point, and you must cite your sources accordingly.

Citation Guidelines:
We assert that work produced in our classes is covered under the Doctrine of Fair Use. In order to make this claim, however, all projects must include academically appropriate citations in the form of a References section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The References section is either included in the project itself or as a separate document, as appropriate. For citation purposes, please use Chicago or MLA style format. You may find information on either at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html

Research:
Need to do research but don't know where to start? Searching for a book, article, or data to support your argument? Not sure how to cite a source in your bibliography? Ask a librarian! Research help is available:
- In person and by phone, chat and email at Ask a Librarian
- Through research guides and FAQs
- By contacting your subject librarian USC Libraries: https://libraries.usc.edu/

Support Systems:
Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710
https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL),
press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

USC Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report
A venue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Service - (213) 740-0776
https://osas.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu,
emergency.usc.edu Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)
ombuds.usc.edu
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concerns.