Marie-Laure Ryan and Jan-Noël Thon, eds. *Storyworlds across Media: Toward a Media-Conscious Narratology.* Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2014. Pb. 363 pp. $ 35.00. ISBN 978-0-8032-4563-1.

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Storyworlds across Media is an outstanding sequel to *Narrative across Media* (edited by Ryan in 2004) that deals with the current proliferation of worlds

in different media. The collection looks at Henry Jenkins's 'media convergence' from a narratological angle: it places storyworlds and narrativity (i.e. the quality that makes a narrative a narrative) at the centre of the new convergence culture. In this context, the contributions demonstrate that the 'storyworld' is an indispensable tool with regard to analyses of our media-saturated age. Among other things, they address multimodal representations of narrative worlds (e.g. in comics, computer games, films, graphic and multimodal novels, as well as video games), worlds that cut across various instalments (as in serial television), and transmedia worlds that develop in different platforms and often have multiple creators (e.g. franchises or the user-driven material of fan fiction).

The anthology consists of three parts. Part I deals with transmedially applicable and medium-specific concepts. Marie-Laure Ryan provides definitions of the terms 'medium' and 'storyworld' and illustrates that the concept of the storyworld allows critics to distinguish world-internal and world-external elements across media and semiotic channels. Also, one can discriminate more clearly between single-world and many-worlds texts, and it is worth noting that the signs that media use shape the worlds they evoke: one only has to compare the affordances of paintings to those of prose texts. Patrick Colm Hogan looks at the emplotting of the storyworld in *Hamlet*, and is particularly interested in trajectory interruption (when one emotionally important segment remains incomplete because another section begins) and intensified parallelism (i.e. the repetition of structurally similar complexes). He also posits a 'nonpersonified narrator' as the source of dramatic emplotment. It seems, though, that the narrator is a medium-specific concept that does not easily translate to other media. Since the functions of Hogan's dramatic narrator are identical with the functions of the (implied) author (see 57, 63), narratologists can easily analyze discourse manipulations in drama without Hogan's concept. Jan-Noël Thon discusses subjective representations of consciousness in feature films, graphic novels, and computer games. He distinguishes between point-of-view sequences (which show what a character sees); (quasi-)perceptual point-of-view sequences (that represent more subjective aspects of his or her perception); quasi-perceptual overlays (which simulate perceptual aspects of a character's consciousness without simulating his or her spatial position); and full-fledged representations of internal worlds (such as dreams, hallucinations, memories, and fantasies). Frank Zipfel develops a transmedial concept of fictionality which involves fictional worlds (i.e. invented or imaginary elements); games of make-believe (people play the game while knowing that the game is a game); and institutional practices (i.e. conventions that lead the recipient to adopt a fiction-specific attitude). In a second step, he demonstrates that fictionality is a common feature of prose narratives, theatre, and film. Werner Wolf addresses the question of how literature and the pictorial arts invite narrative readings through different

framings. Along the lines of Lessing's *Laocoön*, he argues that since the worlds of paintings tend to represent static moments (rather than proper event sequences that move through time) the frame 'narrative' is evoked more frequently and more clearly in the case of literature. However, Wolf also shows that even though the pictorial arts display a lower degree of narrativity, they often encourage narrativization by implying temporality and causality.

Part II of the book focuses on multimodality (the co-existence of different types of signs in the same narrative) and intermediality (cross-references to other media). Wolfgang Hallet does not only demonstrate how the multimodal novels by Haddon, Foer, and Larsen fuse words with maps, photographs, diagrams, handwritten letters; he also addresses the cultural work that these multiple semiotic practices accomplish. Jesper Juul argues that since video games enable their players to influence the course of events, they are not prototypical narratives but fictional worlds in which actions may be performed. Juul investigates the level of abstraction, i.e. the proportion of world features that are attached to game rules, rather than the enhancing of the overall aesthetic illusion. While narratives primarily offer us immersion, games involve a sense of achievement: in order to play a game efficiently, the player must be able to grasp its rules and thus its level of abstraction. Jared Gardner draws our attention to the institutional contexts of narrative production. He looks at the development of comics and films, and demonstrates that early manifestations of the genres (1890–1910) were inherently interactive. With regard to the development of Hollywood and the DVD between 1997 and 2013, on the other hand, he observes that the freedom of active viewers to explore additional paratextual material is severely curtailed by the growing sameness and smallness of the paratexts over recent years. Gardner also shows that Hollywood's interest in film adaptations of comics is decreasing: the big corporations do not wish to encourage the active reading practices of comic book readers. Since comics remain resistant to digitalization, they can serve as a model concerning the question of how to explore multimodality. Thoss analyzes a particular type of media rivalry: he illustrates how the *Scott Pilgrim* comic books and their film adaptation by Edgar Wright vie with one another over which medium can best operate in the manner of a video game. Thoss demonstrates that there is no winner concerning the simulation of video games: the point of the rivalry is to probe media for their potential and to explore new possibilities. Caracciolo argues that readers always draw on their experiential backgrounds to attribute experiences to the characters of narratives on the basis of textual clues. Also, he uses Burroughs's *Naked Lunch* and the computer game *Max Payne 2*, which feature characters who experience hallucinations and dreams, to show that such cases challenge the recipients' cultural values and the medium-specific conventions of narrative representation.

Part III of *Storyworlds across Media* deals with instances of transmedial story-telling in which elements of storyworlds get dispersed across multiple channels. Mittell, for instance, compares the centrifugal (storyworld-driven) expansion of the TV series *Lost* to the more modest centripetal (character-driven) transmedia of the TV series *Breaking Bad*. Mittell also points out that the excessive diegetic extensions of the transmedia of *Lost* were less successful than the hypothetical paratexts of *Breaking Bad* (which foreground alternative dimensions such as visions by secondary figures), and concludes by arguing that one should consider the latter as a productive avenue for serial television. Harvey develops a new tax-onomy of transmedia storytelling to analyze potential connections between the original and its media spin-offs. His six categories are based on legal relationships and illustrate how such directives influence the representation of storyworlds as well as the ways in which they are understood. Klastrup and Tosca use qualitative and quantitative methods to address the question of how fans experienced *The Maester's Path*, an online game to promote the television series *Game of Thrones* (based on the novel series *A Song of Ice and Fire*). Their findings suggest that fans were particularly concerned about the integrity of the original storyworld (its back-story, setting, and ethics), and the process of sharing their experiences on social media in the context of a marketing scheme. Leavenworth probes the connection between the storyworld of *The Vampire Diaries* and unsanctioned, fan-produced developments. She deconstructs the hierarchical relation between production and consumption by showing that the canon always resonates in the fan fictions, while fanfic additions also influence the ways in which recipients look at the canon. Van Leavenworth, finally, demonstrates that the numerous transmedial contributions to the development of the Lovecraft storyworld, which centres on humanity's trou-bling contact with a fearful cosmic reality, have significantly influenced the can-onization of H.P. Lovecraft as an American Gothic writer.

Most of the articles in this collection are excellent – the contributions by Thon, Gardner, and Thoss are among the best. Thon develops a fascinating new typology of representations of private worlds in films, graphic novels, and computer games, thus inviting future media-conscious research to investigate how these strategies relate to the (more classical) representation of conscious-ness in drama and prose (i.e. techniques such as psychonarration, free indirect discourse, and direct thought). Further, Gardner's diachronic perspective on multimodality (1890–2013) contradicts the intuitive assumption that our media-saturated age automatically produces active and multimodal recipients: Gardner shows that 'silent' films were experienced in the context of "vaudeville routines, live music, narration, and sound effects, not to mention the lively commentary of the audience itself" (194), while the freedom of twenty-first-century viewers are carefully circumscribed by multinational media conglomerates that are not

interested in multimodal reading practices. Thoss, finally, develops a new and playful way of looking at remediation or intermediality. His examples involve a case of media rivalry (between comic book and film) concerning the simulation of a third medium (computer game) rather than the represented world. Thoss successfully moves beyond the (traditional and boring) question of medial adequacy (concerning authenticity or the credible representation of the storyworld), and instead focuses on narrative possibilities that are not tied to the mimetic imperative but to media potential. I hope that other scholars in the area of remediation will follow his lead.

The collection as a whole seeks to develop a media-conscious narratology, a new paradigm which does not only address the question of how the constructions of storyworlds are affected by the types of signs that media use, but also deals with multimodality and the expansion of narrative worlds across different media platforms. I was particularly happy to see that most of the articles use an inductive approach that moves from local strategies to global structures (as opposed to a deductive approach which postulates a global structure before looking at local perturbations). The articles thus theorize *actual* connections between worlds and media (instead of merely fantasizing about theoretical possibilities). This anthology is a brilliant contribution to the narratological analysis of media. It is methodologically innovative; its corpus covers the latest media developments (I only thought that more could have been said about apps and mobile phones); and most essays are very well written. I would recommend *Storyworlds across Media* to everyone interested in the expansion of narrative universes in the contemporary media landscape (i.e. the proliferation of sequels, prequels, adaptations, transpositions, variations, and alternatives). Since the collection uses hardly any jargon and always explains narratological and media-related terminology, it can even be used by beginners.