



The Future of Storytelling - Transmedia

Guest was Andrea Phillips

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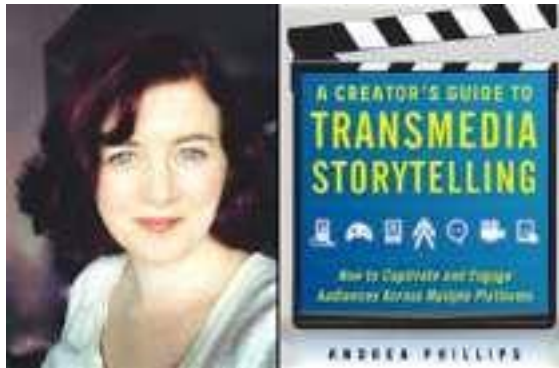
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Andrea Phillips is an award-winning transmedia writer, game designer and author. Her work includes a variety of educational and commercial projects, including The Maester's Path for HBO's Game of Thrones with Campfire Media, America 2049 with human rights nonprofit Breakthrough, and the independent commercial ARG Perplex City. Her indie work includes the Kickstarted collaboration Balance of Powers, the Twitter horoscopes of Madame Zee, and the forthcoming serial transmedia project Felicity.

Andrea is a co-moderator for the first community of ARG players, the Cloudmakers, and a Fellow of the Futures of Entertainment. She has spoken at SXSW, MIT Storytelling 3.0, the Power to the Pixel/IFP Cross-Media Forum, ARGfest, DIY Days, and FITC Storytelling X.1, among others.

Andrea cheats at solitaire (a victimless crime) and Words With Friends (which is less forgivable). Consider yourself warned.

Transmedia Storytelling is a story experience both for and with an audience that unfolds over several media channels. Author Andrea Phillips provides a fantastic introduction in this podcast and her new book, [A Creator's Guide to Transmedia Storytelling](#).

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Transcription of Podcast

Andrea Phillips: You're talking about training. The classic alternate reality game has actually been used in training, for example, military scenarios for quite a while.

I don't remember if I mentioned in the book or not at all. Even at Cisco they've run a couple of sessions of a game called The Hunch, which was an internal training initiative meant at least, in some sense, to make sure that all the Cisco employees were at least fairly familiar with Cisco's product and their capabilities.

But it was wrapped in this fun sort of puzzle-hunt narrative wrapping, if you will. And it made a lot more interesting than just a seminar going over specs.

Joe Dager: Welcome everybody; this is Joe Dager, the host of the Business 901 podcast.

With me today is Andrea Phillips. She is an American Transmedia Game Designer and writer. She's been active in the fields of Transmedia storytelling and alternate reality games in a variety of roles since 2001.

She has recently authored the book "A Creators Guide to Transmedia Storytelling." I would like to welcome her, and I feel ashamed that we don't have four different kinds of media to start out the podcast with.

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Andrea: Oh, it's fine. One of the things I have been saying lately is that not everything has to be Transmedia. It's OK for something to stick to one media if it does the job in just that one. So I think we're perfectly good here.

Joe: When I first think of storytelling I think of the country style of storytelling with the storyteller standing on stage doing a few catcalls and such. Is this just now the electronic version?

Andrea: In a sense, it is. It can be that simple, the one creator doing all the hand puppets essentially with ten different Twitter accounts and what have you.

Or it can be tremendously more elaborate with a six figure budget and 10 different platforms and huge, huge teams of dozens of people trying to get something out the door.

It all depends on what you are trying to make. As with all kinds of a story, it's as simple or complex as you set out to make it.

Joe: What encouraged you to write a book?

Andrea: Well, let me tell you a little of history here. I've been involved in Transmedia in one way, or another, as you said from 2001.

First as a consumer and later as a creator myself, and in 2005 or so, I started a blog talking about some of the things that I was finding in my creation process; on just things that struck me.

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Trying to explain to myself what I was doing and what worked and what didn't. A couple of years ago, I started a series on that blog that was writing for Transmedia, talking about things like characterization and what worked and didn't work and conveying action and so on.

And what I was doing was trying to approach the topic as a matter of craft, if you will. Not this high level structural stuff, not the business angle, but craft. What works, what doesn't, why?

How do you use the tools of Transmedia most effectually? I was trying to start a conversation, because there's not a lot of conversation out there about these topics. Only a few creators are really talking about this stuff out loud. Most of that is in the halls at conferences. Quietly, in little groups, whispered. We all sign so many NDAs and we all have so many proprietary secrets that no one really wants to talk about it.

I find it really, really frustrating as a creator not to be able to talk about this stuff and share experience and get better. I started this series and people were telling me, "You should make a book with this stuff in it." So I thought maybe I would make a book with this. I happened to say on my website, "Hey, I think I'll try to turn this into a book this year."

Someone introduced me to a lovely gentleman who turned into my agent, who sold the book to my publisher in very short order and the rest, as they say, is history. It does come down to that impulse to talk about craft, start a conversation about how to do better at Transmedia. Because it is a very important conversation, we haven't had that very often so far.

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Joe: My first thought about it is that Transmedia is a marketing campaign. It's using all the tricks of social media and creating this reality show product. Is it that? What really is it?

Andrea: It can be that, but it doesn't have to be that. This is the line that we are walking along right now, because, for Transmedia creators, most of our money comes from making marketing campaigns. I've made a fairly nice living for myself for these past years, very largely from marketing campaigns. But, that's not the only thing to do. You also see independent film directors like Lance Weiler are making things that are experiences. They're art just as much as they're marketing.

We're actually starting to see interesting things happening even within marketing, where it's not all marketing, if you will, anymore. It's not all about the call to action. It's not all about making a sale. It's increasingly about building relationships and providing experiences in an effort to make people think of you more kindly. Which is all that branding really means; it means trying to make people think about you in a kinder way.

I guess there is a real blurring of the line between original entertainment and marketing at this point. Such that Transformers the movie was in a sense marketing just as much as any of the rest of it was. The line is almost completely gone at this point. Was Old Spice marketing, or was it entertainment? Does it become more entertainment and less marketing because a million people watched those videos? How do you even decide?

Joe: I think it's tough because marketing has moved from being a medium to get the message out, more as a medium of engagement. Storytelling is the only way to engage people totally.

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Andrea: Absolutely, 100 percent. I've been talking a lot lately about how we're in a war for attention. Marketers are fighting for the same attention that entertainers are, and let's face it, that people's jobs and families are fighting for.

Every one of us only has a limited amount of attention to give. No matter, what kind of message you're trying to put out there, whether it's an entertaining one, whether it's advertising or marketing, or something completely different and personal, you have to try and make it worthwhile of somebody's attention.

In the case of Transmedia, what you're doing is, once you hopefully create something that people care about enough to give their attention to in the first place; you're expanding that to provide more opportunities to keep their attention on you. Every minute that you let someone forget about you and focus their attention on someone else is an opportunity for them to find something else that they love more than you, and maybe not come back to you next time.

It's perhaps a really cold way of looking at it, but I really think that this is a true thing. If somebody loves you and you don't give them more of the thing that they love, eventually they're going to find something else to love.

Joe: Is there short stories, for Transmedia storytelling? And novels? Is there that much of a breadth of nomenclature in storytelling, or in Transmedia?

Andrea: Definitely. There's a ten minute alternate reality game, or Transmedia experience if you will, called "Mime Academy" put out by No Minds Media. It's a very, very short Transmedia experience.

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There are also some very short experiences being put out by Fourth Wall Studios right now. When I wrote the book, they hadn't yet launched any products, but now they have very short story called "Home," which is a Transmedia ghost story. They have a web series called "Dirty Work." Each of which can be taken as a 30-minute piece of entertainment. There's an increasing series; I believe there are three episodes out now that you can pursue.

Then on the other end of the spectrum, there are projects like my own "Perplexity," which ran for two years. In the course of those two years, I wrote a quarter of a million words. I was one of a team of four writers at that point. We had a weekly newspaper, and characters were blogging at least once or twice a week. We had at least three or four characters that were doing that, so there was this persistent ongoing volume of content over time.

That's definitely two ends of the spectrum in terms of size. There are also different kinds of depth, if you will. You see, TV shows like "How I Met Your Mother", that isn't the full-blown Transmedia experience; there aren't the character blogs and so on. But you do see one-off little websites and videos that add a little bit of enchantment to the story at hand. They make it just a little bit more fun. Just a little bit funnier.

Amazing, actually. Amazing, the scope of work that can happen, because there is no limitation, any structure can potentially work.

Joe: I tried to explain Transmedia Storytelling to a couple of people before the podcast, to get some feedback. The definition, I used was it's like an electronic soap box. There's a

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story; it can be a story in itself -- so it can be entertaining, and you can watch the individual show -- but it goes on.

Is that fair to say that, or am I limiting it somehow?

Andrea: No, I think it's fair to say that, and I think one of the first things that you have to realize when you start making Transmedia, is that any given story is by definition a partial truth. I'm talking about fiction as if it a true thing here, but bear with me for a minute; any story is the product of a bunch of choices.

There are always going to be things that happened before the story that you probably haven't included because maybe they're boring. There are always things that are going to happen after the story that you're probably not including because it's either boring, or it's anticlimactic. And there are going to be things that happen during the course of the story that you're not putting on stage or on camera or on the page, because it's disruptive to the flow of your story, it's not relevant at the moment, it just doesn't work for one reason or another.

You're choosing in the storytelling process. You're choosing what to focus on, and what not to focus on. Sometimes those things would make for a better, deeper, richer story if you did include them -- but you can't, because you only have 90 minutes for your film, or you only have 100,000 words for your novel.

One of the great opportunities in Transmedia is to take stuff that could make your story better and richer, but doesn't fit-- what happens before and after, the stuff that happens offstage and make that happen make it real.

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Joe: Isn't this just how Disney built their empire? And we're taking it in and putting into different wording here, and calling it something -- this is kind of a micro-corporation of Disney, isn't it?

Andrea: Yes and no. Actually, I think that Disney were real pioneers in experience design, and the more I learn about how Disney has put together their theme parks, all the kinds of thinking that go into them, the more impressed I am with their abilities at experience design.

When you're walking around Disney World, the Magic Kingdom if you will, they have different music in different areas. They have the speakers perfectly calculated so that as you walk by, you never hear the music clash, but they fade. The music from one fades into the other, so there's always a steady bass line of music.

It just perfectly follows you, so that the music changes and you can't ever put your finger on where it became the theme from one area versus another. That's just such a tiny thing really, such a tiny thing, but it adds to the depth of the experience so much, just to have that happen and not have to notice that it happened.

I really, really do admire their experience design.

Anyway, to get back to your greater question though, I think Disney is definitely and has always done a lot of the kinds of things that we're doing, but Disney has done it in a kind of clean and sanitized safe way.

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One of the things happening in Transmedia right now is finding these grubby, more dangerous-feeling places for Transmedia story telling. Disney and Disney property would never be telling the story where you steal a bust for the Joker. Disney wouldn't probably ever tell the story where you receive a threatening phone call from an angry robot because it's not fitting with their aesthetic.

But, if you branch out from that clean kind of aesthetic, you find all kinds of different mechanics and possibilities to tell a story with, and it's just incredible at how much there is that people haven't even tried yet.

Joe: I think that will go on as technology increases too...

Andrea: Absolutely. And the thing that floors me is that when I started in this world, we had this idea of creating a person as if they were real even though they weren't. Creating this feeling that they were a real friend of yours, and when we were doing this, social media as we know it now wasn't invented yet.

Twitter hadn't been invented; Facebook existed, but you needed a .edu account to get a Facebook account; it wasn't for grownups. A lot of people ask me in interviews, "Where will all of this be in five years?" My stock answer is that I can't tell you where we'll be in five years because I have no idea what's going to be invented. It's going to change everything in the same way social media has changed everything for storytelling.

Joe: Let me go to some of the basic concepts of it. One of the things I thought about when I was reading a book: Do you have to first construct a story, or do you look at the media and think it can tell a good story? What comes first, the story or the media?

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Andrea: I don't think there's a right or wrong way to do it. I think there are definitely projects where you know what media you have to use, and then you've structured the narrative around it, so it works most effectively within those media. And then there are opportunities where the idea for a story is in your head, and you examine what platforms would and wouldn't work.

There's not a right or wrong way; it's a matter of what works for you. In the same way, there are writers who write a novel straight from the seat of their pants, and there are writers who methodically plot everything out in an outline ahead of time. Neither one is more right.

Joe: Well it seems to be intertwined with gaming a lot, the same concept of engagement, interactivity. Are there similarities? I mean you do you have challenges and rewards and things like that in Transmedia?

Andrea: You know; it's not even a matter of challenges and rewards. The big similarity between Transmedia and gaming is this idea that you as an audience member are affecting the outcome of the story. Now, that's not always literally the case in Transmedia. There's a lot of the illusion of interactivity where you give the idea, the impression that the audience is effecting what's happening while not actually letting them change anything significant. Shady trick if you will.

The interesting thing is that when you have the audience feeling like they're the ones in charge, like they're affecting the outcome, you can paint with a broader emotional palette than you can when you're telling just a flat story. There's a benchmark in games about

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whether they're real art or real media. Can they make you cry? Has a game ever made you cry?

I think it's a bad question, really, because, sure, games could make you cry. I have games that have made me cry. And games can make me laugh. Movies can make me laugh and cry. But the power of a game, the power of Transmedia is interaction. I have never yet had a movie that made me feel proud. I have never had a movie make me feel guilty for what happens on the screen because it wasn't my doing.

But when it is your doing, when you're the one that is sending the woman to her death or helping her overcome a terrible obstacle and escape the bad guy, and then you feel something that a movie can't do. That just blows me away. I think Transmedia is actually also related to games in this idea of puzzles, I guess, and challenges and so on. It's more of an emergent property of the platforms that Transmedia uses. It doesn't have to be like a game, but I think it's a lot more fun when it's like a game.

Joe: Well, can you choose different paths to go in the story? Do people get that option?

Andrea: Well, it depends on the story you're telling. I mean, that's sort of the thing about Transmedia, isn't it? Everything is, "It depends." Because Transmedia is a blanket term, and the structures that you can use under that blanket term are so varied. So Transmedia could be a web series and a graphic novel and on top of that, a Twitter stream and the audience is never ever, ever going to be able to change what happens in the web series or the graphic novel, and the Twitter stream is just for a character to let people have a little back and forth, right?

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Or you can have that same structure with the graphic novel and the web series, and the Twitter feed where the Twitter feed is telling things as they happen and then the web series is a recap, if you will, of what's already played out on Twitter... and the graphic novel is actually created by one of the characters as a diary, and that's a completely, completely different structure, even though it's still the same pieces.

So, you can do anything. It gets; it gets not frustrating, exactly, but it gets exhausting just to think about all the things that you could do. And I'm going to sound like a broken record, because there's no right way and a wrong way unless you're trying to achieve a specific purpose.

And then there's a right way and a wrong way for only what you're trying to do and whether it's going to work.

Joe: Well, I took from the book that you were not a big fan of users developing content basically. Tell me if I read that wrong or anything?

Andrea: Oh, no, no, no.

Joe: So, the story's got to be really well-orchestrated.

Andrea: Definitely. Definitely and you're right; I'm really not a big fan of user-generated content. Because I've tried it, and it historically hasn't ever worked the way, I wanted it to.

So I think that there's a lot of potential there, but I'm not sure if that potential is tappable, you know, it might be the equivalent of oil sands, where it would be so expensive to get it out that it's not even worth your time and trouble.

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Joe: So we're not at the activity level, I remember going to a play, and I forget the name of the play now, a wedding-type play where the audience became part of the wedding.

But Transmedia storytelling isn't necessarily like that, right?

Andrea: It's not necessarily like that. It can be like that, but it doesn't have to be like that.

Joe: Because you really leave yourself wide-open to the twists and turns and whether you can complete the story.

Andrea: Yeah, definitely. One of the hallmarks of Transmedia, actually, it's not just as a creator you're not bound to one specific structure. But you're also not tying your audience to one specific kind of consumption.

So even at that kind of dinner theater, you can just show up and kind of watch, and eat your dinner, and not really participate or interact.

A lot of people will engage with a Transmedia story just like that. They'll watch videos, and look at a Twitter feed every now and again, but they're not really, really going to engage in a deep way, and that's OK.

The bulk of your audience will probably be that person, and that's fine. But at the dinner theater, there's also going to be the audience member who is dancing with the bride and cracking jokes with the groomsmen and trying to start a fight between the mothers-in-law.

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In Transmedia, there are also going to be audience members like that, who are going to be trying to get the fullest out of it. The fun thing is, for you as a light participant, even in the wedding dinner theater, the audience member who is trying to start the fight between the mothers-in-law is becoming part of the entertainment for you.

By that same token, in a greater Transmedia experience that's playing out online, any audience member who engages at that really deep level kind of becomes a part of the entertainment themselves for everybody else that's watching at a more casual level.

Joe: You end up excluding someone because of technology? Or do you have to frame it, so they can catch up or how do you do that?

Andrea: This is a really hard thing. It's one of the true, true challenges of using social media and digital media at all. Basically, you are going to exclude people because of technology, whether you like it or not.

You can try really, really hard to make non-Flash websites, limit to platforms that, you know, would work on a mobile phone, for example.

But at the end of the day, simply by choosing to use digital media at all, you've already excluded some people. And you kind of have to make peace with that, one way or the other. And then there's a secondary problem with timing, with playing things out over real time. You create a sort of archive, eventually, of content that people aren't really going to want to go back and look at.

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So it's really, really good practice to provide on-going summaries, you know, "get started quick" guides, where... you cover just sort of most of the important on-going plot points so that an audience member can jump in without feeling like they have to do hours of homework, catching up on a back story before they can understand what's going on.

Joe: What is a "story bible?" Is that what you explained there?

Andrea: Actually, a story bible is meant more for the creators and not for the audience at all. You may find that the recaps that you provide for an audience are sort of abbreviated story bible.

But a story bible is basically a complete summary, Cliff Notes, if you will, of your story. Who the characters are, what their important motivations are, what the places are important things that are happening in your story and are going to happen in your story one day.

And the idea for a story bible is that, if you have to hand off your creation to someone else, they know everything important in your head and can hit the ground running, instead of trying to second-guess "Wait, were these brother and sister, were they cousins?"

Was this character or that character secretly the heir to the throne?" They won't have to guess, or come back and ask you, because it will all be written down neatly already.

Joe: A story bible's kind of having this room that has a family tree in it, and maybe a persona of this person over here, and then the storyline and how its transgressed through the time and the different media you used, so it's kind of a war room style.

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Andrea: Absolutely. Family trees, and timelines, maps, if that's necessary for the kind of story that you're telling. Diagrams of even relationships between people, and descriptions of what the characters look like, everything that you can possibly need, so that if I'm filming the movie, but you're writing the graphic novel.

We won't accidentally say things that are completely in contradiction with one another.

Joe: These stories, should they be constructed along a certain timeline; I know you can have a never-ending story, but I mean, but most of them do have a certain timeline, there's some finality to them, don't they?

Andrea: Definitely. I loved doing Perplexity; I loved the idea of doing a story forever, but it does become extremely exhausting for the audience. I find there is a sort of spot that most projects are sticking to now where they're somewhere between three and twelve weeks long.

Eight weeks seems to be pretty standard at this point. I don't know if it's because it works best if it's the budget that most people can get, but it seems to be a pretty comfortable length for most people.

Joe: You suggested throughout the book is to understand interactivity and feedback loops. In the process methodology world, the feedback loop is talked about all the time. Can you tell me how a feedback loop is built into a Transmedia story?

Andrea: Well, I mean the whole thing is sort of feedback loops isn't it? You put a piece of content out there, and I mean it's a feedback loop for you and the audience. You put a

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piece of content out there, and your audience looks at it and reacts to it. At the same time, you're watching what your audience does, and you react to it in the next piece of content you put out there. So you're influencing what the audience is doing but ideally, the audience is also influencing you.

In terms of pacing and maybe even what you decide to do next. Not every project is super interactive like that; the ones that are become vastly more powerful for the audience and the creators. Both of you wind up getting a better experience out of it. you're listening to each other; -- it's a bit like salsa dancing.

Joe: So transmitting a story isn't necessarily, you build this big block of eight weeks of all these automated things that take place and happen. But to create the more interactive ones, you may have all eight weeks put together. You're tweaking it as you go on, continuously pulling in new features.

Andrea: I'm a big fan of having a sort of spine. A structure you go through no matter what, with certain milestones that you're going to hit along the way. Beyond that, the real power in the project is this interaction, this back and forth, and the tweaking. If there's a minor character that the audience is really responding to find a way to give them a bigger role.

Maybe some other character was going to perform a certain task, but since the audience likes this guy so much you have him do it instead. Or if there is someone whom they really hate you have to find a way to make that character sympathetic or else cut down on their role if they're supposed to like them.

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It's so much more fun to do it that way. I know that there are projects where it's basically all on autopilot. For reasons of scale sometimes you do have to put a lot of things on autopilot, but if you can do it the other way, it is so much better for everybody.

Joe: Well, the problem I see in having it so interactive and doing it the long way sometimes do you just draw a blank? Maybe you had a hangover on Thursday, and you just can't think of anything to do. I mean are there days like that where the creative juices aren't flowing?

Andrea: Oh, my goodness. I guess there are days like that. Here's the thing, the secret to being a creator is putting in the time no matter what. You don't have the luxury to wait for feeling that juice; you have to do it no matter what. So as a professional, you just have to put something out there. You put your best craft into it; you put it out there. Maybe you're not super inspired, maybe you feel like it's not very good.

The sort of amazing secret is that two years later when you go back, and you read that, you can't even tell, which were the days when you were feeling it and which you weren't. It's all the same; it's just a matter of mood, and mood doesn't really affect the craft very much, as long as you're trying to use your tools to the best of your ability.

Joe: I think that's a great point. I like that because I think that it is so true. Could you recommend a Transmedia story that I could follow, or the audience could follow, to kind of get a case study to learn about in a short time?

Andrea: Right now, I'm a really big fan of a project going on called the Lizzie Bennet Diaries. Essentially it's Pride and Prejudice updated to the modern day, and it's primarily a

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web series. But there are Twitter profiles and Tumblrs for the characters. And if you're not the sort of person who likes to go and follow Twitter and Tumblr, there's a sort of main hub site where the really important Twitter interactions are storified for you.

So you can just go and read them and catch up all in one fell swoop. It's just brilliantly done; the structure is great. It can be really easy if you want it to be easy, and it can be really immersive if you want it to be really immersive. And it's light, and it's funny; the actors are fantastic. I really recommend taking a look at it. It would be a great introductory Transmedia experience.

Joe: Well, Transmedia is not for everyone. I mean what are the limitations? Where would you say, "don't go there? You have a story, but just put it in a book just put it on the web site." Where would you tell someone that it's not for them?

Andrea: There are times when it's just not what you want to do. If it's not what you want to do, that's perfectly OK. As I say up front, if all you have in you is a book, and you really don't want to make it interactive, and you really don't want to make a game out of it, then that's OK. People still like single medium stories. They will always like them; they will always exist.

There's definitely always going to be a power in just reading Romeo and Juliet.

Then there are things like a creator's guide is not a Transmedia project because there is a utility to the audience in simply having all of that in one place and not having to search everywhere for fragments of information that I could have just put in the book. But even beyond that I think you may be asking toward my sort of ethical quandaries.

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There are certain kinds of story about serial killers, for example, things that are a little too real and scary. Where I would persuade you to at least have second thoughts about how you put it into Transmedia. There have been a couple of lawsuits and unfortunate incidents. Where people who knowingly or unknowingly were participating in a Transmedia experience had bad things happen to them over the course of that experience.

If you're going to be putting a piece of content out there in the world, bear in mind that not everyone who comes across it is going to know that it's part of a fictional experience or a created experience. So it's not ordinary for someone walking down the street and seeing a flyer for a missing girl to think, "Oh this must be a game," instead of thinking, "oh that's terrible. Remind me to lock my door when I get home."

Joe: So you bring up a good point here, Transmedia is just not on the web.

Andrea: No, it's not just on the web. And having sort of live and in the real-world experiences or events is a great tool in the Transmedia toolbox. There are some creators who do some really, really edgy stuff along those lines. In the book, I have an interview with Yomi Ayeni, who is a British filmmaker that's done some very intense, like Eyes Wide Shut kind of feeling events with audience members. You have to be very, very careful when you provide that kind of experience to make sure that people do not just feel safe and like you're taking care of them, but that they really are safe, and nobody is going to get hurt.

Joe: Because what's real and what is not can be very difficult to distinguish for many of us?

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Andrea: Oh, it absolutely can. I mean if it were easy to distinguish between what was fictional and what wasn't on the Internet, then Snopes the site just wouldn't exist; we would have no need for it. And we wouldn't have all of these cases of people reporting on Onion articles as if they were really real. The fact is I mean nobody needs to feel ashamed or embarrassed by it. The fact is it is often very hard to tell where that line is on the Internet.

As creators, we have to recognize it isn't always easy to tell, and we have to make sure what we're putting out there either isn't going to falsely persuade someone that it's true. Or at least that if they do think, it's true, then nothing terribly bad can happen to them. I mean if you put up a website for a fake restaurant, then there's not a lot of harm that can come from that.

Joe: All of it seems like this big reality show that's in there and that it's just a way that we're that is enabling us to engage with our audience deeper and on a richer experience level.

Andrea: I would say that's a good analogy. I mean in a sense, if you do a great Transmedia experience, you're putting the whole audience into the show and making them feel like they are a cast member.

Joe: What would you think someone's first step should be in Transmedia? I mean how would you recommend them to start learning about it and moving forward?

Andrea: Just to start making something, because the only way to become comfortable with it is not sitting there and thinking about it for a long time. It's actually getting out

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there and putting a piece of content in front of an audience and seeing how they take it and then moving from there.

Joe: How could you help me distinguish someone that knows what I'm talking about in Transmedia?

Andrea: How can you distinguish? That's a tough question. And it's tougher even than you know because I think that there are a lot of people who are really, really smart and could give you some great advice, but have experience that is mainly theoretical or academic. And that's not necessarily a bad thing, but if you were going out trying to hire a Transmedia team, I would want to see a portfolio.

I would want to see not just websites, but diagrams of how the audience was interacting in the experience. I would want to see a case study that showed not just what was so great, but also some things that they didn't do so great. Because if they say that, everything is fantastic, that means either everything was fantastic, which is extremely unlikely because no project is ever perfect, or it might mean that they don't have the confidence.

Or worse, they don't have the vision to know what it is they did get wrong. And that's very dangerous; every creator should know what didn't work with every project and be willing to talk about what they would do next time to make that better.

Joe: Is there a book website?

Andrea: A book website acreatorsguide.com, but I have bi-links in there to Amazon. They're shipping it already. The Kindle edition has started shipping. Barnes and Noble also

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are shipping it. I believe it's going to be bookstores on Friday, June 22nd. I'm very excited, but you know, Chapters and Powell's, basically all the bookstores have it's very, very exciting.

Joe: I didn't know I got that early of a copy.

Andrea: Oh, you did.

Joe: And I do have to tell the audience that I read it cover to cover. As I mentioned to you earlier, there are about 14 to 20 sticky notes sticking out of the side of it and the top of it. I earmarked pages, so it was a very good read, and it left me wanting more.

Andrea: Oh, that's wonderful.

Joe: I think it is definitely a creator's guide, because it's causing me to create something.

Andrea: Oh, that's the best thing you could have possibly said to me. You have totally made my day.

Joe: I would like to thank you very much. Is there something that you would like to leave the audience with? Besides buy the book, which I encourage them to.

Andrea: I'd just like to leave it on the note of; it's such an amazing time to be creating anything. Really, it's such an amazing time, and if you're not in the trenches actually getting your hands dirty and trying to make something, then absolutely get on that. Because it's fun, it's so much fun, and I promise it will make you happy.

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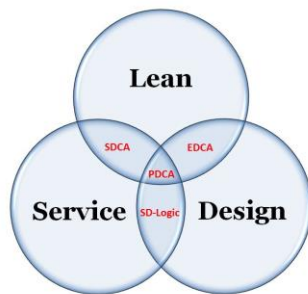
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Joe: OK, well I want to thank you very much, Andrea. Podcast will be available in the Business 901 iTunes store and the Business 901 blog site. So thanks again.

Andrea: Thank you.



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