

## Playing with Movies: Theorising Film-To-Game Adaptation

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### Abstract of Thesis:

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the intersection of ludic and cinematic forms and theorise how games are adapted from films. This thesis will propose a series of film-to-game adaptation models which describe the practice of this type of adaptation based on structuralist approaches to adaptation theory and emerging scholarship on transmedia storytelling.

The particular formal features of videogames lend themselves well to transmedia storytelling, a key aspect of which is world building. Games provide the possibilities of deepening and enriching the core film text by employing various types of extension strategies. The game designer must in some way recreate the diegesis of the film by stepping beyond the frame and considering the spaces not seen or explored by the characters in the film or even by the camera itself. Games can encourage a detailed investigation of the film's diegesis through the design of this analogous game space. The navigation of a game space allows for a type of environmental transmedia storytelling to take place.

A series of case studies in which close comparative readings of formal features of particular films and their game extensions demonstrate the main approaches to film-to-game adaptation. Employing narratological approaches to both film and game form and guided by Genette's theory of transtextuality, the thesis will critically analyse the transmedia storytelling strategies of such games as *Blade Runner* (Virgin, 1997), *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic* (LucasArts, 2003), *Enter the Matrix* (Atari, 2003), *The Chronicles of Riddick: Escape from Butcher Bay* (Vivendi, 2004), *Peter Jackson's King Kong: The Official Game of the Movie* (Ubisoft, 2005), *Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga* (LucasArts, 2007), and *James Cameron's Avatar: The Game* (Ubisoft, 2009).