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## CHAPTER 41

# **Video Games and Their Relationship with Other Media**

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In the 1990s, LucasArts, the game division of the powerful empire set up by director George Lucas, created some of the most narrative and cinematographic video games ever seen with *The Secret of Monkey Island* (1992), *Sam and Max Hit the Road* (1993), *Full Throttle* (1996), and *Grim Fandango* (1998). Conversely, videogame industry leaders have gained enough power to control the production of the film adaptations of their games; for example, Microsoft sold the rights for the adaptation of the video game *Halo* (2001) to Hollywood studios by their own terms.

Even filmmakers are starting to share creative interest in both media, such as Steven Spielberg who has always admitted being a video game enthusiast. In 1995 he founded DreamWorks Interactive, a division dedicated in producing video games, including *Medal of Honor* in 1999, based on an original concept by Spielberg himself. In 2005, Spielberg signed a partnership contract with EA [Electronic Arts] to personally design three new video games.<sup>1</sup>

These examples demonstrate the indisputable bond which has developed between video games and other media, especially cinema and, to a lesser extent, television. The associations between these media have been unfolding in many ways, as we will see. First, the audiovisual likeness and the economic rivalries between video games and films (or television) are the most obvious ones. From an economic point of view, the video game industry maintains a partnership with these media as well.

Since video games have become a huge industry involving a large number of employees working in many specific departments, the production processes and facilities now have many similarities with film and television. Some of these industries merged into powerful multinationals (Sony Corporation) which have interests in all of these media. In some other cases, major film studios have their own division of video game production, like LucasArts and Dreamworks mentioned above.

Video games' exhibition outlets are similar to those of cinema and television: arcade games can be found in multiplex theatres, home systems are hooked to television sets, and major video stores have video games, film, and television series rentals all in one place.<sup>2</sup> All these examples reveal a kin partnership among these industries. The music industry is also becoming an essential player in the video game industry, and video game soundtracks are increasingly popular.<sup>3</sup> Live concerts of video game music (like the Video Games Live tour in 2006), have played to sold-out crowds. Nowadays, the music created for video games is composed in a similar fashion as film music scores. As on television, advertisements in video games have become a common phenomenon. A study by Activision and Nielsen Entertainment was conducted in late 2005 on this issue, and found that young gamers felt that the presence of in-game advertisements, if well integrated into the games, increased their enjoyment of the games.<sup>4</sup>

Much video game theory shares a close connection with other media, since many of its basic concepts and thoughts came principally from film and television studies.<sup>5</sup> For media theorist Henry Jenkins, all these associations are consequences, or symptoms, of a much larger manifestation in culture which he calls "media convergence". Such

convergence manifests itself in many ways, including technologically, economically, socially, culturally, and globally.<sup>6</sup>

Such relationships between video games and other media go back to the early days of video game history. In the early 1980s, video games were already known for their adaptations of television series and American films, especially on the Atari 2600 console: “film and television industries realized the potential of the new medium as early as the mid-1970s, when they sought to have a hand in the video game market; CBS Electronics and 20th Century Fox made their own game cartridges, and several dozen movies and television shows were planned to be adapted into game cartridges for the Atari 2600 alone.”<sup>7</sup>

It was not until 1983 that the movie industry stopped showing interest in video games, as a result of the video game crash caused by the saturation of the market and the eager releases of poorly-made licensed games for the Atari 2600 like *Pac-Man* or the video game adaptation of the movie *E.T.*, which was a monumental flop and quickly became an icon of the crash. Another reason may be the commercial failure of Steven Lisberger’s film *Tron* (1982) (the first movie based on a video game world), which helped push Hollywood away from CGI technology and the whole video game industry for a decade.<sup>8</sup>

### **Video Games and Cinema**

The almost total absence of video games-related themes in Hollywood did not last long. The U.S. importation of the Japanese home consoles from companies like Nintendo and Sega (especially the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) in 1985, the Sega Master System (SMS) in 1986, the Sega Genesis in 1989, and the Super Nintendo (SNES) in 1991) changed the course of video game history. Because of the enormous popularity of these consoles in households, the movie industry regained interest (and economic interest) in video games. In 1989, Universal Studios, in partnership with Nintendo, released Todd Holland’s film *The Wizard*, which was mostly a feature-length publicity film for Nintendo products like the NES, the Power Glove, and the forthcoming *Super Mario Bros. 3* (1990). The buzz created by the motion picture among the gaming youth led *Super Mario Bros 3* to sell “more than 17 million copies [...] worldwide, setting a lasting sales record for a game cartridge that was not packed in with console hardware.”<sup>9</sup>

Since the video game industry continued to release video game adaptations of movies in the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (especially for the NES console, where many games were based on movies),<sup>10</sup> it was therefore only a matter of time before Hollywood, in return, adapted a video game. The obvious choice at that time was to adapt one of the biggest video game icons of all time: Nintendo’s Mario. In 1993, Hollywood Pictures in association with Nintendo released *Super Mario Bros.* starring Bob Hoskins as Mario. Even though the film was a commercial and critical failure (\$20 million gross for a \$42 million budget<sup>11</sup>), movie studios saw this as an opportunity to attract gamers into theaters while it gave the video game industry an occasion to have licensed revenues and better media coverage.

Thanks to fighting games like *Street Fighter II* (1991), *Mortal Kombat* (1992), *Virtua Fighter* (1993) and many others, arcade games enjoyed a renewal of popularity: from 1990 to 1995 alone, more than 100 arcade fighting games were manufactured by more than 20 companies, most notably Capcom (*Street Fighter* series), Midway (*Mortal Kombat* series) and SNK (*The King of Fighters* series). Movie studios then decided to adapt some of them, these games being well-suited for audiences of Hollywood action movies, due to their kinetic combat and stylish graphic violence. In 1994, following *Double Dragon* (directed by James Yukich) based on the 1987’s arcade game of the same name, an adaptation of *Street Fighter* (directed by Steven de Souza) was released, but without much success (\$33 million gross for a \$35 million budget). The first relative success came with *Mortal Kombat* (1995) directed by Paul W. S. Anderson.

Made for a budget of \$20 million, the film grossed \$70 million in United States and \$122 million worldwide. The popularity of the film was sufficient for a sequel, *Mortal Kombat: Annihilation* (1997) directed by John R. Leonetti.<sup>12</sup>

After the box office failure of the film *Wing Commander* (1999) based on the science fiction video game series of the same name, a commercial success even bigger than *Mortal Kombat* followed with the first adaptation of a video game with a female icon: the heroine Lara Croft. With an \$80 million budget, *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* (2001) directed by Simon West, grossed \$131 million in United States (\$47 million the first weekend), making it the biggest commercial success for a video game adaptation. A sequel followed in 2003, *Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life* (directed by Jan de Bont), again starring Angelina Jolie as Lara Croft.

Meanwhile in Japan, a company named SquareSoft, who was responsible for *Final Fantasy*, the most popular role-playing game (RPG) series worldwide, worked on a flamboyant adaptation of its own video game series. Square Pictures (their movie division) in association with Columbia Pictures wanted to make the first entirely photorealistic digital animation movie. Although the film was noted for its technical achievement, thanks to the enormous budget of \$137 million, *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* (directed by Hironobu Sakaguchi, 2001) was a major commercial failure, grossing only \$32 million in United States, and \$85 million worldwide. Ironically, the studio's losses of approximately \$123 million (taking the marketing cost into account) eventually bankrupted Square Pictures, leading to the merging of Square Co. with their long-time rival, Enix.

Back in Hollywood, the major studios decided to take advantage of new interest in popular culture that had begun in Japan a few years before: horror movies and games. As a result, Hollywood studios hastened to produce several remakes of Japanese horror movies rather than to simply import them (for example *The Ring* (*Ringu*), *The Grudge* (*Ju-On*), *Dark Water*, and *Pulse* (*Kairo*)). Soon after, Hollywood decided to devote their film adaptations of video games to survival horror games. The first one to be adapted to cinema was the *Resident Evil* series, and in 2002, Paul W. S. Anderson directed *Resident Evil*, starring Milla Jovovich. The film had a budget of \$32 million and grossed \$101 million worldwide. A sequel followed in 2004, *Resident Evil: Apocalypse* directed by Alexander Witt.

Following on the horror craze, the controversial German director Uwe Boll purchased the rights of several horror video game hits and started to make his own adaptations of such games as *House of the Dead* (2003), *Alone in the Dark* (2005), and *BloodRayne* (2005). These adaptations were mostly famous for being the weakest ones, irritating gamers who nevertheless went to see Boll's pictures or purchased the DVDs of his films. (*House of the Dead* grossed \$10 million in the United States with a budget of only \$7 million, while *Alone in the Dark*, with a budget of \$20 million, only grossed \$5 million in the U.S. *BloodRayne* grossed a mere \$3 million worldwide in theaters with a budget of \$25 million. Nevertheless, the DVD sales of these films were much more profitable.) The controversy surrounding Uwe Boll continued in 2006 when he decided to organize a boxing event, "Raging Boll", with his most virulent critics. The footage of these fights was used for his next movie, another adaptation of a violent video game, *Postal* (2007).

Another horror-movie based on a video game, based on a popular sci-fi first-person shooter (FPS), was released in 2005: *Doom* (directed by Andrejz Bartkowiak), starring the wrestling champion The Rock. Despite the common practice of casting celebrities, the adaptation was again a critical and commercial failure (it was shot with a budget of \$70 million and grossed \$28 million in United States). At the time of this writing, the last movie adaptation of a video game was *Silent Hill* (2006), based on the critically-acclaimed survival horror series of the same name, directed by the French filmmaker Christophe Gans (*Brotherhood of the Wolf / Le pacte des loups*, 2001) and written by Roger Avary (director of *Killing Zoe* and writer of *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*). Even with these big names behind the camera and the fact that Christophe Gans was a self-

proclaimed gamer and fan of *Silent Hill* series, the film received bad reviews and did disappointingly at the box office (it was shot with a budget of \$50 million and grossed only \$72 million worldwide).

Although none of these films became major blockbuster hits, the tendency to adapt video games to cinema is far from over. Considering the large number of video games licensed by Hollywood studios, there will be more adaptations than ever in the years to come. Indeed, almost all video game best-selling hits had their rights bought by a movie studio or a producer. Several projects are already in production, the most anticipated ones (perhaps excluding the ones by Uwe Boll) being *Splinter Cell* (due in 2007), *Halo* (announced for 2008, to be produced by WingNut Films (Peter Jackson's banner)), and finally *Metal Gear Solid* (also announced for 2008, to be directed by the famous designer of the game, Hideo Kojima). To ease the wait, fans can buy the graphic novels adapted from some of these video games, an increasingly popular practice from the game developers. In early 2006, Hideo Kojima released a digital graphic novel based on the *Metal Gear Solid* universe sold exclusively on Universal Media Disc (UMD) for the Sony's PSP. Another graphic novel, based on the game *Halo*, was published by Bungie Software in the summer of 2006.

### **Video Games and Comics/Animation (Manga/Animé )**

Many video games have been adapted from comic books since the beginning of the console era in the United States. The majority of these adaptations are based on Marvel and DC Comics' super heroes. The MobyGames Web site has listed more than 100 adaptations of Marvel and DC Comics (67 for Marvel and 39 for DC Comics more precisely). The main characters adapted in this fashion have been Marvel's *X-Men* and *Spider-Man*, and DC Comics' *Superman* and *Batman*.

In Japan, the list is significantly larger, since video games have always been strongly associated with other Japanese media, especially *animé* and *manga*. *Manga* is the word in Japanese for comics or printed cartoons. *Animé* are Japanese animated films created according to a distinct aesthetic, influenced almost exclusively by *manga*. Video games, which have such a major importance in Japanese popular culture,<sup>13</sup> appeal to a whole generation, named the "visual generation" (*shikaku sedai*) in Japan.<sup>14</sup> The obsessive fans of these hobbies are called by the Japanese pejorative term *otaku*.

Consequently, almost every popular *manga* and *animé* have been adapted into video games in Japan,<sup>15</sup> with increasing numbers of them being imported into Europe and North America. Although children in countries such as France, Italy, Canada, and the United States grew up with Japanese animation since the end of the 1970s, the craze for all that touches Japanese popular culture truly started with the *manga*-based anime *Akira* (1988) directed by Katsuhiro Otomo, and was followed by several others during the 1990s, like Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell* (1996) based on a *manga* by Masamune Shirow, and Hideaki Anno's television series *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995). These titles have also had their video game adaptations. *Akira* was adapted into a video game in 1988 on the NES, *Ghost in The Shell: Stand Alone Complex* in 2004 on the PlayStation 2, and *Neon Genesis Evangelion* in 1999 on the Nintendo 64, although the latter had never been released outside of Japan.

Not surprisingly, many young people worldwide who are interested in Japanese animation are also gamers and consumers of video games series adapted from *manga* and *animé* (such as *Dragon Ball*, *Mobile Suit Gundam*, *Full Metal Alchemist*, and so on), to such a point that even some fans in the United States have been called *otaku*. In the United States, adaptations of animated films and television series was a less of a phenomenon, with the notable exceptions of games based on Disney characters (of which there are more than 100) and games based on the immensely popular series *The Simpsons* (of which there are more than 20), until the emergence of movies using 3-D computer animation made by studios like Pixar and DreamWorks. Every feature film from these studios has had a video game adapted from it so far. For this genre, video

games have become the obvious tie-in products, since 3-D animation and video games share the same target audiences as well as the same visual style and technology.

Conversely, fewer and less known are the adaptations of video games to comics and animation. Once again, it is necessary to look at what has been done in Japan. With the exception of the recent adaptation of *Metal Gear Solid* into a graphic novel as previously mentioned, the best known example is the *Pokemon* video game series. It was so popular in Japan and then in North America, that one could forget that this franchise began as Nintendo Game Boy Advance video games (*Pokemon Blue* and *Pokemon Red*, released in Japan in 1996 and in 1998 for the North America). Indeed, *Pokemon* involved a great many tie-in products, such as television series, animated films, figurines, cuddly toys, home furnishings, and practically every piece of clothing for children with an effigy of the characters Pikachu and Ash. Even though the *Pokemon* franchise is best remembered in North America as a cartoon and may be the most successful adaptation of a video game, it is not the first manifestation of the close relationship between video games and television.

### **Video Games and Television**

Since the emergence of video games as a popular phenomenon, the video game industry has had a relationship with television, while the film industry often considered video games as mere spin-offs. Similar to television, the video game “has played a crucial role in the child’s entry into narrative,” as well as to the construction of “consumerist subjects”.<sup>16</sup>

It is therefore no coincidence that video game settings and characters were first adapted to television in Saturday morning cartoons. The first popular one was the *Pac-Man* series (which ran from September 25, 1982 to September 1, 1984). Based loosely on the original arcade games *Pac-Man*, *Ms. Pac-Man*, *Pac-Man Jr.*, and *Super Pac-Man*, the cartoon production company Hanna-Barbera brought all these characters to life for the TV series. The show featured the *Pac-Man* family (in which “Ms.” *Pac-Man* is actually a “Mrs.”), who are in most episodes troubled by the familiar villainous Ghost Monsters from the games. The family usually got out of trouble by munching on power pellets to energize themselves and chomp the Ghost Monsters. Other shows followed over the years, including *Frogger Video Game* (1982), *The Super Mario Bros. Super Show!* (1989), *Sonic the Hedgehog* (1993), and *Donkey Kong Country* (1998).

The video game craze also inspired a television quiz show called *Starcade*. The game show aired on television stations across the US between 1982 and 1984, generally in a Saturday morning or early afternoon time slot. It consisted of trivia questions regarding video games as well as one-on-one competition between contestants, usually a father and son, on arcade games for electronic prizes and a grand prize of an arcade terminal.<sup>17</sup> While arcade games tended to be popular among both children and adults,<sup>18</sup> home video game systems, with their basic controls and simple graphics, were more typically aimed at children. Moreover, since systems such as the Atari 2600 (1977), the Intellivision (1979), and the Colecovision (1982) were connected to television sets, they became substitute objects of entertainment for children that competed with television, and could offer the feeling of control and direct action that the television could not.

Although Saturday morning cartoons would benefit from the popularity of the video game phenomenon, the video game industry had already been adapting games from television shows for some time.<sup>19</sup> However, some licences were hard to obtain, especially in the arcade sector since the *Death Race* controversy.<sup>20</sup> For example, in Japan, Nintendo’s game designer Shigeru Miyamoto wanted to licence *Popeye* for a new arcade game. King Features Syndicate refused to sell the rights to Nintendo, so Miyamoto was then forced to create his own original character for the game. This is how the character Jumpman began, who was later renamed Mario for the arcade game finally entitled *Donkey Kong*.<sup>21</sup> Even the name “Donkey Kong” caused legal issues,

because of the strong association with King Kong. Nintendo did eventually obtain the rights and produced the arcade game *Popeye* in 1983, but the game had nowhere near the success enjoyed by the *Donkey Kong* and *Mario Bros.* series.

Exchanges between video games and television (mainly cartoons) became increasingly frequent.<sup>22</sup> Some extremely popular franchises, like *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*, marketed derivative products using a variety of media (film, television, video games, comics, novels, toys, and so on), and have over 100 and over 50 games based on them respectively. This aggressive strategy played on consumers' desire for franchises they liked; once the consumption of a franchise begins, one wants logically and emotionally to obtain other products in the franchise, to obtain a complete vision of the whole, both materially and narratively.

In her book *Playing with Power*, Marsha Kinder called this sort of marketed franchise a 'supersystem of entertainment', and cited the huge success of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (TMNT), as a good example of this phenomenon at the end of the 1980s. For Kinder, the success of the TMNT with children was based on the judicious intertextual mixture of animality (Turtles), science fiction (Mutant), and Japanese martial arts (Ninja), and on the expansion of the franchise in several media. The TMNT 'supersystem' began with a cult comic book from Mirage and then an enormously popular cartoon series, created in 1987. An arcade game appeared in 1989, followed by many console games, the first ones being on the NES (*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, 1989; *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Arcade Game*, 1990). Finally, a feature film directed by Steve Barron was released in 1990, its success spawning a series of sequels. The success of this kind of "supersystem of entertainment" relies enormously on the idea of "transmedia storytelling".

### **Transmedia Storytelling and Media Convergence**

In *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*, Janet Murray acknowledged transmedia storytelling when she introduced the concept of "cyberdrama": "...the coming digital story form ... will encompass many different formats and styles but will essentially be a single distinctive entity ... a reinvention of storytelling itself for the new digital medium."<sup>23</sup>

Henry Jenkins, a few years later, coined the term "transmedia storytelling" which simply means "the movement of [narrative] content across media."<sup>24</sup> The concept is an aspect of "media convergence", which Henry Jenkins has described as follows:

...the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, the search for new structures of media financing which fell at the interstices between old and new media, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who would go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they wanted.<sup>25</sup>

This type of manifestation was advanced by the *Star Wars* franchise, in which the tie-in products played a central role. During the 1980s, for instance, the accompanying line of action figures and vehicles from *Star Wars* outgrossed the movies themselves,<sup>26</sup> creating a precedent in the marketing of ancillary products. Since then, goods — including video games— have been promoted with almost every Hollywood blockbuster targeting young audiences. The *Star Wars*-related video games have been used for two main purposes: the re-creation of the most memorable scenes from the trilogies (to be played by their fans), and the addition of new storylines and fresh approaches expanding the *Star Wars* universe. Such effects are not limited to the United States. Recent examples of transmedia storytelling in Japan include such franchises as *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995-1997) and *Blood, the Last Vampire* (2001). These franchises consist of many manga, animé, novels, and video games, each one telling a different story which adds to the franchise's world.

Inspired by these notable achievements, the Wachowski Brothers, the creators of The Matrix film series and declared aficionados of video games, Japanese *animé* and *manga*, and comic book cultures in general, attempted to expand on the concept of transmedia storytelling by creating *Enter the Matrix* (Infogrames, 2003), a video game that could expand the story of *The Matrix Reloaded* (which was released the same day as the *Enter the Matrix* video game, May 15, 2003), and anticipate developments of the third opus of the movie trilogy. Thus, in the game *Enter the Matrix* players can play as two minor characters in the movies, Niobe and Ghost (played by actors Jada Pinkett-Smith and Anthony Wong, respectively). These characters became increasingly crucial (especially Niobe) to the victory of the humans in *The Matrix Reloaded* and *The Matrix Revolutions* (2003). In this way, the game is not a mere spin-off but an integral part of a complex work spanning several media forms and platforms, which fills in blanks in the movies' stories to facilitate the comprehension of the movie trilogy. In addition to the video game, the Wachowski Brothers simultaneously released derivative material such as a series of nine animated films (*The Animatrix*, 2003), two comic books (*Matrix Comics*, Vol. 1 and 2, 2003), and complementary content on the official movie web site ([www.whatisthematrix.com](http://www.whatisthematrix.com)).

Two more video games were released with the same objective in mind. In 2005, the Wachowski Brothers released a massively multiplayer on-line role-playing game (MMORPG) called *The Matrix Online*, which continued the story of the trilogy, beginning just after the end of the third film where machines and humans have reconciled thanks to Neo (Keanu Reeves). *The Matrix Online* allowed players to be part of one of three opposing groups (the humans of Zion, the machines, or the exiles of the Merovingian), all of whom strive to achieve control of the Matrix. The game producers released on a regular basis what they called "Live Events" to stimulate players' immersion in the virtual universe. At the end of 2005, Infogrames released another video game based on the Matrix franchise, also written by the Wachowski Brothers, called *The Matrix: Path of Neo*. The game put the player in the shoes of Neo himself, reliving the main adventures of Neo in the movie trilogy, but with new perspectives never seen in the movies.

The marketing strategies of this ground-breaking franchise helped create a unique transmediatic work brought about by the convergence of several media (film, video games, websites, comics, anime, etc.). Media convergence and transmedia storytelling are becoming the new trend for creators who do not want to be confined to a unique medium or platform, and for producers who want to maximize the profits from a hit, no matter what the original platform. This kind of cultural practice underscores the importance of other media in the emergence and construction of the video game, and helps to predict the possible directions that video games may take in the future. The 'intermedial' nature of the video game is far from being a mere tendency but instead forms an essential part of the medium.

## Notes

1. See Tor Thorsen, "Steven Spielberg, EA ink three-game next-gen deal", available at <http://www.gamespot.com/news/6135746.html?q=spielberg> (accessed July 22, 2006).
2. See Mark J. P. Wolf, "Introduction", *The Medium of the Video Game*, Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2001, page 2.
3. In Japan, it has been a huge phenomenon since the 1980s. See Chris Koehler, *Power Up: How Japanese Video Games Gave the World an Extra Life*, Indianapolis, Indiana: Brady Games, 2005, pages 131-164.

4. See “Activision and Nielsen Entertainment Release Results of Pioneering Research on In-Game Advertising”, available at [http://www.gamesindustry.biz/content\\_page.php?aid=13408](http://www.gamesindustry.biz/content_page.php?aid=13408) (accessed July 17, 2006).
5. See Mark J. P. Wolf, *The Medium of the Video Game*, pages 2-5.
6. See Henry Jenkins, “Convergence? I Diverge.”, *Technology Review*, June 2001.
7. See Mark J. P. Wolf, *The Medium of the Video Game*, pages 1-2. In the first footnote on page 9, he lists 33 game cartridges for the Atari 2600 based on movies and 23 based on television shows.
8. On the Atari 2600 adaptations, see Steven L. Kent, *The Ultimate History of Video Games*, New York, New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001, pages 237-239. On *Tron* and its effect on CGI in Hollywood, see Philippe Lemieux, *L’image numérique au cinéma*, Montréal, Canada: Les 400 Coups, 2002, pages 26 and 35; and Philippe Lemieux, *Les images numériques au sein du cinéma commercial hollywoodien*, M. A. thesis, Université de Montréal, 1997. Lemieux states that from 1982 to 1989 (ending with the success of *The Abyss* (1989)), CGI in Hollywood movies was almost nonexistent, except for some rare sequences here and there.
9. Steven L. Kent, *The Ultimate History of Video Games*, New York, New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001, page 422.
10. For a look at the movie-inspired games on the NES and Sega Genesis platforms, and others: <http://www.mobygames.com/game-group/movie-inspired-games/offset,0/so,1a/> (accessed August 5, 2006).
11. All figures are taken from the Internet Movie Database ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)).
12. The controversy surrounding the violence of this game certainly played in its favor at the box office. For more on this subject, see Steven L. Kent, *The Ultimate History of Video Games*, pages 461-480.
13. See Masuyama, “Pokémon as Japanese Culture?”, in *Game On : The History and Culture of Videogames*, edited by Lucien King, London, England: Laurence King Publishing, 2002, pages 34-35.
14. See Chris Kohler, *Power Up: How Japanese Video Games Gave the World an Extra Life*, page 6.
15. Often *animé* are adapted from *manga* first, which is why they are so interrelated. MobyGames lists about 1000 games inspired by or adapted from *animé* and *manga* (see <http://www.mobygames.com/genre/sheet/anime-manga/> (accessed August 17, 2006)).
16. See Marsha Kinder, *Playing With Power in Movies, Television, and Video Games: From Muppet Babies to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1991, pages 3-4.
17. For more information on *Starcade*, see <http://www.starcade.tv/Starcade/starframe.htm>.
18. See Steven Kent. *The Ultimate History of Video Games*, page 152, and also Chris Kohler. *Power Up: How Japanese Video Games Gave the World an Extra Life*, page 52.

19. See note 7.
20. See the chapter "The Video Game as an Object of Controversy" in this book.
21. See Chris Kohler, *Power Up: How Japanese Video Games Gave the World an Extra Life*, pages 38-39.
22. MobyGames lists 186 games directly inspired from "cartoon shows" on television. This includes American and European animation and Asian animé. See <http://www.mobygames.com/game-group/tv-cartoon-inspired-games/offset,0/so,1a/> (accessed August 5, 2006).
23. See Janet Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1998, page 271.
24. See Henry Jenkins, "Transmedia Storytelling", *Technology Review*, January 2003, page 1.
25. See Henry Jenkins, "Welcome to Convergence Culture", *Receiver*, March 2005, page 2.
26. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Lucasfilm says sales of *Star Wars* merchandise topped \$12 billion since its inception in 1977, about three times the world-wide box office for all six movies combined. See Stephanie Kang, "A New Way to Use the Force", in *The Wall Street Journal*, Eastern Edition, August 22, 2006, B1.

Today video games have become a limitless and multifaceted medium through which Fortune 50 corporations and Hollywood visionaries alike are reaching broader global audiences and influencing cultural trends at a rate unmatched by any other media. Excerpt. In less than four decades video games have gone from simple bouncing block graphics to a global industry of enormous proportions. In 2006 alone, the U.S. video game industry made a record \$12.5 billion. Video games have a growing influence on other media like film, television, and the Internet and are played by hundreds of millions worldwide.