Transcodification and Synthesis of Social, Psychological and Cultural Isolation in Sci-fi Narratives: from Literature to Video Games

Riccardo Retez

Abstract

This study intends to observe and investigate the concept of isolation with a transmediality perspective, opening the analysis to multiple access points for the study of original forms of adaptation and an approach to phenomena of narrative synthesis and transcoding (Jenkins, 2016). Defined as "exclusion, by desire or circumstance, from relationships or contact with the usual environment" (Cacioppo et. al., 2011), isolation is a concept that has been absorbed by the science fiction genre and adapted within different media, through original narratives that revolve around humans – conceived as "human beings". The concept of isolation is declined in stories and media from multiple perspectives; this contribution focuses on three types of isolation and their interpretation and exposition within three different cultural products: social isolation, present within the novel *The Postman* (David Brin, 1985); psychological isolation, as proposed by the Japanese animation series *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Hideaki Anno, 1995); and cultural isolation, and its exegesis in the video game *Death Stranding* (Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2019).

The aim of the contribution is to provide a reconstruction and chronological mapping regarding the declination of the concept of isolation through the three texts, according to a Hegelian logic that sees in the third text the synthesis of the previous ones. From literature to video game, through transmediality approach, it will be possible to highlight how the narrative designed and implemented by each of the three texts is structured through multiple levels that configure different interpretative dimensions, ludic-performative realities and reading levels concerning the role and meaning of the human being in contemporary society. To read David Brin's novel, to watch Hideaki Anno's series or to play and experience Death Stranding is to understand altruism and face isolation, actions that are currently as necessary as ever in the reality of the contemporary world.

Keywords: Isolation, Transcodification, Sci-fi, Literature, Video Games

This study seeks to delve into the multifaceted concept of isolation from a transmediality perspective, encompassing diverse entry points for the examination of distinctive forms of adaptation and an exploration of phenomena related to narrative synthesis and transcoding (Jenkins, 2016). Isolation, in this context, can be defined as a state of "exclusion, whether driven by individual desire or external circumstances, resulting in a detachment from customary relationships and a withdrawal from conventional environmental contexts"

(Warburton and Lui, 2007, p. 48). Nevertheless, it is of paramount importance to establish a clear demarcation between the concepts of isolation and loneliness. Given the previous definition of isolation, loneliness can be defined as "the emotional response stemming from the disparity between one's desired level and quality of social interaction and the actual state of social contact" (Ashraf & Galor, 2011). In the further pages it is possible to look at how these two concepts intersect and sometimes clash, shedding light on the intricate dynamics of human connection and detachment.

By this means, the aforementioned definition of isolation delineates three key dimensions: contact, exclusion, and environment. By dissecting each of these core elements, it is possible to discern three distinct manifestations or types of isolation: social isolation, psychological isolation, and cultural isolation.

In this analysis, the portrayal of social isolation in various stories and media from a multitude of perspectives will be explored, elucidating its prevalence and impact across different contexts. While social isolation finds its manifestation in the narrative of *The Postman*,[1] the examination of psychological isolation is undertaken through the studying of the Japanese anime series *Neon Genesis Evangelion*,[2] offering insights into how this form of isolation is depicted and explored in the realm of animation storytelling. Finally, cultural isolation is exemplified by the video game *Death Stranding* - written, created, directed, and produced by Hideo Kojima and his Kojima Productions company in 2019 -, in order to better understand how isolation can manifest within the context of gaming and digital environments.

By engaging with each form of isolation, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive examination of the concept, elucidating its diverse dimensions and highlighting the ways in which it is represented and explored in various media forms. Ultimately, this endeavor seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding isolation and its significance in contemporary society and media. Through an interdisciplinary approach that draws from literature, animation, and video games, the research aims to provide a nuanced and comprehensive analysis of this multifaceted concept.

The starting point is the comprehension of social isolation that, within the context of this study, is rigorously defined as "an objective condition characterized by physical seclusion that hinders or restricts the development and expansion of a diverse social network, resulting in limited interaction with other individuals and the broader community" (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2009, p. 449). This definition underscores the quantitative nature of social isolation, emphasizing the measurement of an individual's social connections and interactions.

[1] Published in 1985 by Bantam Books, New York.

[2] Anime series created by Hideaki Anno, distributed by GAINAX Studio (Japan) from 1995 to 1997 and then re-created by the same author as a four-movies remake saga under the name *Re-building of Evangelion* from 2007 to 2021.

The Postman, a novel by David Brin, serves as a compelling exemplar of how the concept of social isolation is adeptly adapted and contextualized within the science fiction genre. The narrative unfolds within a post-apocalyptic and dystopian world, presenting the journey of Gordon Krantz, a solitary figure wandering through the desolate Oregon countryside. His discovery of a United States Postal Service uniform leads him to assume the role of a mail carrier and federal inspector for the 'Restored United States of America', thereby initiating a transformation in the dynamics of social isolation. The key elements that contextualize social isolation within the narrative encompass Gordon Krantz himself, the various communities he encounters during his journey, and the impending collapse of civilization. These elements are portrayed both in Brin's novel and in the subsequent movie adaptation directed, produced, and starred in by Kevin Costner, despite its cinematic shortcomings. Within the post-apocalyptic world of The Postman, the survivors have organized themselves into distinct communities, each resembling quasi-tribal units, isolated from one another. Krantz's odyssey involves traveling from one community to another, using his memorized Shakespearean poems to entertain and connect with people. A pivotal moment occurs when he stumbles upon a postal van and dons the United States Postal Service uniform, igniting his mission to reestablish communication and connections between these isolated communities. However, not all of them are receptive to this effort, such as the group of hyper-survivalists known as the Holnists, who vehemently oppose any change to the existing order in a world ravaged by catastrophe. To rekindle hope, the communities require narratives or myths that are firmly rooted in reality and nourished by genuine social investment. Krantz's transformation throughout the narrative is remarkable.[3] Initially portrayed as a solitary figure, a reluctant hero, and a mystifier confined by his own self-imposed isolation, he ultimately evolves into a communicator and a facilitator of connections. His role shifts from that of a leader to that of a mediator, battling social isolation by forging new connections and opening avenues to uncharted territories once these connections have been established. In this manner, The Postman encapsulates the profound transformation that can occur when social isolation is addressed through the rekindling of communication and the reintegration of isolated communities.

Transitioning to the examination of psychological isolation, it is imperative to provide a comprehensive definition of this form. Psychological isolation can

---

[3] In one of the concluding passages of The Postman: A Novel, author David Brin (2011) states that: "We are all connected, like the stars in the sky", speaking to the inherent interconnectedness of humanity. Brin means that much like the stars are interconnected within the vast expanse of the night sky, humans, too, are interconnected through their shared humanity. They are integral components of a larger cosmic web, wherein their actions and interactions generate ripple effects that influence those around them. This quotation serves as a poignant reminder that, despite differences, human beings are united by a common responsibility to engage with one another with kindness and compassion, paralleling how the stars collectively shine in harmonious brilliance.

be elucidated as a "cognitive process characterized by the establishment of a cognitive divide or exclusion between a distressing or menacing cognition and other thoughts and emotions. This division minimizes associative connections with other cognitive constructs, thereby reducing the frequency of recollection of the distressing cognition" (Franklin & Carr, 1971, p. 234). This concept finds its roots in the pioneering work of Sigmund Freud, who illustrated it through the example of an individual initiating a train of thoughts and momentarily pausing before transitioning to a different subject. The Japanese anime series *Neon Genesis Evangelion* offers a profound representation of the Freudian model of psychological isolation.

In essence, *Neon Genesis Evangelion* is a science fiction anime that portrays a future in which Earth has been destroyed by catastrophic climate events. As humanity grapples with the threat of relentless and destructive creatures known as Angels, a reluctant young man joins a selected group of pilots under the command of his authoritarian and emotionally distant father. Their mission is to thwart the Angel menace utilizing colossal machines referred to as Project Evangelion. Key elements within the narrative, contextualizing the theme of psychological isolation, encompass Shinji Ikari, the youthful protagonist; NERV, the secretive organization tasked with combating the Angels; and the looming threat of the Third Impact, a cataclysmic event posing a significant peril to humanity. *Neon Genesis Evangelion* is celebrated for its status as a cult classic within the science fiction genre, as it incorporates layers of interpretation ranging from religious symbolism to psychoanalysis, from post-humanism to trans-humanism. Among the pilots, Shinji Ikari stands as a prime illustration of the psychological isolation theme. As the son of NERV's commander, Gendo Ikari, Shinji endured abandonment and solitude from a young age following his mother's demise. Raised without the presence of either parent and devoid of companionship, he was steeped in isolation throughout his formative years. His reticence and compliance stem from the profound fear of abandonment, driving him to pilot the Project Evangelion when called upon.

NERV, headquartered underground in the city of Neo-Tokyo 3, operates under the leadership of Gendo Ikari, who is secretly executing the Human Instrumentality Project during the entire story, a grand endeavor aiming to merge all human souls into a quasi-divine entity. Despite Shinji's fervent attempts to escape his father's clutches and the camaraderie of fellow pilots, seeking the isolation he has grown accustomed to, Gendo's ambitions come to fruition during the Third Impact. The psychological isolation of the protagonist intersects with the loneliness experienced by those he encounters on his journey, ultimately compelling Shinji to consider the Human Instrumentality Project as a viable path. In the denouement, Shinji opts for individuality, choosing to reconnect with people despite the inherent trepidation.[4]

---

[4] As underlined in Anno (1997), the last dialogue Shinji has with Misato, his tutor and manager

Furthermore, the recurrent motif of the train, serving as a manifestation of the psychological isolation as conceived by Freud, significantly influences Shinji's decisions. In *Neon Genesis Evangelion* isolation and loneliness converge and collide, with Shinji personifying isolation while his friend and fellow pilot, Asuka, embodies the theme of loneliness. The anime's complex narrative masterfully explores the interplay between these intricate dimensions of human experience.

In this academic exploration, we embark on an analytical journey that transcends the dichotomy of social isolation and psychological isolation to arrive at a synthesis of concepts encapsulated within the notion of cultural isolation. This Hegelian process posits social and psychological isolation as thesis and antithesis, respectively, culminating in the synthesis of cultural isolation.

Cultural isolation is thus meticulously defined as "the absence of close and empathetic social interactions resulting from spatial separation, instigated by external forces and catalyzed by transformations within the cultural environment of the individual" (Keijzer, Mäs, & Flache, 2018, p. 12). This form of isolation often arises involuntarily, rarely as a deliberate choice made by the individual, but rather as a consequence of external circumstances beyond their control.

The video game *Death Stranding* developed by Kojima Productions, not only serves as an exemplar of a science fiction narrative that incorporates cultural isolation but also embodies the Hegelian synthesis of the preceding themes of social and psychological isolation. The narrative unfolds in a world ravaged by the aftermath of the enigmatic 'Death Stranding' event, which had decimated a substantial portion of the planet, ushering in the presence of supernatural and otherworldly entities.

The central elements of the narrative revolve around the character Sam Porter Bridges, his affiliation with the specialized organization Bridges, and the looming existential threat posed by the Extinction Entity, Amelie, the older sister of Sam. In the beginning of the game, the two separate, and Amelie (not yet perceived as the antagonist), states: "It is a strange word, 'strand'. 'Strand' can mean a thread, a tie. Whereas 'stranding' means to be stranded on the shore. And being 'stranded' means not being able to go home. And now I'm stranded, Sam... here, on the Pacific coast. A thousand miles away... our bond still holds. You are free, but we are still connected" (Kojima, 2019).

In fact, in this apocalyptic world, Sam assumes the role of a deliveryman tasked with traversing a desolate wasteland to reestablish connections between the fragmented city-states of America. Isolation is not merely a thematic ele-

---

within NERV, is emblematic. In the final moments, Misato urges Shinji to fight: "I've made tons of stupid mistakes and later I regretted them. And I've done it over and over again, thousands of times. A cycle of hollow joy and vicious self-hatred. But even so, every time I learned something about myself. Please, Shinji. You've got to pilot Eva and settle this once and for all. For your own sake. Find out why you came here. Why you exist at all? Answer your own questions".

ment but is intricately woven into the narrative's fabric, evident from the introductory credits of the game, which expound upon the state of post-catastrophe American society and culture.

From the outset, Sam shares striking parallels with Gordon Krantz, portrayed as a lone wanderer navigating the American landscape in search of answers about his past. His character is marked by a particular affliction known as aphenphosmphobia, a profound fear of physical contact and averse to emotional bonds, which Sam frequently exhibits throughout the game. As Sam becomes entangled with Bridges, a specialized organization determined to reestablish societal links through an elaborate infrastructure network, the existential threat confronting humankind becomes increasingly apparent. In a manner reminiscent of NERV in *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, the very objectives of Bridges are poised as a potential peril to all of humanity.

The Extinction Entity – Amelie – unveils a harrowing revelation that Sam's efforts to connect the cities have inadvertently tied each community and, by extension, every soul in America to her, thereby enabling the impending extinction event. It becomes evident that this was her ultimate goal all along. Sam is faced with a heart-wrenching dilemma; he can avert the so-called 'Last Stranding' by severing his connection to the Extinction Entity, but he finds himself ensnared in a complex web of emotions and affections for this supernatural entity, thereby blurring the line between one death deity's fate and the destiny of all life on the planet.

This narrative not only encapsulates cultural isolation but offers a profound reflection on the complexities of human connection, emotional bonds, and the inherent tension between self-preservation and the greater good. *Death Stranding* transcends conventional video game storytelling, delving into the intricate interplay of isolation, societal connectivity, and the sacrifices one must contemplate in the pursuit of collective survival.

The theme of cultural isolation, as depicted in *Death Stranding*, serves as a rich tapestry upon which the intricacies of human existence are interwoven. It exemplifies the transformative power of narratives in reflecting and dissecting the multifaceted dimensions of isolation, ultimately contributing to a broader understanding of the human condition and the inherent paradoxes it presents. In this synthesis, cultural isolation emerges as a potent narrative tool, encapsulating the profound complexities of human interaction, the dilemmas of isolation, and the perennial quest for connection in an ever-changing and unpredictable world.

Cultural isolation, as a synthesis of both social and psychological isolation, is vividly exemplified in the narrative of *Death Stranding*: the game provides a profound resonance with the previously delineated definitions of isolation in its own unique way.

Building on the foundations of social isolation, which involves the objective condition of physical separation and the subsequent limitation of social net-

works, *Death Stranding* plunges players into a post-apocalyptic world where humanity's remnants are divided and physically isolated across vast landscapes. The societal fabric has been torn asunder, and individuals are cut off from one another due to external forces, specifically the cataclysmic events of the *Death Stranding*. This separation is not a matter of choice but a consequence of circumstances beyond their control, underscoring the involuntary nature of their isolation.

Conversely, the game extends the themes of psychological isolation, as defined through the psychological processes that create cognitive divides and minimize associative connections between thoughts and feelings. Within the context of *Death Stranding* this isolation is poignantly portrayed through the character of Sam Porter Bridges. Sam, like the protagonist Gordon Krantz in *The Postman* shares the trait of isolation, signified by his affliction, aphenphosmphobia, revealing a profound fear of physical contact and, in essence, mirroring his isolation from others. This aversion to physical and emotional closeness is a manifestation of his psychological isolation.

Crucially, *Death Stranding* presents a synthesis of the two preceding texts, *The Postman* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, where isolation gradually yields to a powerful sense of connection. While both social and psychological isolation are themes that weigh heavily on the narrative, they serve as stepping stones toward a resolution in collaboration and altruism.

In essence, the game underscores that isolation is not an immutable state but a condition that can evolve and be transcended. The thematic essence of isolation, carried over from *The Postman* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion* is recontextualized within the world of *Death Stranding*. As the narrative unfolds, Sam's journey shifts from a solitary quest for answers, mirroring Krantz's solitary wanderings, to a mission of connectivity and reestablishing societal bonds.

The synthesis of these narratives emphasizes that in a world marked by isolation, the quest to rebuild connections and bridge the divides among isolated pockets of survivors holds the potential to unleash both salvation and destruction. Moreover, *Death Stranding* delves into the complexities of human emotions and choices, ultimately challenging Sam to confront the daunting decision of whether to save a supernatural death entity he has come to love or to sever his connection, thus safeguarding all life on the planet. This pivotal moment in the game narrative serves as the culmination of the theme of connection in the face of isolation, echoing the underlying philosophy of *The Postman* and the intricate psychoanalytical interplay in *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. By these meanings, *Death Stranding* emerges as a synthesis of its predecessors, offering a profound commentary on the transformative potential of human connection. It posits that isolation, regardless of its manifestations, can be transcended through collaboration and selflessness. As a medium, it exemplifies the power of narratives to reflect and interrogate the multifaceted dimensions of isolation, ultimately guiding us toward a deeper understanding

of the human condition and the enduring quest for meaningful connections in a world marked by isolation.

This study, aimed at investigating the representation of isolation in the context of transmedia storytelling, draws inspiration from the works of Henry Jenkins and Elizabeth Evans, who have provided essential frameworks for comprehending this dynamic narrative approach (Jenkins, 2010, pp. 943-958). Through the analysis of the three selected texts and their diverse interpretations of isolation, including those presented by fellow researchers, it is possible to discern how isolation can be interpreted as a form of transmedia storytelling. This, in turn, offers multiple entry points to a central theme across different media and narratives, culminating in a unified and coordinated experience for audiences.

Henry Jenkins, a pioneering scholar in the field of media studies, has laid the foundation for understanding transmedia storytelling within the framework of convergent culture: he defines transmedia storytelling as a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple channels, creating a unified and coordinated experience. Jenkins' definition underscores the idea that storytelling is not confined to a single medium but is disseminated and developed across various platforms, engaging audiences in a multifaceted and immersive experience.

Furthermore, Elizabeth Evans expands upon Jenkins' definition, framing transmedia storytelling as an encompassing practice involving "the increasingly popular industrial practice of using multiple media technologies to present similar themes through a range of textual forms" (Evans, 2019, p. 52). Transmedia storytelling takes on a broader meaning, emphasizing the integration of various media technologies to explore similar thematic elements through a diverse array of textual expressions.

The three works examined in this study, along with their respective interpretations of isolation, epitomize the notion of transmedia storytelling. Each of these texts serves as a distinct entry point to the theme of isolation, utilizing different media and narrative techniques to provide audiences with a comprehensive and unified experience – they converge to form a cohesive narrative web that deepens our understanding of isolation and its various dimensions.

To read David Brin's novel is to immerse oneself in the written word, experiencing isolation through the lens of literature; watching *Neon Genesis Evangelion* immerses the viewer in a visually compelling and psychologically complex narrative, revealing isolation's intricate facets; playing and experiencing *Death Stranding* offers an interactive and sensory exploration of isolation within a virtual world, engaging the player in a unique way.

Each of these media offers varying layers of immersion and interaction, allowing audiences to engage with the theme on personal and emotional levels. The transmedia approach to storytelling, in this context, invites audiences to engage with isolation in multifaceted ways, enhancing their comprehension of

the central theme. In the contemporary world, where issues of isolation and the need for altruism have gained renewed relevance, these texts serve as powerful vehicles for conveying messages and insights. They reflect the complex human experience and the enduring relevance of themes such as isolation and the importance of connection and altruism.

In addition to their engagement with isolation, the three works seamlessly fit into the emerging sub-genre of science fiction known as 'hopepunk'.[5] This sub-genre, characterized by narratives that emphasize hope, resilience, and acts of kindness in the face of adversity, aligns with the thematic underpinnings of the three texts.[6] They exemplify the 'hopepunk' ethos, as they explore isolation and resilience while ultimately championing the triumph of altruism and human connection in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

In conclusion, *The Postman*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Death Stranding* stand as exemplary instances of the transcodification of isolation within the realm of science fiction narratives. They embody a dynamic journey, culminating in a hybrid space characterized by the emergence of novel production phenomena, subgenres, and narrative convergence that typify transmedia storytelling. These works underscore the transformative potential of storytelling and its capacity to traverse diverse media forms, forging a unified and coordinated experience for audiences.

Throughout this exploration, the concept of isolation has served as a powerful lens through which to scrutinize the characters as multifaceted human beings. In science fiction narratives, isolation becomes a catalyst for the genesis of new subgenres, subsequently influencing the landscape of transmedia storytelling. In this context, isolation unfurls as a fertile ground for the examination of novel forms of adaptation and offers insights into the intricate phenomena of narrative synthesis and transcodification.

Ultimately, navigating the ever-evolving landscape of transmedia storytelling, the concept of isolation emerges as a dynamic catalyst for transcending the boundaries of individual narratives and forging connections across a multitude of media. It invites to explore the rich tapestry of human experiences, and in

[5] As Mancuso (2021) underlines, the Hopepunk (first defined in 2017) describes a reaction to decades of dystopian, nihilistic fiction, and explores how optimism can be an act of rebellion. The worlds described in hopepunk works are not utopian or even necessarily hopeful; the genre is expressed in the ways characters approach issues related to loss, pessimism, violence, amorality, isolation and loneliness. In this context, Hopepunk accepts isolation in the sense that if the life of the characters of these stories are meaningless then the only thing they can do is move forward from there.

[6] This is clearly visible from the ending of *The Postman: A Novel,* written by Davin Brin in 2011: "It was not the creature on the pyre that was reborn, and even in sleep, that surprised Gordon. The great bird was consumed, leaving only bones. But the tree blossomed, and from its flowering branches things uncurled and drifted off into the air. He stared in wonderment when he saw that they were balloons, airplanes, and rocket ships. Dreams. They floated away in all directions, and the air was filled with hope".

doing so, provides new insights into the multifaceted world of storytelling and its ever-expanding potential.

The different narratives aforementioned – elucidating themes of hope, resilience, and the unrelenting pursuit of human connection within a milieu characterized by isolation – provide profound insights into the intricate dynamics of the human experience. According to authors Bill Franklin and Richard Carr (1971), scientific inquiry affords a nuanced comprehension of the neurobiological, psychological, and sociological substrates that underlie these cardinal facets of the human condition (pp. 230-237). By this mean, cognitively, these narratives illuminate the convoluted processes within the neural milieu, delineating the cognitive responses to adversarial circumstances and their consequential impact on the sustenance of hope and the manifestation of resilience. Psychologically, an intricate tapestry of emotions, cognitions, and behaviors unfolds, detailing the psychological constituents inherent to the human experience amid periods of isolation. Moreover, from a sociological vantage point, *The Postman*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, and *Death Stranding* unveil broader societal ramifications entwined with the pursuit of human connection. They underscore the pivotal role played by social networks, communal support structures, and shared experiences in fortifying resilience and fostering the tenacity of hope. A deeper psychological exploration of these narratives not only enriches the comprehension of the human experience but also contributes empirically informed perspectives to interventions and strategies aimed at cultivating well-being amidst conditions of isolation. In conclusion, the narratives that generate and explore hope punk in a world marked by isolation offer profound insights into the intricacies of the human experience. Through a critical lens, we gain a deeper understanding of the cultural, psychological, and social dimensions that underpin these fundamental aspects of the human condition. As we unravel the threads of these narratives, we find that, in the tapestry of human existence, hope, resilience, and human connection are not only enduring but also integral to the very fabric of what it means to be human.

References

Anno H. (1997). *The End of Evangelion*. Gainax.

Ashraf, Q., & Galor, O. (2011). Cultural Diversity, Geographical Isolation, and the Origin of the Wealth of Nations. *National Bureau of Economic Research*. https://www.nber.org/papers/w17640

Baccolini, R. (2004). The persistence of hope in dystopian science fiction. *PMLA/Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, *119*(3), 518-521.

Brin, D. (2011). The Postman: A Novel. Spectra.

Cacioppo, J. T., & Hawkley, L. C. (2009). Perceived social isolation and cognition. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, *13*(10), 447-454.

Call-Cummings, M., Hauber-Özer, M., & Dazzo, G. (2019). Examining researcher identity development within the context of a course on par: A layered narrative approach. *The Qualitative Report,* 24(9), 2178-2196.

Demirel, S. K., & Tanritanir, B. C. (2023). Endless hope in David Brin's The postman and José Saramago's blindness. *New Era International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Researches*. https://newerajournal.com/index.php/newera/article/view/174

Evans, E. (2019). *Understanding engagement in transmedia culture*. Routledge.

Frankenberg, G. (2006). Comparing constitutions: Ideas, ideals, and ideology–toward a layered narrative. *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 4(3), 439-459.

Franklin, B. J., & Carr, R. A. (1971). Cognitive differentiation, cognitive isolation, and dogmatism. *Sociometry*, 230-237.

Keijzer, M. A., Mäs, M., & Flache, A. (2018). Communication in online social networks fosters cultural isolation. *Complexity*, *2018*, 1-18.

Kojima H. (2019). *Death Stranding*. Kojima Productions.

Kopylova, O. (2021). Manga production, anime consumption: The neon genesis evangelion franchise and its fandom. *Anime Studies: Media-Specific Approaches to Neon Genesis Evangelion*, 247-295.

Jenkins, H. (2010). Transmedia storytelling and entertainment: An annotated Syllabus. *Continuum*, 24(6), 943-958.

Li, C., Nakamura, M., & Roth, M. (2013). Japanese Science Fiction in Converging Media: Alienation and Neon Genesis Evangelion. *Asiascape Occasional Papers*, 6, 1-16.

Mancuso, C. (2021). Multiplicative speculations: What we can learn from the rise and fall of Hopepunk. *ASAP/Journal*, 6(2), 459-483.

Napier, S. J. (2002). When the Machines Stop: Fantasy, Reality, and Terminal Identity in *Neon Genesis Evangelion* and *Serial Experiments Lain*. *Science Fiction Studies*, 418-435.

Radchenko, S. (2023). Metamodern nature of Hideo Kojima's *Death Stranding* synopsis and gameplay. *Games and Culture*. https://doi.org/10.1177/15554120231187794

Ryan, Marie-Laure. (2015). Transmedia Storytelling: Industry Buzzword or new narrative experience? *Storyworlds: A Journal of Narrative Studies*, 7(2), 1-19.

Santiago, J. A., & Soler, A. (2021). *Anime studies: Media-specific approaches to Neon Genesis Evangelion*. Stockholm University Press.

Warburton, J., & Lui, C.-W. (2007). *Social isolation and loneliness in older people: A literature review*. University of Queensland. Australasian Centre on Ageing.

Wolf, M. J. P. (2018). Transmedia World-Building. In M. Freeman and R. Rampazzo Gambarato (Eds), *The Routledge Companion to Transmedia Studies*. Routledge.