

Towards a poetics of multi-channel storytelling

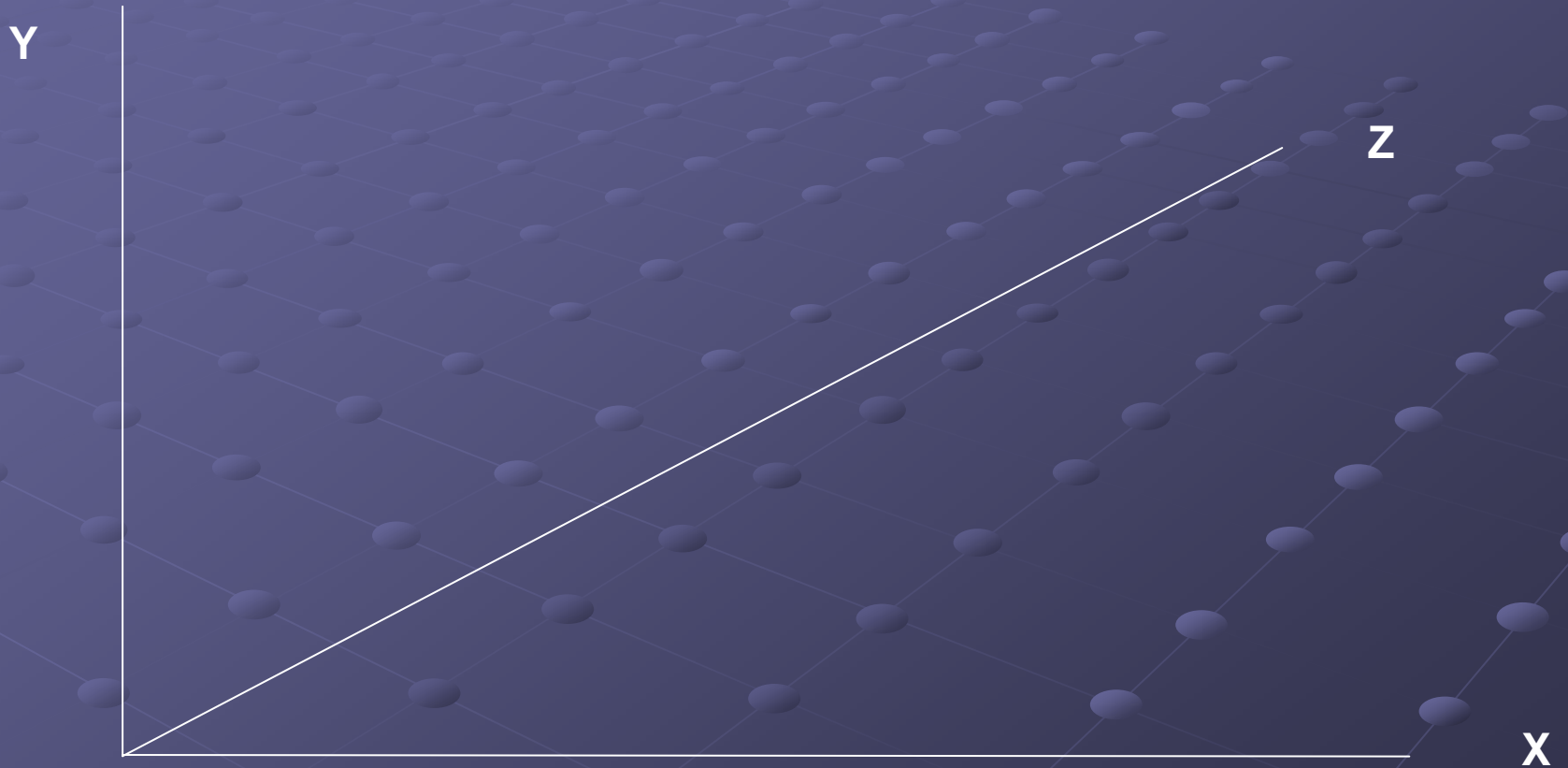
Christy Dena

Jenkins' 'transmedia'

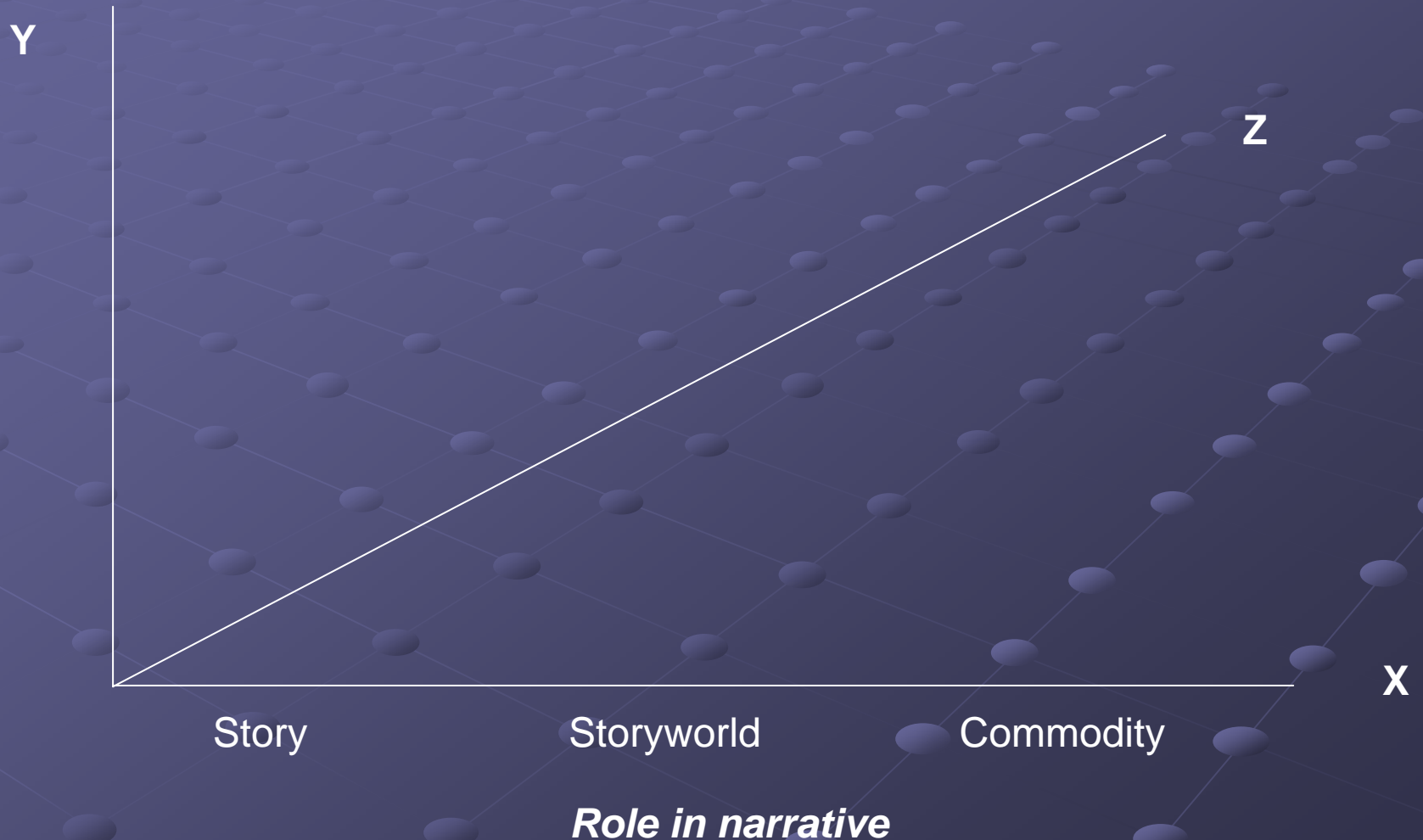
'In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best—so that a story might be introduced in a film, expanded through television, novels, and comics, and its world might be explored and experienced through game play. Each franchise entry needs to be self-contained enough to enable autonomous consumption. That is, you don't need to have seen the film to enjoy the game and vice-versa.'

(Jenkins, 2003)

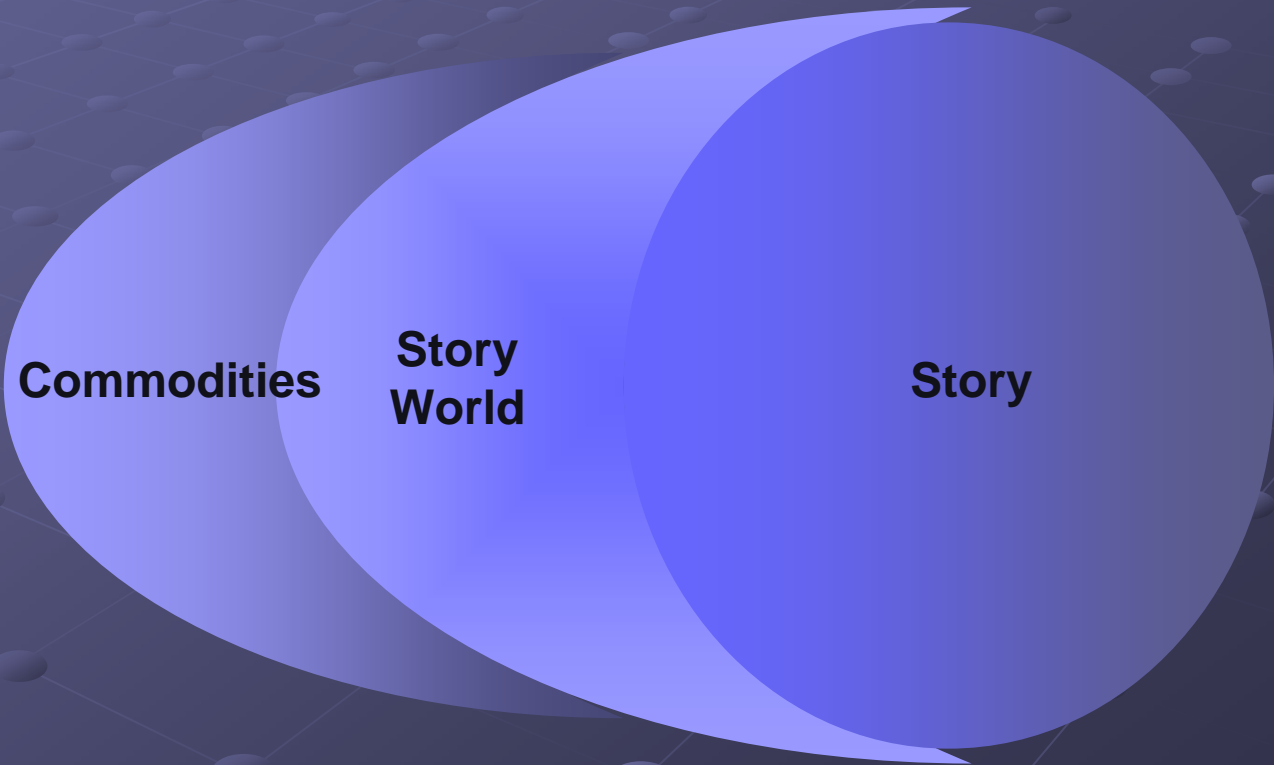
The X,Y,Z of multi-channel works



The X,Y,Z of multi-channel works



$X = \text{Channel(s)}$ Role in Narrative



Story channel

A story channel is:

- Designed as primary source of information about characters, setting and plot;
- Designed and experienced as an entry-point to the whole multi-channel work;
- The experience of it has a strong impact in story comprehension;
- If collaborative user participation can impact story creation;
- Consistent information about characters, setting plot;
- Being a product that cannot be separated from a particular fiction;
- Can be self-contained (if transmedia) or one of the primary texts (if transfiction);
- Are familiar and preferred channels;



Story

Storyworld Channel

Storyworld channel characterised by:

Experience with the channel has lesser impact on story comprehension;

- Not primary source of information about characters, setting and plot;
- Provides further information about characters, setting and plot that are primary or secondary in the story channel;
- Does not play a direct role in the unfolding plot;
- Augments story comprehension;
- Medium-level influence on comprehension of story;
- Consistent with characters, setting and plot in story channel;
- Allows the fictional world to be accessed in the real world through character identification and scene extension;
- Must perpetuate story channel and not break fictional setting;



Story World

Storyworld Example



iRobot website available at: <http://www.irobotnow.com/index.php>

Storyworld Example



Harry Potter
scarf



Harry Potter
student hat

Story World

Commodity Channel

Commodities are characterised by:

- Their low-level of relevance to story world;
- Little to no impact in story comprehension;
- No impact on story creation;
- Their lack of plausibility of existence in the story and storyworld;
- Can be inconsistent with characters, setting and plot as set up in the storyworld and story;
- Have a larger role as an attractor to the storyworld and story channels than as narrative devices.



Commodities

Examples of Commodities



Hagrid plush
doll



Harry Potter
'In Potions
Class' Giclee

Commodities

Harry Potter products available at: <http://harrypotter.wbshop.com/catalog>

Recognition of commodities

'XII - 10:33pm Jul 8, 2004 PST

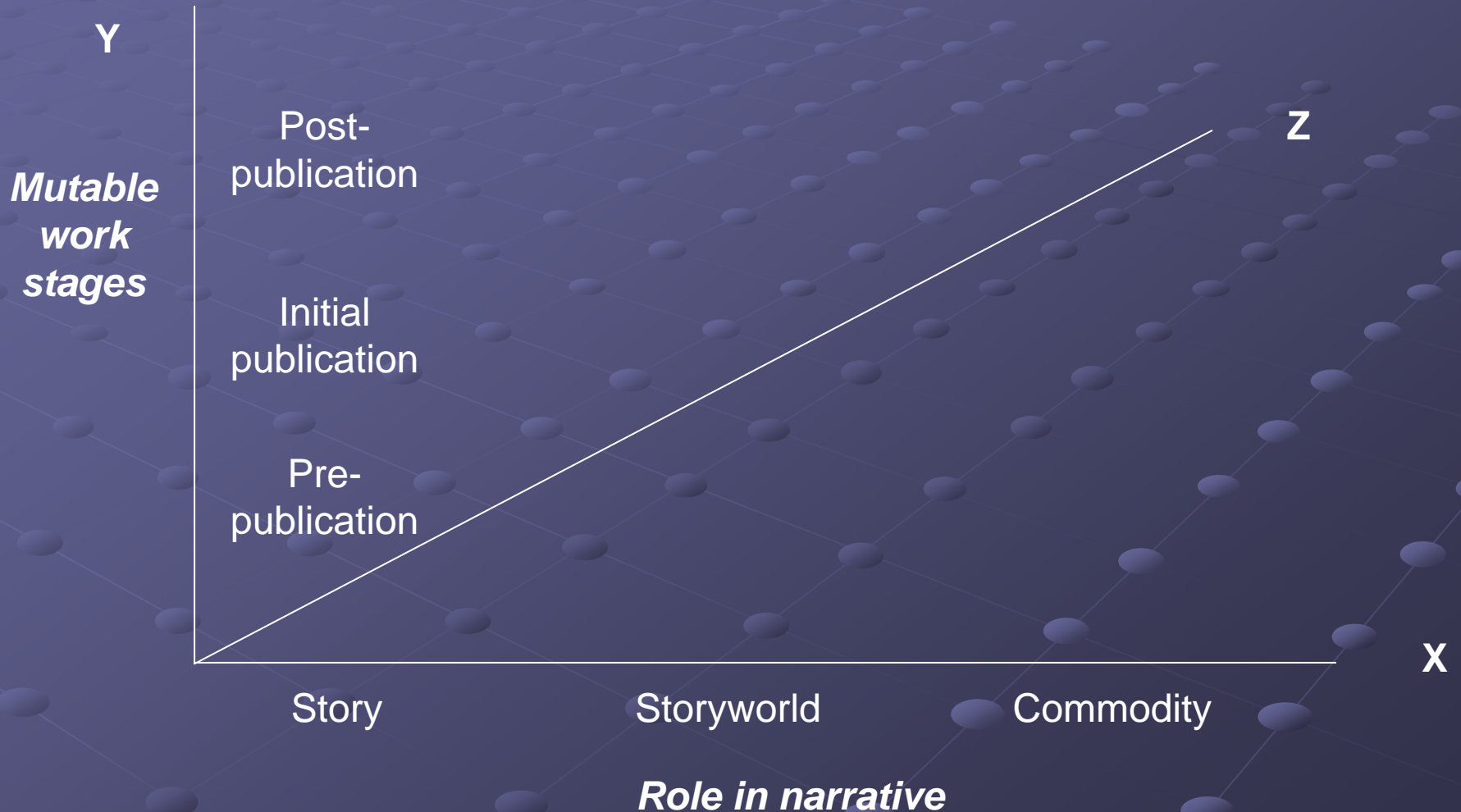
I jokingly ran a search for fight club 2 hoping I would find nothing but to my surprise it was not a sequel I found, but a game..... this is terrible..... this stands against everything that fight club stands for..... its not about marketing and merchandise and advertising..... its about the message.... this is the worst game I have ever heard of.... even the actual fight club in fight club was not about making your opponent bleed or about slamming them into the ground and breaking their spine as this game suggests.... it was about feeling... about the sensation of life...

...'

<http://community.vugames.com/WebX?13@156.UMo2dE8KGk5.0@.f020c44>



The X,Y,Z of multi-channel works



Y = Mutable Work Stages

Pre-Production

conception,
drafting and
editing;
Pre-distribution.

Initial Publication

intended medium and
mode;
first edition;
first reading by the
reader/user;
without updates.

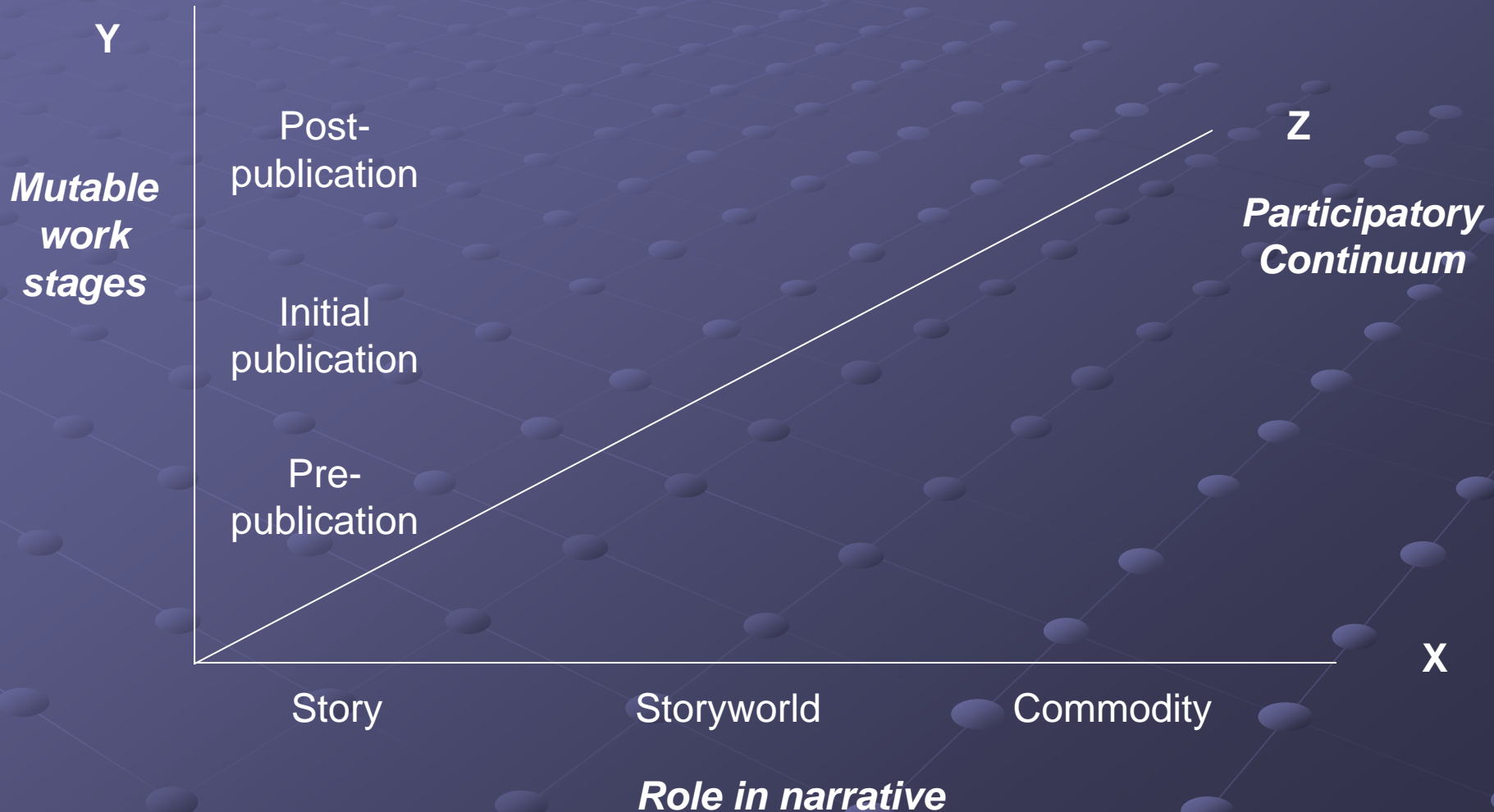
Ongoing Publication

Within the work by either the
producer or users (updates on a
webpage, patches in software,
new edition);

To the work (different cover,
library stamp in a book, viewed
on a different platform and
operating system);

Around the work (reviews, fan
fiction, forums, cultural shifts, 're-
entry' (Tabbi), reading
environment)

The X,Y,Z of multi-channel works



Controlled comment

Vivendi Universal Games

GAMES STORE FORUMS DOWNLOADS CORPORATE CONTACT SIGN UP

International

VU GAMES.COM The name behind the game™

GAME SEARCH // FORUMS //

Search for games by platform or genre. You may also search on a specific word.

Enter Keyword:

And/Or Select From:

All Genres

All Platforms

Go!

game search help

Join the Vivendi Universal Games community and discuss your favorite games' features, strategies, development, tech support, and much more.

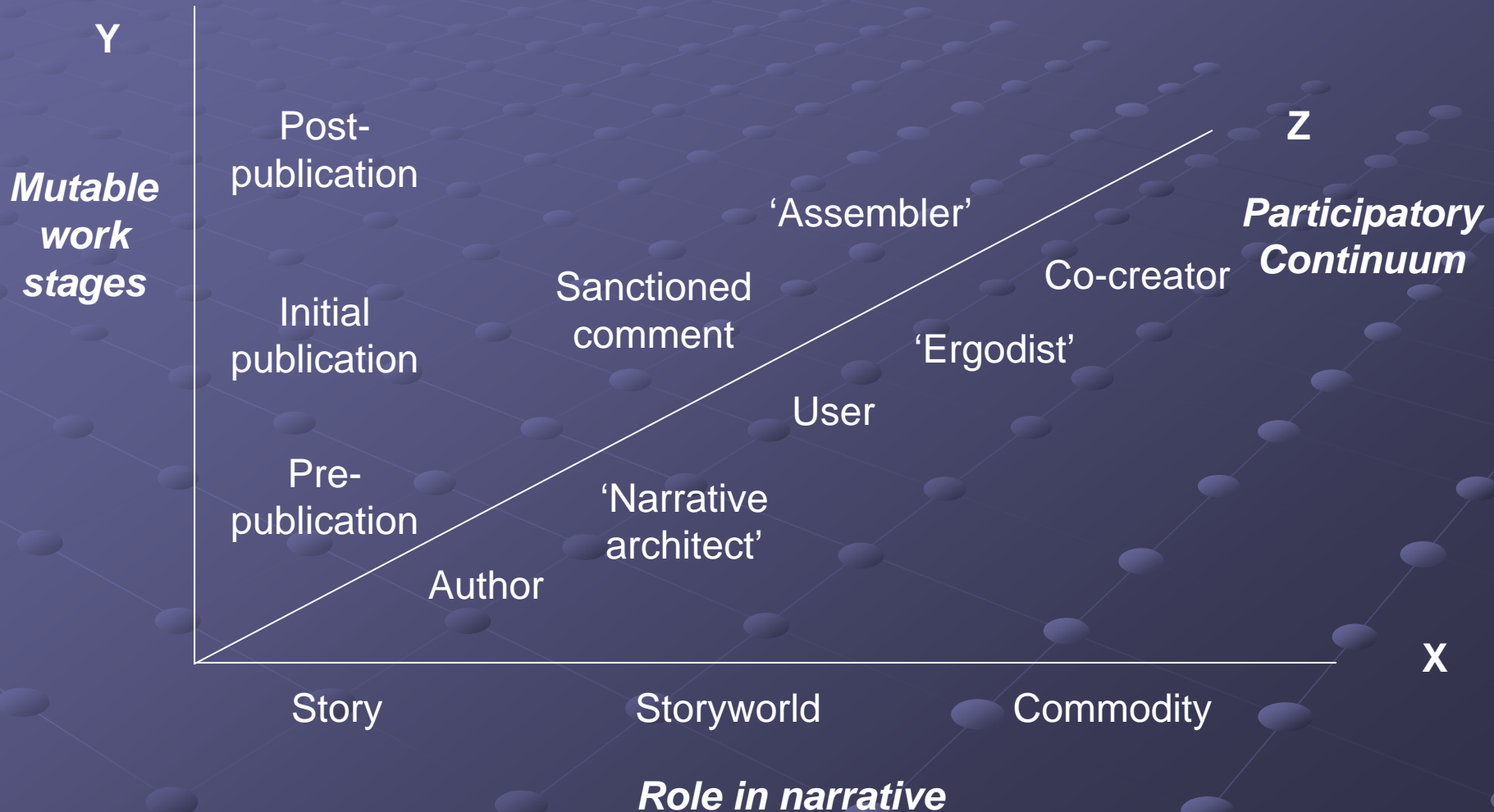
Select a specific game's Forum page below:

Vivendi Universal Games Forums

Battlestar Galactica™	The Lord of the Rings™
Buffy The Vampire Slayer: Chaos Bleeds	Scarface™
Cold Winter	The Simpsons™ Hit & Run™
Crash Bandicoot	Spyro the Dragon
Enclave	The Chronicles of Riddick™
Evil Genius	The Thing
Fight Club	Van Helsing™
The Hulk	The X-Files™: Resist or Serve
Hunter: The Reckoning®	
Sierra Game Forums	
Aliens vs. Predator 2	Men Of Valor
Arcanum	Metal Arms: Glitch in the System
Caesar	NASCAR® Racing
Contract J.A.C.K.	No One Lives Forever 2
Counter-Strike™ Condition Zero™	Phantasmagoria
Emperor: Rise of the Middle Kingdom	Pharaoh
Empire Earth	Pharaoh Official Expansion: Cleopatra
Freedom Force vs The Third Reich	Quest for Glory
Gabriel Knight	Racing Simulations
Ground Control	SWAT

Vivendi Universal Games Forum available at: <http://www.vugames.com/forum.do>

The X,Y,Z of multi-channel works



Contact me:

Star of Dena

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/christydena>

c.dena@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au