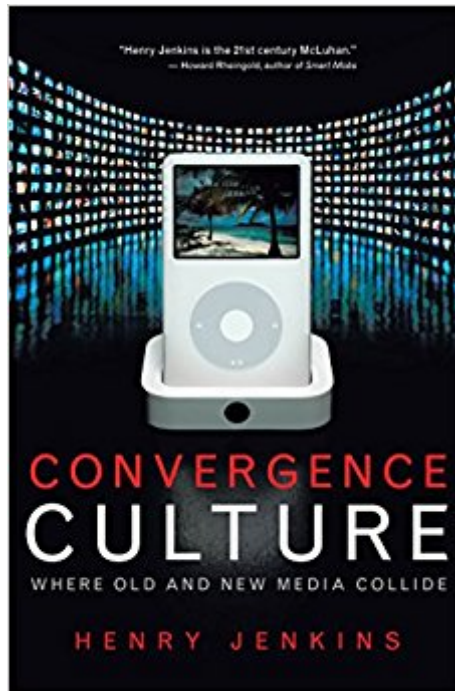




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# Convergence Culture: Where Old And New Media Collide



## Synopsis

Henry Jenkins at Authors@Google (video) Winner of the 2007 Society for Cinema and Media Studies Katherine Singer Kovacs Book Award 2007 Choice Outstanding Academic Title

Convergence Culture maps a new territory: where old and new media intersect, where grassroots and corporate media collide, where the power of the media producer and the power of the consumer interact in unpredictable ways. Henry Jenkins, one of America's most respected media analysts, delves beneath the new media hype to uncover the important cultural transformations that are taking place as media converge. He takes us into the secret world of Survivor Spoilers, where avid internet users pool their knowledge to unearth the show's secrets before they are revealed on the air. He introduces us to young Harry Potter fans who are writing their own Hogwarts tales while executives at Warner Brothers struggle for control of their franchise. He shows us how The Matrix has pushed transmedia storytelling to new levels, creating a fictional world where consumers track down bits of the story across multiple media channels. Jenkins argues that struggles over convergence will redefine the face of American popular culture. Industry leaders see opportunities to direct content across many channels to increase revenue and broaden markets. At the same time, consumers envision a liberated public sphere, free of network controls, in a decentralized media environment. Sometimes corporate and grassroots efforts reinforce each other, creating closer, more rewarding relations between media producers and consumers. Sometimes these two forces are at war. Jenkins provides a riveting introduction to the world where every story gets told and every brand gets sold across multiple media platforms. He explains the cultural shift that is occurring as consumers fight for control across disparate channels, changing the way we do business, elect our leaders, and educate our children.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Henry Jenkins, founder and director of MIT's comparative media studies program, debunks outdated ideas of the digital revolution in this remarkable book, proving that new media will not simply replace old media, but rather will learn to interact with it in a complex relationship he calls "convergence culture." The book's goal is to explain how convergence is currently impacting the relationship among media audiences, producers and content, a far from easy undertaking. As Jenkins says, "there will be no magical black box that puts everything in order again." Jenkins takes pains to prove that the notion of convergence culture is not primarily a technological revolution; through a number of well-chosen examples, Jenkins shows that it is more a cultural shift, dependent on the active participation of the consumers working in a social dynamic. He references recent media franchises like Survivor, The Matrix, and American Idol to show how the new participatory culture of consumers can be utilized for popular success and increased exposure. Jenkins' insights are gripping and his prose is surprisingly entertaining and lucid for a book that is, at its core, intellectually rigorous. Though wordy at times, Jenkins' impressive ability to break down complex concepts into readable prose makes this study vital and engaging. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"Remarkable . . . Jenkins's™ insights are gripping and his prose is surprisingly entertaining and lucid for a book that is, at its core, intellectually rigorous . . . Jenkins's™ impressive ability to break down complex concepts into readable prose makes this study vital and engaging." - Publishers Weekly  
"Jenkins is an astute observer of media culture and his insights are spot-on." - The Los Angeles Times  
"For any Sony PS3 execs out there wondering why their technological masterpiece is being ridiculed by customers before its even released . . . Convergence Culture is a must read . . . Jenkins offers numerous insights on how technology and media professionals can forge better relationships with their customers." - Slashdot  
"Jenkins tries to bring clarity to cultural changes that are melting and morphing into new shapes on an hourly, daily, weekly, monthly basis. Convergence Culture provides a view that looks at the restless ocean and tracks the currents rather than just looking at the individual rocks on the beach." - The McClatchy Newspapers  
"One of those rare works that is closer to an operating system than a traditional book: it's a platform that people will be

building on for years to come. Whatâ€™s more, the book happens to be a briskly entertaining read--as startling, inventive, and witty as the culture it documents. It should be mandatory reading for anyone trying to make sense of todayâ€™s popular cultureâ”but thankfully, a book this fun to read doesn't need a mandate." - Steven Johnson, author of the national bestseller, *Everything Bad Is Good For You*

Fascinating read for any. Reading for part of my media communications graduate class, but Jenkins work can (and should) be enjoyed by any. Focusing on how audiences engage and interact with commercial media production companies is an imperative skill for any that consume media on a daily basis. The book reads quickly because Jenkins discusses interesting communities within the greater realm of popular culture, and he writes with a warm and active voice that stands out from traditional, monotone academic books. Great read!

This was the assigned textbook for a New Media class that I took several months ago (thanks Professor Nicholas, for keeping book costs low!) The book discusses the many intersections of old and new media, and explores the future of media. The book starts off a little heavy and "clumsy", if you are new to New Media research. However, once you get past the introductions, the remaining chapters move swiftly and effortlessly. Each chapter takes a media "case study" and analyzes it, transitioning seamlessly from pop culture to political activism. I found the book so interesting that I gave it to my husband (a public relations specialist) and advised him to read it. This is a great book for individuals interested in communication, technology, and business (there are a lot of good ideas that can be used to take a business from local to global). I highly recommend it!

Convergence Culture offers some very interesting perspectives and case studies for everyone, but especially for media professionals. There are even valuable lessons here to extrapolate for the book publishing industry, although Jenkins doesn't focus much on the book world. He does discuss Harry Potter, but mostly in the context of fan fiction. Jenkins discussion of transmedia storytelling is fascinating, and fits together very well with Frank Rose's discussion in *The Art of Immersion*. The discussion of transmedia storytelling combines Jenkins' three concepts of media convergence, participating culture, and collective intelligence, because it requires consumers to move across multiple media and collaboration with a fan community to fully experience a story. As mentioned above, he uses the example of the Matrix movies to illustrate this point. Traditionally, all the information viewers needed to fully understand a movie were contained in the movie itself and

presented in a mostly linear way that was easy to grasp, but movies like *The Matrix* provide open ended clues and loose strands that can't be fully understood without collaborating with other fans through online communities and by taking part in other extensions of the story in different mediums such as comics and video games. In some cases, these extensions may provide more background or a deeper understanding of the movie, or they might be completely new tangents unexplored in the movie. It will be interesting to see if this mode of story telling continues to gain traction. Overall I enjoyed reading *Convergence Culture*, especially having also previously read *The Art of Immersion*. I do think Jenkins was trying to fit too much into the book, and at times the organization was a bit clunky. Each chapter focused on a particular TV show or movie as an example, so there was a chapter that discussed *Survivor* and the concepts of fan participation and "spoiling," the process by which fans share information that hasn't been aired yet about popular TV shows online. There was also a chapter on *American Idol* and advertising and fan participation. I think it may have been a better idea to organize the book around these ideas and provide more examples as opposed to organizing the book by show or movie. By far my favorite chapter was the one that focused on transmedia storytelling and *The Matrix*. By comparison, the last chapter on politics and popular culture and the afterword on the ramifications of YouTube on politics, while interesting and important, seemed out of place. Perhaps my biggest gripe was how dated the book seemed. Despite being published in 2008 (the paperback was published in 2008, the hardcover in 2006), some of the examples given and, for instance, the lengthy explanation on what a blog is, made the book feel very dated, which goes to show how rapid the media landscape is changing. I would definitely recommend reading this book either before or after *The Art of Immersion* for a more well-rounded view.

Dr. Jenkins has achieved something special with this text--he's synthesized a few generations of technological achievement, humanities computing practices, and popular culture into an accessible, insightful treatise on the power of emerging media. While focusing on contemporary examples, Jenkins never loses sight of the historical perspective. It's a watershed text for those interested in looking at how the full flower of our communication efforts has come into bloom in recent years, and how that condition is impacting content creators, activists, fans, and citizens...

Needed this book for a college course. If you are not into the subject, this can be a very difficult and tedious read. The author is well respected for his significant contributions on the subject matter, so for that I do give him credit for his thorough work. But I gained very little not being a communications

major and having to use this book.

Great title, decent idea, banal thesis, lame execution. Also, as recent as the publication is, its chief examples -- Survivor, American Idol -- are passe and overstated. Light on theory where a little more critical work was possible; very academic, not-so-rigorous understanding of media economics and consumption. But hey, I'm sure some TED audience will eat it up.

Paid for a new book and was disappointed when I opened up to the first chapter only to find markings on the pages

I purchased this for an English class. It's okay. I didn't find the content to be very entertaining but again, I only purchased this for a class. Other than that the book was delivered quickly through the kindle app.

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