

Marketing Semiotics in Digital Games: Myth's Analysis in The Walking Dead and Heavy Rain

Dinko Jukić

Dinko Jukić, Ph.D.

Trade and Commercial School "Davor Milas" Osijek
Ivana Gundulića 38
31 000 Osijek
CROATIA
dinkojukic.phd@gmail.com



Dr. sc. Dinko Jukić, MPA, MLIS, MA, is professor at Trade and Commercial school "Davor Milas" in Osijek. An active member of Croatian Marketing Association, he has published various scientific articles on cultural marketing, brand theory, brand image, game marketing, neuromarketing, media pedagogy and school management. He has participated in 20 international scientific conferences. He has two master's degrees in the humanities and social sciences. He received his Ph.D. in brand perception, more specifically in brand as an emotional and rational consumer impression. His current research interests include marketing in culture, branding in ludology and phenomenon of brand.

ABSTRACT:

The paper analyses the significance of the role of parenting and guardianship in the digital games *The Walking Dead* and *Heavy Rain*. The aim is to present, analyse and explain the phenomenon of myth, mythical structures in digital games, culture, and brand identity. R. Barthes' semiotic theory was used, which analyses constructs through denotation, connotation, and myth. The units of research analysis are scenes from the games that will be presented, described, interpreted, and understood by deconstruction analysis. In the first part, the phenomenon of myth is theoretically elaborated, and then the mythic structure in digital games is analysed. The focus is on myth as a phenomenon, which from a pedagogical point of view, shows the role of parenting and guardianship. Also, the analysis of the connotative sign shows the influence of the media on digital culture, but also on the creation of elements of brand identity of digital games. We will confirm these theses by analysing the content of the mythical structure. The unit of analysis is the *mise-en-scène* and refers to everything that interacts with the digital game and the player. The central concept is a semiotic analysis of the psychological concept of fidelity that is connected to the model of brand identity through the model of attachment. Finally, through a semiotic analysis of the attachment construct, the attachment construct from the aspect of brand identity is also presented. The brand was observed according to J. N. Kapferer's theory and analysed at the message and sign level. The contribution of this study is manifested in an interdisciplinary approach to work through marketing, psychology, pedagogy, media theory and semiotics.

KEY WORDS:

brand, digital game, *Heavy Rain*, marketing, myth, semiotic, sign, *The Walking Dead*.

Introduction

The existence of digital games, more precisely, the genre of adventure, *interactive drama*, in addition to being a very powerful medium for transmitting ideas, messages and even promotional activities, represents a new discourse of postmodern man. Digital games are a medium that displays reality with all its difficulties. *Heavy Rain*¹ shows all the dark, depressing, and anxious reality of a family tragedy accompanied by a metaphorical rain that symbolizes the lack of beautiful, sunny days to the painful symbolism of injustice that appears all the time in a palette of grey tones, and colourful images become fragments of fragile memories. It is playing with the role of colour symbolism that is initially shown in its splendour, marking a happy, carefree childhood and ease of living, the idyllic atmosphere of parents and children, after the prologue becomes filled with grey tones with darker and more depressing images.

Digital games today are a very powerful medium, both from a marketing² and cultural³ point of view. Undoubtedly, video games carry some ethical, pedagogical, and social responsibility, opening various social topics. Digital games are not only fun, as has long

1 QUANTIC DREAMS: *Heavy Rain*. [digital game]. San Mateo : Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2010.

2 ZACKARIASSON, P., DYMEK, M.: *Video Game Marketing*. London : Routledge, 2017, p. 53-64.; See also: ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L.: Marketing of Video Games. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 57-75.

3 For more information, see: DYMEK, M.: Video Games: A Subcultural Industry. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 34-56.

been confirmed by numerous studies, but also by numerous ludological fields that have opened interdisciplinary topics, such as marketing in the digital industry,⁴ semiotics of digital games, narratological theories of digital games,⁵ philosophical discussions,⁶ medical research on the impact of digital games⁷ and cultural essays. The very development of digital games is also manifested in breaking the stereotype that average gamers are children or young people who play immersed in the virtual world and are only passive and indifferent observers. The truth, however, is contrary to former pessimistic predictions. Today, the digital game industry has overtaken both the music and film industries together. Virtual reality is no longer reserved only for the entertainment of young people, but is increasingly being practiced by psychologists, sociologists, computer scientists, culturalologists, philosophers, anthropologists, pedagogues and even doctors.

The aim of this paper is to explore, present, identify and analyse the role of semiotic signs in adventure games in the context of attachment construct. The role of parenting⁸ here is viewed from the aspect of two different digital games in which models of attachment and self-image are presented. The construct of self-image will be viewed separately from the marketing aspect of the digital game because through identification with the main characters in the game, consumers connect on a narratological and semiotic level. This study presents an interdisciplinary theoretical framework in which models of digital game sign analysis and marketing are proposed. The study uses a qualitative research methodology and starts from a phenomenological approach. Interdisciplinarity is manifested through a comparison of different cultural theories, semiotic representation, sociological models, media pedagogy, and brand identity theory. The units of research are the constructs of attachment, i.e., parenthood and guardianship, from which, consequently, denotations, connotations and myths in digital games are interpreted by semiotic analysis. Ultimately, conclusions are drawn that portray digital games as cultural, sociological, and marketing phenomena.

Research Methodology

The paper uses a qualitative analytical-synthetic method⁹ that aims to break down social phenomena and processes into their segments for more detailed analysis. The hermeneutic spiral method is used as a model of understanding.¹⁰ Such a model of understanding implies that individual concepts expand the overall meaning of a phenomenon, entity, or text.¹¹ Therefore, two research approaches are used in parallel in this study: the critical-realistic method¹² and the phenomenological method.¹³ With the qualitative method of the

-
- 4 MAGO, Z.: The Concept of Timelessness Applied to Advergaming. In *Acta Ludologica*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 30.
 - 5 PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Medij i kultura: ideologija medija nakon decentralizacije*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2012, p. 187.
 - 6 KŁOSIŃSKI, M.: Games and Utopia. In *Acta Ludologica*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 12.
 - 7 CLARK, N., SCOTT, P. S.: *Game Addiction: The Experience and the Effect*. London : McFarland Company, 2009, p. 91-115.; GRANIC, I., LOBEL, A., ENGELS, R.: The Benefits of Playing Video Games. In *American Psychologist*, 2014, Vol. 69, No. 1, p. 71-73.
 - 8 For more information, see: BULJAN FLANDER, G., ČORIĆ ŠPOLJAR, R.: Roditeljstvo nekad i danas. In BULJAN FLANDER, G. (ed.): *Znanost i umjetnost odgoja*. Sveta Nedjelja : Geromar, 2018, p. 21-28.
 - 9 HALMI, A.: *Strategije kvalitativnih istraživanja u primijenjenim društvenim znanostima*. Jastrebarsko : Naklada Slap, 2005, p. 18.
 - 10 SCHMIDT, L. K.: *Understanding Hermeneutics*. Stocksfield : Acumen Publishing Limited, 2006, p. 4.
 - 11 HALMI, A.: *Strategije kvalitativnih istraživanja u primijenjenim društvenim znanostima*. Jastrebarsko : Naklada Slap, 2005, p. 27.
 - 12 WILLIG, C.: *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology*. Maidenhead : Open University Press, 2013, p. 48.
 - 13 Ibidem, p. 50.

critical-realistic approach we discover the meaning, and with the phenomenological method we show the texture of the research itself, i.e., we expand the understanding. Such an interpretation of phenomenological analysis¹⁴ places the initial description in relation to the wider cultural, theoretical, and social context, that is, the context of digital games.

The methods used in creating this paper are interpretive, deconstructive, and descriptive. The aim of the method is to explain, analyse and present metadata that appear in the discourse of the digital game and compare it with the construction of reality that an individual creates in the form of symbols and signs, making it a denotation, connotation, and myth. The research method used is qualitative analysis and aims to explain the role of emotions in the adventure digital games *The Walking Dead*¹⁵ and *Heavy Rain*. Due to in-depth data collection, this method therefore does not give priority to statistical indicators of population size, or sample size. The emphasis here is on the depth of the data and its analysis, not the amount. R. Barthes' theory¹⁶ and J. N. Kapferer's theory¹⁷ were used. R. Barthes' theory served as a model of character functioning that was used to determine meaning, and J. N. Kapferer served brand identity as a representation of the brand identity of a digital game.

Digital Culture and Games

Digital culture is a social phenomenon the beginnings of which appear as the response of modern man to information. This is also a paradox because with the development of informatics, there has been a great development of structures that contribute to the availability of information. Such structures create new information and in this multitude of information resources users must become visible, which is most important of all.¹⁸ Also, from the information-communication aspect, it is very difficult to distinguish relevant information in the multitude of unnecessary information. The amount of information is increasing every day, every second around the world 795 photos are posted on Instagram, 1 269 posts on Tumblr, 2 697 calls on Skype, 61 707 searches on Google, 70 220 views of videos on YouTube and 2 611 203 sent emails.¹⁹

Digital culture has also made a difference in the understanding of the concept of audience. With the concept of passive to active audience, there is a phenomenon of active to interactive audience.²⁰ However, in the information-communication context, the concept of interactive audience rests on the assumption of active use in public communications. Such interactivity is audience-related, and it signifies audience fragmentation. From a marketing perspective, such audience fragmentation signifies consumer segmentation because user groups are categorized into categories, where they can be classified according to expectations, habits, reactions, or preferences. From the aspect of digital games, we understand interactivity as the ability of a medium for a user to influence form or content.²¹

14 LARKIN, M., WATTS, S., CLIFTON, E.: Giving Voice and Making Sense in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2008, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 105.

15 TELLTALE GAMES: *The Walking Dead (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. San Rafael : Telltale Games, 2014.

16 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 141-181.; BARTHES, R.: *Književnost, mitologija, semiologija*. Beograd : Nolit, 1971, p. 263-314.

17 KAPFERER, J. N.: *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 2008, p. 171-197.

18 BARABÁSI, A. L.: *U mreži: zašto je sve povezano i kako misliti u znanosti, poslovanju i svakodnevnom životu*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2006, p. 65.

19 ARMSTRONG, S., BRUNSKILL, P.: *Informacijska pismenost*. Zagreb : Kosinj, 2020, p. 15.

20 McQUAIL, D.: *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*. London : Sage, 2005, p. 406.

21 BAKKER, P., SÁDABA, C.: The Impact of the Internet on Users. In KÜNG, L., PICKARD, R. G., TOWSE, R. (eds.): *The Internet and the Mass Media*. London : Sage, 2008, p. 88.

The concept of digital culture, virtual culture and cyber culture will be considered here as a technologically advanced culture where the term *digital* means digital technology in the life and work of modern man. Of course, in such a modern society, digital culture, the categories of space and time are no longer the same, so the very notion of information has changed significantly. New possibilities of digital culture have expanded consumer experiences in all segments. However, is such a culture, in a sociological context,²² a culture in the true sense of the word? Or is it an open culture²³ that transcends the boundaries of the classical understanding of the division of culture into elite, high and low? Observed from the aspect of active and passive subject,²⁴ we can understand digital culture as a popular culture. In this context, culture represents the link between a specific civilization and universal humanity.²⁵ We distinguish the term popular culture in three ways: popular is what many people like,²⁶ popular is the opposite of high culture, and popular is what users have produced for themselves.²⁷ In other words, digital games are therefore elements of popular culture.

In the context of digital games, the notion of popular culture requires redefining. Popular culture implies what users have produced for themselves and for others, but then from another aspect, we find a culture that is imposed for commercial interests. In this context, commercial interests create a mass culture.²⁸ Thus, we can establish a distinction between the notions of mass culture that is adapted to the broad masses, as a form of consumer practice, and popular culture that emerges as a reaction to what is offered and contains elements of selection.²⁹ It also then says that such an attitude is related to the notion of postmodern culture that blurs the boundaries between the sociological division³⁰ of higher and lower culture which is very similar to the model of culture spoken of by Eagleton.³¹ Of course, the very term culture is not simple or unambiguous.³² One of the difficulties of the notion of culture stems from its multidisciplinary nature because different sciences define, interpret, and apply it differently in different discourses. Thus, it means that culture is dependent on social heritage, on user behaviour, symbolic practice of people, the question of identity or a reflection of human creation.

However, the culture of digital games still represents a subcultural industry³³ that produces subcultural content. This is, from the aspect of digital games, true, but from the aspect of cultural theory,³⁴ it is not precise because merging into one common culture alludes to the existence of mass culture. Such a common culture becomes a utopia because it implies that all members of society would equally contribute to the development of universal culture. Applying this to digital culture, especially to the concept of digital games as a subculture, sociological questions about gender equality in digital games immediately arise. As proof of the claim, let's compare *Assassin's Creed Unity*³⁵ which clearly

22 GIDDENS, A.: *Sociology*. Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2001, p. 22.

23 EAGLETON, T.: *Culture*. London : Yale University Press, 2016, p. 15.

24 PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Medij i kultura: ideologija medija nakon decentralizacije*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2012, p. 187.

25 EAGLETON, T.: *The Idea of Culture*. Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2002, p. 112-119.

26 LABAŠ, D., MIHOVILOVIĆ, M.: Masovni medij i semiotika popularne kulture. In *Kroatologija*, 2011, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 113.

27 DUDA, D.: *Kulturalni studij: ishodišta i problemi*. Zagreb : AGM, 2002, p. 105.

28 Ibidem, p. 106.

29 Ibidem.

30 GIDDENS, A.: *Sociology*. Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2001, p. 22.

31 EAGLETON, T.: *The Idea of Culture*. Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2002, p. 87-121.

32 WILLIAMS, R.: *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 87.

33 DYMEK, M.: Video Games: A Subcultural Industry. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 36.

34 EAGLETON, T.: *The Idea of Culture*. Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2002, p. 87-94.

35 UBISOFT MONTREAL: *Assassin's Creed Unity (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Montreal : Ubisoft Montreal, 2014.

shows us how the publishers made the mistake of not having female playable characters in multiplayer. They subsequently corrected this by changing the concept a year later and putting the twins Evie and Jacob at the centre of *Assassin's Creed Syndicate*³⁶ for the main characters. Or, as another example, hypersexualized female characters in digital games like *Dead or Alive 6*³⁷. Therefore, the digital gaming industry is still not a mass culture. The overreliance on this subculture hampers true development of the digital game medium.³⁸

If we want to look at what media mediation³⁹ of digital culture should be, we are essentially talking about the relationship between media and culture. This leads us to the conclusion that different statuses of culture are not the same, but neither are their interests. Culture and medium are very complex constructs and relate at different levels and meet in different segments. We understand the medium as a message.⁴⁰ However, we can also perceive the medium as something that transforms experience into cognition, that is, the media give signs that provide meaning to events from everyday life.⁴¹ Thus, the media become the main axis of communication, the media transmit the message. This message, of course, can be viewed from the informational, marketing, linguistic, but also from the semiotic aspect. From a pedagogical point of view, it is not the same who sends the message⁴² and likewise it is not the same on which medium the message is sent. In other words, we can analyse the mediator of information from the aspect of the bearer of various social functions.⁴³ Therefore, we will look at digital culture from the aspect of the medium and understand the medium itself as a transmitter of the message.

The average video game users are not just children or young people, but adults who make up a large part of the market segment. It is enough to compare the film references of *Mortal Kombat 11*⁴⁴ and the cameo characters that appear to see very clearly that these are 'young people' who are in their mature years today. It is evident that characters like *Rambo*⁴⁵, *T-800*⁴⁶ or *RoboCop*⁴⁷ do not belong to the new generation of gamers, but surprisingly they are very well received and more alive now than at the time they appeared. This also says that these former children who grew up with the culture of the 80s and spent time with *Pac-Man*⁴⁸, *Donkey Kong*⁴⁹, *Q*bert*⁵⁰, today have their own children. Therefore, not only have games evolved, but players have matured along with graphics, resolution, and genres. The maturing relationship of the two generations of players is very clearly seen in the film *Pixels*⁵¹ which, despite its comedy genre, is a kind of homage to classic digital games and society. It is therefore quite understandable that the themes in digital games also became diverse, and the discourse, which ultimately culminated in difficult, mature, and anxious themes, such as *Heavy Rain* and *The Walking Dead*, became more demanding.

-
- 36 UBISOFT QUEBEC: *Assassin's Creed Syndicate (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Quebec City : Ubisoft, 2015.
- 37 TEAM NINJA: *Dead or Alive 6 (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Yokohama : Koei Tecmo, 2019.
- 38 DYMEK, M.: Video Games: A Subcultural Industry. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 49.
- 39 INGLIS, F.: *Teorija medija*. Zagreb : AGM, 1997, p. 23.
- 40 McLUHAN, M.: *Razumijevanje medija*. Zagreb : Golden marketing – Tehnička knjiga, 2008, p. 17.
- 41 INGLIS, F.: *Teorija medija*. Zagreb : AGM, 1997, p. 3.
- 42 BAACKE, D.: *Medienpädagogik*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 1997, p. 19.
- 43 Ibidem, p. 19-20.
- 44 NETHERREALM STUDIOS: *Mortal Kombat 11 (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Burbank : Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment, 2019.
- 45 KOTCHEFF, T. (Director): *First Blood (1982 & 2007, Blu-ray edition)*. [Blu-ray]. Santa Monica : Lionsgate, 2007.
- 46 CAMERON, J. (Director): *Terminator (1984 & 2010, Blu-ray edition)*. [Blu-ray]. Beverly Hills : Metro-Goldwin-Mayer, 2010.
- 47 VERHOEVEN, P. (Director): *RoboCop (1987 & 2001 DVD edition)*. [DVD]. Beverly Hills : Metro-Goldwin-Mayer, 2001.
- 48 NAMCO: *Pac-Man*. [digital game]. Tokyo : Namco, 1980.
- 49 NINTENDO: *Donkey Kong*. [digital game]. Kyoto : Nintendo, 1981.
- 50 GOTTLIEB: *Q*bert (Commodore 64 version)*. [digital game]. Chicago : Gottlieb, 1984.
- 51 COLUMBUS, C. (Director): *Pixels*. [DVD]. Culver City : Sony Pictures Entertainment, 2015.

The digital gaming industry, despite being progressive and surpassing the film and music industries in terms of revenue, still leaves great traces in its subcultural area. These traces are evident in all segments of society, from cultural and economic to pedagogical and psychological. Moreover, all cultural-social and economic aspects are related to digital games so that even concepts such as gamification are integrated into modern society. In such integration, the question arises is the gamification playing with us or are we playing with gamification?⁵² In such an environment, the consumer has a blurred idea of his work and leisure activities. Digital games have marked modern society and we can observe them from a phenomenological point of view. References to digital games are so intertwined that they occur in all forms in film, comics, literature, theatre, and music. It was the intermediality of digital games that promoted them to the forerunners of postmodern culture. As an example of this intertwining, let us cite the cheats for *Heroes of Might and Magic 3*⁵³ in the form of a reference to *The Matrix*⁵⁴ on the red pill / blue pill, which suggests a choice between revealing an unpleasant truth, and remaining in blissful ignorance.

The Concept of the Brand as a Message and a Sign

Because the brand communicates with the consumer as a message, we will view the brand in the context of the sender and recipient of the message.⁵⁵ However, the sender of the message is the manufacturer, distributor or service provider, and the recipient of the message is the user, consumer or more simply, the gamer. The brand is, holistically speaking, a means of communication. In this context, we do not mean only the brand as a living organism,⁵⁶ but the concept of the message. When a brand is a means of communication it transfers a specific message. However, the recipient of the message receives only those elements of the brand identity that the sender wants. This means that, in the context of digital games, gamers receive only fragments of brand identity elements because they cannot perceive complete elements entirely due to perceptual selection. Such fragments of the elements of brand identity are perceived by the consumer individually and they create consumer images.⁵⁷

We then understand a brand statement as a sign, not what that sign represents. In a communicative sense, the term subject represents a transmitter. Thus, it is necessary to observe such a subject from the aspect of message transmission, where the manifestation of the brand message is the statement of the subject. This means that the transmitter subject is different to the stated subject. Therefore, the relationship between subject and object appears here, which we will consider in further analysis as a statement of the brand. In terms of information technology, each brand statement is a unique form of education. The very act of such education starts from the assumption that the message is sent to the recipient in the form of information, which, as such, affects their attitudes and

52 ESCRIBANO, F.: Gamification as the Post-Modern Phalanstère: Is the Gamification Playing with Us or Are We Playing with Gamification?. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 216.

53 NEW WORLD COMPUTING: *Heroes of Might and Magic 3*. [digital game]. Redwood City : The 3DO Company, 1999.

54 WACHOWSKI, L., WACHOWSKI, L. (Directors): *The Matrix*. [DVD]. Burbank : Warner Home Video, 1999.

55 KAPFERER, J. N.: *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 2008, p. 171-197.

56 Ibidem, p. 12.

57 KELLER, K. L., APÉRIA, T., GEORGSON, M.: *Strategic Brand Management: A European Perspective*. Harlow : Prentice Hall, 2008, p. 128-166.

beliefs. The concept of sign is observed here in accordance with F. de Saussure's theory.⁵⁸ The sign combines the term and the acoustic image into one. Thus, the sign denotes the whole, while the word *signifiant* denotes a notion, and the word *signifié* the acoustic image. So, the signifier is what stands for something else. This means that the signifier is like the thing or idea we are trying to evoke, while the signified is the idea in the consumer's mind projected by the signifier. De Saussure observes the concept of an acoustic image⁵⁹ in a broader sense and it is not a material sign, but a psychic imprint and an image given to us by the senses.

According to J. Baudrillard, the sign system is a complete analysis that requires a dichotomy, that is, a signifier and a signified. Consumer signs, accordingly, will be analysed as brands, and in ambient order, signs are more important than the product itself. If we start from the hypothesis that needs, in part, inaugurate the system of production, then we can speak of an abstract code of consumption.⁶⁰ Abstract consumption code distinguishes objects as signs rather than as individual expressions of need and pleasure.⁶¹ With such an approach, not only does the consumer consume objects as signs (brands), but also relationships between objects. Brands are internally perceived as exchange and use values, however, the analysis of the sign points to two levels, i.e., to the signifier and the signified. Buying a brand signifies high consumer involvement because it reflects the consumer's self-image (Picture 1).

$$\text{Brand (sign)} = \frac{\text{Signifier (subject)}}{\text{Signified (concept)}}$$

Picture 1: Brand as a Sign

Source: own processing; SAUSSURE, F.: *Tečaj opće lingvistike*. Zagreb : ArTresor, 2000, p. 98.

Awareness creation is also an arbiter between low involvements because the consumer will perceive the brand exclusively because of its popularity, and it is conditioned by the advertising stimulus. The stimulus evoked by the advertising message is essential⁶² because it is also the only marketing information, i.e., the communication channel between the sender and the recipient. Analysing the level of consumer involvement,⁶³ we indirectly assess and evaluate brands. The very concept of a brand requires much more than distinctiveness, so the role of semantics is the most important element in creating a trademark. We can draw a parallel between the object and the notion of the sign and the exchange value (EV) and the system of use value (UV) and display it as the function (Picture 2).⁶⁴

$$\text{Brand} = \frac{EV \cong \text{signifier}}{UV \cong \text{signified}}$$

Picture 2: Economy of the Sign

Source: BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacija i zbilja*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2001, p. 4.

58 SAUSSURE, F.: *Tečaj opće lingvistike*. Zagreb : ArTresor, 2000, p. 98.

59 Ibidem, p. 99.

60 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structure*. London : Sage, 1998, p. 76.

61 Ibidem, p. 49.

62 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Inteligencija zla ili pakt lucidnosti*. Zagreb : Naklada Ljevak, 2006, p. 104.

63 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. London : Sage, 2017, p. 28-31.

64 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacija i zbilja*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2001, p. 4.

The relationship is established as a hierarchical function between the listed forms. However, J. Baudrillard tells us that UV is a consequence of EV.⁶⁵ Let us explain this through the dichotomy of objects: each sign consists of denotational (usable) and connotative (transferred) signification. When a brand gets a personality, the identity of the brand is created, that is, its character. By accepting the structure of the character, we come to the image in the consumer's consciousness, that is, to modern consumption caused by the desire and not the need of the modern consumer. The symbolic exchange then communicates with the consumer through the consumer's impressions,⁶⁶ which is true, since the most important asset of the brand is precisely in the consumer's mind.

Such a connection between the signs is agreed, arbitrary, which is also the most important principle of the sign. In other words, F. de Saussure⁶⁷ argues that there is no inherent connection between the signifier and the signified. In the context of digital games, the signifier represents a word, an image, an object, while the signified is the mental image that the signifier recalls. In the field of digital games, the marker can be stylized yellow letters MK that associate the mental image of brutal fatalities. It is also important to note that the signs are conventional, meaning that the language and meaning itself belong to the public and not to the author. In other words, when we use language, we borrow conventions that are common and create them into a semantic whole. This means that the creation of meaning takes place by agreement.

Let us explain this with the example of the abbreviation MK. There is nothing in the letters M and K that necessarily means Mortal Kombat. Signs are differential, which means that the only way we distinguish signs, and their meanings is precisely in distinguishing them from others. The only way we recognize the yellow letters MK and number 11 is precisely because the stylized letters and number 11 form a sign. These letters and numbers, that is, colours and stylization, have no natural connection, so their relations are arranged. From the linguistic point of view, here the term is also the language that is the product, and individuals passively take it over.⁶⁸ We conclude that language itself does not mirror material reality but offers us a conceptual map that structures such a world. Therefore, conceptualized depends on culture because language is part of culture.

Myth Phenomenon

Myth cannot be easily defined. It has been the subject of various approaches in the sciences, and its interpretation depends on a scientific approach, such as sociology,⁶⁹ psychology,⁷⁰ theology,⁷¹ philosophy,⁷² anthropology,⁷³ literature,⁷⁴ and culture.⁷⁵ The term myth comes from the Greek word *μῦθος*⁷⁶ which has its roots in onomatopoeia. The notion of myth is complex, just like the notion of culture, because it is encountered in

65 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacija i zbilja*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2001, p. 12-16.

66 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structure*. London : Sage, 1998, p. 49-52.

67 SAUSSURE, F.: *Tečaj opće lingvistike*. Zagreb : ArTresor, 2000, p. 100.

68 Ibidem, p. 59.

69 DURKHEIM, E.: *Elementarni oblici religijskog života*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2008, p. 79-86.

70 FREUD, S.: *Tumačenje snova*. Zagreb : Stari Grad, 2000, p. 271-276.; BOWLBY, R.: *Freudian Mythologies: Greek Tragedy and Modern Identities*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 14-44.

71 TOMIĆ, C.: Mit i religija. In *Crkva u Svijetu*, 1991, Vol. 26, No. 2/3, p. 135.

72 HORKHEIMER, M., ADORNO, T. W.: *Dialektik der Aufklärung*. Frankfurt am Main : S. Fischer Verlage, 1988, p. 4.

73 LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: *Divlja misao*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2001, p. 87-94.

74 SOLAR, M.: *Edipova braća i sinovi*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2008, p. 257-260.

75 COUPE, L.: *Myth*. London : Routledge, 1997, p. 96-97.

76 BITI, V.: *Pojmovnik suvremene književne teorije*. Zagreb : Matica hrvatska, 1997, p. 227.

different disciplines.⁷⁷ Myth has become a fixed point of radical critique of reason.⁷⁸ Myth has played a major role in the history of human civilization because it has served as an interpreter of phenomena and states that are unsolvable. At its core, the myth works paradoxically because it brings the past closer to the present to interpret the future. Forms of myth are also manifested in behavioural economics because they express a state of consumer frustration created by the denial of desire and become an act of awareness, and thus the satisfaction of needs.

Ritual and myth are, from an anthropological aspect, connected. Myth depends on ritual, even if the ritual does not depend on myth. Without ritual there would be no myth.⁷⁹ From an anthropological point of view, myths strengthen social connections, give meaning to the individual, and ultimately, provide a sense of belonging. What gives the myth operational value is the fact that this stated pattern is eternal: the myth explains the present as well as the future.⁸⁰ Therefore, the myth is historical because it refers to events that happened, but the myth is also ahistorical because its stories are timeless. With myth, everything becomes possible.⁸¹ Therefore, the purpose of myth is to enable the overcoming of contradictions because people function on binary oppositions,⁸² and myth is in this context a mediator of binary oppositions.⁸³ Since the myth functions based on the unconscious, it appears in different forms and must be repeated for the meaning to be conveyed.⁸⁴ Therefore, there is no one true version of the myth, all versions convey meaning. This means that one myth can appear in different variants.⁸⁵

From a psychological point of view,⁸⁶ myths are like a collective dream, and they reflect shared desires and anxieties. The psychoanalytic approach of myth interprets man's desires through the unconscious. According to S. Freud,⁸⁷ man is most often guided by the unconscious, and by repression he defends himself from unconscious, instinctive impulses, but this unconscious must come to the surface. Myths in psychoanalysis, therefore, are like collective dreams that reflect shared desires and anxieties. In this way, the myths use the same pattern and are compared to dreams. However, myths, unlike dreams, do not have a source in the emotion that is inherent in an individual, but become collective.

Myths are, according to C. Jung,⁸⁸ a reflection of the collective unconscious. The content of the collective unconscious is called archetypes, and they represent innate patterns of thought and behaviour. Archetypes are invisible universal images, but their manifestations are visible. This means that the myth, from a psychoanalytic aspect, does not possess content, but symbols that represent them.⁸⁹ However, the anthropological understanding of myth gives it a social function. The myth is not symbolic, but a direct expression of its object. Myth challenges, reinforces, and codifies belief.⁹⁰ Creating myths

77 WILLIAMS, R.: *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 87.

78 KNATZ, L.: *Geschichte-Kunst-Mythos: Schellings Philosophie und die Perspektive einer philosophischen Mythostheorie*. Würzburg : Königshausen & Neumann, 1999, p. 43.

79 SEGAL, A. R.: *Theorizing about Myth*. Amherst : University of Massachusetts, 1999, p. 39.

80 LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: The Structural Study of Myth. In *The Journal of American Folklore*, 1955, Vol. 68, No. 270, p. 430.

81 Ibidem, p. 429.

82 LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: *Divlja misao*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2001, p. 104-105.

83 GEBERT, B., MAYER, G.: Mythos zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Zur Einführung. In GEBERT, B., MAYER, G. (eds.): *Zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Formen und Funktionen des Mythos in theoretischen und literarischen Diskursen*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 2014, p. 4.

84 LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: *Divlja misao*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2001, p. 240.

85 LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: The Structural Study of Myth. In *The Journal of American Folklore*, 1955, Vol. 68, No. 270, p. 435.

86 FREUD, S.: *Tumačenje snova II*. Novi Sad : Akademaska knjiga, 2013, p. 266.

87 Ibidem, p. 26-269.

88 JUNG, C.G.: *Psychological Types*. London, New York : Routledge, 2017, p. 60-67.

89 Ibidem, p. 120.

90 MALINOWSKI, B.: *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*. Long Grove : Waveland Press, 2013, p. 100.

increases social solidarity, which means that every culture creates and values its own myths because myths have the function of preserving and maintaining culture. Thus, the function of the role of myth is analogous to ideology in modern society. According to R. Barthes,⁹¹ the myth is presented as natural, and on the other hand, it conceals its production.

When asked what a myth is, R. Barthes instructs us that myth is speech.⁹² He claims that this is not just any speech, for a myth to exist at all, a certain message is needed.⁹³ First, it should be clearly noted that a myth in this context is a message, which means that a myth can be an object, concept, or idea. In other words, myth is a way of denoting form. Myth is not just a genre, it is a way of saying something, that is, a way of convincing people of something. In the context of digital games and myths, everything can be a myth, and everything can be analysed. Myth should be analysed as a discourse phenomenon (*Diskursphänomen*),⁹⁴ i.e., as a product of the tradition of perception and thought. Myth, therefore, acts as a central concept for creating, reflecting, and changing the interface between presence and representation.⁹⁵ Admittedly, this form of representation does not necessarily have to be real, it even starts from fiction, but its fiction is never as questionable as in literature. Rather, the myth has elements of gossip and oral speech.⁹⁶ This is precisely the starting point of the claim that the mythical phenomenon is not only a visualization, but also a true present.⁹⁷ Such permeation of mythic discourse allows for a psychoanalytic approach to myth.

Myth is a second-degree semiotic system.⁹⁸ R. Barthes' theory relies on F. de Saussure's theory,⁹⁹ implementing two levels of notation: denotation and connotation. Denotation implies a literal meaning, and connotation an associative one. According to Barthes' theory, the myth is produced on a connotative level.¹⁰⁰ The connotation depends on the aspect of the vision, the culture of the user and the location. It is not the same as a myth perceived by a person who does not think about roles in society or a person who creates a myth. The relationship is actually very similar to creating a brand image and depends on the elements of brand identity. Building the elements of brand identity is the beginning of creating an image. Image is the result of the communication process, and communication itself has a positive effect on brand preference.¹⁰¹ Communication is also a stimulus that forms a mental image. The image of an object is formed only by thought processing (perception). A brand image can be viewed as an image, notion, or complex experience i.e., the structure of attitudes, experiences and beliefs towards a product or service. Image is undoubtedly a psychologically integrated construct. A brand strength development strategy begins with a clear understanding of brand identity and image.

91 BARTHES, R.: *Književnost, mitologija, semiologija*. Beograd : Nolit, 1971, p. 263-282.

92 Ibidem, p. 263.

93 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 143.

94 GEBERT, B., MAYER, G.: Mythos zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Zur Einführung. In GEBERT, B., MAYER, G. (eds.): *Zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Formen und Funktionen des Mythos in theoretischen und literarischen Diskursen*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 2014, p. 3.

95 Ibidem, p. 5.

96 SOLAR, M.: *Edipova braća i sinovi*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2008, p. 257-264.

97 GEBERT, B., MAYER, G.: Mythos zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Zur Einführung. In GEBERT, B., MAYER, G. (eds.): *Zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Formen und Funktionen des Mythos in theoretischen und literarischen Diskursen*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 2014, p. 8.

98 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 143-144.

99 SAUSSURE, F.: *Tečaj opće lingvistike*. Zagreb : ArTresor, 2000, p. 98.

100 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 147.

101 KELLER, K. L.: Memory Factors in Advertising: The Effects of Advertising Retrieval Clues on Brand Evolutions. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1987, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 329.

Analysis of Mythical Structure

For a digital game to become a myth, certain conditions are required. First, it is necessary to accept the theory according to which the myth is a communication system i.e., a message.¹⁰² From this, it is clear how a myth cannot be an object, a myth is a way of signifying, and a myth is a form. Thus, this means that the myth has no substantive, but formal boundaries. In that sense, digital games can be a myth because they are suggestive. Every object can pass from a closed, silent existence into an oral state that opens the possibility for society to appropriate it.¹⁰³ Therefore, we understand the myth as an image and it can be manifested in written discourse, photography, comics, theatre, film, digital game, but also the brand. The mythical statement arises from the material that has already been reworked to become suitable for a new presentation. In that sense, the picture becomes a letter as soon as it acquires meaning and demands to be read. Thus, speech in a digital game, image, display, or music makes up every meaningful unit and so photography becomes a statement.

For R. Barthes,¹⁰⁴ digital gaming can be understood as a cybernetic machine. It hides the *menu* in the moment of *pause*, but as soon as the game starts, it sends messages to the user. The property of these messages is the simultaneity of digital codes and in this algorithm the user receives several different messages. Analysing them, we notice the level of narration, image, music, and playfulness. What are the relationships between these signs? They are simultaneous, but not identical. In *The Walking Dead*, the focus is on the decision of the main character Clementine and the consequences of her choice. The music is expressed by silence, which is also a message. From a narrative aspect, Clementine takes on the role of an adult. The image is centred on a user and they immerse themselves in the role the moment Lee, or Clementine, looks down. From this it follows that these signs make sense in retrospect of the game because the meaning is discovered only at the end. The silence between Clementine and Lee in the final seconds of the game is an introduction to the catharsis of the user who experiences it only at the end.

The relationship between code and digital play, the nature of the digital sign, denotation, and connotation here is polyphonic. This means that the digital game is in a privileged position, it is a semiological object because the system is stronger.¹⁰⁵ In both games, however, they represent a sign that is subordinate to the mental framework. Games are ideological, they take positions, but they are still games of consciousness, not solutions. The games implicitly end openly and with an awareness of the unconscious. That's why digital games are so powerful. Games don't offer an answer, they ask questions. In this way, the message of meaning and not of sense is understood here. Therefore, *The Walking Dead*, like *Heavy Rain*, is an example of an answer that can be located but not identified. The question, therefore, has no unambiguous answer, the answer depends on the gamer's perspective. From the aspect of marketing, here the question is posed precisely as a model of brand service,¹⁰⁶ therefore, it starts from the experience with the brand. Contact with the brand forms its relationship. This relationship can be different because it depends on the type of contact and can also arouse positive and negative consumer impressions. The consumer continuously maintains a brand relationship.

102 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 143.

103 Ibidem, p. 143-144.

104 BARTHES, R.: *Književnost, mitologija, semiologija*. Beograd : Nolit, 1971, p. 201.

105 Ibidem, p. 202.

106 GRÖNROOS, C.: *Service Management and Marketing: Customer Management in Service Competition*. Hoboken : John Wiley & Sons, 2007, p. 332.

In myth, we come across a three-dimensional pattern: signifier, signified, and sign. However, the myth is presented here as a special semiotic system that is built from a semiotic chain and eventually becomes a second-level semiotic system.¹⁰⁷ What is in the first system a sign, that is, the totality of the concept associated with the image, in the second becomes only a signifier. This means that the myth moves the formal system of original meanings to the next level. Picture 3 shows the semiological structure of the myth. As we see in the myth there are two semiotic systems on which one is dependent in relation to the other. The linguistic activity that myth takes on to build its own system is viewed as the subject of myth. The myth itself is understood here as a metalanguage because it is the second level of language that speaks of the first. Therefore, the letter, the image, the sound, in the same way belongs to the scope of the mythical structure because they are signs and thus reach the myth.



Picture 3: Semiotic structure of myth

Source: BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 147.

As can be seen from Picture 1, the signifier can be viewed in the myth from two points of view: as the final member of the language system or as the initial member of the mythic system. Since, according to the theory of structuralism,¹⁰⁸ we observe a linguistic sign as a relationship between the signifier and the signified, the sign signifies the whole, the word signifier signifies a concept, and the word signified an acoustic image. Therefore, in the mythical structure, we interpret the sign itself here as a new signifier that is in relation to the signified, to ultimately create a new sign, i.e., a myth. Therefore, in Picture 1, this second level of marking of the sign is shown in capital letters in which it is clearly seen how the original level of the sign takes on the role of marker. This is why R. Barthes¹⁰⁹ gives two names for the mythical structure, one at the level of semiotics, where the signifier is meaning, and at the level of myth he calls it *form*. It signified the *term* marked at the level of the semiotics of the linguistic sign, but also of the myth, and it still leaves the correlation between the signifier and the signified as the name sign. However, the third article of myth calls *meaning*, and that word is justified by the fact that myth really has a dual function: it signifies and informs.¹¹⁰

107 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 147.

108 SAUSSURE, F.: *Tečaj opće lingvistike*. Zagreb : ArTresor, 2000, p. 98.

109 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 149.

110 Ibidem, p. 149-150.

Decoding the Connotative Sign The Walking Dead

An analysis of the mythical structure of attachment¹¹¹ is shown through three scenes from a digital game. The first scene begins with meeting Lee and Clementine. Lee has a bloody shirt, and to his left is Clementine. Lee looks straight ahead, and Clementine's gaze points to the camera. Fear and hope are recognized in the looks. Signifier is Lee or Clementine, and signified are the hands. Hands represent salvation because care is taken over by Lee. The contrast of colours and the role of shadow is clearly seen. Everything is in the dark: a shelf, broken books, a family photo in the background, broken glasses, broken glass, and blood on the floor. Also, the role of bipolarity is recognized, which serves to emphasize the contrast: the main characters are illuminated and represent hope, and everything around them is in darkness and represents dying.

The first sign to read is denotation and it is a symbol of salvation, salvation as the hope that Clementine will survive the horror and Lee will find a way out. The connotative signifier is then the protector because Lee's determined look and holding of Clementine's hand is clearly visible. The camera shows the main characters from above emphasizing the fragility of the girl in a ruthless world. The connotative meaning is fear, and the connotative sign ultimately represents growing up. Thus, the first mythical structure of Picture 4 represents Clementine's growing up through the denotation of Lee as saviour and connotative signifier as protector. From the above, the pedagogical construct of taking responsibility and guardianship in the form of giving a hand as a signified and accepting that hand as a connotative signified fear is confirmed. Also, the deconstruction of the myth in the first scene is shown in Table 1 which as a final statement of the myth shows the construct of growing up.



Picture 4: Introduction Lee and Clementine

Source: author's screenshot; TELLTALE GAMES: *The Walking Dead* (PlayStation 4 version). [digital game]. San Rafael : Telltale Games, 2014.

111 BOWLBY, J.: *A Secure Base: Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory*. London : Routledge, 2005, p. 134-148.

Table 1: Growing up

Signifier		Signified	
Lee or Clementine		Hands	
Denotation			
Lee the saviour			
Connotative signifier		Connotative signifier	
Lee the protector		Fear	
Connotative sign			
Growing up			

Source: own processing

The second scene shows Lee cutting Clementine's hair (Picture 5). The scene is extremely important because he had taught her moments before how she could defend herself. Clementine is sitting on the floor, Lee is cutting her hair, and in the background are the open doors of the train and the woods. Signifier is a haircut, and the object of the action is Lee holding scissors in his hand (signified). Clementine *left* (is without?) a hat that is also her trademark, which will later become an element of the brand's identity in the following sequels.¹¹² Denotation is a construct of learning, that is, the first sign is Lee's role as a teacher, and Clementine as a student. Connotative signifiers are views that reveal worry and fear (connotatively signified). Ultimately, it is clear from the connotative signifier and the connotative signified that the mythical structure is a construct of maturation. Lee takes on the role of protector, saviour, but also teacher. Clementine has taken on the role of growing up and this is marked by the ritual haircut which also symbolizes maturation (Table 2).



Picture 5: Clementine's haircut

Source: author's screenshot; TELLTALE GAMES: *The Walking Dead* (PlayStation 4 version). [digital game]. San Rafael : Telltale Games, 2014.

112 KAPFERER, J. N.: *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 2008, p. 171-197.

Table 2: Maturation

Signifier		Signified
Haircut		Scissors
Denotation		
Learning		
Connotative signifier		Connotative signifier
Views		Fear
Connotative sign		
Maturation		

Source: own processing

The third scene shows Clementine facing a harsh reality (Picture 6). Her fears have come true. It is also the turning point of her growing up that will define her in the following sequels: a student who becomes a teacher. The signifier is Clementine. Her face reveals pain, sadness, and disappointment. She doesn't look at the camera, she doesn't look at Lee, and she looks down and holds the gun firmly. Tears slide down her face, which are also inside the sign, the sub-sign, and the signifier of sadness. Signified is the gun itself in her hands. The focus of the camera is on her face, and the gun is shown in close-up. The denotation level is death. Thus, the sign of death consists of the signifier Clementine and the signified gun. The connotative signifier derives from this in the form of a tear, and the connotative signified is sorrow. Ultimately, a myth of forced upbringing is created (Table 3) that manifests itself in a broken frame, a darkened screen, and silence.



Picture 6: Farewell from Lee

Source: author's screenshot; TELLTALE GAMES: *The Walking Dead* (PlayStation 4 version). [digital game]. San Rafael : Telltale Games, 2014.

Table 3: Farewell

Signifier		Signified	
Clementine		Gun	
Denotation			
Death			
Connotative signifier		Connotative signifier	
Tears		Sadness	
Connotative sign			
Farewell and growing up			

Source: own processing

The role of parenting and guardianship in the digital game *The Walking Dead* is portrayed through the mythical structure of growing up. Clementine's confrontation with Lee's preparing her for independent living ends in the fifth episode of the first season. The pedagogical role of parenting and guardianship is evident throughout the play, and here the deconstructions of denotation, connotation, and myth through three scenes are analysed. The whole construct of parenthood, attachment,¹¹³ caring for the weak and powerless, the role of learning and salvation is interwoven with the myth of growing up and dying together. The myth itself, therefore, reads like a struggle for life, growing up, and the inevitable loss of a loved one.

Decoding the Connotative Sign Heavy Rain

An analysis of the mythical structure in the digital game *Heavy Rain* reveals the mythical structure of the pedagogical construct of parenting that is presented through three scenes. The scenes are selected from three different parts of a play in which, according to R. Barthes,¹¹⁴ semiotic analysis decodes the meaning. The meaning of a myth is understood according to a model in which the third member of the myth (connotative sign) has a dual function: it denotes form and informs the term.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the first scene is taken from the prologue and shows Ethan and Jason who are in the mall and marks the denotation of family love between father and son. The second scene implies a connotative sign of parental suffering that is symbolically associated with the name of the game. And finally, the third image shows a form of redemption in which Ethan, Madison and Shaun are in focus.

The first scene is taken from the prologue. It is a picture of an idyllic family, a father, a mother and two children. The colours are bright, vivid, everything is beautiful, dazzling, and the faces of the main characters are illuminated, which further emphasizes happiness and fulfilment. The musical background is light, and the angle of recording emphasizes happiness, which is additionally shown by the ritual carrying of the son on the shoulders. Picture 7 shows Ethan and Jason embracing. The signifier is the very form of parenthood i.e., the father who embraces the son. Signified represents family, and the image of a father

113 BOWLBY, J.: *A Secure Base: Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory*. London : Routledge, 2005, p. 134-148.; See also: BULJAN FLANDER, G.: Privrženost. In BULJAN FLANDER, G. (ed.): *Znanost i umjetnost odgoja*. Sveta Nedjelja : Geromar, 2018, p. 139-155.

114 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 146-154.

115 Ibidem, p. 149.

and son embracing together suggests a denotation of true parental happiness and love. The connotative signifier is an embrace because it emphasizes the form of the signified, that is, the father and the son as one whole, the family. Connotatively signified is happiness, and connotative sign is parental love (Table 4).



Picture 7: Idyllic family

Source: author's screenshot; QUANTIC DREAMS: *Heavy Rain*. [digital game]. San Mateo : Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2010.

Table 4: Family happiness

Signifier		Signified	
Ethan, Jason		Family	
Denotation			
Love			
Connotative signifier		Connotative signifier	
Hug		Happiness	
Connotative sign			
Family happiness and love			

Source: own processing

The second scene is taken from the third chapter Father and Son, which shows Ethan's teary-eyed face mixed with raindrops (Picture 8). This created the symbolism of the title of the digital game and the metaphor of rain as sorrow. We understand Ethan's rainy face as a signifier, and it signifies the pain that on a metaphorical level connects the associative title of the play and the father's teary eyes. The complete metaphor of rain is also a personification of gloomy clouds that 'cry' together with Ethan. Therefore, the denotation is Ethan's loneliness. The connotative signifier is the neglected Ethan, as evidenced by old clothes, an unshaven beard, and a neglected appearance. The colours are grey and gloomy which further enhances the suggestiveness of the accident (connotative signified). The mythical form is the neglected Ethan, and the mythical term is the father's misfortune leading to the connotative meaning of the father's suffering (Table 5).



Picture 8: Rainy face

Source: author's screenshot; QUANTIC DREAMS: *Heavy Rain*. [digital game]. San Mateo : Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2010.

Table 5: Father's suffering

Signifier	Signified
Rainy face	Pain
Denotation	
Loneliness	
Connotative signifier	Connotative signifier
Neglected	Accident
Connotative sign	
Father's suffering	

Source: own processing

The third scene shows Ethan and Madison in an embrace, and it is set here conditionally as it depends on the alternate endings of the digital game (Picture 9). Specifically, this is the final scene from the chapter *A New Life* and according to it, we will perform a semiotic analysis of the mythical structure. It is taken as the correct ending in which the signifier is Ethan and Madison, and together they form the signified as a notion of togetherness. This togetherness alludes to a new beginning, a new community, and a new life, which ultimately denotes happiness. In *Heavy Rain*, there are alternate ends that do not have to match this representation, but due to the need for analysis, a connotative marker in the form of a kiss is shown. The connotative signified here represents the notion of warmth, which ultimately reveals the myth of redemption (Table 6). Redemption because Madison in the final scene says they deserved happiness after experiencing tragedy. The camera focuses on a new couple, a new communion that connotes warmth and represents redemption.



Picture 9: New happiness

Source: author's screenshot; QUANTIC DREAMS: *Heavy Rain*. [digital game]. San Mateo : Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2010.

Table 6: Redemption

Signifier		Signified	
Ethan, Madison		Togetherness	
Denotation			
Happiness			
Connotative signifier		Connotative signifier	
Kiss		Warmness	
Connotative sign			
Redemption			

Source: own processing

The role of parenting in the digital game *Heavy Rain* is portrayed through the mythical structure of the father's redemption. The main character, Ethan Mars, experiences personal suffering due to the tragic loss of a child and blames himself for failing to prevent it. The pedagogical role of parenting is evident throughout the play, and here the deconstructions of denotation, connotation, and myth through three scenes are analysed. The first scene shows the ideal family happiness that symbolizes the connotative sign of parental love. Everything is subordinated in the very prologue of the digital game to emphasize perfection from bright colours, pleasant musical background, and interior to the contours of the face. The second scene forms the mythical structure of the father's suffering and here again, as in *The Walking Dead's* analysis, the bipolarity of the myth is shown which, in contrast to the first connotative sign, forms other myths. In particular, the entire second scene is shown in grey, dark and gloomy tones to associate the father's suffering and the denotation of loneliness, but also the connotation of unhappiness. Finally, the third scene shows Ethan and Madison Page experiencing a new togetherness that denotes happiness. However, the mythical structure reveals that this is a connotative sign of the father's redemption.

Discussion

From the above analysis of the connotative sign i.e., myth, we can conclude that R. Barthes¹¹⁶ is right when he says that myth is speech. Here we understand this term as a discourse phenomenon (*Diskursphänomen*),¹¹⁷ i.e., as a product of the tradition of perception and thought. A myth can then be perceived as a message, meaning that a myth can be an object, concept, or idea. In other words, myth is a way of denoting form. Of course, the myth represents a distinct cultural reality that can be interpreted by numerous perspectives. In a deconstructive analysis of the mythical structure of the digital games *The Walking Dead* and *Heavy Rain*, we have shown here how the myth recounts reality. This is in line with the philosophical aspect of the myth,¹¹⁸ but also the literary-theoretical one, in which the myth is given 'additional trust'.¹¹⁹

Myth at its core requires absolute trust, as it produces absolute objects, myth produces solid units of meaning.¹²⁰ Simply put, literature in this context produces illusion, and myth reality. This is, after all, the reason why the consumer believes in the mythical structure because the myth gives it the character of an indisputable truth. The semiotic system in this analysis starts from R. Barthes' theory¹²¹ which starts from analysing communication and understanding. Does this mean that modern gamers are consumers of myth because they do not start from understanding but exclusively from communication? If the digital consumer has become a consumer of myth, then we can accept the theory that myth is born from a rumour that should not be understood in terms of values.¹²² Here, these rumours are an expression of the inauthenticity of language. Then, such gossip represents an undefined ability to understand, which is precisely why it is so accepted. Mythic consciousness has not disappeared, the autonomy of the sender and the interest of the recipient are important for the authenticity of understanding.

Since we know how the existential interest of the recipient depends on the sender, it is clear why the comparison of the mythical structure and identity of the brand shows the digital and the mythical consumer. Brand identity¹²³ implies constructs of personality, self-image, and relationship, which are at their core related to the mythical structure. Consumers develop brand attachment, cult brands affirm the above,¹²⁴ and brand loyalty also represents the denotational level of the brand sign. Although the visual elements of brand identity are used as a signifier, they represent the signified of the image itself, which in denotation and connotation symbolize the mythical structure of the brand. Consumers believe, adore, and identify with the brand precisely based on myth. Myth, therefore, acts as a central concept for creating, reflecting, and changing the interface between presence and representation.¹²⁵ R. Barthes argues that there are as many languages as there are

116 BARTHES, R.: *Književnost, mitologija, semiologija*. Beograd : Nolit, 1971, p. 263.

117 GEBERT, B., MAYER, G.: Mythos zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Zur Einführung. In GEBERT, B., MAYER, G. (eds.): *Zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Formen und Funktionen des Mythos in theoretischen und literarischen Diskursen*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 2014, p. 3.

118 ELIADE, M.: *Aspekti mita*. Zagreb : Demetra, 2004, p. 6.

119 SOLAR, M.: *Edipova braća i sinovi*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2008, p. 257.

120 Ibidem, p. 255.

121 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 146-154.

122 SOLAR, M.: *Edipova braća i sinovi*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2008, p. 260.

123 KAPFERER, J. N.: *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 2008, p. 171-197.

124 ACOSTA, P. M., DEVASAGAYAM, R.: Brand Cult: Extending the Notion of Brand Communities. In *Marketing Management Journal*, 2010, Vol. 20, No. 1, p. 168.

125 GEBERT, B., MAYER, G.: Mythos zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Zur Einführung. In GEBERT, B., MAYER, G. (eds.): *Zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Formen und Funktionen des Mythos in theoretischen und literarischen Diskursen*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 2014, p. 5.

cultural objects to which society has given the power of meaning.¹²⁶ Consequently, labeling systems, such as images, music, or digital games, do not have the same structure.

Here, the mythical structure in the digital games *The Walking Dead* and *Heavy Rain* is presented on the pedagogical construct of parenting and guardianship from the aspect of deconstructive analysis of myth. The analysis of the digital game *The Walking Dead* shows the myth of Clementine growing up and maturing, which will be an extended version of Lee in the following sequels. Also, note that the limitation of this research arises from the fact that the first season is taken for semiotic analysis showing the model of attachment¹²⁷ but not the identifications that will follow in other sequels, specifically, the pattern of behaviour that Clementine will take and follow on her way. This also confirms the theory of attachment¹²⁸ because the emotionality she achieved with Lee in socializing, growing up and surviving together (attachment, love, care, tenderness) confirmed the feelings of comfort and the inclusion of awareness. In an analysis of the digital game *Heavy Rain* the myth of parental suffering and redemption that destroyed Ethan's marriage, life and meaning due to the tragic loss of a child is shown. Structural analysis has shown how the original denotation of love and happiness becomes metaphorically related to the name of the game and makes a connotative sign of paternal suffering and guilt for his son's death.

Finally, how are the constructs of attachment we analysed in digital games related to the example of father (Ethan) and guardian (Lee) and brand loyalty related? To understand this, we must first accept R. Barthes' mythical structure according to which expression can be anything.¹²⁹ Also, the very core of such a sign and labelling points to arbitrariness and unmotivation, which means that it is inherent in the elements of brand identity created by the manufacturer. In branding process, brand as a sign, we accept digital games as brands or characters from digital games as brand extensions as an orientation system of myth.¹³⁰ In such a context, we read the connotative meaning of the sign of the digital game that can be analysed at the level of brand loyalty theory.

Brand loyalty implies repeated consumer purchase. Therefore, brand loyalty can be observed through the correlation of experience and attitudes that creates consumer satisfaction. Also, it is important to note that consumers have certain expectations of the brand and if their expectations are met, the probability of loyalty increases. Loyalty is primarily manifested in consumer impressions, beliefs, and perceptions of how a specific brand possesses unique qualities, a special image. Brand loyalty is a multidimensional construct that starts from the deeply ingrained consumer beliefs in the brand, its uniqueness, image and quality. We view the concept of brand loyalty through two fundamental dimensions: consumer behaviour and consumer attitudes.¹³¹ We will focus on the conceptual framework of brand loyalty that we observe through the spectrum of loyalty effects, where four dimensions stand out: a) cognitive dimension, b) affective dimension, c) connotative dimension and d) action dimension.¹³²

Interestingly, the dimensions of brand loyalty can be portrayed as a reflection of consumer attitudes. Attitudes encompass a cognitive, affective, and behavioural category that relies heavily on brand image. However, the satisfaction that comes from consumer

126 BARTHES, R.: *Književnost, mitologija, semiologija*. Beograd : Nolit, 1971, p. 166.

127 BOWLBY, J.: *A Secure Base: Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory*. London : Routledge, 2005, p. 134-148.

128 BULJAN FLANDER, G.: Privrženost. In BULJAN FLANDER, G. (ed.): *Znanost i umjetnost odgoja*. Sveta Nedjelja : Geromar, 2018, p. 143.

129 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 143.

130 SOLAR, M.: *Smrt Sancha Panze*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2006, p. 97.

131 JUKIĆ, D.: To Brand or Not to Brand: The Perception of Brand Image in the Digital Games Industry. In *Acta Ludologica*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 32.

132 MOISCESCU, O. I., ALLEN, B.: The Relationship Between the Dimensions of Brand Loyalty. An Empirical Investigation Among Romanian Urban Consumers. In *Management & Marketing*, 2010, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 85.

beliefs in brand value does not necessarily have the effect of increasing fidelity. There is a certain asymmetry between the degree of consumer satisfaction and consumer fidelity. The phenomenon referred to by B. Bourdieu¹³³ reveals the connection between satisfaction and loyalty and presents consumer satisfaction as a cumulative category of different dimensions. It should be noted that fidelity starts from the construct brand attachment,¹³⁴ which, in the broadest sense of the word, can be distinguished as brand loyalty from brand love and brand devotion in the narrower sense of the word. Let us point out that the phrase brand love encompasses a deeper dimension of brand knowledge and understanding, and even intimate and individual knowledge that often culminates in the construct of brand dedication. It is undeniable that brand loyalty is built on the emotional category of consumers, which leads us to the conclusion that the simplest definition is the most comprehensive: brand loyalty reflects how much the brand attracts us.¹³⁵ This means that it includes consumer impressions, motives, needs, stimuli, desires, perceptions and relationships.

Brand identity as well as myth identity can be defined as a system of concepts and attitudes that condition the opinion and behaviour of myth consumers. In this context, we understand mythology as a system of stories and notions. Then the myth becomes an image and an ideology that is primordial.¹³⁶ This also agrees with R. Barthes's theory¹³⁷ that we can incorporate myth into the value attitudes of society that we analyse as mythical creations. The question that arises in the analysis of digital games is whether the mythic consciousness produces a brand, or the brand image produces a myth? This question is crucial if we accept that the components of brand identity¹³⁸ are constructs of self-image, loyalty, and commitment. These same constructs form a mythical structure and serve as a preservation of culture. From the aspect of marketing, we understand this preservation of culture here as brand recognition. Brand identification, loyalty and brand cult form the cultural object of the brand.¹³⁹ The elements of brand identity become archetypes (mythical structures) of the brand marked by the sign itself (brand message).

Myth as story (memory) is best seen from *The Walking Dead* series where Clementine builds and creates a myth about Lee and their values through identification with Lee and respect for his educational values. Separating this psychological and pedagogical aspect (sacrifice, upbringing, attachment) from the mythical aspect (the connotation of growing up, maturing, and losing a loved one) we come to the marketing aspect where Clementine symbolizes the whole series and becomes the franchisee presented as a digital game brand. The model of creating a brand through a character from a digital game is identical to the model of creating a brand of a product or service through the consumer's experience, use and consumption. Throughout the series, Clementine has elements of identity that are recognizable, and this distinction of product from product i.e., game from game, makes Clementine exactly what she is – *a digital brand*.

Value is a key factor in understanding the mythical structure and structure of a brand image. The notion of value¹⁴⁰ cannot be separated from the mythical context. Brand value

133 BOURDIEU, B.: *A New Examination of Service Loyalty: Identification of the Antecedents and Outcomes of an Attitudinal Loyalty Framework*. Tallahassee : Florida State University, 2005, p. 45-47.

134 MALAR, L. et al.: Emotional Brand Attachment and Brand Personality: The Relative Importance of the Actual and Ideal Self. In *Journal of Marketing*, 2011, Vol. 75, No. 4, p. 36.; PARK, W. C., MacINNIS, J. D., PRIESTER, J.: *Brand Attachment: Construct, Consequence and Causes*. Hanover : Now Publishers, 2008, p. 4-9.

135 SARTAIN, L., SCHUMANN, M.: *Brand from the Inside*. San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 2006, p. 14.

136 SOLAR, M.: *Smrt Sancha Panze*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2006, p. 91.

137 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 146.

138 KAPFERER, J. N.: *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 2008, p. 183.

139 JUKIĆ, D.: Advergaming: Identity Brand Analysis in the Virtual World. In *CroDiM: International Journal of Marketing Science*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 89.

140 VRANEŠEVIĆ, T.: *Upravljanje zadovoljstvom klijenata*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2000, p. 90.

is the impression of the consumer. This is the expected value,¹⁴¹ as opposed to the value of the myth in Heavy Rain representing the father's redemption, or in The Walking Dead where Clementine's upbringing is presented. Expected value is an idea of how it will meet the consumer's needs, desires and requirements. But that doesn't mean Ethan's mythical value is above Lee's mythical value. No, it just says that consumers value certain content and a certain mythical structure of the digital game that way. The strength of the brand is precisely in the consumer's perception, perceived quality and image, just like the experienced and repeated myth. For Barthes it is a speech, for Solar a story that creates a myth, for Keller the brand image or for J. N. Kapferer the brand identity. From whichever aspect you look at it, the myth (connotative sign) has the same root as the brand: both start from the consumer's perception and belief. Ultimately, it is the user who creates the brand¹⁴² of the myth, and the myth lives on as long as they believe in it.

Conclusion

The value of myth cannot correct itself, just as the ideology of myth cannot be observed outside the social environment. The mythical structure in digital games forms connotative signifiers that represent digital discourse to users. Then the content of the consumer's consciousness constitutes the knowledge and experience of the myth. Mythic consciousness is understood as a message (speech according to R. Barthes¹⁴³), as a sphere that embraces signification and reaches the denotations themselves. Mythology in digital games establishes meaning. In such a system of denotation and connotation, a myth is the transition of one message that is inherent in integrated marketing communication¹⁴⁴ to another stage of the message. It is about the notion of brand metaphor as a living organism.¹⁴⁵

Therefore, concepts such as Clementine, Lee, Ethan, Madison and heavy rain are not just expressions, i.e., words in the discourse of myth that name the object, just as elements of identity are not only visual or auditory signs, but part of the whole connotative sign, i.e., brands. In this way, the myth becomes a message transmitted by the sender, and the gamer accepts this structure in the game in the role of the recipient. The same principle applies to marketing communication between consumers, manufacturers and brands. Such a projection of mythic discourse is consistent with a society to which mythic thinking corresponds. Therefore, Clementine, specifically her baseball cap, is an example that this is not the consequence of a mythical ideology that represents a new myth, but a carefully selected communication that on an emotional level, through consumer impressions, combines 'family' appeals with a signifier of childhood, happiness and parenthood into a brand kaleidoscope. The same is true of the Heavy Rain metaphor itself, where language returns to mythical foundations i.e., the name of the digital game refers to the regression of mythic consciousness.

Finally, another confirmation that adventurous, interactive dramas have become a kind of bearer of a new mythic consciousness stems from the fact that these games produce forms known as genres, mythical characters and mythical rituals of gameplay. The

141 BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacija i zbilja*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2001, p. 18-25.; BAUDRILLIARD, J.: *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 2017, p. 121-129.

142 GRÖNROOS, C.: *Service Management and Marketing: Customer Management in Service Competition*. Hoboken : John Wiley & Sons, 2007, p. 335-339.

143 BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009, p. 146-152.

144 KESIĆ, T.: *Integrirana marketinška komunikacija*. Zagreb : Opinio, 2003, p. 28-34.

145 KAPFERE, J. N.: *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 2008, p. 12.

Walking Dead started the series with Clementine and created a trademark, a recognizable type of game and a mythical structure that is identical to branding. The same goes for Heavy Rain, who created a trademark due to the recognizable emotional relationship of the characters, interactivity with the user and dramatic composition. In this context, the myth in games can also be seen as a utopia, a utopia of an ideal brand or an ideal parenting and childhood.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ACOSTA, P. M., DEVASAGAYAM, R.: Brand Cult: Extending the Notion of Brand Communities. In *Marketing Management Journal*, 2010, Vol. 20, No. 1, p. 165-176. ISSN 1534-973X.
- ARMSTRONG, S., BRUNSKILL, P.: *Informacijska pismenost*. Zagreb : Kosinj, 2020.
- BAACKE, D.: *Medienpädagogik*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 1997.
- BAKKER, P., SÁDABA, C.: The Impact of the Internet on Users. In KÜNG, L., PICKARD, R. G., TOWSE, R. (eds.): *The Internet and the Mass Media*. London : Sage, 2008, p. 86-102.
- BARABÁSI, A. L.: *U mreži: zašto je sve povezano i kako misliti u znanosti, poslovanju i svakodnevnom životu*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2006.
- BARTHES, R.: *Književnost, mitologija, semiologija*. Beograd : Nolit, 1971.
- BARTHES, R.: *Mitologije*. Zagreb : Pelago, 2009.
- BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Inteligencija zla ili pakt lucidnosti*. Zagreb : Naklada Ljevak, 2006.
- BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacija i zbilja*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2001.
- BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 2017.
- BAUDRILLARD, J.: *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. London : Sage, 2017.
- BAUDRILLARD, J.: *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structure*. London : Sage, 1998.
- BITI, V.: *Pojmovnik suvremene književne teorije*. Zagreb : Matica hrvatska, 1997.
- BOURDIEU, B.: *A New Examination of Service Loyalty: Identification of the Antecedents and Outcomes of an Attitudinal Loyalty Framework*. Tallahassee : Florida State University, 2005.
- BOWLBY, J.: *A Secure Base: Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory*. London : Routledge, 2005.
- BOWLBY, R.: *Freudian Mythologies: Greek Tragedy and Modern Identities*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2007.
- BULJAN FLANDER, G.: Privrženost. In BULJAN FLANDER, G. (ed.): *Znanost i umjetnost odgoja*. Sveta Nedjelja : Geromar, 2018, p. 139-155.
- BULJAN FLANDER, G., ČORIĆ ŠPOLJAR, R.: Roditeljstvo nekad i danas. In BULJAN FLANDER, G. (ed.): *Znanost i umjetnost odgoja*. Sveta Nedjelja : Geromar, 2018, p. 21-28.
- CAMERON, J. (Director): *Terminator (1984 & 2010, Blu-ray edition)*. [Blu-ray]. Beverly Hills : Metro-Goldwin-Mayer, 2010.
- CLARK, N., SCOTT, P. S.: *Game Addiction: The Experience and the Effect*. London : McFarland Company, 2009.
- COLUMBUS, C. (Director): *Pixels*. [DVD]. Culver City : Sony Pictures Entertainment, 2015.
- COUPE, L.: *Myth*. London : Routledge, 1997.
- DUDA, D.: *Kulturalni studij: ishodišta i problemi*. Zagreb : AGM, 2002.
- DURKHEIM, E.: *Elementarni oblici religijskog života*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2008.
- DYMEK, M.: Video Games: A Subcultural Industry. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 34-56.
- EAGLETON, T.: *Culture*. London : Yale University Press, 2016.
- EAGLETON, T.: *The Idea of Culture*. Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2002.
- ELIADE, M.: *Aspekti mita*. Zagreb : Demetra, 2004.
- ESCRIBANO, F.: Gamification as the Post-Modern Phalanstère: Is the Gamification Playing with Us or Are We Playing with Gamification?. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 198-221.

- FREUD, S.: *Tumačenje snova*. Zagreb : Stari Grad, 2000.
- FREUD, S.: *Tumačenje snova II*. Novi Sad : Akademska knjiga, 2013.
- GEBERT, B., MAYER, G.: Mythos zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Zur Einführung. In GEBERT, B., MAYER, G. (eds.): *Zwischen Präsenz und Repräsentation: Formen und Funktionen des Mythos in theoretischen und literarischen Diskursen*. Berlin : De Gruyter, 2014, p. 1-24.
- GIDDENS, A.: *Sociology*. Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2001.
- GOTTLIEB: *Q*bert (Commodore 64 version)*. [digital game]. Chicago : Gottlieb, 1984.
- GRANIC, I., LOBEL, A., ENGELS, R.: The Benefits of Playing Video Games. In *American Psychologist*, 2014, Vol. 69, No. 1, p. 66-78. ISSN 0003-066X.
- GRÖNROOS, C.: *Service Management and Marketing: Customer Management in Service Competition*. Hoboken : John Wiley & Sons, 2007.
- HALMI, A.: *Strategije kvalitativnih istraživanja u primijenjenim društvenim znanostima*. Jastrebarsko : Naklada Slap, 2005.
- HORKHEIMER, M., ADORNO, T. W.: *Dialektik der Aufklärung*. Frankfurt am Main : S. Fischer Verlage, 1988.
- INGLIS, F.: *Teorija medija*. Zagreb : AGM, 1997.
- JUKIĆ, D.: Advergaming: Identity Brand Analysis in the Virtual World. In *CroDIM: International Journal of Marketing Science*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 83-94. ISSN 2585-8599.
- JUKIĆ, D.: To Brand or Not to Brand: The Perception of Brand Image in the Digital Games Industry. In *Acta Ludologica*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 22-35. ISSN 2585-8599.
- JUNG, C. G.: *Psychological Types*. London, New York : Routledge, 2017.
- KAPFERER, J. N.: *The New Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 2008.
- KELLER, K. L.: Memory Factors in Advertising: The Effects of Advertising Retrieval Clues on Brand Evolutions. In *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1987, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 316-333. ISSN 0093-5301.
- KELLER, K. L., APÉRIA, T., GEORGE, M.: *Strategic Brand Management: A European Perspective*. Harlow : Prentice Hall, 2008.
- KESIĆ, T.: *Integrirana marketinška komunikacija*. Zagreb : Opinio, 2003.
- KŁOSIŃSKI, M.: Games and Utopia. In *Acta Ludologica*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 4-14. ISSN 2585-8599.
- KNATZ, L.: *Geschichte-Kunst-Mythos: Schellings Philosophie und die Perspektive einer philosophischen Mythostheorie*. Würzburg : Königshausen & Neumann, 1999.
- KOTCHEFF, T. (Director): *First Blood (1982 & 2007, Blu-ray edition)*. [Blu-ray]. Santa Monica : Lionsgate, 2007.
- LABAŠ, D., MIHOVILOVIĆ, M.: Masovni medij i semiotika popularne kulture. In *Kroatologija*, 2011, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 95-121. ISSN 1847-8050.
- LARKIN, M., WATTS, S., CLIFTON, E.: Giving Voice and Making Sense in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2008, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 102-120. ISSN 1478-0895.
- LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: *Divlja misao*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2001.
- LÉVI-STRAUSS, C.: The Structural Study of Myth. In *The Journal of American Folklore*, 1955, Vol. 68, No. 270, p. 428-444. ISSN 0021-8715.
- MAGO, Z.: The Concept of Timelessness Applied to Advergaming. In *Acta Ludologica*, 2018, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 18-33. ISSN 2585-8599.
- MALAR, L. et al.: Emotional Brand Attachment and Brand Personality: The Relative Importance of the Actual and Ideal Self. In *Journal of Marketing*, 2011, Vol. 75, No. 4, p. 35-52. ISSN 0022-2429.
- MALINOWSKI, B.: *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*. Long Grove : Waveland Press, 2013.
- McLUHAN, M.: *Razumijevanje medija*. Zagreb : Golden marketing – Tehnička knjiga, 2008.
- McQUAIL, D.: *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*. London : Sage, 2005.
- MOISCESCU, O. I., ALLEN, B.: The Relationship Between the Dimensions of Brand Loyalty. An Empirical Investigation Among Romanian Urban Consumers. In *Management & Marketing*, 2010, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 83-98. ISSN 2069-8887.

NAMCO: *Pac-Man*. [digital game]. Tokyo : Namco, 1980.

NETHERREALM STUDIOS: *Mortal Kombat 11 (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Burbank : Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment, 2019.

NEW WORLD COMPUTING: *Heroes of Might and Magic 3*. [digital game]. Redwood City : The 3DO Company, 1999.

NINTENDO: *Donkey Kong*. [digital game]. Kyoto : Nintendo, 1981.

PARK, W. C., MacINNIS, J. D., PRIESTER, J.: *Brand Attachment: Construct, Consequence and Causes*. Hanover : Now Publishers, 2008.

PEOVIĆ VUKOVIĆ, K.: *Medij i kultura: ideologija medija nakon decentralizacije*. Zagreb : Jesenski i Turk, 2012.

QUANTIC DREAMS: *Heavy Rain*. [digital game]. San Mateo : Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2010.

SARTAIN, L., SCHUMANN, M.: *Brand from the Inside*. San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 2006.

SAUSSURE, F.: *Tečaj opće lingvistike*. Zagreb : ArTresor, 2000.

SEGAL, A. R.: *Theorizing about Myth*. Amherst : Univerity of Massachussetts, 1999.

SCHMIDT, L. K.: *Understanding Hermeneutics*. Stocksfield : Acumen Publishing Limited, 2006.

SOLAR, M.: *Edipova braća i sinovi*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2008.

SOLAR, M.: *Smrt Sancha Panze*. Zagreb : Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2006.

TEAM NINJA: *Dead or Alive 6 (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Yokohama : Koei Tecmo, 2019.

TELLTALE GAMES: *The Walking Dead (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. San Rafael : Telltale Games, 2014.

TOMIĆ, C.: Mit i religija. In *Crkva u Svijetu*, 1991, Vol. 26, No. 2/3, p. 133-142. ISSN 0352-4000.

UBISOFT MONTREAL: *Assassin's Creed Unity (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Montreal : Ubisoft Montreal, 2014.

UBISOFT QUEBEC: *Assassin's Creed Syndicate (PlayStation 4 version)*. [digital game]. Quebec City : Ubisoft, 2015.

VERHOEVEN, P. (Director): *RoboCop (1987 & 2001 DVD edition)*. [DVD]. Beverly Hills : Metro-Goldwin-Mayer, 2001.

VRANEŠEVIĆ, T.: *Upravljanje zadovoljstvom klijenata*. Zagreb : Golden marketing, 2000.

WACHOWSKI, L., WACHOWSKI, L. (Directors): *The Matrix*. [DVD]. Burbank : Warner Home Video, 1999.

WILLIAMS, R.: *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2015.

WILLIG, C.: *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology*. Maidenhead : Open University Press, 2013.

ZACKARIASSON, P., DYMEK, M.: *Video Game Marketing*. London : Routledge, 2017.

ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L.: Marketing of Video Games. In ZACKARIASSON, P., WILSON, T. L. (eds.): *The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future*. London : Routledge, 2012, p. 57-75.

