

Editorial

Mahli-Ann Butt, Landon Kyle Berry, Sarah Stang, Alicia Copeland, Leandro Augusto Borges Lima, Erin MacLean, Reece Thomson, and Dennis Wilson.

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Over the past year, we've had a change of hands from our founder, Matt Barr, to our new editor-in-chief, Mahli-Ann Butt. We've taken some extra time to put together this issue with great pride and care.

Through a friendly double-open peer-reviewing process, for this open-call issue we've published 7 excellent game studies student articles:

Dennis Jansen's 'The Environment at Play: Confronting Nature in *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* and the "Frostfall" Mod,' argues that the natural environment in the base game of *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* (2011) is devoid of agency and power in the face of the player's colonialist endeavours to explore, conquer and master that environment. Jansen thus discusses how the "Frostfall" counteracts the destructive and oppositional relationship between the player and nature in *Skyrim*.

Brianna Dym's 'The Burden of Queer Love,' explores attempts by game development studio Bioware to create video games that are inclusive of gay, lesbian, and bisexual players by writing in queer romantic narrative subplots into their games. While Bioware's attempts are certainly not malicious, they fail time and time again, game after game, to break free of the hypermasculine and heterocentric culture dominant in the gaming industry. Instead, Bioware appropriates queer experiences and construes them as a burden to the player so as not to displace the fantasies of male, heterosexual gamers.

Chris Alton's 'Aya of the Beholder: An Examination of the Construction of Real-World Locations in *Parasite Eve*,' uses the foundational example of Square's *Parasite Eve* (1997) to examine the ways in which real-world locations and approximations of such are represented within video game worlds. Alton examines the methods through which videogames can create spaces which evoke the conceptual idea of a given place, both through audio/visual and interactive means, without constructing a one-to-one simulacrum of the location. Thus, the player actively contributes in the transformation of an actionable virtual space into an actualized lived place.

Anna Maria Kalinowski's 'Silent Halls: P.T., Freud, and Psychological Horror,' draws from Sigmund Freud's concept of the uncanny to address how the psychological concepts surface within the never-ending hallway of *P.T.* (2014) and create a deeply psychologically horrifying experience.

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Sean Pellegrini's 'And How Does That Make You Feel?: A Psychological Approach to a Classic Game Studies Debate – Violent Video Games and Aggression,' investigates the claim that violent video games can cause aggression. The findings of this study suggest that people highly correlated with the Dark Triad of personality are a high-risk group for aggression, but that this aggression is unrelated to video games.

Daniel Odin Shaw's 'Ideology in BioShock: A Critical Analysis,' analyses the *Bioshock* series, with a particular focus on the treatment of ideology. By examining the games, with a particular reference the use of procedural rhetoric, this paper argues that this series presents a critique of extreme ideology itself.

Hayley McCullough's "'Hey! Listen!": Video Game Dialogue, Integrative Complexity and the Perception of Quality,' explores potential complexity differences between winning and losing video games at the Spike Video Game Awards. It compared the integrative complexity of a sample of video game dialogue for three categories (Best Shooter, Best RPG and Best Action/Adventure). Across all analyses a consistent mean pattern emerged: The winning games averaged lower complexity scores than the losing games. These findings suggest a general association between simplistic dialogue and high-quality video games, providing keen insight into the underlying psychology of video games, and establishes a strong foundation for future research.

As this issue demonstrates, *Press Start* is always delighted to be publishing the best new work by early career researchers from a wide variety of disciplinary fields.

The *Press Start Journal* team also welcomed many new members to our editorial board. During this transition period, we've begun a mentoring program for our senior members to share their knowledge of the editorial process. This spirit of mentorship, guidance, and support is something we hope to continue into our journal's future as it reflects our larger goal of encouraging game studies students to share their work and take part in a lively, academic community.

Once again, we're seeking new members to replace our outgoing board, who are graduating and moving on to other things. Board members of *Press Start* serve as key stakeholders and decision-makers for developing the journal and actively work to support student scholarship in game studies. Current students and graduates within one year of their graduation date are eligible to apply. Our deadline to apply to be on the editorial board this year has just past, but if you are interested in working with *Press Start* in the future, you can find more information on the responsibilities of an editor here (<https://press-start.gla.ac.uk/index.php/press-start/announcement/view/19>).

In 2018, we saw some of our editors present on a panel at DiGRA in Turin, Italy. This was an exciting opportunity for our new members to sit down with established members and discuss our hopes, expectations, and advice

regarding the publishing process in general, and with *Press Start* in particular. While everyone has a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, some commonalities emerged. Fostering an open, supportive, caring – in other words, overtly feminist – atmosphere for editors, reviewers, and contributors has been our most important goal. Reaching out to, and encouraging, junior scholars, new graduate students, upper year undergraduate students, and scholars whose first language is not English are also central goals for *Press Start*. Given the often intimidating, daunting, and confusing process of academic publishing, we hope to make *Press Start* an appealing home for exciting, innovative, unusual, and social justice-oriented games research.

As students and emerging academics, we believe *Press Start* should embody the kinds of practices that we want to see become standards for academia. Thus, in order to see a greater diversity in game studies scholarship, we have introduced an initiative to translate our calls for papers into as many languages as we can find volunteers: <http://tinyurl.com/yblfxkk4>. *Press Start* encourages submissions from ESL writers, especially if they are not yet fully confident of their ability to write academically in English but want to learn and improve.

Press Start Journal is a labour of love and we thank you for your continued support of our journal.

Best wishes from the *Press Start* editorial board,

Mahli-Ann Butt, Landon Kyle Berry, Sarah Stang, Alicia Copeland,
Leandro Augusto Borges Lima, Erin MacLean, Reece Thomson, and
Dennis Wilson.