

## **Digital Divides and Structural Inequalities: Exploring the Technomasculine culture of gaming**

Thomas H. Apperley<sup>1</sup> and Kishonna L. Gray<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Centre of Excellence in Game Culture Studies, Tampere University, Finland

<sup>2</sup> Department of Communication and Gender and Women's Studies, University of Illinois – Chicago, USA

### **Introduction**

The forms that discrimination and inequality take in gaming cultures are highly nuanced. Understanding how discrimination and inequality shapes the experience of gamers who visibly differ from the dominant able-bodied, anglophone, cis-het, white 'technomasculine' culture of gaming is crucial given the increasing emphasis on gaming in education and training, and the ongoing integration of game-like elements into everyday processes through gamefication and gameful design. We recognize these differences create many ways for people to identify as both insiders and outsiders to gamer culture, and may be marked as outsiders in multiple ways that exacerbates their experience of inequality. A further complication is that many who have bodies that do not conform to the dominant technomasculine gamer culture are nominally included in gaming cultures, but this inclusion requires a tacit agreement with the status quo, which effectively silences dissention (Salter & Blodgett, 2012). In this chapter, we draw on perspectives from cultural studies, critical race scholarship and feminism to highlight the various exclusionary practices within gaming communities.

Despite a widespread perception that games and game-like activities permeate everyday life and mundane activities through the 'ludification of culture' (Raessens, 2005), this cultural change is experienced unevenly. While most people have basic access to gaming technologies, there are inequitable distributions in how users engage games, participate in gaming and esports communities, and perceive their participation in gaming contexts (Apperley 2010; DiSalvo et al 2008; Schott & Horrell 2000). In the processes of becoming ingrained and embedded in our everyday social infrastructure these inequalities in gaming often exacerbate existing inequalities, making it increasingly difficult for equitable participation. Furthermore, in some cases these inequalities have a role in sustaining cultures of hatred and hostility, where privilege is naturalized and gaming, and networked gaming seen as technomasculine activities. As a consequent, women, people of color, disabled, queer and gender non-conforming gamers are intruders into this space.

We explore the structural factors influencing inequality of usage of digital games through concept of "digital inequality" (DiMaggio et al., 2001; 2004). usage. In applying this concept, we will explore what Hargittai (2002) has termed the "second level digital divide," which explores differences in internet use and the implications for the reproduction of social inequality (see also: Hargittai, 2008; Hargittai & Hinnant, 2008). The "second level digital divide" in gaming occurs in a wide variety of contexts with remarkably different qualities which are also shaped by

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

gender, sexuality, race, disability, and other economic factors. Often the focus is on *access*, but access provides no understanding of how technology is actually *used in practice* (Hargittai & Hinnant, 2008). It is crucial to move beyond the binary classification of “haves” and “have nots,” and engage a more nuanced conceptualization of how people use technology (Barzilai-Nahon, 2006; DiMaggio & Hargittai, 2001; DiMaggio et al., 2004). In order to explore how structural inequality shapes the experiences of marginalized groups in gaming in this chapter we first outline the historic role that white men and boys have had as the primary audience of digital games, and the role their role as early adopters of gaming technologies has had in creating a technomasculine gaming culture. Then we turn to explore the crucial role of symbolic violence in sustaining technomasculine dominance in gaming cultures. Finally, we consider how women, gender nonconforming, LBGTQI+, PoC, and disabled gamers have found niches for themselves within and against the dominant technomasculine gaming culture.

### **Inequitable Diffusion of Gaming Technologies**

Gaming industries have succeeded in making digital games a mainstream form of everyday entertainment. Decades of commercial expansion have required the successful growth and maintenance their user base and the continuous repositioning of gaming technologies at the ‘cutting edge’ of domestic media technology. The rates of engaging with and adopting technologies is largely influenced by social and economic status, so with rapidly developing dynamic technologies, a ‘default user’ is factored into the design and marketing of the technology. The gaming industry in North America and Europe has historically assigned White men as their target demographic (Paul, 2012). Dramatic changes that have occurred over the years to how the target audience of gaming is understood, primarily the economic significance of the casual and mobile gaming sector, led to a new recognition of the importance of women for the industry (Anable, 2018; Chess, 2017; Hjorth & Richardson, 2014). While these changes are welcome, they do not significantly impact the gaming experiences many excluded groups.

How the game industry acknowledges, understands, and encourages diversity among its users can also entrench and exacerbate existing inequalities. Within console gaming—in particular—male, female, trans-, and gender nonconforming identifying users of color have felt left behind by the dramatic changes incurred by the rapidly updating vision of the gaming audience, which, while more gender inclusive, is still predominantly understood as white (Gray, forthcoming). For example, among the users of the Xbox One, Microsoft is considered to have been diligent about adhering to the changing needs of their user base. However, most changes reflect what is desirable for the majority of Xbox Live users. and given the number of users, it is unrealistic to assume that they all will be accommodated. This model of change and inclusion which values ‘listening’ to the audience and audience engagement can end up valuing and privileging a ‘majority’ position, which is often, in the case of Microsoft Xbox One, predominantly white. Marginalized users, particularly people of color, are unable to participate in the changing ‘face’ of gaming because their individual voices are drowned out by the White majority.

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

The difficulties faced by marginalized users who wish to continue to engage in the changing conceptions of gaming technologies like the Xbox One are palpably illustrated in the widely used concept of ‘adopter categories’ for new technologies. Adopter categories originate in Rogers’ diffusion of innovation framework (Rogers, 1962), there are five categories—Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority, and Laggards—of which the first two are particularly relevant. ‘Innovators’ are the first individuals to adopt a new technology, they are typically people that are willing to take risks, tend to be the youngest in age, have the highest social class, have great financial lucidity, are very social, and have the closest contact to scientific sources and interactions with other innovators. The second group, the ‘Early Adopters’ tend to be younger in age, have a higher social status, more financial fluidity, advanced education, and are more socially forward than other people who eventually adopt the technology. These individuals interact regularly with ‘Innovators’ and they rely on them to inform them about new innovations. There is not a huge difference between these two types. The ‘Innovators’ often inform the ‘Early Adopters’ on what to do and how to navigate the space—leading them both to adopt the innovation rather simultaneously. It is imperative to note that the majority of the individuals who are ‘Innovators’ and ‘Early adopters’ in gaming also have enough recreational time and capital to devote to social and technological changes in gaming. What previous scholarship on the adopter categories has revealed is that the ways that White men are targeted and cultivated into becoming early adopters of gaming technologies (Lamb et al., 2009, p. 310). Such processes ensure ongoing dominance of technomasculine culture in gaming cultures and make it difficult for people of color and other marginalized folk to shape the cultures of gaming by being early adopters.

One way that adaptor categories targeting white gamers exacerbates existing inequalities is illustrated in the privileging of the use of Standard American English in Xbox Live chats. While this may have seemed ‘natural’ at some point in the history of the Xbox due to the early adopters of the Xbox being primarily White men, now it acts to exclude already marginalized gamers from non-English speaking backgrounds, and those identified as having ‘Asian,’ ‘Black,’ or ‘Latino’ voices. The use of Standard American English impacts on how information is disseminated in these spaces, creating a game culture that privileges those using or adopting it (Gray, 2012; 2014). As this cultural privileging of voice continues it also shapes the technical integration of voice into gaming software in networked games, and how voice is embedded in the interface of the platform itself through voice-activation. Thus, the cultural dominance of Standard American English has profound impact on new adopters of the Xbox One, who may have to spend considerable time training the console to ‘hear’ their voice.

The cultivation of a White male audience for gaming has deep historic roots, which are tied to changing notions of masculinity. In her book, *Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade*, Carly A. Kocurek (2015) provides a genealogical history of how video game arcades provided communities where masculinity and male-ness were the two pillars that upheld them, and how these trends exist and operate in contemporary game cultures. Kocurek asserts:

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

gender inequalities in video gaming did not develop during the industry's postcrash resurrection or with the rise of home consoles; rather, these historical inequalities emerged through public discourse and public practice that accompanied the rise of video gaming's early commercial success in the coin-op industry (2015, p. xvi).

What is crucial about this stipulation is the notion that game cultures and the act of gaming itself has not always historically been considered a predominantly "male" one. Rather, through a variety of marketing strategies the game industry has historically cultivated the relationship between masculinity and gaming in an attempt to make the experience of gaming seem elusive exclusive and special. To this end, Kocurek also considers the economic impact of the arcade, thereby connecting boyhood, capitalism, and public video gaming. She considers the construction of gaming spaces as masculine via this public discourse, and by tracing this discursive history, she illustrates how in the decades of the 70s and 80s video game arcades provided a means for a fledgling notion of technologically empowered masculinity to thrive in the United States. This cemented the notion that gaming was an activity that was to be performed mostly by white, middle class boys and men (2015, p. 51).

### **Masculinity, Technoculture, and Violence**

The intricate connections between masculinity and violence make it essential to discuss the means through which technomasculine gaming culture sustains inequitable practices. Scholars of masculinity have noted that in the US context the dominant masculinity is hypermasculine and violent (Kimmel, 1997; Wesley, 2003). Kimmel argues that US hypermasculinity is based on racism, sexism, and homophobia and marked by violent rapaciousness (1997, pp. 191-192). Wesley points out that as of 1978 "the United States was, without even a close contender, the most violent industrialized nation in the world" (2003, p. 1). This violence stems from deeply embedded cultural ideologies that privilege the sword over the pen, brute strength over intellect, and men over women. The rise of the gaming industry in the US occurred around the same time as the peak violence identified by Wesley (2003). However, geek masculinity is often excluded from critiques of hypermasculinity (see: Massanari, 2015), but the violent and materialistic identities and behaviors that constitute the dominant technomasculine gaming culture share a great many qualities with the hypermasculinity earmarked by Kimmel that need to be further explored.

The growing technology sector of Silicon Valley represent the new centrality of this once hidden, often marginalized masculinities in US culture and politics. According to Johnson, the technomascularity of Silicon Valley can be defined as "an expression of masculinity that is oriented toward the mastery of technology and skilled use of technological tools and systems" (2018, n.p.). Johnson (2018) further suggests that this type of masculinity is often associated with individuals who are highly competent with computers but typically lacking in social or physical skills. Scholars have increasingly illustrated the ways that technomascularity situates women and

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

other non-masculine presenting folks as inferior. Such attitudes are illustrated in the memo written by James Demore, who was critical of Google's commitments to diversity (namely increasing the role of women). It is necessary to explore these practices as exclusionary cultures. While direct violence does not constitute the bulk of the violence experienced by those marginalized by masculinity in gaming, it is important to understand that deliberate exclusion and implicit exclusion can be considered a continuation of this violence. In sociology and cultural studies this is often described as symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), and is useful in this context as it provides us with as a more nuanced way to make sense of how hypermasculine forms of violence are continued in the cultures of gaming through symbolic violence enacted through technomascularity that has created a range of impactful exclusionary activities.

While feminists remain concerned with the continued negative representations of women in media, attention has also been given to the relationship between mediated representations and the experiences of women in physical settings, at least the manifestation of 'real world' inequalities in digital settings. The same is true for video games. An illustrative example presents itself with the work of Salter and Blodgett (2012) where they examine Women existing within hypermasculinity in gaming publics (pre-Gamergate); as such, online gaming communities have been structured as "boy's clubs" that exclude women and non-gender conforming individuals. From their observations of a webcomic series, Salter and Blodgett (2012) identify three archetypal roles that women are given to play within hardcore gaming circles, which include women as sex objects, women as invisible, and women as the enemy. These gendered roles are seen in other social institutions as well. Even more damaging, women who speak out for themselves are belittled, verbally assaulted, and harassed from inside and outside these gaming publics (Fox & Tang, 2014; Gray, 2012; Norris, 2004).

Some of the women and non-gender conforming people who have experienced direct, indirect, and symbolic violence and threats of violence include Zoey Quinn, Brianna Wu, Felicia Day, and Anita Sarkeesian. Many of these threats have caused them to leave their homes for their own safety, and to cancel public events and appearances, fearing for their lives (Rott, 2014). Sarkeesian's story in particular is one that is worth explicating in terms of the violence incurred by the proponents of the GamerGate controversy because negative responses to Sarkeesian's critiques of video games embodied the very tropes she discusses in her YouTube series, "Tropes vs. Women in Games" (Feminist Frequency, 2013-2015). This crowdfunded series, explores the archetypal ways in which female characters have been portrayed in many popular games. This series draws heavily upon feminist critical theory and provides viewers with, as Sarkeesian states at the beginning of each video, being able to enjoy games while still being critical of the content.

One of the more prominent points of Sarkeesian's series is that women are depicted in certain highly clichéd, gendered, and stereotypical ways in games (Feminist Frequency, 2013-2015). Women in games are often objects to look at and objectify, as opposed to their male counterparts, who are often more fully developed and well-rounded characters. In her videos, she takes great care to highlight the many ways in which female non-player characters are oftentimes

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

violently disposed of, or treated, in games. Indeed, these methods range from the “Euthanized Damsel” (a damsel in distress who is killed by the player for her “own good”) to women who are simply background decoration that players may dispose of at their whims. As entertainment experiences, video games have themselves historically employed violence as a rhetorical tool to advance plots and engage users in the often simplistic, conflict driven in-game narrative. As Sarkeesian has pointed out, with a shocking regularity these violent narratives focus on women as continual victims, unable to defend themselves or even seek protection, while the player is positioned as a white masculine savior figure (Salter & Blodgett, 2017). Since posting, Sarkeesian has disabled commentary for each video that she has posted, in an attempt to stem the influx of hate mail and violent threats that she has received since posting her videos (Parkin, 2014). Theorizing gaming culture from this perspective, it is clear that the symbolic and real violence surrounding Gamergate revolves around sexist ideologies within the community, that reflect society in general, yet are somehow unconstrained, if not actually pandered to, by the industry.

Other aspects of gaming culture that act to embed this form of technomasculine domination include various playstyles, as well as the marketing and promotion of games and esports. For example, more casual players, including those who are new to video games or less comfortable with the controls, appear to engage in violent gameplay less often compared to their more experienced counterparts (Ribbens & Malliet, 2015). While solitary gamers may show an increase in aggression after playing violent video games, this effect dissolves when gamers play cooperatively with others (Velez et al., 2016). In fact, Velez and colleagues (2016) found that participants who played cooperatively had similar levels of aggression to participants who did not play violent video games, suggesting a near zero increase in violent outcomes regardless of exposure to violent video games provided there was also social contact with others. But when factoring gender in experiences in interactions around gaming, the kinds of hostility and aggression women experience cannot be ignored, and the symbolic violence directed at women in game culture demands further research. The tendency to use hypersexualized women in videogame and esports marketing and advertising practices has also been well documented (see: Taylor et al., 2009). This level of oppression and marginalization speaks to the symbolic nature of relegating women to social margins within video games and gaming culture.

The industry, games, and players all play a role in the attempts to subordinate women, whether overtly or covertly, limiting female gamers’ agency and visibility while maintaining a hegemonic male order. The events of Gamergate were a cultural reaction to reassert the dominant technomasculine power over the subordinate group (women) as the sexism and gendered expectations within the gaming community rose to the surface and were revealed for critical analysis and assessment. We consider real and symbolic violence against women to be normalized such that its victims are expected to endure it and are punished when these expectations are broken (Gray, 2014). In this context the dominant group, White male gamers, retain a vast majority of the power in video gaming culture (Gray, 2014). This domination is sustained by the gaming industry by continually marketing to and catering this demographic

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

(Gray, 2012), at the cost of the exclusion of others. This level of subordination has led to significant threats of violence digitally and physically. Because of the normalization of this culture within gaming, it is necessary to examine the process that leads to this reality, and symbolic violence is useful in understanding this trend. And while no narrative within gaming is fixed, the use of violence as a means to propel a narrative has been molded for generations and rooted in a culture that continues to situate violence as normal.

### **Challenging Exclusion and Discrimination**

Many of the cultures of use on the peripheries of technomasculine gaming culture are ‘making do’ with otherwise ignored, outmoded, and marginalized technologies or practices than can build and sustain communities which challenge the reproduction of inequality. The differential uses of gaming technologies by marginalized users must also be recognized for their potential to lead to increasingly transformative ways of participation. Harvey (2014), for example, highlights the innovative game design taking place with the Twine platform, which has also provided scope for many people outside of the technomasculine demographic to gain experience in game design (cf. Anthropy, 2012). Research conducted on gameplay practices in a Venezuelan cybercafé, indicated that game piracy was crucial for video game play to occur in that context (Apperley, 2010; 2019), suggesting that the innovative digital rights management regimes of the last decade enforce an ongoing unevenness between the global ‘north’ and ‘south.’ The experience gap between players in developing countries, and what is generally understood to be ‘normal’ is further examined by Phillip Penix-Tadsen (2016; 2019), who amongst other themes, explores the role of unlicensed localization of games in building local games industries in the countries of the global south.

Similarly, female gamers have also found various methods to counteract gendered oppression (Cote, 2017; Gray, 2013). One such method is griefing, which is when an individual or group intentionally plays in a manner unintended by the game developers to make the game less enjoyable for others (Gray, 2014). This method is often used to resist domination from sexist comments or attacks against female players and is particularly effective when utilized by a group of women. As they disrupt the comfortableness of the technomasculine dominant gamers by ‘ruining’ their fun such tactics are similar to those of the “feminist spoilsport,” a reimagining of Sara Ahmed’s (2017) “feminist killjoy” for gaming cultures (Boluk & LeMieux, 2017).

Other marginalized groups have used similar tactics which blend disruptive in game practices with consumer-based demands. Resistance tactics include boycotting particular games, using gaming services to file complaints against players, and posting to social media, gaming websites, and discussion boards (Gray, 2014). Furthermore, in-game protests from marginalized groups which are aimed at disrupting play and attracting the attention of the corporate owners of the game have a long history in networked gaming, they have occurred in *Ultima Online*, *EverQuest*, *City of Heroes*, *Westward Journey* and *Star Wars Galaxies* (Apperley, 2010; Chan, 2009). Although often these activities are aimed at simply reforming the rules of the game, they are often driven by a nominal notion of fairness, that is shaped by technomasculine assumptions

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

that games make everyone equal. However, some in-game protest movements were more concerned with the inclusivity of the games themselves, for example protests were made in *World of Warcraft* after Blizzard had threatened to expel players that were promoting their guild as “gay-friendly” from the game (Ward, 2006). These forms of protest, while often involving issues that parallel offline political concerns, challenge the authority of the owners and managers of the games and game communities to make decisions which impact the players’ experiences by bringing the ‘real’ world into play. Protesting against authorities highlights the arbitrary construction of the virtual and can elevate the stakes of play by establishing resonations between injustices in the games and those which take place in everyday life (Apperley, 2010, p. 113).

### Conclusion

Gaming cultures serve as an on-going example of how media continues to be a significant site where exaggerated forms of hypermasculinity are performed. Gender “provides a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connections among various forms of human interactions” (Scott, 1986, p. 1067). The coding of masculinity establishes a gendered hierarchy of power, especially in the myriad ways that masculinity is depicted. This masculine hierarchy is prominent and visible within gaming. But women and other marginalized folks continue to resist and highlight their own experiences to establish a plurality of gaming cultures.

What is understood to be at stake in videogame play has changed in time since the videogame industry began cultivating a masculine imager. The connection that games have with civics and communities and the growing connection between digital gaming and new forms of cultural expression on communicative platforms like Twitch indicate how digital play can shift the dialogue around digital inequality beyond ‘access.’ The kinds of knowledges, skills and literacies cultivated through play and inclusion in game cultures suggest not just access to nascent communicative forms but also a global participatory culture. Digital play and digital games area an access point to more than just entertainment, they must also be understood as technologies with can cultivate and produce equal opportunities just as much as they can embed discriminatory practices.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thomas H Apperley’s contribution to this work was enabled by the Academy of Finland funded Centre of Excellence in Game Culture Studies [grant number 312395].

### REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Anable, A. (2018). *Playing with Feelings: Video Games and Affect*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.



## DIGITAL DIVIDES

- Anthropy, A. (2012). *Rise of the Videogame Zinesters: How Freaks, Normals, Amateurs, Artists, Dreamers, Drop-outs, Queers, Housewives, and People Like You Are Taking Back an Art Form*. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Apperley, T. (2010). *Gaming Rhythms: Play and Counterplay from the Situated to the Global*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.
- Apperley, T. (2019). Digital gaming's South-South connection. In P. Penix-Tadsen (Ed.). *Videogames in the Global South* (pp. 211-221). Pittsburgh: ETC Press.
- Barzilai-Nahon, K. (2006). Gaps and bits: Conceptualizing measurements for digital divide/s. *The Information Society* 22(5), pp. 269-278.
- Boluk, Stephanie. & LeMieux, Patrick (2017). *Metagaming: Playing, Competing, Spectating, Cheating, Trading, Making, and Breaking Videogames*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. (1992). *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chan, D. (2009). 'Beyond the "Great Fire-Wall": The case of in-game protests in China'. L. Hjorth and D. Chan (eds.) *Gaming Cultures and Place in the Asia-Pacific* (pp. 141-157). London: Routledge.
- Chess, S. (2017). *Ready Player Two: Women Gamers and Designed Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Cote, A. (2017). "I Can Defend Myself": Women's strategies for coping with harassment while gaming online. *Games & Culture* 12(2), pp. 136-155. 10.1177/1555412015587603
- DiMaggio, P. and Hargittai, E. (2001). From the 'Digital Divide' to 'Digital Inequality': Studying Internet use as penetration increases. Princeton Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies, Working Paper 15.
- DiMaggio, P., Hargittai, E., Celeste, C., & Shafer, S. (2004). Digital inequality: From unequal access to differentiated use. In *Social Inequality* (pp. 355-400). Russell Sage Foundation.
- DiSalvo, B. J., Crowley, K., & Norwood, R. (2008). Learning in context: Digital games and young Black men. *Games & Culture* 3(2), pp. 131-141. DOI: 10.1177/1555412008314130
- Feminist Frequency (2013-2015). Tropes Vs Women in Videogames – Season One. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLn4ob\\_5\\_ttEaA\\_vc8F3fjzE62esf9yP61](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLn4ob_5_ttEaA_vc8F3fjzE62esf9yP61)
- Fox, J. and Tang, W. Y. (2014). Sexism in online video games: The role of conformity to masculine norms and social dominance orientation. *Computers in Human Behavior* 33, pp. 314-320. DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2013.07.014
- Gray, K. L. (forthcoming). *Intersectional Tech: The Transmediated Experiences of Black Users in Digital Gaming*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press.
- Gray, K. L. (2012) Deviant bodies, stigmatized identities, and racist acts: Examining the experiences of African-American gamers in Xbox Live. *New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia* 18(4), pp. 261-276. DOI: 10.1080/13614568.2012.746740

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

- Gray, K. L. (2013). Collective organizing, individual resistance, or asshole griefer? An ethnographic analysis of women of color in Xbox Live. *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology* 2. Retrieved from <https://adanewmedia.org/2013/06/issue2-gray/>
- Gray, K. L. (2014). *Race, Gender, and Deviance in Xbox live: Theoretical Perspectives from the Virtual Margins*. New York: Routledge.
- Hargittai, E. (2002). Second-level digital divide: Differences in people's online skills. *First Monday* 7(4). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v7i4.942>
- Hargittai, E. (2008). The role of expertise in navigating links of influence. In J. Turow and L. Tsui (Eds.). *The Hyperlinked Society: Questioning Connections in the Digital Age* (pp. 85-103). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Hargittai, E. and Hinnant, A. (2008). Digital inequality: Differences in young adults' use of the internet. *Communication Research* 35(5), pp. 602-621. DOI: 10.1177/0093650208321782
- Harvey, A. (2014). Twine's revolution: Democratization, depoliticization, and the queering of game design. *GAME: The Italian Journal of Game Studies* 3, pp. 95-107. [https://www.gamejournal.it/3\\_harvey/](https://www.gamejournal.it/3_harvey/)
- Hjorth, L. & Richardson, I. (2014). *Gaming in Social, Locative and Mobile Media*. London: Palgrave.
- Johnson, R. (2018). Technomascularity and its influence in video game production. In N. Taylor and G. Voorhees (Eds.). *Masculinities in Play* (pp. 249-262). London: Palgrave. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-90581-5\_14.
- Kimmel, M. S. (1997). Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame and silence in the construction of gender identity. In M. M. Gergen & S. N. Davis (Eds.), *Toward a New Psychology of Gender* (pp. 223-242). New York: Routledge.
- Kocurek, Carly A. (2015). *Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Massanari, A. (2015). *Participatory Culture, Community, and Play: Learning from Reddit*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Norris, K. (2004). Gender stereotypes, aggression, and computer games: An online survey of women. *CyberPsychology & Behavior* 7(6), pp. 714-727. DOI: 10.1089/cpb.2004.7.714
- Parkin, S. (2014, October 17). Gamergate: A scandal erupts in the video-game community. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/gamergate-scandal-erupts-video-game-community>
- Paul, C. (2012). *Wordplay and the Discourse of Video Games: Analyzing Words, Design, and Play*. New York: Routledge.
- Penix-Tadsen, P. (2016). *Cultural Code: Videogames and Latin America*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Penix-Tadsen, P. (2019). Introduction. In P. Penix-Tadsen (Ed.). *Video Games and the Global South* (pp. 1-32). Pittsburgh: ETC Press.
- Raessens, J. (2006). Playful identities, or the ludification of culture. *Games & Culture* 1(1), pp. 52-57. DOI: 10.1177/1555412005281779

## DIGITAL DIVIDES

- Ribbens, W. and Malliet, S. (2015). How male young adults construe their playing style in violent video games. *New Media & Society* 17(10), pp. 1624-1642. DOI: 10.1177/1461444814530821
- Rott, N. (2014, September 24). #Gamergate controversy fuels debate on women and video games. *NPR*. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2014/09/24/349835297/-gamergate-controversy-fuels-debate-on-women-and-video-games?t=1585555937988>
- Rogers, E. M. (1962). *Diffusion of Innovations* (1st ed.). New York: Free Press of Glencoe.
- Salter, A. & Blodgett, B. (2012). Hypermasculinity & Dickwolves: The contentious role of Women in the new gaming public. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 56(3), pp. 401-416, DOI: 10.1080/08838151.2012.705199
- Salter, A. & Blodgett, B. (2017). *Toxic Geek Masculinity in Media: Sexism, Trolling, and Identity Policing*. New York: Palgrave.
- Schott, G. R. & Horrell, K. R. (2000). Girl gamers and their relationship with the gaming culture. *Convergence* 6(4), pp. 36-53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135485650000600404>
- Scott, J. W. (1986). Gender: A useful category of historical analysis. *The American Historical Review* 91(5), pp. 1053-1075. DOI: 10.2307/1864376
- Taylor, N., Jenson, J. & de Castell, S. (2009). Cheerleaders/booth babes/ Halo hoes: pro-gaming, gender and jobs for the boys. *Digital Creativity* 20(4), pp. 239-252. DOI: 10.1080/14626260903290323
- Ward, M. (2006, February 13). 'Gay rights win in warcraft world'. BBC News. Accessed 1 March 2020, from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/4700754.stm>
- Wesley, M. C. (2003). *Violent Adventure*. Charlottesville: Virginia University Press.
- Velez, J., Greitemeyer, T., Whitaker, J. L., Ewoldsen, D. R., and Bushman, B. J. (2016). Violent video games and reciprocity: The attenuating effects of cooperative game play on subsequent aggression. *Communications Research* 43(4), pp. 447-467. DOI: 10.1177/0093650214552519