

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

# VICTORIAN AND AMERICAN MYTHS IN VIDEO GAMES

9-11 APRIL 2025

## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

BioShock Infinite: Burial at Sea (2013) © Irrational Games

 **CETAPS**  
CENTRE FOR ENGLISH, TRANSLATION  
AND ANGLO-PORTUGUESE STUDIES

 **NOVA FCSH**  
Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas  
UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA

 **FLUP**  
FACULDADE DE LETRAS  
UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO

 **fct**  
Fundação  
para a Ciência  
e a Tecnologia

Financed by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia, I.P., under the project UIDB/04097/2020 - CETAPS, <https://doi.org/10.54499/UIDB/04097/2020>. This event will take place in the framework of the research conducted by the research strands "Culture, Science and the Media" and "American Intersections", of the research area "Anglophone Cultures and History" at CETAPS.



# Victorian and American Myths in Video-Games – International Conference

## Book of Abstracts

Lisbon, April 9-11, 2025

NOVA UNIVERSITY LISBON

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Colégio Almada Negreiros - Campus de Campolide

Salão Nobre

### **Keynote Speakers:**

Heike Paul (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg)

Barbara Braid (University of Szczecin)

Dom Ford (University of Bremen)

### **Scientific Committee:**

Teresa Pereira (Convener) (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Jéssica Bispo (Convener) (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Gabriela Gândara Terenas (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Fátima Vieira (FLUP/CETAPS)

Iolanda Ramos (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

João Paulo Ascenso (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Isabel Oliveira (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

### **Organizing Committee:**

Teresa Pereira (Convener) (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Jéssica Bispo (Convener) (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Rui Mateus (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Alice Carletto (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Mariana Cruz (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

Tânia Cerqueira (FLUP/CETAPS)

Beatriz de Almeida Santos (NOVA-FCSH/CETAPS)

## Keynote Speaker

Heike Paul

### American Myths in Times of Crisis

#### Abstract:

American myths of origin and transformation form an archive of exceptional figures and unique scenarios that have proven their longevity and their elasticity across time. Yet, myth criticism has long moved beyond a simple celebration and heroization of its stock characters and narratives and has engaged in critical revisions of their flaws and 'blind spots'. Two perspectives, somewhat different in the scope of their critique, have prominently emerged over the last decades: one which embraces the Jeremiad as a reparative vision of progress that propels Americans towards a more inclusive union and the fulfillment of America's original 'promise' and another one which considers the American project as deeply flawed from the beginning and thus 'beyond repair'. Presently, both strands of critical revisionism are severely contested by agendas of restoration, revanchism, and destruction seeking not only to return to more exclusivist mythical scripts of old but also to undertake the ultimate stress test of their elasticity in times of crisis.

#### Bio-note:

**Heike Paul** is chair of American Studies at Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg and director of the Bavarian American Academy in Munich. She received her degrees from Goethe University Frankfurt and Leipzig University. In 2018, she was recipient of the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Prize of the German Research Foundation. She held fellowships at Harvard University, the Institute for Advanced Study (Wissenschaftskolleg) in Berlin, and the Thomas Mann House in Los Angeles. Twice, she was Visiting Harris Professor at Dartmouth College. She currently leads the "Global Sentimentality Project" and the Research Training Group "The Sentimental in Literature, Culture, and Politics" at FAU. Among her publications are *The Myths That Made America* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2014); *Understanding Stewart O'Nan* (Chapel Hill: University of South Carolina Press, 2020); *Amerikanischer Staatsbürgersentimentalismus: Zur Lage der politischen Kultur der USA* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021); and *Lexicon of Global Melodrama* (ed. with Sarah Marak, Katharina Gerund, and Marius Henderson, Bielefeld: transcript, 2022).

## Keynote Speaker

**Barbara Braid**

### **Rewriting Victorian biomyths in neo-Victorian biofiction**

#### **Abstract:**

Even though biofiction may seem to be just another term for biographical novels and films, this new mode of life writing has specific features that make it a distinct type of fiction. In this reimagining of historical lives, fiction dominates over facts, which are freely and blatantly appropriated and remixed with legends, gossip, and scandal. Biofiction is, then, a type of literary or audiovisual text that offers a new version of a historical persona, emblematising it and providing new, critical readings of these historical characters and their context, often in the form of metafictional commentary on cultural legacies and afterlives.

What Neo-Victorianism and biofiction share is an urge to rewrite the past. Thus, neo-Victorian biofiction reimagines Victorian figures, whether famous and eminent (Charles Dickens, the Brontë sisters, Queen Victoria, etc.) or notorious or forgotten (Lizzie Borden, Saartjie Baartman, etc.). As biofiction frequently engages in revisionary depictions of established historical figures, shedding light on forgotten or scandalous elements of their biographies, or reinterpreting them in the context of contemporary ideas about identities and societies, it is involved in the process of mythologization and de- or re-mythologization.

In this talk, I will examine several instances of neo-Victorian biofiction (literature, film, television, comic books, etc.) where Victorian biomyths are either reconfigured by neo-Victorian texts or established and re-established by them, through emblematisation, revision, anachronism, metafiction, and parody.

#### **Bio-note:**

**Dr. Barbara Braid** is Assistant Professor of English at the Institute of Literature and New Media, University of Szczecin, Poland. Her research interests circle around neo-Victorianism, the Gothic, adaptation, and popular culture studies. She has recently published articles and chapters on biofiction, for instance, "Biofiction and the Neo-Victorian Crime Novel: The Case of the Brontës" in *The Palgrave Handbook of Neo-Victorianism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024); "Queering the female writer in screen biofictions: *Daphne* (2007) and *Shirley* (2020)" in *Neohelicon* (2024), and "Queer heritage and strategic humour in recent screen biofictions of Emily Dickinson," co-written with Dr Anna Gutowska and published in *Neo-Victorian Studies* in 2024. She is currently working on a number of neo-Victorian projects, including a monograph on heterochronic spaces in neo-Victorian media and an article on biographemes of

Edgar Allan Poe in comic books. She has also been a convenor of the online lecture series *Neo-Victorian Television* (2024).



## Keynote Speaker

**Dom Ford**

### **Mytholudics: Games and Myth**

#### **Abstract:**

Games make meaning both as myth and *through* myth. *Mytholudics* is a framework for analysing games in this way. Myth is a term with a storied history. Here, I understand it through Roland Barthes' assertion that myth is not a thing, an object, or a genre of story, but a *way* of expressing meaning. This allows us to see how discourse everywhere – not just in narratives – and everywhen – not only in ancient times as something we have 'moved beyond' – operates mythically.

Mytholudics couples this with Frog's *mythic discourse analysis*, a modern folklore approach to laying out more concretely how "integers" of mythic discourse amongst a group come together in a particular time. The result is something which can account for stories, but also more disconnected, dispersed and fragmentary, but no less important, mythic constructions, like singular events, superstitions, taboos, social relations, and so on. "When myths are defined as stories, we may see stories where there are none," Frog warns (2018, p. 10). Instead, we should see myths as *models for understand the world and things in it*.

Mytholudics adapts mythic discourse analysis for the study of games, taking into account games' *virtuality* – that they are neither real nor wholly fictional, but worlds be can act within – *nonlinearity* – that games are often experienced nonlinearly and nonprescriptively both in terms of space and time – and *performativity* – that games are played and so approaching them as a static artefact is not enough, we must also approach them as performances. Because gameworlds are emulated worlds, they produce meaning both *through* myth, in that they inevitably draw on 'real-world' myths in their constructions, and as myth, in that they are worlds in themselves with their own internal logics, relations, histories and meanings.

In this keynote, I lay out what mytholudics is and how you can use it. I do this through examples of how Victorian and American myths inform and constitute the gameworlds we inhabit.

#### **Bio-note:**

**Dom Ford** is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Bremen, where he is a part of the Media and Religion lab in the ZeMKI Centre for Media, Communication and Information Research. His current research focuses on how communities in digital games are formed, maintained and negotiated between players and

developers. He also works on worldbuilding and mythmaking in digital media more broadly. His first book, *Mytholudics: Games and Myth* will be published with De Gruyter in 2025. Dom is also an editor for the diamond open access journals *gamevironments* and *Eludamos*, for which he has been longlisted for the Enter Open Access 2024 Award in the 'Young Talent' category. For more, see [domford.net](http://domford.net).



Alexis F. Viegas

## The Hard-Boiled Detective as American Hero in *L.A. Noire*

### Abstract:

This paper explores how the core traits of the hard-boiled detective, as an embodiment of the American hero, have been reinterpreted and adapted in *L.A. Noire* (McNamara 2011). The evolution of the hard-boiled detective as an American hero has its roots in the Western cowboy, the Frontier Myth, and American Individualism (Kollmitzer 2010). This detective inherits the isolation, individualism, and moral ambiguity of the Western hero, navigating a new type of frontier—the city—as a cowboy adapted to urban life (Fiedler 1960). However, hard-boiled fiction also presents key criticisms of American society (Petty 2014). In this sense, the hard-boiled detective operates on two levels: the mythic and the mythopoetical (Bauer, Balter, and Hunt 1978). On the mythical level, this figure appears to reinforce certain notions of individualism and vigilante justice. On the mythopoetical level, the detective’s social and affective isolation, as well as his inability to bring a lasting and stable order provide clear criticisms of the aforementioned American myths. This detective has had many contemporary echoes, and *L.A. Noire* emerges as a pertinent successor to this tradition. The game’s *film noir* traits and inspirations have been studied (Collins 2024; Hakimi 2016; Ivănescu 2015; Simpson 2012), but its literary influences remain ignored thus far. As such, this paper examines how the core characteristics of the literary hard-boiled detective as American hero have been adapted in *L.A. Noire*. For this purpose, I will analyze Cole Phelps’s, the game’s protagonist, journey facing systemic and police corruption in Los Angeles, while drawing a comparison with Raymond Chandler’s Philip Marlowe in *The Long Good-bye* ([1953] 2010). This study underscores the role of videogame crime fiction in understanding the enduring relevancy of the genre’s traditions and sociocultural critiques.

### Bio-note:

**Alexis F. Viegas** is a PhD candidate in Comparative Studies (FLUL) with a project on crime fiction in videogames, as well as an FCT scholarship holder (2024.04205.BD) and a member of the Centre for Comparative Studies (CEComp-FLUL). He holds an MA in Comparative Studies (FLUL) with a thesis on narratology and affective engagement in videogames titled “Analepsis and The Theatrics of Empathy in The Last of Us: Part II.” He holds a BA in Languages, Literatures, and Cultures from the same institution. In 2022, he co-organized the conference “[Nosferatu: 100 Anos de Terror](#),” and has co-edited the resulting, homonymous anthology (Edições Húmus, 2023). Currently, he is (co)editor-in-chief for the scientific journal [estrema](#). His areas

of interest include videogame and intermedia studies, comparative literature, and speculative fiction.

**Diogo Oliveira**

**Pikachu, the Lightning American: The Americanization of *Pokémon*  
in the West by Nintendo America and Europe**

**Abstract:**

In 1999, after dominating Japan, Game Freak's new product *Pokémon* took the West by storm, becoming the world's highest-grossing media franchise of 2023. However, this could only be achieved with the U.S. and Nintendo America's approval. While *Pokémon* products are distributed through trading card games, toys, anime, and film, the video game remains the franchise's centerpiece. Firstly, this paper analyses how *Pokémon*'s slogan 'Gotta Catch 'em All,' was a textbook for the American capitalist market of overconsumption. Secondly, this study focuses on the video game itself and how it wasn't suitable for Nintendo America and had to be edited to fit Western cultural paradigms, with the company removing the video game's cultural odor. More specifically, this paper argues how translation was handled in the first generation of *Pokémon*, with the introduction of American imagery, Americana, pop culture, and Western gender roles. It was also subject to censorship about how the West dealt with Eastern religious figures who were present in the game. Lastly, this paper studies how Nintendo America dominated key areas of video game distribution worldwide, like the *Pokémon* World Video Game Championship, by hosting most of its events in the U.S. and pushing Japan away from the spotlight from the early 2000s and how that changed the game: for instance, while the first four generations saw the game being set in Japan, from the fifth generation onwards, all of the game's titles took place in the West.

**Keywords:** *Pokémon*, American studies, Video Games studies, Translation studies.

**Bio-note:**

**Diogo Oliveira** is a researcher associated with CETAPS in the field of Anglo-American studies. He obtained his master's degree in Anglo-American studies at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto after presenting a thesis on Philip Roth's American Pastoral, titled "Masculine Paradigms, Revolutionary Women and the Feminine Mystique: History and Gender in *American Pastoral*," in 2023. As

an undergraduate, from 2020 to 2021, he wrote about music, cinema, and literature for the Portuguese newspaper *Espalha-Factos*. In 2023, he was published in *Via Panorâmica*. In 2024, he presented papers at the University of Lille and the Technical University Dortmund in the fields of tourism studies and videogames studies, respectively. He also participated in CETAP'S IX Relational Forms, presenting a paper titled "I need you to write a book, Nathan": The Importance of Books When Writing Personal and National History in Philip Roth's *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*." He currently works as an English teacher and form tutor at Escola Profissional de Comércio Externo (EPCE) in Porto, helping marginalized students have a better future.

**Eliana Isabella Radu**

**The Steampunk Gentleman and the Neo-Victorian Hero:  
Refashioning Victorian Masculinity in Video Games**

**Abstract:**

This paper delves into the re-imagination and subversion of the Victorian archetype of the gentleman within video games, with a particular focus on the steampunk genre. The Victorian era's notion of the gentleman, characterized by personal improvement and conservative social allegiance, is revitalized and transformed in the digital landscapes of games such as the "Dishonored" series (Arkane Studios), "BioShock Infinite" (Irrational Games), "Bloodborne" (FromSoftware), the "Fallen London" series (Failbetter Games), and "Lies of P" (Round8 Studio). These games blend traditional Victorian elements with futuristic technology and dark fantasy, creating a distinctive aesthetic that critiques and challenges historical gender norms.

By analyzing character development, narrative structures, and visual design, this paper examines how these games deconstruct the myth of the gentleman. Protagonists in these games often grapple with issues of morality, power, and social hierarchy, reflecting contemporary concerns about masculinity and identity. For instance, "Bloodborne" offers a grim interpretation of Victorian ideals through its gothic horror elements, while "Lies of P" reinterprets the classic story of Pinocchio within a steampunk setting, exploring themes of identity, deceit, and the pursuit of humanity. The "Fallen London" series, with its intricate world-building and deep narrative choices, provides a rich tapestry for examining the complexities of Victorian societal structures and personal identity.

Furthermore, this paper discusses how these games utilize procedural rhetoric to engage players in the critique of Victorian values, encouraging them to question the sustainability and relevance of such ideals in modern society. Through a detailed examination of game mechanics and storytelling, this paper aims to illuminate the ongoing cultural dialogue between Victorian myths and contemporary digital media. The inclusion of diverse game examples highlights the versatility with which video games address and reinterpret historical archetypes, making them a potent medium for cultural reflection and critique.

**Keywords:** steampunk; Victorian masculinity; video games; Dishonored; BioShock; Bloodborne; Fallen London; Lies of P; gender norms; narrative structures; visual storytelling; neo-Victorian.

**Bio-note:**

**Eliana Isabella Radu** is the Head of the Department of PR, Marketing, Cultural Projects, and Museum Education at the Bucharest Municipality Museum. She holds a BA in Film and Creative Writing from the University of Essex and an MA in Intercultural Management from the University of Bucharest, combining a unique blend of creative and analytical expertise in her professional practice. Her responsibilities encompass managing public relations, marketing, and educational initiatives, as well as promoting the museum's cultural heritage.

Her lifelong passion for video games significantly enhances her academic and professional pursuits. Her proficiency in film production and post-production, developed during her studies at the University of Essex, complements her comprehensive understanding of media studies and intercultural communication. In her role at the Bucharest Municipality Museum, she employs her creative and managerial skills to engage diverse audiences through innovative cultural projects.

In addition to her work at the museum, Eliana is an accomplished translator and editor proficient in English, French, and Romanian. She adapts scholarly articles for various publications, contributing to the dissemination of research across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Her extensive experience in cultural projects and her linguistic abilities underscore her dedication to fostering intercultural dialogue and understanding.

Eliana's academic background and professional experience uniquely position her to explore the intersections of Victorian and American myths in video games. Her insights into neo-Victorianism, steampunk aesthetics, and digital media narratives represent an advantage in furthering research on how contemporary video games reinterpret and subvert historical archetypes.

**Eren İleri**

**Working for the Factory: Planetary Colonization and the Imagination of  
Outer Space in  
Construction and Management Simulation Games**

**Abstract:**

The relationship between digital games and outer space is as old as the medium. Many pioneering digital games had thematically featured outer space settings and mechanics, and science fiction was frequently a strong influence. Today, numerous games in the construction and management simulation genre pick imagined outer space environments as in-game surroundings. Many of those games reuse and employ existing ideas of prevalent space exploration myths as their core narrative and gameplay property.

This paper analyzes the digital game *Factorio* (Wube Software, 2020). The factory-building game *Factorio* aptly exemplifies the relationship between the player and the fictional alien planet in ludic outer space with automation-centered gameplay. The game influences player immersion and engagement with planetary colonization themes. It introduces self-reflective elements through gameplay mechanics like “pollution,” prompting players to consider the ethical consequences of their ludic outer space colonization actions and adopt seemingly greener practices, highlighting the transgressive acts of the player (Jorgensen & Karlsen, 2019).

*Factorio* frames the factory as a living entity, contrasting it with “lifeless” indigenous life. This idea of the factory as an all-important automaton emphasizes the depiction of outer space devoid of life, reinforcing the myth of human moral superiority in seeding life in the universe (Westfahl, 1997). Unsurprisingly, Silicon Valley CEOs such as Tobias Lütke and Elon Musk mention the game with high regard.

The game ideologically positions itself at the “manifest destiny” logic of space exploration that stems from the history of American settler colonialism. Paradoxically, these games remove the human player from the center, granting agency to the automated factory and constituting a posthuman entity with the player and the factory. This perspective justifies virtual colonization, positioning the factory as the main subject. Ultimately, the player becomes a tool in maintaining the factory’s successful operation, illustrating a dislocation of human agency in these game worlds.

**Bio-note:**

**Eren İleri**, Mag. art., is a researcher and artist. His current research interest lies in the images of disembodied masculinities in the context of the cultural production of

outer space in science fiction digital games. He is a Ph.D. student at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and a former DOC fellow at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Contact: [erenileri@posteo.net](mailto:erenileri@posteo.net) / <https://erenileri.info>.

**Erick Verran**

### **Nomai, Zonai, Dwemer: Gaming's Ancient Civilizations as Pagan Allegory**

#### **Abstract:**

During the prologue to *The Legend of Zelda: Link Between Worlds*, Link is greeted by the virginal, well-spoken Seres, daughter of the kingdom's high priest, and a kindhearted gravedigger named Dampé. Just as the storyworld itself will be divided into Hyrule and its benighted opposite, Lorule, Seres's introductory contrast with Dampé, one of the franchise's minor recurring characters, makes legible an archetypal split between the saintly and the monstrous. Beyond essentialist caricatures of sociocultural difference, however, videogame narratives have time and again turned to the dichotomy of the hero chosen by God and the pre-Christian, pagan other for their conflicts. Thinly veiled and typically quasi-medieval in setting, these cartoonish scenarios are also not exclusive of mechanistic utopian fantasies. Like with the subterranean Dwemer, an extinct race of dwarves whose metallurgic works can be found throughout Bethesda's *Elder Scrolls* series, in recent years two thematically distinct games—*Outer Wilds* and the latest *Zelda* title, *Tears of the Kingdom*—each base their fictional histories on mysterious, scientifically advanced societies whose ancient technology has survived to benefit some latter-day protagonist. Thus, while *Outer Wilds*' Nomai and *Tears of the Kingdom*'s Zonai each feature as a race of bipedal, three-eyed anthropomorphic goats, both the futurist cosmonauts who populate *Outer Wilds* and Link, Hyrule's Christ-like savior locked in an endless battle against evil incarnate, can be seen to embody an optimistic present fighting against gnostic forces of the deep past. Drawing upon alterity studies, comparative mythology, and the technological sublime, this article attempts to understand the many recurrent, allegorical uses of paganism in videogames.

#### **Bio-note:**

**Erick Verran** is the author of *Obiter Dicta* (Punctum Books, 2021) and a PhD candidate at the University of Utah. His research appears in *Game Studies*, *Press Start*,

the *Journal of Gaming and Virtual Worlds*, *Postmodern Culture*, and the *Journal of Sound and Music in Games*. He is also a poet and literary critic.

**Giorgi Razmadze**

**The Waste Labor and the Capitalist Mythology in Total Refusal's *Hardly Working***

**Abstract:**

This paper explores *Hardly Working* (2022), a machinima film by the Austrian collective Total Refusal, as a critical intervention into the labor dynamics of digital gaming environments. Total Refusal, known for repurposing video game engines to create politically charged audiovisual works, uses *Hardly Working* to recontextualize the roles of non-playable characters (NPCs) in open-world video games. Rather than focusing on the primary gameplay experience, the film shifts attention to NPCs whose repetitive, menial tasks embody the unseen labor that sustains these virtual worlds. By doing so, the collective critiques the capitalist logic embedded in both gaming structures and broader societal attitudes toward work.

Drawing from media theory, labor studies, and critical game studies, this paper argues that *Hardly Working* functions as an aesthetic and theoretical meditation on the precarity and invisibility of labor. The film's deliberate re-framing of NPCs as laboring subjects—stripping them of their traditional roles as functional background elements—creates a space for reflection on the alienation inherent in contemporary digital economies. Additionally, the machinima format, which appropriates in-game footage and modifies it for cinematic storytelling, embodies an act of resistance against the commodification of gaming as a purely consumer-driven medium.

Through a detailed analysis of the film's visual language, narrative strategies, and ideological underpinnings, the paper situates *Hardly Working* within the broader context of Total Refusal's oeuvre, which consistently interrogates the intersections of technology, power, and representation. The film is based on the popular game *Red Dead Redemption 2*, the story of which takes place in the American frontier of the early 20th century. The Austrian collective explores early capitalism, which has merged with the myth of the frontier, which is the main mythology of this country. Labor exploitation and slavery are justified even today by this mythology. Therefore, this study illuminates how *Hardly Working* destabilizes conventional distinctions



between play, work, and art, inviting viewers to reconsider the labor politics not only of gaming but of digital culture at large.

**Bio-note:**

**Giorgi Razmadze** holds a PhD in Arts and is the former Editor-in-Chief of *Kin-O*, the magazine of the Georgian National Film Center. He also served as the invited Editor-in-Chief of *Filmprint* magazine. Currently, he works as a researcher at the Dimitri Janelidze Scientific-Research Institute at Shota Rustaveli Theater and Film Georgia State University, where he is also a visiting lecturer. His primary focus is on the theory and history of cinema, with a special interest in experimental cinema and new media. Giorgi is also a lecturer at multiple universities. He has presented papers at approximately 25 conferences, both locally and internationally, and has published a similar number of scientific articles. His work includes two monographs, co-authorship of a textbook, and co-editing a collection publication. He has been on the Editorial Board of the Scientific Journal of Shota Rustaveli Theater and Film State University of Georgia. He was also invited as a jury member to various film festivals in Georgia and abroad.

**Ines Munker**

**Gentlewomen, Fallen Men and Caged Birds: Playing with Victorian Myths in  
*Assassin's Creed: Syndicate***

**Abstract:**

Emphasising the “interplay between self-reflexivity and immersion” (Boehm-Schnittker and Gruss 15), the neo-Victorian project allows us to consider a diverse array of creative works from the vast pool of “transmedia storytelling” that (re)constructs Victorian myths (Jenkins 96). The immersive and interactive properties innate to video games allow the medium to transform familiar cultural narratives into something tangible, a world the player can traverse and interact with through surrogate characters. *Assassin's Creed: Syndicate's* unique approach to immersion through a multi-layered player embodiment renders the “critical interface between the past and present” central to neo-Victorian media tangible for its audience (Kohlke 1).

Adapting Espen Aarseth's “allegories of space” (“Allegories” 169), I explore the value of video games as allegories of history; as a virtual “simultaneity of stories-so-far”

(Massey 12). In addition to “ludoforming” Victorian London (Aarseth, “Ludoforming” 128), *Assassin’s Creed: Syndicate* creates a self-reflexive in-between space by implementing an “implied character” as a vessel for a critical re-evaluation of Victorian mythology (Aarseth and Karhulahti 269). Employing a multimodal perspective, I analyse how *Assassin’s Creed: Syndicate* uses text, sound, image, and procedural rhetoric to go beyond popular myths of private and public spheres, the Angel in the House, the fallen woman, the gentleman, the dandy, and Carlyle’s Captains of Industry. Through an alternating gendered perspective, the player co-constructs a neo-Victorian narrative that comments on an array of issues connected to these myths, such as women’s education, marriage and motherhood, male rivalries, queer identities and father-son relationships during the industrial revolution. Ultimately, persisting myths of Victorian femininity and masculinity are displaced and re-emerge as imaginations of self-sufficient gentlewomen and fallen men, which, in the fashion of other neo-Victorian narratives are coloured by contemporary ideas and thus reveal just as much about the Victorians as they do about their lingering influence on our twenty-first-century identities.

**Bio-note:**

**Ines Munker** (she/they) is a graduate researcher based in Vienna, Austria. With a Bachelor of Arts in English and American Studies and Intercultural German Studies from the University of Bayreuth (Germany) and a recently completed Master of Arts in Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at the University of Vienna, she aims to pursue doctoral studies focusing on gender, queer and disability studies in video games and gaming culture. Their research interests include video games and interactive storytelling, intermediality and adaptation, gender and queer studies, children’s and YA literature, and popular culture and fan studies.

**Marc Bonner**

**From the Crystal Palace to US National Parks  
A Critical Study towards the American Southwest and Mountain States  
as World-Shaped Hall in Rural Open World Games**

**Abstract:**

In this talk I’ll address the architectonics of rural open world games using adaptations of physical-real iconic places of US federal states and their ecological as well as

ideological implications (Bonner 2023). First, open-world games will be defined as *world-shaped halls* (Bonner 2021, 2023) in reference to both, the structural properties of the *Crystal Palace* and philosopher Sloterdijk's critical remarks on the geo-political implications of said building as embodiment of Victorian imperialism (2013; Asendorf 2017). By bringing distant colonial places into one place for mass consumption, the *Crystal Palace* is the architecture of an ideally industrialised realm embodying the spirit of globalised trade and imperial power.

Grasping open world games as *world-shaped halls* leads to six properties critically revealing five topics: (a) the ways physical-real places are distilled and recombined in order to function as a non-linear entertainment environment in tradition of landscape gardens and national parks; (b) the aesthetic and game-mechanical role of nature and climate in context of compensating for a wilderness long lost and the player's agency; (c) the ideological and ecological implications of such game worlds using iconic natural landscapes of physical reality which in turn originally served to create national identity; (d) the differential of power between player-induced actions and meaning making and developer-induced guidance systems and governing strategies; (e) that the player's agency is rooted both in the imperialist courses of action and in the nomad/war machine's mode of action in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari (1987).

The definition as a *world-shaped hall* provides insights into how open-world games like the *Horizon-series*, *Rider's Republic*, *Red Dead Redemption 2* or *Far Cry 5* recombine and reshape iconic places of the American Southwest and Mountain States and what meaning they generate. In such a way, the talk will intertwine American and Victorian myths in context of creating nation identity and consolidating imperial power.

**Keywords:** Open world games, world-shaped hall, Crystal Palace, US National Parks, landscape theory, game design, imperialism, Sloterdijk, Deleuze & Guattari

**Bio-note:**

**Dr. Marc Bonner** is a substitute professor for history and theory of media at the study program Virtual Design at the University of Applied Sciences Kaiserslautern. He graduated in art history, history of the modern age and information science from Saarland University. From 2017 to 2022 he led the research project "*Open World Structures: Architecture, City- and Natural Landscape in Computer Games*" which was funded by the German Research Foundation. From 2013 to 2017 he was a lecturer at the Department of Media Culture and Theatre at University of Cologne. Prior to that he was a lecturer for Art History at Saarland University. His research interests include the spatiotemporal depiction and use of architecture, cityscapes and natural landscapes in computer games as well as the very architectonics of game space itself. He addresses transdisciplinary connections between architecture, film and

computer games by incorporating disciplines such as philosophy, landscape theory, production studies and anthropogeography. Email: [marc.bonner@hs-kl.de](mailto:marc.bonner@hs-kl.de) / [marcbonner@web.de](mailto:marcbonner@web.de).

**María Teresa DePaoli**

**From Seneca to Modern Mexico: Colloquialism, Tragedy, and the Ludic Camera in Arturo Ripstein and Paz Alicia Garciadiego's Adaptation of *Medea***

**Abstract:**

In *Así es la vida* [*Such is Life*] (2000), director Arturo Ripstein and screenwriter Paz Alicia Garciadiego embrace an innovative and ludic approach to filmmaking, blending digital camera technology with creative dialogue construction to transform the narrative. The film is an adaptation of Seneca's *Medea*, but Ripstein and Garciadiego subvert classical conventions to reflect modern Mexican realities. Ripstein's use of a digital camera for the first time in his career, allows for fluidity, mobility, and spontaneity, creating dynamic, continuous shots that break free from traditional cinematic limitations. The camera itself becomes a character in the film, interacting directly with both actors and the audience, blurring the lines between reality and fiction. This playful relationship between the camera and the characters reflects Garciadiego's playful approach to dialogue, which is fluid, colloquial, and experimental.

Garciadiego's screenplays are known for their focus on colloquialism, which she describes as the "blood transfusion to dialogue." Her use of everyday language, neologisms, rhythm, and rhetorical devices gives her work a distinctive voice. In *Así es la vida*, this focus on the colloquial adds depth to the characters and their emotional worlds, creating a complex, modern narrative that subverts the traditional form of Seneca's tragedy.

The film reimagines the Greek chorus an active participant in the story, with a dynamic presence that interacts with the characters and their inner struggles. By integrating both the digital camera as character and colloquialism in the dialogue, Ripstein and Garciadiego emphasize the tension between high cultural forms and the everyday realities of lower-class Mexican life. Through its whimsical and experimental approach, *Así es la vida* challenges cinematic conventions, offering a playful yet profound commentary on modern Mexican identity by adapting Seneca's tragedy to a contemporary context.

**Bio-note:**

**Dr. María Teresa DePaoli** is Professor of Spanish at Kansas State University. She received her doctorate degree in Spanish Literature and Culture from Purdue University in 2001. Her research focuses on Latin American & Latine Literature and Culture, Mexican film, women writing and screenwriting studies. Dr. DePaoli has published peer-reviewed articles in academic journals such as *Letras Femeninas*, *Inter-Disciplinary Press*, and *Palgrave Macmillan*. Her monograph, *The Mexican Screenplay: A Study of the Invisible Genre, and Interviews with Women Screenwriters* was published in 2014 by Peter Lang International Academic Publishers. She is coeditor of *Las guionistas: A Bilingual Anthology of Mexican Women Screenwriters* (2017). Bilingual Press/Editorial Bilingüe. Arizona State UP. Dr. DePaoli is also co-editor with Floyd Merrell of the second edition of *Las culturas y civilizaciones latinoamericanas* (2017). Her current research project, focused on the creative process of Mexican screenwriter Paz Alicia Garciadiego, is expected to be published in 2027.

**Maria João Brito**

***“Come, Watson! The Game is Afoot!”***

**Sherlock Holmes – An Adventure in Videogames**

**Abstract:**

One of the most famous fictional characters in criminal literature, Sherlock Holmes, made his debut in 1887, in the detective novel *A Study in Scarlet*. Since then, the detective, created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930), has been depicted in various forms around the world, including video games.

In the first part, we will delve into the sociocultural context of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, which align with the timeline of the Sherlock Holmes canon. The next section will focus on video games centered around Sherlock Holmes. Since 1984, Sherlock Holmes has been adapted for various platforms, starting with the text adventure game “Sherlock” for Spectrum and Commodore by Beam Software, and continuing until 2023 with “Ms. Holmes: The Case of the Dancing Men” for Windows and macOS by Elephant Games. The Victorian myth of Sherlock Holmes has continually evolved to meet the challenge of adaptation.

The presentation aims to explore how Sherlock Holmes has influenced the video game industry, as an iconic character who has crossed time and space boundaries.

**Bio-note:**

**Maria João Brito** is a Ph.D. student in Modern Literatures and Cultures at NOVA University of Lisbon. She holds a Master's degree in English and North American Studies at NOVA University of Lisbon with a dissertation about the effect of Jack the Ripper's crimes in the Portuguese press and on the cultural panorama. She also holds a BA in Languages, Literatures, and Cultures in the field of English and Portuguese Studies from the same institution. Her main field of interests centers predominantly on Anglophone Studies. Her current research focuses on female scientist characters in Portuguese and English-speaking fictional narratives (from the 19th to the 21st century). She is also interested in Anglo-Portuguese Relations, Women Studies, Mystery Fiction and Anglophone Culture from the Victorian Era to Interwar Years.

**Mariano Falzone****“Death Is a Mercy”: The American Monomyth of the Superhero in 2005's *The Punisher* Video Game****Abstract:**

Debuting in 1974, the creation of Marvel Comics' character of the Punisher was influenced by vigilante violence fictions such as the film *Dirty Harry* (Don Siegel, 1971) and Don Pendleton's *The Executioner* book series (1969 onwards). In the early 2000s, the character had a resurgence in popularity, kickstarted by the critically acclaimed comic book run from Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon. This popularity reached its high point in 2004, with the release of *The Punisher*, a film directed by Jonathan Hensleigh and starring Thomas Jane. The following year a video game of the same name was released by the studio Volition, which saw Jane reprising the title role and Ennis collaborating in its writing. The comic books of the early 2000s and the film, with its incorporation of motifs and iconography from classic Western films, have been described by scholar Lorrie Palmer as “revisionist superhero Western” (2007).

This presentation begins with a brief history of the character's creation and its first high point of transmedia popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The study then focuses on *The Punisher* video game from 2005 through the conceptual framework developed by John Shelton Lawrence and Robert Jewett in *The Myth of the American Superhero* (2002) and the game's transmedia interplay with the comic books and the film of the early 2000s to analyse in what ways the American

monomyth is reinforced and subverted in these media texts. Furthermore, as the Punisher interacts with other superheroes of the Marvel universe, his potential as a satire and critique of the comic book superhero narrative is considered, as he takes its basic vigilante characteristics to its extreme, crossing the line (the frontier, as it may) and killing, something most other superheroes are averse to do.

**Bio-note:**

**Mariano Falzone** holds a degree in Filmmaking and Audiovisual Arts, which he obtained from the Universidad del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, in Argentina, his home country, in 2014. In 2019 he moved to Lincoln, UK, where he has been living and working at a video game company for the last five years. He is currently doing an MA on Research on Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Lincoln. His dissertation focuses on the history of video games based on superhero comics from the US. In addition, as a video game designer, he has been part of the indie project Orbis Tertius Games. He has developed and published five titles within the context of this project.

**Nicole Koenigsknecht**

**(Re)Mapping the Myth of the American West in *The Oregon Trail* (2021) and *When Rivers Were Trails* (2019)**

**Abstract:**

Since the mid-1970s, various editions of *The Oregon Trail*, originally developed by the Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium (MECC), have been a staple in classrooms across the United States. Dropped into the year 1848, players take on the role of an emigrant attempting to make the arduous covered wagon journey westward from Independence, Missouri to Oregon Territory. Despite its popularity as an educational tool, critics have been vocal about the game's racist, inaccurate, and one-dimensional depictions of Indigenous people(s). While working on the latest version of *The Oregon Trail* (2021), developers at Gamesoft consulted Native American scholars in an attempt to create more culturally sensitive representations of Indigenous characters. One of the first loading screens encountered during gameplay even states that “[f]or Indigenous Peoples, westward expansion was not an adventure but an invasion.” The same loading screen goes on to highlight that, in its new iteration, the game now includes Native American playable characters.



Despite these attempts at integrating nuanced Indigenous perspectives, *The Oregon Trail* remains faithful to its original premise: players retrace again and again an expansionist journey into the mythic American West. In contrast, *When Rivers Were Trails* (2019), developed in collaboration with the Indian Land Tenure Foundation and Michigan State University's GEL Lab, confronts the impact of settler colonization from an exclusively Indigenous point of view. Players maneuver as an Anishinaabeg who is displaced from their traditional territory in the 1890s. Without state borders, in-game maps force players to orient themselves primarily around waterways and reservation lands. Attempts at hunting, fishing, trading, gifting, and participating in resistance take players on a non-linear, self-determined path. As this analysis demonstrates, *When Rivers Were Trails* ultimately subverts settler-colonial narratives about and emotional affiliation with American westward expansion fostered for decades by *The Oregon Trail*.

**Bio-note:**

**Nicole Koenigsknecht** is settler scholar originally from the territory of The Three Fires Confederacy, the place now known as Michigan, who lives and works in Switzerland. After completing a Master of Arts at the University of Vienna, she recently began a position as a research and teaching assistant to the Chair for American Literature and Culture at the University of Zurich. Her doctoral research focuses on contemporary North American Indigenous literatures. She is also an active member of the Emerging Scholars Forum of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-speaking Countries (GKS).

**Paolo D'Indinosante**

**The Myth of Oscar Wilde in Indie Video Games**

**Abstract:**

In *WILDE NOW: Performance, Celebrity and Intermediality*, Pierpaolo Martino (2023, 3) has recently argued that the present-day appeal of the legendary figure of Oscar Wilde lies in the relative ease with which his life and writing appear to 'translate into non-literary media', especially 'cinema, music and the visual arts'. My paper sets out to shift the focus of attention towards the video game medium, which is underexplored (to say the least) in Wilde studies, and contend that the continued Western popularity of Wilde and his oeuvre in the twenty-first century is both

exploited and amplified by indie video games such as *Brink of Consciousness: Dorian Gray Syndrome* (MagicIndie 2012), *Jennifer Wilde: Unlikely Revolutionaries* (Outsider Games 2022), *The Secret Life of Dorian Pink* (AmberLimShin 2023) and *OscarWildeCard* (Up Multimedia 2023). In this twenty-minute presentation, I intend to survey the diverse ways in which these modern video games contribute to Wilde's ongoing mythmaking as they variously appropriate and repurpose his name (*Brink of Consciousness; Dorian Pink*) and body (*Jennifer Wilde; OscarWildeCard*), as well as his best-known literary works, most notably the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891). Particular attention will be paid to the metamorphoses of the Victorian author in *Jennifer Wilde*, where his ghost becomes a playable character, and in *OscarWildeCard*, a 2D queer-themed single-player deck-building turn-based card battler where his influence as a queer icon substantially contributes to the meaning-making process because it is exercised over the interrelated audiovisual, narrative and ludic layers of the video game.

**Bio-note:**

**Paolo D'Indinosante** (<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9437-6639>) is completing his PhD in English Literatures, Language and Translation (curriculum in Literary and Cultural Studies) at Sapienza University of Rome, in cotutelle with the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. His doctoral dissertation focuses on British imperial poetry in the long nineteenth century. As well as modern and contemporary poetry, his other research interests currently include the Italian reception of the literary works of Rudyard Kipling and the intersections of literature (especially Victorian or Victorian-related literature) and video games. He is the author of published and forthcoming articles on Kipling's poetry and short fiction and on the representation/simulation of totalitarian regimes in video games. He sits on the steering committee of GamesLit (Games and Literary Theory Conference). He is also a member of DiGRA (Digital Games Research Association) and DiGRA Italia (Italian Digital Games Research Association).

## **Paweł Baran and Jakub Sadowski**

### ***Call of Duty: Black Ops* series (2010-present) as an anthology of Cold War myths**

#### **Abstract:**

The Cold War is a period commonly associated with global anxiety. It was the time of both Western and Eastern societies negotiating the threat of global destruction and entertaining concepts of nationalism and imperialism (Duara). It is in such time of chaos and discord that myths and legends are born. Stories of heroes or villains, goodness or atrocities can now be thought of as natural effects of wars. Cold War, despite being less overt and destructive than WW II, is no different. During the struggle between the global East and West, many conspiracy theories were born. They are now recognised as an element of American history by the academia, serving as a base for an entire encyclopaedia (see: "Conspiracy Theories in American History" ed. Peter Knight). Adopting Flood's definition of political myth as carrying "(...) the imprint of the assumptions, values, and goals associated with a specific ideology (...)" (42), one can safely say that conspiracy theories are myths. For example, the Red Scare, a conspiracy theory based on the fear of socialist infiltration (Voogd 610), is a product of the capitalist ideology and Western societies afraid of what comes from the East. These Cold War myths found fertile ground for adaptation in all sorts of media, including video games. One of the series that adapts Cold War myths is *Call of Duty: Black Ops*. Our paper serves to analyse the series as an anthology of these myths. We take an in-depth look at how Treyarch comprises and portrays the mythical elements of the global crisis in the world of covert black operations.

#### **Bio-note:**

**Paweł Baran** and **Jakub Sadowski** are both MA students at the University of Szczecin. In cooperation, they have delivered a paper on bibliographical difficulties in academic discourse on video games at a Polish Game Studies Conference in Katowice on November 6th, 2024. Both were part of the organising committee of the *Genre in new media* PGR/ECR Conference at University of Szczecin on November 18th and 19th, 2024. They have given papers during the conference, Baran's was on the contrast between gameplay and narrative in *INDIKA* (2024), Sadowski's was on transmediality of *Magic: The Gathering* card game. Emails: [230278@stud.usz.edu.pl](mailto:230278@stud.usz.edu.pl) (Paweł Baran), [224396@stud.usz.edu.pl](mailto:224396@stud.usz.edu.pl) (Jakub Sadowski).

**Ricardo Santana**

**“My legend will live forever! You cannot kill the Ripper! I will haunt men through time!”: O Mito de “Jack, o Estripador” e os Crimes de Whitechapel representados em *Assassin’s Creed Syndicate***

**Abstract:**

O infame assassino em série conhecido como “Jack, o Estripador” sempre ficou associado a um dos episódios mais chocantes da História de Inglaterra, sendo um dos principais suspeitos pelos crimes ocorridos na região de Whitechapel, em Londres. Devido ao sensacionalismo propagado pela imprensa do período vitoriano, os eventos ocorridos entre 1888 e 1891 elevaram o suposto autor dos homicídios a um estatuto mítico. Num período marcado pela Revolução Industrial, por uma rápida expansão urbana e pelo aprofundamento de desigualdades sociais, as notícias publicadas em torno destes assassinatos também intensificaram a imagem de extrema pobreza e de grande atividade criminal já associadas a Whitechapel.

Atualmente, “Jack, o Estripador” permanece representado como uma figura simbólica, misteriosa e violenta profundamente ligada à sociedade londrina do final do século XIX, sendo frequentemente analisado em diversos meios culturais, como na literatura, no cinema, na televisão, e mais recentemente, nos videogames. No DLC *Assassin’s Creed Syndicate: Jack the Ripper*, em que são incorporados temas centrais da franquia como as lutas pelo poder, resistência social e injustiças estruturais, a figura do “Estripador” é reimaginada num contexto fictício como um ex-membro da Irmandade dos Assassinos, focando-se na sua traição e declínio psicológico enquanto autor do assassinato de prostitutas que, no universo do jogo, também faziam parte da guilda inglesa. O objetivo desses atos era enfraquecer a Ordem e espalhar o terror entre os habitantes locais.

Esta investigação examina como o DLC adapta a lenda de “Jack, o Estripador” para fins narrativos, evidenciando os pontos de convergência e divergência em relação aos registos históricos e às interpretações modernas. igualmente, este estudo analisa de que forma são reforçadas ou desafiadas as construções sociais e simbólicas da Era Vitoriana, bem como a sua permanência na cultura contemporânea.

**Keywords:** *Assassin’s Creed Syndicate*; Jack, o Estripador; Mistérios de Whitechapel; Era Vitoriana; Reinterpretação Narrativa.

**Bio-note:**

**Ricardo Alexandre Fonseca Santana** é doutorando em História Medieval pela FLUL desde 2020, desenvolvendo a tese intitulada “«Passar e levar destes nossos

*regnos per mar ou por terra»: O Comércio de Portugal na Ibéria (1385-1495)”. Os seus interesses de investigação abrangem a História Comercial, Económica, Financeira e Social em Portugal, Representação Histórica nas Artes e Escatologia Medieval e Moderna. Participou em diversos eventos científicos e é autor, em 2022, do artigo “Christian and Muslim mentalities during the Third Crusade in Acre, Damascus, and Jerusalem, represented in Assassin’s Creed”, no âmbito da conferência *The Middle Ages in Modern Games: Twitter Conference*. Em 2024, organizou o evento *Thesis Break: IV Encontro de Doutorandos do CH-ULisboa*. Desde 2022, é investigador no CH-ULisboa, integrando o grupo *Culturas e Sociedades de Encontro e o Programa de Estudos Fazenda*. Desde 2024, tornou-se colaborador do Núcleo de Estudantes de História da FLUL (NEH-FLUL).*

**Rita Barroso**

**A epidemia está-lhes no sangue: complexificação do mito vitoriano do vampiro no videojogo *Vampyr* (2018)**

**Abstract:**

A Época Vitoriana ficou culturalmente marcada pela revisitação de figuras góticas capazes de personificarem ansiedades coevas. Neste contexto, o mito do vampiro assume um lugar central, explorando temas ligados ao horror ao Outro, ao pânico do contágio epidémico e ao terror provocado pelo que é não-normativamente limiar. Explorado em obras como *Carmilla* (Le Fanu, 1822) ou *Dracula* (Stoker, 1897), o arquétipo do vampiro enquanto antagonista e vilão foi, também na contemporaneidade, recuperado por diversos filmes, livros, séries e jogos. No caso do videojogo *Vampyr* (2018) a questão é complexificada. A presente proposta terá como foco principal analisar o videojogo em epígrafe para compreender de que forma Jonathan Reid – o protagonista e avatar do(a) jogador(a) – personifica e desafia representações centenárias do vampiro, enraizadas no período vitoriano. Atentando, especialmente, na componente narrativa e na mecânica de escolhas morais que a impactam, procurar-se-á mostrar como o jogo oferece a possibilidade de o(a) jogador(a) interagir com a reinterpretação do mito de uma forma ativa e consequente, solidificando-o ou transgredindo-o. Explorar-se-á o horror derivado do medo das epidemias e a associação, consolidada na época previamente referida, entre a propagação de doenças altamente infecciosas, o contágio sanguíneo e a culpabilização dos desumanizados. Esta análise permitirá refletir sobre a interpretação de eventos catastróficos aparentemente cíclicos enquanto provocados ou acelerados por personagens vampirizadas que, não estando inteiramente mortas

nem vivas, se tornam prisioneiras da alternância entre repouso invisível e ação transgressora. Tais eventos exigem o envolvimento de uma figura cavaleiresca transfigurada que os possa travar; concomitantemente, requerem a interferência da ciência e da inovação. Em *Vampyr* (2018), o protagonista-jogador(a), sendo ele próprio um vampiro e um médico, terá de derrotar, física, científica e metaforicamente, a sua natureza monstruosa, recuperando o arquétipo vitoriano para o remodelar à luz dos eventos diegéticos e do paradigma contemporâneo.

**Bio-note:**

**Rita Barroso** é atualmente mestranda do Mestrado em Tradução e Serviços Linguísticos, na Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto (FLUP). Completou a licenciatura em História em 2021/2022 (FLUP) e é mestre em Estudos Literários, Culturais e Interartes (FLUP) com a dissertação “The Haunted Power of Suffering: Contemporary Revention of *Yūrei* in Junji Ito’s *Tomie* (1987-2000)”. Tem participado em colóquios e conferências nacionais e internacionais desde 2022. Trabalha como explicadora e tradutora, contando com uma obra literária integralmente traduzida por si (*No Primeiro Dia de Natal*, Faith Hogan, 2023). As suas principais áreas de investigação são a cultura japonesa, os estudos de folclore, a literatura, cinema e videojogos de horror/terror e os estudos de tradução.

**Rui Mateus**

**Mapping Middle-earth: Cartographic Adaptation in *The Lord of the Rings Online***

**Abstract:**

The aim of this paper is to examine the cartographic representation of Middle-earth in the massively multiplayer online role-playing game *The Lord of the Rings Online* (LOTRO) and assess its resemblance to the literary descriptions in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. By contrasting the game's map with the geographic and environmental details provided in Tolkien's narrative, this paper will explore how the game developers interpreted the detailed world of Middle-earth into an interactive digital landscape. The analysis will focus on important locations in regions such as the Shire, Eregion, Rohan, and Gondor, to assess how closely the terrain and landmarks match Tolkien's text.

Special attention will be given to the challenges of adapting a fictional world designed for storytelling into a functional game map. The paper will explore how *LOTRO* balances the need for geographic authenticity with gameplay considerations, such as the expansion of regions or the addition of areas not explicitly portrayed in the books. Furthermore, this work will consider how the immersive qualities of the game allow players to experience Tolkien's world beyond what is conveyed through the text, highlighting areas where the game expands upon or deviates from the source material, like Mirkwood or the Vales of Anduin.

By looking at a contemporary adaptation of a classic work, this paper will offer insight into the intersection of storytelling, geography, and interactive design, particularly the map that provides spatial orientation for the player and the audio-visual element that reinforces immersion into the game world.

**Bio-note:**

**Rui Mateus** is a PhD student of Modern Literatures and Cultures at NOVA University of Lisbon. He received a PhD scholarship in 2020 by the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) (2020.05334.BD) for his doctoral project on fantasy studies. He holds a Master's degree in Modern Literatures and Cultures at NOVA University of Lisbon with a dissertation on the categorization of fantasy literature. He also holds a BA in Languages, Literatures and Cultures in the field of English and Portuguese Studies from the same institution. Rui Mateus is a collaborator of the Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies, a member of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts, and a member of the Associação Portuguesa de Estudos Anglo-Americanos (APEAA). His research interests include the study of fantasy literature, science fiction, dystopian studies, English and North-American literature, classical mythology, space studies, and environmental literature.



**Sarah E. Beyvers**

**Video Games and Victorian Myths of Urban Contagion: Images of Nineteenth-Century Classed Oppression in Interactive Reworkings of Disease**

**Abstract:**

Neo-Victorian video games habitually play with images of contagion and disease. In their re-imagined Victorian cities, sickness appears as a marker of class, thereby functioning as a way of rendering poverty palpable in interactive urban spaces. This often reworks Victorian middle-class anxieties about proximity to the poor. Due to the rapidly accelerated growth of many cities in Britain, Victorian middle- and upper-class city-dwellers felt a distinctive closeness to working-class spaces, which made them uneasy – especially due to the perceived threat of physical (and moral) contagion (Dennis 247). As Stallybrass and White put it, in middle-class imagination, the Victorian slums opened “to let forth the thief, the murderer, the prostitute and the germs” (133). Contamination and contagion thus became two of the central tropes used to grasp the dynamics of city life (135). These tropes have found their way into a variety of neo-Victorian media. However, due to the interactivity and spatial explorability of video games, they are distinctly well-suited to negotiate them via the player character’s classed embodiment and their mobility in urban space.

My paper will explore how representations of city space in neo-Victorian games employ and criticise nineteenth-century middle-class anxieties and myths related to contagion. Using *Dishonored* (2012) and *Dishonored 2* (2016) as examples, I will show how games not merely copy Victorian images of disease and urban contagion but employ them critically instead in order to reflect on the mechanisms of classed oppression in the Victorian city. These games ask the player to examine these ideas through their interaction with and spatial exploration of the city, and they confront the player with their agency in the face of these issues. They become either empowered or disempowered, and players are therefore asked to reflect on their player character’s relationship to the status quo as well as on the consequences of their embodied presence in the city.

**Bio-note:**

**Sarah Beyvers** teaches British literature and culture at the University of Passau, Germany. Her research interests include neo-Victorianism, video game studies, fandom, and narratology. She has published articles on video game narratology, popular and fan culture, contemporary film as well as queer representation. Her PhD project is concerned with the role of spatial explorability and interactivity in video games that reimagine the Victorian age. In *Walk Like a Victorian: Neo-Victorian Video Games and Their Interactive Engagement with the Nineteenth Century* (working title)

she argues that the medium-specific properties of video games allow for the gamified and spatialised exploration of a reimagined Victorian past. Putting the 'play' back into neo-Victorian playfulness, Sarah Beyvers asserts that interactive exploration and ludic engagement constitute a neo-Victorian mode of their own.

**Slaven Lendić**

### **The Subversion of Victorian Morality in FromSoftware's *Bloodborne***

#### **Abstract:**

This presentation will focus on how there is a clear subversion of Victorian (and several other types of) morality in FromSoftware's gothic *Bloodborne* video game title. This type of ethical subversion is found through interaction with various „saveable“ NPCs (Non-Player Characters) throughout the game's storyline. *Bloodborne* takes place in the streets of gothic and Victorian-inspired city of Yharnam, which illustrates game's ethical tonality. Nearly ubiquitously, video game quests are based on altruistic assistance provided to certain NPCs which often produces a prize (e.g., retrieving a bottle of water for a wounded person, after which a prize or positive reinforcement is received). *Bloodborne* provides more than simply an interesting twist on this mechanic, with the mentioned mechanic being firmly established in RPG classics such as *Diablo* and *Borderlands* series. Notwithstanding the engaging dialogue and occasional morally grey quest outcomes in the above mentioned games, *Bloodborne* truly becomes a commentary on the Victorian (alongside other) morality systems. The Victorian values of adherence to duty and restraint are contrasted with highly erratic and unpredictable (thus perhaps more psychologically authentic?) actions of NPC survivors. Subversion of Victorian morality is embodied in the character of Ariana, a female prostitute – with prostitution being dubbed a „great social evil“ within Victorian morality. Interestingly, Ariana is actually the only survivor that is never hostile, manipulative nor physically or verbally violent towards the player's character. Such is not the case with all other „saveable“ human NPCs in the game, some of which turn out precariously antagonistic in unexpected ways. All of this suggests that *Bloodborne* is a critique of Victorian, and perhaps even Kantian morality – thus being more in tune with Nietzschean transvaluation of all values, or simply radically individualistic, with decision indissociable from the specific situation and circumstance.

**Bio-note:**

**Slaven Lendić**, PhD candidate (born in 1989, currently a PhD student at Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek). Currently living in Brussels, employed by the European Commission. Bachelor's and Master Degree in English Language and Literature (Translation studies) and Philosophy. Translated literary works of Veronica Roth (*Divergent* series), Lorna Byrne and Ajahn Brahm. Strong interest in digital humanities, game design, applied ethics, political theory and philosophy of law. Email: [slendic@gmail.com](mailto:slendic@gmail.com).

**Tamás Csöngé**

**Backrooms: The Cultural Analysis of a Digital Myth****Abstract:**

At the heart of the digital urban legend, internet myth, techno-cultural horror-meme of 'the backrooms' is an uncanny (Freud), labyrinthine, oppressive liminal space with yellow walls, flickering lights and endless corridors without windows, which we encounter when, by accident or inexplicable mistake, we are thrown out of our everyday environment into a dreamlike, surreal space outside of our reality. It is no coincidence that the concept is often derived from and related to the phenomenon in video games where the player is able to fly through or walk through walls ('no clipping') by means of a glitch or cheat code, gaining insight into forbidden areas and perceiving perspectives beyond the boundaries of the simulated world carefully constructed for the player. (Wiggins)

The present paper examines how this hypermediatized space, often described as a manifestation of the social unconscious (Stephen), is based on cultural patterns that can be explained by psychoanalytic concepts, and how the institutional system of popular culture has appropriated and subjected it to compulsive narrativization and genre schemas. The myth has captured the imagination of the internet creative community to an extraordinary degree: since the phenomenon was first described in a 2019 post on the anonymous forum 4chan, it has been the basis for numerous images, YouTube videos (Kane Parsons' short films), amateur and professional video games, and now A24 Studios has confirmed the production of a found footage horror feature film on the subject. The paper explores how representations of these deserted, abandoned, impersonal spaces with invisible existential threats evoke and mix technologies and aesthetics from different decades, draw on nostalgia for the 1980s and 1990s (Reynolds), and can be related to concepts such as Michel

Foucault's 'heterotopia', Marc Augé's idea of 'non-places', or Mark Fisher's 'haunthological condition'.

**Keywords:** backrooms; glitch; uncanny; found footage; retro.

**Bio-note:**

**Tamás Csöngé** is a senior lecturer at the University of Pécs (Hungary), Department of Film and Visual Studies. He is a member of The International Society for the Study of Narrative and the European Narratology Network. Working within the framework of rhetorical and classical narratology, he wrote his doctoral dissertation on the topic of perspectivation and character narration in film and has published on the topics of narrative complexity, film narratology and game studies in edited volumes and the journals *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae Film and Media Studies*, *Frontiers of Narrative Studies* and *Ekphrasis*. His other research interests include film theory, the theory of fictionality, and ideological aspects of contemporary popular culture. Email: [csongetamas@gmail.com](mailto:csongetamas@gmail.com).

**Thaís Vigas, Joel Faustino, e Luciano Moreira**

**The London Victorian Society Remediated: Mapping Characters in *Assassin's Creed Syndicate* through Digital Humanities**

**Abstract:**

This presentation explores how Ubisoft's videogame *Assassin's Creed Syndicate* (2015) represents and (re)signifies Victorian London through its spatial distribution of characters and background non-playable characters (NPCs). *Assassin's Creed* is a widely popular video game franchise with over 13 games released until now. It was inspired by the book *Alamut* (1938), by Slovenian writer Vladimir Bartol, being a product of intermedial relations from the start. As stated by Chądzyńska and Gotlib (2022), the world of video games and maps began to connect as early as in the 1960s. Beyond the game's primary plot, *Assassin's Creed Syndicate* offers an elaborate mapping of 1868 London's architecture, social dynamics, and cultural imagery—which the player has the freedom to explore—making it a valuable tool for examining representations of Victorian society through the lens of Digital Humanities. Inspired by the study *Emotions of London* (Heuser et al., 2016), which examined emotional associations with London's spatial geography in 19<sup>th</sup>-century novels, this study relies on Map Genie's interactive mapping tool and

conducts an original gameplay analysis to categorize characters based on gender, class, and age. Map Genie is designed to assist players in navigating the elaborate settings of virtual gaming worlds. It serves as a collaborative hub, allowing users to locate items, missions, characters, and other points of interest with precision. By analysing the visual and spatial distribution of characters and background NPCs, the research aims to explore how the game's representation of Victorian London reflects or challenges Victorian cultural myths, such as gender roles archetypes of men and women, and the stereotypical representation of children, with an intersectional perspective on class. We claim that the game's representation and (re)signification of 19<sup>th</sup>-century London and Victorian society is assisted by remediation processes in the sense of Grusin and Bolter (2000).

**Keywords:** remediation; map; Victorian society; assassin's creed syndicate; digital humanities.

**Bio-notes:**

**Thaís Barbedo Vidas** is from Salvador - Bahia, in the northeast of Brazil. She got her BA in English Language and Literature from the Federal University of Bahia in 2018, a specialization in Audiovisual Translation from Estácio de Sá University in 2021 and is currently enrolled in the second year of the MA in Translation and Language Services at the University of Porto. She is a translator and has signed the translation of many audiovisual products across streaming platforms into Brazilian Portuguese, as well as the localization of a video game entitled *Critter Cove*. She is currently a Junior Researcher in Anglo-American Studies at CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies). Her areas of interest include African American literature, audiovisual and intersemiotic translation, and intermediality. Email: [thaisbarbedo@gmail.com](mailto:thaisbarbedo@gmail.com).

**Joel Ramos Faustino** took a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Languages - Translation (English and German) at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. He is currently enrolled in the second year of the Master's Degree Program of Anglo-American Studies at that same faculty, for which he is currently writing a thesis on the role of magic in medieval fantasy literature. At the same time, he is working as a Junior Researcher in Anglo-American Studies at CETAPS (Centre for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies), where he has worked - among other projects - with the 'Great Utopians' database within the Utopia 500 project. His main interests include medievalism, fantasy literature and aesthetics. Email: [jorafastino@gmail.com](mailto:jorafastino@gmail.com).

**Luciano Moreira** was born in Porto in 1982. He received his PhD in Digital Media from the University of Porto in 2021. He studied at the University of Coimbra, where he got his degree in Psychology in 2005, and at the University of Porto, where he got his MSc in Psychology, in 2012. He is a researcher at the Faculdade de Letras da

Universidade do Porto, an integrated member of CETAPS and a collaborator of CIQUP. He coordinates the CETAPS Digital Laboratory. He teaches Research Methodologies in the Masters in Multimedia. He is a member of the Scientific Board of the International Joint PhD in Social Representations, Culture and Communication. His areas of interest include digital humanities, science communication, science and technology studies, social representations, and scientific research methods. Email: [lucianomoreira@letras.up.pt](mailto:lucianomoreira@letras.up.pt).

**Udbela Escanero**

### ***Disco Elysium's Existential Mythmaking***

#### **Abstract:**

In *Disco Elysium* (ZA/UM, 2019), a non-traditional role-playing video game written by Estonian novelist Robert Kurvitz, players take on the detective role within a murder investigation set in an impoverished seaside district called Martinaise. Drawing intermedial connections to cyberpunk literature and mirroring post-Soviet Estonia, the game explores values and identity in the aftermath of ideological collapse and physical destruction. Indeed, the political and historical allusions of the game, paired with its profoundly personal journey, create a rehearsal space with permeating mythic structures, repurposing Victorian myths whilst presenting spiritual creation and apocalyptic myths within an introspective dystopian landscape, with the game starting in 'primordial darkness' (Asimos, 2013). The game's mythic resonance is particularly transmitted through the "false hero" protagonist, who is affected by a fractured memory due to substance abuse and a broken society due to historical trauma (Aguirre, 2013).

The proposed presentation explores *Disco Elysium* as a site of existential mythmaking where players engage in archetypal narratives such as the Gothic decay of Victorian myth as well as fractured creation myths, incorporating themes of rebirth, death, and meaning (Botting, 2013; Ford, 2022). Supported by anthropomorphised skills, surreal-expressionist aesthetics, mythic metaphors, and complex decision-making, the game successfully challenges players to interrogate their values and beliefs through themes of failure, resilience and ownership (Sicart, 2009; Bogost, 2010; Möring, 2013). In doing so, *Disco Elysium* not only deconstructs traditional myths but also highlights how the function of myth can be existentially reimaged within a contemporary dystopian landscape. The presentation and its discussion will be pertinent in conceptualising further avenues of research,

especially in mythological readings of dystopian and post-apocalyptic games through the investigation of meaning-making and societal mythmaking, to adequately explore how game worlds reframe apocalyptic mythological symbols allowing the re-enactment of societal collapse and reconstruction (McLuhan, 1951; Barthes, 1972; Rosen, 2008).

**Bio-note:**

**Udbela Escanero** recently completed her MPhil in Digital Humanities at the University of Cambridge, where she investigated how reflective game experiences could be developed based on an existential framework within the world-making of deep games, such as *Disco Elysium*. She previously earned a BSc in Politics and Philosophy from the London School of Economics, where she examined the ontological and ethical dimensions of emerging virtual technologies in digital games. Educated in nine different countries, Udbela is fluent in English, German, French, Spanish and Chinese and has gained valuable insights from diverse social, cultural and academic contexts. Her multicultural background fuels her interest in civilisational and societal changes as viewed through game studies. Her research primarily focuses on existential play, moral decision-making, and mythic structures in video games. Currently, she is exploring video games as sites for ethical reflection and existential inquiry in today's techno-dominated Anthropocene.

**Valentina Romanzi**

**Dredging the Depths: (Re-)Playing Lovecraft's Mythos in *The Sinking City***

**Abstract:**

This paper claims that *The Sinking City* (Frogwares, 2019) can be understood as a mythopoeitic videoludic adaptation of H. P. Lovecraft's works, arguing that the game not only retrieves and preserves the Lovecraftian mythos but also expands and updates it, ensuring its continued relevance in contemporary culture. *The Sinking City* draws loosely from Lovecraft's stories, such as "The Shadow over Innsmouth" and "The Call of Cthulhu," while incorporating elements of the broader Cthulhu mythos. The game adapts Lovecraft's works on two levels: the diegetic, through its narrative and world-building, and the extradiegetic, through its deployment of mechanics, aesthetics, and sensory cues to evoke Lovecraft's trademark madness and existential dread.



At the diegetic level, *The Sinking City* retrieves core themes and motifs of Lovecraft's works, such as the fragility of the human mind, the incomprehensibility of cosmic forces, and the inevitability of decay. These are explored through the protagonist's slow descent into madness as he investigates Oakmont, a flooded city teeming with unfathomable creatures. Plot-wise, the game's limited branching endings work well to adapt the sense of futility inherent in Lovecraft's narratives: as the game strongly limits the final outcome options, but still seems to give the player a saying in how the story ends, it reinforces that fact that agential choice is pointless in the face of cosmic indifference.

At the extradiegetic level, the game utilizes mechanics such as sanity meters and retrocognition, alongside oppressive soundscapes, grotesque visuals, and atmospheric design, to immerse players in Lovecraft's universe. By employing interactive features to replicate feelings of powerlessness, disorientation, and unease, *The Sinking City* captures the essence of Lovecraftian horror in a way that exceeds the sensorial limits of the textual medium.

This paper thus argues that *The Sinking City* exemplifies how video games can function as mythopoietic tools, not only preserving but also innovating Lovecraft's mythos. By updating its themes and aesthetics for a modern audience, the game perpetuates the cultural legacy of Lovecraftian horror, ensuring its resonance in an era defined by new forms of anxiety and existential questioning.

**Bio-note:**

**Valentina Romanzi** is a Postdoctoral Researcher in American Studies at the University of Torino and an Adjunct Professor of English at the University of Verona. She holds a PhD in Transcultural Studies in the Humanities from the University of Bergamo. Her research interests lie in US speculative fiction, the posthuman and more-than-human in literature, and ecocriticism (with a focus on the Blue Humanities). She is also researching the interplay of video games and American culture, queerness and fandom, and has an invested interest in the application of Care Theory to literary studies. Her latest book is *American Nightmares: Dystopia in Twenty-First-Century US Fiction* (Peter Lang, 2022). She is an editor at *Iperstoria: Journal of American and English Studies* and collaborates with *RSAJournal* and *ContactZone*.

**Victoria Mummelthei**

**House Rules: Domestic Horror and the Collapse of Patriarchal Control in  
*Layers of Fear***

**Abstract:**

When we talk about player agency in horror games, we tend to think in binaries: either players are empowered or disempowered, either they control the space or the space controls them. *Layers of Fear* shatters these easy distinctions. The game's Victorian mansion offers players the illusion of patriarchal mastery - you are, after all, the "master" of this house - while simultaneously transforming that very promise of control into a trap. Every assertion of player agency (opening a door, examining a painting, entering a room) becomes the trigger for the house's architectural rebellion.

This creates a paradoxical system where player agency and architectural autonomy don't simply oppose each other but feed into each other in increasingly complex ways. The more players attempt to exercise control over the space, the more that space asserts its independence, yet this very rebellion requires player participation to manifest. The Victorian domestic myth of the house as an extension of patriarchal will becomes a closed loop of cause and effect, where attempts to exercise mastery over space generate the very conditions that make such mastery impossible.

This paper examines how *Layers of Fear* weaponizes this paradox to create a new form of domestic horror - one where player agency becomes both protagonist and antagonist. By transforming Victorian domestic mythology into an interactive system of mutual dependency between player and architecture, the game raises uncomfortable questions about how we design and interact with game spaces. When every attempt at spatial control triggers its own undoing, who - or what - is really playing whom?

**Bio-note:**

**Victoria Mummelthei** completed a PhD in Arabic Studies, before pivoting away from philology into the "explorative humanities". In both teaching and research, she seeks approaches that transcend academic habitus: meta-science, reader-centric writing, syndicating science, environmental humanities, game studies, data visualization, and AI. She shares her explorations openly via her "No Discipline" blog and Zenodo - platforms that foster collaborative exchange with fellow trailblazers. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4483-4026>.

Vítor Silva

**Press Start to Scream: The Supernatural Video Game in Late 1990s and Early 2000s Horror Cinema**

**Abstract:**

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, many films such as *Stay Alive* (2006) and *Brainscan* (1994) positioned video games as sites of supernatural terror. Drawing on Hagener and Elsaesser's sensory film theory, Shaviro's notion of post-cinematic affect, and Bogost's discourse on video-games, this paper attempts to situate the 1990s/2000s horror video game within its broader context of cultural panic, arguing that it operates in film as a form of meta-cinema which allows the horror film to engage in both the fear of technology and the allure of immersive play. Through close readings of key films, I conclude that instead of merely serving as narrative scaffolding, the haunted video game trope expands the boundaries of cinematic immersion by incorporating the ludic (play-based) elements of gaming, effectively furthering a more participatory experience of spectatorship which transcends and reshapes the ways we usually perceive and engage with cinematic horror.

**Bio-note:**

**Vítor Alves Silva** is a visual artist, researcher, and curator. His primary research focuses on adaptation processes between literature and cinema, though he often writes on tangent issues pertaining to intermedial studies and cinema in general. He maintains a personal interest in all projects encompassing horror and queer themes. As an artist, Vítor has organized several art exhibitions of original work, in some of the most prestigious national museums and institutions, such as Centro Português de Fotografia and Museu de Aveiro Santa Joana. As a researcher, he has published scholarly articles in various academic journals and actively participates in national conferences relevant to his interests. He is one of the founders of the photography nucleus CÍRCULO. Email: [asgore.vjas@gmail.com](mailto:asgore.vjas@gmail.com) or [up202204445@up.pt](mailto:up202204445@up.pt).

**Zsófia Orosz-Réti**

**Living the dream, playing the nightmare: Remediation and the critique of the American dream in *American Arcadia***

**Abstract:**

The 2023 game *American Arcadia*, set in a Truman Show-like dystopian reality show with a 1970s design, follows the epic escapade of the main character Trevor, aided by his ally Angela, a programmer-hacker operating from outside Arcadia. Similarly to a few other recent titles, such as *Road 96*, it challenges the American Dream unlimited spatial and social mobility. Its novelty, however, is that *American Arcadia* implements a dual-character game mechanic, where Trevor has to proceed in a 2,5D platform-puzzle game, while Angela works as a hacker in a 3D environment, assisting him by hacking and subverting the behind-the-scenes infrastructure of Walton Media, the corporation behind the reality show.

The proposed paper seeks to analyse the game as a critical commentary on the American Dream and by extension, on neoliberal ideology. Using Bolter and Grusin's theory of remediation as a theoretical framework, this study offers to conduct a close-reading analysis of the game mechanics, narrative and symbolism, focusing on how propaganda is exposed as discourse through the in-game hypermediacy of Arcadia's idealised life. I argue that *American Arcadia* uses its dual-character single-player puzzle game mechanic in conjunction with the hypermediacy of television reality shows to comment on questions of individual freedom, choice, agency and prosperity.

The analysis puts a special emphasis on the trope of escaping the dream and its paradoxical alignment with the promise of the American Dream itself. By examining how the game's mechanics and narrative deconstruct notions of free will and social mobility, this paper demonstrates how *American Arcadia* reveals the inherent contradictions within neoliberal ideology. With this, the research hopes to contribute to ongoing discussions in game studies about how video games, even though themselves deeply embedded in a late capitalist system of production, can serve as vehicles for productive social critique.

**Bio-note:**

**Zsófia Orosz-Réti** is a senior lecturer at the Department of British Studies of the Institute of English and American Studies, University of Debrecen. She gained her Ph.D. in 2015. Her primary research is on reducing agency and ideological criticism in video games. Her teaching praxis covers 20-21st century British literature and culture, postcolonial criticism, science fiction in film and literature, and cultural memory. Her most recent publications include "Heroism, vulnerability and care in

civilian-focused wargames" in the *Journal of Gaming & Virtual Worlds* 15.3 (2023): 267-284; „An Actually Existing Dystopia: Othering Eastern Europe and the Lived Experience of an Authoritarian Regime in *Black: The Fall*" in *Studies in Eastern European Cinema*, 14(1), 85–97., and a special block on „Video Games and Affect", co-edited by Norbert Krek, for the *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* (2023).