IN VISIBLE CULTURE

Issue 30: "Poetics of Play"

For its thirtieth issue, *InVisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture* invites scholarly articles and creative works that address the poetics and politics of video games.

20 years ago Janet H. Murray's *Hamlet on the Holodeck* and Espen Aarseth's *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature* began a conversation to theorize the aesthetics of video games. Since these foundational texts, game studies has sustained an interrogation of political questions concerning games, such as issues of representation and the configuration of online game spaces. Video games intersect with industrial practices, embodied experiences, as well as visual and ludic designs, all of which have specific political implications. For this issue we encourage contributors to consider two or more of these factors together, exploring "how games make complex meanings across history, bodies, hardware, and code."[1]

This issue of *InVisible Culture* takes a cultural studies approach toward video games in that the formal aesthetics always register aspects of the culture that they emerge from. We think of games as an open category that includes a broad range of media, from mainstream AAA games to art installations; complex "hardcore" games as well as casual mobile apps; visually rich to text-based interactions—cutting across a range of experiences, from the banality of playing an app to the singularity of wearing a VR headset. We take gaming aesthetics to mean not only the system of visual, aural, ludic, and narrative configurations of (a) given game(s) but also the manipulation of these systems: modding, updating, streaming, etc. We are also interested in what surrounds games, such as to what degree games afford community building and collaboration between players.

Possible topics of exploration include, but are not limited to:

- Games and Representation
- Games and Subjectivity
- Games and Affect, Multisensory Encounters with Games
- Ordinariness/Everydayness of Games, Gamification of Everyday Life
- Materiality/Tactility of Gaming Devices, Embodied Engagements with Games
- Queer/Feminist Approaches to Video Games
- Games and the Politics of Race, Gender, and (Dis)Ability

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[1] Aubrey Anable, Playing with Feelings: Video Games and Affect (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), xi.

- DIY Approaches to Games and Game Making
- Games and Activism
- Genre studies
- Platform Studies
- Games and Sound
- Remediation of Video Game Aesthetics
- Games and/as Contemporary Art, Games in Museums/Galleries
- Games in the Archive, Games as Archive
- Game Communities and Fandom
- Fan-made "How To" and "Let's Play" Videos, Live Streams
- Character Creation Systems and their Politics (Liberatory vs. Constraining)
- The Economy of Games, Microtransactions, Loot crates

Please send completed papers (with references following the guidelines from the Chicago Manual of Style) of between 4,000 and 10,000 words to invisible.culture@ur.rochester.edu by June 30th, 2018. Inquiries should be sent to the same address.

Creative/Artistic Works

In addition to written materials, *InVisible Culture* is accepting works in other media (video, photography, drawing, code) that reflect upon the theme as it is outlined above. Please submit creative or artistic works along with an artist statement of no more than two pages to invisible.culture@ur.rochester.edu. For questions or more details concerning acceptable formats, go to http://ivc.lib.rochester.edu/contribute or contact the same address.

Reviews

InVisible Culture is also currently seeking submissions for book, exhibition, and film reviews (600-1,000 words). For this issue we particularly encourage authors to submit reviews of games or other forms of interactive media. To submit a review proposal, go to http://ivc.lib.rochester.edu/contribute or contact invisible.culture@ur.rochester.edu.

Dialogues

The journal also invites submissions to its Dialogues page, which will accommodate more immediate responses to the topic of the current issue. For further details, please contact us at invisible.culture@ur.rochester.edu with the subject heading "Dialogues submission."

* *InVisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture (IVC)* is a student-run interdisciplinary journal published online twice a year in an open access format. Through peer reviewed articles, creative works, and reviews of books, films, and exhibitions, our issues explore changing themes in visual culture. Fostering a global and current dialog across fields, IVC investigates the power and limits of vision.