

PLAYING LAW

A JURISPRUDENCE OF VIDEO GAMES AND VIRTUAL REALITIES

Law is the ultimate multiplayer role-playing game. Through law, individuals are characterised, subject-object relations are constructed and enforced, and concepts of worth and identity are founded. *Playing Law* seeks to showcase the power of play and the boundless potential of the video game as a medium capable of facilitating experiences which unlock the next level of jurisprudential evolution. This is not only true of games which require players to act as legal characters, but is true of all games which involve the player-avatar – a subject confined in a codified space.

This collection seeks to explore the intersection between the coded realm of the video game and the equally codified space of law. Featuring critical readings of video games as a means of understanding law and justice, this book highlights the power of playing jurisprudentially.



CALL FOR PAPERS

In the realm of the digital game space, players simulate, relate and engage with environments and experiences shaped by legality. In these interactive environments, players are not static – they are forced to be law enforcers (*L.A. Noire*; *Battlefield Hardline*; *Super Mario Bros*), compelled to be vigilantes (*Grand Theft Auto*; *Batman: Arkham Knight*; *Watch Dogs*), or otherwise made to follow the rules of the game.

Whether it is the most simplistic puzzle game (*Tetris*; *Snake*; *Pacman*) or a massive open world role-playing adventure (*The Elder Scrolls: Skyrim*; *Red Dead Redemption 2*; *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*), the player must engage with the law of this interactive space – the codified rules of the game maker and the imagined legality given form in the gameworld. Even in games where the player may “choose their own path” (*Life is Strange*; *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt*; *Infamous: Second Son*), the illusion of freedom is naturally limited by the dominion of the creator. In this sense, video games reflect the pervasive power and limitless influence of law itself.



31 JAN

ABSTRACT
BRIEF CV

14 FEB

NOTIFICATION
OF ACCEPTANCE

1 JULY

DRAFT CHAPTER
FOR PEER REVIEW

EARLY 2021

ANTICIPATED
PUBLICATION

ALL FULL CHAPTER SUBMISSIONS WILL BE SUBJECT TO A DOUBLE-BLIND PEER REVIEW PROCESS

We welcome all submissions which use video games as a serious means of evaluating, critiquing and exploring questions of law, legality and jurisprudence.



Analysis of the video game is not limited to the narrative or ludological form itself, but can be extended to the means through which the game is played and particularities of the video game medium. For example, peripheral aspects of the video game could include controllers, cutscenes, aesthetics, genre, design, easter eggs, microtransactions, music, and transmedial artefacts that assist in the creation of the gamespace. To be clear, submissions should focus not on the way video games are regulated by law, but rather encourage legal and jurisprudential analysis of the law as captured, represented, or imbued within the game itself.

Potential themes could include, but are in no way limited to, the following:

- Representations of Law and Justice in Video Games
- Playing Right: Obedience and the Figure of the Law Enforcer
- Playing Wrong: Cheating, Mods, and the Figure of the Criminal
- Action and Passivity: Agency, Choice and Witnessing in Video Games
- Law as Video Games: Algorithm, Code and Biopolitics
- Playing Yourself: Subject, Identity and Personhood through the Coded Avatar
- Consequences and Death: Permadeath, 1-Ups, Respawn
- Performing Subversion with Gender, Sexuality, Race and Body
- Games with an Agenda: Advocacy through Video Games
- The Role of Lore, Art, Nostalgia and Sound in Constructing Game Spaces
- Materiality and Medium: Controller and Control, Genre and Form
- The Gamification of Law: Serious Games, Learning the Law and Law Enforcement



HOW TO SUBMIT

CONTRIBUTORS SHOULD SUBMIT

- 500 WORD ABSTRACT
- 1 PAGE BRIEF CV

TO

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BY 31 JANUARY 2020.

