



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ROLE-PLAYING

A peer reviewed journal on analog role-playing games
and adjacent phenomena

ISSUE 18

Editorial

This issue of the International Journal of Role-playing is based on the proceedings of the first Role-Play in Games Conference hosted in Tampere, Finland, April 9th and 10th 2025, by the Games As Art Center and Tampere University Game Research Lab.

Leland Masek, Daniel Fernández Galeote, Antonio Pomposini Tabja, Felipe García-Soriano, Jaakko Stenros, and Ian Sturrock
3-6

Another Kind of Future/Past: Decolonial and Asiafuturist Imagination in the Philippines from the 19th Century to the Contemporary Tabletop Role-Playing Games of #rpgsea

This piece explores four recent tabletop role-playing games from the Philippines arguing they expand a rich tradition of 19th-century speculative writers with a decolonial and anticolonial vision of a future-past.

Adrian Hermann 7-21

What are Studio Games?: Using the GFI Model to Investigate Chinese Jubensha

This piece presents two expert interviews on the popular commercial studio model of larp in China and "Jubensha". These studios, provide services, customized props, themed environments, and professional game masters to craft a unique business model and type of role-playing experience

Pengze Zheng 22-36

From "Playing a Role" to "Role-Playing Games": The Genealogy and History of the Term "Role-Playing"

This article genealogically maps the meanings of "role-playing" across nine historical and disciplinary contexts. It argues that the ideas that underpin contemporary hobbyist role-playing are layered, interdisciplinary and hybrid.

Mátyás Hartyándi 37-50

Hack, Slash, Heal, Repeat: Theorizing the Concept of the Murderhobo in Dungeons & Dragons

This work introduces and fleshes out the playstyle "murderhobo", which is widely known in the gaming world, with a clear definition for game studies.

Steven Dashiell 51-61

On the Metaplot: A Look at Transmedial Storytelling in Tabletop Role-Playing Games

This work theoretically expands on the concept of "metaplot" as an ongoing story inside of a gameworld created and released by a game publisher. He argues this represents a core tension between role-playing's interest in creative agency for players and the economic realities of game publication.

Jukka Särkijärvi 62-73



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**Losing and Finding Oneself:
Duo- and Autoethnographic
Study of 'Character' in the larp
Superrealism**

This text uses multiple ethnographic methodologies to bring designer intent and player experience into discourse. It argues that a variety of design choices in larp may construct a meaningful and transformative experience for its players.

Sarah Lynne Bowman,
Lauri Lukka, and
Josephine Baird 74-91

**How Do You Want To Do This?:
Us, Role-Playing Games, and
The End of the World**

This article uses a case study of Critical Role to analyze the persistent foundations of capitalist realism even in a collective storytelling medium.

Șerban Mark Pop 92-100

**The Dynamic Loop Model: A
Systemic-Cybernetic Meta-
Theoretical Framework for
Understanding Tabletop Role-
Playing Games**

This article introduces the Dynamic Loop Model for analyzing and understanding trpgs, based on cybernetics, Stafford Beer's Viable System Model and Niklas Luhmann's Social Systems Theory.

Felipe García-Soriano and
Daniel González Cohens
101-119

**How is Learning in Edu-larp as
a Method Described and Seen
by Practitioners?**

This work analyzes expert interviews to unpack the what, how, and why edu-larp is used as a tool for learning.

Josefin Westborg 120-138

The Role of the Cosmographer

This piece argues that role-playing games represent a historical development of the human capacity for imagining other worlds. It frames rpgs as cosmographic technology, synthesizing the ironic imaginations of speculative fiction with oracular simulations of dice, randomness, and probabilities from wargaming.

Nicholas Mizer 139-150