

Jessica Enevold

Game Love

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What does love have to do with gaming? As games have grown in complexity, they have increasingly included narratives that seek to engage players with love in a variety of ways. While media attention often focuses on violent emotions and behavior in gaming, love has always been central to the experience. We love to play games, we have titles that we love, and sometimes we love too much or love terrible games for their shortcomings. Love in gaming is rather like love in life—often complicated and frustrating but also exciting and gratifying.

This collection of fresh essays explores the meaning and role of love in gaming, describing a number of ways—from coding to cosplay—in which love can be expressed in, for and around games. Investigating how gaming involves love is also key to understanding the growing importance of games and gamers as cultural markers.

Jessica Enevold is an associate professor of Cultural Studies at the Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences, Lund University, Sweden. Her research focuses on digital and analogue popular cultures in everyday life and media, specifically computer game culture, reality TV, love, health, gender, mobility and play. **Esther MacCallum-Stewart** is a research fellow at the Digital Cultures Research Centre, University of West England. Her work examines the ways in which players understand narratives in games and she has written widely on gender, love, sexuality and roleplaying.

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