

of Hall and Ellis's 1897 *A Study on Dolls*, in which the psychologists asserted that dolls fostered a girl's feminine identity, the contributors also look at the impact on such an identity of Riot Grrrls musicians—Courtney Love from the band Hole; Kat Bjelland from the band Babes in Toyland; and Katie Jane Garside from the band Daisy Chainsaw. Chandler and Anselmo-Sequeira argue that, although Hall and Ellis “seminally proposed that ideal ladylikeness was best embodied by the figure of the doll: a silent, and inactive object,” Riot Grrrls “reclaimed and reused dolls to dismantle longstanding notions about proper femininity” (p. 80). There is nearly a century of doll production that the contributors might use to enhance their thesis. They might also have focused more on the Grrrls themselves. Take for example, Courtney Love's relationship with dolls. While she “defied dominant expectations and investments in hygiene, self-containment, and beautification,” Love also collected hundreds of dolls with husband and musician, Kurt Cobain. When Cobain passed away, Love commissioned doll maker Dame Darcy to create a doll for their daughter. Dame Darcy used a lock of Cobain's hair to make the doll's hair. With this decision, the doll became an artifact of memory and mourning and embodied a long tradition of doll play.

The study of dolls provides a unique perspective for understanding how play constructs and disrupts girlhood. Many of these essays would be strengthened by illustrations since the analysis of dolls in cultural history often depends on the study of images. Still, *Doll Studies* is a thoughtful collection that demonstrates the impor-

tance of play and its material culture to social and cultural history.

—Michelle Parnett-Dwyer, *The Strong*, Rochester, NY

Jane Jensen: Gabriel Knight, Adventure Games, and Hidden Objects

Anastasia Salter

New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. Acknowledgments, preface, foreword, notes, and index. 183 pp. \$21.99 paper. ISBN: 9781501327469.

Until recently, perusing just about any published history of video games might have given rise to the false impression that the industry is entirely driven by men. But such is not the case—it is only a matter of how games have largely been historicized. After all, historically speaking, video games are quite young. Most video game histories mark the beginning with William Higinbotham's analog computer game *Tennis for Two* in 1958—although some dispute even this, since video games did not become popular until the 1970s. Anastasia Salter, in her illuminating biography of an understudied industry figure, *Jane Jensen: Gabriel Knight, Adventure Games, and Hidden Objects*, offers the history of video games a much-needed intervention.

Jensen, Salter's subject, is an interactive storyteller for whom computer games—particularly adventure games—offered great potential. Best known for the Gabriel Knight series, Jensen brought thoughtful “hidden object” puzzle design and a novelist's attention to narrative and

detail to the adventure genre early in the development of home computer games. Celebrated for her innovations in interactive dialogue and her well-researched world building in playable space, Jensen appears here to be a singular force in the adventure form and a major influence on the development of detailed game spaces. Jensen also understood the potency of using the voices of professional actors to lend authenticity to her games and of borrowing from the incredible cultural cache of cinema. In fact, her point-and-click adventure-horror game *Gabriel Knight: Sins of the Fathers* (Sierra On-Line, 1993) was the first CD-ROM-released game to use an all-Hollywood cast. Devotees of her adventures and video game designers will find the chapter on her most successful Gabriel Knight franchise of particular interest. However, the book also offers a wide-ranging look into her game innovation outside the mainstream, including her casual games, her writing beyond conventional games, and her development of an independent studio, Pinkerton Road. Additionally, an interview of Jensen by Salter included in the book offers a frank look at where Jensen stands in relation to the games industry and adds dimension to the work.

This book is one in a series called *Influential Video Game Designers*, edited by Carly A. Kocurek and Jennifer deWinter—themselves game studies scholars of note. Other designers in the series include games-for-girls pioneer Brenda Laurel and Shigeru Miyamoto of *Mario*, *Donkey Kong*, and *Legend of Zelda* fame. As with the other titles in the series, this one strikes a balance between excellently researched chapters well suited to scholarly citation

and an accessible style friendly to nonspecialists and those with a general interest in video games.

Jane Jensen is Salter's second book, the first being *What is Your Quest? From Adventure Games to Interactive Books* (2014). She has coauthored two texts—one with Bridget Blodgett, *Toxic Geek Masculinity in Media* (2017), and one with John Murray, *Flash: Building the Interactive Web* (2014). She also edited a collection about electronic literature. A professor of digital media at the University of Central Florida, Salter studies video games as part of her larger commitment to the study of women and socially defined "others" and computational technology. This book is in keeping with the author's interests, particularly as a text that recognizes a major force in interactive fiction other than the male geniuses earlier histories tended to fetishize.

In recent years, this unseemly side of game culture garnered international press attention from widely publicized discrimination lawsuits and antiharassment campaigns against what Emily Chang in her *Brotopia* (2018) recently called the "Silicon Valley boys' club." In an important feminist revisionist gesture, Salter's book gives witness to the trenchant but toxic culture within the tech industry in general (and with game design more specifically) and corrects its male-dominated history by offering Jensen's work its rightful position at the core of the history of adventure games. The increasing ability to tell personal stories with nuance, narrative complexity, and expressivity through games, thanks to more accessible game development tools like *Twine*, is in no small measure due to the trailblazing of Jensen. She

helped make such elements of interactive fiction important to players of computer games, a fact Salter's book demonstrates beautifully for those familiar with the history of video games even as it introduces Jensen's quarter-century of contributions to those who are not.

In addition to showing why Jensen's work matters, Salter also spends significant time describing the game designer's diverse and creative investigations into other forms of narrative like story manuals, comics, interactive picture books, stories, and novels. The fluidity of Jensen's ability to move narratively across and between media forms (what is often referred to as "transmedia storytelling") speaks to Salter's sense of Jensen as a "writer-designer with a novelist's approach" (p. 138). I was struck by the critical importance this absorbing account affords the experiences of those who were part of the industry early on and how precious that is for a robust historical understanding of video games. Salter's invaluable *Jane Jensen* will surely become a foundational document that sheds light on the origins of games.

—Soraya Murray, *University of California at Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA*

Playing with Feelings: Video Games and Affect

Aubrey Anable

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Audrey Anable provides a succinct over-

view of her book early in the introduction: "I make a case for why media theory is not finished with representation and subjectivity" (p. xi). Of course, as you might imagine, making that case is anything but simple. As Anable discovers, much of game studies as a field fetishizes mechanics and computation as the distinguishing feature of gaming (and therefore the most important aspect for analysis). There are also profound and troubling reactions from various members of the game-playing public when representation is discussed. This, she argues, has left game studies ill equipped to address how feeling and emotion impact and enhance game play, a deficiency she notes is not limited to game studies. In response, Anable presents affect, which she defines as "the aspects of emotions, feelings, and bodily engagement that circulate through people and things but are often registered only at the interface—at the moment of transmission or contact—when affect gets called up into representation" (p. xviii). This definition provides an excellent outline of the main points she explores in her work.

In particular, her definition highlights the notion of a constant feedback loop between users and interfaces. Throughout this work, Anable addresses the idea of being with technology, both bodily and spatially. Her third chapter, which focuses on casual games and posits the gradual breakdown of the work-play dichotomy, does so explicitly, but it is an implicit theme throughout the book. Anable repeatedly and in various ways asserts the importance of bodies and identities as crucial and unerasable components of the player-interface-game circuit. Her definition of affect also highlights the