

**Madison D. Schmalzer (she/her)**  
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## EDUCATION

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### **North Carolina State University**

*PhD in Communication Rhetoric and Digital Media*

2022

Dissertation: “Transition Games: Speedrunning Through Gender”

Chair: Andrew Johnston

Committee: Nick Taylor, Grant Bollmer, Helen Burgess

### **Ball State University**

*Master's of English Literature*

2017

Thesis: “‘A puppet who can see the strings’: Dr. Manhattan as Metatextual Comics Reader in *Watchmen*”

Advisor: Joyce Huff

### **University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh**

*Bachelor of Arts in English*

2014

## POSITIONS

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Interdisciplinary Instructor of Literature and Media | Full-Time Faculty

2022-Present

Ringling College of Art and Design

## REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES

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“‘I Took a Deep Breath and Came Out as GC’: Excavating Gender Critical Information Literacy Practices and Anti-Trans Radicalization on Ovarit and Mumsnet”

*Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* | Co-author PS Berge | Accepted

“Surviving the Reset: Speedrunning *Spyro*, Trans Mundanity, and Playing in the Impasse”

*Camera Obscura* | Forthcoming (In Press)

“Un-Moving Play and the End of Time: Code Injections and the Trans Abrogation of Media Objects”

*Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* | Co-author PS Berge | Forthcoming (In Press)

[“Breaking The Stack: Understanding Videogame Animation through Tool-Assisted Speedruns”](#)

2021 | *Animation*

[“Janky Controls and Embodied Play: Disrupting the Cybernetic Gameplay Circuit”](#)

2020 | *Game Studies*

[“Play While Paused: Time and Space of Videogame Pause Menus”](#)

2020 | *Journal of Games Criticism*

"The Ontology of Incremental Games: Thinking Like the Computer in Frank Lantz's *Universal Paperclips*."  
2019 | *Eludamos*

"Framing Super-Vision: Panoptic Vision and Controlling Frames in Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' *Watchmen*"  
2019 | *ImageText*

## BOOK CHAPTERS

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"Speedrunning and the Limits of Subversion"  
*Subversive Gaming* | Eds. Dr. Aparajita Bhandari & Sara Bimo | Palgrave | Accepted

## ESSAYS AND BOOK REVIEWS

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"‘Arbitrary Categories’ and ‘Alternative Sexual Archetypes’: Trans Definitions in Videogame Communities"  
*Trans Games Zine* | Forthcoming

Review of Book: "Performativity in Art, Literature, and Videogames" by Darshana Jayemanne  
*American Journal of Play* | 2023

"Speedrunning *Undertale* Helped Me Understand My Gender Better"  
*Polygon* | 2021

## INVITED TALKS

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"Trans-forming Videogames: Speedrunning, Trans Desire, and Embodied Glitches"  
Disco Network | November 22, 2022

"Hacking Controllers: Queering the Videogame Controller"  
Featured Speaker CRDM Symposium | April 8, 2020

## PEER REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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"Arbitrary Categories and Alternative Sexual Archetypes: Gendered Rulesets, Provisional Play, and the Production of Speedrunning Categories."  
Accepted | Society of Cinema and Media Studies | March 24, 2024

"‘We Really Just Pressed Buttons:’ Trans Vectors of Desire, Arbitrary Code Execution, and Unplaying *Zelda* in *Triforce%*."  
Society of Cinema and Media Studies | April 14, 2023

"Re-Animating the Gameworld: Shifting Agency In *Left 4 Dead*"  
Pop Culture Association National Conference | April 15, 2020

"Against Control: Undermining Normative Game Design Through Janky Controls"

Computers and Writing: Practicing Digital Activism | May 14, 2020

“We’re All Soldiers Now (Unless We Aren’t): Discourse Formation in Competitive *Overwatch* Communities”  
Popular Culture Association National Conference | April 20, 2019

“Transforming the Interface: Breaking Controllers and Rethinking Immersion”  
Dialog 2.0: Social Movements, Online Communication & Transformation | March 29, 2019

“‘What! Online discourse is evolving!’: A Discourse Analysis of Competitive *Pokemon* Fansite *Smogon University*”  
Popular Culture Association National Conference | March 28, 2018

“Frames and Their Destruction: Chaucer’s Tenuous Vision of Control in the *Canterbury Tales*”  
Practical Criticism Midwest | February 3, 2017

“Not So Super-Vision: Panoptic Vision and Controlling Frames in Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons’ *Watchmen*”  
South Atlantic Modern Language Association 88 | November 5, 2016

## GUEST LECTURES

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“The Transformative Power of Glitch”  
Gender and Communication Studies and Game Studies Classes, Bryce Stout | Oct 12, 2023 | NC State

“Imagining Queer Worlds”  
World Building Class, David Steiling | Nov 9, 2022 | Ringling College

“Jank and Embodied Play”  
Ludic Networks Graduate Class, Nick Taylor | March, 13 2022 | NC State

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**Artistic Vandalism: The Art of Breaking Media** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2024

Explores the practice of physically dismantling media as an artistic form and potent means of challenging hegemonic structures. This course delves into the history, philosophy, and hands-on practice of media disruption, encompassing the act of tearing, shattering, burning, hacking, defacing, destroying, and breaking various forms of media including videogames, fine art, AI, surveillance technologies, fashion, and architecture, and more.

**History of Game Art** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2023-Present

Surveys the history of computer games in technical, design, and aesthetic fields beginning with the development of the computer through platformization of the contemporary videogame industry. Covers the development of games culture and traditions of diverse designers and players.

**Queer Games Studies** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2023-Present

Covers the history of queer game design and engages in critical game making practices to trouble mainstream conceptions of games, explore diverse positionalities, and contribute to queer narratives and representation in gaming.

**Videogame Studies** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2022-Present

Critically examines the cultural, social, and artistic dimensions of videogames. Through a combination of theoretical analysis and hands-on exploration, students delve into key issues within the field of Game Studies,

including critical game making, representation, player agency, and the broader cultural impact of games.

#### **Literature and Media Studies** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2022-Present

Explores the dynamic relationship between media technologies and cultural narratives. Through close analysis of literature and various media forms, including film, games, and digital media, students examine how technologies shape and are shaped by cultural narratives, offering insights into the impact of media on society and storytelling.

#### **Game Studies** | North Carolina State University, 2021

Engages in critical theoretical and practical explorations of both digital and analog games. Through interdisciplinary perspectives, students analyze the cultural, social, and artistic dimensions of games, examining their impact on society and individuals while actively participating in hands-on game creation and analysis.

#### **Rhetoric and Aesthetics of Media Materiality** | North Carolina State University, 2020

Delves into intersections of materiality and rhetoric in media forms. Through critical analysis and hands-on exploration, students examine how material aspects of media, such as physicality, texture, and medium, shape and communicate persuasive messages, narratives, and ideologies, shedding light on the multifaceted relationships between materiality, rhetoric, and the media we engage with.

#### **Media Theory and History** | North Carolina State University, 2020-2021

Explores theoretical foundations and historical developments that shape understandings of media. Through critical analysis and historical context, students examine key concepts, theories, and approaches in media studies, tracing the evolution of media technologies, their societal impact, and the various theoretical lenses through which we interpret and analyze media in its diverse forms.

#### **Public Speaking** | North Carolina State University, 2018-2020

#### **Rhetoric and Composition** | Ball State University, 2015-2016

#### **Research Methods** | Ball State University, 2015

### **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

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#### **History of Game Art Student Learning Outcomes Redesign** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2022

#### **Literature and Media Studies Core Courses Redesign** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2022

#### **Core Course Planning Committee** | North Carolina State University, 2021

### **SERVICE & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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#### **Academic Standards Committee** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2023-2024

#### **Anyone's Game Academic Symposium Organizer** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2023-Present

**History of Game Art Lead & Curriculum Designer** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2022-Present

**Game Jam Facilitation** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2022-Present

**Mentoring of Graduate Students** | Bryce Stout, NC State 2019; Travis Merchant-Knudson, NC State 2020; PS Berge, UCF 2022; Mar Scardua, NC State 2022

**Excellence in Teaching and Leadership Seminar** | Ringling College of Art and Design, 2022-2023

**Journal Reviewer** | *Journal of Games Criticism, Games and Society*, 2020-Present

**Graduate Student Association Representative** | North Carolina State University, 2021

**Research Assistant** | Andrew Johnston, Archival Data Collection | North Carolina State University, 2019

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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**Member** | *Society for Cinema and Media Studies*, 2020-Present

**Member** | *Digital Games Research Association*, 2020-Present

**Member** | *Pop Culture Association*, 2016-Present

## PROFICIENCIES

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Twine | Expert

Step Works | Intermediate

Unity | Novice

Game Maker | Novice

Inform 7 | Intermediate

HTML | Intermediate

## LANGUAGES

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English | Native

French | Novice

German | Novice

## REFERENCES

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**Dr. Andrew Johnston**

Associate Professor, English, NC State

arjohn14@ncsu.edu

**Dr. Nick Taylor**

Associate Professor, Communication and Media Studies, York University

ntt@yorku.ca

**Dr. Stephanie Seketa**

Director of Liberal Arts, Ringling College of Art and Design

sseketa@c.ringling.edu