

Justin A. Bortnick

Curriculum Vitae

18 March 2023

EDUCATION

2015-2022 Ph.D. in English Literature

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

Dissertation: *Communities of Reality: Game Design, Narrative and Political Play*

Dissertation Supervisor: Alice Gambrell

2013-2014 College of Liberal & Professional Studies Non-Traditional Graduate Studies

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

2013 B.A., English, B.A., Classical Civilization

Lafayette College, Easton, PA

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2022- Assistant Teaching Professor of English

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Professor in the Digital Narrative and Interactive Design major, a program focused on preparing undergraduate students in classes of 19-25 for a career in games, immersive entertainment, digital media and more.

PUBLICATIONS

Manuscripts in Preparation

2021 *ARG-itechting the New Propaganda: A Dangerous Appropriation of Game Design*

Harlan Ellison in Cyberworld: *I Have No Mouth, YU-NO* and Pioneering Digital Narrative
(Invited to Resubmit)

Game Work

Ongoing Allfather Productions

University Magician's Society, Producer, Lead Designer, Writer

Tidying Your Computer with Carrie Mondo (2019), Producer, Lead Designer, Writer

Design Consulting (non-NDA clients disclosed upon request)

2019-2022 Definitely Real Productions

Dared My Best Friend, Lead Interaction Designer, Project Archive Lead

2015-2020 Twinbeard Studios

Glittermitten Grove (2017), Game Designer, Writer, ARG Master, Marketing, Narrative, Business Development, Publisher Relations

IndieCade@E3 Official Selection 2017

IndieCade Festival 2017 – Official Nominee
Top 10 Games of 2016 – #10 (Vice, Patrick Klepek)
Top 10 Games to Watch in 2016 – #2 (Giant Bomb, Austin Walker)

2017 Erebus, LLC
Apocalypse Now (Canceled), Marketing

2015-2016 Thinker-Tinker
OCTOBO, Writer
National Parenting Product Awards Winner 2020
alt.ctrl.GDC – Official Selection 2016
IndieCade@E3 – Official Selection 2016
IndieCade Festival 2016 – Official Nominee
Indie Prize Awards – Best Kids and Family Game, Most Innovative Game –
Nomination

2007 EngliShinbok Team
Shin Bokura no Taiyō: Gyakushuu no Sabata Unofficial Translation Patch,
Localization/Continuity

Web-Based Publications

2016 *Shoggoths in a Segregated America* - Book Review, *Lovecraft Country* by Matt Ruff (Los Angeles Review of Books)

Emergent Meaning and Narrative in the Digital Space: Addressing Tensions in Games and Game-like Media (Game Developer)

2015 *Ludic Epistolary, or, Where Have All The Letters Gone?* (Game Developer)

Other Publications

Ongoing *Red Pages Podcast*

INVITED TALKS

2021 “Conspiracy, Propaganda and Social Media” Writing Program, Lafayette College, November 2021

2014 “Emergent Systems in Electronic Gaming.” University of Pennsylvania.

Final Fantasy VI Book Club, Overthinking It

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY/PARTICIPATION

Refereed Papers

2022 *Who Creates Games? Developers, Players, and Collaborative Authorship*, **Twentieth International Conference on Publishing Studies**, Rhodes, Greece

2021 *Dangerous Games: ARGs, Social Media Platforms and Participatory Propaganda*, **Electronic Literature Organization Conference 2021**, Online

2020 *Alternate Reality Games and Designing Propaganda*, **UCLA Southland Virtual Conference: Insights/Oversights**, Online

Presentations

2022 *Alternate Reality Games and Participatory Propaganda*, **Hand Eye Society's Super FESTival**, Online.

2021 Presentation of Research, ICIDS 2021 Doctoral Consortium, **International Conference on Interactive Digital Storytelling**, Tallinn, Estonia

2018 *Rallying the Resistance: Frog Fractions 2's Alternate Reality Game*, **Game Developers Conference**, San Francisco CA

Conferences/Symposia Organized

2019- 2023 **NarraScope**: Treasurer (2019), Conference Chair (2020-2022) Faculty Liaison (2022-2023)

2021 **International Conference on Interactive Digital Storytelling**: Graduate Student Committee

Festival Judging

2019-2023 **Independent Game Festival**, San Francisco CA
2016-2017

2016-2022 **IndieCade Festival**, Los Angeles CA

2019 **Indie MegaBooth**

2018-2019, **Boston Festival of Indie Games** (Boston MA)
2022

AWARDS

2022 **Information, Medium & Society**: Emerging Scholar Award

TEACHING AND COURSE DEVELOPMENT

2022- **University of Pittsburgh**, Pittsburgh PA
Department of English
Digital Humanity (Fall 2022, Spring 2023)
Introduction to Game Studies (Fall 2022)
Narrative & Technology (Fall 2022, Spring 2023)

College in High School Program
Introduction to Game Studies (course developed, Spring 2023-)

2016-2022 University of Southern California, Los Angeles CA

Department of English

Los Angeles: The City, the Novel, the Movie (Fall 2020 [Online], Fall 2021) – TA,
Thomas Gustafson

Teaching the Heart: Emotional Intelligence and the Humanities (Spring 2019,
Spring 2021 [Online]) - TA, Thomas Gustafson

The Art of Poetry (Fall 2019) – TA, Dana Gioia

USC Writing Program, Assistant Lecturer

Writing and Critical Reasoning -Thematic Approaches – Technology Thematic
(Fall 2017, Spring 2018)

Technology and Social Change (Spring 2022)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2017 Los Angeles, CA: USC Worldbuilding Institute, Spaceship Earth Project

2016 Los Angeles, CA: Doheny Library Special Collections

2014-2015 Philadelphia PA: Van Pelt Library Rare Books & Manuscripts Library

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

2021 **Reviewer for international journals**

- Games and Culture

2021-2022 **Association for Research in Digital Interactive Narratives:** Graduate Student
Committee, Arts and Industry Outreach Task Force

2021-2023 **International Game Developers Association Game Writing Special Interest Group:**
Discussion Moderator, Discord

2019-2023 **Interactive Fiction Technology Foundation:** President of the Board of Directors (2023-
Present), Conference Committee (2019-2023)

2016-2017 **University of Southern California:** Graduate Student Government English Department
Representative

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

2017 Chris Priestman, “Frog Fractions 2 and the difficult art of mystery making,” *Kill Screen*,
11 January 2017
<https://killscreen.com/previously/articles/frog-fractions-2-art-mystery-making/>

2016 Justin McElroy, “The jig is up: Behind the yearslong reveal of Frog Fractions 2,” *Polygon*,
26 December 2016
<https://www.polygon.com/features/2016/12/26/13974966/frog-fractions-2-reveal>

Katherine Cross, "Yuting Su's *Octobo*: A 21st Century Teddy Ruxpin," *Gamasutra*, 17
March 2016
https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/268346/Yuting_Sus_Octobo_A_21st_Century_Teddy_Ruxpin.php

REFERENCES

(Available Upon Request)