

**EduTalks@Council of Europe - Migrancy, refugees and citizenship
representations in video games**

Wednesday, 20 June 2023 14:00 – 15:20 CET

Moderator

Alessandro Soriani, PhD, is senior assistant professor (fixed-term) at the Department of Education Studies “G.M. Bertin”, University of Bologna. His research explores the influence of relationships that develop within digital environments on the social climate of learning environments and the development of inclusive school’s policies in contexts of social-violence. His scientific interests are ICT and media, video games included, in educational and pedagogical contexts. He works as consultant for the Council of Europe’s Digital Citizenship Education Project. He is the coordinator of the Council of Europe’s Video Game Culture Working Group.



Speakers



Beatriz Pérez Zapata is a PhD in English Studies. She is lecturer of English for Specific Purposes at TecnoCampus (Universitat Pompeu Fabra) and English and Education at the Valencian International University. She is the current coordinator for the Degree in Video Game Design and Production at TecnoCampus. Her research focuses on video games and postcolonialism and the representation of diasporic subjects and refugees in media and video games.

Dr. **Nathan A. Jung** teaches in the Technical Communications Program in the College of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has published widely in the humanities with a particular focus on the relationship between media, migration, and democracy.



Jack Gutmann is a generalist artist from Syria, Jack considers himself on a mission to push the boundaries of games beyond the realms of fun and profit. He sees games as an opportunity to learn and explore beyond one's limitations. In 2016 he worked together with Causa Creations on a game about his escape from Syria in the name of Path Out. Currently, he joined forces again with Causa to work on a new game project about migration.

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Abstract

“This Edu Talk will focus on the variety of ways in which contemporary video games engage with narratives of migration and refugeedom. For that purpose, I will provide an overview of video games on these matters to then talk about how these games provide a greater understanding of the historical, cultural, social and political relationships of our world and about the affective possibilities that these games offer so that wide audiences can connect with others in rather complex ways.”

Beatriz

“This talk explores how refugee video games offer new perspectives on emotions like empathy and compassion for refugees by focusing on the importance of space in refugee experiences.” **Nathan**

Jack will share his perspective on how he thinks games have been one of the strongest cultural instruments. How they have been shaping how millions saw/approached the world, how games have been educating many more about history, languages, creativity, and much more.

His intervention will discuss about how Games can be unintentionally political and might reflect what some might have thought was appropriate to see the world at a point in time, the kind of damage that might have left on marginalized people and cultures. Unlike other mediums games can reach the entity of the player, as the player emerges with that character and that world, not just as a third person reading/watching but in an immersive experience. Because of this Games can access the psyche and the inner consciousness, this can leave a mark for a long time just like a digital tattoo.

Video games can be a double-edged sword, their impact has been maybe undermined due to the fun factor or the graphics, regardless of which is the reason, video games is still a new medium to explore and Jack believe it is possible to change the way we preserve it as we push its boundaries beyond just profit and fun, but as a medium for art, history, education, simulation, team building, health, and relationships.