

Emma Leigh Waldron, Ph.D.

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Media studies (digital media, online platforms, games, television, and popular culture), performance studies (embodiment, liveness, technology & performance, and interactive media), affect studies, and critical sexuality studies

EDUCATION

- 2018 **Ph.D. Performance Studies, University of California, Davis**
Dissertation: "Mediated Intimacy: Performing Sex on HBO, YouTube, and in Analog Role-Playing Games"
Committee: Maxine Craig (advisor), Elizabeth Freeman, Kristopher Fallon
Designated Emphases: Feminist Research & Theory, Critical Theory
- 2012 **M.A. Performance Research, University of Bristol, with distinction**
Dissertation: "Beyond Binaries: Questioning Authentic Identity in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*"
Advisor: Angela Piccini
- 2009 **B.A. English, Rutgers University, magna cum laude**
Minors: Theater Arts, Art History
Senior Thesis Advisor: Paul Benzon

EMPLOYMENT

Academic

- 2024–present **Assistant Researcher in Internet Culture**
Department of Informatics, UC Irvine
Independently design and conduct research on internet culture through the lens of performance studies and affect studies, with focus on narrative analysis.

Research will culminate in monograph project on ASMR, detailed under Publications.

2024–present Lecturer

Department of Informatics, UC Irvine

Independently design and teach undergraduate courses in the Game Design and Interactive Media program and in the School of Information and Computer Science. Specialization in narrative, affect, interactive media, and writing. See page 6 for list of courses.

Select Student Advising Experience (academic adjacent)

Implemented pedagogical techniques in advising undergraduate students on major choice, graduation requirements, and career development. Frequently collaborated with faculty and university administration. Demonstrated deep knowledge of curriculum design and institutional policies.

2023-2024 Academic Advisor, Undergraduate/Undeclared Advising Program

University of California, Irvine

2021-2023 Undergraduate Advisor, School of Art

California State University, Long Beach

2018-2021 Career Advisor, College of the Performing Arts

Chapman University

PUBLICATIONS

Books (monograph in progress)

Waldron, Emma Leigh. *ASMR: Performance, Sensation, and the Future of Media* (working title).

Proposal and sample chapters are being developed for submission to MIT Press, in consultation with MIT Press's new media acquisitions editor. Submission of proposal materials anticipated December 2024.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles (published)

- 2017 Waldron, Emma Leigh. “This FEELS SO REAL!’: Sense and Sexuality in ASMR Videos.” In “Viewing Patterns: Studying Information/Iteration/Incarnation in Media Infrastructures.” *First Monday*, vol. 22, no. 1-2.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles (in progress)

Waldron, Emma Leigh. “Divinatory Media: Dice and Tarot Cards as Technologies for Materializing the Immaterial.”

In progress for submission to the *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* at the encouragement of the journal editors.

Editor-Reviewed Book Chapters

- 2015 Trammell, Aaron and Emma Leigh Waldron. “Playing for Intimacy: Love, Lust, and Desire in the Pursuit of Embodied Design.” In *Rated M for Mature: Sex and Sexuality in Video Games*, edited by Matthew Wysocki and Evan W. Lauteria, 177-193. New York: Bloomsbury, 2015.

Journal Article Compendiums

- 2020 Trammell, Aaron, Evan Torner, Emma Leigh Waldron, and Shelley Jones, editors. *Analog Game Studies, Volume 4*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon ETC Press, 2020.
- 2019 Waldron, Emma Leigh, Aaron Trammell, and Evan Torner, editors. *Analog Game Studies, Volume 3*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon ETC Press, 2019.
- 2017 Torner, Evan, Aaron Trammell, and Emma Leigh Waldron, editors. *Analog Game Studies, Volume 2*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon ETC Press, 2017.
- 2016 Trammell, Aaron, Evan Torner, and Emma Leigh Waldron, editors. *Analog Game Studies, Volume 1*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon ETC Press, 2016.

Book Reviews

- 2013 Rev. of *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*, James Paul Gee. *National Academic Advising Association Journal*, vol. 33, no. 2.

Editor-Reviewed Publications

- 2015 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Mediated Sexuality in ASMR Videos." *Sounding Out!* <http://soundstudiesblog.com/2015/12/14/affect-and-sexuality-in-asmr-videos/>. 14 December 2015.

Self-Published Works

- 2015 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "The Pleasures of Adaptation in Ryan North's *To Be or Not to Be*." *Analog Game Studies*, vol. 2, no. 3.
- 2014 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Larp-as-Performance-as-Research." *Analog Game Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1.
- 2014 Torner, Evan, Aaron Trammell, and Emma Leigh Waldron. "Reinventing Analog Game Studies." *Analog Game Studies*, vol. 1., no. 1.

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

Papers Presented

- 2024 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Mediated Intimacy: Negotiating Closeness, Embodiment, and Power." *Society for the Study of Affect (PITS Conference)*. Lancaster, PA. October 12-14, 2024.
- 2024 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "'Some Ghastly Predicament': Negotiating Trauma through Camp in *Search Party*." *Society for Cinema and Media Studies Annual Conference*. Boston, MA. March 14-17, 2024.
- 2018 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Playing Intimacy: Live-Action Role-Playing Games as Affective Objects." *Capacious*. Millersville University. Lancaster, PA. August 8-11, 2018.
- 2018 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Feeling Good: ASMR and the Discourse of Therapy." *Queer, Feminist and Trans Studies Research Cluster Conference: Queering Care and Cure*. UC Davis. Davis, CA. May 3-4, 2018.
- 2018 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "'Just Female Porn': Performing Sex(uality) in ASMR Videos." *2018 Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association*. UCLA. Los Angeles, CA. March 29-April 1, 2018.

- 2016 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Sweat, Tears, and Bleed: The Radical Potentiality of Live-Action Role-Playing." *Rutgers Media Studies Conference: Extending Play 3*. Rutgers University School of Communication and Information. Piscataway, NJ, September 30-October 1, 2016.
- 2016 Shaw, Adrienne, Evan W. Lauteria, and Emma Leigh Waldron. "Making Queer Games History: The Collection and Assessment of LGBTQ Game Content." *Different Games*. Brooklyn, NY. April 8-9, 2016.
- 2016 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "'Just Female Porn': The Contested Sexuality of YouTube's ASMRtists." *Thinking Gender Conference*. UCLA. Los Angeles, CA, April 7-8, 2016.
- 2016 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "'This FEELS SO REAL!': Sense and Sexuality in ASMR Videos." *Doing the Body in the 21st Century*. University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA. March 31-April 2, 2016.
- 2016 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "'This FEELS SO REAL!': Sense and Sexuality in ASMR Videos." *PCA/ACA National Conference*. Seattle, WA. March 22-25, 2016.
- 2015 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "'This FEELS SO REAL!': Sense and Sexuality in ASMR Videos." *Affect Theory Conference*. Millersville University. Lancaster, PA, October 14-17, 2015.
- 2015 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "'This FEELS SO REAL!': Sense and Sexuality in ASMR Videos." *Rutgers Media Studies Conference: Extending Play, The Sequel*. Rutgers University School of Communication and Information. Piscataway, NJ. April 17-18, 2015.
- 2015 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Touching and Feeling: Performing Intimacy and Playing Sex in Larps." *PCA/ACA National Conference*. New Orleans, LA. April 1-4, 2015.
- 2014 Waldron, Emma Leigh and Aaron Trammell. "Playing for Intimacy: Love, Lust, and Desire in the Pursuit of Embodied Design." *Living Games Conference*. NYU Game Center. New York, NY. March 2014.

Departmental Symposia

- 2017 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Playful Intimacy: Vulnerability and Consent in Live-Action Role-Playing (Larp)." Designated Emphasis in Feminist Theory & Research Graduate Student Symposium. UC Davis. Davis, CA. May 19, 2017.
- 2016 Waldron, Emma Leigh. "Sweat, Tears, and Bleed: The Radical Potentiality of Live-Action Role-Playing." Performance Studies Symposium. UC Davis. Davis, CA. October 7-8, 2016.

- 2015 Waldron, Emma Leigh. “‘This FEELS SO REAL!’: Sense and Sexuality in ASMR Videos.” Designated Emphasis in Feminist Theory & Research Graduate Student Symposium. UC Davis. Davis, CA. May 29, 2015.
- 2014 Waldron, Emma Leigh. “Safe Sex: How to Play Intimacy in LARP.” Performance Studies Symposium. UC Davis. Davis, CA. December 4-5, 2014.

Other Presentations

- 2017 Guest Lecturer on LARP, First-Year Seminar: Role-Playing Games and Society (taught by Joseph Dumit), Spring 2017, UC Davis.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2017-2018 Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Educational Foundation Dissertation Year Fellowship, UC Davis
 Awarded to students in need of financial support, who are ready to complete their dissertation, and with demonstrated exceptional academic ability and potential in the disciplines of History, Economics, Political Science, English, Performance Studies, or Music. 5-9 fellowships awarded annually.
- 2016 Margrit Mondavi Summer Fellowship, UC Davis
 Awarded to support research, workshops and travel for graduate students in Ph.D. and M.F.A. programs in the humanities, arts and cultural studies. Approximately 4 fellowships awarded per year.
- 2014-2016 Eugene Cota-Robles Fellowship, UC Davis
 Highly competitive fellowship to promote campus diversity. Awarded to entering Ph.D. students in any discipline for outstanding academic record and promise of productive scholarship. Approximately 11 fellowships awarded per year.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California, Irvine

- 2024 Lecturer, Special Topics in Games and Society (GDIM 49) – “Games and Emotion”, School of Information and Computer Science, Fall 2024

- 2025 Lecturer, Storytelling for Interactive Media (GDIM 55), School of Information and Computer Science, Winter 2025
- 2025 Lecturer, Critical Writing on Information Technology (ICS 139W), School of Information and Computer Science, Spring 2025

Chapman University

- 2021 Instructor, Managing Your Creative Career (PERF 329), College of Performing Arts, Interterm 2021

University of California, Davis (instructor of record)

- 2017 Associate Instructor, Intro to Acting (DRA 10), Department of Theatre and Dance, Fall 2016

At UC Davis an Associate Instructor (AI) is a graduate student who is employed as the instructor of an entire lower division course. AIs conduct instruction independently and without supervision.

University of California, Davis (teaching assistant)

- 2017 Intro to Film Studies (FMS 100), Department of Cinema and Digital Media, Spring 2017
- 2017 Intro to Film Studies (FMS 100), Department of Cinema and Digital Media, Winter 2017
- 2017 Cinema History (CTS 41A), Department of Cinema and Digital Media, Winter 2017
- 2016 Intro to Critical Gender Studies (WMS 50), Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies, Fall 2016

Rutgers University

- 2013 Section Facilitator, Honors Colloquium (01:090:111), School of Arts and Sciences, Honors Program, Fall 2013

- 2013 Section Facilitator, Students in Transition Seminar (01:090:220), School of Arts and Sciences, Spring 2013
- 2012 Section Facilitator, Honors Colloquium (01:090:111), School of Arts and Sciences, Honors Program, Fall 2012
- 2007 Peer Instructor, First-Year Interest Groups: Theater Arts (01:090:120), School of Arts and Sciences, Fall 2007

Pedagogical Training

- 2018 Seminar on College Teaching, Center for Educational Effectiveness, UC Davis

Additional Relevant Teaching Experience

- 2012 Co-Residency Director, Glenwood Elementary School (Short Hills, NJ), Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, “Pages to Players” School Residency Program, Spring 2012
- 2011 Assistant Residency Director, Glenwood Elementary School (Short Hills, NJ), Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, “Pages to Players” School Residency Program, Spring 2011
- 2010 Teaching Artist, Forest Street School (Orange, NJ), Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, “Pages to Players” School Residency Program, Fall 2010
- 2010 Education Intern, Summer Professional Training Program, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Summer 2010

SERVICE

Disciplinary

- 2017-Present Editor-at-Large, *Analog Game Studies*, www.analoggamestudies.org
Review submissions for annual Generation Analog conference, represent AGS at various GenCon industry events, provide occasional editorial support, and maintain various aspects of AGS website and social media platforms.
- 2014-2017 Co-Editor-in-Chief, *Analog Game Studies*, www.analoggamestudies.org
In collaboration with Aaron Trammell and Evan Torner, co-founded the first online, academic journal devoted to the study of analog games, gaming, and

play. Oversaw “Documentation” area of first volume. Solicited, reviewed, and edited contributions from academics, designers, and community members. Responsible for working closely with one assigned contributor per issue on editing the piece for publication. Built the final posts and supported AGS online presence and promotion.

2016 Conference reviewer, *Rutgers Media Studies Conference: Extending Play 3*, Rutgers University School of Communication and Information, Piscataway, NJ, April 2016

2015 Conference reviewer, *Rutgers Media Studies Conference: Extending Play – The Sequel*, Rutgers University School of Communication and Information, Piscataway, NJ, April 2015

Departmental

2016 Performance Studies departmental symposium organizer, “Radical Resonances and Bodily Boundaries,” UC Davis, October 7-8, 2016.
In collaboration with two other graduate student peers, coordinated all aspects of annual 2-day departmental symposium. Cooperatively set theme, wrote CFP, and reviewed submissions. Individually oversaw programming logistics, including finalizing the schedule, designing and circulating promotional materials, inviting guest speakers and panel moderators, booking space, delegating additional duties, and overseeing flow of events on the days of. Symposium featured wide variety of practice- and theory-based presentations by ~20 departmental affiliates, and welcomed ~40 attendees.

2016-2018 Feminist Research and Theory Designated Emphasis Liaison to the Performance Studies Graduate Group, UC Davis

Campus

2024 Poster, Video, and Oral Presentation Judge, Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) Symposium, UC Irvine

Community

2016 Review Juror, IndieCade
2016 Copy Editor, *#Feminism: A Collection of Nano-Games*
2015 Review Juror, IndieCade
2014 FringeHIGH Talk-Back Facilitator, FringeNYC
2013 Translation Copy Editor, *The Larpfactory Book Project*
2013 Translation Copy Editor, *Stockholm Scenario Festival*
2013 FringeHIGH Talk-Back Facilitator, FringeNYC
2012 FringeHIGH Talk-Back Facilitator, FringeNYC

Training & Professional Development

2024	Suicide Prevention Training: QPR, UC Learning Center (through UCI)
2024	Bystander Intervention Training: Step Up!, UC Learning Center (through UCI)
2024	Dealing With Distressed Students, UC Learning Center (through UCI)
2024	Mental Health First Aid, National Council for Mental Wellbeing
2021	UndocuALLY Training, CSULB Dream Success Center
2019	Theory & Practice of Advising eTutorial, NACADA
2019	Safe Space Training, Chapman University Diversity & Inclusion
2017	Undocu-ALLY Educator, UC Davis AB540 & Undocumented Center
2014	Safe(R) Space Training, Rutgers Center for Social Justice & LGBT Communities
2014	Professional Work Skills Program, Rutgers University Human Resources

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

2024-present	Society of Cinema and Media Studies
2024-present	Society for the Study of Affect
2018	American Comparative Literature Association
2015-2016	Popular Culture Association
2014-2015	Humanities, Arts, Science and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC)