Glossary

acts/efforts of ideation: refer to the player's implicit comparison of the game-world to her empirical surroundings through the creation and continual revision of images.

Anti-Utopia: refers to a tradition that seeks to undermine the utopian philosophy by claiming that the present society is the best there is. The agenda behind such a statement is to consolidate dominant ideology.

anti-utopia: refers to real or fictional ways (texts, films, games, etc.) to communicate the anti-utopian philosophy by either depicting a future world or utopian premise that is utterly pessimistic or by seducing the reader/player to believe in shallow and clichéd solutions.

blanks: refer to overall vacancies in the game that allow for interaction to occur and help the player link the fictional events to her/his empirical surroundings. Blanks speak to the player's urge for combination as she/he closes the blanks between the perspectives she has helped create through both imaginative and ergodic interaction.

classical dystopia: refers to a subgenre of the video game dystopia that involves the player in a malignant gameworld and invites her/him to struggle against it. Although these efforts are in vain, it differs from the anti-utopia in that it triggers fictional anger in the player and evokes the urge to counteract such tendencies in the empirical world.

creative dialectic: refers to the empirical player's communication and engagement with a work of art to discover truth—which is influenced and shaped by the specific cultural surroundings.

critical dystopia: refers to a subgenre of the video game dystopia that comes in two variants. The first variant virtualises a negative society that sends the player on a linear route to resistance and the redemption of the flawed world—or, at least, to an ambiguous ending—whereas the second variant lays the prospect of Utopia into the player's hands. Both variants often discuss the origins of dystopia.

empirical world: refers to the reality outside of the game, narrative, film, or work of art. I use the term synonymously with empirical reality, real world, actual world, contemporary society/surroundings, extratextual reality, and so on.

ergodic interaction: refers to the player's physical input on some sort of input device (such as a controller) to effectuate an event or a series of events in the gameworld. The category of the ergodic includes both the player's active impact on the gameworld as well as her/his cognitive readiness to act.

fiction: the term is used in the sense of fictionality and in a functional approach. It refers to the aggravated referentiality between empirical reality and the reality of fiction, which the player has to decipher/construct through her/his acts of ideation.

gamespace: refers to the ontological layer of the gameworld: the virtual gamespace. It is composed of a set of rules and basic buildings blocks (environments, objects, characters, etc.) that create a malleable space of possibility in which the player can manoeuvre and act.

gameworld: refers to how the player perceives the world of the game as a whole: the virtual gamespace and the fictional storyworld in combination. These create a participatory, explorable space in which most diverse narratives may be co-created.

game world: (not to be confused with gameworld), refers to the participatory, private world of the player (or appreciator) and the 'games' she/he is playing with a work world, which include: ergodic, imaginative, psychological, emancipated games, and so on.

gaps: are places of indeterminacy in the game(world) that can either be filled through imaginative interaction (the filling in of indeterminate spaces such as the

inside of an inaccessible house or character personalities) or through ergodic interaction, where the player actualises certain possibilities to action ingrained in the game. Gaps speak to the player's urge for completion.

imaginative interaction: refers to the player's imaginative games with the gameworld such as imagining the inside of an inaccessible house, the interrelations between characters, considerations about the gameworld's past or how the plot may proceed, and so on.

Utopia: refers to the philosophy of utopianism at whose core lies humankind's wish to create better social surroundings and the endeavour to lead a happy, fulfilled life.

utopia: refers to a genre that virtualises a future which is better than the designers' and players' empirical present. At its core lies the function of shedding a critical light on the empirical world and suggesting micro or macro solutions to it.

playful trial action: refers to the player's multifarious involvement in the world of game narratives. In the sense I am describing, it revolves around the player's ergodic, imaginative, and psychological involvement in the gameworld and in an intimate comparison to the empirical world through acts of ideation.

representation: in the specific sense I am using the term, representation is synonymous with fiction.

science fiction: refers to a broad genre that encompasses subgenres such as the posthuman, space opera, cyberpunk, steampunk, or post-apocalypse. Although I do not subordinate utopia and dystopia to SF (because of the genres' long traditions), there are many affinities between them.

storyworld: refers to the fictional layer of the gameworld. Through a storyworld, the virtual gamespace is endowed with life, creativity, and meaning. In addition, the concept has significant impact on the creation of gamespaces, for if a plot framework is employed, the shape of the gamespace is determined accordingly.

video games: the term (video) game is used to describe all sorts of digital games. For my specific purposes, it describes the subgenre of the video game narrative (if not otherwise stated).

video game narrative: refers to a subgenre of video games that are considered hybrids between traditional (video) games and a new form of participatory narrative. In this study, most video games I refer to are also VGNs (if not otherwise stated).

video game dystopia: a genre that describes a subset of VGNs. It virtualises a negative society and involves the player in a trial action in which she/he may scrutinise the problems of the gameworld and act to redeem them—or at least attenuate their consequences.

work world: refers to the (story)world of a work of art with which the appreciator, reader, spectator, or player engages.