

Acknowledgments

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“It has never been our goal to counsel participants as their seniors but to learn with and from them”—this sentiment from the introduction to the first proceedings of the Young Academics Workshop still rings true and has informed the scholarly exchange with the authors of this anthology. We are more than grateful for the opportunity to work on this second iteration of the “New Directions in Game Research” with so many promising researchers we gladly and proudly call colleagues. Who would have thought that the Young Academics Workshop would become a staple of the renowned Clash of Realities conference and would even bring into being not one but now even two thematically diverse and innovative edited collections?

We consider it a great privilege to support promising young scholars in the early stages of their career. From our own experience we know quite well the importance of collegial support and feedback, and of being provided with opportunities to present and publish while still trying to find your place in academia. Being somewhat responsible for these up-and-coming researchers and the flourishing of their ideas, we hope that we lived up to this considerable responsibility.

Therefore, first and foremost, we want to thank the Young Academics assembled in this book, for their passion and tenacity in working with us on this book—and finishing this work, even in these trying times. We learned so much from you and for this we are grateful.

We want to thank the many people behind the Clash of Realities conference, doing so much for the game studies field nationally and internationally. Especially to Björn Bartholdy and Gundolf S. Freyermuth, supporters of the Young

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Finally, we want to give our thanks to the many institutions supporting our research, allowing us this time-consuming endeavor, among them the *a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School of the Humanities Cologne*, the IT University of Copenhagen, the Cologne Game Lab and ifs internationale filmschule köln. We are very grateful to all professors and staff of the institutes for their support of the Young Academics Workshop over the past years. We would also like to thank Benjamin Beil and the University of Cologne for co-organizing the Clash of Realities 2021 conference. Michael Debus and Miruna Vozaru are also indebted to the European Research Council for the grant that supported the project Making Sense of Games, and also allowed them to bring their contribution to this anthology. Last but not least, we are grateful to the *TH Köln* for their financial support, to *transcript* and especially Linda Dümpelmann for her trouble-free collaboration and to the Federal Ministry of Education and Research for making an Open Access publication possible.