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The Discourse Community's Cut:

Video Games and the Notion of Montage

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The remediation of cinema by video games has always been almost self-evident for film scholars.[1] With both their aesthetics based on sound and moving images, one could only agree with French journalist Daniel Ichbiah: "Of all the disciplines [or, in better terms, of all the artistic fields], cinema remains the one to which the video game is the nearest."[2] From this perspective, one also has to agree with Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's statement that "the fact that the classical cinema predates computer games by a hundred years gives it a repertoire of visual techniques that computer games in fact want to appropriate."[3] However, as Dominic Arsenault and Bernard Perron have argued, it might be time to try to understand *how* and *why* video games have been discussed *through* cinema.[4] This fixation on film has often kept commentators from exploring the video game as a medium in its own right. Moreover, although the analogy between movies and games has so often been made (by scholars, developers, designers, journalists, reviewers, and fans), film concepts have not been used as consistently in the study of video games as one would think.

This chapter reflects on the ways in which the abovementioned analogy has been employed and discussed. It aims to consider the "in-between" and

to concentrate on the prefix "inter" of the *inter*medial perspective taken by the present volume. Consequently, we will examine in detail the ins and outs of the notions of cut and montage as applied to video games. After all, thinking about the relationship between cinema and video games obviously requires the study of one of the—if not the—most important visual techniques employed in film. Indeed, according to the famous French filmmaker and essayist Jean-Luc Godard, in cinema, "talking of *mise en scène* automatically implies montage."[5] From the Soviet filmmakers of the 1920s to the modern cinema of the French New Wave, not to mention the classical Hollywood cinema, shot-assembling has been at the foundation of the filmic language as well as a big part of its immediacy and hypermediacy. Game designers have certainly wanted to appropriate this technique.

The underlying hypothesis of our analysis is that the way one conceives of the relationship between video games and films is shaped by the body of knowledge and practices specific to a discourse community. As Bruce Herzberg has explained:

> [The u]se of the term "discourse community" testifies to the increasingly common assumption that discourse operates within conventions defined by communities, be they academic disciplines or social groups. The pedagogies associated with writing across the curriculum and academic English now use the notion of "discourse communities" to signify a cluster of ideas: that language use in a group is a form of social behavior, that discourse is a means of maintaining and extending the group's knowledge and of initiating new members into the group, and that discourse is epistemic or constitutive of the group's knowledge.[6]

Therefore, the following study compares the references made to montage in two communities: video game scholars and game journalists. We chose a few relevant keywords to conduct this research: "montage," "editing," "cinematic," "transition," "cut," "cut-scene," and "camera angle."[7] In this chapter, we explore their uses and occurrences in scholarly books and essays as well as in video game magazines and websites. Our examination of the different uses of these terms will show that each one of these communities has, so to speak, its director's cut on the question. The analysis of what John Swales has termed discursive "moves"—describing, analyzing, interpreting, promoting, enumerating, quoting, etc.—will exemplify how each community refers to film montage terminology according to their respective discursive system, communicative goals, and pragmatic requirements.[8] Although it may seem as if our study would only confirm common assumptions, it will, above all, showcase

how journalists loosely use film montage terminology to describe games as clearly and fashionably as possible in an attempt to reach as large an audience as possible. In contrast, academics tend to formalize this knowledge through consistent and unambiguous frameworks built through community debates and feedback. Comparing specific rhetorical strategies in these discourse communities will reveal disregarded constraints, whether discursive or social, which determine those two different ways of recalling the same film montage conceptual apparatus. Considering that games are primarily concerned with the continuity and coherence of the action, the end of this chapter will suggest ways in which the academic community can challenge preconceived ideas about the importance given to the cinematographic approach to video game "montage."

Cutting to the chase

The discussion of games-in-light-of-films inevitably leads us to cut-scenes. As Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska point out in their introduction to *ScreenPlay: Cinema/Videogames/Interfaces* (2002): "The most obvious links between games and cinema are the 'cut-scenes' found in many games: short, 'pre-rendered' audio-visual sequences in which the player usually performs the role of more detached observer than is the case in the more active periods of gameplay."[9] Being at the core of both montage and "cut"-scene, the concept of "cut" remains fundamental to our present inquiry. Rune Klevjer's leading study on this subject is enlightening.

In his "Defense of Cutscenes" (2002), Klevjer wonders: "What can possibly be the reason for *cutting up* the players' configurative activities with close-to-parodic, B-movie-type cinematic sequences?"[10] In this formulation, "to cut up" refers to the division of games into pieces, into different segments. Klevjer goes on to assert:

> A cutscene does not *cut off* gameplay. It is an integral part of the configurative experience. Even if the player is denied any active input, this does not mean that the ergodic experience and effort is paused. A cutscene *is never truly "cinematic,"* no matter how poorly implemented it may be. In any case, it cannot avoid affecting the rhythm of the gameplay.[11]

In this instance, "to cut off" stresses the idea of an interruption of the game during non-interactive segments. This is formulated more clearly in Klevjer's historical account where the movement to another scene is accentuated by the use of the expression "to cut away":

> *Pac-Man* (Namco, 1980) was the first game to include cut-scenes in the literal sense of the term: brief non-playable intermissions that *"cut" away* from the action to present a kind of staged "scene" depicting Pac-Man and his monsters chasing each other around. The *animated intermissions* in *Donkey Kong* (Nintendo, 1981) were the first to unambiguously convey a story and a plot: Kong steals the princess and Jumpman saves her.[12]

While Klevjer at first inquired into the "cinematic" nature of the cut-scene, his recent definition associates these sequences with films:

> In a cut-scene, the virtual camera is a *movie camera*, setting up time-space according to the conventions of cinematic fiction. The movie camera speaks through a repertoire of expressive movements (tracking, panning, etc.), framings, and focal techniques. Most importantly, it operates through *cuts in time and space*, which typically follow *the conventions of continuity editing*.[13]

With regard to "the conventions of continuity editing," it is finally here that the word "cut" clearly refers to its filmic designation. Addressing the constant and instantaneous changes from one framing to another, Evan Narcisse has argued that "you have games like this year's *Heavy Rain*, whose interactive cinematic ambitions arguably make it one long cutscene."[14] Relying on quick-time effects, the action of Quantic Dream's game is, indeed, constantly shown from different angles, even in the period of the player-character's exploration of locations. The player sees *Heavy Rain* through a *movie camera*. In contrast to a first-person game, this is not a game aesthetic similar to a long take in the gameworld.

The cut-scene is supposed to be the quintessence of the relationship between video games and films. Nonetheless, Klevjer's study illustrates that "cut" can refer to four different yet related dimensions, which are not directly linked to cinema: division, interruption, transition, and continuity. Consequently, it seems essential to ask how the visual code of montage is, in fact, addressed in discourse about games.[15] On the one hand, our comparative study of discourses in academic video game studies and game journalism contributes to the debate with an in-depth literature review and rich examples that come to validate and nuance what may appear as obvious rhetorical differences between scholars and journalists. On the other hand, and more importantly, it brings into discussion overlooked sets of textual and contextual conditions that shape each community's worldview, discursive "moves," communicative goals, and social interactions.

The academic discourse: cross-fade from film to game studies?

Searching for keywords related to "montage" in academic discourse on video games does not lead to many texts. Indeed, scholars who do not engage with video game aesthetics do not speak of montage at all. Those who write about it mostly come from film and media studies, and, although they emphasize the differences between films and games, they often consider the latter to be in a direct lineage with the former. Mark J.P. Wolf's seminal essay on the articulation of space in video games, "Inventing Space" (1997), exemplifies such a positioning of video game theory as heavily dependent on theoretical developments pertaining to other visual media:

> At present, film and television theory are best equipped for dealing with the medium of video games, which clearly overlaps them in places and extends many of their ideas, such as the active spectator, suture, first-person narrative, and spatial orientation. Video games are certainly deserving of their own branch of theory, and it will likely be one which is in close kinship to film and television theory.[16]

Notions coming from film theory have appeared more than once in academic discourse about games. Despite its scarcity, the notion of montage has been addressed by scholars who write about games. A close reading of such works reveals a certain tension between the need to rely on film and television studies to theorize the video game image and a desire to emancipate the reflection on the art form from other disciplines.

The consensus on cut-scenes

As game segments often described as "cinematic," cut-scenes represent the one area in which there seems to be a general consensus regarding the presence of montage. In addition to Klevjer's aforementioned identification of continuity editing in cut-scenes, both supporters and detractors of the relevance of montage to the analysis of games recognize non-interactive segments as using such cinematic conventions:

> Cut-scenes usually follow the framing and editing conventions of mainstream film—sometimes starting with longer, "establishing" shots, for example, to provide initial orientation before moving to close-ups

> of important detail—and mark a break from moments of more active gameplay.[17]
>
> The cinematic interludes that appear as cut scenes in many games do indeed incorporate montage, but gameplay itself is mostly edit free.[18]
>
> [T]he cut-scene, along with its use of the filmic quality, of editing allows for the relatively quick and easy delivery of lots of information in a short period of time.[19]
>
> Cut-scenes also use cinematic editing methods, and . . . even artifacts of the filming process are sometimes simulated to achieve cinematographic effects, such as depth of focus variations or lens glare.[20]

Replay sequences in driving games have also been described with montage-related vocabulary. King and Krzywinska discuss such sequences in the game *Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2* (Electronic Arts, 2002) in terms of "'cinematic' cuts away from the immediate action, . . . in which 'zone' and 'jump' cams provide instant slow-motion shots of exploits such as slamming into road blocks or making vehicles fly through the air."[21] Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman have also noted the "flurry of filmic styles, camera angles, and rapid-fire editing [which] references Hong Kong action films" in the replays of *Wreckless* (Bunksha Games/Activision, 2002). However, they stress that such visuals "would be too disconcerting to include in real-time gameplay."[22] The place of montage in gameplay proper is the subject of much debate.

Montage in 2D and pre-rendered 3D games

In his aforementioned 1997 essay, Mark J.P. Wolf likens advancements in the representation of video game space to the development of montage and editing in film. He associates single-screen games such as *PONG* (Atari, 1972) and *Space Invaders* (Taito, 1978) with the films of Lumière and Méliès and compares the "nonoverlapping static screens which cut directly one to the next without scrolling" in games such as *Adventure* (Atari, 1979) and *Superman* (Atari, 1979) to two D.W. Griffith films from 1909, *The Lonely Villa* and *A Corner in Wheat*. The parallel with cinema is quite striking in Wolf's affirmation that such a visualization technique is "not only following the precedent set by film but relying on it to allow the player to make sense of the geography of the game" and that "the screens are seen as being immediately adjacent to one

another, an assumption that relies on one's knowledge of continuity editing in film."[23]

Wolf still uses montage-related language in a 2008 book chapter on adventure games when he describes a segment from *Myst* (Cyan, 1993): "A transitional sound effect and cinematic fade-out and fade-in helped to retain the continuity of the experience which could have been ruined by the 'Loading . . .' screens sometimes found in other games."[24] Likewise, Perron and Therrien have discussed graphical adventure games with editing terminology when they align "the progressive use of close-ups" with game designers' cinematic ambitions and also note "a succession of medium shots and close-ups which follows the filmic model" in *King of Chicago* (Cinemaware, 1987).[25] Following this observation, they argue:

> It is with the cutting up of graphical adventure games into various framing distances and the movement of characters along the depth axis (in/out toward the "camera") that . . . the presence of the camera in video games really began to make itself felt. But this camera is, in fact, virtual. It is a label that allows meaning to be produced.[26]

Michael Nitsche similarly relies on the virtual camera to identify a contradicting point of reference for the origin of montage in games:

> *Intellivision World Series Major League Baseball* (Daglow and Dombrower, 1983) allegedly was the first game to use different perspectives toward a single event. Multiple cameras were integrated, fragmenting the interactive playground into separate images from different viewpoints. This introduced the cinematic element of montage to games. From that moment on, players had to connect those images to form a whole game space in their fictional space—their imagination of the game world.[27]

Aside from graphic adventure and sports games, survival horror titles with pre-rendered images have been widely discussed in montage-related terms:

> The crucial sense of real-time continuity demanded by a 3D game prohibits it from employing cinematic techniques of editing (other than those evidenced in cinematic cut-scenes or in changes in fixed camera positions that occur during interactive gameplay in some in [*sic*] third-person shooters, such as *Resident Evil* (Capcom, 1999)).[28]

> Like a film, *Resident Evil 3* structures space and the player's experience through editing and fixed framing, which is often used to create shock

> effects. The intrusive effect of pre-rendered camera angles within gameplay reminds the player that control is limited and that the gameplay is highly predetermined.[29]
>
> Following horror cinema's example, the survival horror genre has broadly relied on the "classic camera," on the analytical cutting up of space and on the clever use of camera angles—in high or low angle—to reduce the player's field of vision and create surprise effects.[30]

In addition to contributing to the acknowledgment of cinematic editing in the *Resident Evil* series, Wee Liang Tong and Marcus Cheng Chye Tan's opposition between pre-rendered and real-time 3D suggests the existence of a certain tension between notions of cut and continuity and the past and future of the art form.

Montage in 3D games

When writing about the representation of space in 3D games in "Inventing Space," Wolf uses camera-related terms even though he implies an absence of montage:

> *Doom*, *Dark Forces*, *Descent*, and *Stonekeep*, and various virtual reality games, provide players with an unbroken exploration of space, allowing them to pan, tilt, track, and dolly through the space, which is usually presented in a first-person perspective view and in real time.[31]

In his 2001 book *The Language of New Media*, Lev Manovich also finds that 3D games are prone to discard montage all the while, paradoxically, writing "in cinematic terms":

> Many computer games also obey the aesthetics of continuity in that, in cinematic terms, they are single-takes. They have no cuts. From beginning to end, they present a single continuous trajectory through a 3D space. This is particularly true for first-person shooters such as *Quake* (id Software, 1996). The lack of montage in these games fits in with a first person point of view they employ. These games simulate the continuity of a human experience, guaranteed by the laws of physics.[32]

In addition, Manovich concludes that "where old media relied on montage, new media substitutes the aesthetics of continuity," thereby implying that

montage is a thing of the past.[33] Scholars such as Tong and Cheng Chye Tan, who describe game narrative as "'filming' without cutting and editing," likewise oppose the "cinematic mode" of cut-scenes and the interactive sequences of 3D games:

> The immersion of a gamer in an interactive simulated 3D environment, in real-time, precludes the employment of cinematic framing and editing techniques, the stylistic modus operandi in the construction of filmic narrative. Although games can, and often do, consist of both immersive interactivity and cinematic cutscenes, these are two distinct modes of visualising the game-environment that cannot be synthesized.[34]

Alexander Galloway's *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture* (2006) traces the origins of the first-person point of view in games to the subjective shot in film. Despite this genealogic alignment of the two media, Galloway's general stance on montage is that it needs to be removed in order to achieve what he calls "gamic vision":

> Abandoning montage creates the conditions of possibility for the first-person perspective in games. The lack of montage is necessary for the first-person way of seeing, even if the game itself is a side-scroller, or a top-view shooter, or otherwise not rendered in the first person. Where film montage is fractured and discontinuous, gameplay is fluid and continuous. Hence the gamic way of seeing is similar to human vision in ways that film, and television and video, for that matter, never were.[35]

What these authors seem to suggest is that technological development should allow 3D games to eliminate montage in favor of a more advanced type of video game image, but not all members of the academic community share this position. For some scholars, graphical improvements seem to further convergence, as game designers increasingly attempt to imitate cinematic montage:

> As its memory and processing speeds grew, and its graphics capabilities improved, more games appeared which licensed franchises from film and television hoped to play on their appeal. Not only content, but cinematic styles of composition and editing, storytelling devices, and other conventions from film and television made their way into video games . . . By the 1990s, video games had title screens, end credits, cutting between different sequences, multiple points of view, multiple locations, and increasingly detailed storylines.[36]

> Three-dimensional videogames not only mimic cinema's aesthetics (lighting, camera angles, cinematography and editing conventions, camera movement, and framing in three-dimensional space) but also mimic some of the inadequacies of cinematic/photographic indexicality, such as lens flare (light hits the lens and scatters around in the lens) and motion blur (objects appear blurry due to high-speed motion) . . . the aesthetics of videogames now resemble the cinema more than they do our own perceptual activities.[37]

Obviously, the academic community is divided when it comes to montage in games, especially as far as more recent installments are concerned. From cut-scenes to the segmentation of space for dramatic or horrific effects and the borrowing of cinematic conventions, the works surveyed so far have approached video game montage as something that is somewhat imposed on the player. But what of the player's input in the fragmentation of represented space?

From the imitation of cinema's visual codes to "interactive montage"

Michael Nitsche is perhaps the most ardent defender of video game montage. In his 2005 essay "Games, Montage, and the First Person Point of View," Nitsche articulates a theory of video game montage around the player's triggering of cuts between the first-person point of view and three other camera positions: the following camera, the overhead view and the predefined third-person perspective. He considers such transitions as "an integral part of the functional gameplay." When the player switches to the sniper rifle view in *GoldenEye 007* (Rare, 1997), activates the "sight-jacking" feature in *Siren* (Project Siren, 2003), navigates the 2D map in *Doom* (id Software, 1993), or uses the camera obscura as a weapon in *Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly* (Tecmo, 2003), "none of these editing strategies simply copies cinematic traditions," but rather work toward "the reinforcement of the player positioning in the game space through the interactive cut."[38]

Where Manovich, Galloway, and others view montage as belonging to media of the past, Nitsche understands it as part of the future of video games: "the development of montage is an ongoing process in video games and maybe players and designers need further "education" before we can unlock more expressive forms. One more reason to start the debate on montage in video games."[39] Nitsche reprised his ideas about interactive montage in his 2008 book *Video Game Spaces*, in which any cut which is somewhat initiated

by the player's actions is included in the matrix of point of view changes. In this newly developed model, montage does not only stem from the player's deliberate change in the virtual camera's perspective. "Location jumping" between predefined frames in *Resident Evil* is also considered a form of "interactive montage" because it is triggered by the player's movement through space.[40]

Despite his negative stance toward montage in 3D games, Galloway recognizes forms of editing reminiscent of interactive montage in cases of "cutting between various visual modes: opening the map in *World of Warcraft* (Blizzard Entertainment, 2004); the use of a sniper rifle or night-vision goggles; cutting between different camera positions, as with looking in the rear-view mirror in driving games like *True Crime* (Luxoflux/Activision, 2003)."[41] Elsa Boyer's edited book *Voir les jeux vidéo* (which can be roughly translated as "to see" or "to view the video game"—reinforcing the collection's strong ties with the medium of cinema) likewise acknowledges the presence of montage in the passage between screens or rooms, or between the game level and the menu or map.[42] Finally, Perron and Therrien also foreground the player's role in video game montage when they equate the possibility of switching points of view at will in *Grand Theft Auto 3* (Rockstar Games, 2001) and its following installments with the "live editing of a car chase."[43]

On account of the many divergent points of view on the matter, it becomes evident that there is no clear-cut vision of montage with regard to the representation of gamespace in the academic community. But what about the other functions of montage?

Fast-forwarding with montage

While the works mentioned so far have regarded montage as a way to articulate space, montage also affects the perception of time. In their introductory chapter to *ScreenPlay*, Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska discuss game time with regard to ellipses:

> Games are far less likely than films to use ellipses to eliminate "dead" time. Time in games may be spent exploring (without always getting anywhere) or interacting with objects that do not have any significant bearing on the main tasks. Most films only give screen time to what is deemed to be essential to storyline, spectacle or the building of character or mood. Action-adventure-type games operate mainly in something closer to real time with ellipses occurring primarily at the end of chapters and

> levels. This creates a significant difference between the pace (and length) of games and that of films.[44]

Mia Consalvo et al. make similar observations about massively multiplayer online games. They rely on "montage sequences" such as the condensed training process in *Rocky* (1976) to define montage as "a linear illustration of the relationship between hard work and the progress of expected rewards . . . [M]ontage provides a unique place to examine 'hard work is rewarded' precisely because montage's illustration of progress and reward relies on redacting hard work to a minimal amount."[45] The montage here becomes a way of fast-forwarding through hard work, which is contrary to the ideal efforts expected to achieve the game's objectives. In this context,

> the burden of work once undertaken by an editor in the form of literal or digital cuts and edits is now shifted onto the player, who must advance his or her avatar through the hard work, denied any condensation of time or effort, or montage of his or her activities. Thus, the unit evolves across media and now takes on a new form, created by and reinforced by the medium of digital games.[46]

Similar to how Nitsche highlights the segmentation of gamespace, Consalvo et al. foreground the importance of the player's input in the unfolding of game time.

However, whereas player control reinforces the relevance of game montage for the former, the latters' point seems to be that player interactivity and montage are, in fact, not compatible. The passage quoted above makes clear that the ambivalence toward montage which Galloway and Boyer, for example, express is nowhere to be found in Consalvo et al.'s argument. Montage is nevertheless retained as a relevant keyword, which is perhaps symptomatic of the tension which inhabits video game studies: that between the reliance on and the movement away from cinema as a point of reference.

As previously outlined, game studies scholars have rarely discussed montage-related issues and have clearly focused on visual and spatial aspects. Indeed, few critics have answered Michael Nitsche's call to "start the debate on montage in games."[47] Interestingly, beyond our own search for occurrences of filmic discourse, a search for the keywords "editing," "edit," and "editor" often leads to mentions of level-editing and modding.[48] Such a use of the term moves away from its cinematic definition. In this sense, the discourse on video games, which comes from disciplines other than film studies, resembles that of journalists and reviewers in this respect.

Game journalism: edit your own montage

Our main intention for scrutinizing the journalistic discourse community was to refine the understanding of both the remediation of montage in video games and its conceptual re-theorization through academic discourses. Accordingly, the methodological challenge was to examine how journalists have addressed the same formal elements that led academics to theorize a film-centric form of "montage" characteristic of video games. These goals were addressed through an in-depth discourse analysis of two influential magazines of the specialized video game press: *Computer Gaming World* and *Electronic Gaming Monthly*.[49] Besides their significant popularity, visibility, and notoriety in gaming culture, these two sources were also selected for their distinct editorial lines, which represent an important balance between PC and console news.

Moreover, by covering the 1980s and the turn of the 2000s, they grant a privileged access to a historical period where the comparisons between film and video games were not only quite common, but also dramatically changing. To diversify these sources and see if the findings echo elsewhere in the journalistic community, our corpus also includes reviews from the most-viewed websites of the video game press: *GameSpot*, *PC Gamer*, *IGN, Destructoid*, and *Joystick Division*.

Our study reveals an important shift in journalists' rhetorical use of central notions related to film montage theory. As mentioned earlier, the concept of "editing" either designates the modding tools conceived to customize a game (scenario editor, map editor, replay editor, graphics editor, editing tool, etc.) or literally refers to the activity of modifying game content: "editing your program," "editing commands," and "entering and editing data."[50]

In fact, journalists rarely use the word "editing" in its cinematographic sense. Most of the time, it occurs in reviews or news coverage of games that precisely remediate the film editor's role as central gameplay mechanic. Video games such as *Bugs Bunny Cartoon Workshop* (Novotrade International, 1990), *Stunt Island* (The Assembly Line, 1992), *Steven Spielberg's Director's Chair* (Knowledge Adventure, 1996), and *The Movies* (Lionhead Studios, 2005) are telltale examples of this type of extreme remediation. These games provide tools for players to create their own movies. Although they all offer different kinds of possibilities, the main idea remains the same: Players pick a location, choose characters, plan their actions, determine camera angles, fix the lighting, etc. Then, as an editor, they work with an in-game editing interface to cut, move, duplicate, or insert a scene, place props, cue some sound effects, organize the shot segmentation, etc. The following quote from an

article about *Stunt Island* aptly exemplifies the film montage rhetoric commonly used to review this type of games:

> By using footage from the eight different cameras, the player [of *Stunt Island*] is then able to enter the *editing room* and *splice together* a full feature action film . . . Via a split screen, the *editor* (player) is able to view any one of the eight films, define a *film segment* and then "paste" it to the actual *movie footage*. The films can be fast forwarded, stepped through, reversed, frozen and have special effects and sound added.[51]

Apart from articles dealing with these simulations of film (post-)production, the notion of "editing" in its filmic sense is almost absent from these gaming outlets. The same holds true for the concept of "montage" although the word's meaning is even more fluid. Sometimes, "montage" acts as a synonym of cut-scene or vaguely refers to a certain in-game arrangement of audiovisual elements:

> Reading objects [in *Psychic Detective*] is another matter. Eric's clairvoyance is an extremely visceral experience: touching a charged object will hit him with an incredible montage of images and emotions.[52]

> The stylized cut-scenes, montages, and voiceovers [of *Total Annihilation: Kingdoms*] made the story seem like a Ken Burns documentary at times.[53]

> *Arthur's Knights II* is a visual treat whose graphics and cut-scenes are occasionally stunning. From the opening montage to the final frames, the artwork strives to recreate the age of chivalry and mysticism.[54]

There are also cases where the term "montage" refers to the assemblage of gameplay elements. The review of *Family Card Games* (Soft Stream International, 1992), for instance, conceived of the game as a "montage of mix-and-match computerized card games."[55] *The Rocketeer* (NovaLogic, 1991) is defined as more than a simple "montage of arcade sequences loosely joined together with comic book storyline."[56] The semantic expansion of the term "montage" goes as far as to designate video montage that offers a compilation of attractional elements of a specific game. This could be to mention a "montage" of all the cut-scenes or death sequences in a game, a "montage" of all the possible endings of a game scenario, a "montage" of gameplay footage, etc.[57]

These results indicate that both discourse communities use film vocabulary. However, journalists do not mobilize it from a conceptual standpoint. Instead, the lexical field of film montage is employed with flexibility and a more

generalist perspective. Therefore, it represents a well-known set of words journalists draw on in order to ensure the clarity and understanding of their commentary. Since theoretical intentions are not at the core of this discourse community, their rhetorical appropriations of film montage serve to describe game elements that have been arranged through game design. It leads to formulations that attest to the informal usefulness of this theoretical apparatus. In fact, journalistic discourse about any game design elements may be argued in montage-related terms. But does it automatically imply montage?

Switching views on the cuts

Journalists and reviewers do not systematically refer to montage when they use film terms. Indeed, when game scholars see evidence of video game "montage," journalists and reviewers rather see the articulation of the "camera" or a broad idea of a moving viewpoint. Effectively, they mainly attribute the "cut" to the game itself or to the "camera," and not to a type of "montage" specific to the video game as an expressive form.[58] Their repurposing of the conceptual apparatus of film theory primarily serves to describe the dramatic effect produced by the camera:

> [T]he developers also chose to pump up *Attitude*'s prematch drama with more elaborate ring entrances, complete with camera cuts and digitized versions of each wrestler's ring music.[59]

> One thing I'll say for [*Resident Evil:*] *Outbreak*—it is absolutely gorgeous. Its fully 3D environments allow for dramatic camera pans and zooms.[60]

> *Resident Evil 2* is no exception, following the familiar formula of suspense achieved through changing perspective and cinematic camera angles.[61]

> Within the survival-horror genre, cinematic camera angles have become a fixture of sorts that serve to create a genuine mood or feeling.[62]

Reviews about games featuring a lot of action corroborate this singular rhetorical use. Again, all the film terminology—not only the one exclusively related to montage—seems adequate to illustrate how the "camera" frames and guides the action:

> [In *The Warrior*] you leap fences, pick door locks, and jump over obstacles as the camera pans around to follow the action.[63]

> If combat conditions are just right [in *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*], cinematic cameras will kick in to show the action from a more satisfying vantage point. Players can control the camera, but it also adjusts itself intelligently as it follows you.[64]

> [In *Max Payne 3*] killing the last guy in a section treats you to a close-up of his demise. But with Euphoria in control, when you keep shooting during the death cinematic the body responds to every bullet, performing a morbid, slow-motion dance on its way to the ground.[65]

Even in articles about graphic adventure games and survival horror games—two genres known for their thoughtful remediation of film language—journalists tend to reorient film montage rhetoric for other critical interests. For instance, many reviews analyze how certain formal elements remediate the aesthetics of film and create an effect associated with the experience of cinema. However, they do not conceptualize these elements as part of a "montage":

> *Cinemaware* interactive movies feature the look and feel of real film, complete with closeups, zooms, and changes in perspective . . . Cuts, pans and closeups simulate a real movie experience.[66]

> Through use of their new SCI (Sierra Creative Interpreter) [in *Police Quest II: The Vengeance*], Sierra has doubled the graphic resolution capabilities of their previous release. They are now able to add cinematographic touches such as zoom shots, split screens and film wipes.[67]

> At certain points during [*Creature Shock*], the viewpoint will shift to a dramatic, exterior viewpoint . . . It's done with an artistic flair that reflects an attention to detail rivaling commercial cinematography.[68]

> You play [*Alone in the Dark*] from a third-person perspective that's switched constantly, and the multiple "camera angles" give the game a distinct cinematic look and feel.[69]

As these examples show, journalists reflect on their experience of film remediation in video games through the camera and all formal effects that recall the conventions of film language. It explains why certain montage-specific notions like "cut" and "transition" are used, without clear distinction, alongside camera-specific notions: "zoom," "pan," "close-up," and "camera angle." This discursive appropriation of film montage terminology is also observable through

the interchangeability of words such as "switch," "shift," or "change" to identify a "cut" or a "transition" between viewpoints: "[Shadowcaster] changes the perspective from which one views the dungeon"; "the player's perspective shifts"; "the view shifts to a rear, external view of the craft"; "the camera switches from static angles to one that moves around"; "the camera keeps switching angles"; "[t]he camera angle changes abruptly and often cuts off your view."[70]

The semantic expansion of the terms "scene" and "sequence" presents a similar adaptation of film concepts. Instead of referring to the organization of shots into a coherent narrative unit, "scene" and "sequence" mostly designate a spatially and/or temporally finite portion of a game that has a distinct type of gameplay or that requires precise interactions. In some cases, they are employed as synonyms of "puzzles," "rooms," "levels," "screens," "segments," "turns," "phases," etc. Expressions such as the "action sequence," the "fighting scene," the "arcade sequence," the "space combat sequence," etc. are thus common. Semantic disparities keep on accumulating even in the journalistic remixing of the idea of "transition." Reviewers call upon this notion to address any back-and-forth process between a variety of elements (camera angles, loading process, levels, gameplay segments, cut-scenes, menus, characters, etc.):

> [In *The 7th Guest*] the player is forced to endure the long video sequence of motion from one location to another, sometimes very slowly . . . In addition, after witnessing the action several times, I would prefer the option of making the transition pass more quickly to alleviate the frustration that can develop while waiting for the game to transport the player to the next location.[71]

> When one moves from one location to another [in *Myst*], each scene cross-fades to the next. If these fades seem too slow, it is possible to opt for fast transitions that fling one directly into the next scene.[72]

> *Max Payne 3* transitions almost seamlessly from cutscenes to gameplay sequences and back . . . The non-interactive sequences give the impression that they fold in and out organically, but serve another function as cover for the game's lengthy loading sequences.[73]

As a matter of fact, journalists occasionally describe a transition with montage-related terms such as cuts, fades in/out, dissolves, wipes, iris, etc. Nevertheless, these examples show that their principal concerns are not to apply ideas pertaining to editing or montage to the video game. Instead, their

interest primarily focuses on the seamlessness of transitions and their rhythmic effect on the gameplay experience. Therefore, the worldview of the journalistic discourse community does not indicate any systematic evidence of a form of video game "montage."

Different kinds of discourse assemblage

Insofar as journalists are not looking for a terminology as precise and consistent as the one needed in the academic discourse community, it was certainly expected that they would have less concerns about what scholars have conceptualized as "montage" in video games. Their body of knowledge becomes even more obvious from their ways of addressing the global assemblage of a video game:

> The game [*The 7th Guest*], presented in gothic horror garb, consists primarily of a *collection of* 23 logic puzzles *woven together* in the form of a graphic adventure that takes the player through the 22 rooms of Stauf's eerie mansion.[74]

> As a result, *Inca* comes across as a loosely *strung together series of action sequences, mazes and puzzles*, resulting in the appearance of a *collection of games* rather than a single title. Yes, the story does emerge, but mostly between *segments of play*.[75]

> [*Star Wars: Rebel Assault*] is a fresh experience, a *melding of* arcade action and cinema that showcases the possibilities of a CD-ROM game . . . The game is *composed of* a series of 15 chapters . . . The chapters consist of "mini games" all *threaded together* in a linear, cinematic plot . . . Most chapters are "aim and shoot" games, while a few others test your flight and maneuvering skills.[76]

Examples where the configuration of the game as a whole is not even labeled as "montage" or "editing" are common formulations. In the end, *if* academics and journalists mobilize the same montage-related terms, their significations and rhetorical uses are mostly divergent. The notion of "discourse community" explains how these discursive singularities are part of what defines a community, its social interactions, and the way it experiences, interprets, and further discusses/writes about things. Patricia Bizzell has added some critical insights to Herzberg's definition of a discourse community presented in the introduction, explaining that a

> discourse community is a group of people who share certain language-using practices. These practices can be seen as conventionalized in two ways.
>
> Stylistic conventions regulate social interactions both within the group and in its dealings with outsiders . . . Also, canonical knowledge regulates the world views of group members, how they interpret experience . . . The key term "discourse" suggests a community bound together primarily by its uses of language, although bound perhaps by other ties as well, geographical, socioeconomic, ethnic, professional, and so on.[77]

Through this lens, the comparison of two different forms of appropriations of film montage theory for the study of video games is useful for two main reasons. First, it enables us to highlight underestimated textual and contextual constraints that give discourse communities both their uniqueness and blindness. Second, it can serve to reveal the multiple biases of interpretation that have conditioned some of the most common observations, rhetorical strategies, and repurposing of preconceived ideas.

The main goal of the journalists and reviewers cited in this chapter was to describe the aesthetics and effects of various "forms of montage" in video games. Their more flexible use of film-centric and montage-related concepts illustrate that their motivations are not oriented toward theorizing the medium of video game, but rather toward video games as enjoyable and playable objects. More tied to the topicality of games and game releases, their conditions of expression are molded by the immediacy of their job and by their canonical "communicative genres" such as articles, reviews, news reports, written interviews, etc.[78] This situation requires a type of rhetoric that has to be synthetic, *in media res*, and focused on currentness and factual information. Therefore, cinematographic terms present an efficient body of knowledge which allows journalists and critics to easily identify audiovisual elements, describe the experience, and produce a commentary that can be widely understandable by a large and diversified readership which seeks news about games. This discursive logic exposes another quality of the journalistic discourse community, namely the attractiveness of the rhetoric, whether for critical or marketing interests. Indeed, the need to capture the attention of the reader and to inform them about game products they may have bought (or want to buy) determines the informal use of the conceptual apparatus of film montage. In the context of the present study, especially when looking at the 1990s, where remediating film was one desirable way for the video game to legitimize itself as a medium, the montage-related language appears as a trending lexicon to describe the appeal or disappointment of a game. If journalists share the vocabulary of cinema, they do not conceptually envision

video games in terms of "montage" because it does not reflect their communicational intentions, their professional requirements, nor the reading interests of their target audience.

On the other hand, although only a small portion of the scholars discussed above have argued in favor of "video game montage" as a unique form of expression, theoretical concerns related to the functionalities, conventions, and aesthetic forms of montage nevertheless permeate their contributions to the discussion of games. Like journalists, textual and contextual restrictions particular to the academic discourse community shapes scholars' discursive purposes. One of the principal motivations of gaming scholars is to take an analytical distance to understand and analyze video games or use them to study other phenomena. Due to the long-term scope of research projects and the nearly unpredictable duration of peer review, researching, writing, and publishing are surely much slower in the academic than in the journalistic community. The scholarly approach produces communicative genres which tend to be more expansive in scope and published on a less frequent basis (scholarly articles, theses, books, conference proceedings, etc.). Compared with video game journalism, which addresses multiple communities, scholars' communicative genres, goals, and moves aim toward a niche audience of specialized readers. On a discursive level, historicizing, problematizing, recognizing lineages and ruptures, asking questions, creating debates, opening up dialogues, and developing analytical tools are key discursive moves in the academic community. On a social level, scholars need to publish. They have to gain peer recognition in order to secure a permanent job in an academic institution. They are struggling for funds, possibly managing important research budgets, etc. All those discursive and pragmatic factors affect how game scholars experience, interpret, and theorize the video game as an art form that remediates cinematographic "montage." The literature review presented in this chapter thus exposes the often-discarded epistemological background and social context that have framed references to film montage in video game studies.

Every discursive system is structured by "common public goals," "mechanisms of intercommunication," "[communicative] genres," "specific lexis," and a "threshold level of members."[79] These guidelines frame a set of rules (whether discursive, temporal, financial, editorial, ethical, professional, social, etc.), which regulate why each community has its singular voice and worldview. Although these conditions make some discourses possible and others more difficult to express, these discourses may still overcome their apparent limitations without losing their uniqueness. Quite the contrary, the comparative study of discourse communities is a valuable methodology to reflect on notions in a more encompassing way and from a framework

which considers a multiplicity of viewpoints and various rhetorical strategies. As Bizzell has rightly pointed out, "Attention to the way discourse confers authority on knowledge and its possessors has prompted study of discourse conventions, the 'rules of the game' for winning authority."[80] Ultimately, everyone has to be conscious of the influence they have on the modeling of their readership's comprehension. Through a polyphonic lens, even the discursive regulations of the most marginalized discourse community of gaming culture have the potential to clarify and refine the assumptions and preconceived ideas of the more established one. This approach has the benefits of overcoming the downside of essentialism by insisting on the importance of studying discourses not only in a given discourse community, but also those in-between them.

This implies the effort not only of looking at how other communities have used similar concepts differently, but also of understanding the space where communities collaborate or, more importantly, where they disagree and contradict: "[B]eing well informed does not entail just collecting evidence, but listening to the contradictions that arise from membership in various discourse communities."[81] Since this porosity also qualifies the relationship between major discourse communities of the gaming culture, the present analysis can benefit from case studies of individuals that contribute in more than one discourse community.

As a journalist who has adopted a scholarly approach to reflect on "montage" in video games, Steven Poole might be a good example of the positive outcome that may emerge from the communities' encounters, overlaps, and contradictions. Poole enriched the academic knowledge about video games with his seminal *Trigger Happy: Videogames and the Entertainment Revolution* (2000) by embracing his journalistic perspective while drawing on a variety of scholars (such as Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Brian Sutton-Smith, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Michel Foucault, Martin Heidegger, Johan Huizinga, and Vladimir Propp) and employing an academic register by including quotations, a bibliography, and an index, among others. For instance, Poole underlined the incompatibility between montage and the visual necessities of gameplay by comparing driving games to car commercials:

> [M]ontage creates a sense of rhythm and motion, but such an approach would be fatal in a videogame, where the player has to control the car, and thus requires a continuous, unbroken viewpoint—either a cockpit cam or follow cam. This is essential for easy, intuitive navigation; if the camera cuts to a different position so that your vehicle appears to be going the other way, the physical videogame controls will suddenly be reversed in their effects. You're going to crash nastily.[82]

He further argued against a film-based approach to montage in video games and stated that automatic changes in camera positions "are not performing traditional montage but trying to give the player a better view of the action under his control." Clearly, for Poole, the "function always takes precedence over such stylish touches," and "true montage" is simply not used in games.[83] Far from closing the debate on montage's relevance for the video game medium, Poole's early demonstration of its disagreement with gameplay, along with Lev Manovich's claims about an aesthetics of continuity, sparked Michael Nitsche's development of the idea of "interactive montage."

Poole's contribution to the formation of game studies was not only a major one because academic writing about video games was practically non-existent at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Rather, he took the necessary critical distance from his own discourse community to open his mind to the voices of others, such as scholars. His nuanced way of thinking about "montage" in video games was certainly due to the uniqueness of his liminal perspective (partly journalistic and partly academic). His case shows that establishing bridges between discourse communities represents a key initiative from which one can reflect on discourse communities' epistemological mindsets, discursive rules, and "authority on knowledge."[84] It should now be clear that each discourse community of the gaming culture has something to gain from keeping their gate of knowledge open to other communities, if only for the critical consciousness this fosters.

"Cut!" and "action!"

The close inspection of cinema and montage-related concepts in two discourse communities has exposed the proliferation of these concepts in discourse throughout history, and the inconsistent integration of this language, from clear references to the remediation of movie-making in games to the expanding significations of notions such as "editing," "cut," "transition," and "scene." Following these observations, it is only natural to ask if the concept of montage and related notions can aptly refer to some aspects of the video game experience, and whether such notions help us understand the specificities of the medium.

A short analysis of one of the most visible productions in recent history will make it easier to summarize the findings about the fuzziness and permeability of cinema-related language in the gaming community and to highlight some elements of game design that could be related to such notions. *Grand Theft Auto V* (Rockstar, 2013) integrates viewpoint manipulation in a way typical of many contemporary games: Players can switch the point of view between

predefined positions, moving progressively further from the protagonist in a continuous camera movement. The PS4 and XBox One releases of the game (2014) also integrate a first-person option (and, interestingly, here the game engine cuts directly to this view upon request). In an early mission, the Italian American Michael bonds with the younger African American named Franklin; the pair will become partners in crime for the rest of the game. During the introductory cut-scene, Michael gives Franklin "lessons" about the criminal world: "Today's lesson is all about humility. Tomorrow we try a training montage." "A training what?" replies Franklin. "I was just lost in an 80s movie fantasy," retorts Michael.[85]

A few moments later, the pair learn that Michael's yacht has been stolen, and proceed to hunt the thieves on the highway. The plan is so improbable that it does appear to parody 1980s action movies: Michael instructs Franklin to get on the hood of his car during the high-speed chase, as Michael tries to get close enough so that Franklin can jump on the boat. When players manage to complete this wacky part of the plan, a most interesting indication appears on the top left corner of the screen: "press 'O' to toggle cinematic camera." If players decide to use this option, the scene cuts to show Franklin's progress on the yacht. Much like the semantic flexibility witnessed in the discourse of game journalism, this specific phrasing seems to avoid the notion of cut; it invites players to seamlessly transition into another point of view in the continuity of the interactive scene, while attributing this reframing to the virtual camera. But as a matter of fact, this mission in *GTA V* acts as a tutorial for players who would like to perform their very own interactive cross-editing.

While they perform cross-cutting in this scene, players do not lose control of the vehicle completely, and they can come back at any moment to the common "behind the car" view that suits this type of gameplay. However, the system must provide assistance with the guidance of the vehicle, in order to avoid unfair crashes during the shots that show Franklin's progress. This manipulation of the interactive situation brings up one last point to consider when discussing montage in video games: player agency is far from being integrated in a methodical, consistent manner in gameworlds. Andreas Gregersen and Torben Grodal have explored the mapping between primitive action (P-action)—the actual manipulations of players on the interface—and the action represented in the virtual world. Of course, many different types of this mapping have been implemented in the history of the medium, leading to a vast repertoire of design strategies.[86] The P-action and the virtual action can be more or less isomorphic (similar in execution and effort), and some mappings are downright symbolic in nature. In *GTA V*, driving a vehicle entails a type of symbiotic mapping, by virtue of a minimal similarity between the actual manipulations on the game controller (turning with a joystick, pushing

on the triggers to accelerate) and the vehicular interface being manipulated in the virtual world. Granted, the gestures of the player do not necessitate as much effort and could be said to be "metonymic" in nature: the virtual action is performed through a similar but miniature gesture on the interface.[87] The game also integrates other types of mapping that are closer to the symbolic end of the spectrum. For instance, getting in the car or interacting with the environment only requires the player to press a button to see the avatar perform the virtual action automatically. Mapping may be said to be punctual, in that it only occurs at the beginning of the action. Furthermore, selecting a weapon during the numerous shoot-out scenes involves scrolling through iconic representation of what is currently held in inventory, before confirming the selection; grabbing ammunition on the ground also occurs in what should be called a highly synthetic form of virtual action feedback.[88] The flow of the action prevails over the sequencing of moving images.

GTA V's "mapping situation" provides a good indicator of the competences needed to perform and progress through the game: much more player effort is dedicated to coordination during driving sequences, and synthetic feedback ensure more attention is dedicated to aiming than managing equipment during shoot-outs. The complexity and diversity of action mappings that have been presented here is far from being limited to the very specific example of *GTA V*. Of course, these design choices vary greatly between game genres, which often build on the same common mapping scenarios to integrate player effort. But in many of these genres, synthetic mappings have become an integral part of gameplay expectations; players are not "denied any condensation of time and effort," for their very ability to perform virtual actions rely heavily on such contractions.[89]

One could choose to refer to this type of manipulation in the modeling of interactive scenarios as "actional montage"—a term that should trigger a rather clear idea in the minds of fellow scholars working in the field. But other discourse communities, much like the young Franklin quoted above, might reply with a simple query: "Actional what?" Perhaps an expression such as "actional design" would be more appropriate in order to convey the specificity of this practice; more general expressions such as "actional articulation" or even "actional *mise en scène*" would also fit. After all, many game designers are inspired in their creative activity by their knowledge of other media practices beyond cinema, and by the most audible discourse communities. Studying the plurality of these communities active in the world of gaming is useful in that it provides—now evoking Michael's position in *GTA V*—a "lesson in humility": everyone should be mindful about the language dynamics and their implications when they talk about cultural practices.

Notes

1 This chapter was written within the framework of GRAFICS (Groupe de Recherche sur l'Avènement et la Formation des Institutions Cinématographique et Scénique—Research Group on the Creation and Formation of Cinematographic and Theatrical Institutions) of the University of Montreal, supported by the Quebec Research Fund—Society and Culture (FRQSC). It is mainly based on results obtained on the occasion of the project "Histoire du montage à l'aune des mutations technologiques du cinéma: pratiques, esthétiques, discours—History of montage in the light of the technological changes of film: practices, aesthetics, discourse," funded by the Research Council of Social Sciences of Canada (SSHRC 2013–18).

2 Daniel Ichbiah, *La saga des jeux vidéo* (Paris: Éditions Générales First, 1997), 353; our translation.

3 Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 87.

4 Dominic Arsenault and Bernard Perron, "De-Framing Video Games from the Light of Cinema," *G|A|M|E—Games as Art, Media, Entertainment: The Italian Journal of Game Studies* 4 (2015), http://www.gamejournal.it/arsenault_perron_deframing/.

5 Jean-Luc Godard, *Godard on Godard*, trans. Tom Milne (New York: Da Capo, 1972), 39.

6 Bruce Herzberg in John Swales, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 21.

7 Both "cut-scene" and "cutscene" will be used freely, so as to avoid the need to underline the choice of one term over the other. This will also be the case for "closeup" and "close-up."

8 Swales, *Genre Analysis*.

9 Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska, "Introduction: Cinema/Videogames/Interfaces," in *ScreenPlay: Cinema/Videogames/Interfaces*, ed. Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska (London: Wallflower, 2002), 11.

10 Rune Klevjer, "In Defense of Cutscenes," in *Computer Game & Digital Cultures Conference Proceedings*, ed. Frans Mäyrä (Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2002), 194; our emphasis.

11 Ibid., 195; our emphases.

12 Rune Klevjer, "Cut-Scenes," in *The Routledge Companion to Video Game Studies*, ed. Mark J.P. Wolf and Bernard Perron (London: Routledge, 2014), 306; our emphases.

13 Ibid.; first italics in original; second and third emphases added.

14 Evan Narcisse, "Press 'B' to Skip: A Brief History of the Cutscene," *Time*, June 25, 2010, http://techland.time.com/2010/06/25/press-"b"-to-skip-a-brief-history-of-the-cutscene/.

15 Like it is commonly—and unfortunately—the case, the audio codes of montage are not being dealt with. It is as much an analysis bias of our visual culture as a finding of our research.

16 Mark J.P. Wolf, "Inventing Space: Toward a Taxonomy of On- and Off-Screen Space in Video Games," *Film Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1997): 11. Wolf's heavy reliance on film theory to describe the video game experience may be explained by the need to appeal to the expectations of a readership interested by cinema, since the article was published in *Film Quarterly.*

17 Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska, "Film Studies and Digital Games," in *Understanding Digital Games*, ed. Jason Rutter and Jo Bryce (London: Sage, 2006), 115.

18 Alexander Galloway, *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 64.

19 Paul Cheng, "Waiting for Something to Happen: Narratives, Interactivity and Agency and the Video Game Cut-scene," in *Situated Play: Proceedings of DiGRA 2007 Conference*, 20.

20 Grant Tavinor, *The Art of Video Games* (Malden MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 112.

21 Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska, *Tomb Raiders and Space Invaders: Videogame Forms and Contexts* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 167. Since cut-scenes are sometimes referred to as "cinematics," the formulation in this quotation may seem confusing. In this particular instance, however, "cinematic" is used as an adjective to describe the "cuts" in the visual rendering of the action.

22 Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman, *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 414.

23 Wolf, "Inventing Space," 14–6. Wolf further reinforces *Adventure*'s connection with cinema in *The Video Game Explosion*: "Released in 1979, *Adventure* featured thirty interconnected screens that used *the cinematic convention of cutting* one to the next rather than scrolling" (82; emphasis added).

24 Mark J.P. Wolf, "Genre Profile: Adventure Games," in *The Video Game Explosion: A History from* PONG *to PlayStation and Beyond*, ed. Mark J.P. Wolf (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008), 88.

25 Bernard Perron and Carl Therrien, "Da *Spacewar!* a *Gears of War*, o comme l'immagine videoludica è devintata più cinematografica," *bianco e nero*, no. 564 (May–August 2009), 45; our translation.

26 Ibid., 48; our translation.

27 Michael Nitsche, *Video Game Spaces: Image, Play, and Structure in 3D Worlds* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 116.

28 Wee Liang Tong and Marcus Cheng Chye Tan, "Vision and Virtuality: The Construction of Narrative Space in Film and Computer Games," in *ScreenPlay. Cinema/Videogames/Interfaces*, ed. Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska (London: Wallflower, 2002), 99.

29 Tanya Krzywinska, "Hands-On Horror," in *ScreenPlay: Cinema/Videogames/Interfaces*, ed. Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska (London: Wallflower, 2002), 209.

30 Perron and Therrien, "Da *Spacewar!* a *Gears of War*," 47; our translation.

31 Wolf, "Inventing Space," 20.

32 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 135.

33 Ibid.

34 Tong and Cheng Chye Tan, "Vision and Virtuality," 99, 104.

35 Galloway, *Gaming*, 65.

36 Mark J.P. Wolf, "The Study of Video Games," in *The Video Game Explosion: A History from PONG to PlayStation and Beyond*, ed. Mark J.P. Wolf (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008), 20.

37 Timothy Crick, "The Game Body: Toward a Phenomenology of Contemporary Video Gaming," *Games and Culture* 6, no. 3 (2011): 261.

38 Michael Nitsche, "Games, Montage, and the First Person Point of View," in *Changing Views: Worlds in Play*, ed. Suzanne de Castell and Jennifer Jenson (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 2–3.

39 Ibid., 4.

40 Nitsche, *Video Game Spaces*, 123.

41 Galloway, *Gaming*, 65.

42 Elsa Boyer, "Cut-scenes: L'Image entrecoupée," in *Voir les jeux video: Perception, construction, fiction*, ed. Elsa Boyer, Elie During, Emmanuel Siety, and Paul Sztulman (Montrouge: Bayard, 2012), 102. Like Galloway's, Boyer's vision is not without ambivalence, as she reduces montage to its strictly functional aspects: "If there is montage, it is in its most minimal sense of chronological and spatial linear juxtaposition, where it is used primarily to smooth the cut, to render it invisible and inconsequential for the player so that, for example, the functions of the directional keys are not changed when switching from one screen to another or when the camera changes position and angle within the same screen" (102; our translation).

43 Perron and Therrien, "Da *Spacewar!* a *Gears of War*," 49; our translation.

44 King and Krzywinska, "Introduction," 14.

45 Mia Consalvo, Timothy Dodd Alley, Nathan Dutton, Matthew Falk, Howard Fisher, Todd Harper, and Adam Yulish, "Where's My Montage? The Performance of Hard Work and Its Reward in Film, Television, and MMOGs," *Games and Culture* 5, no. 4 (2010): 385.

46 Ibid., 393.

47 Nitsche, "Games," 4.

48 For example, Salen and Zimmerman, *Rules of Play*, 548, 550; Hector Postigo, "Of Mods and Modders: Chasing Down the Value of Fan-Based Digital Game Modifications," *Games and Culture* 2, no. 4 (2007): 302, 307, 308; Elisabeth R. Hayes and Ivan Alex Games, "Making Computer Games and Design Thinking:

A Review of Current Multiplayer Games," *Games and Culture* 3, no. 3–4 (2008): 319; Anders Tychsen and Michael Hitchens, "Game Time: Modeling and Analyzing Time in Multiplayer and Massively Multiplayer Games," *Games and Culture* 4, no. 2 (2009): 178; and Olli Sotamaa, "When the Game Is Not Enough: Motivations and Practices Among Computer Game Modding Culture," *Games and Culture* 5, no. 3 (2010): 244.

49 The Video Games Observation and Documentation University Lab (LUDOV) provided scanned and searchable versions of the complete *Computer Gaming World* magazine collection (268 issues between 1981 and 2006) and a considerable selection of issues for *Electronic Gaming Monthly* (79 issues between 1989 and 2009). Since we do not mean to pad out the references section, all references to the video game press are included in the notes only.

50 William Edmunds, *Computer Gaming World*, November–December 1981, 13; Marty Halpern, *Computer Gaming World*, May–June 1982, 28; James Trunzo, *Computer Gaming World*, September–October 1986, 32.

51 Tim Trimble, *Computer Gaming World*, August 1992, 17; emphases added.

52 Arinn Dembo, *Computer Gaming World*, July 1996, 120.

53 Thierry Nguyen, *Computer Gaming World*, September 1999, 151.

54 Arcadian Del Sol, *Computer Gaming World*, December 2002, 119.

55 *Computer Gaming World*, July 1992, 16.

56 *Computer Gaming World*, November 1991, 57.

57 Notably, searching for "montage" in the databases of the chosen online sources leads to articles with headlines referring to paratextual videos that offer a montage of game content: "E3 2011: Wii U Third-Party Montage Actually Xbox 360, PS3, PC Footage" (Tor Thorsen, *GameSpot*, June 8, 2011, http://www.gamespot.com/articles/e3-2011-wii-u-third-party-montage-actually-xbox-360-ps3-pc-footage/1100-6318243/); "Dishonored Kill Compilation Shows a Montage of Creative Murder" (Omri Petitte, *PCGamer*, November 14, 2012, http://www.pcgamer.com/dishonored-kill-compilation/); or "Mortal Kombat 10 E3 Footage Komes Komplete with Fatality Montage" (Phil Savage, *PCGamer*, June 9, 2014, http://www.pcgamer.com/mortal-kombat-10-e3-footage-komes-komplete-with-fatality-montage/).

58 In his study of the ways theoreticians, critics, and spectators talk about the camera, Edward Branigan concludes: "I believe that when a film critic speaks about a camera, he or she is tacitly invoking some theory of one or more human abilities that a camera is said to mimic, explore, refuse, transcend, and so on. The term 'camera' becomes a shorthand way to make assertions about the meanings to be found in a film, assuming that a particular bodily process is the most prominent at that moment and operates in the assumed way" (166).

59 Gary Mollohan, *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, July 1999, 108.

60 *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, June 2004, 100.

61 Roy Dulin, *GameSpot*, March 26, 1999, http://www.gamespot.com/reviews/resident-evil-2-review/1900-2532786/.

62 Ivan Sulic, *IGN*, December 3, 2002, http://ca.ign.com/articles/2002/12/03/silent-hill-2-review.

63 *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, November 2005, 33.

64 Nick Suttner, *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, January 2009, 58.

65 Tyler Wilde, *PCGamer*, March 2, 2012, http://www.pcgamer.com/max-payne-3-preview-2/.

66 *Computer Gaming World*, August 1986, 46.

67 Michael Chaut, *Computer Gaming World*, February 1989, 42.

68 Jeff James, *Computer Gaming World*, February 1995, 128.

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