

January 7, 2019

For Immediate Release

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***American Journal of Play* Publishes Special Issue that Explores Work and Play**

ROCHESTER, NY—Can work be considered play? Can play involve work? The newest issue of The Strong's *American Journal of Play* (<http://www.journalofplay.org>), guest edited by J. Talmadge Wright of Loyola University Chicago and David G. Embrick of the University of Connecticut, challenges the work and play binary, exploring the interrelationship between the two experiences. A series of articles from some of the leading researchers and thinkers on the topic explore the Marxian perspective of work and play, the social fight for shorter work hours and more free play, and the emotional work of family negotiations in digital play spaces.

In the article and book excerpt, "Twitch and Work of Play," author T. L. Taylor, professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, examines the work of online game streamers—players that broadcast their video game play on social media platforms like Twitch. Taylor discusses how they convert their private play into public entertainment, which often turns their hobby into lucrative side-jobs or even careers. She argues that this convergence of play and work blurs the lines between the two.

Taylor writes, "The work of play is often deeply transformative. It can be filled with difficult pleasures, enjoyable instrumentality, and complex negotiations between system, self, and others. It can modulate in complicated ways between freedom and constraint, self-direction and obligation to oneself or a community."

Taylor argues that looking at the work-play dichotomy through the lens of live streaming might also promote a more meaningful look at labor and leisure on a macro level.

Additional articles in Vol. 11, No. 1 of the *American Journal of Play* (<http://www.journalofplay.org>) include:

"Liberating Human Expression: Work and Play or Work versus Play," by J. Talmadge Wright. The author challenges the traditional notion of opposition between work and play, arguing that play acts as "a means to access what is real." He applies this thinking to the world of online roleplaying video games and talks about how gamers can accomplish goals and form relationships through play.

"The Politics of Playtime: Reading Marx through Huizinga on the Desire to Escape from Ordinary Life," by Michael J. Roberts. The author argues that it's important to maintain the difference between work and play, despite a recent push to merge them. Keeping this distinction aids the labor movement, which pushes for shorter work hours and can lead to an increase in time to play.

"The Emotional Work of Family Negotiations in Digital Play Space: Searching for Identify, Cooperation, and Enduring Conflict," by J. Talmadge Wright and David G. Embrick. The authors explore the world of massively, multiplayer online roleplaying games and their real world and in-world implications. They examine the change in family dynamics and responsibilities resulting from playing these types of games. Through this lens, they also look at the complex communications and social dynamics within the games themselves.

"Playing to Death" by Ken S. McAllister and Judd Ethan Ruggill. The authors examine the relationship between death and play in video games. They argue that games often provide players with a "playground at the edge of morality," which pushes thoughts of death away and instead creates a perception that it's predictable and controllable.

The complete issue of the *American Journal of Play* can be accessed freely online at www.journalofplay.org (<http://www.journalofplay.org/>). Printed editions are also available for subscription and single-copy purchase.

About the American Journal of Play

The *American Journal of Play* is a peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary publication that serves as a forum for discussing the history, science, and culture of play. Published three times each year by [The Strong museum \(http://www.museumofplay.org\)](http://www.museumofplay.org) in Rochester, New York, the *Journal* includes articles, interviews, and book reviews written for a broad readership that includes educators, psychologists, play therapists, sociologists, anthropologists, folklorists, historians, museum professionals, toy and game designers, policy makers, and others who consider play for a variety of reasons and from various perspectives.

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