

Editorial

Welcome to the IJRP!

The mission of the *International Journal of Role-Playing* is to be a publication venue for the top-class articles discussing role-playing and role-playing games. The scope of the journal is broad, being inclusive for relevant submissions from a number of fields. Due to our ambition, the road from the first issue, published in 2008, has been a long one. It is our sincere hope that you, the reader, will enjoy the fruits of our quest for quality scholarship, presented in the five articles included in this issue.

Quite a bit has happened on the topic of role-playing research since we published our inaugural issue. For instance, on the topic of recreational tabletop role-playing, McFarland alone has published three notable monographs: Sarah Lynne Bowman's *The Functions of Role-Playing Games* (2010), Jennifer Grouling Cover's *The Creation of Narrative in Tabletop Role-Playing Games* (2010) and Michael J. Tresca's *The Evolution of Fantasy Role-Playing Games* (2011). Other interesting works include the peer-reviewed collection *Think Larp*, published in Knudepunkt 2011, and the artbook *Nordic Larp*, that documents a cross-section of 30 notable Nordic live-action role-playing games.

In this environment, the role of the *International Journal of Role-Playing* is to bring together the divergent threads of scholarship. What can creation of narrative in tabletop role-playing games contribute to our understanding of online role-play? How can Nordic larp researchers contribute on the discussion on functions of role-playing? Psychologists have been onto role-playing since the 1920s, psychodrama should have a lot to contribute to the way game studies understands role-playing. After all, the very act of role-playing stays fundamentally same, even when the specifics vary depending on the medium.

The diverse background of the *IJRP* editors and reviewers allows for a broad view and tight scrutiny on what is considered "relevant" earlier work, hopefully bridging the gaps of the researchers of tabletop role-playing games, larps, MMORPGs, educational role-playing, interactive drama, training simulations and so forth.

For this reason, I'm particularly happy to present a diverse assortment of five articles: Jonne Arjoranta takes a philosophical angle on the discussion on definitions of the first issue. Bill White discusses masculinity and tabletop role-playing through an analysis of texts produced in a play session of *Ganakagok*, a game of his own devising. Myriel Balzer discusses the relevance of immersion for the didactical potential of role-playing. Noirin Curran looks at role-playing as a social and cultural phenomenon, revisiting the stereotypical image of a role-player in light of quantitative studies. Finally, J. Tuomas Harviainen broadens the scope of what we perceive as role-playing, by studying the similarities of role-playing and sadomasochistic play.

On behalf of the Editorial Board, I sincerely hope you enjoy the second issue of the *IJRP*,

Markus Montola

REFERENCES

- 1) Bowman, S. L., 2010. *The Functions of Role-Playing Games: How Participants Create Community, Solve Problems and Explore Identity*. McFarland.
- 2) Cover, J. G., 2010. *The Creation of Narrative in Tabletop Role-Playing Games*. McFarland.
- 3) Henriksen, T. D. & al. (ed.) 2011. *Think Larp*. Rollespilsakademiet. <http://rollespilsakademiet.dk/kpbooks>
- 4) Stenros, J. & Montola, M. (eds.) 2010. *Nordic Larp*. Fëa Livia.
- 5) Tresca, M. J., 2011. *The Evolution of Fantasy Role-Playing Games*. McFarland.