

# ALEX P. LEITH

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## EMPLOYMENT

### Assistant Professor

Department of Mass Communications, College of Arts & Sciences, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, August 2019 – Present

### Graduate Assistant

Department of Media & Information, College of Communication Arts & Sciences, Michigan State University, September 2012 – May 2017

### Adjunct Instructor

Division of Humanities, College of Arts & Sciences, McKendree University, January 2012 – May 2012

Department of Liberal Arts, School of Arts & Sciences, St. Louis College of Pharmacy, August 2011 – May 2012

Department of Speech Communication, College of Arts & Sciences, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, August 2011 – December 2011

### Graduate Assistant

Department of Speech Communication, College of Arts & Sciences, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, August 2010 – May 2011

### Marketing Manager

University Communications, Brigham Young University – Idaho, August 2008 – August 2009

## EDUCATION

### Doctor of Philosophy, Information and Media (Media and Information)

Michigan State University, 2019

*Dissertation:* Gameplay livestreaming: Agents of gamespace

*Committee:* Rabindra Ratan (Chair), Casey O'Donnell, Morgan Ellithorpe, Brandon Van Der Heide

### Master of Arts, Speech Communication (Interpersonal Communication)

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, 2011

*Thesis:* I know what you did last night: Exploring parasocial Facebook relationships. *Committee:* Jocelyn DeGroot-Brown (Chair), Alicia Alexander, E. Duff Wrobbel.

### Bachelor of Arts, Communication (Public Relations)

Brigham Young University – Idaho, 2009

Clusters: English and Philosophy

## FUNDING

### External Funding

2021-2025: \$1,599,851 - FW-HTF-R: Collaborative Research: Virtual Meeting Support for Enhanced Well-Being and Equity for Game Developers. Ratan, R. A., Foxwell, M., Leith, A. P., Beyea, D., and Winn, B.

### Internal Funding

2023-2024: \$6,300 – OER Adoption, Adaptation, and Implementation Incentive Program. Leith, A.P.

2021-2022: \$2,000 – New Faculty Incentive Program. Leith, A. P.

## SCHOLARSHIP

### Provisional

Leith, A. P. (Invited). Game streaming: Motivations and consequences for viewers. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*.

### Peer-Reviewed Publications

Leith, A. P., & Gheen, E. (2022). Twitch in the time of quarantine: The role of engagement in needs fulfillment. *Psychology of Popular Media*, 11(3), 275-280. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000372>

Foxman, M., Beyea, D., Leith, A.P., Ratan, R. A., Chen, V. H. H., & Klebig, B. (2022). Beyond genre: Classifying virtual reality experiences. *IEEE Transactions on Games*, 14(3), 466-477. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TG.2021.3119521>

Leith, A. P. (2021). Parasocial cues: The ubiquity of parasocial relationships on Twitch. *Communication Monographs*, 88(1), 111-129. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637751.2020.1868544>

Ratan, R. A., Fordham, J., Leith, A. P., & Williams, D. (2019). Women keep it real: Avatar gender choice in League of Legends. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 22, 254-257. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2018.0302>

DeGroot, J. M., & Leith, A. P. (2018). R.I.P. Kutner: Parasocial grief following the death of a television character. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*, 77, 199-216. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00302228156004>

Leith, A. P., Ratan, R. A., & Wohn, D. Y. (2016). The (de-)evolution of evolution games: Analyzing the accuracy of evolution depiction in video games. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 25, 655-664. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10956-016-9620-x>

### Conference Proceedings

Foxman, M., Ratan, R., Bouzek, D., & Leith, A. P. (2023, June). Virtual limited: Boundaries of play in virtual reality production. To be published in *DiGRA 2023 Extended Abstract Proceedings*. Seville, Spain.

Leith, A. P., Foxman, M., Onuche, M., Ratan, R., & Lim, C. (2023, June). Mixed feelings and realities: Joyful to nauseating sentiments about VR on Twitter. To be published in *DiGRA 2023 Extended Abstract Proceedings*. Seville, Spain.

Foxman, M., Leith, A. P., Beyea, D., Klebig, B., Chen, V. H. H., & Ratan, R. (2020, November). Virtual reality genres: Comparing preferences in immersive experiences and games. In *CHI PLAY '20: Extended Abstracts of the 2020 Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play* (pp. 237-241). ACM Digital Library. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3383668.3419881>

Leith, A. P. (2018, October). Playing games for others: Constructing a gameplay livestreaming taxonomy. In R. Ratan, B. Winn, & E. LaPensée (Eds.), *Proceedings of Meaningful Play 2018* (pp. 372-379). ETC Press. <https://doi.org/10.1184/R1/9995969>

### **Book Chapters**

Fordham, J., Leith, A. P., & Ratan, R. A. (2017). League of Legends: Summoning a league of their own. In J. Banks, R. Mejia, & A. Adams (Eds.), *100 greatest video game franchises* (pp. 102-104). London: Rowman & Littlefield.

Leith, A. P., & Fordham, J. (2017). Assassin's Creed: Leap of faith through historiophoty In J. Banks, R. Mejia, & A. Adams (Eds.), *100 greatest video game franchises* (pp. 11-12). London: Rowman & Littlefield.

Leith, A. P., & Ratan, R. A. (2017). Super Smash Bros.: Fight with the one that brung ya. In J. Banks, R. Mejia, & A. Adams (Eds.), *100 greatest video game franchises* (pp. 178-180). London: Rowman & Littlefield.

### **Invited Presentations**

Leith, A. P., Freberg, K., Wall, M., & Dalton, S. (2020, May). *How to teach digital and social media marketing well*. Panel presented at the Midwest Digital Marketing Conference. St. Louis, MO.

### **Conference Papers & Presentations**

Foxman, M., Leith, A.P., Ratan, R., Bouzek, D. (2023, May). *Playfully Virtual: Finding Authentic Communication in Videoconferencing and Online Meetings*. Paper to be presented at the International Communication Association 73rd Annual Conference. Toronto, ON.

Leith, A.P., Foxman, M., Onuche, M., Bouzek, D. (2023, May). *Diffusion of gratification: The reception of VR as a modality for remote work and meetings*. Paper to be presented at the International Communication Association 73rd Annual Conference. Toronto, ON.

Leith, A.P., Foxman, M., Ratan, R., & Lim, C. (2023, May). *Feelings for meetings: A sentiment analysis of videoconferencing platforms a year apart*. Paper to be presented at the International Communication Association 73rd Annual Conference. Toronto, ON.

Foxman, M., Leith, A. P., Sulzendorf-Liszkiewicz, A., Beyea, D., Klebig, B., Graciano, L., Bouzek, D., & Ratan, R. A. (2022, October). *Playing at work: Finding and designing play into virtual meetings*. Paper presented at the 2022 International Conference on Meaningful Play. East Lansing, MI.

Foxman, M., Beyea, D. G., Leith, A. P., Ratan, R. A. Chen, V. H. H., Klebig, B. (2021, May). *Hardly just hardware: Understanding games and genres in virtual reality experiences*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association 71st Annual Conference. Virtual.

- Foxman, M., Leith, A. P., Beyea D., Klebig, B., Chen V. H. H., & Ratan, R. (2020, November). *Virtual reality genres: Comparing preferences in immersive experiences and games*. Paper Presented at CHI Play '20. Virtual.
- Leith, A. P., & Baker, S. (2020, November). *Cmonbruh, trihard: Using machine-learning to identify racial harassment in Twitch chat messages for Black and White streamers*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association 106th Annual Convention. Indianapolis, IN [Virtual].
- Leith, A. P. (2020, May). *Communicating closeness: Verbal immediacy as a predictor of parasocial relationships on Twitch*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association 70th Annual Conference. Gold Coast, AUS [Virtual].
- Leith, A. P. (2020, May). *When watching isn't enough: Human agents and their influence of gameplay and gamespace through synchronous chat*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association 70th Annual Conference. Gold Coast, AUS [Virtual].
- Leith, A. P. (2019, August). *The affective messaging of gameplay livestream viewers*. Paper presented at the 2019 Digital Games and Research Association Conference. Kyoto, Japan.
- Leith, A. P. (2018, October). *Giving you your space: Examining gamespace expandability*. Paper presented at the 2018 International Academic Conference on Meaningful Play. East Lansing, MI.
- Leith, A. P. (2015, November). *Busking on a digital pitch: Investigating Internet-based gameplay broadcasting*. Paper to be presented at the National Communication Association 101st Annual Convention. Las Vegas, NV.
- Leith, A. P. (2015, November). *Understanding the implications of uses and gratifications in gameplay viewing*. Paper to be presented at the National Communication Association 101st Annual Convention. Las Vegas, NV.
- Rabindra, R. A., Fordham, J., Leith, A. P., Williams, D., & Kennedy, T. (2015, May). *Identity salience in avatar choice motivation*. Paper to be presented at the Gaming Bodies Preconference of the International Communication Association 65th Annual Conference. San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Boehmer, J. H., & Leith, A. P. (2015, March). *Tweeting the World Cup: Soccer teams' use of dialogic communication during the 2014 World Cup*. Paper presented at The Eighth Summit on Communication and Sport. Charlotte, NC.
- Leith, A. P. (2014, November). *Learning to play: Academic impacts of digital gameplay among disadvantaged African American students*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association 100th Annual Conference. Chicago, IL.
- Huang, T. K., Cotton, S. R., & Leith, A. P. (2014, May). *The impact of emotional costs on students' IT use and academic performance in the context of computer integration*. Paper presented at the Digital Divide Preconference of the International Communication Association 64th Annual Conference. Seattle, WA.
- Leith, A. P. (2013, June). *A more accessible celebrity: A case for parasocial interactions with YouTube personalities and communities*. Paper presented at International Association of Media and Communication Research 2013 Conference. Dublin, Ireland.

Leith, A. P., Ratan, R. A., & Wohn, D. Y. (2013, June). *The (de-)evolution of evolution games: Analyzing the accuracy of evolution depiction in video games*. Paper presented at International Communication Association 63rd Annual Conference.

DeGroot, J. M., & Leith, A. P. (2011, November). R.I.P. Kutner: Parasocial relationships and grieving the death of a television character. Paper presented at National Communication Association 97th Annual Convention.

Leith, A. P. (2011, November). The games we play. Paper presented at National Communication Association 97th Annual Convention.

## **Thesis & Dissertation**

Leith, A. P. (2019). *Gameplay livestreaming: Human agents of gamespace and their parasocial relationships*. (Doctoral dissertation). Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

Leith, A. P. (2011). *I know what you did last night: Exploring parasocial Facebook relationships*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Edwardsville, Illinois.

## **Courses Taught**

### **Assistant Professor**

Dept. of Mass Communications, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

MC 590: Research Methods in Mass Media

*Investigation of special topic area. Individual research projects which may include field experience and operations analysis. Requires consent of graduate program advisor. Semesters: Fall, 2020.*

MC 471: Special Topics in Mass Media: Introduction to Data Analytics in Journalism and Mass Communications

*The skills required to be a successful data journalist are many, ranging from numeracy and spreadsheet fluency to being able to create visualizations and interpret and perform statistical analyses. Semesters: Fall, 2019.*

MC 451: Research Methods in Mass Media

Dept. of Mass Communications, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

*Examination of traditional and emerging concepts of research. Extensive use of research instruments, evaluation, and special applications to mass media. Individual and group research projects required. Semesters: Spring, 2021; Spring, 2022; Fall 2022.*

MC 327: Design and Writing for the World Wide Web

*This course provides a comprehensive overview of both the theoretical and practical aspects of the World Wide Web. Semesters: Fall, 2019 – Present.*

### **Teaching Assistant**

Dept. of Media & Information, Michigan State University

COM 803: Intro to Quantitative Research Methods

*Introduction to quantitative social science research methods and applied analyses for understanding research reports and developing graduate level research projects.* Semesters: Fall 2011.

TC 401: Social Media in Society

*In this course, we will focus on understanding the social impacts, both practical and theoretical, of computer-mediated communication (CMC) systems that have a social component.* Semesters: Fall 2013

TC 401: Science Fiction, Communication, and Technology

*This course will examine the various ways in which technology and communication are portrayed in science fiction films and novels.* Semesters: Spring 2013, Fall 2013

MI 201: Introduction to Media and Information Technologies and Industries

*Operational principles and applications of media and information technologies. Overview of the media and information industries.* Semesters: Spring 2016, Fall 2016.

MI 101: Understanding Media

*This course provides an introduction to and overview of the field of telecommunication, information studies, and media:* Semesters: Spring 2015, Summer 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017

Department of Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University

SPC 103: Interpersonal Communication

*Principles and practices of oral communication emphasizing message formation and delivery, listening, perception, awareness of verbal and nonverbal codes, relationships, and managing conflict:* Semesters: Fall, 2010; Spring, 2011.

## **Adjunct Instructor**

Division of Humanities, McKendree University

JRN 372: Web and Print Publication Design

*Students learn to prepare editorial copy, graphics, photographs, and other material for print and online media:* Semesters: Spring, 2012.

Department of Liberal Arts, St. Louis College of Pharmacy

EN 3100: Professional Communication

*This course covers principles and practice of interpersonal communication and public speaking, with special emphasis on skills needed in the provision of pharmaceutical care:* Semesters: Fall, 2011; Spring, 2012.

Department of Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University

SPC 105: Public Speaking

*Theories, strategies, and techniques for researching, organizing, outlining, and delivering speeches:* Semesters: Fall, 2011.

SPC 103: Interpersonal Communication

*Principles and practices of oral communication emphasizing message formation and delivery, listening, perception, awareness of verbal and nonverbal codes, relationships, and managing conflict: Semesters: Fall, 2010; Spring, 2011.*

Department of Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University

*Theories, strategies, and techniques for researching, analyzing, constructing, and presenting oral arguments for and against selected contemporary topics and issues: Semesters: Fall, 2011.*