

Steven Gotzler

Curriculum Vitae

315 Greenlaw Hall
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Literary and Cultural Studies, 2021
Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University

M.A. in Literary and Cultural Studies, 2012
Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University

B.A. in American Studies, 2009 (with highest honors)
Department of American Studies, University of California at Santa Cruz

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2022-Present	Teaching Assistant Professor, Department of English & Comparative Literature, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2026-Present	Director, Critical Game Studies Program, Department of English & Comparative Literature, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2026-Present	Director, Digital Literacy and Communications (DLC) Lab , University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2025	Interim Director, Digital Literacy and Communications (DLC) Lab , University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2023-2026	Associate Director, Digital Literacy and Communications (DLC) Lab , University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2021-2022	Special Faculty, English Department, Carnegie Mellon University

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Working Models: Computation, Labor, and the Procedures of Play

- monograph in development; a study of how games model work, from worker placement mechanics, automation games and work simulators to historical railroad games and character creation systems. Chapter material presented at King's College London (2024), DiGRA (2025, 2026), UNCG Game Studies (2026), and Universität Tübingen (2026).

Terminal Degree: Computing and the End of the Public University, co-authored w/ Avery J. Wiscomb

- under contract with the [series in Critical University Studies](#) at Johns Hopkins University Press; publication expected 2028.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- “The Afterlife of Fossil Play: 18XX and the Eerie Ecogame” (under review)
- 2026 “Machine Learning: *INSIDE*’s Cinematic Lessons in Control,” *Open Screens* 8.3 (2026), special issue on *Teaching Video Games in the Humanities: New Media, New Pedagogies*, edited by Iris Kleineck-Bates and Marta F. Suarez. <https://doi.org/10.16995/OS.27250>
- 2026 “Making Marx More Readable: A Minimal Computing Approach to a Community-Driven Edition of *Capital Vol.1*” co-authored with Avery J. Wiscomb. *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 20.2 (2026). <https://dhq.digitalhumanities.org/vol/20/2/000864/000864.html>
- 2022 “Abolitionist Pedagogies, Pedagogical Labor: A Critical Dialogue” co-authored with Vineeta Singh and Roopika Risam *Ethnic Studies Review*, 45.2-3, (Fall 2022). <https://doi.org/10.1525/esr.2022.45.2-3.43>
- 2019 “1956—The British New Left and the ‘Big Bang’ Theory of Cultural Studies,” *Lateral* 8.2 (Fall 2019), Years in Cultural Studies series. <https://doi.org/10.25158/L8.2.10>

BOOK CHAPTERS

- 2028 “A Genealogy of Minimal Computing” co-authored with Avery J. Wiscomb, contribution to *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2028*, edited by Kelly Baker Josephs and Lindsey Thomas (forthcoming with University of Minnesota Press).
- 2027 “The Detections of Totality: Cognitive Mapping in *Disco Elysium*’s Thought Cabinet,” contribution to *Crime Does Play: Detective Fiction in Video Games* edited by Dean Bowman and James McLean (forthcoming with Bloomsbury).
- 2027 “The New Cinema of Surplus: Partial Lumpenization and the Reserve Army of Labor in Contemporary Cinema,” contribution to *The Idea of the Lumpenproletariat*, edited by Ben Clarke and Michael Bailey (forthcoming with Routledge).

ESSAYS AND REVIEWS

- 2020 Review of *Second World, Second Sex: Socialist Women’s Activism and Global Solidarity during the Cold War* by Kristen Ghodsee, *Lateral* 9.1 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.25158/L9.1.11>

- 2018 “Speaking of the Working Class: On Richard Hoggart,” *Los Angeles Review of Books* (April 25, 2018).
<https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/speaking-of-the-working-class-on-richard-hoggart/>

DESIGN PRACTICE AND DIGITAL PROJECTS

- 2026 *Skydiver's Information Manual, 1992* – a found-object solo role-playing game, composed out of the United States Parachute Association's handbook for new jumpers: a manual of rules for managing a dangerous form of play (prototype).
- 2025-Present *Keep Calm and Carry On* – a historical board game about the London Blitz, draws from materials in the Imperial War Museum archives and designed as an operational war game, but without combatants (in development).
- 2022-Present *Subject Matter: Tabletop* (w/ Jordan Tynes) – a podcast about board games and the subject matter that animates them (30 episodes).
<https://www.subjectmattertabletop.org/>
- 2019 *MARXdown* (w/ Avery J. Wiscomb) – a minimal reading edition of Marx's *Capital* Vol. 1.
<https://marxdown.github.io/>
- 2019 *The Historical TV Guide* (w/ Kathy M. Newman) – contribution to the *Digital Humanities Literacy Guidebook*.
<https://cmu-lib.github.io/dhlg/project-videos/newmangotzler/>

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS

- 2026 Global Seed Grant, UNC Global Affairs, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- 2025 International Collaboration Grant, Institute for the Arts & the Humanities, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- 2024 Curricular Development Award, College of Arts & Sciences, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- 2024 Global Partnership Award, UNC Global Affairs, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- 2023 Faculty Support Grant, Institute for Arts & Humanities, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- 2019 Graduate Student Teaching Award, Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University
- 2019 Departmental Service Award, Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University
- 2019 Digital Humanities Summer Institute (DHSI) Tuition Grant, University of Victoria
- 2019 Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant for “Keywords in *Cultural Studies*,” dSHARP, Carnegie Mellon University
- 2018 Posner Rare Book Collection Fellowship for “The Frankenstein Complex,” Posner Fine Arts Foundation

- 2018 Graduate Student Research (GuSH) Grant, Graduate Student Assembly, Carnegie Mellon University
- 2018 Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant for “MARXdown – a minimal digital edition of *Capital Vol.1*,” dSHARP, Carnegie Mellon University
- 2017 Publishing Workshop Fellowship, LARB/USC Publishing Workshop, University of Southern California
- 2017 A.W. Mellon Digital Humanities Seed Grant for “Mapping the Television Mega-Text,” Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Carnegie Mellon University
- 2012 Raymond Williams M.A. Fellowship, Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND INVITED TALKS

- 2026 “After Fossil Play: Eco-Games Beyond 18XX” Sustainable Futures at Play, Universität Tübingen (Oct 21-23)
- 2026 “Pretrained: The University and the Making of AI” (w/ Avery J. Wiscomb) MOSAICS, Charles Babbage Institute (Oct 15-16)
- 2026 “Rules, Models, Components for a Critical Pedagogy of Play” UNC-Tübingen Workshop: Playful Media and Sustainable Futures, Universität Tübingen (Jul 9-10)
- 2026 “A House Is Not a Home: Queergaming and Recuperative History in *Molly House*” Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA) (Jun 14-18)
- 2026 “18XX Forever: Railway Time & Fossil Play on the Tabletop” Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA) (Jun 14-18)
- 2026 “Transacting the Future: Financial Speculation and Futurity in 18XX Games” UNCG Game Studies Conference, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Mar 20-21)
- 2025 “The Detections of Totality: Cognitive Mapping and Urban Space in *Disco Elysium*” Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA) (Jun 30-Jul 4)
- 2025 “The Art of Counting Labor: Worker Placement Games as Capitalist Realism” Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA) (Jun 30-Jul 4)
- 2024 “Flat Reading: New Materialist Methods for Analog Game Studies.” Invited Talk for UNC-Duke Critical Game Studies Symposium (Oct 25)
- 2024 “Dollars, Departments, and Donations: *Carnegie* as Managerial Architecture and Performance” UNC-KCL Critical Game Studies Symposium, King’s College London (Jun 4-6)
- 2024 “Unsettling the Remediations of Settler-Colonialism in Video Games.” (w/ DA Hall) Modern Language Association (Jan 4-7)
- 2023 “Game Studies Podcasting with Subject Matter: Tabletop,” (w/Jordan Tynes) GEN CON Trade Day, (Aug 2)

- 2023 “Python for Humanities Teaching.” Invited Workshop for colloquia on Humanities Data @ UNC (Mar 29)
- 2023 “Rethinking Reading Editions: Minimal Computing Principles as Practical Commitments.” (w/ Avery J. Wiscomb) Modern Language Association (Jan 5-8)
- 2019 “DH as Resources and Infrastructures.” Guest Lecture for English 840: Digital Humanities Theories and Methods (Nov 07)
- 2019 “Deploying Lightweight Digital Editions in the Community and Classroom.” (w/ Avery J. Wiscomb) Association for Computers and the Humanities (Jul 23-26)
- 2019 “MARXdown: A digital edition of Marx’s *Capital Vol.1*.” Cultural Studies Association (May 30-Jun 1)
- 2018 “Using the Television ‘Mega-Text’ to Find Social Class in 1950s TV.” (w/ Kathy M. Newman) Society for Cinema and Media Studies (Mar 14-18)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL

Department of English & Comparative Literature, Teaching Assistant Professor

English 341: Tabletop Games: Narrative, History, and Design
 English 257: Video Games and Narrative Cinema
 English 168: Games and Literature
 English 148: Horror Fiction
 English 105i: Writing in the Digital Humanities
 English 105: Writing in the Research University

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Department of English, Graduate Instructor

English 270: Professional and Technical Writing
 English 241: Introduction to Gender Studies
 English 221B: Fantasy Literature
 English 221A: Modern British Classics
 English 202: Nerds, Experts, and Geniuses: Intellectuals in Popular Culture
 English 101: Work Stories: from Industrial Revolution to Automated Future

School of Art, Teaching Assistant

Art 206: Contemporary Visual Culture, 1960 to the Present
 Art 100: Critical Histories of the Arts

PROGRAMS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND EVENTS

PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- 2026–Present Co-organizer, UNC–Universität Tübingen Partnership in Game Studies and AI Ethics
- 2024–Present Co-organizer, UNC–King’s College London Partnership in Critical Game Studies
- 2023–Present Primary Convener, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies (UNC, Duke, King’s College London)

CONFERENCES/SYMPOSIA ORGANIZED

- 2026 UNC–Tübingen Symposium: *Playful Media and Sustainable Futures* (Tübingen Universität, Jul 9-10; UNC Chapel Hill, Sep 21-25)
- 2025 UNC–KCL Critical Game Studies Symposium: *Studying Games, Writing Play* (Apr 22-25)
- 2024 UNC–KCL Critical Game Studies Symposium: *Transatlantic Exchanges* (Jun 4-6)
- 2023 Cultural Studies Association, 21st Annual Conference (Jun 01 – Jun 04)
- 2022 Cultural Studies Association, 20th Annual Conference (Jun 02 – Jun 04)
- 2021 Cultural Studies Association, 19th Annual Conference (Jun 10 – Jun 12)
- 2020 Cultural Studies Association, 18th Annual Conference (May 28 – May 30)
- 2019 Cultural Studies Association, 17th Annual Conference (May 30 – Jun 01)
- 2018 Cultural Studies Association, 16th Annual Conference (May 31 – Jun 01)

PANELS, TALKS, AND SEMINARS ORGANIZED

- 2026 “Virtual Influencers, AI Music, and Therapy Chatbots: Ethical Considerations Amid the Generative AI Hype,” public lecture by Jana Hecktor (IZEW, Universität Tübingen), UNC–Tübingen Workshop, UNC Chapel Hill (Sep 24)
- 2026 “Take a Good Long Look: Gender in the Magic Mirror,” works-in-progress talk by Antonia DiNardo, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Apr 17)
- 2026 “Recursivity, Repetition, and Race: Building a Methodology for Reading Race in Video Games,” invited lecture by Dr. Austin Anderson, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Mar 11)
- 2026 “Materializing Design Traces // Tracing Design Materials,” invited lecture by Dr. Rilla Khaled, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Feb 27)
- 2026 “‘You Were Expected’: Encountering Algorithmic Rememory in *The Outlast Trials*,” works-in-progress talk by Zayla Crocker, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Feb 13)
- 2025 “Playing to Learn, Learning to Teach: Video Games and the Humanities Classroom,” works-in-progress talk by Dr. Gaspard Pelurson, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Nov 13)
- 2025 “Annotated Archives: Developing Game Studies Research Tools and Practices,” by D.A. Hall, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Oct 9)
- 2025 “Games Life Writing,” methods workshop with Dr. Rob Gallagher, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Apr 23)

- 2025 “Self-Narrating Play: Games Life Writing as Critical Praxis” invited lecture by Dr. Rob Gallagher, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Apr 22)
- 2025 “Auto-ethnography and Gaming While Asian,” methods workshop with Dr. Edmond Y. Chang, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Mar 21)
- 2025 “Queergaming, Close Playing, and Gaming Futures,” invited lecture by Dr. Edmond Y. Chang, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Mar 20)
- 2025 “GPU Shaders as Metaphors for, and Materializers of, Experience,” by Dr. Kelsey Brod, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Mar 4)
- 2024 “Gamification and Value Capture,” by Dr. Feng Zhu, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Nov 19)
- 2024 “Materiality and Analog Play” discussion session led, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Oct 8)
- 2024 “Playful Pedagogies: Teaching with Games,” roundtable with Dr. Michelle Robinson, Dr. Jennifer Gates-Foster, Dr. Kym Weed, D.A. Hall, and Antonia DiNardo, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Sep 30)
- 2024 “Digital Ethnography for Game Studies Research,” methods workshop with Dr. Kishonna Gray, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Apr 11)
- 2024 “Augmenting Reality: Black Praxis in Digital Gaming,” invited lecture by Dr. Kishonna Gray, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Apr 10)
- 2024 “Intersectional Tech: Black Users in Digital Gaming,” discussion session led by D.A. Hall, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Apr 4)
- 2024 “Critical Design and Development Reality,” design workshop with Ernesto Escobar, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Mar 7)
- 2023 “Ascesis, Shugyo, and Ethical Self-Cultivation: Gaming as Martial Art?” discussion session with Dr. Feng Zhu and Dr. Gaspard Pelurson, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Nov 28)
- 2023 “Introduction to Unity Engine,” design workshop with Joyce Rudinsky and Doug Stark, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Oct 24)
- 2023 “Transdisciplinary Methods,” discussion session co-led with Stephanie Kinzinger, Carolina Seminar in Critical Game Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Sep 26)
- 2023 “Critical Worldbuilding with Tabletop Games,” Critical Game Studies Initiative, UNC Chapel Hill (Mar 31)
- 2023 “Inclusive Design Practices in Tabletop Gaming with Omari Akil,” Critical Game Studies Initiative, UNC Chapel Hill (Feb 20)

ACADEMIC SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL

University

Member, Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee (FITAC) (2026-2029)

Department of English & Comparative Literature

Member, Committee on Community Awareness & Well-Being (2025-Present)

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Co-Editor, [Distributed Special Issue of Ethnic Studies Review](#) on “Abolitionist Pedagogies, Pedagogical Labor,” (2022-2025)

Contributing Editor, “Years in Cultural Studies” series, *Lateral: The Journal of the Cultural Studies Association*, 2020-2023

Peer Reviewer, Digital Games Research Association (2025-Present)

Peer Reviewer, *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, (2024-Present)

Peer Reviewer, *European Journal of Literature, Culture, and Environment*, (2023)

Peer Reviewer, Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH) (2020-2021)

Peer Reviewer, Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations (ADHO) (2019-2020)

Governing Board Member, [Cultural Studies Association \(CSA\)](#), (2018-2023)

Programming Committee (2019–2023; chair, 2022)

Site Committee (2018, 2022)

Travel Grants Committee (chair, 2020, 2023)

RELEVANT TECHNICAL SKILLS

GAME DESIGN

Analog prototyping and playtesting for board games and TTRPGs, nanDECK, Tabletop Simulator, Twine, Unity

LOCAL LANGUAGE MODELS

LM Studio, fine-tuning with Unsloth, retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) pipelines, agentic harnesses and tool-use workflows

MULTIMEDIA COMPOSITION

Podcast recording and audio editing (Adobe Audition), video editing (Adobe Premiere Pro), graphic design (Adobe Illustrator)

WEB DEVELOPMENT

Markdown, GitHub and GitHub Pages, static site builds (Jekyll, Astro), HTML, command line

DATA ANALYSIS, TEXT ANALYSIS, AND DIGITAL EDITING

Python 3, Jupyter and Google Colab notebooks, RegEx, OpenRefine, Voyant Tools, topic modeling with MALLET, AntConc, OCR with ABBYY FineReader, Hypothes.is, Omeka, TEI/XML, Manifold

DIGITAL METHODS AND DESIGN TRAINING

- 2026-27 Machine Learning for Games, Hugging Face (enrolled, expected completion Spring 2027)
- 2026 AI Agents Course, Hugging Face (Fall 2026)
- 2023 Text Analysis and Natural Language Processing with spaCy 1, Constellate Text Analysis Pedagogy Institute (Jul 7-21)
- 2022 From Lightbulb to Meeples: Game Design from Ideation to Prototype, Central Michigan University, Center for Learning Through Games and Simulation (Sep 1-Oct 15)
- 2019 Publishing with Manifold Scholarship Platform, Association for Computers and the Humanities 2019, Duquesne University (Jul 24)
- 2019 Data Carpentry Workshop: Data Analysis w/Python and Data Cleaning w/OpenRefine, Carnegie Mellon University Libraries (Jul 22-23)
- 2019 Digital Humanities Summer Institute (DHSI), University of Victoria Seminar on: "Open Access and Open Social Scholarship" (Jun 10-14)
- 2018 Digital Humanities Summer Institute (DHSI), University of Victoria Seminar on: "Conceptualizing and Creating the Digital Edition" (Jun 4-8)
- 2018 Documenting Reproducible Research with Jupyter Notebooks, Carnegie Mellon University Libraries (Mar 2)
- 2017 Python for Humanists Workshop, University of Pittsburgh (Sep 22-23)
- 2015 Digital Humanities Intensive Summer Seminar, Carnegie Mellon University (May 18 - 22)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA), 2024-Present
- Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH), 2019-Present
- Modern Language Association (MLA), 2018-2024
- Cultural Studies Association (CSA), 2016-2023