Atmospheres in the Affective Arrangement of Play

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INTRODUCTION
I wish to bring forward a conceptual framework for the analysis of affective atmospheres in videogames. Affect has been somewhat of a neglected dimension in Game Studies until recently. Yet it appears clear that when we play videogames, we are living an emotional experience (Järvinen, 2008). Videogames are affective, bodily experiences (Shinkle, 2008) and this affective quality makes them meaningful. Recent works such as that of Ciara Cremin (2016) and Aubrey Anable (2018) are exciting developments that show how affect may be fruitfully analyzed in the context of the videogame medium.

I extend this line of research to include a particular type of spatialized feeling, the atmosphere (Griffero, 2010; Böhme; 2016). I consider players and the videogames they play as involved in an affective arrangement (Slaby, 2019) presenting an atmosphere. Players enter a functional videogame space which is the intersection of a structural ludonarrative and rule-based space, and a presentational audio-visual space (Nitsche, 2008). This happens at the level of the interface, which may be considered an enveloping spatial environment composed of inorganically organized objects (IOO) (Ash, 2015) which through the intersection of narrative and mechanics compose a gameworld (Jørgensen, 2013). These spatial gameworlds, or "worlds of affect" (Shaw & Warf, 2009), present a certain atmosphere. I believe it is the atmosphere of a certain videogame that leaves a trace in the player and that stays with them after finishing playing.

BIO
Andrea Andiloro is a Ph.D. candidate at Swinburne University of Technology – Centre for Transformative Media Technologies. His main research involves affect and atmosphere in videogames. Other research interests involve war videogames as military propaganda, the military-entertainment complex, and the 1990's Australian videogame industry.

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