

# 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

Ratan, R., Foxman, M., Leith, A. P., Beyea, D., and Winn, B. (2021-2025). *FW-HTF-R: Collaborative research: Virtual meeting support for enhanced well-being and equity for game developers*. National Science Foundation. \$1,599,851 (Total); \$70,458.00 (SIUE)

### Internal Funding

Leith, A. P. (2023-2024). OER Adoption, Adaptation, and Implementation Incentive Program. \$6,088

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

## SCHOLARSHIP

### Peer-Reviewed Publications

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., & 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>

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

Lim, C., Leith, A.P., Foxman, M., Ratan, R., Klebig, B. (2025, January) *The Hyperpersonal Model of Communication in virtual meetings: Exploring the roles of fatigue, social interaction anxiety, muting, and avatar use in meeting engagement*. To be published in *Proceedings of the 58th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*.

Milik, O., Jang, D., Foxman, M., Klebig, B., Bayea, D., Leith, A. P., Ratan, R. (2024, November). Focusing on virtual groups. A method for focus group interviews in XR/VR group settings. To be published in *AoIR Selected Papers of Internet Research, 2024*.

Foxman, M., Bouzek, D., Lim, C., Ratan, R., Klebig, B., Leith, A.P., & Beyea, D. (2024, July) Making a virtual playground: Values-based game design in meeting platforms. 2024: *Abstract Proceedings of DiGRA 2024 Conference: Playgrounds*.

- Lim, C., Foxman, M., Leith, A.P., Meshi, D., Ratan, R. (2024, July) Wanting playfulness to counter fatigue from virtual meetings: Associations with social interaction anxiety and workaholism. *2024: Abstract Proceedings of DiGRA 2024 Conference: Playgrounds*.
- Foxman, M., Bouzek, D., Rata, A., & Leith, A. (2023, June). Virtually Limited: Boundaries of Play in Virtual Reality Production. *2023: Abstract Proceedings of DiGRA 2023 Conference: Limits and Margins of Games*.
- Leith, A., Foxman, M., Onuche, M., Ratan, R., & Lim, C. (2023, June). Mixed Feelings and Realities: Joyful to Nauseating Sentiments about VR on Twitter. *2023: Abstract Proceedings of DiGRA 2023 Conference: Limits and Margins of Games*.
- 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. (2019, 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>

### **Reviewed Book**

- Leith, A. P. (2024). *Quantitative research in mass communications: R and RStudio*. Bookdown. [https://bookdown.org/alex\\_leith/mc451/](https://bookdown.org/alex_leith/mc451/)

### **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**

- Beyea, D., Lim, C., Lover, A., Foxman, M., Ratan, R., & Leith, A.P. (2024, June). *Zoom fatigue? A meta-analytical examination of research on the antecedents of videoconferencing fatigue*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association 74th Annual Conference. Gold Coast, QLD.

- Foxman, M., Bouzek, D., Lim, C., & Leith, A.P. (2024, June). *Playing from home: Identity, cohesion, and communication for remote game makers*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association 74th Annual Conference. Gold Coast, QLD.
- Lim, C., Foxman, M., Ratan, R., Beyea, D., Jeong, D., & Leith, A.P. (2024, June). *Touch-up my Zoom fatigue: Positive attitudes about online meeting platforms are negatively associated with virtual meeting fatigue and positively associated with using impression management features*. Paper presented at the International Communication Association 74th Annual Conference. Gold Coast, QLD.
- Foxman, M., Leith, A.P., Ratan, R., Bouzek, D. (2023, May). *Playfully Virtual: Finding Authentic Communication in Videoconferencing and Online Meetings*. Paper 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 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 presented at the International Communication Association 73rd Annual Conference. Toronto, ON.
- Foxman, M., Leith, A. P., Sulzdorf-Liszkiwicz, A., Beyea, D., Klebig, B., Graciano, L., Bouzek, D., & Ratan, R. A. (2022, October). *Playing at work: Finding and designing play into virtual meetings*. 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*. Presented at the International Communication Association 71st Annual Conference. 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*. 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*. 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*. 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*. Presented at the 2019 Digital Games and Research Association Conference. Kyoto, Japan.
- Leith, A. P. (2018, October). *Giving you your space: Examining gamespace expandability*. 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*. 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*. 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*. 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*. 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*. 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. Presented at National Communication Association 97th Annual Convention.
- Leith, A. P. (2011, November). *The games we play*. 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: Independent Study in Mass Communications (Fall 2020)  
MC 471: Special Topics in Mass Media: Introduction to Data Analytics in Journalism and Mass Communications (Fall 2019)  
MC 471: Special Topics in Mass Media: Social Media Analytics (Spring 2024)  
MC 451: Research Methods in Mass Media (Spring 2021, Spring 2022 – Spring 2024)  
MC 327: Design and Writing for the World Wide Web (Fall 2019 – Spring 2023, Spring 2024)  
MC 323: Digital Publishing and Design (Spring 2023 – Fall 2023)  
FST 101: Succeeding & Engaging at SIUE (Fall 2023)

### **Teaching Assistant**

Dept. of Media & Information, Michigan State University

COM 803: Intro to Quantitative Research Methods (Fall 2011)

TC 401: Social Media in Society (Fall 2013)

TC 401: Science Fiction, Communication, and Technology (Spring 2013 – Fall 2013)

MI 201: Introduction to Media and Information Technologies and Industries (Spring 2016 – Fall 2016)

MI 101: Understanding Media (Spring 2015 – Spring 2017)

Department of Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University

SPC 103: Interpersonal Communication (Fall 2010, Spring 2011)

### **Adjunct Instructor**

Division of Humanities, McKendree University

JRN 372: Web and Print Publication Design (Spring 2012)

Department of Liberal Arts, St. Louis College of Pharmacy

EN 3100: Professional Communication (Fall 2011 – Spring 2012)

Department of Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University

SPC 105: Public Speaking (Fall 2011)

SPC 103: Interpersonal Communication (Fall 2010 – Fall 2011)

### **Committees**

- Rachel Berg, Master's Project Member (Spring 2021)
- Abdurrahman Celik, Thesis Member (Summer 2023 – Summer 2024)
- Hope Chulka, Comprehensive Exam Member (Spring 2024)
- Kain Henson, Master's Project Member (Fall 2021 – Summer 2022)
- Lenny Escarlet Montano Claire, Graduate Exam Member (Spring 2021)
- Stephanie Schrage, Senior Assignment Supervisor (Spring 2020)
- Ashlyn Smith, Master's Project Member (Fall 2021 – Summer 2022)
- Thomas Yancey, Senior Assignment Supervisor (Fall 2021 – Spring 2022)

## **SERVICE**

### **Departmental**

- ACEJMC Reaccreditation, Member (Fall 2022 – Fall 2023)
- Library, Liasian (August 2020 - Spring 2024)
- Mass Communications Week, Chair (Spring 2021 - Spring 2023)
- Website Committee, Member (Fall 2021 – Summer 2024)
- Technology Committee, Chair (Spring 2024 – Summer 2024)

### **College**

- Program Review Member, International Studies (Fall 2023)

### **University**

- Search Committee Member, Director of Student Financial Aid (Spring 2020 – Fall 2020)
- Task Force Member, Engagement in Asynchronous Classes (Summer 2020)
- Reviewer, Cougar Guide (Spring 2020)
- Discord Server, Program Coordinator (Fall 2023 - Summer 2024)

## **Academia**

### **Reviewer**

#### Journals

- Communication and Sports
- Communication Monograph
- Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking
- Death & Dying
- Games & Culture
- Information & Management
- International Journal of Communication
- Mass Communication & Society
- Media Psychology
- Psychology of Popular Media
- Technology, Mind, & Behavior

#### Conferences

- Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems
- Computer-Human Interaction in Play
- Digital Games Research Association
- Global Fusion
- Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences
- International Communication Association
- Meaningful Play
- Meaningful XR
- National Communication Association

### **Leadership**

#### Journals

- Journal of Media Psychology, Special Issue Co-Editor (Summer 2024)

#### Conferences

- Global Fusion, Co-Planner (Spring 2020 – Fall 2020)
- International Communication Association, Game Studies Student & Early Career Representative (Spring 2022 – Summer 2024)
- Meaningful XR, Co-Planner (Fall 2023 – Summer 2024)

#### **Public**

- Triad Debate Tournament, Judge (Spring 2020)
- Fort Collins Debate Tournament, Judge (Spring 2022)