

Summary



Play, You Fools / Opportunities for Libraries in Gaming and Gamification (Christoph Deeg)
(pp. 596 – 599)

The topic of gaming is taking on more and more importance for library work and services today. It has long ceased to be simply a matter of having »fun and games« in the library. Gaming gives an entirely new dimension to library service and will thereby change it. But this topic is hardly new. Libraries have already offered gaming for years. Collection development with this target group in mind (at least in public libraries) has become standard practice. In the future gaming, in terms of culture and literacy, will be just as relevant as the book.

But gaming is not a PR tool. It does not function as bait that can raise the library's »coolness« or convert people to readers of books. It is an autonomous area with its own strategy – preferably one that is embedded in the library's digital-analog strategy.

When libraries concern themselves with gaming they are not only dealing with games and a leisure time activity of greater or lesser interest. There is an entire culture built around gaming. It is part of the cultural identity of more and more people. Libraries need to understand this culture and all its facets and to help it be accessible. Moreover, libraries can and should help establish links between gaming and other cultural areas. To this end it is important that gaming be recognized as being of equal value, for example, with books. It is not just a matter of acquiring and tolerating gaming in the library, but rather of creating cultural space for it. All this is not an attack on the book; but when we enter a library today, we still experience a cultural space focused around the book. It is important to develop it further.

Not an Easy Game / Berlin Writer and Children's Media Expert Describes Current Developments in Game Consoles, Apps and Software for Children (Thomas Feibel)
(pp. 600 – 603)

Video games have always had a poor reputation. Especially among adults. Those who could not get into them have automatically considered games a waste of time and money. Press and politicians also have generally spoken ill of computer games. Perhaps this disapproval even led to the genre's status within youth culture. It was not much different with rock music for previous generations. And then came the next reproaches. It is not so long ago that children and adolescents, in particular, were found to display strong signs of addiction. Computer games, according to a few brain researchers, can erase what has been painstakingly taught during the day at school and seriously encroach on academic performance.

Is this genre socially accepted today? Not necessarily. While society on the whole has become more inclined to play games as a result of smartphones and tablets, the old problems still remain. Neither has Germany's first out-patient clinic for game addiction (in Mainz) any fewer patients, nor are certain games able to forgo explicit violence. The answer is much more trivial: there is money to be made with video games. According to Germany's business association for the game industry, BIU, German companies alone saw a turnover of €2.3bn in 2016. Since there is a considerable sum of tax revenue associated with this enormous figure, politicians have been led to change their minds. As a booming branch of activity it is even receiving support in the form of local business incentives in many federal states. After all, the expanding business sector of video games is creating a good number of jobs.

Harvest Your Town / The Bad Oldesloe City Library Engages in Sustainable Ecological Library Service with Very Different Partners – and Received the »IFLA Green Library Award 2017« (Jens A. Geißler, Tim Schumann)
(pp. 640 – 643)

Bad Oldesloe is a county seat with over 25,000 inhabitants in Schleswig-Holstein and as the result of a strong local initiative earned the title »Fair Trade Town« in 2015. With its media collection of over 42,000 items, digital media and services, as well as programs for schools and kindergartens, the city library's six-person team serves an area of about 34,000 people.

In order to strengthen the city library as an open (learning) center and catalyst for innovation and to embark on new ventures with local actors, the program »Harvest Your Town« was developed. The changing role of the public library became associated with sustainable and green library service. Its goal was to open up the library and strengthen its function as a space for networking, meetings, and pro-active creativity.

In addition to the practical implementation of theoretical notions of sustainable library work, the library brought together people active in the community and encouraged new forms of cooperation. Actions such as a seed exchange or a vegetable stand for food-sharing have made the city library into an easily accessible venue for new encounters and learning experiences. By offering rooms for activities and audiences, the library has become a public neighborhood space, where civic spirit and involvement, networking, and the propagation of social and ecological ideas and projects can flourish.

Translated by Martha Baker