

CSMC special issue December 2025
Games & Storage

Dear colleagues,

We are excited to circulate this call for articles for a special issue of *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, on the broad topic of games and storage. The foundational premise of this special issue is that systems of containment and storage provide the conditions for digital play – and that like other infrastructural arrangements, they are both profoundly political and frequently, at least for most of us, invisible.

Questions of media, storage, and containment have become central to our current moment of cascading crises: How do the enclosing logics of digital platforms both contain our data and, in a slightly different sense, contain modes of resistance? How do storage technologies harbour elements of the digital we consider ephemeral, like cloud data, livestreams, or abandonware? What are the climatological impacts of our data storage, particularly given the voracious demands of AI? How are digital games entangled in these larger processes? Whose sociotechnical systems filter games and their players into states of precarious (hyper)visibility? How do strategies of containment both unlid and foreclose the future of critical game studies as a discipline?

Here, we are guided by Zoe Sofia's articulation of "container technologies" and the recognition that systems of storage and containment are never neutral, though they are frequently invisibilized. We understand container technologies both as media, as per Brooke Erin Duffy and Jeremy Packer's look at Tupperware, while also considering certain media technologies from the standpoint of the work they do to store and retrieve, as with the theorization of MP3s offered by the late and wonderful Jonathan Sterne.

For this special issue on games and storage, we are less interested in providing a list of possible topics than we are with soliciting work that engages seriously with these premises and foundational texts. We are particularly interested in hearing from emerging, precarious, and/or minoritized scholars, and are able to provide a supportive editorial hand in bringing your work to fruition.

If you are interested in developing a paper for this special issue, please send a 250-500 word abstract to Nick Taylor (ntt@yorku.ca) with "Games and storage special issue" in the subject line. We will accept abstracts between now and April 22, and notify you of our decision by April 30. Selected authors will be invited to submit a full draft for review by June 2025, with finished drafts ready by the end of September, for publication in December 2025. If you do not have the bandwidth for a full-length paper, we would also love to host shorter, non-peer reviewed "forum" pieces.

The following are topics for papers we have already solicited:

- Solar servers for hosting games ('storing' the sun)
- Containing bodies through Twitch's policies around nudity
- Bunkers in games
- Keeping gender minorities safe at games industry conventions (while also containing feminism).

If you are interested in serving as a reviewer, please also let us know by emailing Nick (again, ntt@yorku.ca).

Thanks for your interest!

Nick Taylor

Robyn Hope

Christine Tran

Duffy, B. E., & Packer, J. (2022). Wifesaver: Tupperware and the unfortunate spoils of containment.

In S. Sharma & R. Singh (Eds.), *Re-Understanding Media: Feminist Extensions of Marshall*

McLuhan (pp. 98–118). Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781478022497-009>.

Sofia, Z. (2000). Container Technologies. *Hypatia*, 15(2), 181–201.

<https://doi.org/10.1353/hyp.2000.0029>.

Sterne, J. (2006). The mp3 as cultural artifact. *New Media & Society*, 8(5), 825–842.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444806067737>