

Nick Ballou

POSTDOC - PSYCHOLOGY OF VIDEO GAMES

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‘Games are an identity management tool [...] Rather than enabling people to pretend to be something we’re not, games help us to become more of who we really are.’ — Nick Yee

Academic Positions

Postdoctoral Researcher

2023–present

OXFORD INTERNET INSTITUTE

- Work with [Andy Przybylski](#) to understand how video games affect mental health using large-scale telemetry data
- Collaboration with game industry partners including Nintendo, Xbox, and FuturLab

Education

PhD in Video Game Psychology, *passed with no corrections*

2019–2023

QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

- Topic: When do games support mental health, why hasn’t science been successful?
- Contributions: Strongest evidence to date that playtime does not affect wellbeing; development of open source game data collection method
- Methods: longitudinal survey methods, qualitative interviews, meta-science
- Supervisors: Prof Sebastian Deterding, Dr Laurissa Tokarchuk, and Dr David Zendle

MPhil with *distinction* in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics

2017–2018

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

- Research areas: phonetics, second language acquisition, computer-assisted language learning
- Supervisor: Dr Calbert Graham

BS *magna cum laude* in Linguistics and Environmental Studies

2012–2016

TULANE UNIVERSITY

Skills

Open Research	Open data/materials/code, preregistration, questionable research practices, open access
Video game effects	Digital trace data, player experience measures, self-determination theory, dysregulated gaming
Research Methods	Surveys, longitudinal studies, qualitative methods (e.g., grounded theory)
Programming	R(Markdown), LaTeX, Python (Intermediate), SQL (Basic)
Statistics	Multilevel models, structural equation modeling, GL(M)Ms, power analysis

Selected Publications




Presented here are the published works I’m proudest of, though this is only a small subset of everything I’ve published. For a complete list, please see my [Google Scholar](#).

Open access versions are available via the [OA](#) icons.



JOURNAL ARTICLES

- 2024 **Ballou, N**, Sewall, CJR, Ratcliffe, J, Zendle, D, Tokarchuk, L & Deterding, S. Registered Report Evidence Suggests No Relationship Between Objectively-Tracked Video Game Playtime and Wellbeing Over 3 Months. *Technology, Mind, and Behavior*, DOI: [10.1037/tmb0000124](https://doi.org/10.1037/tmb0000124). [OA](#)
- 2023 **Ballou, N**. A Manifesto for More Productive Psychological Games Research. *Games: Research and Practice*, DOI: [10.31234/osf.io/fp89z](https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/fp89z). [OA](#)
- 2022 **Ballou, N** & Zendle, D. “Clinically Significant Distress” in Internet Gaming Disorder: An Individual Participant Meta-Analysis. *Computers in Human Behavior*, DOI: [10.1016/j.chb.2021.107140](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.107140). [OA](#)





CONFERENCE PAPERS

- 2023 **Ballou, N** & Deterding, S. 'I Just Wanted to Get It Over and Done With': A Grounded Theory of Psychological Need Frustration in Video Games
The Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play - CHI PLAY '23, DOI: [10.1145/3611028](https://doi.org/10.1145/3611028). 
- 2022 **Ballou, N**, Deterding, S, Iacovides, I & Helsby, L. Do People Use Games to Compensate for Psychological Needs During Crises? A Mixed-Methods Study of Gaming During COVID-19 Lockdowns
CHI '22 Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, DOI: [10.1145/3491102.3501858](https://doi.org/10.1145/3491102.3501858). 
- 2021 **Ballou, N**, Warriar, VR & Deterding, S. "Are You Open? A Content Analysis of Transparency and Openness Guidelines in HCI Journals"
CHI '21 Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, DOI: [10.1145/3411764.3445584](https://doi.org/10.1145/3411764.3445584). 




TEAM SCIENCE AND CONSORTIA

- 2022 Parsons, S, Azevedo, F, Elsherif, MM & **110 others including Nick Ballou**. A Community-Sourced Glossary of Open Scholarship Terms.
Nature Human Behaviour, DOI: [10.1038/s41562-021-01269-4](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-021-01269-4). 
- 2022 Stewart, S, Pennington, CR & **8 other UKRN leads, including Nick Ballou**. Reforms to Improve Reproducibility and Quality Must Be Coordinated across the Research Ecosystem: The View from the UKRN Local Network Leads.
BMC Research Notes, DOI: [10.1186/s13104-022-05949-w](https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-022-05949-w). 

Grants

- 2022 **£3k**, For research on data donation and loot boxes 
- 2022 **£4k**, For research on objective logging of Xbox gaming 
- 2021 **£2k**, For research on objective logging of Xbox gaming (lead grantwriter) 
- 2015 **\$1k**, Devlin Internship Grant 

Scholarships

- 2019 **£69k**, EPSRC PhD Funding, IGGI Centre for Doctoral Training (4 years) 
- 2018 **€7k (declined)**, AIPHES Pre-doctoral Training Grant 
- 2012 **\$108k**, Presidential Merit Scholarship (4 years) 

Other Academic Work

Research Development Instructor

2021–2023

QMUL RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

- Propose, design, and lead workshops on peer review/publication bias, and questionable research practices
- Address open research issues with PhD students and postdocs across a wide range of disciplines

Organiser and Founder

2020–2024

REPRODUCIBILI^{TEA}, QMUL CHAPTER

- Established local chapter of global [ReproducibiliTea](#) journal club for monthly discussions of science reform
- Grew to maximum attendance of 15+ across disciplines and career stages
- Initiated collaborations with faculty members at QMUL, librarian staff, external speakers, and ReproTea organisers at other institutions

Local Network Lead

2021–2024

UK REPRODUCIBILITY NETWORK

- Responsible for coordinating grassroots open science-related activities at QMUL
- Coordinated and analyzed survey on awareness and use of open sciences practices at QMUL
- Active efforts to reform which metrics are used to evaluate faculty