

Career Delusions and Ludopolitics in the Gaming Industry

A Precarious Game: The Illusion of Dream Jobs in the Video Game Industry, by Ergin Bulut
(ILR Press, 2020)

Reviewed by Aidan Schmidt

To many young video game enthusiasts, the possibility of earning a living through gaming is an enticing prospect. *Ergin Bulut's A Precarious Game* takes a deep dive into the murky waters of the video game industry and looks into the numerous barriers to entry that exist within the field. The main thesis Bulut pushes in this book is that the video game industry as a whole can be fun for veterans, and precarious for those on the bottom. Bulut is a Turkish media studies professor at Koc University. His findings could be biased on the account that he only looked at the practices of one company located in the Midwest of the United States. Studio Desire, the company that Bulut looked at, is representative of many other video game development companies, employing predominantly white, heterosexual males. His book's intended audience is mainly men and women coming out of college who want to enter the video game industry, yet his work is also relevant to a younger demographic. His findings answer the question that many aspiring video game developers wish to know for themselves.

The first chapter discusses the implications of ludopolitics and how the illusion of playing games for work leads to more egregious inequality than normal. The second chapter highlights the decrease in worker autonomy and the notion of technomascularity which is exacerbated because of the decline of garage culture. The third chapter looks at how successful games change the dynamics of a city, tying in ludopolitics to city demographics. The fourth chapter reveals the chaotic communication process that occurs between publishing companies and developers, with an emphasis on conflict between stress and creative emotion. Chapter 5 provides insight into woman's perspectives regarding the notion of technomascularity and the perceived unfairness of being able to have fun at work and make more money than women. Chapter 6 deals with the abysmally low wages that those at the bottom of the ladder receive for their work, which cuts off the line of work as a viable option for those who need a living wage and experience. Chapter 7 discusses the culture of layoffs that en bong4.6 (y)10.9(a)bi. tigahing hihank (a)2-4.6 (y, (e)2 (s)8 (t)-4.6 (he)-1.7.2 ()-1.7 (c)31 (u)-13.2 (r)6.9e)2 (go

