



Kathleen Morrissey, PhD

PhD in Computational Media



Why did you choose to study at WPI?

I chose to study at WPI because its [Interactive Media & Game Development](#) (IMGD) program is highly reputable. The faculty, who bring valuable industry experience and a strong teaching orientation, provide exceptional guidance and mentorship. The robust community, including a supportive alumni network, also provides opportunities for networking and career advancement. Additionally, WPI's interdisciplinary focus aligns with my background and career aspirations. I will leave WPI equipped with a diverse skill set, which is needed to thrive in the field of game design and interactive media!

How are you involved with the WPI community?

While I haven't been deeply involved in campus activities yet, I'm excited to explore the clubs and groups WPI offers. The school has a clear intention to provide graduate students with a well-rounded experience and I plan to take advantage of it. I'm particularly interested in being more involved with the [Graduate Student Government](#) to connect with peers and enrich my time at WPI.

Hometown

Randolph, MA

Mentor/Advisor

- [Gillian Smith](#)
- [Karen Stewart](#)
- [Melissa Kagen](#)

Achievements

- Contributing author of two books: *Pandemic Play: Community in Performance, Gaming, and the Arts* and *The World of Final Fantasy VII: Essays on the Game and Its Legacy*
- Director/Producer of positively reviewed Memoirscape (a cozy/interactive game/physical installation)

Interests

- powerlifting

What's your favorite thing about WPI?

When I was recruiting students to support a large-scale project in IMGD, I was able to get students from various backgrounds. This level of collaboration is one of my favorite things about WPI. I also love how inclusive the school is, particularly in celebrating women and queerness, which matters to me deeply.

Do you have a faculty or staff mentor?

Dr. Gillian Smith has been a significant mentor for me, exemplifying how to balance compelling scholarship, innovative design creations, and dedicated teaching. Dr. Melissa Kagen advocates fiercely for the development of her students and is forward-thinking within the field. Dr. Karen Stewart has also been influential because elevates the quality of research and writing within the program and models excellent mentorship. Each of these mentors has profoundly impacted my academic and professional growth at WPI.

What projects are you working on?

Currently, I'm deeply immersed in studying consensual play, and will present my research at two conferences this summer. Additionally, I'm guest-editing a special issue of *The Journal of Gaming & Virtual Worlds* on this topic and actively soliciting essays. Alongside these commitments, I'm exploring research threads with my collaborators for Memoirscape, a cozy immersive physical installation I directed, which received positive acclaim. Furthermore, I'm developing a solarpunk game, aimed at exploring philosophical themes within interactive experiences.

- art
- video games
- playing electric guitar
- hiking
- writing
- puzzles

Campus Activities

- Teaching Assistant, Interactive Media and Game Development program



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8AM

Arrive on campus and
work in the library

1PM

Lunch with my partner,
who is nearby at Clark
University!

2PM

Work on coursework or
research in the library

5PM

Attend my graduate
courses



Learn more about Kathleen's project

The IMGD 'Memoirscape' exhibit encourages
players to stick around and get comfortable

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