

Annotated Bibliography*

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*GAME 471

Bourriaud, Nicolas. *The Exform* 2015. Translated by Erik Butler. London, UK: Verso, 2016.

This book covers the concept of the exform, the socially and culturally excluded parts of society and the elements that persist at the margins that impact the center. He examines how the systems of power define what is visible or valuable and what is discarded. This can provide a solid theoretical foundation on the analysis of Possum Springs and its citizens as exforms.

Caputo, Giovanni B.. “Strange-face-in-the-mirror illusions: specific effects on derealization, depersonalization, and dissociative identity.” *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, vol. 24, no. 5, April 3, 2023, pp. 575-608. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2023.2195394>

This article examines how mirror gazing at low light can produce visual and identity related hallucinations. It connects face perception and dissociation through reported phenomena like identity fragmentation and the appearance of deformed facial features. This can be used in the analysis of Mae’s dream sequence to support the idea that her surreal visions are consistent with real symptoms of dissociation and identity disruption. It helps explain the psychological basis for Mae’s dreamlike horrors.

Consalvo, Mia, and Phelps, Andrew. “Getting through a Tough Day (Again). What Possum Springs Says about Mental Health and Social Class.” *American Journal of Play*, vol. 12, no. 3, July 21, 2021, pp. 338-362. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1284139.pdf>

This article examines how architecture and the design of the game convey themes of mental illness and working class struggle. It emphasizes repetition and environmental story telling as expressions of psychological and economic stagnation. This can be used to analyze the design of Possum Springs as a reflection of trauma and emotional stagnation as well as insights on the designs used in the game tell a symbolic story.

Kreitler, Melanie. “Playing with the Narrative of Mental Illness: Communication Beyond Serious Empathy Games.” *BiD*, vol. 52, June, 2024, pp. 1-13. <http://fima-docencia.ub.edu:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/22315>

This article critiques the genre of “serious empathy games” for simplifying mental illness. Kreitler praises *Night in the Woods* for portraying mental illness as a complex and ambiguous concept and avoiding one sided narratives. This can help in support of Mae’s mental health being portrayed through uncertainty and unreliable narration.

MacLeod, Riley. “*Night In The Woods: The Kotaku Review.*” *Kotaku*, February 24, 2017 <https://kotaku.com/night-in-the-woods-the-kotaku-review-1792726026>

This criticism discusses the games’ exploration of mental illness, small-town

despair, and millennial anxiety. As well as comments on the game's surprising turn of events. Used in the discussion of structural violence and the interpretation of the horror twist.

Mochocka, Aleksandra, and Walczak, Radosław P.. "Focalization, Subjectivity, and Magic(al) Realism in *Night in the Woods*." *Anglica Wratislaviensia*, vol. 61, no. 2, January 18, 2024, pp. 77-92. <https://doi.org/10.19195/0301-7966.61.2.6>

This article examines the use of focalization and magical realism in the game, arguing that Mae's perspective shapes a story world where the boundaries between real and imagined are blurred. This article can help in the sections on the dream horror and magical realism as well as to help explain how ambiguity of perspective helps frame the supernatural as a metaphor rather than literal.

Nasr, Ramona et al.. "Financial insecurity and mental well-being: experiences of parents amid the lebanese economic crisis." *BMC Public Health*, vol. 24, October 31, 2024, pp. 1-8 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-024-20544-3>

This article shows a strong correlation between financial insecurity and increased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression among Lebanese parents during a period of economic instability. It can provide real world evidence that economic hardship contributes directly to mental illness and help in the analysis of Possum Springs and its citizens.

Pane, Salvatore "Night in the Woods is the Working Class Fiction I've Been Waiting For." *Paste*, April 18, 2017 <https://www.pastemagazine.com/games/night-in-the-woods/night-in-the-woods-is-the-working-class-fiction-iv>

This criticism emphasizes on the game's honest portrayal of the working class, emotional burnout, and generational frustration of a dying town. This can help of the analysis of the economic exhaustion and social class in the town, as well as societal collapse.