

University of Missouri, St. Louis

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January 2024

Afterlight: Game Design and the Power of Narrative

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Recommended Citation

Hollenbeck, Elio, "Afterlight: Game Design and the Power of Narrative" (2024). *Undergraduate Research Symposium*. 164.

Available at: <https://irl.umsl.edu/urs/164>

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In the last few decades we as a society have watched the evolution of games as a storytelling medium. From Candyland to The Last of Us, all games use some form of narrative to bring players into the world of the game. Over the course of the last six months, I've been developing a tabletop card game with the working title of *Afterlight*. In this presentation, I will be explaining my process as I've worked on designing and refining this game. I will also talk about why I feel game design can be an effective way to engage people with difficult topics and the broader uses of game design in helping people deal with and process difficult narratives in the real world. The core of this is centered around the "magic circle" players create when they choose to play a game, and the fantasy of empowerment and disempowerment players willingly accept in taking on their role as a "player".