fun examples but also the authors' analysis of issues normally of interest to folklorists, including elements of tradition, transmission, and children's uses of folklore as they manage their psychological and social anxieties. Some will read for all these reasons but also for the interdisciplinary connections to philosophy and science relating to the embodied mind.

The reader who approaches the book with a primary interest in play, no matter what the home discipline, likely will note that the authors never actually define play (or games, for that matter), counting on the reader's intuitive understanding of play. What that assumption misses, though, is a point hinted at in a few places in this book (e.g., in the discussion of the mirror game Bloody Mary and other games of the supernatural). Gregory Bateson's frame theory of play and fantasy (see *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* 1972) notes that when we enter the play frame we step outside ordinary, everyday, taken-for-granted reality and into a reality where the subjunctive, what-if mood dominates. We might even enter the sort of state of ecstasy described by William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) or the state of flow described by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (*Beyond Boredom and Anxiety* 1975). Only a few of the folk illusions discussed by Barker and Rice in this excellent book induce such an alternative reality, but this is a point worth making as children explore what-if.

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Planet Cosplay: Costume Play, Identity and Global Fandom

About five years ago, I was a masters student applying to graduate school at the University of Southern California with a writing sample called "Raceplay: Cross-Racial Pop-Culture Cosplay as Political Speech" (now a chapter in a forthcoming book). During my interview for the program, I had the opportunity to discuss the paper with my now-advisor, Henry Jenkins. I told him I could hardly find any reference texts on cosplay, and I asked if he had any suggestions. We were both stumped and, much like the authors Paul Montfort, Anne Pierson-Smith, and Adam Geczy, I had to draw on popular sources and on theory focused on other fannish practices to cobble together a theoretical understanding of cosplay.

Now, thanks to these authors, future students will have access to *Planet Cosplay: Costume Play, Identity, and Global Fandom*. As far I know, *Planet Cosplay*, is the first major theoretical text about cosplay from an academic press. This is a supposition born out in the introduction to the book, which covers the very brief history of cosplay scholarship, consisting of about two decades. To say that the work is timely, fresh, and significant is an understatement considering the relative dearth of scholarship on the topic and the thorough—if broad—treatment the subject receives here.

The book is broken into three sections

each with three chapters. The first, titled "Critical Practice," is perhaps something of a misnomer because its three chapters deal largely with the theoretical implications of cosplay. The first of these chapters, addresses cosplay as a citational activity and in arguments about textuality, partly drawn from Henry Jenkins' discussion of fans as "textual poachers" in a book by that title. Chapter 2 analyzes cosplay photography and social capital, beginning with a historical overview and then diving deeper into the norms, mores, and visual language that emerge from "cosphotography" (including the differences in etiquette from east to west). Chapter 3 takes a more focused approach by analyzing cosplay practices at one specific event, Auckland Armageddon Expo 2013.

Section 2, titled "Ethnographies," picks up right where the previous chapter left off by taking an ethnographic approach to the next three chapters. Titled "Cos/play," "Cosplay Sites," and "Cos/creation," the three explore cosplay through themes of play, space, and creativity, the last of which also engages with a discussion of the political economy of cosplay. Meanwhile, the former two chapters incorporate thoughts about the value of play in the lives of adults and the effects of globalism on the art form, respectively. Chapter 4, "Cos/play," will be of particular interest to those who study psychology and education, while sociologists and anthropologists might gain more from "Cos/creation" as they look to discover themes of social and cultural exchange.

Finally, section 3 is quite aptly titled "Provocations." Though in chapter 7 the topic of "Proto-Cosplay" may be provocative only to those without a founda-

tion in theater history, it does make the commonly understood origins of cosplay problematic. However, I would have liked to see this information toward the beginning of the book in the discussion of the early history of cosplay—stashing it in the third section of the book gives the impression that the earlier discussion of the history of the form is curiously and ahistorically truncated. Nonetheless, the inclusion of the information is necessary and significant, especially for newcomers to the field of fandom and media who may approach the topic from more technical and analytical backgrounds. Although it seems vitally important to acknowledge that the act of playing dress-up is neither new nor unique, what is significant about cosplay are the ways the act of dressing up have been codified, reproduced, and intertwined with modern popular culture.

The last two chapters in this section are undoubtedly provocative by default. Chapter 8, "Cosgender/Cosqueer" relies heavily on work from Judith Butler and Donna Haraway about gender performance and cyborg identities. However, like most of the book, this chapter could benefit from a deeper engagement with performance studies research—especially given how frequently its authors remind us that cosplay is a performance—and the work of scholars such as Jose Muñoz, whose discussion of disidentifications would certainly enrich any talk of gender identity and performance.

Chapter 9, "Cosporn" begins with a discussion in search of a satisfactory definition of the word "pornography" and whether sex appeal is intrinsic. The authors debate whether depictions of sexuality themselves are sufficient to be

characterized as porn; they remark that certain sexual scenes play for titillation and arousal while others are played for romance and a sort of slice-of-life realism. Ultimately, they seem to agree to disagree. The authors go on to discuss fetishism in relation to costuming and, of course, cosplay in relation to porn. The chapter ends with description and analysis of a few cases of "cosporners." This chapter also could have benefitted from a look at additional fandom studies of pornography, romance, and sexuality, particularly in the works of Constance Penley and Janice Radway.

Ultimately, this text must and will see the light of many a fandom studies syllabus and perhaps a broader audience of not only scholars in the fields of play, fandom, and subcultural studies, but also cosplayers themselves. It is entirely possible that there will be fan meta critiques in response to the work, as well as the traditionally expected academic response. In any case, as the first in what is sure to be an entire body of literature, this text is a vital addition to bookshelves everywhere.

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The Postmodern Joy of Role-Playing Games: Agency, Ritual, and Meaning in the Medium
René Reinhold Schallegger
Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2018. Preface, conclusion, abbreviations used, chapter notes, bibliography, and list of names and terms. 258 pp. $55.00 paper.
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The concept of postmodernism has been appraised quite differently by continental European and Anglo American academics. Whereas many Anglo American scholars—Terry Eagleton, Nicholas Birn, Jane Elliott and Derek Attridge among them—have historicized the postmodern period as spanning the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s and now consider our current literary period "after 'theory'" or "post-theory," many continental European scholars—Pierluigi Pellini and Pierre Ouellet among them—are still preoccupied with postmodernism as a relevant heuristic category. So, too, is René Reinhold Schallegger, who argues (in dialog with Linda Hutcheon) in his book *The Postmodern Joy of Role-Playing Games* that postmodernism inherently has "a ludic logic at work, talking of players and moves" (p. 19). To Schallegger, role-playing games (RPGs) are sites at which the postmodern achieves social and narrative expression. Indeed, as the title of the book suggests, the participants in such games experience postmodern "joy," the pleasure of seeing language as procedural rather than factual; as always interrupted and contingent rather than fluid, explanatory, and coherent. The book does a laudable job in its explanations of postmodernism and its tensions with modernism. Yet the book stumbles when applying this theoretical framework to RPGs. The reasons for this are illuminating in and of themselves.

Continental European literary studies, "Germanistik" and "Amerikanistik" among others, places emphasis on the inclusion of works within a grand meta-narrative of defined epochs and great thinkers. This canon unfortunately leaves precious little room for the pop-culture