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# Raising the Stakes: E-Sports and the Professionalization of Computer Gaming (MIT Press)

*T. L. Taylor*

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T. L. TAYLOR



## RAISING THE STAKES

E-SPORTS AND THE PROFESSIONALIZATION  
OF COMPUTER GAMING



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**T. L. Taylor : Raising the Stakes: E-Sports and the Professionalization of Computer Gaming (MIT Press)**

before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Raising the Stakes: E-Sports and the Professionalization of Computer Gaming (MIT Press):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I had to read a book about how society and sports are connected By Grillz9909I found this book out of desperation. I really wanted to write about the topic of e-sports and needed a good source. Wow. What a thorough book. It has so many citations and sources that I literally stopped reading the words in parenthesis (after a while).It gives a great introduction to e-sports and backs up everything with facts and data. This

book is just full of useful (and probably important) info on the gaming culture. However, I guess I just didn't entirely find the point of the book. It's basically like reading an encyclopedia on e-sports. If you're looking for great info- you've found it! If you're looking for an entertaining book with an agenda though, you won't be satisfied. BUT SERIOUSLY- this is like the go to book for this topic. I don't think there is a more thorough or well written book about it. Well done! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Written with a bit of analytic and philosophical wit, Taylor covers various and important aspects of eSports. By Customer'Written with a bit of analytic and philosophical wit, Taylor covers various and important aspects of eSports history, culture and what was needed to bring it all together.'I've gone into reading this book with two minds: first, as a gamer and lover of eSports with several years experience in online tournament play; second, as a fourth year undergraduate student of philosophy. I would say that both my mind as a gamer and as a philosophy student were graciously satisfied in reading this book. If you're a fan of philosophy, particularly within the realm of game theory, then there's something for you in this book. If you're a fan of eSports, then there's something for you in this book. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great! Informational! By Customer Provided an in-depth history and analysis of the evolution of e-sports, e-sports media, and business. While slightly out of date, (a lot of changes have happened since it was published) it still encapsulates some of the main fundamentals of e-sports and gaming culture.

Competitive video and computer game play is nothing new: the documentary *King of Kong* memorably portrays a Donkey Kong player's attempts to achieve the all-time highest score; the television show *Starcade* (1982--1984) featured competitions among arcade game players; and first-person shooter games of the 1990s became multiplayer through network play. A new development in the world of digital gaming, however, is the emergence of professional computer game play, complete with star players, team owners, tournaments, sponsorships, and spectators. In *Raising the Stakes*, T. L. Taylor explores the emerging scene of professional computer gaming and the accompanying efforts to make a sport out of this form of play. In the course of her explorations, Taylor travels to tournaments, including the World Cyber Games Grand Finals (which considers itself the computer gaming equivalent of the Olympics), and interviews participants from players to broadcasters. She examines pro-gaming, with its highly paid players, play-by-play broadcasts, and mass audience; discusses whether or not e-sports should even be considered sports; traces the player's path from amateur to professional (and how a hobby becomes work); and describes the importance of leagues, teams, owners, organizers, referees, sponsors, and fans in shaping the structure and culture of pro-gaming. Taylor connects professional computer gaming to broader issues: our notions of play, work, and sport; the nature of spectatorship; the influence of money on sports. And she examines the ongoing struggle over the gendered construction of play through the lens of male-dominated pro-gaming. Ultimately, the evolution of professional computer gaming illuminates the contemporary struggle to convert playful passions into serious play.

The recent explosion in the popularity of competitive gaming lacks a sufficient amount of documented history for people to truly appreciate just how far professional video gaming has come. Finally, T.L. Taylor provides an amazing perspective on eSports that will educate fans about a period of competitive play that's nearly been forgotten. Forget what history you may know, this book gives you the history you should know. (Marcus "djWHEAT" Graham, Host and Executive Producer, OneMoreGame.tv) T.L. Taylor has been among the best analysts of the media we have had over the past decade. Now she turns her exacting but always entertaining scrutiny to e-sports, with all the power we have come to expect of a participant observer of the highest order. (Toby Miller, author of *Makeover Nation*) In *Raising the Stakes*, T. L. Taylor does exactly what the title promises by giving us the first serious academic take on the world of competitive e-sports. She touches on every aspect of the new cyberathleticism, always carefully balancing enthusiasm and skepticism. (Henry Lowood, Curator for History of Science Technology Collections, Stanford University) This book is about much more than the e-sports scene. T.L. Taylor uses e-sports as a lens for looking at the confluence of social, cultural and technological practices that are reshaping human interaction as digital culture at both the local everyday level and at the broader level of global techno-politics. (Bart Simon, Director of the Centre for Technoculture, Art and Games, Concordia University, Montreal) ... Taylor has given us a great account of an exciting part of gaming culture. (Faltin Karlsen 1900-01-00) While *Raising the Stakes* fits neatly within the gaming studies or media studies genres, it is also an exciting and novel contribution to the growing body of work in what might be termed global technology studies. (Jenna Burrell *Contemporary Sociology*) *Raising the Stakes* is a must not only for game studies but also media and internet studies researchers as a wonderfully nuanced study of century-first digital play-based in DIY, grassroots ideology-in the face of burgeoning leisure commercialization. Play on. (Game Studies) Esports is a fascinating collision of new technology and culture with traditional sports structure, and is a phenomenon that could only happen in the present. There is a growing body of research around the growing esports phenomenon, and this book provides a great primer into the academic perspective on the emerging culture. In my opinion, this is the book to refer anyone to who is interested in understanding esports -- for both newcomers and veterans. (Timothy Young Day9) Taylor's book is a valuable piece of scholarship that lays the groundwork for further investigation into all aspects of video games as sport and players as athletes. (Steve Jacobs *American Journal of*

Play)About the AuthorT. L. Taylor is Associate Professor in Comparative Media Studies at MIT. She is the author of Play Between Worlds: Exploring Online Game Culture (MIT Press).