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Editorial

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The editorial team for Assembled 2018 issue of the Journal of Virtual Worlds Research is proud to release Assembled 2018. This issue includes five exciting research studies covering a broad and diverse array of topic areas but still focuses on the enhancement of knowledge in the realm of Virtual Worlds. In essence, the name of the issue ‘Assembled,’ defines the wide spectrum of professionally peer-reviewed articles inspired by subject matter experts in their respective fields. The five elite manuscripts chosen for this issue provide significant contributions to Virtual World research in terms of theory, methodology, and practice.

In the first article, Steven Downing’s **Virtual Parent-Child Relationships: A Case Study**, he shares his and his physically-separated child’s own experience of their use of Virtual World games as a way to bridge the separation between the two of them and strengthen their relationship. Downing uses interviews and interactive interview to relay the experiences they shared. His case study is designed to spark interest in future exploration, and as a conclusion, he suggests literature should not only focus on virtual education, and the social dangers virtual games may present to adolescents but to also focus on the relationship enhancements they can provide.

In Florian Flueggen, Dr. Stephanie Doyle and Dr. Hermann Veith’s article **One Game - One Effect? What Playing “World of Warcraft” Means for Adolescents and their development** the authors take a stab at understanding how adolescents are influenced by Virtual World games such as World of Warcraft (WoW). They interviewed and examined six adults who had played WoW extensively as youths, using Grounded Theory methods and developmental psychology factors, finding that all six players’ experiences were individual and unique to their respective personalities. The authors made note that these findings were in contrast to the popular stigma claiming gameplay negatively affects adolescent’s social skills.

Our article from Ahmed Elmezeny, Nina Edenhofer and Jeffrey Wimmer, **Immersive Storytelling in 360 Degree Videos: An Analysis of Interplay Between Narrative and Technical Immersion**, involved a qualitative study looking at the things that make a user immerse into a 360-

degree virtual storytelling environment (looking at both narrative and technical factors). The author highlights that Virtual Reality and 360-degree video immersion contain spatial aspects and includes the interplay of temporal, spatio-temporal, and emotional immersion. Though Virtual Reality and 360-degree video are new to technology, research finds there is strong evidence viewers obtain greater stimuli from their use than they do in the traditional video. The authors make recommendations for deeper looks into 360-degree video and Virtual Reality in quantitative studies.

In Dr. Peter F. Wardle's **Avatar Sex - the Joy of the Not Real**, he uses Second Life to examine and categorize factors associated with virtual gender swapping and sexual interactions. The author relies on terminology such as symbolic, imaginary and real to describe the operator's behaviors. These terms give justification as to why an operator may act in ways they would not in the real world. The author interviews users on why and how they chose their genders and requested detailed information on sexually themed areas in which they visited in Second Life. The author ends with a call for extended research on Virtual World sexual behaviours, exploration of Virtual World intimacy, and emotion in Virtual World play.

And in our final article Helen Sara Farley wrote **Using 3D Worlds in Prison: Driving, Learning and Escape**. This manuscript highlighted a considerable topic of virtual reality use in prisons. Farley pointed out the capabilities and the low cost of 3D virtual technology then shared some current uses prisons today. For example, for prisoners living in cells for more 20 years virtual technology is used to introduce new technology those prisoners have never seen. Additionally, she provides examples of virtual reality for rehabilitation in areas of destructive behaviour patterns, abuse, and addictions. She also shares the employment of virtual reality in teaching formal skills, culture, and languages to prisoners helping them integrate better into society. The author ends her writing by explaining some virtual reality limitations and some then emphasizes their potential.

This issue will surely make an impact on our audience of researchers, academics, and practitioners, both those who are in the field of technology and virtual use, and those who are just curious. Great rigor went into selecting these five impressive articles that provide abundant prospect for future research.

For a final note in this Assembled 2018 issue introduction, we would like to introduce the editorial team. This six-member team was tied together with a great wealth of knowledge, experience and broad perspectives in order to build this issue of the Journal of Virtual World Research. Our Prime Editor, Dr. Angie Cox, resides in Germany; Dr. Felipe Becker Nunes in Brazil; Dr. Miao Feng in Chicago, USA; and Dr. Edwardo Donavon in the District of Columbia, USA. The Editor-in-Chief, Yesha Sivan, resides in Israel and Hong Kong and our Coordinating Editor, Tzafnat Shpak in Israel as well. The entire team's viewpoints and ideas as well as a dedicated team of expert reviewers who worked together with a common goal, 'to enlighten the readers', and were the perfect recipe to develop an issue sure impress our readers. We are confident you will enjoy the issue.