

**LIFT and Bento Miso present**

***No Reading After the Internet: Women Game Players, Characters and Creators***  
**with texts selected by Jennie Faber**



**Wednesday, 14 March, 2012**

**Bento Miso (300 – 862 Richmond Street West, Buzz #800)**

**7 PM, Free**

**Facilitated by Jennie Faber and cheyanne turions**

The creation and consumption of video games has long been seen as the domain of men and boys. Women and girl gamers are rendered "invisible" by designers and communities, even while producers attempt to capitalize on the "bored housewives" market and design games with ostensibly girly themes.

In multiplayer games, female players are forced to disguise their gender to avoid harassment, and are effectively silenced. "Feminine" (non-combat) game mechanics and storytelling is derided. Women and girls are relegated to marginal participation and spectatorship—the only safe spaces for them. And the lack of creator gender diversity produces games that reinforce this cycle.

Bento Miso, located in the heart of Queen West, is a collaborative workspace for independent web and game makers, and is expressly a physical "safe space" for women game creators and players. Co-founder Jennie Faber has culled a selection of readings around the theme of women game players, characters and creators. She is interested in exploring how female characters—playable and non-playable, enemies, villains, and heroes—and women game-makers—producers, writers, designers, et cetera—can shape a new player culture in which it is safe for women and girls to fully engage in and enjoy video games. These entities are as marginalized as players, yet may hold the key to re-programming player communities.

Excerpts from the following articles will be read aloud and discussed by participants at the salon: "Cheerleaders, booth babes, Halo hoes: pro-gaming, gender and jobs for the boys" by Nicholas Taylor, Jen Jenson and Suzanne de Castell; "Gender in play: Mapping a girls' gaming club" by Nick Taylor; "Women are treated better than men online", says NerdBoobLoot-man" by Hoyden and Shaker Lauredhel; and "What do we do about video games?" by Roy.

***No Reading After the Internet*** is a salon series dealing with cultural texts, which are read aloud by participants. The particular urgency of the project is in reforming publics and experimenting with the act of reading, as its own media form, in our moment. *No Reading* means to offer an engaged pedagogical space where participants can retrace the steps used in constructing understanding, productively challenging individual and collective ways through the realms of language and interpretation. To participate in *No Reading* is to invoke an exuberant not-knowing, seeking out moments of collective illumination. No pre-reading or research is required.

Born and raised in Alaska, **Jennie Faber** grew up writing, gaming, and coding in the '90s. Now she's an avid gamer, a recovering prescriptivist editor, and front-end developer. She is the Product Director at Bento Box and co-founder of Bento Miso. She draws on her editorial background to translate documentation and conversations into real user goals and create refined, useful, usable applications.

### ***No Reading After the Internet - Toronto***

([www.noreadingaftertheinternet.wordpress.com](http://www.noreadingaftertheinternet.wordpress.com)) is supported by the **Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT)** (<http://lift.ca>). Special thanks to **Bento Miso** (<http://bentomiso.com>) for their support of this month's salon.