

**Dialogues of the Dead: Reanimated Interaction in Computer Games**  
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Dialogue has been the paradigm for human computer interaction since Alan Turing proposed a conversational game as a test of artificial intelligence in "Computing Machinery and Intelligence." This talk will confront theories of dialogue from the traditions of philosophy and literary studies with theories of interactivity. Can we learn from the dialogues of the dead? I believe we can, and I will argue that dialogue is observed - that the interlocutors who converse are not the audience of the dialogue. Instead it is the eavesdroppers who stand back from the conversation that witness the dialogue and possibly benefit from it. Further, we can see this in human-computer interactivity - the interesting interaction (in a game) is on the screen between representations of the player (hero) and representations controlled by the computer (monsters). For this reason I will distinguish, for critical purposes, between the interactivity scripted in a new media work like a computer game, which takes place on the stage of the screen, and the ergonomic issues around how we control our characters using input/output devices. Both are important, but the dialogue is of the dead on screen. These dead are animated by us (and the computer) so that we can witness their interaction. The ethical question that follows is what should we do with these reanimations.