

11-1-2022

Umurangi Generation: The Red Skies of Neo-Liberalism

Ian Byrne
Memorial University



Part of the [Film and Media Studies Commons](#), and the [Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies Commons](#)

Follow this and additional works at / Suivez-nous ainsi que d'autres travaux et œuvres:

<https://scholars.wlu.ca/thegoose>

Recommended Citation / Citation recommandée

Byrne, Ian. "Umurangi Generation: The Red Skies of Neo-Liberalism." *The Goose*, vol. 19 , no. 2 , article 5, 2022,

<https://scholars.wlu.ca/thegoose/vol19/iss2/5>.

This article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Goose by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

Cet article vous est accessible gratuitement et en libre accès grâce à Scholars Commons @ Laurier. Le texte a été approuvé pour faire partie intégrante de la revue The Goose par un rédacteur autorisé de Scholars Commons @ Laurier. Pour de plus amples informations, contactez scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

IAN BRYNE

Umurangi Generation: The Red Skies of Neo-Liberalism



Watch the video essay here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdL0o_ArYjo

In this video essay I examine the themes of neo-liberal decay and Indigenous resistance present in the photography game *Umurangi Generation*. Photography games are a video game genre that make taking photos through an in-game camera the mechanical focus. This non-violent engagement prioritizes player expression and exploration, rather than the action and combat focused games that are typical of the medium. *Umurangi Generation* was released in May 2020 by Australia based developer Nephtali Faulkner and his team ORIGAME DIGITAL. Using a combination of Indigenous knowledge and academic theory ORIGAME DIGITAL aims to create games which challenge conventional video game design and western cultural assumptions. In an industry where games are regularly derided as ‘political’ for including minority representation, *Umurangi Generation* stands out by being unapologetic in its anti-Capitalist politics. *Umurangi Generation* uses environmental storytelling to make a scathing critique of Neo-liberal responses to modern crises such as climate change, police violence, and government response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Works Cited

Dillion, Grace. *Walking on Clouds*. University of Arizona Press, 2012.

Errant Signal. *Vibing to the End in Umurangi Generation*. *YouTube Video*, September 13, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ctkeq8IpdQA&t=523s>.

"imagineNATIVE Festival." *Unreserved*, CBC Radio, October 16, 2020.

Klein, Naomi. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate*. Vintage Canada, 2014.

Sheehan, Norman W. "Indigenous Knowledge and Respectful Design: An Evidence-Based Approach." *Design Issues*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2011, pp. 68-80.

Robert, Kelly. "Environmental Storytelling Strategies in Digital Environments: A Qualitative Comparison." 2019, Texas A&M University, MA thesis. <hdl.handle.net/1969.1/188790>.

Sims, Daniel. "Talking Climate Change and Maori culture with Umurangi Generation." *The Indie Game Website*, June 5, 2020. www.indiegamewebsite.com/2020/06/05/talking-climate-change-and-maori-culture-with-umurangi-generation/.

The Telegraph. "Australian PM Scott Morrison heckled during visit to bushfire victims' town." *YouTube Video*, January 2, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=az4lkKjAsdl&t=21s&ab_channel=TheTelegraph. Today.

"Australia Wildfires Rage on Amid Effort To Save Koalas, Kangaroos." *YouTube Video*, January 2, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXXMxmswrtOg&ab_channel=TODAY.

Umurangi Generation. Origame Digital, 2020.

IAN BRYNE is a 27-year-old university student studying English Literature at Memorial University. Growing up in Western Newfoundland, nature and environmental concerns have been a constant throughout his life. As an academic he hopes to advance the burgeoning field of games scholarship, uncovering the depths of this often dismissed medium.