

## Metaverse Or Simulacra?

Far more widely used than Second Life are two online games, Minecraft and Roblox. Between them, they have a user base of between 150 and 300 million and most of these are young and loyal, unlike most of those who tried Second Life. Both Minecraft and Roblox are sandbox games, that is they offer users a VR in which they can build and shape the environment in which they play. This is very different from the ready-made spaces of the shooting and exploring games they supersede. Minecraft is designed for younger players, who use simple blocks to build a shared world. Roblox offers a more programable environment providing the makings of a multitude of players' worlds within the game. There has not yet been much academic research around the role of Minecraft and Roblox in teaching and learning, but it is coming. An early indicator investigated Roblox and teaching sculptural heritage (Meier et al., 2020) and it seems likely that the children and young adults who are currently immersed will generate more take-up for teaching and learning. But games are likely to continue to be a niche, albeit with very many participants. premium ebooks

Computer games and online gaming are not for everyone; however, there are internet technologies that have become near-ubiquitous, these are the technologies of socialisation and work.