Games, particularly massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs), are about community; the micro interactions and collective experiences that occur between members of the community within the space of the game, and sometimes beyond. These experiences and interactions contribute to the reciprocal building of both the player's reputation in a particular game and the reputation of the game among the game's community. My work uses *Lord of the Rings Online* (*LOTRO*), a digital game adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth, to explore how reputation and community impact the gamespace. Regrettably, scholars working at the intersections of Tolkien Studies, adaptation theory, and game studies have not yet attended to the importance of reputation and community in this context. The translation of the narrative across mediums, the transmedial expansion of the narrative, and the reputation of the end product as an adaptation are often the focus of study. And while several scholars note the reputation of *LOTRO* as an adaptation of Tolkien's textual universe, less recognized is the *impact* of this change in space on the participant's immersion in and the community's engagement with the world of Middle-earth. In an attempt to address this gap, this paper considers how the spatial structures of reputation - or the components that shape reputation - impact engagement in and with the play environment.

There are two types of reputation addressed in this paper: player reputation, which includes affordances like the player's avatar, their information bubble, and their fellowships; and game reputation, which includes elements like the game's interface, graphics, and adaptation of space. How do the spatial structures of reputation impact engagement *in* the play environment? And why do they impact engagement *with* the gamespace? The "how" merits a closer analysis of the player's reputation by examining how the game's social architectures - or the mechanisms that afford in-game communication - affect the player: the effect of interface on social relations

and on community formation in the game influences social interaction between players. The "why" requires a consideration of the game's reputation: the degree to which *LOTRO* convinces its players that it is Tolkien's Middle-earth has a direct impact on two factors: first, the success of seamless player integration into this virtual world. And second, the formation of a digitally mediated space that functions as a place of social gathering.

The results of my work are twofold: first, the interlocutionary accoutrements that comprise player reputation attest to the ethos of individual players. These interlocutionary accoutrements impact engagement between players, acting as the channel through which players exchange and communicate information with each other. Second, the interface of the game grants the player access to an architected space. The components of the game's reputation imbricate to establish this space as Middle-earth, and encourage the community to engage with it as such. In short, my work illustrates that the spatial structures of reputation immerse the player into the gamespace, and shape it around a sense of social cohesion grounded in player-to-player micro interactions and community-wide collective experiences.