

ZEPPELIN UNIVERSITY

MASTER THESIS

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT & ECONOMICS

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## **The Narrative of Warfare**

*A Structural Video Game Analysis and a  
Comparison of Perspectivistic Styles of  
Reading the Narrative of the Game*

**"Call of Duty Advanced Warfare"**

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written by

MARC ERIC WALLNER | 13201333

in the Department of

COMMUNICATION, CULTURE & MANAGEMENT

*Thesis Supervisor:*

Prof. Dr. Marian Thomas Adolf

*Thesis Supervisor:*

Dr. Martin Herbers

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## Executive Summary

Although many video games have been included in scientific analyses so far, research has not yet focused on the in-depth analysis of narratives in First-Person Military Shooter (FPMS) games. Scholars such as Huntemann (2010) already analyzed the general perception and understanding of warfare with players of the "Call of Duty" franchise titles "Modern Warfare" and "Modern Warfare 2", finding that the amount of players who are persuaded by the portrayal of militarism in those video games equals the amount of players who are repelled by it (Huntemann and Payne, 2010, p.232). Consequently, the goal of this thesis is to establish on the one hand, a basic video game literacy for the reader to be able to understand the medium of the game and on the other hand, an in-depth analysis of the narrative of the latest FPMS title of the COD franchise "Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare". The study will put forward a possible way how to approach a structural video game analysis that revolves around the game and its contexts. Furthermore, this thesis will analyze the transfers and transformations that take place when the player enters the virtual world through the application of the transfer & transformation model by Jürgen Fritz. Results show that the game, in fact, carries political and militaristic ideologies. Results from the interviews, however, show that players are able to identify the different narratives used in the game. Those narratives, however, are partially perceived and interpreted in completely varying ways, ranging from clear political propaganda and ideology, to anti-war messages, and more profound messages about the futility of warfare.

### Dear Reader,

Before you begin reading this thesis, please take a closer look at the "**Thesis Guide**" in **Appendix A**. The enclosed guide will provide you with recommendations regarding when to watch the additional video material that comes on DVD with this thesis. It is important to remember that only when the video material is watched, the reader who is not familiar with the game COD AW will be able to understand this thesis.

GOOD LUCK & HAVE FUN