#TwitterPlay: A Case Study of Fan Roleplaying Online

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Discourse analysis examining how 18 roleplayers on Twitter perform characters from *The Hunger Games* [1,2], interact with other roleplayers and fans, and use the affordances of Twitter to extend the narrative.

**Two Types of Roleplayers**
- Groups who use shared username structures (usernameDistrict1) and/or hashtags (#District1) and interact mainly with their group
- Individuals who play non-central characters and focus on commentary and fan interaction

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**Analysis Process**

**Code for broad themes:** First level analysis revealed the importance of affordance use (usernames, hashtags), first person perspective, and remaining in character

**Iterative Analysis:** Examining patterns showed that roleplayers fell into two main categories: group roleplayers and individuals

**Identifying Issues:** Focusing on describing differences between roleplaying groups (performance style and character choice)

**Generating Themes and Codes:** Characterizing different types of tweets, including conversational, individual character performance, group performance, and group identification

**Refined Coding:** For this poster, we focused on use of username structure, hashtag appropriation, use of trending topics, and hashtag creation

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**#TwitterPlay:** skilled use of both Hunger Games specific and general Twitter-wide hashtags and other affordances to combine narrative with current events and make social commentary

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**Example of TwitterPlay**
Roleplayer tweeting about wanting to eat deadly nightlock berries (from HG narrative) in response to musician’s appearance on Billboard Music Awards, collapsing the narrative and current events

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**Two Audiences Addressed by Hashtags**

Twitter Wide (hashtag appropriation)

- #RelationshipsNowdays
- #ReasonsYoureSingle
- #FreeCookieDay

Hunger Games Specific (hashtag generation)

- #Cinnerators
- #PanemUnited

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**References**

