Research Office
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Research Assistant Opportunity

Gaming Scriptures: Biblical Reception History in Retro Video Games

Posting Date: November 16, 2026
Posting Closing Date: November 27, 2026
Virtual Interviews: Early December 2026
Position Start Date: January 15, 2027

Overview:

Gaming Scriptures: Biblical Reception History in Retro Video Games explores how retro video games shaped the reception history of biblical texts and traditions in gamified digital form, from 1982–2005. Drawing on religious studies, digital humanities, cultural history, and game studies, the project traces how these games opened new interpretive possibilities for ancient stories through immersive, gamified engagement with Jewish and Christian scriptures.

As the first phase of a potentially larger research program, this pilot project will:

(1) Establish a comprehensive, annotated roster of biblically inspired retro video games from approximately 1982–2005.
(2) Develop and test a methodology for reception-history studies of biblical video games, piloted against six titles spanning different eras and media types.

The Graduate Research Assistant will support this work through bibliographic research, literature reviews, gameplay, and knowledge mobilization.

The role is for a one-year position of up to 220 hours distributed weekly according to project workflow and an agreed upon workplan (estimated average of 5 hours per week, maximum of 8 hours per week).

While most duties will be undertaken remotely through online collaboration and communication, key aspects of the project are based in up to six in-person gaming sessions at the Airdrie Public Library. Candidates must be able to travel locally and collaborate in these events.

Key Responsibilities:

- Undertake **scoping research** to establish a comprehensive catalogue of relevant titles released across platforms using online databases, archives, publications, and websites.
- Create and maintain an **annotated database** of video games, cataloging and contextualizing their use of biblical materials.

- Support **academic knowledge mobilization** by reviewing conference papers and journal articles, as well as **public knowledge mobilization** through online materials, including project website development and editing short videos for YouTube.
- Serve as the **primary game player** of the six titles noted above and lead video editing of screen-recorded gameplay to support review and analysis of game content.

Qualifications and Experience:

- Undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline; specialization or coursework in ancient religions, biblical literature, and historical-critical methods preferred.
- Current enrollment in a graduate program.
- Strong experience with video games, including familiarity with retro/classic gaming platforms.
- Experience with digital image, video, and audio production software (especially Camtasia).
- Experience in developing and maintaining datasets.
- Familiarity with Zotero for bibliographic management.
- Experience with computer coding, including using AI tools to generate, iterate, and publish programs.
- Prior experience in a Research Assistant role is an asset.
- Documented experience completing university-level research projects.
- Ability to work independently and remotely, meeting deadlines in an organized manner.
- Strong critical thinking, analytical reading, collaboration, and communication skills.

How to apply:

Qualified individuals are encouraged to submit their application by email to Dr. Andrew Perrin at aperrin@athabascau.ca. Applications must include (i) a brief cover letter that summarizes your skills, interests and experience, (ii) a current resume or curriculum vitae, and (iii) an unofficial copy of your transcript(s). All items must be submitted in PDF format. Contact information for 2 references will be requested at the final stage of recruitment for the candidate of choice.

Evaluation of applications will begin immediately and will continue until a suitable candidate is found. All applicants are thanked for their interest in this position; however, only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Athabasca University and the researchers are committed and seek to support equity in employment and research opportunities. We strongly encourage applications from Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+ people, women, and other historically marginalized groups. Applicants are welcome, but not required, to self-identify in their letter of application.