

# Physical Spaces and Temporal Plots

## Narrative Techniques in Biowares CRPGs

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This research paper seeks to explore the relationship between linear narratives and player agency within the context of computer roleplaying games (CRPGs). The CRPGs chosen as case studies are three created by or related to the work of Bioware Corp.: *Baldur's Gate* (1998), *Planescape: Torment* (1999) and *Dragon Age: Origins* (2009). The methodology for the case studies is developed through a close examination of the academic literature relating to the role of narrative in games, the CRPG genre in particular and Bioware's work within this genre. Findings reveal how these techniques have evolved over time and demonstrate that conflicts between player agency and a pre-scripted narrative can be resolved through thoughtful design and integration of the two elements. These findings are discussed, and some suggestions for further research are provided.