Game Studies Reading Group 2019:
“A Summer in the Global South: A Reading Group on Regional and Transnational Game Studies”

This summer, we’re putting together a reading group that engages with regional game studies. Exploring video game scholarship on and from the Global South, we will look at issues and tensions emerging from doing such work across transnational boundaries and within culturally specific contexts. We will see how long drawn debates and current issues in the field are articulated and shaped as they are situated within broader and specific geopolitics. From the indigenous roots of play in Latin America to the implications of #GamerGate reverberating across gaming communities in Southeast Asia, different methodological approaches and perspectives will be surveyed. How has western and northern scholarship framed video games outside of its territory? How can regional lenses enrich and complicate ongoing discussions on topics such as gender and race?

Discourses on empire, post-colonialism, globalization, and diaspora intersect, emerge from, and frame regional game studies. Thus, these will also be focal points of discussion in looking at issues surrounding narrative, representation, play, design, market, fandom, platform, affect, and labor among others. Given the nascency of regional game studies and the limits imposed by language and access, we will attempt to bring together manuscripts, book chapters, journal articles, grey literature, and popular texts for these ends. As we will not be able to explore the breadth of game studies within and across regions, we will put together a reading list with a sampling of themes, methods, geographies, and cultures. Where possible, texts by women, people of color, queer folks, and other who have been historically marginalized in game studies will be preferred.

While the coverage seems topically broad and geographically wide, in this casual but rigorous reading group, we ultimately would like to acknowledge and engage with the potential of regional game studies in relation to our respective research interests and the shape of the field as a whole.

Books (monographs and collections):


Mukherjee, S. (2017). *Video Games and Postcolonialism: Empire plays back.* Springer. [will be asking UCI library for access]


[available at the UCI Library]

[forthcoming]

[available at the UCI Library]

**Articles:**


**Suggested reading:**

While we will only cover selected chapters/sections of the books above, we highly recommend that you (eventually) read them in their entirety.


The upcoming Special Issue on “Games of Empire 10 Years Later” in Games & Culture, slated for release June 2020.
SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Wednesday, July 10): Mapping things out --- an overview


--- plus a chapter/country of one’s choosing

Week 2 (Wednesday, July 17): Video Games, The Empire, and Postcolonialism


--- Chapters 1, 4, and 5.


**Recommended for further/future readings**


--- The rest of the book

--- The rest of the entire special issue

Week 3 (Wednesday, July 24): Imagined Communities of Play: Nation, National, and Nationalism


Digital Masks and Lucha Libre
Visual Subjectification and Allegory of Mexico in Video Games
Daniel Calleros Villarreal (101-114)

Arab Gamers
An Identity Inclusivity Study
Bushra Alfaraj (169-182)

The Emerging African Video Game Industry
An Analysis of the Narratives of Games Developed in Cameroon and Nigeria
Rebecca Yvonne Bayeck (211-224)


Recommended for further/future readings


Week 4 (Wednesday, July 31): Global-Local | Comparative Ecologies, Milieus, and Rhythms

--- Introduction, Chapters 3, 4, 5, and Conclusion

Recommended
--- The rest of the book

--- Chapters 2 and 4

Week 5 (Wednesday, August 7): Transnational Production, Development, and Localization


--- Chapter 5

**Recommended**


--- The rest of the book

--- Chapter 6

**Week 6 (Wednesday, August 14): Cultural Codes and Identities I**

--- Introduction, Parts I.2 (Persuasion) and II.6 (Simulation), and Afterword

**Week 7 (Wednesday, August 21): Cultural Codes and Identities II**


Geyser, H., 2018. Decolonising the Games Curriculum: Interventions in an Introductory Game Design Course in South Africa. *Open Library of Humanities, 4(1).*


**Week 8 (Wednesday, August 28): Borders and Transnational Play**

--- Introduction, Chapter 5, and Conclusion