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### Game Studies Summer Reading Group: Goals, Readings, Schedule

Reading group logistics:

- Meeting once a week, from 2:00 - 4:00 pm on Thursdays, for eight weeks: from Thursday, 6/29 to Thursday, 8/17, in conference room 5222 in Donald Bren Hall.
- Participant expectations: please come prepared to be an active participant in discussion. This is a collaborative, exploratory environment where we will be learning from one another. Bo is here as your facilitator, not your instructor.
- Each participant will select one reading over the course of the summer to lead discussion on. Leading a discussion can be informal, but please have points and questions ready for the group.
- PDF versions of our reading can be found in our [reading group Google folder](#) (materials are being added on a rolling basis).

Reading list design goals:

1. To offer grad students a crash course in the **big names of game studies** -- not so that they can replicate longstanding issues of citing and re-citing the same limited (and privileged) voices, but so that they can be conversant and therefore “legitimate” in the field, and building from that legitimacy disrupt and reimagine game studies in their own work. *We might call this the “canon” of game studies, but definitely note the air quotes.*
2. To highlight the work of **key voices** in game studies whose work has often gone **overlooked** or **undervalued**, with a special emphasis on non-cis-male scholars, scholars of color, queer scholars, and others invested in social justice -- with the hope of encouraging students to see game studies as a field that is diverse, complex, and ripe for dissent. *We might call this a counter-canon of game studies: not a perfect metaphor, but you get the idea.*
3. To bring a selection of **contemporary works** addressing **culture**, history, identity, social justice and (broadly speaking) the social contexts and meanings of video games into dialog with these earlier works.

Additional reading group goals:

4. To build **interdisciplinary discussions** and community around games **across UCI**, with a focus on bringing together graduate students from diverse areas of interests and departments in a collaborative exploration of game studies.
5. To explore, attend to, and interrogate a wide range of **methodologies** that can be brought to the **study of games** and those who play them. What are the possibilities and limitations of these methods? Whose perspectives do they make visible and whose perspectives do they silence?

6. To support one another in a group dynamic that is **inclusive** and **conscientious**. This means that we agree to create a space where we avoid discriminatory language, always use our colleagues stated pronouns, keep an eye on our privilege, try to check our assumptions about normative identities and bodies, and educate one another when possible but also reserve the right to prioritize self-care. Are there other guidelines we'd like to add to this list?

## SCHEDULE & READINGS

Some things to note as you look at the schedule of readings:

- You'll see many books listed below, but fear not: we will be reading selections from these books, not whole books. Whenever possible, these selections will be made [available as PDFs](#), though those interested in continuing to work with game studies might consider purchasing some of these texts in their entirety.
- The one exception is the book *Gaming Representation*, which is new from editors Jen Malkowski and TreaAndrea Russworm. If you can afford it, I strongly recommend buying (well, pre-ordering) this book. So many of the essays in it look amazing. Here's the [Amazon link](#).
- The exact placement and pairings of these readings is loosely designed, but also allows space for a bit of randomness. This will hopefully allow us to discover resonances and tensions between pieces of writing that engage with related topics, as well as those we might not think to juxtapose.
- For each week, you'll see a couple of main readings, followed by an "if you have time" optional additional reading. These are highly recommended, but if you're short on time, focus on the main readings for the week, which will be the focus of discussion.

### Meeting 1, Thursday, June 29:

- Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (1944): chapter 1, "Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon"; chapter 2, "The Play-Concept as Expressed in Language" - PDF in Google folder
- Roger Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games* (1957): chapter 1, "The Definition of Play"; chapter 2, "The Classification of Games"; chapter 3, "The Social Function of Games"; chapter 4, "The Corruption of Games" -- PDF in Google folder
- + If you have time: Georges Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure" (1933) - PDF in Google folder

### Meeting 2, Thursday, July 6:

- Janet Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck* (1997): Introduction, "A Book Lover Longs for Cyberdrama"; chapter 2, "Harbingers of the Holodeck"; chapter 4, "Immersion"
- Ian Bogost, *Persuasive Games* (2007): Chapter 1, "Procedural Rhetoric"; chapter 3, "Ideological Frames"; chapter 8, "Procedural Literacy" - PDF in Google folder

- + If you have time: Espen Aarseth, *Cybertext* (1997) - Chapter 1, "Introduction: Ergodic Literature" - PDF in Google folder

Meeting 3, Thursday, July 13:

- Mia Consalvo, *Cheating* (2007): Introduction, "To Cheat or Not to Cheat"; chapter 4, "Gaining Advantage: How Videogame Players Define and Negotiate Cheating"; chapter 8, "Capitalizing on Paratexts" - PDF in Google folder
- T. L. Taylor, *Play between Worlds* (2006): chapter 1, "Finding New Worlds"; chapter 3, "Beyond Fun: Instrumental Play and Power Gamers"; chapter 4, "Where the Women Are" - PDF in Google folder
- + If you have time: Celia Pearce, *Communities of Play* (2009): chapter 1, "Communities of Play and the Global Playground"; chapter 3, "Emergence in Cultures, Games, and Virtual Worlds"; chapter 8, "Communities and Cultures of Play" - PDF in Google folder

Meeting 4, Thursday, July 20:

- Jesper Juul, *Half-Real* (2005): Introduction; chapter 5, "Rules and Fiction"
- Jesper Juul, *The Art of Failure* (2013): chapter 1, "Introduction: The Paradox of Failure," chapter 3, "The Feeling of Failure," chapter 6, "The Art of Failure" - PDF in Google folder
- Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman, *Rules of Play* (2003): chapter 1, "What Is This Book About?," chapter 12, "Rules on Three Levels", chapter 23, "Games as the Play of Experience", chapter 24, "Games as the Play of Pleasure", chapter 25, "Games as the Play of Meaning" - PDF in Google folder
- + If you have time: Alex Galloway, *Gaming* (2006): Chapter 1, "Gamic Action, Four Movements"; chapter 5, "Countergaming" - PDF in Google folder

Meeting 5, Thursday, July 27:

- Mary Flanagan, *Critical Play* (2009): Chapter 1, "Introduction to Critical Play"; chapter 7, "Critical Computer Games" - PDF in Google folder
- Mary Flanagan and Helen Nissenbaum, *Values at Play in Digital Games* (2014): chapter 1. "Groundwork for Values in Games"; "chapter 2, "Uncovering Values at Play" - PDF in Google folder
- Tracy Fullerton, "The Hegemony of Play" (2007) - PDF in Google folder
- + If you have time: Miguel Sicart, *Play Matters* (2014): chapter 1, "Play Is," chapter 5, "Beauty," chapter 6, "Politics" - PDF in Google folder

Meeting 6, Thursday, August 3:

- Jane McGonigal, *Reality Is Broken* (2012): Introduction, "Reality Is Broken"; chapter 3, "More Satisfying Work"; chapter 6, "Becoming a Part of Something Bigger than Ourselves"; chapter 8, "Leveling up in Life"; chapter 14, "Saving the Real World Together" - PDF in Google folder
- Carly Kocurek, *Coin-Operated Americans* (2015): Introduction; chapter 1, "The Microcosmic Arcade"; chapter 6, "The Arcade Is Dead, Long Live the Arcade"; chapter 7, "The Future Is Now" - available to read online through UCI library
- + If you have time: Katherine Isbister, *How Games Move Us* (2016): Introduction; chapter 1, "A Series of Interesting Choices"

Meeting 7, Thursday, August 10:

- *Gaming Representation*, edited by Jennifer Malkowski and TreaAndrea Russworm (2017): "Introduction" from Jen Malkowski and TreaAndrea Russworm, Part II "Race, Identity, and Nation" (chapter ten by Lisa Patti can be lowest priority of the chapters in this section if you're short on time)
- Lisa Nakamura, *Cybertypes* (2002): Introduction; chapter 2, "Head-Hunting on the Internet"; chapter 5, "Menu-Driven Identities" - PDF in folder
- + If you have time: Dimitri Williams, et al., "The Virtual Census" - PDF in Google folder

Meeting 8: date Thursday, August 17:

- Adrienne Shaw, *Gaming at the Edge* (2014): Introduction, "Clichés versus Women"; chapter 1, "Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Digital Games"; chapter 2, "Does anyone really identify with Lara Croft?"
- Anna Anthropy, *Rise of the Video Game Zinesters* (2012): Chapter 1, "The Problem with Videogames"; chapter 3, "What Is It Good For?"; chapter 5, "The New Videogame" - PDF in Google folder
- If you have time: *Queer Game Studies*, edited by Bonnie Ruberg and Adrienne Shaw (2017): Introduction, "Imagining Queer Game Studies"; chapter 12, "Welcome to My Fantasy Zone: *Bayonetta* and Queer Femme Disturbance"; 13. "Role-Play as Queer Lens: How 'Closet Shep' Changed My Vision of *Mass Effect*" - PDF in Google folder