

Organized by:

Bonnie (Bo) Ruberg - Assistant Prof, UCI Informatics - bruberg@uci.edu

Benedict (Bono) Olgado - PhD student, UCI Informatics - bolgado@uci.edu

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.

Logistics:

- Meeting **Wednesdays from 6:00 - 8:00 pm** in Donald Bren Hall 5032, for eight total weeks between Wednesday, July 10 and Wednesday, August 28.
- Each week, we'll tackle a selection of readings grouped by sub-theme. These texts will either be available online or we will provide them as PDFs.
- All UCI grad students and faculty are welcome! If you know a particularly advanced undergrad you'd like to invite, just send us a heads up ahead of time.
- There will be free food -- probably something dinner-y and lowkey, like pizza. If you have specific dietary restrictions, just let us know. There will be vegetarian and GF options by default.

- It's ok if you can't attend for the whole summer. We know that folks will need to drop in and out for travel, summer jobs, etc. If you could give us a heads up with a rough idea of your schedule, that would be great.
- Many of us come from different disciplinary and personal backgrounds. It's ok to contribute to the group in different ways. We simply ask that you come prepared to discuss.
- We're still ironing out the details, but we may ask each of you to pick one reading that you sign up to lead discussion about. This helps us decentralize conversation, so that we can be facilitators rather than instructors.

Students who have expressed interest in participating in 2019 group:

- Christie Abel (rising 2nd year PhD student, Informatics) - abelca@uci.edu
- Maria Anderson-Coto (rising 2nd year PhD student, Informatics) - mjander2@uci.edu
- Amanda Cullen (rising 4th year PhD student, Informatics) - cullena@uci.edu
- Akil Fletcher (rising 2nd year PhD student, Anthropology) - affletch@uci.edu
- Dan Gardner (rising 5th year PhD student, Informatics) - dlgardne@uci.edu
- Reggi Gardner (rising 2nd year PhD student, Informatics) - rtgardne@uci.edu
- Thomas Grace (incoming PhD student, Informatics) - thomasdgrace@gmail.com ← *can't attend but wants to follow along with the reading list*
- Naz Hartoonian (incoming PhD student, Informatics) - nhartoon@uci.edu
- Matt Knutson (graduating PhD, Visual Studies) - mknutso1@uci.edu
- Ian Larson (rising 2nd year PhD student, Informatics) - larsoni@uci.edu
- Lika Liu (incoming PhD student, Informatics) - haizhou@usc.edu
- Nika Nour (incoming PhD student, Informatics) - nikanour@gmail.com
- Quynh Nguyen-Le (incoming PhD student, Visual Studies) - quyennl@uci.edu
- Bono Olgado (rising 2nd year PhD student, Informatics) - bolgado@uci.edu
- Spencer Ruelos (rising 3rd year PhD student, Informatics) - sruelos@uci.edu
- Mikael Sebag - mikaeldsebag@gmail.com
- Christine Tomlinson - ctomlins@uci.edu
- KT Wong (rising 3rd year PhD student, Visual Studies) - kokw@uci.edu

Reading List

PDF copies of the following texts have been consolidated and are available in [our shared google drive](#) with generous permission from the authors. Kindly do not distribute beyond the reading group. Everyone is encouraged to buy personal copies of the books when possible in support of these scholars. We are still waiting for Anne Marie Schleiner's forthcoming manuscript.

Refer to the weekly schedule for the specific sections/chapters we will be reading in each book.

Books (monographs and collections):

Apperley, T. (2011). *Gaming rhythms: Play and counterplay from the situated to the global*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

Huntemann, N., & Aslinger, B. (Eds.). (2013). *Gaming globally: Production, play, and place*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

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

O'Hagan, M., & Mangiron, C. (2013). *Game localization: Translating for the global entertainment Industry*. John Benjamins.

Penix-Tadsen, P. (Ed.). (2019). *Video Games and the Global South*. Carnegie Mellon University, ETC Press.

Penix-Tadsen, P. (2016). *Cultural Code: Video Games and Latin America*. MIT Press.
[available at the UCI Library]

Schleiner, A. (2020, forthcoming). *Transnational Play: Pirate Localizers, Shanty Playgrounds, and Mobile Games*. Xxx.
[forthcoming]

Wolf, M. J. (Ed.). (2015). *Video games around the world*. MIT Press.
[available at the UCI Library]

Articles:

Dyer-Witheford, N., & De Peuter, G. (2009). Empire@ Play: Virtual games and global capitalism. *CTheory*, 5-13.

Liboriussen, B., & Martin, P. (2016). Regional game studies. *Game Studies*, 16(1).

Murray, S., 2018. The Work of Postcolonial Game Studies in the Play of Culture. *Open Library of Humanities*, 4(1).

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.

Bernal-Merino, M. Á. (2014). *Translation and localisation in video games: making entertainment software global*. Routledge.

Dyer-Witheford, N., & De Peuter, G. (2009). *Games of empire: Global capitalism and video games*. University of Minnesota Press.

Hjorth, L. & Khoo, O. (Eds.). (2015). *Routledge handbook of new media in Asia*. Routledge.

Hjorth, L., & Chan, D. (Eds.). (2009). *Gaming cultures and place in Asia-Pacific*. Routledge.

Mukherjee, S., & Lundedal Hammar, E. (Eds.). (2018). Postcolonial perspectives in game studies [Special issue]. *Open Library of Humanities*, 4(2): 33. --- [the entire special issue](#)

Penix-Tadsen, P. (2013). Latin American Ludology: Why We Should Take Video Games Seriously (and When We Shouldn't). *Latin American Research Review*, 174-190

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

[Liboriussen, B., & Martin, P. \(2016\). Regional game studies. *Game Studies*, 16\(1\).](#)

[Penix-Tadsen, P. \(Ed.\). \(2019\). Introduction. *Video Games and the Global South* \(pp. 1-32\). Carnegie Mellon University, ETC Press.](#)

[Huntemann, N., & Aslinger, B. \(Eds.\). \(2013\). Introduction. *Gaming globally: Production, play, and place* \(pp. 1-15\). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.](#)

[Wolf, M. J. \(Ed.\). \(2015\). Introduction. *Video games around the world* \(pp. 1-16\). MIT Press.](#)
--- plus a chapter/country of one's choosing

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

[Dyer-Witheford, N., & De Peuter, G. \(2009\). Empire@ Play: Virtual games and global capitalism. *CTheory*, 5-13.](#)

[Mukherjee, S. \(2017\). *Video Games and Postcolonialism: Empire plays back*. Springer.](#)
--- Chapters 1, 4, and 5.

[Murray, S., 2018. The Work of Postcolonial Game Studies in the Play of Culture. *Open Library of Humanities*, 4\(1\).](#)

Recommended for further/future readings

Dyer-Witheford, N., & De Peuter, G. (2009). *Games of empire: Global capitalism and video games*. University of Minnesota Press.

Lammes, S. (2010). Postcolonial Playgrounds: Games and postcolonial culture. *Eludamos. Journal of Computer Game Culture*, 4(1): 1-6.

Mukherjee, S. (2017). *Video Games and Postcolonialism: Empire plays back*. Springer.
--- The rest of the book

Mukherjee, S., & Lundedal Hammar, E. (Eds.). (2018). Postcolonial perspectives in game studies [Special issue]. *Open Library of Humanities*, 4(2): 33.
--- The rest of the entire special issue

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

[Penix-Tadsen, P. \(Ed.\). \(2019\). *Video Games and the Global South*. Carnegie Mellon University, ETC Press.](#)

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)

[Zulkarnain, I. \(2014\). " Playable" nationalism: Nusantara Online and the " gamic" reconstructions of national history. *SOJOURN: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 29\(1\), 31-62.](#)

Recommended for further/future readings

Wolf, M. J. (Ed.). (2015). *Video games around the world*. MIT Press.

Hjorth, L., & Chan, D. (Eds.). (2009). *Gaming cultures and place in Asia-Pacific*. Routledge.

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

[Apperley, T. \(2011\). *Gaming rhythms: Play and counterplay from the situated to the global*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.](#)

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

Recommended

Apperley, T. (2011). *Gaming rhythms: Play and counterplay from the situated to the global*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

--- The rest of the book

Huntemann, N., & Aslinger, B. (Eds.). (2013). *Gaming globally: Production, play, and place*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
--- Chapters 2 and 4

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

[Huntemann, N. B. \(2013\). Women in video games: The case of hardware production and promotion. In N. Huntemann & B. Aslinger \(Eds.\), *Gaming Globally* \(pp. 41-57\). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.](#)

[Šisler, V. \(2013\). Video game development in the Middle East: Iran, the Arab world, and beyond. In N. Huntemann & B. Aslinger \(Eds.\), *Gaming Globally* \(pp. 251-271\). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.](#)

[O'Hagan, M., & Mangiron, C. \(2013\). *Game localization: Translating for the global entertainment Industry*. John Benjamins.](#)

--- Chapter 5

Recommended

Bernal-Merino, M. Á. (2014). *Translation and localisation in video games: making entertainment software global*. Routledge.

O'Hagan, M., & Mangiron, C. (2013). *Game localization: Translating for the global entertainment Industry*. John Benjamins.

--- The rest of the book

Huntemann, N., & Aslinger, B. (Eds.). (2013). *Gaming globally: Production, play, and place*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

--- Chapter 6

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

[Penix-Tadsen, P. \(2016\). *Cultural Code: Video Games and Latin America*. MIT Press.](#)

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

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

[Chung, P. \(2015\). The globalization of game art in Southeast Asia. In L. Hjorth & O. Khoo \(Eds.\), *Routledge handbook of new media in Asia* \(pp. 402-415\). London: Routledge.](#)

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

[Clément, P. \(2019\). Not Waiting for Other Players Anymore: Gaming in the Middle East between Assignment, Resistance and Normalization. In P. Penix-Tadsen \(Ed.\) *Video Games and the Global South* \(pp. 115-128\). Carnegie Mellon University, ETC Press.](#)

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

[Schleiner, A. \(2020, forthcoming\). *Transnational Play: Pirate Localizers, Shanty Playgrounds, and Mobile Games*. xxx. *preview and excerpts from unfinished version*](#)

--- Introduction, Chapter 5, and Conclusion