Organized by Bo Ruberg (bruberg@uci.edu), Asst Prof, UCI Film & Media Studies
Topic & reading list by Akil Fletcher, PhD student, UCI Anthropology
University of California, Irvine

RACE & GAMING
4th annual summer Game Studies reading group (2020)

Logistics:

- We meet **5:00 - 7:00 pm PST, Wednesday evenings**, between July 8 and August 26 (8 weeks).

- We meet **synchronously via Zoom**; you'll get a link to our individual meetings via email.

- This is an informal, seminar-style reading group. Feel free to join us when you can; no worries if you can't attend all the weeks.

- All readings either are (or will be made) available to you online to access for free as PDFs. Here is the "2020 GS reading group" Google folder where you can find all the readings.

- Each week we'll read 3 articles and/or chapters. We hope you'll have a chance to read and come prepared to chat. If you don't get a chance to read, you're still welcome to come listen in.

- UCI grad students from all backgrounds and levels of expertise are welcome!

- "Hey, we used to get free food during reading group!" That's true; sorry we can't Zoom you food. But feel free to bring a snack, chill with your cat, join the call in your PJs: whatever feels good.

"Race & Gaming" description:

This summer, the 2020 Games Studies reading group will be engaging with literature on race and gaming. We will be focusing on how games both interact with and interpret race across the medium and discover the ways in which games and the people who play them come to make sense of racialized spaces. With the recent push to view games as both apolitical and colorless creations, there is a reinvigorated need to examine games through the lens of race, which allows us to understand the ways in which games come to recreate and sustain the racial logics which influence our everyday interactions. This group will both seek to answer and engage with questions such as: How is race shaped within the video games industry? How does gaming inform a larger narrative of race? And, how do games capture, or fall short of capturing, racial experiences? These questions will serve as a preliminary foundation for the group and will be expanded upon throughout the summer. However, first and foremost, the group will be a healthy space created in order to explore the many connections between race and gaming and will hopefully explore unexpected questions in the best of ways.

Note for folks who are new to UCI's annual grad student Game Studies Reading Group: There are some authors not represented here that you (rightly!) might expect to see on a reading list about race and gaming. In many cases, that's because we've read their (wonderful!) work in prior years.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 (July 8): Fighting for Belonging: Challenges to Exclusion

Gray, Kishonna and David Leonard, *Woke gaming: Digital challenges to oppression and social injustice.* University of Washington Press, 2018. Selected chapters:

- Gray, Kishonna and Leonoard, David. Introduction: "Not a Post-Racism and Post-Misogyny Promised Land: Video Games as Instruments of (In)Justice"

- Rowlands, Timothy et al. Chapter 2: "Power, Violence, and The Mask, Representations of Criminal Subjectivities in Grand Theft Auto Online"

- Fordyce, Robbie, Neale, Timothy, and Apperley, Thomas. Chapter 12: "AVATARS Addressing Racism and Racialized Address"

Week 2 (July 15): More Than Just Race: Intersectionality in Gaming

Kafai, Yasmin B., Gabriela T. Richard, and Brendesha M. Tynes, eds. 2016. *Diversifying Barbie and Mortal Kombat: Intersectional perspectives and inclusive designs in gaming*. Pittsburgh, PA: ETC Press Selected chapters:

- Jasmin Kafai, Gabriela Richard, Brendesha Tynes, Introduction: "The Need For Intersectional Perspectives and Inclusive Designs in Gaming"

- Shana T. Bryant, Chapter 9: "Black and Female in Tech: An Intersectional Guide for Intersectional People"

Gray, Kishonna. 2020. *Intersectional Tech: Black Users in Digital Gaming.* Louisiana State University Press. Please read: Introduction. *Note: This is an advance copy. **Please do not share the linked PDF***

(It's not officially on our schedule, but if you're interested, the UCI library now has a full online copy of Gray's earlier book *Race, Gender, and Deviance in Xbox Live*)

Week 3 (July 22): I See Color: Representation and Diversity in Gaming

Nakamura, Lisa. 2019. "Gender and Race in the Gaming World" *Society and the Internet: How Networks of Information and Communication are Changing Our Lives*, 2nd edition, Mark Graham and William H. Dutton, Oxford University Press, 2019.

Brock, A. (2011). "'When Keeping it Real Goes Wrong'": Resident Evil 5, Racial Representation, and Gamers. Games and Culture, 6(5), 429–452. https://doi.org/10.1177/1555412011402676

Disalvo, Betsy and Amy Bruckman. "Race and gender in play practices: young African American males." FDG '10: Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games, June 2010.

Week 4 (July 29): There Are No Strings On Me: Racial Embodiment and Characters

Passmore, Cale et al. "Racial Diversity in Indie Games: Patterns, Challenges, and Opportunities." CHI PLAY '17 Extended Abstracts: Extended Abstracts Publication of the Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play, 2017.

Srauy, S. (2019). "Precarity and Why Indie Game Developers Can't Save Us from Racism." Television & New Media, 20(8), 802–812. https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476419851081

Everett, Anna, and S. Craig Watkins. 2008. "The power of play: The portrayal and performance of race in video games." In The ecology of games: Connecting youth, games, and learning. Edited by Katie Salen Tekinbas, 141–166. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Week 5 (August 5): It's Always Something: Racial Experience in Gaming

Ortiz, S. M. (2019). "You Can Say I Got Desensitized to It": How Men of Color Cope with Everyday Racism in Online Gaming. Sociological Perspectives, 62(4), 572–588. https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121419837588

Russworm, TreaAndrea and Samantha Blackmon, "Replaying Video Game History as a Mixtape of Black Feminist Thought." *Feminist Media Histories*, (2020) 6 (1): 93–118.

Trammell, Aaron. 2016. "How Dungeons and Dragons Appropriated the Orient." *Analog Game Studies*.

Week 6 (August 12): If Not For You, Then Who?: Contending with the Myth of the Model Minority

Fickle, Tara. *The race card: From gaming technologies to model minorities.* New York: NYU Press, 2019. We'll be discussing the full book -- but please feel free to focus on specific chapters.

Week 7 (August 19): Additional Perspectives: Global and Indigenous

Patterson, Christopher. *Open World Empire: Race, Erotics, and the Global Rise of Video Games*. Introduction: "Touching Empire, Playing Theory." (full book available via UCI website here)

LaPensée, Elizabeth. "When Rivers Were Trails: Cultural Expression in an Indigenous Video Game." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* (2020). DOI: 10.1080/13527258.2020.1746919

Byrd, Jodi. "Beast of America: Sovereignty and the Wildness of Objects: Sovereignty and the Wildness of Objects." South Atlantic Quarterly (2018) 117 (3): 599–615. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-6942183

Week 8 (August 26): Do You See Yourself?: Representation Part 2 Gaming Boogaloo

Malkowski, Jennifer, and TreaAndrea Russworm, eds. 2017. *Gaming Representation: Race, gender, and sexuality in video games*. Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press. Selected chapters:

- Malkowski, Jennifer, and TreaAndrea Russworm. Introduction: Identity, Representation, and Video Game Studies beyond the Politics of the Image

- Russworm, TreaAndrea. Ch 6: "Dystopian Blackness and The Limits of Racial Empathy in the Walking Dead and the Last of Us"

- Hutchinson, Rachel. Ch 9: "Representing Race and Disability Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas as a Whole Text."