DiGRA 2017 Workshop: "Gaming the Systems: Towards a More Inclusive DiGRA"

What would it mean for Game Studies to be diverse, and what role can DiGRA play in achieving this? Does the term 'diversity' deserve critical scrutiny in its own right?

Participation
Participation in the workshop is open to all DiGRA participants, regardless of acceptance to the workshop. Space is limited. If you plan to attend the workshop as a participant (not a presenter), please register by **June 15, 2017** by sending an email to **Darshana Jayemanne** at digradiversityworkshop@gmail.com.

Introduction
In light of corporate initiatives such as Intel's recent and highly substantial investment in creating an inclusive workforce, 'diversity' can legitimately claim to be one of the most impactful terms that has ever been developed in league with humanities and social sciences thinking. On the other hand, diversity can be seen as a code word for the most comfortable way in which difference appears to contemporary power structures - and hence subject to academic critique.

Intel's recent and widely publicized investment in making their own workforce more inclusive and diverse[1], as well as increasing diversity in games and the tech industry broadly, demonstrates that conversations about representation are finally making headway in corporate sectors. At the same time, we might question if these business-minded approaches to diversity are really invested in the more critical types of change diversity is discussed in relation to in academic conversations.

Moreover, as the industries we are interested in begin to take seriously questions of their own diversity, we too must take stock of who is represented in the wide field that is game studies. What can we do to make our field more inclusive and represent a wider array of perspectives? Might it even be possible that we could use such efforts in turn to offer a model for the industries we study as they launch efforts to increase diversity?

As scholars, perhaps the response to this situation is quite predictable: more research is needed. This DiGRA workshop will pose the question of what a diverse game studies would look like in both theoretical and practical registers: partly by gathering theoretical papers and partly by providing a venue for voicing and testing ideas that can be represented as precedents to DiGRA and other game studies conferences.

The workshop will balance the question of what other fields have done to encourage diversity with the question of what scholars of play can bring to thinking about what academic diversity means in the first place. This will be a half day workshop on **July 2, 2017,** organized as follows:

Format and Activities

12:00-12:30 Opening and Introductions

12:30-13:00 Designing Diversity Guidelines

13:00-15:00 Paper presentation – six papers, 15 minutes each and 5 minutes of question time.

15:00-15:30 Break and Play Time

15:30-17:00 Co-facilitated Discussion
Location

[1]http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/233716/Intel_to_invest_300_million_in_tech_game_diversity.php

PAR-Arts West North Wing-256 (Collaborative Learning Room)

The University of Melbourne

Parkville 3000.

Call for Proposals

We welcome proposals for papers that investigate questions such as, but not limited to:

- What have conferences, fields of study and the game industry done to encourage diverse participation? Can and should DiGRA take a proactive role in fostering game studies diversity?

- To what degree is diversity a useful concept? What political work does it do and can it do in our field? How does it link with concepts of representation, attention and competition, and to what level are such concepts already part of the logic of the academy?

- What potentials do academics interested in play bring to broadening or questioning the idea of diversity?

- How diverse is the history of game studies as both theory and pedagogy and to whom does this matter?

- What is the relation of academic game studies to videogame business and industry across various regional and national contexts, and to what degree does this affect diversity?

- Middleware is often cited as increasing access to game development, but how diverse are the resources, assets and legal structures of such tools? What role does the academy play in this area and how could it be expanded?

- Who is best positioned to speak on regional issues including funding and representation, and what power dynamics are at play in the centrality of the Anglophone academy to DiGRA?

- Is DiGRA creating a safe space for diverse voices, and what are best practices models for how DiGRA should do this internally, and pressure platforms externally? What are the practical issues and how can they be met?

Submissions

Please send your extended abstract (1500-3000 words) to **Sian Beavers** digradiversityworkshop@gmail.com by **April 5, 2017** at 17:00 CET (9:00 PST). Please note this is an open paper format and you are **not** required to use the DiGRA template for extended abstracts.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent to participants on April 20, 2017. Full papers (8000 words including references) are due September 15, 2017 for peer review. Camera ready papers for ToDigra publication on November 17, 2017.

Publication

[1]http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/233716/Intel_to_invest_300_million_in_tech_game_diversity.php

Accepted papers will be included in a Diversity Special Issue of ToDiGRA, published in 2018, where full papers will be subject to an additional round of peer-review prior to publication.

Important Dates

Extended Abstract Deadline: **April 5, 2017 12 Midnight PST (Pacific Standard Time)**

Notice of Acceptance: **April 20, 2017**

Camera Ready Abstracts: **June 1, 2017**

Full Paper Draft: **September 15, 2017**

Camera Ready papers for To Digra: **November 17, 2017**

[1]http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/233716/Intel_to_invest_300_million_in_tech_game_diversity.php