DiGRA 2015

Video game culture has had a self-image of being a distinct cultural form united by participants identifying themselves as "gamers" for many years. Variations in this identity have been perceived either in relation to preferred platform or level of commitment and skill (newbie, casual, core, pro, etc.). Today the popularity of games has increased dramatically, games have become more specialized and gaming is taking place in a number of divergent practices, from e-sport to gamification. In addition, the gamer position includes a number of roles and identities such as: players, learners, time-fillers, users, fans, roleplayers, theory crafters, speed runners, etc. Furthermore, techniques like gamification and game-based learning, as well as the playful use of computer simulation for training purposes, is making it difficult to distinguish games from non-games.

Additionally, video game culture is merging with other forms of popular culture and new mobile technologies are making distinctions between digital and non-digital gaming blurred. Yet, whilst the forms of play seem to have become more diverse, the content of games is often only challenged by independent titles. This is the case despite a maturing audience, some of whom now seem to urge for more diverse themes and representations within games. In the light of increasing criticism of the representations and practices that have dominated much of games culture, it seems that the relationship between the identity of the "gamer" and the content of games is undergoing a change.

Traditionally, game studies has tried to find common ground, seeking shared definitions and epistemologies. DiGRA 2015 seeks to encourage questions about the 'Diversity of play', with a focus on the multiple different forms, practices and identities labelled as games and/or game culture.

The conference aims to address the challenge of studying and documenting games, gaming and gamers, in a time when these categories are becoming so general and/or contested, that they might risk losing all meaning. Given this, what concepts do we need to develop in order for our research to be cumulative and how do we give justice to the diverse forms of play found in different games and game cultures?

The conference welcomes papers on a wide range of topics, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Game cultures
- Games and intersections with other cultural forms
- Online gaming and communication in game worlds
- Gender and gaming
- Games as representation
- Minority groups and gaming
- Childhood and gaming
- The gaming industry and independent games
- Game journalism
- Gaming in non-leisure settings
- Applications of game studies in other domains
- Gamification
- System perspectives and mathematical game theory
- Hybrid games and non-digital games
- Game design characteristics
- Technological systems
Simulations

Location & Date

- 14-17 May 2015
- Lüneburg, Germany
- At Campus of Leuphana University of Lüneburg
- Scharnhorststr. 1 D-21335 Lüneburg