

Workshop Proposal: Game Studies in / and Latin America

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On the occasion of the first-ever DiGRA International Conference to be held in Latin America, we propose this full-day workshop on **Game Studies in / and Latin America**, focusing on scholarly approaches to game studies from throughout the region and scholarship centered on the relationship between video games and cultures, politics, economics and society in Latin America.

In some ways, game studies has always been Latin American—at least in part. Decades ago, some of the major proponents of Latin American cultural studies began dealing with video games in their work (García Canclini 1990, 1995; Sarlo, 1994), while some of the leading voices in the history of game studies are from Latin America (Frasca, 2001; Zagal, 2010, 2012, 2019). This workshop aims to draw out these interdisciplinary and inter-generational connections between game studies and Latin America, in order to understand complex world interactions among epistemological fields and the diverse ways game studies knowledge is appropriated and developed in different cultures. Game studies has not only been acquiring new scenarios for discussion and academic publications, but also has had a great impact on the growing Latin American video game industries due to the close relationship between scholars and developers in the region. Thus, Latin American game studies as a field is a consequence of an unique historical, social and economical development of video games as culture and as a very important cultural industry (Garfías Frías y Cuenca Orozco, 2020).

Over the past ten years or so, scholarship related to video games and Latin America has flourished. Publications from within the region have touched on relationships between video games and history, media and education (Falcão, 2017; Núñez Pacheco et al, 2018; Frago and Amaro, 2018; Wong, 2021), while others have analyzed Latin America's relationship with video games from global, trans-national or regional perspectives (Taylor, 2014; Wolf, 2015; Penix-Tadsen, 2016, 2019; Schleiner, 2020). Likewise, the past decade has brought about publications on related subjects through the lens of Latin American and Latinx media studies (Mutis et al, 2019; López et al, 2022; L'Hoeste and Rodríguez, 2023; Llamas-Rodríguez, 2023), game studies (Kelly González, 2023; Cuenca Orozco, 2023) and technological history (Chan, 2013; Medina et al, 2014; Burbano, 2023). This workshop will also focus on the novel directions scholarship on games in / and Latin America is taking today as well as the impact that scholarly research is having on the video game industry in the region.

The goal of this workshop is to bring together scholars from throughout Latin America and the globe to think collaboratively about the role of games and game culture in this vast and diverse region, and how Latin American perspectives on game studies inform and sustain our discipline on a global level. We intend to make visible Latin American academic productions around video games and culture, understanding the need to incorporate the local theoretical and methodological proposals into the international framework of game studies. We hope that these

connections will lead to collaborations on future conference panels, articles, journal issues, anthologies, monographs and/or multimedia projects.

In terms of format, the organizers will divide contributors into groups of 3-4 presentations. Each workshop participant will give a 10-15 minute presentation regarding either a specific project they are researching or the general relationship between their research, video games and Latin America. After each group presents, there will be an extended discussion period to make space for collaboration and participation by all workshop attendees.

We aim to have 3-4 groups with 3-4 presentations each, with a total of 9-16 presentations depending on the submissions we receive. Applicants to the workshop will provide a bio, title, 3-4 keywords, and 150-word abstract for their presentation. Attendees who do not wish to present will be allowed to attend and participate in the workshop, pending availability of space.

Organizers

Blanca Estela López Pérez is the head of the Design, Humanities and Philosophy of Culture research group, and responsible for the research program in Ludic Culture and Digital Humanities at the Autonomous Metropolitan University in Azcapotzalco (México). She is coordinator of the DevHour International Game Forum, a member of the Digital Humanities Network (HD Network) and the International Network of Role-Playing Game Researchers. She is vice president of DIGRA Digital Games Research Association Chapter Mexico. She is co-author of the books *Transmedia Narratives. Videogames and Literature in Culture* (UNSA, 2018), *Videogames and Language* (UAM, 2022) and *Videogames and Cinematography* (UAM, 2024).

Phillip Penix-Tadsen is a specialist in contemporary Latin American cultural studies and regional game studies, focusing on the intersections between politics, economics, digital media and visual culture throughout Latin America today. He earned a Ph.D. from Columbia University and is Associate Professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies and Chair of Game Studies & eSports at the University of Delaware, where he regularly teaches courses on Latin American cultural studies and game studies. Prof. Penix-Tadsen is the author of *Cultural Code: Video Games and Latin America* (MIT Press, 2016) and editor of the anthology *Video Games and the Global South* (ETC Press, 2019).

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