2019 Virtual Symposium on Information & Technology in the Arts and Humanities
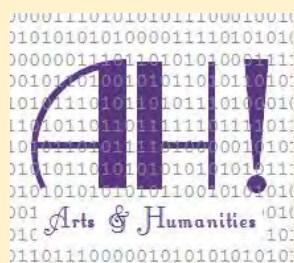
"Video Games and Information Science"

Conference Program

April 4, 2019

12:00pm-4:00pm EST

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Schedule at a Glance [Eastern Standard Time]:

12:00-12:10	Christian James, Introduction
12:15-12:55	Olle Sköld, "Documenting Videogame Communities"
1:00-1:40	Marc Schmalz, "The UW iSchool Game Research Group"
2:00-2:40	Christina Boyle, "All Work and Some Play: Video Games in Urban Academic Libraries"
2:45-3:25	Michael Hughes, "Meta-FAQ: What Motivates the Authors of Video Game Walkthroughs?"

# 2019 Virtual Symposium on Information & Technology in the Arts and Humanities

"Video Games and Information Science"

Introduction
Christian James

Christian James is SIG AH Chair and Web Application Librarian at Catholic University of America University Libraries, where he maintains Libraries websites and digital collections. Christian has a MLS from the University of Maryland, College Park and a MA in History from George Mason University.
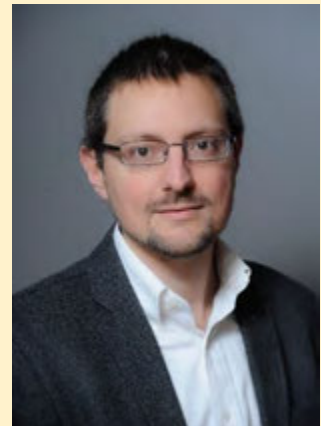
Documenting Videogame Communities
Olle Sköld

Videogames and videogaming is a highly interesting field of inquiry for library and information-science (LIS) research directed by one of the canonical motors of the discipline: to inquire into the processes by which information emerges, and to nuance the understanding of the roles of this information within its contexts of production and use. This talk centers on two important and interconnected challenges for videogame-focused LIS research. Firstly, it explores how we can theorize and understand the relationship between the shape and form of videogame-community social media and the contexts and modes of information production by which they emerge. Secondly, the talk outlines how such insights can offer practical and conceptual support to the knotty issue of how to preserve those sociocultural aspects of videogames that exist 'beyond' the code and audiovisual data resources of the videogame itself. The talk will end with an attempt to identify which avenues of future study in this area that look the most promising and productive, and some thoughts on the process of conducting research in the borderlands of LIS and archival science.

Dr. Olle Sköld is a senior lecturer at the Department of ALM, Uppsala University. He is the author of 'Documenting Video game Communities', for which he received ASIS&T:s 2018 ProQuest Doctoral Dissertation Award. Sköld's research is characterized by a broad interest in the ALM field, digital cultures, and digital humanities. Previous work includes studies of information practices, documentation, knowledge production, memory-making, video game preservation, and the practices and information systems of archivists.

The UW iSchool Game Research Group
Marc Schmalz

This session presents the work of the GAMER Group at the University of Washington Information School. The GAMER Group was founded by Dr. Jin Ha Lee in 2011 as a home for research on organizing and providing access to video games and related materials, focusing on the development of the Video Game Metadata Schema (VGMS). This project proposed and continues to develop a conceptual model and metadata schema for the cataloging and classification of digital games as cultural objects. Since then, Dr. Lee and her advisees have embarked into research on a number of game-related studies, including work with VR in libraries, augmented reality games, and game development. Marc Schmalz, a doctoral candidate at the UW iSchool and one of Dr. Lee's current advisees, will present information on the GAMER Group's latest work.

Marc Schmalz is a doctoral student at the University of Washington Information School, where he is a member of the GAMER (GAME Research) Group. With more than two decades of experience as a technology and game professional, his research interests involve entertainment software development from an information systems perspective. Specifically, he is interested in the ways in which self-identification with IT affects worker behavior on IT project teams, and finds digital games to be a particularly salient segment in which to pursue these studies. Marc's work has appeared in The Data Base for Advances in Information Systems and Cataloging & Classification Quarterly, and conference proceedings including the European Conference of Information Systems, Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, and the iConference.

All Work and Some Play: Video Games in Urban Academic Libraries
Christina Boyle

Although there is still some hesitance to accept video games as valuable materials for academic library collections, there is a growing body of research that proves that they are highly beneficial to these institutions. The current conversation indicates that video games are useful to academic libraries, but there is very little discussion of their role within urban library collections. In this presentation, I will highlight the unique reasons why video games are important additions to these libraries. Video games are both effective community builders and catalysts for increased awareness and usage of library sources and services. They are also modes of information and tools for developing critical inquiry, and as such, they support academic curricula. The rise of game design programs, coding, and varsity Esports programs reflect a culture that is increasingly entwined with gaming. As hubs for research and critical thinking, urban academic libraries need to embrace the gaming medium.

Christina Boyle is an Instruction/Reference Librarian and OER Coordinator at the College of Staten Island (CUNY) in Staten Island, NY. She has previously taught English Composition to freshman students, and now teaches a research course within the library along with her general duties as librarian. Christina focuses her studies in emerging technology as it relates to higher education and libraries, open educational resources, and library outreach. She is intrigued by the potential for popular culture, such as video games, cosplay, and graphic novels, to be used as teaching and learning tools within academic libraries. She has published and presented on video games in libraries and on memes for academic use. Christina hopes to continue exploring this topic and how it relates to libraries, while looking ahead to other emergent technologies and their role in academic libraries.

Meta-FAQ: What motivates the authors of video game walkthroughs?
Michael Hughes

Walkthroughs, also known as FAQs or strategy guides, are player-authored documents that provide step-by-step instructions on how to play and what to do in order to finish a given video game. Exegetical in their length and detail, walkthroughs require hours of exacting labor to complete, yet authors are rarely compensated for work that markedly differs from other kinds of fan creativity. In this presentation, attendees will learn what motivates walkthrough authors including details gleaned from interviews with six longtime GameFAQs contributors. They will also learn why this motivational composite increases our understanding of the gratifications that drive fan labor even as they complicate assumptions about its exploitation.

Michael Hughes is an instruction librarian and associate professor at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. His research interests include game cultures, player-generated content, and media fandom generally. Michael's writing can be found in scholarly journals, including First Monday and portal: Libraries and the Academy, and at VGMO: Video Game Music Online. He is currently researching the history of video game fanzines.

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