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Application: MRI in Digital Cultures Graduate Student Conference CFP

Remediating the Game: Narrative, Interactivity, Design, Play

Remediating the Game will engage the continuing impact of game design as it moves from traditional forms of entertainment to more "serious" institutions such as advertising, business, education, and medicine among others. This conference will invite participants from a variety of disciplines to consider this trend moving toward the ubiquity of "gamification" in corporate marketing strategies. How does the rhetoric of gamification reduce games to mere structural components meant to pad corporate bottom-lines rather than complex systems engaging interactive behavioral processes? What strategies are available to deconstruct the narrative/interactivity binary that fails to consider the ways in which game design and game play are generated through material and media instantiations? What examples of the productive employment of game design and the popular videogame are available in alternate artistic modes and design strategies? What defines a game and/or a videogame? How can various institutions and artistic endeavors utilize the resources of games and videogames without falling victim to the reductive strategies of gamification? This conference will interrogate the ways game design and game culture move across various media forms and social and cultural institutions in order to consider the vital aspects that define gameplay versus the reductive strategies of gamification that often consider only surface structural components rather than complex interactive behavioral processes.

Conference papers might engage this topic in a variety of ways. Papers may consider the more avant-garde strategies of countergaming that resist traditional feedback loops between machine and player. These countergaming strategies can also address the issue of interactivity versus narrative. What happens as narrative moves across different media forms? How has game design been applied to alternate artistic endeavors including literature, visual art, and performance among others? What are the productive versus the reductive strategies of game design manifesting in mainstream culture including education, advertising, business management, and medicine among others? How are games part of more complex systems of media ecologies that include designers and players, machines and narratives, literary and cinematic adaptations and paratexts, and all aspects of media transmission including source, transmitter, channel, receiver, and destination? How do the complex virtual worlds of *Second Life* or Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs) such as *World of Warcraft* resist traditional notions of gameplay through extensive complexity, open-ended narrative, and simulation. How do ethnographies of virtual worlds expand traditional notions of anthropological and sociological research? How is the subject defined through these various avatars interacting in virtual worlds? This conference aims to redefine traditional definitions of game, narrative, simulation, subjectivity, play, design, interactivity, data, transmission, communication, identity, and the multiplicity of components constituting the media ecologies of games.