

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIGRA MEXICO SPECIAL ISSUE

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During October 16th and 17th, 2023, the 1st International DIGRA MX Congress took place in Mexico City. This congress was organized by the recently formed chapter, DIGRA MX, with the aim of creating a space for discussion and reflection on game studies research conducted in Mexico and Latin America. This edition saw the participation of both public and private higher education institutions, as well as professionals from the national industry; this convergence reflects some of the particular characteristics of the epistemological field in Mexico, and presents the chapter as a reflection of the cultural identity of the region.

A total of 35 papers were presented, addressing the concerns of the region regarding video games and Latin American societies. Topics included education, mental health, and the language of, and in, video games. Another addressed issue was the representation of cultural otherness and forms of colonial power, as well as cultural resistances in the region. Workshops were also held on topics such as legislation and ethics in professional game development practice, and gamification and smart cities.

Hosted by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) on October 16th and the Metropolitan Autonomous Univer-

sity Azcapotzalco (UAM-A) on October 17th, the event brought together specialists, academics, and students from various parts of the country. Researchers from institutions such as the University of Guadalajara, SAE Institute Mexico, COCO School, Autonomous University of Baja California, University of Digital Arts, Vasco de Quiroga University, among others, participated. Additionally, researchers from universities in Spain, Colombia, and Ecuador also took part. However, as the workshops demonstrated, the Mexican game development industry also showed interest in engaging with, and participating alongside, academia; this is something we celebrate, as many Mexican academics are also developers. This is one of the characteristics that the DIGRA MX chapter supports.

The congress saw a high number of undergraduate and graduate students participating, highlighting a generational shift in our academia, and creating a friendly and diverse space for discussion. Not only did young researchers contribute richly to the discussion and provide fresh perspectives, connections were also formed that suggest that someday the network of game researchers in Mexico and Latin America will become broader and have an impact on various levels of academic, industrial, and cultural production.

Special thanks are due to the keynote speakers, who supported the 1st International DIGRA MX Congress with their high-quality, empathetic, and collaborative contributions. On October 16th, Dr. José P. Zagal from the University of Utah presented "Videogames are Gimmicks" online; and on October 16th, Dr. Souvik Mukherjee from the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences in India presented "Provincializing Game Studies: The Global, Local, Regional and Transcultural in Researching Video Games," followed by the participation of Dr. Nelson Zagalo from the University of Aveiro in Portugal with "Engagement Design: cognitive player's profiles." The richness of the contribution of these three presentations lay in the audience's ability to identify shared concerns that arise locally, and respond to global phenomena.

With ideas of community and connection in mind, the congress closed with satisfaction regarding the quality of the presentations. It

also identified areas of opportunity to improve the 2024 edition, from logistics to providing spaces for social interaction. But above all, it helped organizers and many participants feel that, despite the difficulties and challenges presented by the field of game studies in Latin America, we are not alone.