

Panel 1: Games and Community

“Critical cultural exploration of video game stores within Tejanx communities” by Anthony Ramirez,
Texas A&M University Joey Lopez, Texas A&M University

“eSports on the US/Mexico border” by Arthur D. Soto-Vásquez, West Texas A&M University, USA

“Playing Race, Nation, and Archival Silence: Convergences between Afro-Latin America and Videogames”
by **Jalin Jackson**, Northwestern University, USA

CHAT SESSION

Regina Mills: That Stan Lee tortilla is everything

Jorge Hernandez: That’s awesome!!

Aline Job: Edward James Olmos <3. Our beloved William Adama! hahahaha

Regina Mills: I am so interested in that third question - how are Latinas/os/xs "coded" so to speak in games?

Anthony & Joey: We also left game stop, Best Buy and other mainstream spaces out for a later project

Anthony & Joey: Which do need to be studied

Phill Penix-Tadsen: This is extraordinary and groundbreaking research, guys, amazing!

Anthony & Joey: And their first meetings were taking place right now, durning february

Anthony & Joey: For the El Paso meet up

Anthony & Joey: This Game Jam also took place very recently

Bobby S: Were you able to track where they “publish” the results of their Jam? Or are games just being shared locally within the community?

Anthony & Joey: Yes they published in their FB group

Anthony & Joey: We will get the info

Phill Penix-Tadsen: I play video games with my kids every day 😊

David L. Puga: hot Cheetos while gaming? you gotta make sure you got some napkins!

Ian Barba: use chopsticks to keep it off your fingers

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Y qué tal los Dorilocos??

Bobby S: It appears to be a universal rule that an independent gaming shop has to have Pocky

Noah Getachew: Takis also?

Eva B Diaz: sounds like they're wonderful places to connect with the community. it's very rare to see that here in California, excluding the LA area

Phill Penix-Tadsen: These mom-and-pop places are really rare here in Delaware 😞 All Game Stop

Jorge Hernandez: Thank you guys! That was awesome!!

Regina Mills: I'm so excited to see the conclusions you draw on your project, **Anthony & Joey**

Anthony & Joey: Smash bro tournaments were prevalent in our research

Anthony & Joey: TAMUI is on the border and legit, I have enjoyed visiting it! Almost taught there. Amazing students and radical potential.

Anthony & Joey: EJO

Regina Mills: Woah, what a poster!

Bobby S: killer graphic design

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Agreed, great concept as well

Anthony & Joey: Port San Antonio is having an Esports specific arena made and will begin hosting events in it soon. Thought you all might find this interesting. <https://www.portsanantonio.us/EIEF>

Regina Mills: There's an eSports org here at TAMU College Station as well and they have a split between "culture and community" and the eSports players (they have a VP for each part). It would be interesting to compare your org to others in Texas

Regina Mills: (my undergrad research assistant at the moment is the president, so I'm learning a lot about it!)

David L. Puga: so no hot Cheetos with queso!?

Phill Penix-Tadsen: At U of Delaware, we have a collegiate eSports program, and we also have an academic program—this year we launched a new major in Game Studies and eSports. It's tricky to balance the student life side and the academic side, we're still figuring it out.

Anthony & Joey: That's cool

Matt Knutson: @Regina my institution does the same split, which complicates the bureaucratic regulation questions that Arthur is bringing up.

Anthony & Joey: If you look at the Port SA link Regina they list a good amount of Universities who participated in their meet ups. Interesting stuff.

Chris Ortega: My campus has esports under the sport management department.

Anthony & Joey: This is great stuff, I like the reflection of your own agency and perspective vs the students lived reality of esports

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Question for Anthony and Joey (for Q&A): How do you feel about game companies marketing to Latinx players? Is it a worthwhile endeavor? A stereotypical joke? Or something in between?

Jorge Hernandez: Thank you so much! It was very informative!

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Great talk, Arthur, thank you!

Matt Knutson: Great presentation!

Regina Mills: I am so excited for this as an AfroLatinx studies scholar

Noah Getachew: Amazing Presentation

Anthony & Joey: Jalin, thanks for doing this presentation, we are excited!

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Question for Arthur for Q&A: Our biggest challenge in our collegiate eSports program is increasing diversity. Our racial dynamics are very different from your institution, but the gender dynamics are similar. How do you approach gender diversity in your eSports program?

Regina Mills: I second Phill's question! I have complicated feelings about posing eSports as a male retention strategy considering the long history of eSports as an exclusionary space...

Anthony & Joey: Phil, there is a ton of room for growth. Really I feel your work shows how when mainstream euro centric marketing ignores a market, they tend to create their own and thus a secondary market occurs. Re imagined retro gaming narratives often show this. We feel that like the film industry, Latino stereotypes are what we are still mostly experiencing, however we like to think that like in the comic/graphic novel space, independent creators will offer a better lens for our culture to seen from. Which is sad, but also powerful.

Mar Scardua: I am fascinated by Jalin's presentation so far

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Me too Mar, this is absolutely crucial work!

David L. Puga: great question to think about as we move into the "meta verse" era of technology.

Anthony & Joey: I like his geographic representation of a real space in a game how it is interacted with can draw out further ideas of how race and it's history can be of high value.

Regina Mills: yep, for sure. Kishonna Gray's work is crucial here (esp. her book Intersectional Tech)

Megan Condis: I am grabbing these questions so hopefully we can use them to kick off the Q+A!

Lauren Acosta: Thank you Megan!

Mar Scardua: YES, the construction of race in Latin America is COMPLETELY different from the US!! I keep saying that and ppl still go :000

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Second the recommendation of Kishonna Gray's work!

Jorge Hernandez: That's a fantastic approach!

Anne-Marie: Love the idea of accounting for absences as well in videogame representation

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Soraya Murray's 'On Video Games' is outstanding, I just got a copy a couple of weeks ago.

Letícia Perani: Jalin's work reminds me of prof. Eliane Bettocchi's work, a Afro-Brazilian game scholar (my colleague at Federal University of Juiz de Fora) who is studying representation in games

Regina Mills: discussion of race in Latin America is so difficult - the number of times I've hear people say "there is no racism in Latin America" or that "racism is a US construct" is exhausting. But the rhetoric used is different. I like using Edward Telles' Pigmentocracies as well the work of Juliet Hooker in these regards

Jorge Hernandez: Thank you!! It was an awesome presentation!

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Fantastic, provocative talk Jalin!

Lauren Acosta: From Phil: Question for Arthur for Q&A: Our biggest challenge in our collegiate eSports program is increasing diversity. Our racial dynamics are very different from your institution, but the gender dynamics are similar. How do you approach gender diversity in your eSports program?

Mar Scardua: Question for Jalin: from your perspective, can you give us an example of what a more appropriate Afrolatine construct in videogames is/could be? Not like, a full concept, but examples to illustrate to people to whom this difference of perception of race that isn't US-based may be too abstract.

Phill Penix-Tadsen: <https://www.dondeir.com/tecnologia/unam-lanza-yaopan-videojuego-sobre-la-conquista-de-mexico/2021/09/>

David L. Puga: Comes down to more equity and access, I remember growing up my family just didn't have the money to afford a personal computer so it was a dream back then. Nowadays computers and development engines are becoming more and more wide spread.

Phill Penix-Tadsen: **Anthony & Joey** Check this out ^ a video game about the conquest from the Tlaxcaltecan perspective

Regina Mills: woah, what an intriguing game!

Anthony & Joey: Yup!!!

Anthony & Joey:

<https://store.steampowered.com/app/623640/Mulaka/#:~:text=Feb%2027%2C%202018,for%20this%20game%20are%20positive.>

Anthony & Joey: This is the game Anthony was referencing

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Some strategies we are thinking about include an all-women Valorant team, newbie nights and women's nights at our eSports arena, summer camps focused on diversity... Still dreaming here though!

Madison Wedge: Those are all amazing ideas

Anthony & Joey: Arthur you bring up some great points. It's tough building organic community, while also thinking about equity in terms of race and gender, because often you have such a strong sway, I know for us we often have to seek out and promote our events in a way that is very untraditional. Even how we decorate our lab and the posters we have is thought about.

Regina Mills: great point - the sports rhetoric does feel like it's already about building on being male-focused.

Matt Knutson: (zot zot)

Mar Scardua: it's me!

Megan Condis: from your perspective, can you give us an example of what a more appropriate AfroLatin construct in videogames is/could be? Not like, a full concept, but examples to illustrate to people to whom this difference of perception of race that isn't US-based may be too abstract.

Dazia Pineda: The team behind Mulaka is Lienzo, and they are about to release their next game called Aztech Forgotten Gods!

Anthony & Joey: Wow

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Oh yeah, I like Mulaka! I'm finishing up a chapter on indigenous culture and video games in Latin America right now!

Mar Scardua: there's "Dandara - Trials of Fear" by Long Hat House (my friends in Brazil :D but legit fantastic game)

Regina Mills: I'm gonna talk about Miles Morales tomorrow!

Phill Penix-Tadsen: LOVE Dandara! My students do too! Tell your friends, Mar!

Mar Scardua: I will!!

Mar Scardua: Phill, I sure will tell them!! They're so talented, haha

Mar Scardua: ha, yes, good point Jalin. Black is still seen as alien.

Mar Scardua: Thank you!!!!

Letícia Perani: "A Nova Califórnia", inspired by a novel by Afro-Brazilian writer Lima Barreto, and developed by Afro-Brazilian designers Jaderson Souza and Tainá Félix:
https://store.steampowered.com/app/699510/The_New_California/

Matt Knutson: Aaron Trammell's "Repairing Play" is totally in line with what Megan was saying a moment ago.

Mar Scardua: "Árida - Backland's Awakening" is also a Brazilian game by friends (Aoca) that takes place in a very forgotten area and culture of Brazil. The hero is a brown girl.

Matt Knutson: Correction: Trammell's "Torture, Play, and the Black Experience" is what I meant.

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Regarding Dazia's question, I think a lot of US players aren't aware of the Latin American origins of hit games like Trivia Crack or Kerbal Space Program. On the other hand, the cultural

background was a big part of how Mulaka was promoted. There is a growing audience seeking out Latin American games, and more companies like Steam promoting Latin game packages, etc., so I think awareness is growing but relatively low.

Mar Scardua: (also most of the devs in "Árida" are Afro-Latine - representation in production and leadership is paramount)

Lauren Acosta: Twitter Hashtag for those who are interested. #HHIC_Gaming

Mar Scardua: Dazia, that's a sad reality.

Dazia Pineda: Totally, but it was awesome to see that after some years it was no longer a thing. At least when I got in in 2013, it was not a problem or a stigma...

Eva B Diaz: Dazia, if your question was about networking twistter is a good place to connect with more latinx communities like PRGDA and Latinx in Games

Jalin Jackson: Woke Gaming

Eva B Diaz: I really recommend it!

Jalin Jackson: Gaming Respresentation

Dazia Pineda: We already have a lot of connection within Women in Gamex from Mexico, Tan Grande y Jugando from Colombia and in general all the Women Game Jam organization between many Latam countries 😊

Regina Mills: I think there is a chapter on Indigenous games in Indigenous Interfaces that could be helpful about Latin American video games and marginalized representations

David L. Puga: Assassin's Creed 3 did a decent job at decolonial and anti racism despite itself

David L. Puga: (or in spite of itself)

Regina Mills: I think also we need to consider how the tools to make games influence our ability to make a "decolonial" or "anti-racist" games, too

Bruno de Paula: @Regina - agreed!

Jalin Jackson: MODS

Jalin Jackson: Big source of "Resistance"

Jalin Jackson: I've seen plenty of those

Arthur D. Soto-Vásquez: An eSports advisors group would be super helpful

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Regina, thanks for the tip! I hadn't seen this chapter: 6 JOYSTICKS AND JAGUARS: Bribri-Inspired Games in Neoliberal Costa Rica (pp. 141-162)

Caleb Ward: TCHIA is an upcoming game centered on a young girl in New Caledonia in the Archipelago. <https://store.steampowered.com/app/1496590/Tchia/>

Lauren Acosta: Power in numbers :)

Jalin Jackson: Thank you and everyone! Thanks as well to Arthur, Anthony, and Joey

Phill Penix-Tadsen: Powerful work from ALL of you panelists, thanks again!

David L. Puga: Thank you all, this has been great!

Regina Mills: Great presentations - I hope we can all stay in conversation!

Anthony & Joey: BTW, we are always open to collaborate

Anthony & Joey: Anthony Ramirez

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FB: <https://www.facebook.com/arramirez>

W: <https://www.re-socialmedia.com/>

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YT: <https://m.youtube.com/user/dayojtl333>

W: <http://www.thecmcollective.org/>

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Anthony & Joey: That's our contact and SM

Arthur D. Soto-Vásquez: Thanks all! The ideas are inspiring me to come back to this work and think more critically about it 😊

Dazia Pineda: Thank you everyone!

Lauren Acosta: Thank you!

Mar Scardua: thank you all!!

Bobby: Excellent work, all

Lauren Acosta: yes!

Jose B Yznaga: hello :)

Phill Penix-Tadsen: I am ALWAYS happy to talk about video games and Latin America 😊

Phill Penix-Tadsen

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(my personal website has links to PDFs of all my publications)

Slides from my keynote talk:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ia-sc2KZ3eEwwIBpbUuENo4idNJlbnRS/edit?usp=sharing&oid=117287820917517745929&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Notes, drafts, texts, etc. from my keynote talk:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ia-sc2KZ3eEwwIBpbUuENo4idNJlbnRS/edit?usp=sharing&oid=117287820917517745929&rtpof=true&sd=true>

PDF of Cultural Code: Video Games and Latin America:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JGwwVvfKWdP6oXtqlk8ccXUfAM05rJDY/view?usp=sharing>

ePub of Video Games and the Global South:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O2_ON68f7wEZ6oZ672EfQtjn3GQEH02S/view?usp=sharing

Regina Mills: Thanks for sharing all of this, Phill!