PLAY / MAKE / RESEARCH

Video Games and Academia

Symposium | University of Sussex | June 16th 2017

The symposium **Play/Make/Research** originated as an opportunity for video game researchers across the University of Sussex, and other institutions and companies nearby our campus, to meet and share their research. The goal of this event was to **create an interdisciplinary community of video game studies** within our University where researchers can connect and share ideas, projects, and approaches.

The event consisted on a **full day symposium** divided in two sessions. During the **morning session**, we had 10 **short presentations** of 7-10 minutes each (pecha kucha style) with a round of questions and debate. The **afternoon session** was set up as a **seminar presentation**, with three invited speakers. More details can be found here: https://playmakeresearch.tumblr.com

The short presentations were selected through a **Call for Papers**, shared through posters spread across the university, schools' mailing lists, and social media. All ten submissions for this CFP were accepted. Six participants were affiliated to the University of Sussex, spread throughout different schools. Two participants came from nearby Universities and the other two were from research companies in Brighton. The invited speakers were selected due to the relevance of their research and the unique approach the offer for researching video games.

A total of **26 people** attended the event, celebrated at the **Sussex Humanities Lab**.

The **range of disciplinary fields** involved in this event was pleasantly surprising. The different approaches offered by each speaker revealed the complexity of researching video games, and added interest for cross disciplinary projects. Some of the presentations focused on exploring video games using theoretical approaches, others looked at player's experiences while playing games, others focused on the design process, and others engaged with the dynamics of the industry.

In this sense, some of the main discussions that came up from the presentations were oriented towards the game industry, debating how to bridge the gap between universities and companies, how researchers can make a productive contribution to this medium, and how we could further explore the medium.

Overall, participants' feedback was positive. Internal and external speakers positively engage with others, sharing contacts and ideas. The response to the invited speakers was particularly positive and prompted long debates after their presentations. One of the key goals behind this event was to create networks with scholars in our university for future projects. We discussed the possibility of a new event, both within the University and at Brighton, that could bring together video game developers and academics in the area. We have stablished contacts via email and social media to work on these ideas.

Organizing this event has been a great learning experience. Each step required a high amount of dedication and careful planning. Specially with invited speakers involved, booking time was crucial to fit the budget. Dealing with the different parts, from speakers to school administration, was an intense process, but one that will come hand in the future.

The expenses for the event can be seen in the chart below.

Date	Description	Ammount
02/05/2017	Invited speakers' traveling	£269,50
02/05/2017	Invited speakers' accommodation	£463,00
06/06/2017	Catering	£237,20
Total		£969,70