

Minutes for ICA Game Studies Special Interest Group Business Meeting  
Tuesday, 18 June,

Meeting started at 4:30 pm

Leader: James Ivory, outgoing vice-chair/incoming chair (standing in for outgoing chair Dmitri Williams)

- I. **Approval of minutes.** First order of business was the approval of last year's minutes, which passed unanimously.
- II. **Chair's report**
  - a. J. Ivory provided the chair's report in lieu of D. Williams. First note was a report from the ICA Board Meeting. Before beginning, J. Ivory noted that as a SIG, Game Studies does not have some of the rights associated with division status. For example, voting is restricted and Game Studies cannot vote on certain issues like the ICA Fellows.
    - i. There will be some **restructuring of ICA Fellows voting**
      1. **Absentees** are being counted as no-votes
      2. Some issues are geographical regarding how the board is represented is geographic and do not accurately reflect cultural areas. For example, Africa and Oceania are paired together.
      3. ICA is also looking at some gender inclusivity issues
      4. They are also being proactive about geographic and individual representation by country
      5. The London 2013 conference is one of the most expensive conferences ICA has put on so far, but J. Ivory assured the group that ICA will still be stable financially.
- III. The meeting was momentarily suspended as a representative from the Executive Committee, Peter Vorderer, joined us to provide a report on next year's conference.
  - a. Next year's conference will take place in Seattle, May 22-26, 2014, at the Sheraton hotel.
    - i. **Theme:** Communication and "The Good Life"; looking at the impact of technology on our lives; social scientific; humanistic; well-being
    - ii. Theme chair: Helen Wang (University of NY in Buffalo) -- health and new technologies
    - iii. **Hotel:** Room cost will be \$135 USD including wifi
    - iv. **New formats:** ICA will be trying out some new formats. For example, attendees will be able to conduct research meetings where you can submit a proposal for a meeting room with 10-25 people only that has no presentations, just an exchange of ideas.
      1. This will be dealt with outside of the usual reviewing process.

- v. **Preconferences:** ICA does not know how many preconferences will be hosted; this year's number is unprecedented.
- vi. **Evaluation:** The group was asked to fill out the evaluation sent out in the next few weeks; the board draw conclusions for how to organize the conference next year from the evaluation.
  - 1. One of the important questions: are you comfortable with the extra half a day or do you want to go back to the previous schedule? Either way, this would affect the price and the acceptance rate.
- vii. **Dance/Ball:** P. Vorderer emphasized that one of the aspects he would like to add to next year's conference was a dance of some kind. The new tech director will be the DJ and provide music, and this will be an opportunity to loosen up and relax during the conference.

IV. **Chair's Report (continued)**

- a. **Mid-year board meeting:** The board meets once at ICA and once online during the year, which will continue.
- b. **Publication committee and related working group:** One of the things that ICA is looking at is trying to look at more creative things to publish more than the papers, that might reflect a more open access model. There is very much a focus on changing how journals are organized but also open data sets and ways to publish other types of data.
- c. **Upcoming conferences:**
  - i. 2014: Seattle
  - ii. 2015: San Juan Portico
  - iii. 2016: Tokyo
  - iv. 2017: San Diego
  - v. 2018: Prague
  - vi. 2019: Washington, DC
  - vii. A. Kuhn asked if the conference will always be in May. J. Ivory replied that this issue has not been voted on.
  - viii. Other places were discussed: Minnesota and Hawaii, for example.

V. **Chair's and Vice Chairs Report:**

- d. **Division Status:** Game Studies is above 200 members now, and has maintained this status for long enough that it might be eligible to become a division as of August 2014. It is only \$3 to become a member, so please encourage your colleagues to join.
  - i. Division status is important: being a division as opposed to a special interest group influences the group's submission status, how many sessions are allotted for a conference.
- e. Conference statistics:
  - i. Paper competition: 39.4% acceptance rate.
    - 1. 99 submissions (87 papers, 12 panels); 39 accepted (35 papers, 4 panels)
    - 2. 102 reviewers; all papers got 3 reviews; lower panel acceptance

- a. J. Ivory noted that we had many volunteers, and very positive reviewers. Thanks to everyone who took the time to review, and for those who stepped up at the last minute to review.
    - 3. There were many quality papers that could not be accepted due to the SIG status.
  - f. Preconference had a separate competition and does not impact the conference submission process.
  - g. J. Ivory took a few minutes to answer questions.
    - i. A. Kuhn asked if the virtual conference cancelled this year.
      - 1. J. Ivory replied that the virtual conference was cancelled this year; it was cancelled because it wasn't seen as universally helpful for the whole body of ICA. In contrast, for Game Studies, conference formats like the extended session and virtual conference might work well for our members.
    - ii. Another question, regarding the ICA Fellows discussion, was whether the board talked about specifically how they were going to address gender diversity issues.
      - 1. J. Ivory replied that there were not issues now but also initiatives that other organizations are doing that we can adopt.
        - a. Fellows are 1:3, men: women, which indicates that there are things we can patch up in the future
        - b. There was an argument for the creation of the entity that was independent of conference programming, a commission on the status of women that has programs but also the status of women in the conference as a whole.
        - c. The argument was that ICA needs to come up with something that functions administratively and not just a division, such as what currently exists.
        - d. However, this is a groups recommendation that has not been acted upon.

## VI. New Business

- a. Elect a secretary:
  - i. **Job description:** Primary task is to take good conference notes; there are other things the secretary could be involved in but it is not required.
    - 1. It is relatively low commitment other than attend the conference
    - 2. Volunteers: Rachel Kowert (University of Münster); Jamie Banks (University of Toronto); Elizabeth Newbury (Cornell University)
- b. Question regarding the Bylaws: would more positions make sense?
  - i. There were no responses to this question, so J. Ivory proposed that we consider it for next year.
- c. J. Banks wanted to discuss the informal list of those researchers who play games and would like to play with other members of the SIG. J. Ivory thanked J. Banks for putting this together.

- i. The question was whether this list should be expanded to another format, such as a forum, listserv or a Facebook group. Right now it is just a list that is by invitation, but J. Banks emphasized that we could be more creative. One proposal was a steam group.
  - ii. J. Ivory pointed out that by the will of members, our listserv is for business only, thus informal communication like this is not conducted to the listserv.
  - iii. A paper was passed around to create an informal arm of the interest group, entitled the Taskforce on Fun.
- d. A. Kuhn asked why the Game Studies business meeting was at the same time as the Communication and Technology (CAT) business meeting, suggesting that there is a lot of overlap between the two groups that might lead to a conflict in attendance.
  - i. J. Ivory noted that for scheduling purposes, Game Studies and CAT, who have a joint reception, wanted to have their business meetings directly before the reception. The joint reception is going to paradoxically cause the conflict.
  - ii. He conducted a quick poll of the audience to see if the primary conflict was with CAT, or whether other divisions (such as Information Science) might also prove to be a conflict. J. Ivory concluded that a follow up to all members through an online poll will need to be sent to get confidence that it is only CAT.
- e. One of ICA's big expense item: computer support and tech support;
  - i. ICA Admin is thinking about hiring a new person

V. **Pre-conference for 2014**

- a. J. Ivory asked whether the group would like to have a preconference. The general consensus was yes.
- b. C. Klimmt noted that one concern from this year's conference was the paper competition for the pre-conference. It can't be all the papers that didn't get into the other conference but it is also difficult getting people to submit to both the pre-conference and conference.
- c. This year, there were close to 50 people at the pre-conference.
  - i. N. Bowman pointed out that one fourth of the people are going to the pre-conferences.
- d. One interest was for next year, getting more people who are working in the industry to attend, in particular designers.
  - i. J. Banks pointed out that the Game Developers Conference builds bridges between academia and industry.
  - ii. N. Bowman pointed out that industry seems curious about what we are doing as we move as a discipline beyond addiction and violence studies.
  - iii. Yet the concern is also that as we present to the industry, we also need to have the industry present to us.
- e. M. Elson asked that for next year, we try to avoid three conflicting tracks. He also pointed out that there is a lot of video on YouTube from the pre-conference.

- f. A sign-up sheet was passed around for the pre-conference taskforce, with E. Newbury volunteering as lead.
- VI. Policy Issues
- a. J. Ivory noted that there is increasing salience between the talk about video games and the talk about crime. Game studies might want to consider having a voice in the policy discussion particularly about the negative effects of games.
  - b. M. Schmierbach asked what the current mechanism is for ICA regarding policy discussions.
    - i. J. Ivory said that the ICA administrative team looks through abstracts and pitches it to interest media sources.
  - c. M. Schmierbach followed up by asking whether Game Studies could have a policy oriented session and try to promote that session.
    - i. J. Ivory said that ICA could promote a paper group in the future. He also noted that game studies scholars could get involved, and that it doesn't have to be the group.
  - d. There was concern about drawing attention to policy issues, and one proposal was having papers not just over certain policy issues (e.g. violence) but to open the debate for different ideas
  - e. M. Elson pointed out that other divisions might be putting out statements.
  - f. N. Bowman clarified that ICA would turn to us as a division about particular topics when journalists go to ICA for specific questions.
    - i. Communication scholars are being turned to for input.
  - g. One suggestion was to capitalize on the diversity of opinions our division has as game scholars. We can say there is diversity and pluralism of opinions.
    - i. A. Harvey spoke to the issue of new membership and recruiting. From the perspective of a new member, it might seem to odd to come out as one voice, particularly if people don't see themselves in that opinion.
  - h. J. Ivory concluded the discussion by saying that this was good feedback, and the sense from the room is that Game Studies as a group does not need to be authoring papers but should encourage individual scholars to do so.
- VII. Conclusion
- a. J. Ivory wanted to thank all the reviewers, and thank the new members who attended the meeting.
  - b. J. Ivory thanked Dmitri Williams for his years of dedication to the Game Studies Special Interest Group. With more than four years of service, D. Williams has done a lot for the group with his individual direct service and he has done so in a way that has always been very productive and efficient.
  - c. J. Ivory also wanted to welcome Nicholas Bowman as the new Vice Chair. J. Ivory will be the new Chair.

Adjourned at 5:46pm

Submitted by Elizabeth Newbury (standing in for secretary Joyce Neys)

