

Interactive Symposium - 2021 Virtual Edition

GAM(BL)ING: Commodification of Leisure in the Digital Era

May 10 - 13, 2021



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Welcome to the Interactive Symposium 2021: Virtual Edition
Gam(bl)ing: Commodification of Leisure in the Digital Era

With advances in technology, a wide range of everyday practices are becoming more digitalized.

The boundaries between offline and online spaces seem more blurred than ever, leading us to question how different forms of consumption connect harmoniously or disruptively along the physical-digital continuum.

Supported by ubiquitous mobile technologies and connected platforms, gam(bl)ing experiences have been shaped by hyper-connected and rapidly adaptive technological environments that have changed the very nature of gaming and gambling, making them virtually indistinguishable.

The objective of this symposium is to provide a space for researchers, students, clinicians and others in the field to share knowledge and discuss issues surrounding digital gam(bl)ing and the commodification of leisure in the digital age. Join us for this virtual and interactive edition of our symposium.

The programme is rich in content and will include:

1. interactive sessions with our internationally renowned guest speakers;
2. presentation and exchange sessions with a new generation of students;
3. workshops that promote experimentation and exchange.

In the closing session, we will have the immense privilege of attending a presentation by Mr. Edward Snowden followed by a Q&A session!

Keynote Speakers

May 10th, 2021: Commodification of Games in the Digital Era

Aphra Kerr, Ph.D. - Professor, Department of Sociology, Maynooth University (Ireland)

Gerda Reith, Ph.D. - Faculty Member, University of Glasgow, School of Social and Political Sciences (United Kingdom)

May 11th, 2021: Marketing, Promotion, and Regulatory Issues

Maude Bonenfant, Ph.D. - Professor, Department of Social and Public Communications (UQAM), Chairholder *Chaire de recherche du Canada sur les données massives et les communautés de joueurs* (UQAM)

Alexander Ross, Ph. D. (c) - Faculty of Information, University of Toronto (Canada)

May 12th, 2021: Technology and Intervention: A Tenable Association?

Yasser Khazaal, Ph.D. - Professor of addiction psychiatry (Lausanne University), Chief Physician, Department of Addictions Medicine (CHUV, Lausanne)

Caroline Simonpietri, Ph.D. - Associate researcher, Laboratoire Centre Population et Développement (IRD), University of Paris-Descartes (France)

May 13th, 2021: Closing Conference

Edward Snowden - Whistleblower and cybersecurity expert

Workshop Moderators

May 10th, 2021: Blockchain, crypto, and gambling: Evolving overlaps

Ingo Fiedler, Ph.D. - Blockchain Research Lab, Concordia & Hamburg University (Germany)

May 11th, 2021: An interactive venture into the world of video games

François Savard - President of the Virtual Guardians Foundation

Benjamin Denis - Head of Business Development at Edgegap

Antonin Tran - Esports consultant at Halternative

May 12th, 2021: Online intervention: who, how, why?

Martin French, Ph.D. - Concordia University

Valérie Van Mourik, M.Sc. - Clinical researcher, CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal

Speaker Profiles



Dr. Aphra Kerr has a PhD in Communication Studies (2000) and is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at Maynooth University, Ireland where she teaches the sociology of media, technology and digital communication. She is a collaborator of the ADAPT Centre for Digital Content Technology where she works on projects researching AI and data governance, ethics and policy, and is co-PI on a project on ‘Gambling in Ireland’. She has been researching digital games for almost 20 years and was co-principle investigator on the SSHRC funded ‘Refiguring Innovation in Digital Games’ project. In 2016 she received a Distinguished Scholar award from the international Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA). She currently serves as

an expert adviser to the Pan European Games Information system (PEGI) and is a member of the Media Literacy Ireland network.

Gerda Reith is a Professor of Social Science at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. She is interested in ideas about addiction, risk and excess and their relation to wider issues of behaviour and governance in global consumer societies. She is particularly interested in the social and commercial determinants of gambling, as well as the relation of gambling harms with social inequalities and public health. Gerda’s research has been funded by a variety of organisations, including the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC), the British Academy and the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). Ongoing projects focus on betting and sports; on geographies of mobile gambling, and on exploring the spread of gambling in Malawi. She is currently a Commissioner on the *Lancet* Public Health Commission on Gambling, and the *Howard League Commission* on Problem Gambling and Crime.



Maude Bonenfant is a professor in the Department of Social and Public Communications at l’Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). She has a doctorate in semiotics and is chairholder of the Canada Research Chair on Gaming Communities and Big Data (2018–2023). Her research focuses on the social dimensions of communication technologies, social networks, big data, artificial intelligence, online communities, as well as gaming practices and video games. She is codirector of the Laboratory for Research on Social Media and Gamification, director of the Homo Ludens Research Group on Games and Communication and member of the Research Group on Everyday Information and Surveillance (GRISQ).

Alexander Ross is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information. He was a graduate fellow at the McLuhan Centre for Culture and Technology from 2018 to 2020. His research interests include the political economy of communication, critical platform studies, and the gamblification of games. His dissertation project focuses on how platformization and app economies are transforming digital gambling and creating new forms of cultural production.



Yasser Khazaal is a psychiatrist-psychotherapist. He is a professor at the University of Lausanne and chief physician in the Department of Addictions Medicine at CHUV in Switzerland. He works specifically on the development and evaluation of apps and their recreational approach in the dissemination of possible treatments and in promoting the processes of empowerment and recovery.

As a result of a triple disciplinary training in Neurosciences (M2R), Health Management/Marketing (MBA) and Socio-Anthropology (PhD), **Caroline Simonpietri** has been focused on chronicity and the digitalization of the health system since the early 2000s. Associate researcher in the CEPED laboratory (IRD) of the University of Paris-Descartes (Sorbonne-Paris-Cité) and independent consultant, she offers her services to associations, institutions and business in evaluating and disseminating their societal innovations, from their theoretical creation to reception by end-users (patients and healthcare professionals) in the form of “action research.”



The author of the new memoir, *Permanent Record*, former CIA officer and National Security Agency (NSA) consultant **Edward Snowden** risked everything to expose the U.S. government's system of mass surveillance. He is the subject of the Oscar-winning best documentary *Citizenfour* and the critically acclaimed Oliver Stone film, *Snowden*. Appearing live from Moscow, Snowden continues to speak out about technologies and practices (increasingly by nongovernmental entities) that have created “the most effective means of social control in the history of our species.” “Everything we do now lasts forever. Not because we want to remember, but because we are no longer allowed to forget,” he says, evoking the key theme of *Permanent Record*. “Helping to create that system is my greatest regret.” As one of the world's most passionate and authoritative voices on privacy and cybersecurity, Snowden continues to warn us of the growing threats of our digital age.

Schedule of Events

Please note: All times are in Eastern Standard Time.

Monday, May 10th, 2021 - Commodification of Games in the Digital Era

Tuesday, May 11th, 2021 - Marketing, Promotion, and Regulatory Issues

Wednesday, May 12th, 2021 - Technology and Intervention: A Tenable Association?

Thursday, May 13th, 2021 - Closing conference

Commodification of Games in the Digital Era May 10th, 2021

9:00 to 11:30 a.m.: Opening Sessions

This session will be available in both French and English.

9:00 to 9:55 a.m.: ‘Gambling 2’: The ‘new frontier’ of mobile and social gambling

Gerda Reith, Ph.D., University of Glasgow

9:55 to 10:10 a.m.: Break

10:10 to 11:05 a.m.: *The Gamblification of Media, Sports and Play: Rethinking Risk and Responsibility.*

Aphra Kerr, Ph.D., Maynooth University

11:05 to 11:30 a.m.: Q&A sessions for keynote speakers

1:00 to 2:30 p.m.: Thematic workshop

The presentation will be in English and the PowerPoint will be available in French.

Group discussions will be held in both English and French.

Blockchain, crypto, and gambling: Evolving overlaps

Ingo Fiedler, Ph.D., Concordia University

3:00 to 4:00 p.m.: Q&A session for asynchronous presentations

Synchronous session where the authors of the papers will be present to answer questions.

Marketing, Promotion, and Regulatory Issues
May 11th, 2021

9:00 to 11:30 a.m.: Conference Sessions

This session will be available in both French and English.

9:00 to 9:55 a.m.: *Gaming, Gambling, Advertising and Data Collection — How Borders get Blurred in the Absence of Framing*

Maude Bonenfant, Ph.D., Université du Québec à Montréal

9:55 to 10:10 a.m.: Break

10:10 to 11:05 a.m.: *Play to win: Playtika and the political economy of social casino apps*

Alexander Ross, Ph.D.(c), University of Toronto

11:05 to 11:30 a.m.: Q&A sessions for keynote speakers

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.: Thematic workshop

The workshop will be held in French, but the speakers are fluent in English.

An interactive venture into the world of video games

François Savard, President of the Virtual Guardians Foundation

Benjamin Denis, Head of Business Development at Edgegap

Antonin Tran, Esports consultant at Halternative

Technology and Intervention: A Tenable Association?
May 12th, 2021

8:15 to 8:45 a.m.: Q&A session for asynchronous presentations

Synchronous session where the authors of the papers will be present to answer questions.

9:00 to 11:30 a.m.: Conference sessions

This session will be available in both French and English.

9:00 to 9:55 a.m.: *Are Apps the ubiquitous tool to boost change?*

Yasser Khazaal, Ph.D., Lausanne University

9:55 to 10:10 a.m.: Break

10:10 to 11:05 a.m.: *Expert-Patients, Technology and Addiction: What Articulation?*

Caroline Simonpietri, Ph.D., University of Paris-Descartes

11:05 to 11:30 a.m.: Q&A sessions for keynote speakers

1:00 to 2:30 p.m.: Thematic workshop

Vignettes supporting the groups discussion will be available in French and English.

Group discussions will be held in both English or French.

Online intervention: who, how, why?

Martin French, Ph.D., Concordia University

Valérie Van Mourik, M.Sc., Clinical researcher, CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal

Closing Conference

May 13th, 2021

8:30 to 10:00 a.m.: Closing conference

This session will be available in both French and English.

What I learned from games--playing for and against mass surveillance

Edward Snowden, Whistleblower and cybersecurity expert

Azeb Wolde-Giorghis, Journalist

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