Dear Reader,

Something that was difficult when writing this paper is that within the game design and interactive media community there is not much formal writing because most of the community rhetoric happens via videos and twitch streams. I find it interesting that while the gaming community is about inclusion there is not much diversity of players, both in gender and race. While this community appears on the outside very open there is a lot of bias within it. I realized through analyzing all the sources that mechanics in games are basically the rhetoric for it. Rhetoric is to writing as mechanics are to game design. This is written in APA format as I think game design is considered a communication discipline and they typically use APA.

Analyzing Rhetoric That Conveys the Value of Inclusion in the Field of Game Design and Interactive Media

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Inclusion within the game industry is cornerstone to create better games to reach a wider audience. By analyzing four different writing sources (game design syllabus, an online article, and two student writing samples) inclusivity is underscored in the game design community by showing up in multiple ways, including language, lack thereof, and the culmination of multiple perspectives.

The syllabus for *History of Games and Interactive Technology* demonstrates inclusivity by having no prerequisites, and wide acceptance of possible course materials. Within the syllabus for *History of Games and Interactive Technology* under the prerequisites banner there is simply one word "none (Steffen, 2021, p.1)." This tells the student that there is no extra work necessary before they can even consider taking this class. This class is open to anyone who simply wants to take it,so there is no gatekeeping within this class or major when it comes to education. By not having any prerequisites for this course it opens the door to more people and more majors and therefore more people and more ideas.

Similarly on both page 1 and page 3 of the syllabus there are points made on the openness of assignments and course material. The syllabus states that students should "critically analyze games from different eras and genres(Steffen, 2021, p.1)," in reference to the course materials to be studied in the class and continues:

> Including 3 games you *choose* for the purpose of critical analysis… Games can
> range in price from as little as $1 (i.e. mobile games) to as much as $60 (AAA
> console and PC games), while indie games tend to be in the $10-20 range. You

will be allowed to *choose* which designer or studio to study, and this will affect

how much you need to spend, if any (Steffen, 2021, p.3)

Both of these examples point to inclusion as a value. The repetitive use of the word

"choose" denotes the value of being able to have freedom of choice in the education a

student seeks within this field. The wide range of possible options both in the class and

outside the class give way for students to focus on things they like and are passionate

about. No two students are the same and so by opening the course materials so widely to

many ideas there are more options that could be presented in the classroom. Not to

mention the author takes the time to briefly explain the variety of choices of games in case

the student is unfamiliar with gaming. The author also includes a wide range of

approximate prices of games to study which is inclusive for students who have different

budgets.

Another simple way that inclusion is conveyed within writing in the game design

field is the use of lowercase letters in place of capital ones. In the article *7 innovative*

video game moments that pushed game design forward in 2021 by Keith Stuart there are

no capital letters in the title or even in the following section headers. This way of writing

is seen as more casual and easily accessible because it is not as academic.The video game

industry attracts multiple age groups so writing in lowercase letters appeals to younger age

groups because it doesn't present as academic. All the while not deterring an older fandom

because the punctuation change does not compromise the integrity of the content. By this

article being more accessible, not only in the lowercase letters but also as it is posted to an

online forum, there is no gatekeeping of information therefore leading to the inclusion of

more people into the field.

The value of inclusion is again conveyed by there not being any dialogue or on screen text in the game *Unpacking* (2021) mentioned in the aforementioned article. By not having a language connected to this game opens up its audience base while including less-catered-to demographics within the gaming community. Younger players are able to play as one does not need to know how to read to play. Players who are hard or hearing or deaf are not missing out on the storyline. It also lends itself to an international audience as this game is not published with a certain language attached.

Games like *Lost in Random* (2021)and *Windermyth* (2019) mentioned in this article use mechanics to push inclusivity within the gaming community. Both of these games take mechanics that have been used before and draw inspiration from other table top games like Dungeons and Dragons(1974), Magic the Gathering (1993), and Pokemon(1996). With the addition of these known mechanics the developers are able to reach a wider audience, perhaps an audience that is not as represented in the gaming community.

Inclusion can also be displayed by having many sources like *"Tell Me Why"*, a student writing example within the *Disciplinary Techne* (Davidson, C., & Matzke, A., 2019 p. 120–123) *,* as well as my own writing (Harms, 2021). The student in *Disciplinary Techne* uses seven different sources within their essay and pulls from many topics and articles while I use ten in an analysis. Both of us use sources to create an inclusive paper, in an attempt to draw from many perspectives within this field of study. Although, finding a writing example for my field of study is difficult since oftentimes we are not required to write traditional papers. We work in the field of action, making projects, prototypes and mockups. The nature of this work in and of itself demands more group work therefore in

conversational project work we incorporate multiple perspectives making inclusive spaces for brainstorming. Not to mention everyone has a non-specified area of expertise for example if one works in environment design they would still have to help with the overall level design via coding. Everyone dabbles in each other's fields, working together to create a cohesive finished product. This kind of work doesn't show up on paper.

Throughout the syllabus and it's repeated wording lending itself to full disclosure and it's non-existent prerequisites it shows inclusivity to it's students. The article presented inclusivity through it's wide availability on an online forum and it's nonacademic stance on lowercase letters. Lastly, the student examples exemplified inclusivity through using many sources not only in papers but with those around them when working on projects.

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