SHIRA CHESS

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EDUCATION

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Dept. of Language, Literature, & Communication, Troy, NY
PhD, Communication and Rhetoric, August 2005 – December 2009
Defense Date, November 20, 2009
Dissertation: License to Play: Women, Productivity, and Video Games
Committee Chair: June Deery, PhD

Emerson College, Dept. of Media Arts, Boston, MA
MA, Media Studies, January 2001 - December 2003
Thesis: (En)Gendering the Boob Tube: Technology, Agency and the Action TV Femme
Committee Chair: Michael Selig, PhD

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL
BA, English, August 1991 - August 1995

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Chess, S. (2009). How to play a feminist. *Thirdspace*. Article forthcoming in Winter 09 issue.

Chess, S. (2009). Book review for *Digital culture, play and identity: A world of warcraft reader*. *Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies*. http://rccs.usfca.edu/bookinfo.asp?ReviewID=622&BookID=432

Chess, S. (2008). The c-word: queering the cylons. In J. Steiff and T. D. Tamplin (Eds.) *Battlestar Galactica and philosophy: Mission accomplished or mission frakked up?* (pp. 87-94.). Chicago, Ill: Open Court Press.

Geisler, C., Novak M, Bennett, A., Voorhees, C., Grice, R., Krull, B., Sharp, M., McCoy, M. Isbister, K., Watt, J., Chess, S., Schaeffer, N.,Young, B., Search, P., Booth, P.; Zappen, J., & Kenkel, B. (2006). Usable content in a post-document world. *Proceedings of the IEEE International Professional Communication Conference.*

Chess, S. (2005). Playing the bad guy: *Grand Theft Auto* in the panopticon. In N. Garrelts (Ed) *Digital gameplay: essays on the nexus of game and gamer* (pp. 80-90.). Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland Press.

PUBLICATIONS IN REVIEW

Chess, S. (2009). A 36-24-36 Cerebrum: Gendering video game play through advertising. Submitted to *Critical Studies in Media Communication*. Minor revisions by request.

Chess, S. (2009). Going with the flo: Gender, play, and productivity in *Diner Dash*. Submitted to *Feminist Media Studies*. Major revisions by request.

Invited Presentations

Chess, S. (2009, July). Can't get no play! Women, video games, and productivity. Paper presented at the Albany International Game Developer Association, Albany, NY.

Chess, S. (2005, October). Playing the bad guy: *Grand Theft Auto* in the panopticon. Paper presented at the University of Pittsburgh lecture series on new media, Pittsburgh, PA.

Selected Conference Presentations

Chess, S. (2009, November). Don't worry, mama will fix it!: Motherhood, technological play, and productivity. *National Communication Association*, Chicago, Illinois. (Forthcoming.)

Chess, S. (2009, November). Methodological Issues in Video Game Research. *National Communication Association*, Chicago, Illinois. (Forthcoming.)

Chess, S. (2009, November). The failure of the Ron Paul rally in *World of Warcraft*. *National Communication Association*, Chicago, Illinois. (Forthcoming.)

Chess, S. (2009, October). Wii are family: Wiis, miis, and family play time. *Internet Research 10.0* (The Association of Internet Researchers), Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (Forthcoming.)

Chess, S. (2009, September). Playing, dashing, and working: Simulated productive play in the *Dash* Games. *DiGRA*, West London, England. (Presentation available at http://shirachess.com/digra/digra-dash-presentation.mov.)

Chess, S. (2008, October). Balancing on the great gender platform (watching the video game sharks below). *Internet Research 9.0* (The Association of Internet Researchers), Copenhagen, Denmark.

Chess, S. & A. Davisson. (2008, April). A 36-24-36 cerebrum: The nintendo DS and gendered advertisements. ***William A. Kern Conference*** *on* ***Visual Communication: Rhetorics and Technology***, Rochester, NY.

Chess, S. (2007, October). What do feminists know about play anyway? Understanding feminism through digital play. *The Society for Social Studies of Sciences*, Montreal, Quebec.

Chess, S. (2007, April). My gnome, my guild, my self: MMOs and the collective projective identity. *National Popular Cultural Association*, Boston, Massachusetts.

Chess, S. (2007, March). Commentary without pity: Retelling, rewriting, and recapping the television text. *International Conference on Narrative*, Washington DC.

Academic Employment

Instructor

IHSS 1972 – The History and Culture of Games (RPI, Fall, 2006)
Freshman Level course was a broad survey on both traditional and digital games using a combination of theoretical and hands-on approaches to designing and understanding play.

CMM 101 – Introduction to Mass Communication (Endicott College, Fall, 2004)
Introductory Level Mass Communication course which explored the history, culture and impact of a broad spectrum of topics in communication.

CMM 380 – Media Ethics and Law (Endicott College, Spring 2005)
Upper-level course in communication and media, where students examined specific media studies topics such as 1st amendment and copyright issues.

Teaching Assistant

LITR 2450 – Utopian Literature (RPI, Fall, 2008)
Comparative Literature course focusing on utopian and dystopian themes in books, film, graphic novels, and new media. Final projects had students building fictional utopias.

COMM 6810 – HCI Prototyping (RPI, Spring, 2007)
Distance graduate level course that involved building paper prototypes to test theoretical approaches in Human Computer Interaction.

ITEC 2210 – Introduction to Human Computer Interaction (RPI, Spring, 2006)
Course in theory and practice of Human Computer Interaction, which culminated in final course projects.

ITEC 4100 – IT Capstone (RPI, Fall, 2005)
Assisted in syllabus, assignment, and grading; met with students to discuss course projects.

Guest Lecturer

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Digital Rhetoric (Fall, 2009) *Graduate Course*
- Media Studies (Fall, 2008) *Graduate Course*
- Advertising and Culture (Fall, 2009)
- Psychological and Social Affects of Games (Fall, 2009; Fall, 2008)
- Designing Characters for Computer Games (Spring, 2009)
- Gender and Technology (Spring, 2006; Fall, 2008)
- Media and Popular Culture (Spring, 2007)
- Science and Fiction (Spring, 2007)

Emerson College
- Gender Studies, (Spring, 2003)
- Television Studies (Fall, 2003)

Professional Development

Administrative Coordinator, (RPI, May 2009-Present)
Organized graduate orientation, colloquium series, and served as a liaison between faculty and graduate students.

Co-Instructor, (SUNY Youth Institute, May 2009)
Taught a workshop on game design to at-risk high school students.

Graduate Assistant, (Emerson College, January 2002 – May 2003)
Assisted Jane Shattuc, PhD in research and teaching.

Awards and Recognition

Extraordinary Travel Funds Award, Dept. of LL&C. Fall 2009 for: *Internet Research 9.0* (The Association of Internet Researchers), Copenhagen, Denmark.

Rensselaer Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences Fellowship, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Fall 2007-Summer 2009.

1st Place Graduate Essay Division, McKinney Writing Competition, Spring, 2007. For the essay: My gnome, my guild, my self: MMOs and the collective projective identity.

Service Commitments and Committees

Reviewer, *Internet Research 10.0* (Association of Internet Researchers), Fall 2009

Committee Member, Games in Education Symposium (1st Playable Productions), July 2009

Reviewer, Editorial Board, *Rocky Mountain Communication Review,* Spring 2009-Present.

Reviewer, *Children, Youth and Environments*, Summer 2008

Member, DeCoLab: Design Collaborative, Department of LL&C, RPI, Jan. 2008-Present.

Committee Member, Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace, Concordia University. Nov. 2006-Present.

Committee Member, Usable Content in a Post-Document World. December 2005 – June 2006.

Selected Industry Experience

1st Playable Productions, Troy, NY
Apprentice Designer, May 2009 – Sept. 2009
Researcher, May 2006-August 2006
Designer and researcher on the following games for the Nintendo DS:

- *My Virtual Tutor Reading Adventure*
- *Winter's Tail*
- *Style Lab: Jewelry Designer*
- *GoPets: Vacation Island*

Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA
Web Developer, May 2001 – July 2005
Created web sites for the publishing company's college division using:

- HTML and XML
- Flash
- Photoshop
- Dreamweaver

Children's Progress, Somerville, MA
Developer, November 2001 – August 2002

- Used Flash and Director to develop children's educational computer games

Inc.com, Boston, MA
Web Developer, Oct. 1999 — February 2001

- E-commerce (B-toB)
- Online publishing
- Web marketing

Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Academic Web Designer, March 1998 - January 1999

- Developed an online MBA program
- Worked with students and faculty to enhance virtual classroom
- Managed Blackboard and other online classroom tools