

2015. Mia Consalvo, President DiGRA

Level Up was the first conference of the then newly created Digital Games Research Association, which sought to both bring together a growing community of scholars and recognize and formalize the study of digital games. The event signaled a watershed moment for us - games became an object of scholarly inquiry not simply due to their potential effects, but because of their cultural importance, and their status as key signifiers of meaning in contemporary culture.

Over the years DiGRA has continued that tradition of gathering an international group of scholars to refine and advance our theories, bringing in new approaches and disciplinary backgrounds, and surveying the continually changing landscape of the industry and gameplay practices. But in addition to being a place for the exchange of knowledge and development of theory, Level Up was a place where we came together - many of us for the first time - to share our work, build relationships, and form an international community of scholars. DiGRA's later conferences have continued that work, but we owe a debt of gratitude to Level Up's initial organizers and participants for making it all seem possible and paving the way for the scholarship and fellowship that followed.