# Female game developers in the Australian digital games industry


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Honours Thesis 2013


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## Statement of authorship/originality

*I declare that the work presented in the thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original and my own work, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.*

**Debbie M. Taylor**

## Acknowledgements

I would especially like to thank and acknowledge the supervision and guidance provided by Dr Yusuf Pisan, who despite coming from a technical background in Artificial Intelligence, accepted to take me on and allowed me to pursue research in the Social Sciences. For giving me latitude, yet clipping my wings when I got too ambitious, and ultimately for ensuring that I finished on time.

I would also like to thank;

- Robert Leidl, and Thomas Given-Wilson, for both having spent many, many hours over the past two years debating the pros and cons of me even starting this thesis. For being a sounding board, but more importantly for having faith that I could do it.
- My friend, Annie Burns, for her constant encouragement and support, for being my tester during practice interviews and for casting an outsider's eye over my thesis to ensure it made sense to a non-digital game industry lay-person.
- All of the interviewees, census & survey respondents; for kindly taking time out of your busy days to contribute your comments and thoughts, without which this thesis would not exist.
- Sourivat Seignarack (Souri) for his generous contribution of background information and insight into the industry.
- Giselle Rosman for being the centre of the 'Aussie game dev universe' - for being available to answer questions at all hours, filling in the blanks and offering to chase-up the un-contactable.
- Dr Michael Charleston for his patience, understanding and timely advice.
- My buddies, Shayne Baptist and Rohan Eldridge who made sure that I went outside in the sunlight and bought food at least once a week, and for generally keeping an eye on me.

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## Abstract

Females make up half the population, and represent 47% of the digital game player market in Australia, yet women do not have comparative input and influence into the creation of digital games. Women are underrepresented in the digital games industry all over the world. In Australia, women's level of contribution to game development is much lower than the USA, Canada, and UK.

This thesis seeks to establish the factors that influence the low participation of women in this fast-growing industry, and to possibly find ways to reverse this trend.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A review of literature from the areas of computer science, IT, and digital games development was carried out focusing on the impact of social, structural and cultural factors, and how these may influence women choosing a career in the Australian digital games industry.

This study is empirical in nature using a Mixed-Method Grounded Theory approach. A database of all known Australian digital game companies was constructed. A census was then carried out with 356 digital game development studios across the country. From there, a separate "*Aussie Women Game Developers*" survey was conducted with thirty-five women working in the industry. From the survey respondents a subset of ten women participated in a semi-structured, in-depth, one-on-one, open-ended interview.

## Abbreviations, Acronyms & Definitions

| | |
|---|---|
| AAA | Games developed for major platforms with big marketing budgets |
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ADGI | Australian Digital Games Industry |
| ASIC | Australian Securities & Investment Commission |
| .auDA | .au Domain Administration |
| BSc. IT | Bachelor of Science in Information Technology |
| CS | Computer Science |
| DCI | Digital Content Industry |
| DGI | Digital games industry |
| EA | Electronic Arts (digital game company) |
| GDAA | Game Developers Association of Australia |
| GDC | Game Developers Conference (held annually in San Francisco) |
| GTA V | Grand Theft Auto V |
| HR | Human Resources |
| IGDA | International Game Developers Association |
| ICT | Information, Communications & Technology (industry) |
| IT | Information Technology (field, faculty) |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| TAFE | Technical and Further Education (vocational college) |