

## **Accessibility Awareness Day 2015**

### **Dr. Amy Ratelle – Gaming the System: Video Games and Accessibility**

**Amy Ratelle** was one of the presenters at Accessibility Awareness Day 2015. Amy is currently Semaphore's Research Coordinator at the University of Toronto and recently completed her PhD in Communication and Culture. Her research areas include critical media studies, children's literature and culture, animality studies, post humanist theory, and visual culture.

The 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2015 was Accessibility Awareness Day and Dr. Ratelle presented about developments in the Video Game industry which will make it more accessible to persons with disabilities.

#### **What are the some of the current issues?**

- Little to no effort has been placed on making both games and gaming hardware accessible for players with disabilities by the gaming industry.
- About 20% of gamers have some sort of disability in the gaming industry.
- The Sony PlayStation, in particular, has made it inordinately difficult to re-map the functionality of its controllers, and excludes many players from joining in to what has become an increasingly important social activity for gamers of all ages.

Given how difficult it can be for gamers with disabilities to access both equipment and resources to play current and popular video games, Semaphore approached the AbleGamers Foundation to build an Accessibility Arcade at the University of Toronto. Persons interested in participating in the Accessibility Arcade are endorsed to contact Semaphore directly at:

[www.semaphore.utoronto.ca](http://www.semaphore.utoronto.ca).

If you'd like to learn more about Dr. Ratelle's work and the Accessibility Arcade, please view the presentation available online at: [www.uwindsor.ca/aad2015](http://www.uwindsor.ca/aad2015)

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