



MARCH 18-22, 2024
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How to Teach Representation Responsibly: *A Seven-Point Guide*

Ash Rezvani
Serious Game Designer
Assistant Prof. @ University of Montana

#GDC2024

Fox, J., Ralston, R. A., Cooper, C. K., & Jones, K. A. (2015). Sexualized avatars lead to women's self-objectification and acceptance of rape myths. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 39(3), 349-362.



SAINTS ROW



Yang, G. S., Gibson, B., Lueke, A. K., Huesmann, L. R., & Bushman, B. J. (2014). Effects of avatar race in violent video games on racial attitudes and aggression. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 5(6), 698-704.



“Representation Matters.”

*...okay, now
what?*

DEAD OR ALIVE Xtreme
Venus Vacation
ヴィーナス バケーション

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Let's talk about **how** to
represent...

...not **why** we represent.



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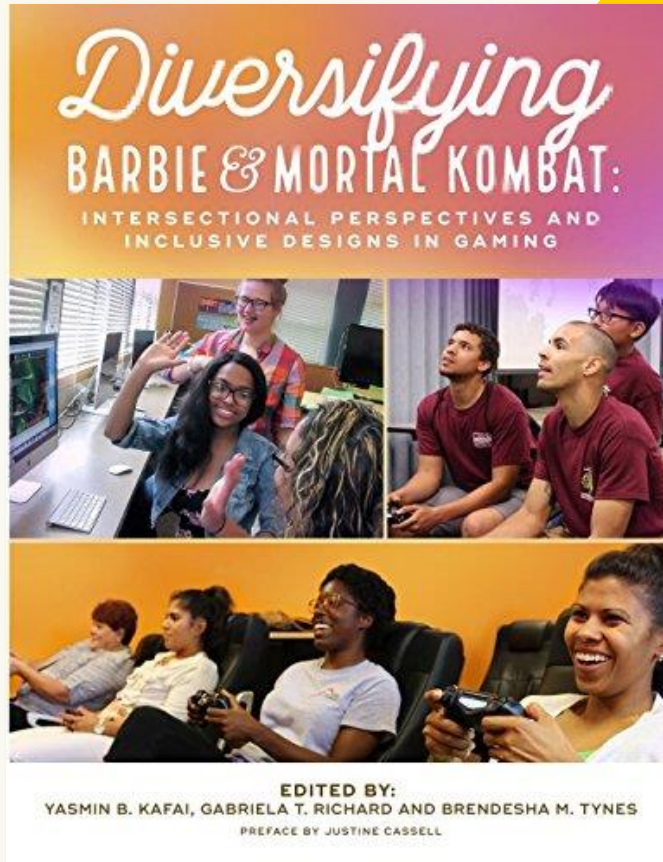
1.

**Acknowledge and
accept that players
have implicit bias.**

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1. Acknowledge and accept players have implicit bias.

Flanagan, M., & Kaufman, G. (2016). Shifting Implicit Biases with Games Using Psychology. *Diversifying Barbie and Mortal Kombat*, 219-233.



bias and the psychological obstacles that it entails. By definition, implicit bias refers to an unconscious negative evaluation or association that gets incorporated into one's mental representation (or "schema") of a particular concept (be it a person, group, place, event, idea, value, etc.). What's particularly insidious about implicit bias is that it does not depend on (and often occurs *in spite of*) an explicit endorsement or intention to have a negative attitude toward a particular target (Blair, 2002).

No one is immune to implicit biases. Even those who genuinely and legitimately consider themselves to be non-prejudiced and committed to instilling human values such as egalitarianism at a conscious level could, at the same time, hold a negative association toward individuals of another group at an implicit level (Beattie, et al., 2013; Flanagan & Nissenbaum, 2014). In fact, it is likely that most biases go unnoticed and even "unbelieved" (Pronin et al., 2002).

**1. Acknowledge and accept
players have implicit bias.**

**Having implicit bias
doesn't make you a
bad person. It just
makes you human.**

1. Acknowledge and accept players have implicit bias.

Hall, S., Evans, J., & Nixon, S. (2013). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices, second edition*. Sage Publications.

Representation is a *process*.

We can also think of representations as

1. To look like or resemble
2. To stand in for something or someone

Meanings aren't real or fixed – **continuously produced, defined, and redefined**



Stuart Hall

**1. Acknowledge and accept
players have implicit bias.**

**Close your eyes
and picture a tree.**

**1. Acknowledge and accept
players have implicit bias.**

Sign 



**“well-ingrained by powerful forces
of socialization and inequitable
media representations, but they
are by no means impermeable to
change.”**



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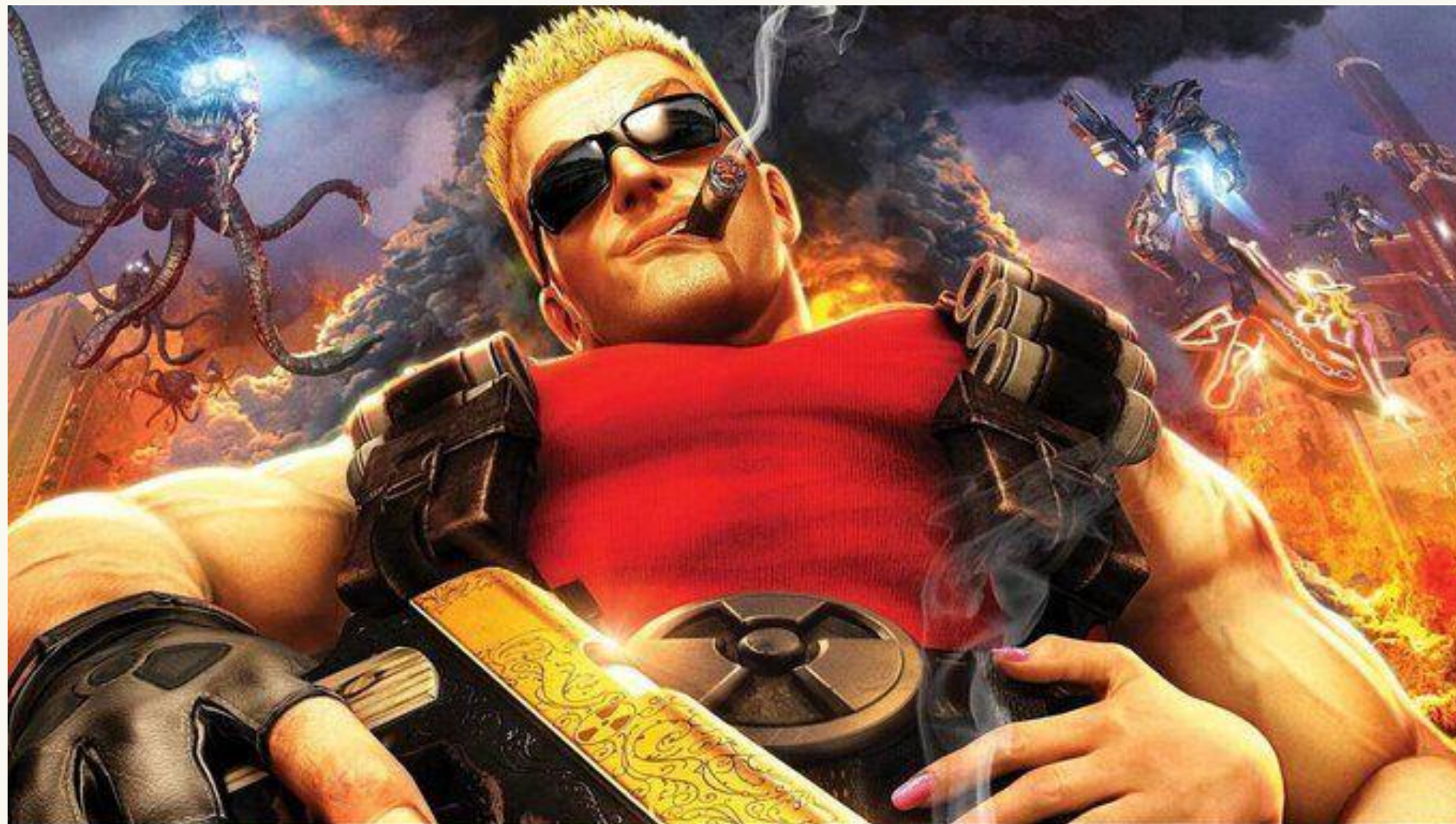
2.

Create
multidimensional
characters.

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2. Create multidimensional characters.

DUKE NUKEM



2. Create multidimensional characters.



2. Create multidimensional characters.

DUKE NUKEM



2. Create multidimensional characters.

Batson, C. D., Chang, J., Orr, R., & Rowland, J. (2002). Empathy, attitudes, and action: Can feeling for a member of a stigmatized group motivate one to help the group? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(12), 1656-1666.

LaPrelle, J., Hoyle, R., Insko, C., & Bernthal, P. (1990). Interpersonal attraction and descriptions of the traits of others: Ideal similarity, self similarity, and liking. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 24, 216-240.

Oswald, P. A. (1996). The effects of cognitive and affective perspective taking on empathic concern and altruistic helping. *The Journal of social psychology*, 136(5), 613-623.

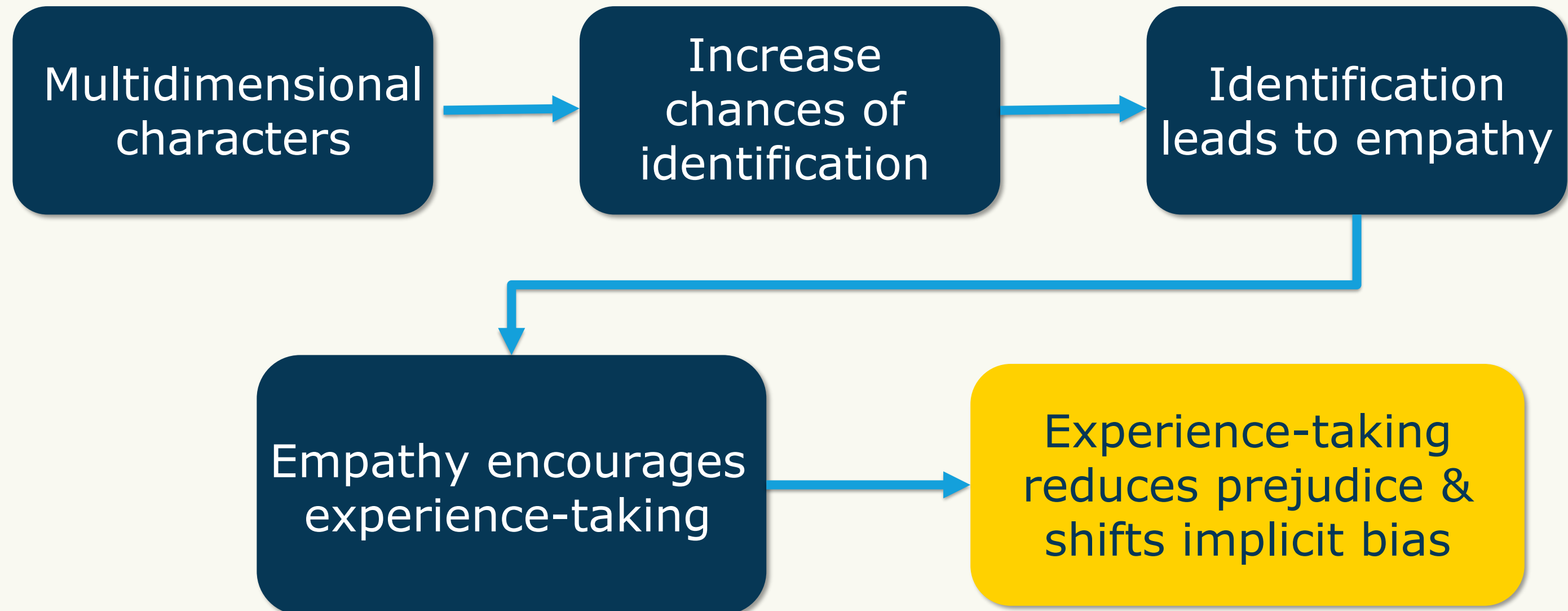
Empathy reduces prejudice.

Kaufman, G. F., & Libby, L. K. (2012). Changing beliefs and behavior through experience-taking. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 103(1), 1.

Todd, A. R., Bodenhausen, G. V., Richeson, J. A., & Galinsky, A. D. (2011). Perspective taking combats automatic expressions of racial bias. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 100(6), 1027.

Experience-taking increases empathy.

2. Create multidimensional characters.





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3.

Depth AND Breadth.

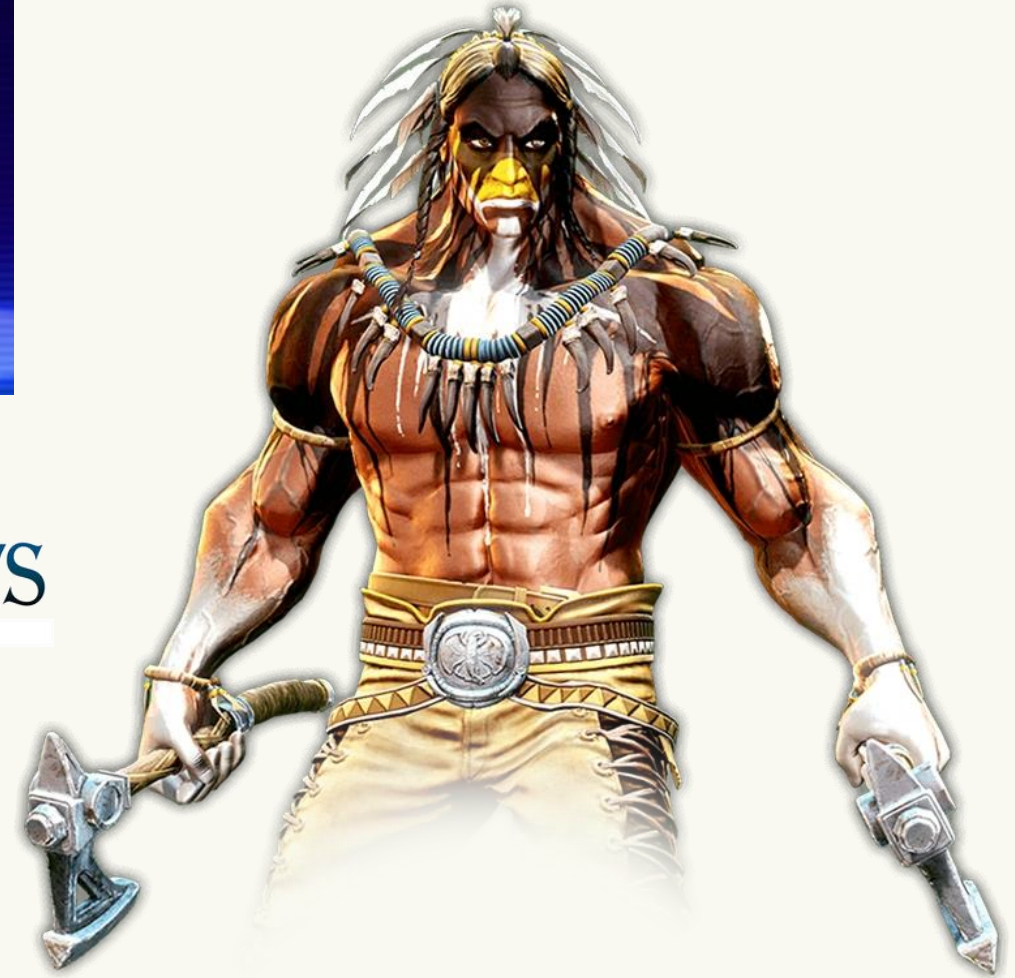
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3. Depth AND breadth.



Tomahawk, Oglala, Lakota, Sioux (Native American), late 19th-early 20th century,

3. Depth AND breadth.



**Breadth is the
answer!**

3. Depth AND breadth.

HORIZON

FORBIDDEN WEST™



3. Depth AND breadth.





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4 & 5

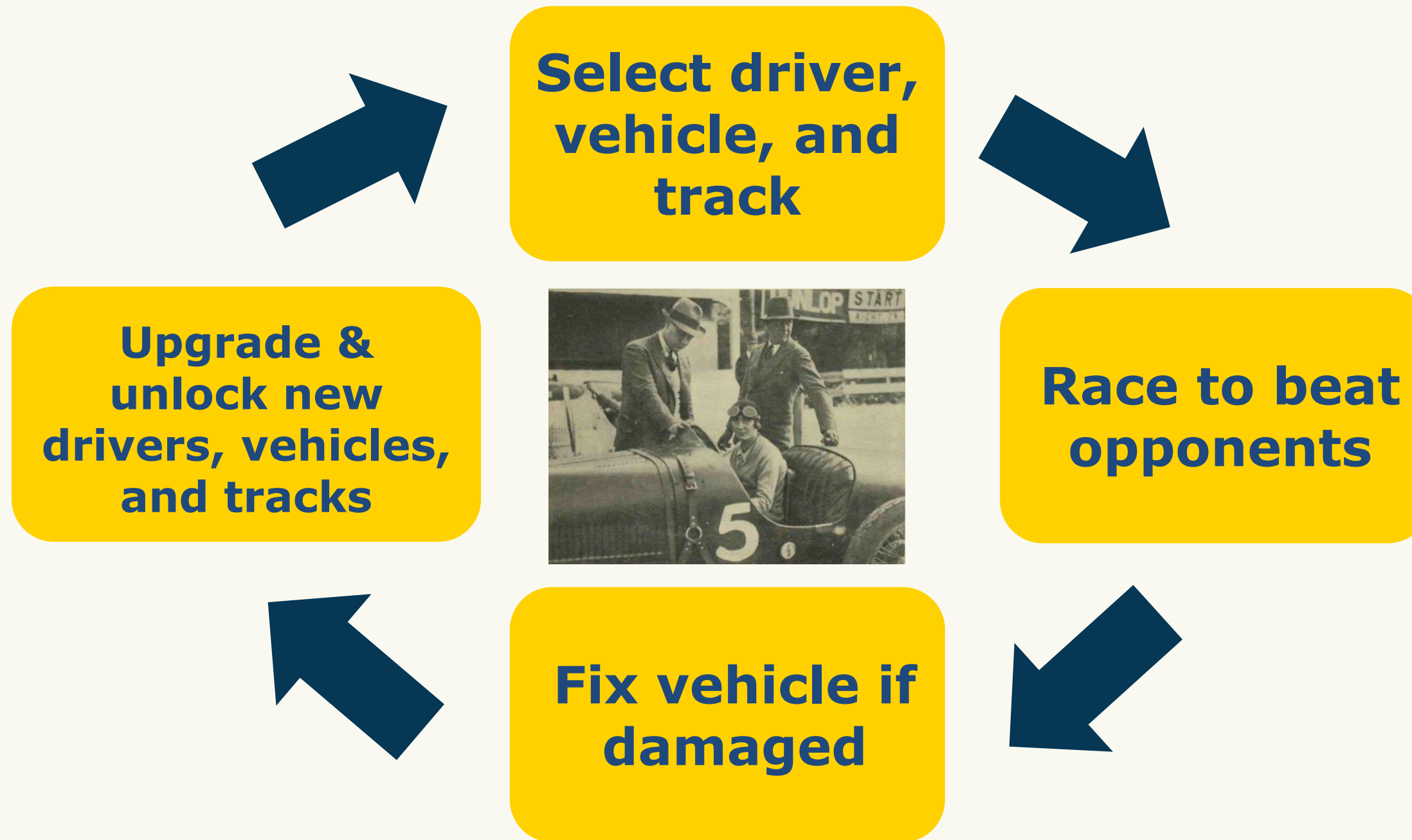
Design for Repetition, and Find Balance.

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“Reactance”

*I'm not going to believe it,
because you told me to*

4. Design for repetition.





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6.

Empower players.

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6. Empower players

Everyday Racism



Download on the
App Store



ANDROID APP ON
Google play



6. Empower players

HAIR NAH







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7.

**Acknowledge and
accept that *you* have
implicit bias.**

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7. Acknowledge and accept *you* have implicit bias.

DONTNOD Entertainment. (2024). *FAQ*. Tell Me Why Game. <https://www.tellmewhygame.com/faq/>



TELL
ME
WHY



Tlingit culture is a key part of Tell Me Why's story and scenery. Our partners at [Huna Heritage Foundation](#) have been integral in our goal to portray these elements respectfully and responsibly. They also informed many other aspects of the game, including atmospheric sounds, Tlingit-language pronunciation and spelling verification, and information on customs such as funerary rites. We also commissioned Huna Tlingit artisans to create the many Tlingit objects, murals and designs that appear in the game. For more info on their work, read our [blog post](#).

To ensure that Tyler's character would resonate with a wide and diverse audience of trans people, the Tell Me Why team worked closely with two of GLAAD's transgender staff: Nick Adams, Director of Transgender Representation; and Blair Durkee, Special Consultant for Gaming. For over two years, Nick offered foundational guidance on story and character, consulted on casting, and reviewed scripts at all phases of production.



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Conclusion

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- 1. Acknowledge and accept that players have implicit bias.**
- 2. Create multidimensional characters.**
- 3. Depth AND breadth.**
- 4. Design for repetition.**
- 5. Find balance.**
- 6. Empower players.**
- 7. Acknowledge and accept that you have implicit bias.**

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Questions?

✉ ashley.rezvani@umt.edu

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✂ [@krucial_a](#)

Ash Rezvani
Game Designer & Assistant Professor
University of Montana

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