

## Melinda Marie Cohoon

PhD Candidate in Near and Middle Eastern Studies  
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### EDUCATION

**Ph.D. Candidate in Near and Middle Eastern Studies** 2017–Expected 2025

University of Washington (UW), Seattle, WA

Dissertation: “Affective Entanglements and Precarious Lifeworlds: Iranian Gamers in Culture”

Advisors: Arzoo Osanloo (chair), Selim Kuru, Sareeta Amrute, and Jinha Lee

**M.A. in International Studies-Middle East** 2015-2017

University of Washington (UW), Seattle, WA

Thesis: “The Imperial Frontier: Tribal Dynamics and Oil in Qajar Persia, 1901-1910”

Advisors: Arbella Bet-Shlimon and Ellis Goldberg

**B.A. in History and Urban Honors** 2011–2014

Portland State University (PSU), Portland, OR

*Magna Cum Laude*

Honors Thesis: “Palestinian Women of the Intifada: The Women’s Committees, 1987-1988”

### TEACHING & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Information Controls Senior Research Fellow, OTF Winter 2024–Early Winter 2025

LSJ 321: Human Rights Law in Culture and Practice, As Taught, UW Summer 2024

MELC 485: Digital Media: The Middle East & Central Asia, As Taught, UW Spring 2024

LSJ 321: Human Rights Law in Culture and Practice, TA, UW Spring 2023, Autumn 2023

JSIS 201: The Making of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, TA, UW Winter 2023

NEAR E 101: Gateway to the Near East, TA, UW Autumn 2022

Marlowe in Sheets Digital Project, IT Consultant, UW Summer 2022

Simpson Center Grant for HSTCMP 590, GSA, UW Summer 2021

HSTAFM 162: History of the Islamic World, Reader/Grader, UW Summer 2021

HSTAFM 162: History of the Islamic World, Reader/Grader, UW Spring 2021

JSIS 202: Cultural Interactions in an Interdependent World, TA, UW Spring 2019

HSTAFM 163: History of the Modern Middle East, TA, UW Winter 2019

JSIS 544: Reading Seminar on Middle East Studies, RA, UW Autumn 2018

Arabic Translator for the Department of History, GSA, UW Winter 2017–Spring 2017

GLP Fellow, Slade Gorton Policy Center, Seattle, WA Winter 2016–Spring 2016

### PUBLICATIONS

#### Refereed

**Journal Article:** “Thinking with bell hooks and Paulo Freire: A Syllabus for the Digital Middle East,” *Interdisciplinary Digital Engagement in Arts & Humanities*, 3(4), June 6, 2023.

DOI: 10.21428/f1f23564.1f310314.

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**Journal Article:** “The Digital Borderlands: (Counter)Discourse and Metadata Analysis of Iranian Video Games,” *Interdisciplinary Digital Engagement in Arts & Humanities*, 3(2), December 15, 2022. DOI: 10.21428/f1f23564.73008090.

**Journal Article:** “Digital Iran: Soft Power and Affect in Video Games,” *Interdisciplinary Digital Engagement in Arts & Humanities*, 2(1), July 28, 2021. DOI: 10.21428/f1f23564.3d7610e0.

**Book Review:** “Paulo Lemos Horta’s *Marvellous Thieves: Secret Authors of the Arabian Nights*,” *Review of Middle East Studies*, 53(2), December 2019. DOI: 10.1017/rms.2019.47.

**Journal Article:** “The British-American Imperial Agenda in Iraq: The Oil and Railway line from Kirkuk to Haifa, 1920-1932,” *PSU McNair Scholars Online Journal*, 9, 2015. DOI: 10.15760/mcnair.2015.30.

### Non-refereed

**Book Chapter:** “Digital Iran Tahdig: A Critical Digital Pedagogy Approach,” *Critical Digital Humanities Cookbook*, ACRL (Accepted).

**Case Analysis:** “Information Controls in Iranian Cyberspace: A Soft War Strategy,” *The Iranian Studies Unit Series: Case Analysis*, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, May 8, 2022. <https://bit.ly/3MPWPHe>.

## DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP

**Multiplatform Project:** “Digital Iran Reloaded: Anticolonial and Imperial Narratives of Iran in Video Games,” latest update September 5, 2023. Podcast: <https://bit.ly/3FyY0ceb>, <https://digitaliranproject.com>, [https://www.twitch.tv/digital\\_iran](https://www.twitch.tv/digital_iran), and [https://twitter.com/IranDH\\_project](https://twitter.com/IranDH_project).

**Omeka Project:** “The Digital Borderlands: Glocalizing Iranian Video Games,” latest update June 1, 2020. <http://iranianvideogames.com/cms/>.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS & LANGUAGES

### Digital Research Project Consulting & Mentorship

**Programs, Tools, and Platforms:** Omeka Classic, OmekaS, Neatline, Docker, WordPress, Canvas, Alma Library Management System, Scalar, Visual Code Studio, Excel, CSV, Atlas.Ti, NVivo, XMedia Recode, Open Broadcasting System, Streamlabs, Audacity, Twitch.TV

**Languages, Scripts, Subsets:** JavaScript (D3), CSS, JSON, HTML Basic

**Research Methods:** Participant-Observation, Textual and Discourse Analysis, Interviews, Virtual Ethnography, Web Scraping and Data Mining using Python, HAR, and R, Data Visualization

**Persian & Arabic:** Advanced reading, speaking, and writing.

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**French:** Intermediate reading, speaking, and writing.

### EXTERNAL FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Information Controls Fellow Stipend, OTF (\$84k)	2024-2025
Social Data Research/Dissertation Fellowship, Social Science Research Council	2020-2021
Google Conference Scholarship Program	2021
Diversity & Inclusion in Esports Category (Finalist), #TheGameHERSAwards	2020
Digital Humanities Summer Institute Tuition Scholarship, DHSI, UVic ( <i>Declined</i> )	2020
Digital Humanities Summer Institute Tuition Scholarship, DHSI, UVic	2019

### INTERNAL FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Digital Humanities Summer Fellowship for Digital Projects, Simpson Center, UW	2023
NELC Top Off Scholarship, NELC, UW	2021-2022
Roshan Institute Fellowship for Excellence in Persian Studies, NELC, UW	2021-2022
Roshan Institute Fellowship for Excellence in Persian Studies, NELC, UW	2020-2021
Maurice and Lois Schwartz Fellowship, NELC, UW	2020-2021
Digital Humanities Summer Fellowship for Digital Projects, Simpson Center, UW	2020
Roshan Institute Fellowship for Excellence in Persian Studies, UW	2019-2020
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Persian (Summer), MEC, UW	2019
Carolee Danz Endowed Scholarship (Spring), UW Libraries	2019
Easa A. Bateh Fellowship (Summer), NELC, UW	2018
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Turkish (Summer), UW ( <i>Declined</i> )	2018
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Arabic, MEC, UW	2017-2018
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Arabic (Summer), UW ( <i>Declined</i> )	2017
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Arabic, MEC, UW	2016-2017
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Arabic (Summer), MEC, UW	2016
The Henry M. Jackson Top Scholar Fellowship, UW	2015-2016
Ronald E. McNair Research Fellowship Program, PSU	2013-2014
The Diversity Enrichment Scholarship, DMSS, PSU	2013-2014
President's Equal Access Scholarship, DMSS, PSU	2013-2014

### GRANTS & HONORARIUMS

Dissertation Writing Intensive Honorarium, OWRC, UW	2024
Information Controls Travel & Technology Per Diem, OTF (\$10k)	2024-2025
Gateway to the Middle East Lecture Honorarium, MELC, UW	2023
Cinema & Media Studies Lecture Honorarium, CMS, UW	2023
MELC Travel Grant, MELC, UW	2022
Near & Middle Eastern Studies Professionalization Award, NMES, UW	2022
Graduate Student Conference Presentation Award, UW	2022
Physicians For Human Rights Lecture Honorarium, Seattle, WA	2022
Gateway to the Near East Lecture Honorarium, MELC, UW	2022
Digital Forays Lightning Talks Honorarium, Kevorkian Center, NYU ( <i>Canceled</i> )	2021
Graduate Research Cluster Grant, Simpson Center, UW	2019-2020

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Digital Humanities Summer Institute Travel Grant, Simpson Center, UW	2019
Digital Humanities Summer Institute Travel Grant, Simpson Center, UW	2018
Ronald E. McNair Travel Grant, PSU	2014

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

**Panel Chair:** “Panel A: Retro Games,” *Session 7*, Keystone DH 2024, Erie, PA, May 21, 2024.

**Panel Chair:** “Panel: Games/Simulations about the Human Body,” *Session 5*, Keystone DH 2024, Erie, PA, May 21, 2024.

**Panel Chair:** “Panel: Building Games,” *Session 1*, Keystone DH 2024, Erie, PA, May 20, 2024.

**Lecture:** “Government Information Controls: Iranian Responses to Internet Censorship during Protest,” *MELC 101: Gateway to the Middle East*, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, November 6, 2023.

**Lecture:** “From Old to New Media: Soft War in the Iranian Game Industry,” *MELC 101: Gateway to the Middle East*, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, November 6, 2023.

**Lecture:** “The Video Gaming Industry in Iran,” *CMS 274 Summer B: Intro to Video Games (Media Critical Concepts)*, Cinema & Media Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, August 15, 2023.

**Lecture:** “Internet and Political Controls of Cyberspace in Iran,” *Near East 101: Gateway to the Near East*, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, November 9, 2022.

**Lecture:** “Video Games and the Iranian Gaming Industry,” *Near East 101: Gateway to the Near East*, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, November 9, 2022.

**Panel Chair:** “Panel 3: Bodily Knowledge Part 1,” *Dismantling the Body: Possibilities and Limitations in Art Making*, The Graduate Students of Art History, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, May 19, 2022. <https://bit.ly/3LDjqWr>.

**Moderator:** “In Conversation with Mana Kia: Persianate Selves,” *Persian Studies Workshop Series Spring 2021* sponsored by the Department of Near Eastern languages and Civilization and Persian and Iranian Studies Program, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, March 9, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GeuM1aETb3U>.

**Workshop Lead** with Arna Elezovic and Ayda Apa Pomesnikov, “Introduction to Interdisciplinary Ethnographies: Defining Ethnography in Anthropology and Science and Technology Studies,” *Interdisciplinary Ethnographies Workshop Series* sponsored by the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, December 2, 2019.

## CONFERENCES & SYMPOSIA

**Panel Presenter:** “Digital Iran Reloaded: Iranian Gamers vs the Islamic Republic of Iran,” *Session 1: Digital Communities Panel*, Keystone DH 2024, Erie, PA, May 20, 2024. <https://bit.ly/4bvD6cs>.

**Panel Presenter:** “Politics of the Everyday: Iranian Women Gamers and Cyberspace Censorship,” *Rethinking Women’s Empowerment Panel*, Middle East Studies Association Conference, December 1, 2022.

**Public Panel Presenter:** *Human Rights Huddle: Protest, Censorship, and Repression in Iran*, Physicians for Human Rights, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, November 15, 2022.

**Public Panel Presenter:** *Iran: Gender & Rights After State Violence*, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures and The Middle East Center, University of Washington-Bothell, October 8, 2022.

**Conference Presenter:** “Digital Iran Reloaded: Preserving Video Games and Ethnographic Data,” *Open Digital Collaborative Project Preservation in the Humanities Conference*, University of Victoria, BC, CA, June 7, 2022.

**Panel Presenter:** “EverybodyHacks Interdisciplinary Panel,” *GeoDat*, Geography Data Science, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, April 8, 2022. <https://bit.ly/3yS6pVI>.

**Invited TALK:** “Iranian Gamers on Social Media, Twitch, and World of Warcraft,” *Near East 101: Gateway to NELC Digital*, Near Eastern Languages & Civilization, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, November 3, 2021.

**Panel Presenter:** “Affective Entanglements: Iranian and Iranian American Gamers on Social Media and World of Warcraft,” “*STS Alter-ed*” Panel, Good Relations: Practices and Methods in Unequal and Uncertain Worlds, Society for Social Studies of Science Annual Meeting, October 8, 2021.

**Conference Presenter:** “Critical Digital Pedagogy and Mentorship: A Syllabus for the Digital Middle East,” *Open/Social/Digital Humanities Pedagogy, Training, and Mentorship*, University of Victoria, BC, CA, June 17, 2021.

**Conference Presenter:** “*Digital Iran* Project Management,” *Project Management in the Humanities Virtual Conference*, University of Victoria, BC, CA, June 9, 2021.

**Conference Presenter:** “Digital Iran: Narratives of (De)colonization in Video Games,” *Digital Humanities Summer Institute Virtual Conference & Colloquium*, University of Victoria, BC, CA, June 7, 2021.

**Showcase Presenter:** “Digital Iran: Narratives of (De)colonization in Video Games,” *Hacking the Academy: Simpson Center Digital Humanities Summer Fellows Showcase*, University of Washington, October 13, 2020.

**Invited TALK:** “Digital Iran: Anticolonial and Imperial Narratives of Iran in Video Games,” *Society of Scholars Virtual Meeting*, Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, October 7, 2020.

**Panel Presenter:** “The Affective Entanglement: Iranian Women Gamers Online,” *Ethnographies of the Everyday: Negotiating Iranian Subjectivities through Gender Performance, Music, and Video Games Panel*, Middle East Studies Association Virtual Conference, October 6, 2020.

**Workshop Co-presenter** with Victoria Rahbar: “Reading and Playing Right to Left: Preserving Japanese Comics and Iranian Video Games,” *The Right to Left Virtual Workshop*, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, CA, June 7, 2020.

**Conference Presenter:** “The Digital Borderlands: Glocalizing Iranian Video Games,” *Digital Humanities Summer Institute Virtual Conference & Colloquium*, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, CA, June 2, 2020.

**Capstone Presenter:** “Reimagining History through Digital Cultural Artifacts: A Teaching Method,” *NMES Capstone* sponsored by the Walter M. Chapin Simpson Center, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, May 4, 2018.

**Conference Presenter:** “The Imperial Frontier: Tribal Dynamics and Oil in Qajar Persia, 1901-1910,” *Graduate Student Conference in Middle East Studies*, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, May 19, 2017.

**Symposium Presenter:** “The British-American Agenda in Iraq: From Kirkuk to Haifa, 1920-1932,” *Ronald E. McNair Symposium*, Ronald E. McNair Program, Portland, OR, August 13, 2014.

**Symposium Presenter:** “Palestinian Women of the Intifada: The Women’s Committees, 1987-1988,” *Honors Undergraduate Symposium*, The University Honors College, Portland State University, Portland, OR, May 29, 2014.

**Conference Presenter:** “The Imperial Agenda and Oil Concessions Concerning the Iraqi Railways,” *Middle East Conference*, The Middle East Studies Center, Portland State University, Portland, OR, May 23, 2014.

**Symposium Presenter:** “Oil Concessions Concerning the Iraqi Railways: From Baghdad to Kirkuk, 1920-1929,” *The Undergraduate Research Symposium*, UW, Seattle, WA, May 15, 2014.

## **MEDIA & IMPACT**

**Interview:** “Video Games, Politics, and Foreign Policy,” Melinda Cohoon interviewed by Yogasai Gazula, *Humanist Huskies*, March 10, 2022. <https://bit.ly/3nU50ru>.

**Interview:** “Student profile: Melinda Cohoon – Exploring the Political Worlds of Online Videogaming, between Iranian Gamers and the 2020 US Election,” Melinda Cohoon interviewed by Will Bamber, Near and Middle East Studies, October 30, 2020. <https://bit.ly/3RW0sfe>.

**Interview:** “The Right to Play Games,” Melinda Cohoon interviewed by Kate Stringer, The Graduate School, October 28, 2020.

**Newsletter:** “Near and Middle Eastern Studies Students Present a Virtual Panel at the 2020 Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting,” *Middle East Center Newsletter*, Fall 2020. <https://bit.ly/3aoDdfL>.

**Blog post** co-authored with Victoria Rahbar: “Reading and Playing Right to Left: Preserving Japanese Comics and Iranian Video Games,” *News & Events*, Near Eastern Languages & Civilization, June 29, 2020. <https://bit.ly/3PjcCQ0>.

**Newsletter:** “An Interview with Journalist and Iran Specialist Barbara Slavin,” Interviewed by Melinda Cohoon, *Middle East Center Newsletter*, Fall 2019. <https://bit.ly/3GsCFks>.

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Humanities, Arts, Science and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory  
Islamicate Digital Humanities Network  
Middle East Studies Association  
Society for Social Studies of Science