

Critical Game Studies

Hartwick College

ENGL 352-B

TuTh 10:10 am–12:10 pm, Yager 413

(4 credits; WD, WGS, GEO 2, 4, 6)

Spring 2024

<https://engl352spring2024.wordpress.com/>

Password for desktop computers: games

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Required Books

Galloway, Alexander R. *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture*. U of Minnesota P, 2006.
MLA Handbook. 9th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2021.

Required Video Games and Software¹

Battlenet app, <https://us.shop.battle.net/en-us>.

Braid. Number None, 2009. *Steam* app.

Dys4ia. Anna Anthropy, 9 Mar. 2012, <https://freegames.org/dys4ia/>.

Gone Home. Fullbright Company, 2013. *Steam* app.

Hair Nah. Momo Pixel, 2017, <https://hairnah.com/>.

Mountain. David O'Reilly, 2014. *Steam* app.

Passage. Version 3.0, Jason Rohrer, 13 Dec. 2007, <http://hcsoftware.sourceforge.net/passage/>.

Portal 2. Valve, 2011. *Steam* app.

Return of the Obra Dinn. 3909, 2018. *Steam* app.

The Stanley Parable: Ultra Deluxe. Crows Crows Crows, 2022. *Steam* app.

Steam app, <https://store.steampowered.com/>.

World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King Classic. 2004–10. Version 3.4.1, Blizzard, 2019–24.

Battlenet app. <https://wowclassic.blizzard.com/en-us/>.²

¹ All games with “*Steam* app” next to them can be downloaded and installed using the Steam platform/application. Please install Steam on your laptop at <https://store.steampowered.com/>. With the exception of *World of Warcraft* (see below), I would urge you to install and make sure the games run on your laptop as early as possible in the semester. That said, Steam does have frequent sales, so students who are generally organized may want to wait until later in the semester to purchase some games in case they go on sale. As I did before the semester started, I will try to alert students when Steam is having a sale on any of the required games for this course.

² Do not install the standard, current version of *World of Warcraft* (2004–22) on your machine, as it is very big and you won't be able to play with the class if you do. Please make sure to install *World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King Classic* and **do not install the game until March 11**. For more information on how to install the game, see the handout “Instructions for Installing *World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King Classic*” available on D2L and to be handed out in class on Thursday, March 7.

Further Required Software

Microsoft Office. Students are required to use Microsoft Word for this class. Go to <https://portal.office.com>, log in using your Hartwick credentials (email and password), and install the full version of MS Office.³ The program is free for Hartwick students.

Accessing the Games in this Class

For this class, I recommend that if students have access to a laptop capable of running all the games assigned in this course, that they use that laptop—either a PC or Mac—and be prepared to bring it to nearly every class. If a student does not have their own computer, all the games have been installed on the desktops in Yager 413 and, once a student has logged in with the password *games*, those computers should be able to launch all the required software for the class using students' own Battlenet or Steam accounts. These desktops are available for student use whenever the library is open (which is until midnight most nights, and if the room is closed, talk to a librarian to open it). Please do not hesitate to contact me if you face any technical issues during the semester, and I will do my best to work with you to find a solution.

Recommended Materials

As we will be spending a lot of time playing video games in this course, and I am assuming that most of you will be playing these games on your own Mac or PC, I recommend purchasing both a mouse and a game controller. Either can be obtained relatively inexpensively. Having more than just a keyboard and touch pad will make your life easier this term.

I also recommend acquiring a folder dedicated exclusively to this course so that students can organize printouts of the readings. Students should also set aside roughly ten dollars for printing costs if they go beyond their allotted quota. Students who have any difficulty obtaining any of the required texts for this course should contact me as early as possible in the semester.

Prerequisites

The successful completion of ENGL 110 College Writing and ENGL 190 Introduction to Textual Analysis are strongly recommended.

Catalog Description

This course will introduce students to the field of critical game studies. Participants will play a variety of video games and learn how to critically engage these unique media objects. The course will also provide historical, cultural, social, political, and economic contexts for the study of video games. Course readings will familiarize students with theoretical and methodological debates in game studies and ask students to analyze games and gaming culture with regard to issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Prior completion of ENGL 190 Introduction to Textual Analysis is highly recommended.

Course Description

Over the past forty years, video games have become a dominant form of global cultural production. Individual titles now gross billions of dollars, smartphones have made casual gaming nearly ubiquitous, and the video game industry is now bigger than the global book, film, and

³ Note: Students with Chromebooks will be unable to install Microsoft Office, as Chromebooks do not allow the installation of such software.

music industries *combined*. Video games inform a variety of other arenas as well, including business, education, health, social media, and the military. And yet many still do not consider video games worthy of significant attention. The emergence of serious independent video games over the past twenty years, however, alongside a renaissance in the academic field of game studies have firmly established the video game as an important object of humanistic inquiry. This course will introduce students to the field of critical game studies. We will play a variety of games and learn how to critically engage these unique media objects. The course will also provide historical, cultural, social, political, and economic contexts for the study of video games and will explore a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches for critically playing and analyzing them. We will think about why we should study video games, read theoretical reflections on medium specificity and the nature of play, think about issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality in games and gaming culture, and explore the relationship between video games and the political and economic realities of the early twenty-first century. As video games become one of the more visible and important forms of cultural production, it has become essential to develop a gameric literacy and a critical vocabulary for understanding how and why they make meaning, how and why they are such a powerful force in the media landscape of contemporaneity.

Learning Outcomes

By semester's end, students in this course should be able to: 1) produce a persuasive interpretive argument grounded in the close analysis of a video game (GEO 2); 2) demonstrate familiarity with the history and terminology of game studies and its relationship to broader twentieth- and twenty-first-century conversations about technology (GEO 6); 3) situate games within a their cultural, political, social, and literary contexts (GEO 4); and 4) draw upon the work of others to support their analyses.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Texts—Students will be required to have read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts for each class meeting. This also entails that students bring the texts to class, whether the book or *printouts* of the PDFs from D2L. Additional readings for the course (see below) can be found under the “Readings” section of D2L and then under a folder corresponding to the date by which given texts should be read. Do not let the content of this course or common preconceptions about video games fool you (i.e., that we’re just going to be playing games . . .): this course asks students to read *quite* a bit and *very* carefully. Our meetings and discussions will depend upon the rigorous, intelligent, and frequent involvement of every participant of the class, and this involvement is not possible if students do not come to class prepared. All students must obtain the edition of the texts specified above. Unless individual arrangements are made with the instructor, electronic versions of the texts will not be permitted; students are required to *print out* all readings from D2L and bring those printouts to class. (I recommend downloading and printing all the readings out at the beginning of the semester so they’re easily accessible when you’re busier later in the semester.) Students should expect to read between 75 and 125 pages per week.

Video Games—Students will be required to have substantially played each of the assigned video games for each class meeting. Compared to many contemporary video games, most of the games in this course are relatively short and can be completed in under four hours (sometimes much

less, sometimes a bit more). As some of the games are difficult, and students' skills may vary, it is not expected that every student will finish every game. With that consideration, students are expected to play each game for (roughly) at least 2–3 hours before each scheduled class meeting (some, like *Mountain*, may require very little play time at all), with more time devoted to the games that students choose to write about. If a game is assigned for multiple weeks (e.g., *World of Warcraft*), students should expect to spend at least 4–6 hours each week with that game.

Quizzes—Students will often be given unannounced short quizzes on the assigned material. Students who have done the reading will, for the most part, find these quizzes quite manageable. Students who fail a quiz will lose two percentage points off their total final grade. (If you do the math, multiple failed quizzes could dramatically lower your grade.) Quizzes cannot be made up, though I will drop the lowest score. Unless otherwise informed, all quizzes are open book.

Papers—Students will be asked to write three short 2-page papers, two essays of 4–6 pages, and a final paper of 7–10 pages during the course of the semester. All papers should be proofread and polished. They should be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins, and should accord to MLA guidelines for citation and format.⁴ Students who do not follow directions or fail to meet the basic requirements of an assignment—e.g., not meeting the page requirement,⁵ failing to format a paper correctly, or failing to upload a paper to D2L—will automatically cost that student a *minimum* of 5% of their assignment grade (so B+ to B-, B to C+/B-, etc.). I will primarily assess papers on *the strength of their argument*, *the quality of their idea*, and *the rigor of their analysis*. Due dates for these papers are below. The assignments with rubrics will follow. All papers must be handed in as hard copies in class *and* submitted on D2L as .doc or .docx files. There will be a link under “Assignments” to electronically upload your papers.

Blog—Because some of the central questions of this course revolve around the relationship between technology and culture, and most of our texts and games are contemporary and digitally inflected, the class will be keeping a collective blog in order to put students' writing in conversation. Each student will write four graded blog posts and comment on other students' posts, which will count for ten percent of a student's grade. (Required blog posts that do not meet the requirements of a particular assignment [for example, not meeting the minimum word requirement], will also lose as least 5% of the assignment grade.) There will also be five percent of a student's grade that will be assessed holistically based on how much a student participates on the blog *beyond* the required four posts and eight required comments (that is, by making additional posts and comments). Additional posts and comments will not be accepted after the final class meeting. Students will receive an email from me through Wordpress.com inviting them to write for the blog in the first week of class. Students should be signed up and ready to participate by Friday, February 9, 2024 (and their participation grade will be negatively affected for each day beyond that that they are not signed up). See the “Blog Assignment” for more specific details. The blog can be found at: <https://engl352spring2024.wordpress.com/>.

⁴ I urge students to consult their *MLA Handbook* (2021) when formatting their works cited pages—a book required for this course—as EndNote, Microsoft Word, or other citation software is almost always incorrect. Students should also note that this syllabus correctly cites each course text in MLA format either above or below, including the games.

⁵ 4–6 pages means that the paper must be *at least 4 full pages* (i.e., not 3 ½ or 3 ¾ pages, etc.). Students will not be penalized for going over the page requirement (within reason).

Participation—As we will critically read texts, play games, and discuss each other’s work in this class, student participation is crucial to our work. Though I will occasionally lecture, the class is a collective inquiry into the subject matter and class time will primarily consist of discussions that privilege students’ thinking, reading, writing, and game playing. As such, the course requires the input of all its participants and your attendance is a necessity. *More than three absences will negatively affect your grade, in which case you may want to consider withdrawing from the course and taking it again under better circumstances. Students who are marked absent for more than six total classes will automatically fail the course.*

That said, I understand that it is possible that a student may miss significant class time due to illness, a positive COVID-19 test, or other unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, it is each individual student’s responsibility to communicate with me regarding any issues they might have attending class sessions or doing the work of the course. If students communicate with me about legitimate issues that may cause them to miss class time, I will do my best to work with them to make sure that they are given the opportunity to succeed.

Grading

Participation: 15%

Short Papers: 10%

Blog Posts: 10%

Blog Participation: 5%

Essay 1: 10%

Essay 2: 15%

Final Essay: 35%

Classroom Etiquette

To create a solid logistical foundation that will ensure a positive learning environment for each participant, students should adhere to the following guidelines for classroom etiquette. Failure to do so may result in being marked absent or in penalties applied to a student's participation grade.

Texts—Students who do not have their text in class will be marked absent (whether I draw attention to it or not). This includes having *printouts* of the PDFs from D2L.

Lateness—I give crucial information and reminders about the course at the beginning of class, so being late is not only disruptive but means that students may miss information that is important to their success. Students who are frequently more than five minutes late will be marked absent.

Notes—Students should take notes during class meetings and should have the materials to do so. During my twenty years of teaching in higher education, I have found that, unsurprisingly, students who take notes in class perform better than students who do not. (Taking notes is clear evidence of engagement in the class discussion and thus evidence of participation as well.)

Laptops, Phones, Tablets—As we will be playing games together *frequently*, students should have laptops in class every day. That said, unless we are actively playing a game *together*, anyone observed using their mobile phone or another digital device during class, including the computers in the classroom, whether I draw attention to it or not, will be marked absent for the day. (I will be sure to let you know when computer use is “okay,” indeed *required*.) That said, the use of a computer outside of gameplay may be permitted if individual arrangements are made with the instructor early in the term or if a student has received an academic accommodation.

Leaving Class—Ideally, students will not have to leave class, and we will have a break every day. But students should feel free to get up without my permission as long as they do so unobtrusively. If an individual student makes a habit of leaving, however, I will have a conversation with them about disrupting class. If they continue leaving after this conversation, they will be marked absent each time they leave regardless of circumstance. If a student has any issue that would cause them to need to get up frequently, please talk with me in the first weeks of class or at any time during the semester.

Headphones—Please make sure to remove your headphones or earbuds in class. Failure to do so will result in being marked absent.

Participation—Students should be prepared to participate throughout the class. I will frequently call on students even if they have not raised their hand. Please speak with me during the first week of class if this is an issue for you.

Technical Difficulties—As we will be using technology extensively, I expect that students will occasionally face technical difficulties that may make them unable to participate in class activities. To limit such issues, students should consult the calendar below and make sure to be prepared for each class. Because this is a large class, I may be unable to pause class or help a student with technical issues. I will also probably have technical difficulties of my own at some points, and so I encourage students' patience and understanding.

FlightPath

The Hartwick Flightpath is a student-centered program that is flexible and adaptable to support your pathway to graduation and to prepare you for what lies ahead. By the time you graduate from Hartwick, you will have a suite of skills and experiences that tie together the breadth of your Hartwick education and highlight your accomplishments. This course supports the development of student educational outcomes in the following way(s): it fulfills FlightPath General Education Outcomes 2, 4, and 6, counts as a 300-level Writing Designated course (WD), an elective for the Women's and Gender Studies Minor, is a possible elective in the English and Creative Writing Majors, and is a required course in the Game Development Major.

College COVID-19 Policy

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, circumstances may necessitate adjustments to instruction, such as shifts in mode of instruction (to remote or hybrid), classroom capacity limits, or indoor mask requirements. Updates will be provided on the College website (<https://www.hartwick.edu/about-us/covid-19-updates/>). Instructors will communicate with students about any specific adjustments that are being made to their courses, such as modality of instruction, expectations for participation, and any changes to assigned work; students should check their Hartwick email accounts frequently for information from their instructors.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. It will result in a zero for the assignment and a formal charge will be filed with the Office of Academic Affairs. Plagiarism could also result in more serious action, including a student failing the class and being suspended or expelled from the College. *Plagiarism includes: Lack of proper citations when quoting from someone else's work; representing someone else's work as your own; and knowingly allowing one's work to be submitted by someone else. Plagiarism also includes: Copy and pasting from online (or offline) sources without quotation or attribution; using online paraphrase tools (such as QuillBot) to change other people's words or your own and then submitting those tools' output as your own; and using generative artificial intelligence (AI such as ChatGPT) and submitting without attribution any portion of its output as your own, including any ideas or topics it may have generated.* In this class, students are prohibited from using generative AI in any way unless an assignment says otherwise, and any unattributed use of generative AI constitutes plagiarism and a violation of Hartwick's Academic Honesty Policy.⁶ Further, as different writing software such as Grammarly is increasingly incorporating AI—indeed, Grammarly advertises itself as an “AI writing partner”—any writing software other than Microsoft Word, Google Docs, dictionaries, thesauruses, or similar resources are prohibited, including Grammarly, paraphrase tools (such as QuillBot), and plagiarism checkers. Finally, as each assignment in this class is designed to build upon the previous one, culminating in two major assignments, if there is evidence that a student has plagiarized a short paper or a blog post—e.g., Short Paper 2 or Blog Post 3—in my formal charge detailing a student's violation of Hartwick's Academic Honesty Policy, I will recommend that that student not only receive a zero for that assignment but also for the larger assignment the short paper or blog post is building toward as an appropriate sanction—i.e., Essay 1, Essay 2, or your Final Paper. Violations of Hartwick's Academic Honesty Policy are not limited to plagiarism, so students should familiarize themselves with it at: <https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/academic-affairs/academic-policies/>.

Academic Adjustments and/or Modifications

Students must present me with an updated Academic Plan Letter for the Spring 2024 semester in order to be eligible for academic adjustments. Hartwick College is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If a student with a disability wishes to request academic adjustments, they should contact Lara Sanford, Director of AccessAbility Services, at sanfordl@hartwick.edu or AccessAbilityServices@hartwick.edu. AccessAbility Services is located on the fifth floor of Yager Library in the Center for Student Success. Any information regarding a student's disability will remain confidential. Requests for academic adjustments should be made as early as possible. Please reach out to me with any other concerns you might have about the course, including accessing course texts.

⁶ On attributing AI output in MLA style, see “Ask the MLA: How Do I Cite Generative AI in MLA Style?” *MLA Style Center*, 17 Mar. 2023, <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>. Which is also to say: even though students will not be using generative AI in this class, we will likely cover how to appropriately cite the use of ChatGPT or other AI tools in your writing later in the semester.

The Writing Center

Located in Clark Hall 230, the Writing Center offers free one-on-one writing support for any stage of writing, including brainstorming, outlining, drafting, and revising. The Writing Center offers personalized feedback on short assignments, essays, senior theses, resumes, graduate school applications, scholarship applications, and other documents. Students can request in-person or [Zoom](#) support by scheduling thirty-minute or one-hour appointments through [Navigate](#). Asynchronous email support is also available by emailing your assignment prompt, assignment, and any questions to WritingCenter@Hartwick.edu. In some cases, I may send you to the Writing Center for help on a particular assignment or issue.

E-mail Communication Policy

Each student is issued a college email address (username@hartwick.edu) upon admittance. This email address may be used by the college for official communication with students. I will also communicate with students via their hartwick.edu address. Students are expected to regularly read email sent to this account. Failure to read and react to communications from either the College or from me in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to communications sent to their Hartwick email address.

Health and Success

Success in this course depends heavily on your personal health and wellbeing. Recognize that stress is an expected part of the college experience, and it often can be compounded by unexpected setbacks or life changes outside the classroom. Your other instructors and I strongly encourage you to reframe challenges as an unavoidable pathway to success. Reflect on your role in taking care of yourself throughout the term, before the demands of exams and projects reach their peak. Please feel free to reach out to me about any difficulty you may be having that may impact your performance in this course as soon as it occurs and before it becomes unmanageable. In addition to your academic advisor, I strongly encourage you to contact the many other support services on campus that stand ready to assist you. Hartwick offers free counseling for students who are experiencing personal or emotional difficulties. The Counseling Center is located in the Perrella Health Center and offers psychological services and sexual assault services. Appointments can be made Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., by calling (607) 431-4420 or emailing counselingcenter@hartwick.edu.

Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Reporting

Hartwick College is committed to equal opportunity and providing a safe community free from all forms of sexual misconduct including sexual-/gender-based harassment, discrimination, dating or domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and sexual assault. If you wish to make an official report to the College or have questions about the College policy and procedures regarding sexual misconduct, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, Michael Arno, at titleix@hartwick.edu or (607) 431-4293. Online reporting and policy information is available at <http://www.hartwick.edu/titleix>. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact one of the following resources: Perrella Wellness Center, Health or Counseling: (607) 431-4120; or Opportunities for Otsego's Violence Intervention Program: (607) 432-4855. All other employees of the College are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator so that support and resources can be provided for all parties.

Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion, or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Calendar⁷

See *endnotes* below for any game with a note next to it: that means there might be specific steps to download the game or a website you must visit in order to play it. All course links are also available on the blog: <https://engl352spring2024.wordpress.com/>. Games without endnotes are available for download on Steam. Readings with notes are on D2L; readings without notes are in the required books for the course.

With the exception of World of Warcraft, any game it says “in class” after, please make sure to have your laptop in class that day with the game already installed so that we can play it together; we will begin the game that day and you are not expected to play it prior to class (in fact, I would ask that you don’t, so that we can all start together). If it doesn’t say “in class” next to a game, you are expected to already have played the game for at least 2–3 hours prior to each class we are covering it (so, for example, you should play Braid for at least 2–3 hours before class on 2.29 and then for at least another 2–3 hours before class on 3.5).

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTIONS

2.6 Syllabus
Introductions
Icebreakers

2.8 Johan Huizinga, “Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon”¹
*Passage*²
*Dys4ia*³
There’s a glitch in *Dys4ia*; finish it by watching it here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8x9hjGBY7c&ab_channel=Moniboni
*Hair Nah*⁴

WEEK 2: PLAY, GAMES, AND MEDIA SPECIFICITY

2.13 **Blog Post 1 Due**
Roger Caillois, “The Definition of Play” and “The Classification of Games”⁵
Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman, “Defining Games”⁶
Portal 2 (in class)

2.15 **Two Comments on Blog Due**
Marshall McLuhan, “The Medium Is the Message”⁷
Portal 2

WEEK 3: EVOLUTION OF VIDEO GAME CRITICISM: WHY STUDY VIDEO GAMES?

2.20 **Short Paper 1 Due**
Roger Ebert, “Why Did the Chicken Cross Genders?”⁸ and “Video Games Can Never Be Art”⁹
Portal 2 (two-player in-class play)

⁷ Please note that additional readings or handouts may be assigned when appropriate and that the schedule is subject to change. For ease with citation, bibliographic endnotes to the readings available on D2L (anything with an endnote rather than page numbers) have been provided below in MLA style.

- 2.22 Read excerpt from 8th ed. of the *MLA Handbook*¹⁰
Bradley J. Fest, “Formatting a Paper in MLA Style”¹¹
Mark J. P. Wolf and Bernard Perron, “Introduction” to *The Video Game Theory Reader*¹²
Patrick Jagoda, “Videogame Criticism and Games in the Twenty-First Century”¹³
Bring to class: *MLA Handbook*, 9th ed.
Workshop Short Paper 1

WEEK 4: APPROACHES TO VIDEO GAMES I: NARRATOLOGY V. LUDOLOGY

- 2.27 **Blog Post 2 Due**
Janet Murray, “From Game-Story to Cyberdrama”¹⁴
Markku Eskelinen, “The Gaming Situation”¹⁵
Braid (in class)

- 2.29 **Two Comments on Blog Due**
Jesper Juul, “Games Telling Stories?”¹⁶
Espen Aarseth, “Genre Trouble”¹⁷
Braid

Week 5: APPROACHES TO VIDEO GAMES II: PROCEDURALISM

- 3.5 **Short Paper 2 Due**
Ian Bogost, selections from *How to Do Things with Videogames*¹⁸ and “Can the Other
Come Out and Play”¹⁹
Braid

- 3.7 Ian Bogost, “Procedural Rhetoric”²⁰ and “The Abyss between the Human and the
Alpine”²¹
Mountain (let the game run for at least 15 mins.)
Bring to class: *MLA Handbook*, 9th ed.
Workshop Short Paper 2

WEEK 6: APPROACHES TO VIDEO GAMES III: ACTION

- 3.12 **Essay 1 Due**
*World of Warcraft*²² (in class; follow directions on “Instructions for Installing *World of
Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King Classic*” prior to class; **make sure to register
for a Battlenet account and start a World of Warcraft Classic subscription on
3.11**)
- 3.14 Alexander R. Galloway, *Gaming* (pp. 1–38)
World of Warcraft (in-class play)
- 3.19 No Class, Spring Break
3.21 No Class, Spring Break

WEEK 7: MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER GAMES I: SURVEILLANCE, DISCIPLINE,
CONTROL

- 3.26 Michel Foucault, “Panopticism”²³
Bring to class: *MLA Handbook*, 9th ed.
Workshop Essay 1
World of Warcraft
- 3.28 Michel Foucault, “Panopticism” (continued)
Gilles Deleuze, “Postscript on Control Societies”²⁴
World of Warcraft (in class; Battlegrounds: be at level 10–19 [don’t go over]; have your character in the library in Stormwind Keep by the beginning of class)

WEEK 8: MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER GAMES II: PROTOCOL

- 4.2 Alexander R. Galloway, selections from *Protocol*²⁵
World of Warcraft (in class; Dungeons: bet at level 15–29 [don’t go over]; make sure you have found the Flight Master in Westfall [Sentinel Hill]; have your character in Stormwind or, optimally, Sentinel Hill by the beginning of class)
- 4.4 Class Canceled

WEEK 9: MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER GAMES III: PLAYING LABOR, PLAYING IDENTITY

- 4.9 **Blog Post 3 Due**
Scott Rettberg, “Corporate Ideology in *World of Warcraft*” (*WoW Reader*, pp. 19–38)
Hilde G. Corneliusen, “*World of Warcraft* as a Playground for Feminism” (*WoW Reader*, pp. 63–86)
Jessica Langer, “The Familiar and the Foreign” (*WoW Reader*, pp. 87–108)
World of Warcraft
- 4.11 **Two Comments on Blog Due**
David Golumbia, “Games without Play”²⁶
Alexander R. Galloway, “We Are the Gold Farmers”²⁷
World of Warcraft (in class; Arena tournament: be at level 20–29 [don’t go over]; have your character in the library in Stormwind Keep by the beginning of class)
—**Make sure to cancel your *World of Warcraft* subscription by the end of today. To be eligible for extra credit opportunity, deposit all your gold into the guild bank by the end of today as well.**

WEEK 10: #GAMERGATE AND SERIOUS GAMES I: GENDER AND SEXUALITY

- 4.16 **Essay 2 Due**
Nick Wingfield, “Feminist Critics of Video Games Facing Threats in ‘GamerGate’ Campaign”²⁸
Jennifer Justice, “Stop Me If You’ve Heard This One . . .”²⁹
Anita Sarkeesian, “Damsel in Distress (Part 1)”³⁰ (watch in class)
Amanda Knox, “Anita Sarkeesian on Gamergate and Sexism”³¹ (watch in class;
CW: screenshots of violent, abusive, and misogynist language)
Gone Home (in class; **see endnote 32 for playing on class computers**³²)

- 4.18 Leigh Alexander, “‘Gamers’ Don’t Have to Be Your Audience. ‘Gamers’ Are Over”³³
Ian Williams, “Death to the Gamer”³⁴
Peter Frase, “Gamer’s Revanche”³⁵
Adrienne Massanari, “#Gamergate and The Fapping”³⁶
Gone Home

WEEK 11: SERIOUS GAMES II: GENDER AND SEXUALITY (continued)

- 4.23 **Blog Post 4 Due**
Edmund Chang, “Queergaming”³⁷
Return of the Obra Dinn (in class)
- 4.25 **Two Comments on Blog Due**
Adrienne Shaw, “From *Custer’s Revenge* and *Mario* to *Fable* and *Fallout*”³⁸
Return of the Obra Dinn

Required: Attend the Babcock Lecture⁸

**Robert T. Tally Jr., “Mapping and Monsters: Critical Theory in the Teratocene”
7:00 p.m., Eaton Lounge, Bresee Hall**

Optional: Robert T. Tally Jr., “Welcome to the Teratocene: Morbid Symptoms and the Present Conjuncture”³⁹

WEEK 12: SERIOUS GAMES III: WALKING SIMULATORS, CONTROL, AND COUNTERGAMING

- 4.30 **Suggestions for Open Play Due to Blog (optional)**
Alexander R. Galloway, *Gaming* (39–69)
The Stanley Parable (in class)
- 5.2 Alexander R. Galloway, *Gaming* (70–126)
The Stanley Parable
Class vote on what to play/look at on Tuesday, 5.7

WEEK 13: GAMIFICATION AND METAPROCEDURALISM

- 5.7 **Short Paper 3 Due**
In-Class Group Workshop of Short Paper 3
Open Play (class decides what to play/look at for 2nd half of class)
- 5.9 Patrick Jagoda, “Gamification and Other Forms of Play”⁴⁰
Bradley J. Fest, “Metaproceduralism”⁴¹ and “The Function of Videogame Criticism”⁴²

⁸ This required event will count like a quiz: full credit if you go and 2% off your grade if you don’t. (That said, like a quiz, I will also drop this assignment if it’s your lowest quiz score.) Students who ask a question at Tally’s lecture will get extra credit. Students who cannot make the reading and who still want credit for this assignment can read a chapter from Tally’s most recent book and from which the talk is derived. Such students should read “Welcome to the Teratocene: Morbid Symptoms and the Present Conjuncture”—mentioned above (as optional) and available on D2L under a folder for 4.25—and post at least a 150-word reflection on the chapter. I will make a post on the blog titled “Reflections on Robert T. Tally Jr.” on the morning of April 25 and students can then post their reflections in the comments to this post. For credit, post your comments by the beginning of class on Tuesday, April 30.

FINALS WEEK

5.15 Final Paper Due by 12:00 p.m.

Turn in hard copy of final paper to my mailbox on the 2nd floor of Clark Hall and upload to D2L as a .doc or .docx file

Endnotes

¹ Huizinga, Johan. "Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon." 1938. *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*, translated by Johan Huizinga and R. F. C. Hull, Beacon, 1955, pp. 1–27.

² *Passage* can be played in a browser at <http://passage.toolness.org/>. You can also download the game for free at <http://hcsoftware.sourceforge.net/passage/>.

³ *Dys4ia* can be played in a browser at <https://freegames.org/dys4ia/>. **NOTE:** Since the end of support for Adobe Flash, *Dys4ia* now glitches near the end of the game and cannot be advanced. Finish watching the game on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8x9hjGBY7c&ab_channel=Moniboni.

⁴ *Hair Nah* can be played in a browser at <https://hairnah.com/>.

⁵ Caillois, Roger. "The Definition of Games" and "The Classification of Games." 1961. *Man, Play, and Games*, translated by Meyer Barahs, U of Illinois P, 2001, pp. 3–10 and 11–36.

⁶ Salen, Katie, and Eric Zimmerman. "Defining Games." *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*, MIT Press, 2004, pp. 70–83.

⁷ McLuhan, Marshall. "The Medium Is the Message." 1964. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, critical ed., edited by Terrence Gordon, Gingko, 2003, pp. 17–36.

⁸ Ebert, Roger. "Why Did the Chicken Cross Genders?" *Movie Answer Man*, 27 Nov. 2005, <http://www.rogerebert.com/answer-man/why-did-the-chicken-cross-the-genders>.

⁹ Ebert, Roger. "Video Games Can Never Be Art." *Roger Ebert's Journal*, 6 Apr. 2010, <http://www.rogerebert.com/rogers-journal/video-games-can-never-be-art>.

¹⁰ *MLA Handbook*. 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016, pp. vii–20.

¹¹ Fest, Bradley J. "Formatting a Paper in MLA Style: Quoting Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde's Prose and Poetry." 22 Sept. 2021.

¹² Wolf, Mark J. P., and Bernard Perron. "Introduction." *The Video Game Theory Reader*, edited by Mark J. P. Wolf and Bernard Perron, Routledge, 2003, pp. 1–24.

¹³ Jagoda, Patrick. "Videogame Criticism and Games in the Twenty-First Century." *American Literary History*, vol. 29, no. 1, Spring 2017, pp. 205–18.

¹⁴ Murray, Janet. "From Game-Story to Cyberdrama." *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*, edited by Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrigan, MIT Press, 2004, pp. 1–11.

¹⁵ Eskelinen, Markku. "The Gaming Situation." *Game Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 2001, <https://www.gamestudies.org/0101/eskelinen/>.

¹⁶ Juul, Jesper. "Games Telling Stories? A Brief Note on Games and Narratives." *Game Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 2001, <http://www.gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/>.

¹⁷ Aarseth, Espen. "Genre Trouble: Narrativism and the Art of Simulation." *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*, edited by Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrigan, MIT Press, 2004, pp. 45–55.

¹⁸ Bogost, Ian. "Introduction: Media Microecology" and "Art." *How to Do Things with Videogames*, U of Minnesota P, 2011, pp. 1–8 and 9–17.

¹⁹ Bogost, Ian. "Can the Other Come Out and Play?" *How to Talk about Videogames*, U of Minnesota P, 2015, pp. 63–70.

²⁰ Bogost, Ian. "Procedural Rhetoric." *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*, MIT Press, 2007, pp. 1–64.

²¹ Bogost, Ian. "The Abyss between the Human and the Alpine." *How to Talk about Videogames*, U of Minnesota P, 2015, pp. 150–59.

²² *World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King Classic* is slightly complicated to install, so please be sure to follow the directions on the handout "Instructions for Installing *World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King Classic*" available on D2L and to be handed out in class on Thursday, March 7. Note: **INSTALL WORLD OF WARCRAFT ON MARCH 11.**

- ²³ Foucault, Michel. "Panopticism." 1975. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan, Vintage, 1995, pp. 195–228.
- ²⁴ Deleuze, Gilles. "Postscript on Control Societies." 1990. *Negotiations: 1972–1990*, translated by Martin Joughlin, Columbia UP, 1995, pp. 177–82.
- ²⁵ Galloway, Alexander R. "Introduction" and "Physical Media." *Protocol: How Control Exists after Decentralization*, MIT Press, 2004, pp. 2–27 and 28–53.
- ²⁶ Golumbia, David. "Games without Play." *New Literary History*, vol. 40, no. 1, Winter 2009, pp. 179–204.
- ²⁷ Galloway, Alexander R. "Postscript: We Are the Gold Farmers." *The Interface Effect*, Polity, 2012, pp. 120–43.
- ²⁸ Wingfield, Nick. "Feminist Critics of Video Games Facing Threats in 'GamerGate' Campaign." *New York Times*, 15 Oct. 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/16/technology/gamergate-women-video-game-threats-anita-sarkeesian.html>.
- ²⁹ Justice, Jennifer. "Stop Me If You've Heard This One." *NYMG*, 30 Aug. 2014, <http://www.samanthablackmon.net/notyourmamasgamer/?p=5619>.
- ³⁰ Sarkeesian, Anita. "Damsel in Distress (Part 1): Tropes vs Women." *Feminist Frequency*, 7 Mar. 2013, <https://feministfrequency.com/video/damsel-in-distress-part-1/>.
- ³¹ Knox, Amanda. "Anita Sarkeesian on Gamergate and Sexism | The Scarlet Letter Reports." *YouTube*, uploaded by Vice Life, 12 Dec. 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggyVXHU0_ms&ab_channel=VICELife.
- ³² *Gone Home* runs a little slowly on the in-class computers, so if you are planning on playing it on them, please follow these directions so that you can walk more quickly in the game:
- 1) At the launch screen, click "Options."
 - 2) Select "Control" and move the sensitivity all the way to the right. Then click "Back."
 - 3) Then select "Graphics."
 - 4) On graphics, select "Low" for "Graphics Quality." Also choose the lowest resolution and deselect "Full Screen" so that it runs in a window.
- Doing this will allow you to walk faster and progress through the game more quickly.
- ³³ Alexander, Leigh. "'Gamers Don't Have to Be Your Audience. 'Gamers' Are Over.'" *Gamasutra*, 28 Aug. 2014. *Archive.Today: Webpage Capture*, accessed 14 Dec. 2021, <https://archive.ph/11kTW>.
- ³⁴ Williams, Ian. "Death to the Gamer." *Jacobin*, 9 Sept. 2014, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/09/death-to-the-gamer/>.
- ³⁵ Frase, Peter. "Gamer's Revanche." *Peter Frase*, 3 Sept. 2014, <http://www.peterfrase.com/2014/09/gamers-revanche/>.
- ³⁶ Massanari, Adrienne. "#Gamergate and The Fappening: How Reddit's Algorithm, Governance, and Culture Support Toxic Technocultures." *New Media & Society*, OnlineFirst, 9 Oct. 2015, pp. 1–18.
- ³⁷ Chang, Edmund Y. "Queergaming." *Queer Game Studies*, ed. Bonne Ruberg and Adrienne Shaw, U of Minnesota P, 2017, pp. 15–23.
- ³⁸ Shaw, Adrienne. "From *Custer's Revenge* and *Mario* to *Fable* and *Fallout*: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Digital Games." *Gaming at the Edge: Sexuality and Gender at the Margins of Gamer Culture*, U of Minnesota P, 2014, 13–54.
- ³⁹ Tally, Robert T., Jr. "Welcome to the Teratocene: Morbid Symptoms at the Present Conjuncture." *The Fiction of Dread: Dystopia, Monstrosity, Apocalypse*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2024, pp. [TBD].
- ⁴⁰ Jagoda, Patrick. "Gamification and Other Forms of Play." *boundary 2*, vol. 40, no. 2, Summer 2013, pp. 113–44.
- ⁴¹ Fest, Bradley J. "Metaproceduralism: *The Stanley Parable* and the Legacies of Postmodern Metafiction." *Wide Screen* vol. 6, no. 1, 2016, pp. 1–23, <http://widescreenjournal.org/index.php/journal/article/view/105/145>.
- ⁴² Fest, Bradley J. "The Function of Videogame Criticism." *The b2o Review*, 3 Aug. 2016, <http://www.boundary2.org/2016/08/the-function-of-videogame-criticism/>.

Acknowledgments

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