

In terms of the effort that went into creating this, I suppose it came down to two main steps, with a certain level of recursive back-and-forth. First I went through different game studies and composition and rhetoric texts regarding game studies. I also went through some other game studies syllabi. Most of these focused on game studies in itself, but as time went on, I decided I wanted to focus more on the intersection of game studies and rhet-comp for two reasons. First of all, I may end up at a school with someone in computer science, English, etc., teaching a game studies class, so this would offer a more discipline-specific class. Second, I've been thinking a lot, as a scholar and teacher, about what became my overall course question: What can game studies and rhet-comp learn from each other? Still these other syllabi and the scholarship I read or revisited helped clarify my course design and readings.

My next major step was drawing from past course documents, mainly for the templates and the more general material, like the policies on the syllabus. I then set about revising these documents, largely remaking all of the assignment sheets and changing large swaths of the syllabus. I started with the course "Overview" on the syllabus, as this became a free write where I thought through the readings and course examples I had read. I came back to it and edited it a lot, but the general scope stayed the same after the initial draft or two. I then did a rough working-through of the calendar, thinking up the major timetables, themes, and readings. From here, I did a rough draft of each assignment sheet. As I did the assignment sheets, I would go back to the calendar, then back to the course Overview and other parts of the syllabus, edit them, and repeat. I found that as I wrote what I wanted students to do in the assignments, I needed to revisit the readings and class schedule to make sure it scaffolded, then make sure that all three parts reflected the course overview and goals.

I'm still trying to think through what those goals are, as I wasn't working from anything, but I was somewhat guided by the question noted above: What can game studies and rhet-comp learn from each other? In rhet-comp, gaming literacies and procedural rhetoric are, by far, the

most common conversations, with Gee's monograph on video games and language particularly central. So I started here, beginning with how players engage with games (via literacy as my lens), then moving to how games engage us (via procedural rhetoric and emotion, a recent turn in some game design conversations). For texts, I used the two dominant videogame literacy texts in the field, Gee and Selfe and Hawisher's *Gaming Lives in the 21st Century*, then Bogost's core piece on procedural rhetoric and a recent text about emotion and game design, which complicates Bogost's point of view. For the project, the student then had to use some of the ideas from class to analyze a game. Writing this now, I would actually like to revisit this assignment and assignment two and work in one of the paradigms from Molly Kestler's talk about having a box with some theories and particular games to pair them with.

For unit 2, I decided that I wanted to focus on the somewhat more political nature of gaming identity. At first, I wanted to try to do this as well as a genres approach, like "what genres circulate around games," which is still in there, but I foregrounded the consideration of gaming identities, as Kocurek's book does a nice job discussing both the history of video games in the U.S. and the rise of the male-dominated identity it has. Davis' article does a nice job discussing the role of "insider" knowledge in gaming, gamers as audiences, and how players can compose with games using the famous Leeroy Jenkins example. This project then has the student analyze a piece from the larger gaming ecology, focused around audience, identity, and culture. I wanted this to then allow students to look at what sort of composing goes on in gaming communities but to engage it with a critical and rhetorical lens in terms of audience and community. I still think I need to think more on how I would scaffold on this assignment.

Unit three became the most important unit, and my favorite, I think. I really wanted my class to design games, and to make the most of it, I wanted to make it a group project and to inform the work with a variety of perspectives and examples with a focus on a more iterative approach, drawn from Salen and Zimmerman, Mary Flanagan, and others. I then would want to

use the design space in the classroom for group meetings, one-on-one meetings, and small-scale play testing. Instead of peer reviews, we'd have a play-testing day. Instead of turning in an assignment, we'd have presentation days, in which we play the games and groups can talk a bit about them. Individuals would also do a reflection on the process to work at some meta-cognitive elements. My one tension with this unit was that I wanted to include broader considerations of game design, so I included readings into the design phase. I imagine online discussions would be more central here, as most of class space would be for game designs, but I wonder if this unit is too much work in too little time. Again, something I'd have to think through.

The last unit I bring into focus by starting with some grounding texts in game studies, Huizinga and Caillois, as well as Brian Sutton-Smith's discussion about the "rhetorics" of play. These are all focused around definitions. While most courses would likely start out with these readings, I wanted to end on them, spending the majority of the class looking at applied or specific elements of games, like how they engage rhetorically or how we design them, then end on these deeper questions as a sort of capstone. Likewise, the unit, though just a week, would focus on the guiding question of the course. This, too, would guide the final portfolio and reflection assignment.

I still do find some tensions, but ultimately, I feel like this course would be fun to teach and really gets at my goal. I might still waffle on some readings, re-consider the timetable, particularly Unit 2, and need to polish and adjust as I moved along. But overall, I am happy and really learned a lot about how I would craft this sort of course and what sort of elements in the scholarly conversation I value at the teaching level. I may even use some of these materials, particularly around Unit 3, for a future class.

WRT 426

Rhetorics of Play

Fall// 2019
Mon, Wed: 11:30 am–12:45
Bowne 108 and DSL (Bird 469)

Instructor: Brett Keegan
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Office: HB Crouse 005
Office Hours: Mon 1:30-3:30 and by
appointment.

WRT 308 Overview:

The goal for this class is to engage with the “writing,” rhetoric, and literacies that inform or are informed by games. As such, this is not a course on game studies or rhetoric alone, but on the intersection of these areas. Our guiding question will be: What does writing and rhetoric have to learn from games studies and what does game studies have to learn from writing and rhetoric? As we move to answer this question, we have four main units: writing with games, writing around games, writing games, and writing after games.

The first unit deals primarily with literacies, in particular what skills are needed with gaming and how games operate as rhetorical artifacts. Our primary guiding question will be how we engage rhetorically with games, and how games engage rhetorically with us. Looking at examples and key rhetorical concepts, you will then analyze a particular game.

The second deals with gaming culture more generally, or as its name suggests, the writing that often circulates around games and gaming culture and how this informs gaming identity. Here, through examples and readings, we will discuss gaming culture and the sort of writing that infuses this culture. For this project, you will analyze an artifact from this community and how it addresses identity.

The third unit will involve writing games. Here, we will continue our discussion of design and the game industry, and these readings will help supplement your project: the construction of a game. This will be a group project and could be a Twine game, an analogue game, or another type of electronic game, and we will involve the class as a whole in game testing.

And the last unit will look, more directly, at what games and game studies have to teach us how we communicate more generally, how our current sphere is shaped by games, and what we, as writers and rhetoricians, can add to the conversation. This will be a short, reflective unit, culminating in a portfolio assignment.

Coursework

Texts: There are no assigned textbooks for the class, and the readings will largely be electronic and PDF available through blackboard.

Assignments and Activities: You will encounter four main kinds of work: readings/videos, discussion questions, projects, blogging, and classroom activities. For readings/videos, I will assign readings to spur classroom activities or provide material for you to work with for projects. You will not be expected to “master” the readings, but should be prepared to engage with them. This may involve annotating them or taking notes.

I will assign online discussion questions to go regularly with the readings that will help build toward larger unit projects, help you engage with the readings, and help inform our class discussions. Each unit will have a project focused on the material of the unit. These will often be open ended with specific learning goals in mind. These will often go through multiple drafts and include related invention work.

You also be expected to blog each week, creating a total of 15 posts, each of 200+ words. As we discuss more in class, these blogs can be about anything but are expected to be ongoing, consistent writing that you maintain. You may also use this space to further think-through class ideas and readings.

Last, we will often do class activities. These may involve discussions, presentations, freewrites, etc. As with your writing, I expect engagement with these activities. This will particularly important with the design unit when we will come together a lot as a class in the form of a studio or design space.

Feedback: Some feedback will come from fellow students and some will come from me. Both tell you in various ways how your readers are responding to your writing and how you can reflect on your own work. Some will be written and some will be in person. We will actively discuss feedback, both how to give it and what to do with it.

If, at any point, you have questions regarding feedback, feel free to e-mail me or see me in person. Also, feel free to use your classmates at large for thoughts and suggestions, being mindful that each assignment is your original work and should reflect this fact both in the product and the process.

Grading: When it comes to grading I will not grade individual assignments but will issue a contract at the opening of the course, which we will agree on and edit to suit the course needs.

I do this for two reasons. First of all, most settings outside of school do not involve grading, yet tasks—including learning—still take place through feedback and interaction. Second, I want to encourage you to put in effort and creativity, getting tasks done, without worrying about individual grades. In some ways, this grading contract may seem more difficult, but in the end, I think it better reflects the messy, ongoing, and often unfinished way writing takes place instead of treating assignments like individual skill tests or products. **This process tends to reward consistent effort more than traditional grades and works best when you remain on top of your work.**

The default grade for this course is a B +/-. In other words, if you complete the three major assignments, engage with enough feedback, show up a sufficient amount, blog, and participate online and offline, you are guaranteed a B, with the + or – dependent on work. Exceeding these requirements will result in an A, while failing to meet them will result in a C or lower. Students who fail to reach the most basic requirements receive an F. For more detail, please consult the grading contract.

If you have further questions or concerns regarding the contract or your grade, let me know. I know that life happens, and since my ultimate concern is for you to succeed, I am flexible to your needs and circumstances. That said, though I may check in, particularly through conferences or with the class as a whole, you will likely have to seek me out in individual circumstances.

Course Policies

Attendance: If you must miss a class, you are responsible for work assigned. Please realize, however, that class time cannot be reconstructed or made up, and that your performance, your work, and your final course grade will be affected by absences. As we often discuss key concepts in class, missing it can slow class progress as a whole. **You have 5 absences.** Beyond these five, consult the grading contract.

In terms of lateness, there is no penalty but please avoid it. On some days, like workshops or open writing days, I will likely be more lenient, but particularly on discussion or activity days, being late can be disruptive. Once or twice or now and then is no problem, but consistent lateness is.

Student Writing: All texts written in this course are generally public. You may be asked to share them with a peer, the class, or with me during classroom activities or for homework. You may also be asked to consider signing a consent form requesting the use of your writing for professional development, teacher training, and classroom instruction within the Syracuse University Writing Program.

Writing for Class on Varied Media: Any composing you do for the course, regardless of the media, falls under the Code of Student Conduct. If, for instance, you are writing on Blackboard or on a website or blog you have created for the course, the guidelines concerning harassment, threats, academic dishonesty, etc., still apply.

Blackboard: Our course is loaded on blackboard. I will expect you to be able to locate, download, and link to a range of course materials with some regularity throughout the semester. I will also contact you regularly via the blackboard course listserv, so please check your .syr account at least once daily. The url for blackboard is: <http://blackboard.syr.edu>.

Special Needs and Situations If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Syracuse University and I are committed to your success and to supporting Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This means that in general no individual who is otherwise qualified shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, solely by reason of having a disability. Moreover, you are entitled to the utmost privacy. If issues arise that you wish to discuss, however, do not hesitate to bring them up however you are comfortable.

Computer and Technology Use: We will also be using email for contact outside class. Use email to contact me about your coursework, to set up an appointment to meet with me outside class, or to ask a question. I will try to return e-mail within 24 hours and likely will not answer emails after 9:00 p.m. or before 7:30 a.m.

Regarding the distracting capabilities of phones and computers, I allow you to use either system in class, but may ask you to put away said systems if they are a distraction to those around you. Moreover, if you must take a call, please leave the room. Avoid texting in class.

Academic Integrity: All writing submitted for this course is understood to be your original work. In cases where academic dishonesty is detected (the fraudulent submission of another's work, in whole or part, as your own), you may be subject to a failing grade for the project or the course, and in the worst case, to academic probation or expulsion. For a more detailed description of the guidelines for adhering to academic integrity in the College of Arts and Sciences, go to: <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>

Please, if you have an issue, contact me. I'd rather talk things through than pursue discipline after the fact.

Religious Observances: SU's religious observances policy, found at http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

Language: In this increasingly diverse time, many new words are coming into use and many old ones are falling out of favor. If any of my language or the language of your peers, like the used of gendered pronouns or ableist terms, proves offensive or inaccurate according to your experience, please let me know and we can work something out. Moreover, I am committed to providing a safe space for engagement, but my role as instructor also involves "instructing," which may create some challenging situations. However, if you feel this discomfort goes too far, let me know.

The Writing Center

Experienced writing consultants at the Writing Center (101 HB Crouse Hall, on the Quad) can teach you how to succeed on individual assignments and ultimately become a better writer. They're prepared to work one-on-one with you at *any* stage of your process and with *any* kind of writing you're attempting while attending SU. For more information on hours, location and services, please visit <http://wc.syr.edu>. This is a *free*

resource to all students and highly recommended for every assignment you work on in this class. During this summer session, the wiring center has hours 8 a.m. to 4:30, and you are encouraged to sign up for 30-minute sessions. You must register online to make an appointment.

Orange SUccess

To create a more coordinated and effective learning experience for you, I will be using Orange SUccess, a platform found through your mySlice page that links you, your current faculty, and your advisers. This platform includes attendance, alert flags, and kudos. With alert flags, if I have concerns with your attendance or work, I will likely use the system to “flag” this area to alert you and your advisers, so that way we can find some strategies or services to help. Kudos offer the opposite feedback, highlighting effective habits and quality work.

For this service to work, however, you must check your e-mail regularly. Also, as Orange SUccess is still a new addition to the classroom at Syracuse, some patience and experimentation may be required, and I appreciate your patience in advance

WRT 426 Calendar

Spring

Date	In-class Topics and Activities	Homework (due the following class)
Introductions		
Week 1 Tues	Introductions Course goals and syllabus Discuss grading contract	Read grading contract and come ready to discuss Read and annotate: Alex Ried “On Blogging” and examine blogs from Blackboard.
Thurs	Finish discussing contract and sign Set up class blogs Discuss project	Read Gee, <i>What Videogames Have to Teach Us About Literacy</i> , introduction and ch. 1 and answer discussion question If not finished, complete first blog post
Unit 1: Writing with Games		
Week 2 Tues	Discuss definitions of games Discuss literacies	Continue Gee with ch. 2-3 Answer discussion questions
Thurs	Continue discussing literacies	Read Selfe and Hawisher <i>Gaming Lives in the 21st Century</i> , “Introduction” and any two other chapters. Reflect on your own gaming literacy narrative or gaming literacy more generally, as you see it or fit in.
Week 3 Tues	Game Lab Introduce Lab Discuss Selfe and Hawisher Play	Read Bogost <i>Persuasive Games</i> , “Procedural Rhetoric” Play from “Serious Games” list. Answer discussion question analyzing game based on Bogost.
Thurs	Game Lab	Read Isbister <i>How Video Games Move Us</i> ,

	Discuss Bogost and “Serious Games” Play	“Introduction” and “A Series of Interesting Choices” Play an empathy game from the list Answer discussion question regarding the empathy game and emotion.
Week 4 Tues	Gaming Lab Discuss Isbister and empathy games Review unit Discuss unit project	Begin rough draft
Thurs	Peer reviews	Submit rough draft Friday
Week 5 Mon- Wed	Conferences	Submit final draft Friday
Unit 2: Writing about Games		
Thurs	Touch base Introduce next unit	Continue draft and submit Saturday Read Kocurek <i>Coin-Operated America</i> , “Introduction,” and Ch. 1
Week 6 Tues	Discuss Kocurek and rise of “gamer” identity	Read Kocurek, Ch. 6-7 Answer discussion question
Thurs	Discuss “gamer” today. Discuss Rhetorical analysis Work through examples	Rhetorically analyze an artifact from a gaming community, on Blackboard, and submit
Week 7 Tues	Present on examples	Read Andréa Davis “‘Leeroy Jenkins!’ What Computer Gamers Can Teach Us About Visual Arguments” Answer discussion question
Thurs	Discuss Davis and insider knowledge Revisit assignment, discuss ideas	Submit rough draft Friday
Week 8 Tues	Peer review	Continue on draft
Wed-Fri	Conferences	Turn in final draft Sunday
Unit 3: Writing Games		
Week 9 Tues	Begin Unit 3: Introduce unit and project Discuss game design	Read Salen and Zimmerman <i>Rules of Play: Design Fundamentals</i> , Ch. 1-2 Answer discussion question on design
Thurs	Game Lab Discuss iterative design Play	Read Salen and Zimmerman, Ch. 3-6 Answer Discussion question on play and game

	Discuss	mechanics
Week 10 Tues	We will not meet as a class. Instead watch Vegetarian Zombie's Twine videos and play Twine games from list, from Blackboard.	Read Mary Flannigan <i>Critical Play</i> , "Designing for Critical Play" and Kocurek's "Twine and Empathy Games" Answer discussion question on these alternative or additional approaches to iterative design
Thurs	Meet in Computer Lab Twine workshop and rapid game design	Read background on "New Games" and Bernard DeKoven's "Changing the Game" Answer discussion questions on rules v. player agency
Week 11 Tues	Meet (some sort of gym or outside) Play and discuss "new games" Create teams for project	Read Jennifer deWinter, <i>Shigeru Miyamoto</i> , "The Father of Modern Videogames" Answer discussion question on design philosophies
Thurs	Game Lab Design meeting 1	Read Bogost and Montfort, <i>Racing the Beam: The Atari Video Computer System</i> , "Stella" and "Yar's Revenge" Answer discussion question on the constraints and affordances of the "platforms"
Week 12 Tues	Game lab Design meeting 2	Finalize rough draft for testing
Thurs	Game Lab Play testing	Revise rough draft Read Anna Anthropy <i>Rise of the Videogame Zinesters</i> Answer discussion question on indie development.
Week 13 Tues	Game Lab Design meeting 3	Finalize final draft and write reflection
Thurs	Presentations	
Week 14 Tues	Presentations	
Thurs	Presentations/Discuss Design/Gap day	Read Huizinga <i>Homo Ludus</i> , Caillois <i>Man, Play, and Games</i> , and Brian Sutton-Smith <i>Ambiguities of Play</i> excerpts Answer discussion question on a rhetorical definition of games
Unit 4: Writing after Games		
Week 15 Tues	Discuss "What can rhetoric and writing bring to game studies?" Introduce project	Begin Project
Thurs	Touch base on project, peer reviews	Finish final project TBA

Grading Contract

WRT 426

Spring

Brett Keegan

The following document outlines policies for your final grade. As noted by the syllabus, **the default grade for the class is a B+/-**, with A's being achieved for exceptional performance and grades below B coming from a failure to meet class requirements.

By signing this document you agree to whatever conditions I set as the instructor of record and that we set as a class together. We may alter this as a class in the initial stages of the course and amend it as the course goes on, depending on the course.

As noted in the syllabus, life happens and I am willing to be flexible. With that in mind, I can make allowances, but in order to create a fair classroom for all involved, such exceptions will need to be rare and directed by this contract, my discretion as the instructor, and University policies.

This contract should free you up for more creativity and sustained effort by emphasizing your continued and varied investment. This is to better capture the messy process of writing, the gradual growth of learning, and the ongoing effort that informs these acts.

For a B -/+ you must complete the following, considered the fundamentals of the course:

- All four major projects completed according to their requirements.
- Weekly blog posts (15 total) 200+ words each
- Participation in in-class and online discussions and blog engagement (30 total posts/comments)
- Satisfying the attendance policy (5 or fewer absences)

Regarding **participation**, we mean the following:

- Contributing to class discussion through thoughtful, relevant comments
- In class and online, students and instructor should be good listeners, "listening to understand," not merely to respond. Students and instructor should also avoid monopolizing or interrupting conversations.
- Online responses should be at least 2 sentences, if not more, of constructive criticism, thinking, or related conversation.
- Check class-related e-mails from instructor and peers and ask questions of any course documents, policies, or goals.
- Listen to directions from both the instructor and course materials.

For an A, you must meet all of the requirements for a B and do the following:

- Introduce readings and/or lead a class discussion with a brief presentation or planned activity

- Or, consult with me to create an additional independent project that must be **completed before unit 4**.

To get grades less than a B, you must fail to meet the minimum course requirements at varying degrees:

Grades	Projects	Blog	Participation	Attendance
C +/-	4	12	25	7
D +/-	3	7	15	7

When achieving these grades or an F, you may fail in any one of the above categories. For example, if you participate with 25+ comments online but complete 12 blog posts, you still receive a C. Likewise, if you complete all four projects but only 6 blog posts, you also receive a D. The same goes for the F: If you fail to meet the D requirements in any category without a reasonable excuse, you will receive an F for the course.

I, as the instructor, can amend this document through the input of the class, but I reserve the right to work through rare exceptions with my own discretion in order to maintain students' right to individual privacy. But this should be a rare, last resort practice.

As one final note, I will try to reference this contract so you do not forget it, but **it is ultimately your job as a student to know what you need to do to get the grade that you want**. With that in mind, you may want to consult this document early and often until you get a solid sense for your overall plan. You may also contact me with any questions.

If you have read the above and feel that the class alterations and amendments are reasonably fair—even if they may not be ideal or “easy”—please sign the line below, agreeing to the policies outlined in this contract.

Name

Date

WRT 426: Unit 1 Assignment:
Artifact Analysis



This unit, we've discussed different gaming literacies and games as rhetorical artifacts, so for your project, you should pick a particular game and analyze what sort of literacies are needed to play it effectively and how it interacts with you, the player.

Project Description

This project could take a variety of forms depending on your goal or comfort. It could take the form of a more traditional analytic piece, the form of a thoughtful walkthrough video, or the form of a guide. Any form is fine, as long as you address the central question: How do players interact with this game, in terms of the literacies we've discussed in class, and/or how does this game interact with the player, in terms of procedural rhetoric, emotion, or other elements?

In terms of a model, I would imagine around **1,000-1,200 words worth of effort**, an inclusion of 5+ sources—likely readings from class, texts from the recommended folder, or other related documents regarding video games or the game that you pick. As noted, this may take a few forms, but it should involve citations, active engagement with sources, and a genuine analysis of your artifact.

Questions to Consider

Feel free to consider the following questions. You do not need to answer all of them, nor are you limited to them as long as you meet the general design of the assignment:

1. What is the point of the game? The goal?
2. How do you play? What literacies or skills are required?
3. Following Gee, how does the game, as a larger system, work?
4. What are effective strategies to engage with the game? Why might this be?
5. Does the game have a particular argument or purpose? What methods is it using to make it? Text? Visuals? Procedural rhetoric? Why might it use these methods?
6. What cultural biases or general assumptions does it exhibit or model? Why is this significant?
7. Following Isbister, how does this game engage with you emotionally? Why might it do this?

8. Would this be appealing to a particular audience or type of player?

What I'm Looking For:

	Positive	Negative
Assignment Goals	Actively uses the questions and assignment description. Stays on task.	Strays away from the assignment focus.
Descriptive	Uses specific and engaging examples from the artifact and/or describes the artifact clearly as a whole and any relevant context	Engages with or describes artifact with unclear, vague language.
Analysis	Does analysis and not just description: Looks for engaging patterns and uses them to form larger conclusions.	Merely describes or only does surface-level exploration or analysis.
Terms/class readings	Attempts to use relevant terms or concepts from class readings or related sources	Does not use concepts or grossly misuses them, showing a lack of care.
Sources	Effectively incorporates 5+ sources through quotes, summaries, and/or paraphrases. Cites them.	Does not use sources or does so in a shallow, “fly-by” fashion without any meaningful engagement.
Organization	The assignment forms a largely cohesive whole with a clear structure and focused paragraphs.	Lacks cohesion, scattered paragraphs, a lack of structure or throughline.
Creativity	Uses engaging examples, experiments with language and voice, makes the most of the medium.	Uses obvious examples in unoriginal ways or uses 5-paragraph theme when other structures may serve better.
Grammar and Style	Relatively free of sentence-level or document errors.	Shows obvious lack of proofreading.

[Document image: “Toy Joy Bomberman”(2005), via Mike and Creative Commons]

WRT 426: Unit 2 Assignment: Community Artifact



This unit we focused on gaming communities and gaming identities, particularly the rise of the “gamer” identity and how that is enacted in various texts and locations, particularly online forums or comment threads.

Project Description

For this assignment, I want you to pick an artifact or collection of artifacts and examine how they are enacting, drawing from, or contributing to a sort of identity. I also want you to consider why this may be significant. For example, is it making certain assumptions? Drawing on certain cultural tropes? Directing itself toward a certain audience? Displaying insider knowledge or expert skills? Artifacts may include YouTube videos, blog posts and articles from gaming websites or review sites, forum conversations, advertisements, collections of memes, or other relevant examples.

The goal is to rhetorically dissect the example(s) to create a cohesive and engaging conclusion. The project should use concrete examples to create analysis-driven claims and address why this analysis or conclusion may matter.

You will write about this in the form of an extended **blog post or group of blog posts of about 1,000-1,200 words.**

Questions

To help you accomplish this analysis, you may want to consider the following questions. Again, you are not limited to these questions nor do you have to answer all of them:

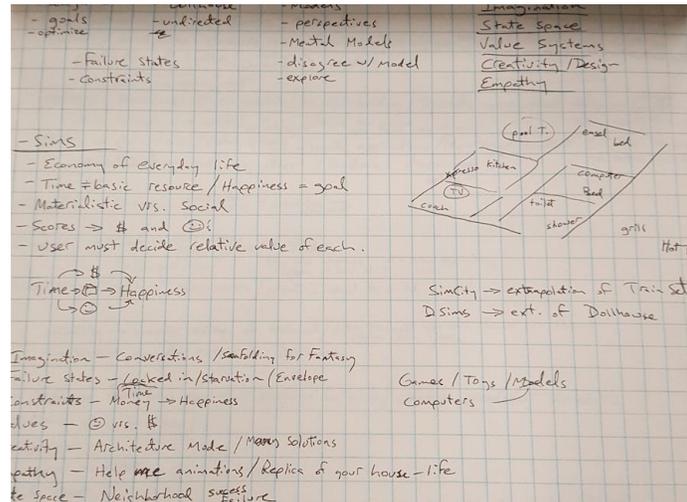
1. Who is this artifact or set of artifacts for? How do you know? Why does this matter?
2. What values are implied or argued for?
3. Do any particular images, phrases, or motifs seem to repeat?
4. Does this artifact connect with similar examples? Do you see any links with popular culture?
5. Is any “insider” knowledge expressed or expected in the audience?
6. What is the purpose of this artifact? What is it trying to accomplish?
7. From Kocurek, do you see any nostalgia or appeals to “technomascularity”?
8. What skills or literacies are needed to produce this artifact?

What I’m Looking For

	Positive	Negative
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Assignment goals	Actively uses the questions and assignment description.	Strays away from the assignment focus.
Use of research	Shows an engagement with primary or secondary research in a way that advances the analysis. Shows reasonable consideration in the choice of the artifact(s).	Does not employ texts or primary research. Artifact(s) seems random.
Descriptions	Clearly describes the artifact—how it looks, how people use it, what it does, etc.—using vivid language and examples.	Does not give a clear picture of the space and uses unclear, vague language or examples.
Analysis	Does analysis and not just description: Looks for engaging patterns and uses them to form larger conclusions. These conclusions focus on the rhetorical elements of the artifact—and not just a “close reading,” for example.	Merely describes the space, engages in surface-level analysis, or has a scattered, unfocused analysis.
Grammar and Style	Relatively free of sentence-level or design errors.	Shows obvious lack of proofreading.

WRT 426 Unit 3 Project: Game Design



This unit, we build a game after (and while) learning about different game design elements: fundamentals about what a game is, strategies of iterative design, the roles of material constraints, and the role of design philosophies and market pressure. As in most design circumstances, this is a team project.

Project Description and Requirements

This assignment has two main parts: (1) a game, which you will present to the class and design as a team, and (2) an individual reflection on the design process that you will turn in on the day you present.

The game can either be electronic or analogue. Analogue games may be built from various craft materials, modified from other game boards, or (as in the case of New Games) come from a variety of general materials with a variety of uses. And electronic game can also be built with anything, though we will study Twine and Twine games to offer a potential tool. Throughout the process, I'll be checking with you to make sure that the game is enough, but it should be a sizable product as this is the main project of the semester. We will also have time in class to design the game, but you may need to work outside of the class, with workflow management being key.

Reflection: This project requires you to reflect on your process directly as part of the assignment. **This will be a separate typed document that you turn in via a paper copy, at approximately 2-3 pages**, though it may be longer. It should focus on the following questions:

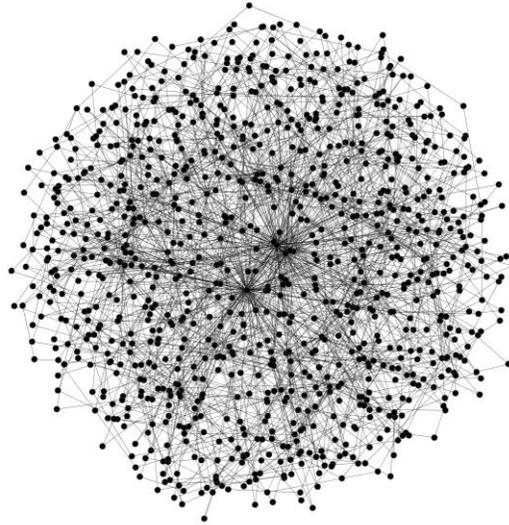
- a. How did you divide the labor? Why this particular strategy? What was productive or unproductive about it?
- b. Did your materials or platform have any particular constraints or affordances that ultimately affected the end product?
- c. Did you, anyone in the group, or the whole group have any design philosophies?
- d. What was the goal of you game? An argument? A certain type of fun? A feeling?
- e. Who, beyond others in the class, may enjoy playing this game? What audiences would you envision playing this? What about the game gives you this idea?
- f. What strategies did you use to reach the final product? What worked especially well? What would you change?
- g. How did you make use of in-class time and out-of-class time?

- h. How did the play testing impact your final product?
- i.

What I'm Looking For

	Positive	Negative
Length/Effort	The project exhibits the required effort, which we will discuss at an ongoing basis. But should provide a reasonable amount of depth and engagement over a decent play session and shows a polished final product.	Project seems thrown together last-minute or does not otherwise exhibit the appropriate level of effort.
Purpose and Cohesion	The game has a clear focus or purpose and its different components work together toward this purpose. Displays elegant design.	Lacks a clear purpose and/or does not work toward this purpose in a cohesive or effective way.
Usability	Should be fairly usable and intuitive to use. Rules and procedures are easy to follow, even for first-time users.	Is too complex or materially inaccessible for users. Rules and procedures are difficult to follow.
Sensitivity to Medium	Tries to make the most of the materials or tools at hand, showing sensitivity to the material elements of game design.	Ignores the potential of a medium.
Reflection	Reflection answers the questions above in a precise way and explains the project and the thinking behind it.	Reflection is incomplete, lacks sufficient engagement or detail and does not help explain the project.
Style and delivery	Project is cleanly executed with few errors based on the medium. (For example, few grammar mistakes in Twine games, clear images, nice materials, etc.)	Shows lack of care for the presentation of the project.

WRT 426 Unit 4 Project: Portfolio and Reflection



This unit we will review the semester's writing as a whole, producing a portfolio that collects and reflects on the writing you've done this full semester and use this particular project to ultimately reflect on what writing and rhetoric can draw from or teach regarding game studies.

Project Description and Requirements

This project will not involve much new writing, but will instead engage with past texts that you have created or engaged with this semester. In all, you will create a single document, either in a word processor, your blog, Prezi, or some other tool that collects a variety of pieces and organizes those pieces through a reflective apparatus. It has two parts:

1. **Collect a series of writing:** Collect writing from this past semester that has had a relevant to the unit question: **What can writing and rhetoric draw from game studies, and what can writing and rhetoric teach game studies?** Most of this writing could be yours—including your blog posts, discussion questions, unit projects, invention work, writing (or work) from other classes, creative work you do on your own, important or illustrative social media posts. This writing may be in-progress or completed, polished or rough. You may also add other's writing, like potential peer comments, course materials, readings, or quotes that you encountered. Last, it can also include the documenting of workspaces (particularly unit 3), screen captures, etc., that we conducted during the semester. The "writing" that you include may be alphabetic, visual, digital (through hyperlinks), and any modality that you can include. They could also be texts that did well or could have been better. **The key here is focusing on the unit question, and this section should be about 12-15 pages, though it may go over.**
2. **Reflection:** You will also organize this piece of writing by providing both a reflective cover letter and reflective annotations of your writing. These annotations could be Microsoft or Google Docs comments, footnotes, small reflections paired with texts, or some other means to reflect on individual texts or parts of texts. **The cover letter should be about 2-3 pages and will introduce the pieces, clarify what your answer is to the unit 4 question, discuss how the work you have done this semester (and beyond) lead to that conclusion, and if you see any future questions or potentials for you or these topics**

more generally. The annotations should be specific observations, thoughts, comments, or reflections on your pieces that connect to this larger reflection.

I recommend doing the collecting and annotating first, with some revising, re-collecting, re-reflecting as you move forward. But you are free to go in any order.

What I'm Looking For

	Positive	Negative
Length/Effort	The project meets the required page length (14) and includes its constituent parts.	Project seems thrown together last-minute or does not otherwise exhibit the appropriate level of effort.
Selection of pieces	Includes pieces that show a variety of situations, helping inform a holistic and meaningful portfolio, that help answer the unit question.	Pieces feel randomly selected or designed simply to cover page requirements.
Cover letter	Shows engagement with the reflection question, a clear framing of motifs, and a description of the pieces.	Merely names pieces and doesn't articulate larger themes or contradictions.
Annotations	Comprehensive and meaningful, engaging with the assignment goals. Picks up on specific examples from the pieces.	Rushed, scattered, or incomplete. Don't move toward the assignment goals.
Grammar and Style	Project is cleanly executed with few errors	Shows lack of care for the presentation of the project.

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