

## MSCH-399 Think.Play: Intro to Critical Game Studies

[Course Information | Meets Twice Weekly]

[Course Limit: 30 students]

Instructor: Iris Bull  
Office: TBD  
Meetings: By appointment

### Course Description

This course is designed to facilitate **the development and production of portfolio projects** that work to critically elaborate upon the human significance of games and gaming in contemporary society and everyday life. **Lectures and course materials** help to situate broad theoretical frameworks for participating in contemporary discourses on games and gaming, while **student assignments** encourage students to delve more specifically into topics and areas of concern unique to their interests. In this large conceptual scope for the class, there will be opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary and/or multimodal work. Although the course does not prepare students in technical skills to express their work on any specific platform, **students are encouraged to explore new trade skills** in the development of their portfolio projects. To that end, the guiding ethos for this class is characteristic of a **critical DIY approach to multimedia production**. While writing is considered a foundational in part for sharing ideas, this critical DIY pedagogy may help facilitate a student's experimentation with different web-based platforms, audio/visual media, and material-based resources.

Class meets twice a week—first to think, then to play. **'Think'** days are a mixture of lecture and discussion, while **'Play'** days are devoted to playing games with or among each other. Some games will be provided on Play days, but students will also be encouraged to bring in games from their own collection to share. 'Games' in this context are not restricted in any sense; some days might include alternative reality games (ARGs), text-based adventures, first-person shooters, or tabletop board games—the range of genres and media will vary.

### Grade & Assignments

Attendance	10%	Mandatory
Participation	10%	Reflects Submissions to Canvas
Reflective Essay #1	5%	2-3 Page Essay
Reflective Essay #2	10%	2-3 Page Essay
Midterm Project	25%	Essay (or) Research Paper (or) Product
Draft #1 Final Project	5%	TBD
Draft #2 Final Project	10%	TBD
Final Project	25%	Essay (or) Research Paper (or) Product

- Attendance Policy:* Attendance is mandatory for both portions of the class. Each student is allowed to exercise 2 absences (either 'excused' or 'unexcused') without a deduction to their final grade; any absences beyond this allotment will factor into a student's grade as flat deductions in the following manner:  
3<sup>rd</sup> absence = 2% deduction  
4<sup>th</sup> absence = 5% deduction  
5<sup>th</sup>+ absence = 10% deduction
- Participation:* Participation is a function of regular contributions to class discussion, which is facilitated by regular submissions to our Canvas site *before* class on Think days. Each student should contribute 2 questions to the discussion thread for the week **and** 3-4 sentences that justify or rationalize those questions.
- Sample: In Anna Anthropy's discussion of independent game publishing, she talks about how anyone can (and probably should) participate in making games. She makes the point that certain stories are underrepresented in mainstream gaming, and that self-publishing in a community space can help diversity social perspectives of different lives and experiences. I don't really identify with Anthropy, but I can understand why representation should be an equitable experience for other people, so what can I do to help 'diversify' games if I don't recognize myself as a particularly 'diverse' person?*
- \*Wild Card\** Constant, consistent participation is a marathon of work that warrants special recognition. Students who consistently complete participation assignments on Canvas **before** their due date will earn a **Wild Card**. The Wild Card can be used at the end of the term for a modest grade 'bump' of up to 3% on their final grade.
- Reflective Essay #1:* Identify 2 readings from class and put them in conversation:  
1) Identify a key question, problem, or issue for both authors/papers.  
2) Summarize the key ideas for both authors/papers related to this question/problem/issue.  
3) Take a stand in the perceived debate between these two authors/papers and justify your reasoning.  
2-3 pages, 1.15 single-spaced, 12 pt. Times font, 1 inch margins  
**Due Week 9**  
*Pro tip:* Use this essay as a way of exploring ideas related to your midterm project.
- Reflective Essay #2:* Identify 2 readings read for class and put them in conversation:

- 1) Identify a key question, problem, or issue for both authors/papers.
  - 2) Summarize the key ideas for both authors/papers related to this question/problem/issue.
  - 3) Take a stand in the perceived debate between these two authors/papers and justify your reasoning.
- 2-3 pages, 1.15 single-spaced, 12 pt. Times font, 1 inch margins

#### **Due Week 15**

*Pro tip:* Use this essay as a way of exploring ideas related to your final project.

#### *Midterm Project*

Students have 3 options to choose from.

#### **Due Week 8**

#### **The Reviewer Track**

- Using principles from Fernández-Vara's, *Introduction to Game Analysis*, write a 1000 word review essay of a game of your choosing. Discuss aspects of mechanical design and narrative depth, and provide the reader with some insight into how different aspects of the game either work in concert or contrast with each other. The review can be of an older game, but the analysis must be original. If you are reviewing a game that has been reviewed online by someone else in the past, you should cite and engage with at least 1 other author on some aspect of the game.
- Your essay should be accompanied by a minimum of 6 unique screenshots or images of the game.
- The essay should be submitted as a pdf with images embedded in the text.

#### **The Researcher Track**

- Identify an author or artist whose work can be used to better understand some concept or idea that has social, cultural, or political significance in the contemporary moment. It would be helpful to identify work that highlights an ongoing public debate of some kind. (*Example: Kim Kardashian and her games*)
- Identify some of the key themes and ideas that characterize the concept or idea, citing where you think some of the dominant discourse around these ideas happens. (*Example of themes: Kids as consumers and free-to-play games, representations of femininity and*

*empowerment—Example of sources: blogs on Kotaku related to the Kim Kardashian games, essays we read in class related to gender, representation, and fandom)*

- Identify **at least 2 scholarly articles** that help you articulate an argument about the significance of the work done by the author/artist you've chosen. These articles might come from class, or you might find them in conducting research on your own time.
- Take a stand in a perceived debate about the work you've chosen to study, supporting your argument with at least 2 scholarly sources.
- Articulate at least one weakness or bias in your analysis that could undermine your findings and explain how your analysis tries to account for that potential weakness.

### **The (Re)designer Track**

- Inspired by some textual or playful experience in the class, design and produce a game or interactive art piece. Accompany this project with a 700 word reflective essay on your design choices and muses, and prepare to formally present your project to the class.
- The reflective essay should describe a perceived problem or curiosity that the deliverable works to address or bring our attention to.
- The reflective essay should include at least one citation to an article or game experienced in our class setting, or it may include a summary of an inspirational in-class discussion/conversation (that may have occurred formally or informally).
- This project should be entirely original and uniquely reflect some engagement with the course material. All sources of inspiration should be formally cited in the review essay. Any appropriation of someone else's work must be formally discussed in the essay, with critical attention paid to the ways in which the appropriation is constitutive of *fair use* or otherwise authorized by the original producer. Please see the appendix on plagiarism for further clarification on this matter.

*Draft #1 Final Project* Each student must submit a project proposal with the instructor to confirm a rubric for the final project. The assignment is pass/fail. **Due Week 9**

- Draft #2 Final Project* Each student must submit evidence of drafted materials for their final project. The assignment is pass/fail. **Due Week 12**
- Final Project* Rubrics for the final project will mirror options available for the midterm. However, students will negotiate their own changes/modifications to the assignment following their own project proposal. **Due Week 15/Finals Week**

## Group Projects

Students may wish to collaborate on a project for the midterm or final assignment. In general, groups of 2 are acceptable; however, the instructor must approve of groups in advance of the project due date. In order to earn approval, each group must present two project documents at the onset of their collaboration.

- The first document is a **project proposal** that summarizes both the key themes and ideas that guide the collaboration, and the specific goals and deadlines that structure the project.
- The second document is a **contract** that delegates the various tasks and responsibilities between the group members. This contract should be incredibly specific and detail-oriented. The instructor may require the addition of delegated tasks if it seems the contract is not sufficiently detailed.
- Because these documents are incredibly context-specific in their formulation, it is encouraged that they be drafted with consultation from the instructor.

## Grading Rubric

A+	97.0	A	93.0	A-	90.0
B+	87.0	B	83.0	B-	80.0
C+	77.0	C	73.0	C-	70.0
D+	67.0	D	63.0	D-	60.0

*\*Students should note here that a Wild Card could be used to handedly bump a 'B-' to a 'B' but that a bump from 'B' to 'B+' requires more than a 3% increase in their grade total.*

[The Indiana University Registrar determines the grading scale.](#)

## Plagiarism

"Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work, including the work of other students, as one's own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered 'common knowledge' may differ from course to course.

- a. A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment.

- b. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge an indebtedness whenever:
1. Directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;
  2. Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories;
  3. Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written;
  4. Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or
  5. Offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment."

- Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct,  
[Part II, Student Responsibilities, Academic Misconduct](#)

- [Fair Use FAQ](#)
- [IU Fair Use Checklist](#)

[The IU Libraries' Copyright Program](#) provides useful information and assistance on copyright & licensing to IU-Bloomington faculty, researchers, students, and staff. General help is available by email at: [fairuse@indiana.edu](mailto:fairuse@indiana.edu).

Learn about [the Creative Commons project](#), and play around with [the Creative Commons Search Database](#) to discover work you can freely share, use, and remix with attribution.



Cam Evans, 2010 'Kirby'

## **Accessibility & Accommodations**

### *IU Religious Observances:*

Students should use the appropriate [form](#) to request a religious accommodation within the first two weeks of the course. Forms are provided by [Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty & Academic Affairs](#). The IU Religious Observances policy [is outlined here](#).

### *ADA Accommodations:*

Students with documentation from the [Office of Disability Services for Students](#) should share that information with this instructor within the first two weeks of the course. Students harboring a sense of awareness about their needs but without formal documentation should also consult with the instructor within the first two weeks of the course.

## Email

Email is the best way of contacting the instructor, but students should expect responses to occasionally require 24 to 48 hrs. Emailing during ‘normal business hours’—8am-5pm, Monday-Friday—is the best practice to honor.

## On The Exam Known as ‘Life’

- **Practice wellness.**  
You’re a student, but you’re a human first. I don’t expect acts of stoic perseverance for the work you’ll complete for this class, so, if at any point you’re feeling on edge about your work, your place, your time—please reach and speak to someone. My office hours aren’t only for hashing about homework assignments, but there are also [other people on campus](#) who you can turn to when you need help.
- **Practice self-expression: fill a sketchbook by the end of the term.**  
Writing regularly—no matter how painful the experience—bears enormously valuable fruit. Sketch storyboards or collage concepts—express your ideas in another form that you can more easily discuss with others. Demonstrate the value of your ideas by working to keep track of them because yes—they are valuable!
- **DIY Doesn’t Mean ‘Do It Alone’**  
Both when you’re trying something new, and when you’re trying to perfect something you’ve been doing for a long time, it helps to seek out feedback. If you don’t know the friendly folks at the [Writing and Tutorial Services \(WTS\)](#) center, you should make the time to visit sometime early in the semester.  
Locations and hours:

<i>Wells Library Learning Commons</i> Mon–Thurs 10am–8pm Fri 10am–5pm	<i>Neal Marshall Black Culture Center</i> Sundays 5pm–8pm Wed’s 6pm–8pm	<i>La Casa, Latino Cultural Center</i> Tuesdays 6pm–8pm Thursdays 6pm–8pm	<i>Academic Support Centers (ASCs)</i> (Briscoe   Forest   Teter) Sun–Thurs 7–11pm
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## Term Schedule

- **Warning:** The work for this course is intensive and some may require more time and attention than you’re used to giving. Many of the texts were chosen to highlight a variety of sources and authors who could guide your research and production practices in the class. Most of these assignments are intended to challenge you, but it is not my expectation that there is anything to ‘master’ in this class. If you’re having trouble at any point with reviewing the assigned readings in a timely manner, please contact me for a meeting. **If there are any books, articles, songs, videos, games, podcasts, art pieces, or local events you feel should be considered for class discussion, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss them.**

## **Reception**

Week 1: Rhetoric, Analysis, & Representation

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~82 pages

- Fernández-Vara, C. (2015). "Chapter 1: The Whys and Wherefores of Game Analysis." *Introduction to Game Analysis* (pp. 1-22). Routledge: New York.
- Flanagan, M. (2009). "Chapter 1: Introduction to Critical Play." *Critical Play: Radical Game Design* (pp. 1-15). MIT Press.
- Shaw, A. (2014). "From *Custer's Revenge* and *Mario* to *Fable* and *Fallout*: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Digital Games." (Excerpt) *Gaming at the Edge: Sexuality and Gender at the Margins of Gamer Culture* (pp. 18-42). University of Minnesota Press.
- Bogost, I. (2008). The Rhetoric of Video Games. In Katie Salen (Ed.) *The Ecology of Games: Connecting Youth, Games, and Learning* (pp. 117–140). MIT Press.

Week 2: Culture, Localization, & Multiculturalism

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~93 pages

- Morrison, T. (1992). "One: Black Matters." *Playing in the Dark* (pp. 3-28). First Vintage Books Edition.
- Jackson, G. (2015). "We are not colonists." *Offworld*.  
<http://boingboing.net/2015/03/20/we-are-not-colonists-2.html> (~3 pgs.)
- Cross, K. (2015). "Opinion: Cultural Influence Does Not Preclude Diversity." *Gamasutra*.  
[http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/245754/Opinion\\_Cultural\\_influence\\_does\\_not\\_preclude\\_diversity.php](http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/245754/Opinion_Cultural_influence_does_not_preclude_diversity.php) (~4 pgs.)
- Blackmon, S., and Karabinus, A. (2015). *Invisibility Blues 1.1: When Race is on the Menu: Choice, Change, and Character Creation [Video]*. [Transcript]. *Not your mama's gamer*. [http://www.nymgamer.com/?page\\_id=11620](http://www.nymgamer.com/?page_id=11620) (~9 pgs.)
- Anhut, A. (2014). "Press X to make sandwich – A complete guide to gender design in games." *How to not suck at game design*.  
<http://howtonotsuckatgamedesign.com/2014/05/press-x-make-sandwich-complete-guide-gender-design-games/> (~16 pgs.)
- *Optional*: Moss, R. (2012). "Why Game Accessibility Matters." *Polygon*.  
<http://www.polygon.com/features/2014/8/6/5886035/disabled-gamers-accessibility> (~17 pgs.)
- *Optional*: Ibrahim, H. "What it's like to always play the bad guy: On the portrayal of Arabs in online shooters." In Daniel Goldberg and Linus Larsson (Eds). *The State of Play*. pp. 75-83.
- *Optional*: Bull, I. (2012). "gender and Minecraft: console-ing passions 2014." *feminist games*. <https://feministgames.wordpress.com/2014/04/13/gender-and-minecraft-console-ing-passions-2014/> (~11 pgs.)



- Jenkins, H. (2005). Games, the new lively art. *Handbook of computer game studies*, 175-189. <http://web.mit.edu/21fms/People/henry3/GamesNewLively.html>
- Balsamo, A. (2011). "Introduction: Taking Culture Seriously in the Age of Innovation." *Designing Culture: The Technological Imagination at Work*. Duke University Press (pp. 1-16).
- Kopas, M. (2015). "Introduction." In Merrit Kopas (Ed.) *Videogames for Humans: Twine Authors in Conversation* (pp. 5-21).
- Polansky, L. (2015). "Mangia by Nina Freeman: Played by Lana Polansky." In Merrit Kopas (Ed.) *Videogames for Humans: Twine Authors in Conversation* (pp. 273-316).
- Rami Ismail, Farah Khalaf, Imad Khan, Romana & Khan Ramzan. (2016). "The Current State of Muslim Representation in Video Games." [\[Video\]](#) GDC 2016. (duration: 70 minutes).
- *Optional*: Alexandra, H. and Walker, A. (2016). "License to Kill: Talking The Division with Heather Alexandra." [\[Podcast\]](#) Giantbomb.

**Week 4: A Brief Intermission—We will not meet collectively for the week. Use this time to review the essays we've read and work on your first reflective essay.**

## ***Production***

- Toyama, K. "Chapter 2: The Law of Amplification." *Geek Heresy: Rescuing Social Change from the Cult of Technology*. (ebook pp. 38-62).
- O'Donnell, C. (2014). "A Tutorial Level" & "Teasing Our Underlying Systems and Structures" *Developer's Dilemma: The Secret World of Videogame Creators*. MIT Press. (pp. 3-70). **\*Skim the Tutorial Level\***
- ea\_spouse [Hoffman, E.]. (2004) "EA: The Human Story." *Livejournal Blog*. (~3 pgs.) <http://ea-spouse.livejournal.com/274.html>
- Evan Narcisse, Austin Walker, Shawn Alexander Allen, TJ Thomas, and Catt Small. (2015). "Video Games' Blackness Problem." *Kotaku*. <http://kotaku.com/video-games-blackness-problem-1686694082> (~10 pgs.)
- *Optional*: Legault, M.J., and Weststar, J. (2013). "Are Game Developers Standing Up for Their Rights?" *Gamasutra*. (4 pgs.) [http://gamasutra.com/view/feature/184504/are\\_game\\_developers\\_standing\\_up..php?page=1](http://gamasutra.com/view/feature/184504/are_game_developers_standing_up..php?page=1)

- Anthropy, A. (2012). "Chapter One, The Problem with Videogames" and "Chapter 6, Making the Games" *Rise of the Videogame Zinesters: How Freaks, Normals, Amateurs,*

*Artists, Dreamers, Dropouts, Queers, Housewives, and People Like You Are Taking Back An Art Form.* (pp. 1-22, 117-142).

- Rami Ismail, Tsitsi Chiumya, Elena Lobova, Sithe Ncube, Sun Park, Tasneem Salim, Laia Bee. (2016). "1ReasonToBe Panel." *GDC 2016*.  
<http://www.gdcvault.com/play/1023582/> (duration: 1 hr.)
- Kareem, S. (2015). "The Games That Are Too Underground to Be Indie." *Motherboard*. <http://motherboard.vice.com/read/the-games-that-are-too-underground-to-be-indie> (~3 pgs.)
- Thomas, T.J. (2015). "my IndieCade East 2015 talk (text): 'creating alternative game & art scenes.'" *TronMaximum.net*. <http://tronmaximum.net/2015/02/my-indiecade-east-2015-talk-text-creating-alternative-game-art-scenes/> (~4 pgs.)
- Polansky, L. (2015). "New Problems." *Sufficiently Human*.  
<http://sufficientlyhuman.com/archives/798> (~6 pgs.)
- @inurashii. (2015). "What does #altgames mean?" [\[Storify\]](#) (1 pg.)
- @videodante. (2015). "Lana Polansky On Altgames." [\[Storify\]](#) (1 pg.)
- Sheffield, B. (2016). "How to Almost Bankrupt Your Game Company." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC 2016*. (duration: 30 min)
  - *Optional follow-up to Sheffield's talk (warning: may result in whiplash):* Palm, T. "Games Accelerators for the Arts, Not for Monetization." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC 2016*. (duration: 30 min)

### Choose 1:

- *Optional:* Ellison, C. (2016). "Embed with Shawn Beck." *Embed with Games: A Year on the Couch with Game Developers*. Birlinn Ltd. [\[Accompanying Playlist\]](#) (pgs. TBD)
- *Optional:* Birke, A. (2015). "Automate, Streamline, Win! Content Creation for Small Teams." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC Europe*. (duration: 1 hour)
- *Optional:* Korppoo, K. (2015). "Cities: Skylines, A Case Study." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC Europe*. (duration: 1 hour)
- *Optional:* Roget, W. (2016). "AAA Virtual Orchestration on an Indie Budget." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC 2016*. (duration: 1 hour)

Week 7: Human Resources

| 150 pages & 30 min

- Taylor, T.L. (2012). "Chapter 4: Growing an Industry." *Raising the Stakes: E-Sports and the Professionalization of Computer Gaming*. MIT Press. (pp. 135-180).
  - **Follow-up:** Yang, A. (2016). "Why 'Shards of War' Started eSports in Beta." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC 2016*. (duration: 30 minutes).
- Consalvo, M. and Begy, J. (2015). "Introduction, A Different Kind of World," "Chapter 2, Those Were the Days: Interacting with Beta Players," "Chapter 3, Shifting Platforms and Troubled Ground: *Faunasphere* and Facebook," and "Chapter 4, The End of the World." *Players and Their Pets: Gaming Communities from Beta to Sunset*. University of Minnesota Press. (pp. 1-18, 61-94).
- Huntemann, N. (2013). "Likeness Licensing Litigation: Student Athletes and the Future of Sports Videogames" In M. Consalvo, K. Mitgutsch, and A. Stein (Eds.) *Sports Videogames* (pp. 175-194).

- *Optional*: Kocurek, C. (2015). "Two, Gaming's Gold Medalists: Twin Galaxies and the Rush to Competitive Gaming" *Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade* (pp. 37-66). University of Minnesota Press.

**Week 8: A Brief Intermission—We will not meet collectively for the week. Use this time to review the essays we've read and work on your midterm project.**

## **Socio-historical Context**

Week 9: Accessibility | ~86 pages

- Ellcessor, E. (2016). "Chapter 5, The Net Experience: Intersectional Identities and Cultural Accessibility." *Restricted Access: Media, Disability, and the Politics of Participation*. NYUPress. (pp. 157-186).
- Shaw, A. (2014). "A Future Free of Dickwolves." *Gaming at the Edge: Sexuality and Gender at the Margins of Gamer Culture* (pp. 201-232). University of Minnesota Press.
- Gray, K. (2013). "Collective Organizing, Individual Resistance, or Asshole Griefer? An Ethnographic Analysis of Women of Color In Xbox Live." *Ada: The Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*. <http://adanewmedia.org/2013/06/issue2-gray/> (~15 pgs.)
- Galloway, A. "Chapter Four, Allegories of Control." *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture* (pp. 85-106). University of Minnesota Press.
- *Optional*: [The Disability Gaming Resource](#)

Week 10: Convergence Culture & Moral Panic | ~120 pages

- Jenkins, H. (2008) The Moral Economy of Web 2.0 (Parts One thru Four) (~16 pgs.)
  - [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#) | [Part 3](#) | [Part 4](#)
- Ferguson, C. J., & Beaver, K. M. (2015). "Chapter 12, Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Video Game? Media-Based Moral Panics." In D. Chadee (Ed.) *Psychology of Fear, Crime, and the Media: International Perspectives*, pp. 240-253.
- Sicart, M. (2009). "Chapter 1, Introduction" and "Chapter 2, Computer Games as Designed Ethical Systems". *The Ethics of Computer Games* (pp. 1-59). MIT Press.
- Kocurek, C. (2015). "Anarchy in the Arcade" *Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade* (pp. 91-114). University of Minnesota Press.
- *Optional*: Wages, R., Grünvogel, S. M., & Grützmacher, B. (2004). How realistic is realism? Considerations on the aesthetics of computer games. In *Entertainment Computing-ICEC 2004* (pp. 216-225). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- *Optional*: Ferguson, C. J. (2013). Violent video games and the Supreme Court: lessons for the scientific community in the wake of Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association. *American Psychologist*, 68(2), 57-74. (~13 pgs.)
- *Optional*: Seyama, J. I., & Nagayama, R. S. (2007). The uncanny valley: Effect of realism on the impression of artificial human faces. *Presence*, 16(4), 337-351.

Week 11: Memory & Archival Preservation

| ~ 219 pages

- Guins, R. (2014). "Introduction," "One, Museified," and "Three, After the Arcade." *Game Afterlife: A Cultural Study of Video Game Afterlife* (pp. 1-73, 107-165). MIT Press.
- Kocurek, C. (2015). "Introduction," "One, Microcosmic Arcade: Playing at the Cultural Vanguard," "The Arcade is Dead, Long Live the Arcade: Nostalgia in an era of Ubiquitous Computing." *Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade* (pp. xi-35, 151-188). University of Minnesota Press.

**Week 12: A Brief Intermission—*We will not meet collectively for the week. Use this time to review the essays we've read and work on your second review essay.***

## **Cultural Artifact**

Week 13: Structure & Experience

| 138 pages & 106 min

- **REVISITING FROM WEEK 1:** Bogost, I. (2008). The Rhetoric of Video Games. In Katie Salen (Ed.) *The Ecology of Games: Connecting Youth, Games, and Learning* (pp. 117-140). MIT Press.
- Brathwaite, B. (2010). "Train (or How I Dumped Electricity and Learned to Love Design)." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC 2010*. (duration: 60 minutes).
- Upton, B. (2016). "Four, Heuristics" "Five, Anticipation," "Six, Mastery," "Eleven, Play without Winning," and "Fifteen, Play and Meaning." *The Aesthetics of Play* (pp. 51-114, 183-198, 259-281). MIT Press. (100 pages)
- Bee, A. (2016) "Nobody Cares About It But It's The Only Thing That Matters: Pacing And Level Design In JRPGs." ZAM.  
<https://medium.com/@MammonMachine/nobody-cares-about-it-but-it-s-the-only-thing-that-matters-pacing-and-level-design-3ed043dc3309#po0fvwqe1> (~4 pgs.)
- Johnston, D. (2015). "The Making of *Dust*: Architecture and the Art of Level Design." In Daniel Goldberg and Linus Larsson (Eds). *The State of Play*. pp. 169-210.
- *Optional:* Detar, J. (2016). "History Shaping Design: Gender Roles As Shown In Centuries of Game Design." [\[Video\]](#) *GDC 2016*. (duration: 46 minutes).
- *Optional:* Ash, J. (2010). Architectures of affect: anticipating and manipulating the event in processes of videogame design and testing. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28(4), 653-671.

Week 14: Design Imperatives

| 65 pages & 25 min

- Columbia, D. (2009). Games without play. *New Literary History*, 40(1), 179-204.
- Bogost, I. (2015). "Videogames are better without characters." *The Atlantic*.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/03/video-games-are-better-without-characters/387556/> (~7 pgs.)

- Polansky, L. (2015). "Against Flow." *Sufficiently Human*. <http://sufficientlyhuman.com/archives/995> (~4 pgs.)
- Flanagan, M. (2009). "Eight, Designing for Critical Play." *Critical Play: Radical Game Design* (pp. 251-262). MIT Press
- Anthropy, A. (2012). "Chapter 7, By Your Bootstraps" *Rise of the Videogame Zinesters: How Freaks, Normals, Amateurs, Artists, Dreamers, Dropouts, Queers, Housewives, and People Like You Are Taking Back An Art Form*. (pp. 143-158).
- *Optional*: Howe, A. C. (2015). "Critical Switch: Republican Dad Mechanics." *Haptic Feedback*. <http://hapticfeedbackgames.blogspot.com/2015/05/critical-switch-republican-dad-mechanics.html> (~2 pgs.)
- *Optional*: Anthropy, A. (2015). "Empathy Game." [Blog]. <http://auntiepixelante.com/empathygame/> (1 pg.)
- *Optional*: John, M. (2016). "The World is Listening...But Games Aren't Talking." [Video] *GDC 2016*. (duration: 25 minutes)

Week 15: Glitch...?

|

~35 pages

- Pieschel, A. (2014). "Glitches: A Kind of History." *The Arcade Review*. (~10 pgs.) <http://www.arcadereview.net/published/2014/11/7/glitches-a-kind-of-history>
- Apperley, T. H. (2013). The body of the gamer: game art and gestural excess. *Digital Creativity*, 24(2), 145-156.
- Stewart, Z. (2015). "On The Beautiful and Tragic Weirdness of Sonic Adventure, Part 1: An Empty City." *Zeal*. (~9 pgs.) <https://medium.com/mammon-machine-zeal/on-the-beautiful-and-tragic-weirdness-of-sonic-adventure-41af91883445#.kz7bwpgb0>

**Finals Week: Projects will be presented during our exam period. Presentation guidelines will be reviewed in class. General format: 5-7 minute micro-talks (graded pass/fail as 5% of the total grade for the final project).**

# **Play Days**

Play days are an opportunity to socialize, play games, and work collaboratively with classmates on 'independent' projects. Attendance is mandatory.

## **Week 1**

- System Set Up Day (depending on facilities)
  - Setting up console systems
  - Installing necessary software on computers (e.g., Steam, Twinery, etc.)
- 1:1 Introductions + Socializing + [The Same Page Tool](#)
- Games: Bring Your Own
- [I am Bread](#) (PC)
- Rocket League (PC or Playstation 4)
- [Bridge Constructor](#) (Xbox One)

## **Week 2**

- *Assassin's Creed III: Liberation* (PC or Xbox 360)
- *Saints Row 3* (PC or Playstation 3 or Xbox 360)
- *Minecraft* (PC and/or Xbox 360)
- *Fallout 4* (PC)
- [Out of the Park Baseball 17](#)

## **Week 3**

- Mangia by Nina Freeman
- Depression Quest by Zoe Quinn
- I'm Fine by Rokashi Edwards
- reProgram by Soha Kareem
- Fuck That Guy by Benji Bright
- Anhedonia by Maddox Pratt
- There Aught to Be a Word by Jeremy Penner
- The Message by Jeremy Lonien and Dominik Johann
- 3x3x3 by Kayla Unknown
- Eft to Newt by Michael Jaffe
- Player 2 by Lydia Neon

## **Week 5**

- The Magic Circle (PC)

## **Week 6**

- *Joylancer* (PC)
- Sunset (PC)
- Trigger (PC)
- Local Developer Guest Lecture?
- Local Developer Gaming Session?

## **Week 7**

- Cities: Skylines (PC)
- Sim City (preferably old & new versions for PC)

## **Week 9**

- Settlers of Catan (Tabletop)
- Halo (Xbox One)
- Pit (Tabletop)

## **Week 10**

- Call of Duty: Modern Warfare (PC, Xbox)
- Doom (PC)
- Super Smash Brothers (Wii)

## **Week 11**

- Pong
- Tetris
- Emulators ...

## **Week 13**

- Game-making Workshop (Game Jam)

## **Week 14**

- Freeplay/Game Jam pt. 2

## **Week 15**

- Freeplay/Game Jam pt. 3