Videogame Analysis Assignment

Each week on Wednesdays, two students will present analyses of their games to the rest of the class. These presentations should meet and often exceed the expectations laid out below. Undergraduate students will be expected to complete this assignment once throughout the semester; graduate students will present twice.

Goals and Expectations

This analysis assignment is meant to give you practice and experience with presenting your theories, analyses, and ideas to a friendly audience. It is my hope that as you read and consider the materials we discuss during the week, you will begin to connect those ideas to your experiences with your game. If there are particularly interesting moments, ideas, concepts, happenings, etc. with your game that you think are relevant to class discussions, readings, and course materials, you are encouraged to explore those ideas more deeply in this presentation. You will then bring your game (or recorded moment in the game) to class and connect your analysis to the topics discussed in class.

Analyses can be either a close reading of a particular moment in a game or else a broader (but focused) discussion of a particular game rule, narrative structure, character model, social phenomenon, etc. that you consider relevant and meaningful. For example, you may wish to present the WoW community's reactions and dealings with Chinese farmers or the way that Halo's tutorial level expertly teaches players the game's "design grammar" (Gee) in a safe way. Or perhaps you want to show KoToR's innovations with game ethics. Whatever your choice, you are strongly encouraged to discuss it with me first so that I can help you focus the presentation. Game walkthroughs are not acceptable. You must directly connect your game to the readings and discussions from class.

Logistics and Parameters
- You are responsible for recording and preparing the moment in your game that you are analyzing. For help, ask friends, colleagues, others in the class.
- You are required to provide a handout to go along with your presentation. The handout can be in the form of a short paper, a multimedia video, a transcript of an in-game discussion or interaction, an outline of a longer paper you'll write for your midterm and/or final project, etc.
- Presentations should take about 20-30 minutes.
- Presentations should reference and connect to readings in the course.
- Presentations are conducted individually, but you may consult others in your preparation and collaborate with others who are playing your same game or have experience with your topic.
- Presentations are not necessarily arguments for your particular approach to your game; instead, they should take the form of analyses, connecting theory to the text or experience you're examining. Tell us what you notice, what you observe, what's interesting to you and for what reasons.

Presentations will be evaluated based primarily on your ability to directly connect your game to the themes and ideas of the course.