

GAME ANALYSIS

Part of the course argument is about the importance of taking *individual games* seriously - as media experiences, communication, cultural critique, and tools for reflection. The game-centric approach of the class is important because while we have slowly come around to taking "Games" in general seriously - as designed commodities, as a new media form worthy of academic theorization, and as pop culture entertainment - we have lagged in careful attention to and sustained critical reflection on single games and our own experiences of them. This assignment is an opportunity to explore a self-selected game from the class in more depth using the resources of the class readings, lectures, and collective one-sheets.

Details

Your game analysis will:

1. be roughly 1200-1500 words
2. be posted to the website using the "Game Analysis" category
3. include at least 1 screenshot
[for use on the blog as a "Featured Image," the image that displays with your post]
4. focus our attention on a single game
5. provide insightful commentary on the game, addressing its significance beyond personal entertainment
6. makes significant use of at least one of the following:
a toolbox item from lecture, an assigned reading/video, or readings represented in the one-sheets

The purpose of these analyses is to share an informed and critical perspective on a specific game attending to some details of design and the development of particular experiences. These are *not reviews* that aim to inform gamers as consumers, share opinions about personal likes and dislikes, or general evaluations about whether the game is "good." Nor do these need to be comprehensive, systematic interpretations of the entire game (impossible in the space you have). Instead, they should provide an attentive and insightful commentary on the details of gameplay that you identify as significant and worthy of further reflection.

Consider one or more of the following questions as a catalyst:

- Does the game position the player to perceive or reflect on a particular idea or theme?
- Does the game enable a particular experience that has significance for understanding the topic(s) it addresses?
- Does the gameplay present a challenge to particular ideas from game studies? Conversely: a potential catalyst for extension?
- Does the game function as cultural or philosophical commentary? What in the gameplay experience facilitates this?

Viable games

Dear Esther

Gone Home

Papers, Please

Cart Life

Braid

Thomas Was Alone

Starseed Pilgrim

Eidolon

Terraria

Superbrothers: Sword & Sworcery EP

Evaluation

These analyses will be evaluated for rigor of thought, quality of insight provided into the game experience of your selected game, and clarity of writing. Rigor of thought refers to your demonstrated attention to details in the game, informed use of concepts from the course materials, and the general coherence of reasoning and reflection. Quality of insight pertains to the significance of the game and its gameplay (beyond entertainment) that you identify in your analysis.