Games: Design, Strategy, Philosophy, and Society
Fall 2016 Syllabus

Opening Days

Readings:

• Leigh Alexander, *Life Hacks: A Netrunner Story*

• Brendan Caldwell, *Brendan’s Correct Way to Scratch*

• Dave Hickey, *The Heresy of Zone Defense*

Games: Say Anything, Bring Your Own Book, Follow

Writing Assignment: Meaningful game
Part 1: Game design and player experience

Readings:

- Sample game designs and design notes from Salen and Zimmerman, *Rules of Play*
  - Frank Lantz, *Ironclad*, pages 286–297
  - Kira Snyder, *Sneak*, pages 490-501
  - James Ernest, *Carribean Star*, pages 588-601

- Sample game reviews by Conway, Duffy, and MacLeod

  - Chapters 15 and 19 (pages 173–189 and 231–246)

- Jane McGonigal, *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World* Chapters 2–4 (pages 35–76)

- Bernard Suits, *Grasshopper: Games, Life, and Utopia* Chapters 1–3 (pages 8–43)

- Raph Koster, *A Theory of Fun for Game Design* Chapters 1–4 (pages 2–79)

Games:

- In the library course reserves: Backgammon, Hive, The Bridges of Shangri-La, Can’t Stop, Coloretto, High Society, FlowerFall, Hanabi, Hey That’s My Fish!, Lost Cities, Mr. Jack Pocket, Roll Through the Ages, Tsumo, Uptown, Codenames, Coup, Skull, Reverse Charades, But Wait There’s More, Spyfall

- In the Wise Resources: Eat Poop You Cat, Space Team (requires mobile devices), Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes

Design Assignment: Strategy or social game
Part 2: Gaming communities and stories

Readings:

- Amy Scholder and Eric Zimmerman, *Re: Play: Game Design+ Game Culture*, pages 158–188
- Bernard DeKoven *The Well-Played Game: A Player’s Philosophy* Chapters 1–4 (pages 1–38)
- — Chapters 6–7 (pages 59–104)
- A. Alvarez *The Biggest Game in Town* Chapters 2–5 (pages 25–79)
- *Weiqi Wonders: Conversations About the Game of Go in China* documentary (on course reserve)

Games:

- In the library course reserves: The Quiet Year, Fiasco
- In the Wise Resources: Kaleidoscope, Ribbon Drive, Action Castle, games from the New Games Book and the Well-Played Game, including Dho Dho Dho, Catch the Dragon’s Tail, Smaug’s Jewels, Go-Tag, Red Handed, Hagoo, Zap Zorch Boing Perfigliano, Thar’s a Bar, and Lemonade, games from David Schirduan’s 200 Word RPG Challenge, including Defective Robot Philosophers, #Astroturf, Plagiarism, Test Seven, Always Chaotic Evil, Sherlock Holmes is an Asshole, and All Fall Down

Design Assignment: New Games style physical game or David Schirduan style micro role-playing game
Part 3: Games in society and games for change

Readings:

- Anita Sarkeesian *Tropes vs. Women in Video Games* videos, Liz Losh *GamerGate 101*
- Anna Anthropy, *Love, Twine, and the End of the World*
- Evan Narcisse, *The Natural: The Parameters of Afro*
- — Chapters 11 and part of 14 (pages 219–246 and 296–316)

Games:

- **In the Wise resources:** Sneaky Cards, Radix Endeavor, MalariaSpot, Superbetter (requires mobile device), Swing Voter Go (requires mobile device), iNaturalist (requires mobile device), Top Secret Election Game
  
  Twine games and games from the Spring Thing Festival of Interactive Fiction, including Cow Farming Activities on the Former West, Queers in Love at the End of the World, Shipwrecked, Tangaroa Deep, Cry$tal Warrior Ke$ha
  
  Games for Change Festival award winners, including Fold It and Never Alone (purchase)

- **In Reality is Broken:** Cruel 2 B Kind, Tombstone Hold 'Em

**Design Assignment:** Twine game or game for change