Gaming & Adaptations
Presentations

Over the next two weeks, we will discuss play, rules, critical apparatus, and gaming. Prof. James Morgan should be able to help us establish what it is to play, and then also play using New Media. For this set of presentations and forum posts, you will create your own game.

Choose a work of literature that you find moving, satisfying, or well-written and describe the rules of a game version of its stories, characters, or themes. You may find that considering how to adapt a work of literature for a game is very different from speculating about making a film adaptation, although you may have to think about what characters would look like or how the writer's prose could be condensed into script format.

You do not have to design a videogame in which the action is represented digitally on a computer screen: you may choose to adapt the book as a board game, card game, physical game, alternative reality game, etc. But the game does need to have rules and a way to keep score or register winning and losing. It should also be a good game, which you would find engaging to play that invites participation.

You may chose to focus on the instructive rather than entertaining aspects of the work of literature and consider how best to persuade players how to eliminate the evils that the author is portraying, such as slavery in *Huckleberry Finn* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Or you may want to use the game to encourage players to see possible counternarratives or ideological issues that the writer conceals, such as the place of English imperialism and colonialism in the works of Jane Austen or Daniel Defoe.

Whatever you do, you should choose the genre of your game very carefully to suit the aims of your adaptation. You could design a story-based adventure game with levels and a clear objective, such as the independent game *Samorost* (where you can try out a partial version online http://amanita-design.net/samorost-2/). Or a game that is much more about atmosphere and visual setting, such as the independent game Cloud (http://interactive.usc.edu/projects/cloud/), or even about a soundscape. Perhaps you imagine a game in which one player tries out different combinations in order to figure out the rules, such as the casual game Grow Cube (http://www.eyezmaze.com/grow/cube/). Or perhaps you want to choose a massively multiplayer online role-playing game in which there is a lot of knowledge-sharing among players to supplement the already generous exposition about rules that is provided by the game itself. You can look at Runescape (http://runescape.com/) to see an example of a free, popular, multiplayer online game. All of these examples are PC games that use a keyboard as an input device, but you may choose to develop an adaptation of your work of literature that involves a game controller, such as a PlayStation, Wii, or Xbox.

The first part of the assignment requires that you write a 1000-word description about your game. The second part of the assignment requires that you visualize your game using static or moving images and write a 500-word description to accompany the visual images. For this section of the assignment, you may use original or found art, images, photographs, etc. to display your ideas. Because you will have to accumulate those images somewhere, you might consider uploading them to an online environment like Picasa.

Presentation
We will divide this work into two days of presentations:

- On November 2, be prepared to present a 5 minute description of your game.
- On November 4, be prepared to present a 5 minute demonstration of the images for your game.

Written Posts
On November 2, post a 1000-word description of your game is due by 10am in the appropriate Moodle Forum.

On November 4, post a 500-word description of your visualizations is due by 10am in the appropriate Moodle Forum.

Grading
A letter grade for each presentation will be based on your ability to communicate the ideas about your game. Up to 9 points will be given for each written post based on your ability to convey the complexity of your ideas in a written format.