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Play and Praxis: Exploring the Implications of Videogame-Infused Pedagogy in the Composition Classroom

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PLAY AND PRAXIS: EXPLORING THE IMPLICATIONS OF

VIDEOGAME-INFUSED PEDAGOGY IN THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

This project presents a theoretical and practical examination of the term "videogame-infused pedagogy," as defined through its use of videogames in the composition classroom, connections to the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing, James Gee's research, and Ian Bogost's notion of procedurality. By presenting a series of pedagogical materials and approaches to using videogames without cost or stringent hardware requirements, this project presents an approach to bringing videogames into the composition classroom by focusing on sustainability and applicability across a range of contexts.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Prologue

At her 2004 chair's address for the CCCC, Kathleen Blake Yancey called attention to one of the biggest shifts occurring in composition studies—a shift to the new literacies in the 21st century. Her address entitled "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key" calls attention to the "tectonic change" occurring in 21st century literacy. This shift involves a wide public who writes and participates *outside of the academy*: "There are no A's here, no Dean's lists, no writing teacher to keep tabs on you. Whatever the exchange value may be for these writers—and there are millions of them, here and around the world—it's certainly not grades" (Yancey 301). Yancey goes on to discuss the types of literacies the 21st century has brought forth:

> The literacies that composers engage in today are multiple. They include print literacy practices (like spelling) that URL's require; they include visual literacy; they include network literacy. As important, these literacies are textured and in relationship to each other. Perhaps most important, these literacies are social in a way that school literacy all too often only pretends to be (Yancey 302).

Among other things, Yancey calls for composition studies to begin addressing and incorporating the new literacies in composition pedagogy. How to best engage these literacies remains an open question with progress made in many spaces. Many within composition studies, including Kathleen Yancey and those influenced by the New London Group, sought ways to develop and foster the literacies emerging in our students in the classroom space.

As a term, literacy is highly contested and difficult to define, an issue further complicated by the wide array of definitions of literacy presented by composition and literacy scholars. Furthermore, literacy scholars come from an exceptionally wide range of backgrounds including education, computer studies. This project uses the conversation surrounding literacy as a jumping off point, yet the range of scholars in composition, game studies, and literacy studies discussing literacy from such varied viewpoints present challenges to this project immediately. Even just within composition, Beth Daniell notes that "looking at the narratives of literacy makes several issues obvious. The first is the conflicted politics of composition" (406). Conflicting and wide-reaching definitions of literacy further echo this concern. For the purposes of this project, I will apply literacy to classroom practice primarily through the lens of Bogost's work with procedurality and James Gee's learning principles while borrowing and building on definitions from a wide range of perspectives. Elsewhere, Gee defines literacy as "control of secondary use of language" (n.p.), and in this project I will illustrate several ways in which videogames foster this. The lack of cohesive backgrounds for the conversations surrounding videogames and literacy necessitates a far-reaching and therefore problematic array of perspectives on literacy be examined in this project first to showcase the theoretical benefits of bringing videogames into the composition classroom.

Nonetheless, the literacy practices students already engage in and how to bring them into the composition classroom present a worthy point of inquiry for many calls to foster new literacies. In answer to these calls made to the field at large to engage students' new literacies, several methods of engaging students with multimodal assignments and projects emerged. While instructors ask students more frequently to make blogs, videos, audio recordings, and remixes as assignments, this type of multimodal work cannot easily be addressed in the classroom as part of

pedagogical practice. While several outlets including the WPA, NCTE, NWP, and Computers and Writing made the approaches and tools for answering Yancey's call more easily possible through free, open source software and practical engagement, lesser-known and underdeveloped approaches to engaging new literacies exist. As a theoretical approach to doing so by implementing composition pedagogy infused with videogames this project aims to develop an approach to fostering the new literacies of our students by suggesting practical approaches to bringing videogames into the composition classroom to address these same concerns and needs.

As an emerging approach to addressing the needs of students in the composition classroom in the 21st century, the use of videogames in the classroom warrants extended exploration for its ability to foster these new literacies in the composition classroom through videogame play. Several scholars write at length about the educational and literate benefits of videogames as well as in the composition classroom (Egenfeldt-Nielson, Gee, Bogost, Alexander, Robinson, Colby and Colby), but few attempt to define an approach to bringing videogames into the classroom while addressing the practical concerns of using videogames.

1.2 Problem Statement

This theoretical and praxis-based exploration of videogames and composition responds to three primary issues: the tangential nature of videogames in regards to the composition classroom, the lack of research on videogames and composition focused on application in the classroom space, and the lack of consensus on how to incorporate videogames in the classroom based on the disparate angles of presentation for this research. As a response to these problems, I will outline what I call videogame-infused pedagogy. Furthermore, videogame-infused pedagogy as explored in this project outlines how videogames can be brought into the classroom with little to no

financial burden and also lays out assignments and units of a pilot course run in the spring of 2013 to accomplish all of the above.

The lack of attempts to bring videogame theory and composition studies together to directly apply to the composition classroom presents the first major point this project responds to, thereby making its role clear as a complementary approach. The second chapter of this project traces the history of videogames and their relationship to learning and literacy. From here, this project explicates the connections between literacy and composition studies in chapter two, illustrating the current body of research on composition and videogames by housing it within composition studies. Chapter two of this project also takes this a step further by bringing together the Framework for Success for Success in Postsecondary Writing, James Paul Gee's learning principles from *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*, and Ian Bogost's notion of procedurality as an applicable framework for composition studies. Utilizing videogames in the classroom may not be a novel idea, as evidenced by a breadth of articles scattered across several publications, but direct connections to composition remain comparatively sparse. A smattering of articles address composition directly (deWinter, Robinson, Alexander), while the special issue of *Computers in Composition* entitled "Reading Games: Composition, Literacy and Video Gaming" serves as perhaps the most focused and conscious approach to bringing videogames and composition together. These articles, in this sense, prove largely successful. The articles cited above provide a solid foundation for instructors interested in exploring videogames as a component of their course and serve as a theoretical entry point for my research by presenting worthy considerations for instructors concerned about teaching with games (deWinter), how game development/writing can benefit

the writing classroom (Robinson), and how the literate practices of gamers connect to composition (Alexander).

The approaches taken throughout the special edition of *Computers and Composition* and similar explorations of videogames and education to date, particularly those within the discipline of composition, lack expansive discussions of games in practice. Traces of how videogames can become an active component of the classroom are littered throughout *Computers and Composition* (Alberti, Colby & Colby, Moberly), but the lack of synthesis in these pieces leaves providing instructors a means to engage with videogames and bringing games into the classroom space as an active part of the learning experience by the wayside. While essays like Colby and Colby's "A Pedagogy of Play: Integrating Computer Games into the Writing Classroom" draw videogames into the composition classroom and suggest a composition classroom focused on videogames as a theme, they lack key, unique components of this project—an approach to videogames in composition pedagogy designed for adaptation by a wide range of instructors beyond those interested in a radical alteration of their pedagogical approach and a display and discussion of classroom materials to show what videogames look like in practice in a composition classroom. While *World of Warcraft* may prove a fantastic theme for a classroom space, Colby and Colby divorce gameplay from the classroom, and while the attention they give to videogames in the classroom space remains part of the small body of literature specific to rhetoric and composition, praxis and pedagogical materials remain significant omissions this project will address in the third chapter by focusing on the units of my pilot course and the assignments and lessons therein.

Several scholars propose approaches to using videogames in the writing classroom from several disciplines, and among these proposals a wealth of possibilities emerge for games and

pedagogy. While this research remains beneficial as a starting point, it points to the larger issue: the lack of consensus as to how best use games in the composition classroom. The ambiguity in how games fit into the composition classroom serves as equal parts encouragement and dissuasion. Approaches to using videogames in composition proposed by Alexander, Robinson, and deWinter et al. all focus on practicality and praxis, yet do not make these elements explicitly available for other instructors to examine and consider. The wealth of approaches and lack of explication means few, if any, detailed approaches to teaching with videogames exist. This project does not attempt to provide a solitary answer to how games work best in the classroom, but rather presents several units, games, and lesson plans to provide a range of possibilities brought together from several disparate approaches to teaching with videogames and situating them in composition pedagogy. Significant differences exist between suggesting an instructor ask students to design a game for the classroom and providing guidelines and scaffolding for implementing videogames in composition pedagogy, and this gap between suggested practice and instructor implementation remains unfilled. The third chapter of this project in particular presents materials from my pilot course to begin addressing this issue.

1.3 Inquiry and Questions

In this project, I will outline a framework based on my pilot course founded on open-ended principles so as to be as scalable, adoptable, and adaptable by instructors with access to computer technology in the classroom space. By synthesizing two of the most recognizable figures in game studies (Gee and Bogost) with the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing and producing a set of pedagogical materials for my own course that embraces videogame-infused pedagogy as a crucial component, I will explore the relationship between composition pedagogy and videogames. Of the research done on games and learning, several poorly designed or bias-

driven approaches exist. In the long-term I plan to conduct empirical research to examine these relationships and account for these known issues with studies conducted on games and learning. Before this can be done, however, establishing a fundamental understanding of the uses for videogames in the composition classroom proves necessary. This project attempts to show how videogames can become part of the composition classroom and accounts for other known issues with using videogames in the classroom first and foremost.

This project explores how the literature surrounding games and learning supports the use of videogames in the composition classroom and will show approaches to bringing videogames into the classroom for instructors interested in doing so. Chapter two this project focus primarily on connections between research and theory based on videogames, learning, literacy, and composition while chapter three presents a largely theoretical inquiry focused on course materials and anecdotes. Through this combination of theory and dialog, this project attempts define the first steps towards using videogames in the classroom based on my experiences as an instructor beginning with no concrete plans for lessons, projects, or implementation and how to move from theory to application. This project explores the relationship between videogames and composition pedagogy in an attempt to discover how videogames benefit composition pedagogy, and what approaches in the literature look like when implemented in the classroom and what potential benefits and issues arise from doing so. Thus, I will address the following questions: how has the landscape of videogame development and gameplay shifted to provide greater access for the composition classroom? What relationships exist between videogame theory and composition pedagogy? How can videogames complement composition pedagogy? What does videogame-infused pedagogy look like in practice? What are the implications for videogame-

infused pedagogy going forward? What obstacles face instructors interested in implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy? These questions guide the work in the following chapters.

1.4 Methods

This project attempts to explicate, like the Framework for Success, a scalable, adoptable, adaptable approach to integrating videogames into composition pedagogy to fuse theory and practice with examples from my own classroom materials. I will illustrate the ways James Paul Gee's learning principles and Ian Bogost's procedurality complement composition pedagogy by discussing a variety of assignments, lessons, and units of my course, as well as their connections to the goals set forth in the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing. The second chapter of this project examines Gee's learning principles and Bogost's procedurality, illustrating how modern game theory and composition pedagogy connect. This project's discussion of Gee's learning principles will focus on a selection of learning principles that relate closely to the Framework for Success's Habits of Mind. Similarly, the discussion of Bogost's procedural rhetoric and procedural literacy shows the connections between procedurality and the Framework for Success. The shift presented by Bogost's work, however, moves the discussion to classroom practice. The second chapter also highlights the uses of games such as *First Person Tutor, Phone Story,* and *The Wikipedia Game* in relation to the Framework for Success.

The third chapter of this project takes the theories of Gee and Bogost further by showing how the theory encourages the use of games in the classroom potentially as a course topic, a course unit, an assignment, or simply a lesson plan. Here, through a careful examination of the units of my pilot course, this project will outline the various ways instructors can use videogames in a composition classroom. This includes units focusing on games as places, games as rhetoric, designing games, and the social concerns surrounding videogames. Thus, this project aims to

illustrate the theories supporting videogames, learning, and composition then make connections between modern game theory and composition pedagogy in chapter two, and moves to practice in chapter three. The final chapter explores the implications and concerns emerging from using videogames in the composition classroom and the theory and practice informing the pilot course.

1.5 Discussion of Implications

The approach examined in this project makes a point out of making the process of teaching using videogames more transparent and easier for other instructors to use and is rooted in the potential of such an approach. Whether or not videogame-infused pedagogy effectively answers the calls issued by Yancey and the New London Group, the fact remains that students regularly engage with videogames without any sort of prompting. Alexander notes that "a recent survey of 1,118 first-year college students [...] revealed that our students spent approximately six hours per week reading material on the Web and that nearly half of those surveyed (465) spent four hours per week playing video or computer games (36). James Gee makes similarly enthusiastic claims that "video gaming [...] is a multimodal literacy *par excellence*" (18). Students not only play games more and more frequently according to the research conducted, but theory like Gee's shows videogames as capable of fostering 21st century literacies in our students. Upon returning to the calls for composition and writing instruction to take what students know outside of our classrooms and use this as a means to foster new literacies, arguing that videogames provide significant potential proves simple. As multimodal texts by definition, videogames provide several opportunities to foster the multimodal literacies of our students, yet also provide opportunities to achieve additional literate gains, such as procedural literacy, through videogame play in our classrooms.

This, of course, means discussing the issues standing in the way of videogame-infused pedagogy becoming common practice proves necessary. In particular, worthwhile issues of access, resistance, and content must be explored. First and perhaps most crucially, my research and goals cannot exist nor be explored without access to videogames themselves. Thus whether these games literally *can* enter the classroom remains the most immediate and obvious barrier between games entering the classroom space. The prominence of organizations like Computers and Composition illustrate how computers gained traction in the classroom space, and prior to a few short years ago access to games in the classroom presented a very real barricade to adopting a videogame-infused pedagogy. Access to computers does not immediately remove the barricades between bringing games into the classroom space, however. As deWinter et al. caution:

> Researching and teaching with games can be a relatively expensive
> endeavor. Off-the-shelf games cost, on average, around $50, and generally
> require specialized machinery such as a console or high-end PC to run.
> Even if an institution already has the requisite platform, computer labs
> tend to be very carefully administered. It is not uncommon for instructors
> to face an uphill battle just to install a game in one of these labs, let alone
> teach with it.

Since deWinter et al.'s, warning important shifts for both better and worse occurred (exacerbating the increased cost of videogames at retail comes from shifts in distribution models and cloud gaming services).

The nature of games as texts and the content housed within them emerge as a second issue. Despite the scholarship conducted on games in composition and the special issues of

Computers in Composition, videogames occupy a contested space between a field expanding into digital spaces, yet largely unwilling to consider videogames a valid pedagogical or learning text. Many document resistance from fellow instructors, administrators, and even students when considering videogames for the classroom space (deWinter, Alexander, Max Lieberman's "Four Ways to Teach with Video Games"). Alexander in particular notes:

> Inevitably, some instructors (or administrators) will question the attention I am asking us to pay to gaming as a literacy event and pedagogical space. Such instructors rightly ask what is *left out* of our writing instruction when we turn to examining gaming. If students are designing an MMORPG, what kinds of writing are they *not* doing? I cannot help but ask in return, *what are we already leaving out by* not *examining gaming as a literacy event for our students*? (59)

Here, elements of both the persistent stigma facing videogames as a component of the classroom and the necessity to incorporate them become evident. The contested space of what should be "left out" tends to leave videogames disposed by the wayside despite their myriad connections to new literacies.

The third, equally valid ethical concern emerges immediately when considering the content of the games themselves. DeWinter et al. note:

> Administrators' and teachers' concerns, by contrast, lie in a different direction, one marked with a legitimate anxiety about litigation ("how dare you expose my children to that kind of garbage?") and pedagogical quality ("what happened to teaching reading, writing, and recitation?").

Legislators prevail upon parents and teachers alike to beware the hazards

of computer games that feature sex and violence.

James Gee explored some of these factors contributing to the contested nature of videogames

early in *What Videogames Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*, including problems

with violence, gender representation, and lack of knowledge about games as a medium (10). Gee

largely dismisses of the role of violence and gender in videogames, as they "would require more

space than I can devote to them here and still cover issues germane to learning" (10), a

perspective I wish to echo. While valid ethical concerns emerge from implementing videogame-

infused pedagogy, I will not spend significant time in this project discussing the negative effects

of videogames as a text or in popular culture. That said, the reputation videogames hold in

popular culture is not entirely unearned. Videogames remain subject to these issues; however,

the approach I suggest for bringing videogames into the composition classroom does not

necessitate the use of games which reinforce these issues. While benefits exist for bringing

controversial games and texts into the composition classrooms, due to the charged nature of

videogames as a text (especially for learning), I will identify suitable games for the composition

classroom and either easily or freely available games for students and instructors alike.

1.6 Defining Videogame-Infused Pedagogy

This introduction explicates several of the foundational principles addressed in this project in

addition to some of the considerations necessary before beginning a discussion of the literature,

theory, and practice of using videogames in the composition classroom. One question remains

after considering the key issues behind implementing videogame-infused pedagogy in the

classroom—how to *define* videogame-infused pedagogy as a term. Four crucial components to

videogame-infused pedagogy stand out in the definition this project conceptualizes. As it stands, videogame-infused pedagogy:

1. Approaches composition pedagogy by bringing together Gee, Bogost, and the Framework for Success.

2. Provides several ways for a range of instructors to use games in the classroom.

3. Teaches composition by actively using games inside the classroom.

4. Focuses on freely available games and games without advanced computers required.

Videogame-infused pedagogy as a term responds to the issues noted above in the literature on videogames and learning and presents sustainable approaches to teaching composition using videogames for instructors with varying levels of interest and access to doing so. Using videogames actively in the classroom has the potential to bring together several of the most critical components of 21st century literacies, videogame theory, and the guiding principles of composition pedagogy. In the following chapters this project extrapolates the core concepts of videogame-infused pedagogy and illustrates how videogames complement composition pedagogy.

CHAPTER TWO

NEW LITERACIES, THE FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESS, GEE'S LEARNING PRINCIPLES, AND BOGOST'S PROCEDURALITY

2.1 Introduction

Videogame-infused pedagogy presents several opportunities to facilitate the call of scholars

arguing for pedagogies that address new literacy practices, multimodality, literacies outside of

educational settings, and digital technologies. In this chapter I will clarify these connections by

connecting major theories in composition studies, composition pedagogy, and game studies

together. This chapter begins with a brief exploration of the discussion surrounding new literacy

practices and composition studies, followed by a discussion of the Framework for Success in

Postsecondary Writing's precedents for composition pedagogy endorsed by organizations

including the CWPA, NCTE, and National Writing Project. I connect the Framework for Success

to the work of major game theorists James Paul Gee and Ian Bogost next. Starting with James

Paul Gee's 36 learning principles found in videogames in his book *What Video Games Have to

Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* and moving on to Ian Bogost's notion of procedurality as

seen in *Persuasive Games*, this chapter will connect the Habits of Mind seen in the Framework

for Success to leading theories about games and education. By connecting the bodies of literature

on videogames, literacy, composition, and pedagogy together, the theoretical foundation and

guiding principles for videogame-infused pedagogy become clearer. I will begin by locating this

discussion within composition studies and move by the end of this chapter to major theories in

game studies to show the connections made on both sides of this discussion and to make them

explicit as part of defining videogame-infused pedagogy. In the following chapters, I will

address the process of implementing videogame-infused pedagogy in the classroom in order to

show how the strategic implementation of active videogame play in composition pedagogy can target the Outcomes listed in the Framework for Success.

2.2 Videogames and Literacy

Before connecting videogames directly to composition pedagogy, drawing broad connections to the shifts in composition theory towards examinations of students' new literacy practices illustrates a fundamental connection between videogames and composition studies. Within the field of writing studies several articles address new literacies and draw connections between literacy and videogames to further echo Yancey's call to incorporate new literacies into the composition classroom and show videogames as a valuable resource for exploring and developing the literacies of our students further. Whereas other disciplines focus on approaches to game-based learning with set expectations like learning dental hygiene (Egenfeldt-Nielson) composition studies aims to foster difficult skills to measure and articulate. In particular, the notion of fostering new literacy practices proves challenging. Kathleen Yancey expands upon the literacies students develop outside of the classroom as one of the many voices at the forefront of the movement to bring new literacies into the composition classroom. Others, like the New London Group, argued more generally in the past that "Literacy pedagogy now must account for the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies (61). The work of the New London Group predates Yancey, but her work to incorporate these ideas into composition pedagogy specifically echoes the point they make— "it may well be that we have to rethink what we are teaching, and, in particular, what new learning needs literacy pedagogy might now address" (61). Videogames present an ideal text for accomplishing this both in composition studies and for examining 21st century literacy practices given their rich and varied genres. "Any successful theory of pedagogy must be based on views about how the

human mind works in society and classrooms, as well as about the nature of teaching and learning" (82), and in the coming chapters I will outline several ways videogame-infused pedagogy can accomplish this goal.

Many within the field worked to make the connection between the importance of literacy practices and videogames more explicit. Among them, Eric Zimmerman makes the connection between literacies and videogames explicit by stating that "traditional ideas about literacy have centered on reading and writing— the ability to understand, exchange, and create meaning through text, speech, and other forms of language" (23). Hui-Yin Hsu and Shiang-Kwei Wang build on Zimmerman's "gaming literacies" by bringing gaming literacy and "new literacies" together. The authors move the discussion of videogames and literacy closer to composition studies by locating it in terminology already permeating the field and those made foundational in Yancey's work. Hsu and Wang specifically focus on how thanks to the "profound change in new technologies such as video technologies, the Internet, and gaming software, the notion of new literacies has launched a new era in the examination of literacy" (401). Meanwhile, Alice Robinson connects videogames and writing instruction together by echoing Hsu and Wang and adding that "as professionals, writing instructors and video game designers are tasked with creating spaces where the potential for skilled creativity and problem-solving can be practiced and assessed. Understanding how this process works helps us begin to make sense of our questions about video games' significance as places for literacy" (368).

Similarly, Jonathan Alexander notes that "many in the larger field of composition studies are not yet aware of the possibilities for transforming the way we approach writing instruction that emerge when critically considering the potential place of video and computer gaming in the composition classroom" (36). Alexander brings literacies into this discussion by pointing out that

"gaming offers us a rich venue to see *multiple* literacies— the visual, technological, and textual—at play. […] Turning our attention to gaming, then, gives us a significant opportunity to examine complex literate and rhetorical work in action" (37). Alexander also discusses literacies in videogame play and how they influence the writing classroom by exhibiting literacy reflectivity (53), trans-literacies (54), multicultural literacies (55), collaborative writing (55), and critical literacies (57) among others. Thus, videogame-infused composition pedagogy spans modes of composition and environments where students write and "cuts to the heart of what we as compositionists *should* be doing: offering students a diversity of writing experiences *and* encouraging them to become more *conscious* writers—that is, writers rhetorically aware of how audience, genre, and tone work in a variety of writing environments" (59). These articles locate videogames inside of literacy studies and composition pedagogy, and serve as a foundation for a discussion about videogames, composition, literacy, and pedagogy. Alexander, with the multiple calls to composition, videogames, and literacy aids the points made by Yancey, The New London Group, Zimmerman, Hsu and Wang, and Robinson by showing how important fostering new literacy practices proves in the composition classroom as well as how important videogames can help accomplish this goal. The literature on games, learning, and literacy established a need for writing instruction to foster and capitalize on the new literacies our students possess and should develop.

As a theoretical backing the calls of Yancey and the New London Group serve as an impetus for shifts in composition theory. The work of Zimmerman, Hsu and Wang, Robinson, and Alexander respond in part by connecting videogames to composition and literacy studies despite their range of backgrounds and approaches. Composition theory proves remarkably difficult to connect through a set of common practices, however. Composition theory and

pedagogies show remarkable range. Suggesting a single means for incorporating videogames in the composition classroom therefore proves significantly more difficult on a practical level. The Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing addresses the broad spectrum of composition pedagogy in many ways, and brings together the otherwise disparate field of composition with a series of core tenets. The following sections will introduce the Framework for Success and make the connections to videogame-infused pedagogy explicit.

<p align="center">**2.3 The Framework for Success and Videogame-Infused Pedagogy**</p>

The Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, and The National Writing Project collaborated to develop and endorse the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing. This document "describes the rhetorical and twenty-first-century skills as well as habits of mind and experiences that are critical for college success" ("Framework for Success" 1). The Framework for Success serves as a sort of successor to the WPA Outcomes Statement, a document born from questions and concerns voiced on the WPA listserv in 1996 (Harrington 321). In her introduction to the WPA Outcomes Statement in 2001, Yancey submits 4 questions asked among writing program administrators, concluding with: "given sufficient commonality, would it be possible to articulate a general curricular framework for first-year composition, regardless of institutional home, student demographics, and instructor characteristics? Could we do this in a way that doesn't prescribe or infringe?" (Harrington 321). Yancey answers this question by stating that it can. The WPA Outcomes Statement inevitably states that "the Outcomes Statement is a curricular document that speaks to the common expectations, students of first-year for composition programs in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century" (Harrington 323). Thus, the WPA Outcomes Statement, and now

the Framework for Success, serves as a standard across many universities and composition pedagogies to bring the vast array of approaches to teaching writing together.

The Framework for Success features a rebranded version of the WPA Outcomes Statement in addition to 8 Habits of Mind. This chapter focuses on the Framework for Success's Habits of Mind whereas chapter three shows how my pilot course implementing videogame-infused pedagogy targets the Habits of Mind *and* Outcomes. This theoretical examination explores how instructors may use videogames in the classroom, thus assessing the outcomes cannot currently be done nor does it mesh with the goals of this project. The list of Habits of Mind I will explore and explain in further depth in the following sections includes: Curiosity, Openness, Engagement, Creativity, Persistence, Responsibility, Flexibility, and Metacognition. These Habits of Mind target the development of Rhetorical Knowledge, Critical Thinking, Writing Processes, Knowledge of Conventions, and the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments ("Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing" 1). The WPA, NCTE, and NWP designed this document as scalable for the needs of different instructors and institutions and as a result, hundreds of two- and four-year universities adapted or adopted the Framework ("Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing" 2), making it an ideal site for situating videogame-infused pedagogy. The Framework's colossal scope makes it a prime starting point for seeking new ways of building on literature advocating moving the field of composition forward by incorporating new literacy practices and the notion that videogames may prove helpful in reaching this outcome. The final outcome listed in the Framework for Success, the "ability to compose in multiple environments" ("Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing" 1) only further leaves the door open for videogame-infused pedagogy to help students develop composition skills "from traditional pen and paper to electronic technologies" (1) on a

large scale. This larger move led to several developments, including the establishment of computer classrooms for composition courses and provides the ideal point of entry for videogame-infused pedagogy in composition.

The question of how best to synthesize the goals of composition and the new movements seeking to include new literacies—the goal of covering composition "from traditional pen and paper to electronic technologies"—looms heavily over the abundance of technologies and approaches to teaching composition. Given this, no document or approach to composition can possess universal guidelines and appeal. How, then, does the field move forward from this point, where computers and the field of composition collide in an attempt to move composition pedagogy into the digital age, without examining the wealth of opportunities presented by computers in the classroom space? How can we attempt to synthesize the movements in the field towards the digital age while remaining adoptable and adaptable, like the Framework for Success? The connections between videogame-infused pedagogy and composition studies emerge from embracing the scale and scope of composition studies with an adaptable and adoptable approach— one of my goals in defining videogame-infused pedagogy. This chapter began by discussing the larger calls in the field of composition as an impetus for the work done in composition and literacy studies connecting videogames and composition. The range of composition pedagogies noted by Harrington and Yancey which necessitated the WPA Outcomes Statement and later led to the Framework for Success also inform the adaptability and adoptability of videogame-infused pedagogy. Thus, mapping videogame-infused pedagogy onto the Framework for Success shows a range of ways instructors can utilize videogames in the composition classroom while also fostering the Habits of Mind and targeting certain Outcomes. In the following sections, I will continue to move from composition studies into game studies by

mapping the Habits of Mind onto the work of James Paul Gee and Ian Bogost in order to illustrate the connections between theories in composition and game studies toge and make them explicit for composition pedagogy in new ways.

2.4 Gee's Learning Principles and the Framework for Success

James Gee's learning principles and the book they come from, *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*, represent a watershed moment in the examination of videogames and learning. While scholarship points to few dozen studies linking games and education (Egenfeldt-Nielson), Gee shows concrete examples of commercially available games and a range of learning principles they engage. In many ways, as the title of his book suggests, Gee builds on the work of literacy scholars and his previous work with the New London Group. Conversations surrounding videogames and learning inevitably trace back to Gee's work in *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*, and with good reason. As one of the first expansive explorations of games and learning extending beyond examinations seen elsewhere, Gee's book remains among the most referenced texts in discussions germane to games and learning. Other reasons persist for Gee's continued impact on learning and videogames beyond his role as one of the first scholars to direct sustained attention to the learning benefits and possibilities for videogames. Gee's book is divided into 8 chapters focusing on 36 learning principles. In his introduction, Gee states that "if the principles of learning in good video games *are* good, then better theories of learning are embedded in the video games many children in elementary and high school play than in the schools they attend" (5). In his introduction, Gee sets up videogames as a place where principles of learning exist, and makes cursory attempts to connect these principles to several fields, but never sustains much attention to English, let alone composition. This section will extrapolate the connections between Gee's

learning principles and the Habits of Mind to make the parallels between learning theories

focused on videogames and composition studies explicit.

Of Gee's 36 principles no fewer than 15 relate directly to the Habits of Mind laid out in

the Framework and foster the types of learning we seek in the composition classroom. These

obvious and sustained connections generate a possibility space where explorations of

videogames and composition pedagogy can occur. Considering the range and scope of both the

Framework for Success and Gee's learning principles, both approaches leave room for scalability

for a range of instructors and pedagogical approaches to engage with. Many of Gee's principles

relate to more baseline elements of education like the Active Learning Principle by claiming that

"all aspects of the learning environment (including the ways in which the semiotic domain is

designed and presented) are set up to encourage active and critical, not passive, learning" (221).

Passive learning seems an unlikely pedagogical ideal for many instructors, and as such, makes

principles similar to this one relatively universal. While this by no means limits the value of

active learning it does however suggest potential for dismissal by some as less important for

composition studies and the exploration of new literacies. Several of Gee's principles, including

many I do not focus on here, relate directly to the Habits of Mind present in the Framework for

Success.

The first habit of mind, Curiosity, presents an obvious connection to what Gee calls the

Discovery Principle, wherein "overt telling is kept to a well-thought-out-minimum, allowing

ample opportunity for the learner to experiment and make discoveries" (142). Within a more

helpful context, Gee discusses this principle in the fifth chapter of his book focused on "Telling

and Doing." Here, Gee discusses a few games and how the principles directly relate to them. Gee

discusses the game *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*. He also makes connections between

learners and how they "can do much with lots of overt information that a teacher has explicitly told them outside the context of immersion in actual practice. At the same time, learners cannot learn without some overt information; they cannot discover everything for themselves" (120). A combination of videogames and composition pedagogy can connect to allow students to understand information in the proper contexts, but also allow learners to seek information themselves with the tools provided. The Framework defines Curiosity as "the desire to know more about the world" (2), and by balancing the explicit demands of our pedagogy on our students and presenting information in the proper contexts we can achieve a similar balance to *Tomb Raider* in the composition classroom.

Like many of the Habits of Mind, several of Gee's principles directly relate to the second, Openness, including the Ongoing Learning Principle, Cultural Models About the World Principle, and Cultural Models About Learning Principle. The Framework defines Openness as "the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking in the world [...] fostered when writers are encouraged to […] practice different ways of gathering, investigating, developing, and presenting information" (8). The Ongoing Learning Principle focuses on the fact that "the distinction between the learner and master is vague, since learners, thanks to the operation of the 'regime of competence' principle […] must, at higher and higher levels, undo their routinized mastery to adapt to new or changed conditions. There are cycles of learning, automatization, undoing automatization, and new, reorganized automatization" (68). Gee sees games as capable of building up and subsequently shifting a sense of mastery over content through new contexts in gameplay. This principle suggests games and videogame play can foster openness to learning as part of a rigorous pedagogy. This focus on providing cycles of learning and mastery keeps

players on their toes in videogames makes for a worthy complement to the Openness cited by the Framework.

The Cultural Models about the World and Cultural Models about Learning Principle from Gee also focus on expanding the learners' perspectives on the world and learning itself. Gee sets up his Cultural Models About the World principle by stating that "learning is set up in such a way that learners come to think consciously and reflectively about some of their cultural models regarding the world, without denigration of their identities, abilities, or social affiliations, and juxtapose them to new models that may conflict with or otherwise relate to them in various ways" (176-177). He follows this up with the Cultural Models About Learning Principle and suggests that "learning is set up in such a way that learners come to think consciously and reflectively about their cultural models of learning and themselves as learners, without denigration of their identities, abilities, or social affiliations, and juxtapose them to new models of learning and themselves as learners" (177). Like the previous principle, both get at a key point in the Framework for Success—that a student can "examine their own perspectives to find connections to the perspectives of others" (8) and thereby foster Openness. Gee notes in his chapter on Cultural Models that many freely available games like *Under Ash* and *Ethnic Cleansing* present challenging models of the world and require students to reflect critically on them.

From here, the Habits of Mind shift to two things Gee shows videogames connecting to frequently: Engagement and Creativity. By "engagement," the Framework for Success means "a sense of investment and involvement with learning" (1). This ties directly into Gee's Probing Principle and Active, Critical Learning Principle. Games engage players with the worlds they present by allowing them the chance to probe them. This kind of "learning is a cycle of probing

the world (doing something); reflecting in and on this action, on this basis, forming a hypothesis; reprobing the world to test this hypothesis; and then accepting or rethinking the hypothesis" (105). Videogames provide low-stakes spaces where this kind of exploration and engagement can occur. Furthermore, the Active, Critical Learning Principle sets games up as spaces, like learning, where "the learning environment[s] […] are set up to encourage active and critical, not passive, learning" (Gee 41). As such, these two principles relate closely to Engagement, fostered when writers "act upon new knowledge that they have discovered" and "find meanings new to them or build on existing meaning as a result of new connections" ("Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing" 8). By using Gee's learning principles as outlined here players and writers are capable of learning new ways of interacting with the world and engaging with new ideas, as seen in similar principles and the Framework for Success.

Gee's principles connect to Creativity through the Multiple Routes Principle and Transfer Principle. The Framework outlines creativity as "the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas" (8), fostered when students "take risks by exploring questions, topics, and ideas that are new to them" as well as when students "use methods that are new to them to investigate questions, topics, and ideas" (8-9). This Habit of Mind intersects with Gee's Multiple Routes Principle. Gee states that "there are multiple ways to move ahead. This allows learners to make choices, rely on their own strengths and styles of learning and problem solving, while also exploring alternative styles" (105). Both Gee and the Framework establish the potential for students to take risks in writing, research, and games. Furthermore, Gee's Transfer Principle aligns with many goals within the field of composition studies. Whereas he discusses this principle in action when he applied tactics used for defeating boss characters in violent, mature games like *American McGee's Alice* and *Return to Castle*

25

Wolfenstein, the Transfer Principle emphasizes that "learners are given ample support for an opportunity to practice transferring what they have learned earlier to later problems, including problems that require adapting and transforming that earlier learning" (142). Consideration of the concepts our students may transfer to other contexts becomes increasingly crucial in modern composition pedagogies, and videogames present clear instances of transferring concepts. Furthermore, adopting a videogame-infused pedagogy encourages careful reflection and can foster the ability to "take risks" and explore "ideas that are new" in students.

Gee's learning principles also connect frequently to Persistence, Responsibility and Flexibility. Persistence means "the ability to sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects" ("Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing" 1), making the Bottom-Up Skills Principle useful here. It states that "basic skills are not learned in isolation or out of context, rather, what counts as a basic skill is discovered bottom up by engaging in more and more of the game/domain or games/domains like it. Basic skills are genre elements of a given type of game/domain" (142). This move to teach skills within context as opposed to isolation bears similarities to new pedagogical approaches to teaching composition, and fits well with the Framework's goal to convince students to "grapple with challenging ideas, texts, processes, or projects; follow through, over time, to complete tasks, processes, or projects; and consistently take advantage of in-class […] and out-of-class […] opportunities to refine their work" (9). Exposure to multiple and similar genres of written, visual, and gaming texts allows students to meet the standards of both Gee and the Framework. The Committed Learning Principle encourages lasting engagements with learning experiences in spaces players find compelling since "learners participate in an extended engagement (lots of effort and practice) as an extension of their real world identities in relation to a virtual identity to which they feel some commitment

and a virtual world they find compelling" (Gee 64). The connections players can make in games provide compelling opportunities to reinforce Persistence in the classroom.

Utilizing videogames can foster Responsibility as well, with Gee noting that the Affinity Group Principle and Insider Principle allow players to become bonded together in their gameplay activities and take on the roles of teacher, insider, and producer as opposed to only consuming, making them accountable as part of a peer group while also placing significant responsibilities on them. The Framework defines Responsibility as "the ability to take ownership of one's actions and understand the consequences of those actions for oneself and others" fostered upon encouraging students to "recognize their role in learning; act on the understanding that learning is shared among the writer and others […]; and engage and incorporate the ideas of others, giving credit to those ideas by using appropriate attribution" (9). Gee notes that in the Affinity Group Principle for games and learning "learners constitute an 'affinity group,' that is, a group that is bonded primarily through shared endeavors, goals, and practices and not shared race, gender, nation, ethnicity, or culture" (212). The power of games to provide spaces where players become experts of knowledge in addition to allowing a variety of ideal contexts like game development for helping students to collaboratively create and understand learning in different ways makes them an equally powerful tool for the composition classroom. The Insider Principle highlights that "the learner is an 'insider,' 'teacher,' and 'producer' (not just a 'consumer') able to customize the learning experience and domain/game from the beginning and throughout the experience" (212). Games can make connections to online communities and help students become a significant part of teaching and take ownership of knowledge, again making them ideal for complementing both the Framework for Success and composition pedagogy.

Videogames also engage with Flexibility remarkably well. Not only through principles already discussed, like the Multiple Routes Principle, but the Regime of Competence Principle and Ongoing Learning principle work together to provide players with chances to learn, apply, relearn and reapply knowledge in a variety of circumstances (68) and make flexibility crucial for both gameplay and composition. Noted previously, the Regime of Competence Principle suggests that "the learner gets ample opportunity to operate within, but at the outer edge of, his or her resources, so that at those points things are felt as challenging but not 'undoable'" (Gee 68). Significant commonality exists with the Ongoing Learning Principle. The Framework defines the kind of flexibility seen as valuable for the context of writing classrooms as "the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demands" (9). Students who exhibit this "approach writing assignments in multiple ways, depending on the task and the writer's purpose and audience; recognize that conventions [...] are dependent on discipline and context; and reflect on the choices they make in light of context, purpose, and audience" (9). Like many of the Habits of Mind, a wealth of Gee's principles apply, and many of them reinforce that students need to learn the value of contexts in writing. Once again we see videogames and Gee's principles in support of a major component of the goals of composition pedagogy.

The Framework for Success concludes its list of Habits of Mind with Metacognition, or "the ability to reflect on one's own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes used to structure knowledge" ("Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing" 1). Not only do we see the cultural aspects of this definition engaged by the cultural principles discussed above in the section on Openness, but instructors can engage metacognitive processes through videogame play while incorporating the ideas behind Gee's Text Principle, Intertextual Principle, and Multimodal Principle. The Text Principle pushes for learners to understand texts as

something more than verbal or embedded, but as embodied experiences (106). Learners better understand how genres operate through the embodied experiences provided in gameplay, as the Intertextual Principle states, because "understanding a group of texts as a family (genre) of texts is a large part of what helps the learner make sense of such texts" (224). Finally, games engage with what Gee calls the Multimodal Principle, or that "meaning and knowledge are built up through various modalities (images, texts, symbols, interactions, abstract design, sound, etc.), not just words" (224). Games are multimodal texts through their synthesis of music, visuals, written text, and tactile feedback through controllers, yet the benefits of this synthesis remain ignored by leaving games outside of the classroom space.

Gee's learning principles make connections between games and learning far easier to both explore and cite, and mapping them onto the Habits of Mind locates Gee's important research on the benefits of games and learning within composition studies. As a way of locating points of contact between videogames, learning, literacy, and composition pedagogy Gee's research proves essential to my definition of videogame-infused pedagogy. The lack of focus on application remains one issue Gee shares with the majority of research done on videogames and learning. Like the Habits of Mind in the Framework for Success, Gee's presentation of the learning principles divorces them from classroom context. As seen above both Gee and the Habits of Mind clearly offer a great deal for composition pedagogy, but their practical applications remain largely abstract thus far. This project seeks to make these connections clear in practice, and will display them in practice in chapter three. In the next section of this chapter I will focus on Ian Bogost's work with the rhetoric of videogames and procedurality to illustrate the next crucial step in the discussion of videogames and composition studies: how to move from the exigence of Yancey and the New London Group to the theoretical foundations of literacy

scholars and put the theoretical guidelines presented by the Framework and Gee into practice in the classroom.

2.5 Ian Bogost's Notion of Procedurality and the Framework

While James Gee shows games and learning broadly, Bogost focuses on what games *do*, and the importance of playing them. Ian Bogost is a game designer and leading force in videogame scholarship. He devotes sections in *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames* and "The Rhetoric of Video Games" to the possibilities for videogames in education and focuses on procedurality in both. In his discussion of procedurality Bogost focuses on two things specifically: procedural literacy, and procedural rhetoric. By playing videogames students begin to understand an advanced form of argument (procedural rhetoric) and according to Bofost they can become procedurally literate through gameplay itself. Thus, playing games fosters new literacy practices in students and an understanding of advanced digital rhetorics. This section will map procedurality onto the Habits of Mind using specific examples of freely available games to illustrate how actively playing games can foster the Habits of Mind in addition to Gee's work. Bogost's focus on playing videogames to foster procedural literacy proves crucial to videogame-infused pedagogy as he presents an exigence for actively playing games in a classroom setting. Mapping procedurality onto the Habits of Mind locates Bogost's work within the context of composition pedagogy.

As a term, Bogost traces procedurality back to *Hamlet on the Holodeck*, written by Janet Murray where she "defines the four essential properties of digital artifacts: procedurality, participation, spatiality, and encyclopedic scope" ("Rhetoric" 122). While procedurality applies to a wide range of digital texts, Bogost points out that "Chris Crawford has used the term *process intensity* to refer to the 'degree to which a program emphasizes processes instead of data,'" and

that "unlike productivity software such as word processors and spreadsheets, video games are usually created with some expressive purpose in mind; they represent models of systems or spaces players inhabit, rather than serving as mere tools" (122). While his assertion that modes of expression used regularly in composition such as word processors are "mere tools" undermines their potential for expression his point about the process intensity of productivity software remains valid. Videogames become increasingly process intensive annually and as new hardware and game engines become available. Thus, "as a high process intensity medium, video games can benefit significantly from a study of procedural rhetoric" ("Rhetoric" 125).

Bogost's work as an offshoot of Murray's procedurality manifests in his terms procedural rhetoric and procedural literacy. For Bogost, all games use processes to represent systems. Even games as seemingly different as *Animal Crossing* (a game wherein players participate in a small community of animals) and *Doom* (where players to slaughter aliens to survive) are subordinate to processes. Therefore:

> When video games represent things—anything from space demons to long-term debt—they do so through procedurality, by constructing rule-based models of their chosen topics. In *Doom*'s model of the world, emphasis is placed on the trajectory and power of weaponry. In *Animal Crossing*'s model of the world, emphasis is placed on work, trade, and arrangement of the environment ("Rhetoric" 125).

In this way "video games make arguments about how social or cultural systems work in the world—or how they could work, or don't work" ("Rhetoric" 136). Not all games possess a *strong* procedural rhetoric, however, which Bogost defines as "the practice of persuading through processes in general and computational processes in particular" (*Persuasive* 3). Bogost

calls procedural literacy: "interacting with procedural systems that make strong ties between the processes in a model and a representational goal—those with strongly argued procedural rhetorics. Otherwise said, we can become procedurally literate through play itself" (*Persuasive* 255). Bogost keeps his discussion of procedurality intentionally broad to allow procedural analysis of several types of games and situations so that an analysis of capitalism in Nintendo's *Animal Crossing* proves as legitimate as an examination of the social dynamics of modern schools in Rockstar Games' *Bully*. This wealth of possibilities makes procedurality applicable in a remarkably wide range of contexts in the same way as the Framework for Success.

Bogost wastes no time in his section on learning and videogames in *Persuasive Games*: the first line reads "are videogames educational?" He answers promptly with "the answer largely depends on what 'educational' means" (Bogost 233). Bogost cites traditional notions of education and what he calls "didactic pedagogy, conjuring visions of classrooms and textbooks" (233). He goes on to say that "videogame players develop procedural literacy through interacting with the abstract models of specific real or imagined processes presented in the games they play. Videogames teach biased perspectives about how things work. And the way they teach such perspectives is through procedural rhetorics, which players 'read' through direct engagement and criticism" (Bogost 260). Procedurality places a focus on learning, criticism, and interaction, all done through exploration and with guidance from an instructor. Bogost never explicitly states that instructors are the best resource for unpacking and criticizing game worlds, but his statements on the relationship between videogames and learning certainly do leave a space open for an instructor using videogame-infused pedagogy to fill. As a theory of connecting games, learning, and rhetoric together, Bogost's procedurality stands on its own, but by making the

connections to composition pedagogy explicit its role within composition pedagogy becomes more than an exigence for playing games in the classroom.

Like Gee's learning principles connections between the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing and Bogost's notion of procedurality exist. Procedurality provides significant value for this project as it places an impetus on actively playing videogames, and the process of playing games and procedurality can be mapped onto and further reinforce the Habits of Mind. I designed videogame-infused pedagogy to build primarily on Gee and Bogost as their work makes the connections between games and learning and literacy clear (Gee), and place an impetus on playing videogames in the classroom (Bogost). Bogost makes a point out of using videogames as systems that present the world in a biased manner based on computer code, and in several games we see this enacted. I will examine the Habits of Mind through the lens of specific games in composition pedagogy as opposed to the vague connections seen in Gee's learning principles to bridge the gaps between theory and practice in videogames and composition studies.

A range of freely available games illustrate the points made by Bogost in his book and article on procedural rhetoric and what this offers composition pedagogy. This section will map Bogost's procedurality onto the Habits of Mind by locating each within the context of specific games available for use in the classroom. Returning to Engagement, *First Person Tutor* presents rich opportunities for composition classrooms. Engagement asks for students to make connections to the ideas of themselves and others and using a game like *First Person Tutor* draws connections between videogames and the Framework for Success and an otherwise obscure process—student evaluation—as well as the reality of our expectations as instructors. In *First Person Tutor* players become a TA who must pay back a mountain of loan debt by finding

grammatical and spelling errors in a paper to fail students who insulted your employer on Facebook. The game rewards players with additional pay for finding more errors and thereby further ruining a student's grade. Not only does this abstract system provide students with a chance to sit at a table and take on the responsibility of evaluating student projects (a regular occurrence for composition instructors), but it also provides a unique opportunity to discuss the values behind assessment in our classrooms and allows students to examine a system of assessment (a flawed one in this case, providing ample opportunity for criticism). Bogost would argue that this sort of play helps our students become procedurally literate by actively participating in a system and then unpacking it through classroom discussion. This connects with Engagement in our classrooms and provides several avenues for productive discussion about composition and for a range of pedagogical styles and assessment practices.

Further connections exist between *First Person Tutor* and another Habit of Mind— Persistence. The Framework hopes for Persistence to foster a desire to grapple with challenging ideas and texts in addition to working for long-term benefits. By the nature of the system it duplicates *First Person Tutor* provides a prime opportunity to connect to the range of processes explicated in our classrooms in this Habit of Mind, but videogames cultivate long-term commitment exceptionally well. *Minecraft* stands out as a prominent game of this Habit of Mind from the independent development community. In *Minecraft* players can build anything they desire by using blocks made of a variety of materials. The power to build and design anything students may desire ties into many of the Habits of Mind, but in particular it highlights the ability to stick with a given approach to building. While the full game of *Minecraft* requires installations and payment, a Java-enabled web browser can access the free-building mode of the game for free. Aside of this more abstract exploration of Persistence relating to games a more powerful

representation comes from titles like *The Wikipedia Game*. This title tasks players with finding a particular page on Wikipedia within a set number of clicks or challenges them to find it with a certain time set on the clock. This requires critical thinking about the connections between a variety of topics and encourages discussion in our classrooms about how titles like *The Wikipedia Game* abstract processes like research and how these systems may or may not work in our composition classrooms.

Instructors can broach discussions about the process of research through texts such as *The Wikipedia Game* while fostering Habits of Mind such as Responsibility. Examining research methods presents an ideal opportunity to discuss the necessity for responsible writing and attribution practices in our classrooms and how our pedagogical or university mandates may inform the systems represented here. The power (and subsequent powerlessness of needing to find a particular page using nothing but links on Wikipedia) presented to students in *The Wikipedia Game* also illustrates the abstract process of seeking out information and suggests a need to consider how sources may lead to others in the process of researching a major project or simple research paper, thereby allowing them to "recognize their own role in learning" ("The Framework for Success for Success in Postsecondary Writing" 5). This also requires considerable versatility on the part of our students as thrust upon them by the deluge of information and content at all times online.

These same types of skills become valuable when playing games like Molleindustria's *Turboflex*. While many videogames require advanced understanding of a variety of inputs and systems few make this the focus of the gameplay itself. Jarring shifts between gameplay mechanics define *Turboflex* uses this alienating gameplay style as a rhetorical device to show the struggle of workers who cannot find full-time occupations must shift between several workplace

contexts as experts in none. This plight not only means a lot of opportunities to discuss social concerns through *Turboflex*'s abstraction of the process of switching between skillsets, but also a chance to become aware of shifts in context. While the means of playing a game like *Turboflex* remains the same (clicking the mouse), what those mouse clicks mean and what output results shifts drastically based on the new context players find themselves in. These skills prove valuable not only in digital environments, but also for understanding how the fundamental work of our classrooms and field — composing — changes depending on context. Similarly, *Argument Champion*, another free Abode Flash-based browser game, presents opportunities to foster important conversations about arguments, audience awareness, and changes in context. In *Argument Champion*, players choose a term from a short list and either argue in favor of their term or against their opponent's term by connecting the audience's ideas with these terms in as few moves as possible. This means careful selection of terms, ideas, considering an outside audience, and making points quickly and successfully within considerable constraints. The abstracted representation of argumentation remains incomplete in many ways but asks students to consider choices based on contexts, audiences, and purposes.

For this reason games like *Argument Champion* highlight Habits of Mind like Metacognition. Players must actively participate in an abstracted system and adapt to its rules to succeed. Considering that *Argument Champion* asks our students to immediately consider what makes a good argument and how to appeal to an audience before crafting the argument, students engage with metacognition. The necessarily complex representation of argument actively challenges students to consider what constitutes an argument and how to make one in either agreement or defiance of *Argument Champion*'s representation of how to make arguments. Thus, when playing this game students must "examine processes they use to think and write in a

36

variety of disciplines and contexts" (5). Players cannot progress in *Argument Champion* without making decisions about approaches to arguments, and whether to build on their own points or attack someone else's. The game provides a meta representation all on its own, but when combined with discussion in the classroom it becomes easily possible to see the value of games like this for the composition classroom. Much like *Argument Champion* prompts players to consider audiences, constraints, and exigences, Bitzer's work proves foundational for many approaches to composition pedagogy. As an accompaniment for texts and ideas like "The Rhetorical Situation," games like *Argument Champion* shine, and ask our students to reflect on complex, abstract processes carefully and to become participants at the same time. Doing this in a videogame as opposed to a writing prompt or project, as Gee notes, also presents a low-stakes space for this participation and understanding to occur without the burden of designing their own arguments first or writing hundreds of words.

Argument Champion presents multiple opportunities to foster many of the ideals related to the Habit of Mind Creativity. Videogames provide novel approaches learning for our students by default and using a videogame as a pedagogical tool will require students to "use methods that are new to them to investigate questions, topics, and ideas" (5). The representational power of videogames as put forth by Bogost's procedurality draws out this Habit of Mind in our classrooms. The traditional stigma of videogames as blood-soaked killing simulators and objectification tools for little boys means that an examination of games such as those listed above can generate considerable introspection for our students including a reworking of the expectations of not only games but also arguments and representational systems. Conversations about the robust representational systems in games can carry over into many mediums we actively incorporate into the composition classroom, including a wealth of digital and visual

arguments we ask our students to compose routinely with video essays or images altered in Adobe Photoshop. Discussions about constructing arguments in several contexts proves necessary to both create and criticize these arguments and are fundamental to Creativity as defined by the Framework, and similarly invaluable to understanding many multimodal texts.

The power of a host of freely available browser-based games not only serves videogame-infused pedagogy and the composition classroom well for fostering Creativity, but there are also several games capable of accomplishing similar things for Curiosity. The games listed above provide robust opportunities for reconsidering modes of expression, representation, and research, but also provide ample opportunities for writers to "learn more about the world" (4). While other mediums allow players the chance to see parts of the rest of the world videogames provide players the rare opportunity to take part in these scenarios and situations. Bogost presents an example of one such game in his book *How to do Things with Videogames*. Here, he introduces a game titled *Darfur is Dying* in his section focusing on how games allow players to experience empathy by taking on the role of otherwise inaccessible characters. In this case, he notes that "in *Darfur is Dying*, weakness is all the player ever gets. There is no magic to invoke, no heroic lineage to appeal to; strength adequate to survive is simply inaccessible" (*How to do Things* 19). The genocide in Sudan serves as a backdrop for this experience, and the game requires players to not only experience a difficult situation to access, but to better understand another world. Another browser-based game, *3rd World Farmer*, asks players to do the same. Players learn through and understand a representation of a real world system by experiencing farming in harsh African conditions in a system where nearly certain failure places players at the mercy of the system presented by the game's code. Both cases amount to understanding the harshness of survival in inhospitable environments. Through representation and process, players may see and

learn more about the world around them in ways videos and articles simply cannot while simultaneously requiring and encouraging students to become literate in complex virtual/digital environments.

Finally, this shows clear connections to the remaining Habit of Mind, Openness. This Habit of Mind suggests that our classrooms foster "the willingness to consider new ways of being and thinking about the world" (4). How better to "find connections with the perspectives of others" (4) than to actually embody those experiences? Countless games approach this topic, and many of them, like *3rd World Farmer* and *Darfur is Dying* are available from a web browser. Other more intellectually challenging games such as *Race Warriors* ask players to do the same. This game asks players to consider incredibly complex systems such as racism through a simple questionnaire and results in assigning players a race and forcing them to assault another ethnic group. The developers built *Race Warriors* on a hacked version of an NES game (*Ikari Warriors*) so the game's visuals are extremely simple and in no way reflect the reality of war or racism, but the questionnaire asks simple questions like "are you afraid of spiders?" and "do you like candles?" This subversive system asks players to consider how unrelated questions can thrust a new identity onto them, and then tells players to rally against someone of another race. The alienation and arbitrariness of the game's system invites players to question countless things both within the game and outside of it. *Race Warriors* claims to "Analyze Data and Run [a] Personalized Game" when a player's answers are submitted, but the game appears to randomize the race, background, and enemies for each player. What might this say about the perspectives of others or perhaps a complex system such as race relations? Unpacking and criticizing these arguments and seeing the world through other perspectives including other places in the world,

other races, other mindsets, and even the developers of the game prove worthwhile pursuits for our classrooms and tie together with the Framework for Success.

While Bogost lacks anything as succinct as Gee's principles his notion of procedurality and procedural rhetoric may accomplish something far more important: returning the focus to the games themselves and playing them. The direct application of procedurality to gameplay provides multiple and meaningful connections to the Framework for Success in addition to helping students to become procedurally literate by playing and criticizing games and the systems in them. Bogost states that "even though the player of a game might carry out the actions of the criminal, or the ninja, or the humanitarian, he does not necessarily endorse, reject, or adopt them outside of the game" (*Persuasive* 238). Instructors should approach games like *Race Warriors* with caution for the volatile content represented and its potential to lead to volatile discussions in the classroom space; playing games like this in the classroom and then discussing the real world processes as abstracted within the game means players may not accept, adopt, or reject the actions or processes seen in videogames (for better or worse), but students must nonetheless consider the processes and decide on their own thereby developing procedural literacy. The previous sections illustrate how incorporating videogames into composition pedagogy can bring together divergent theories of videogames, composition, and literacy when mapped onto the Habits of Mind and considered within the context of the composition classroom.

2.6 Towards a Videogame-Infused Pedagogy Focused on In-Class Application

The exploration of theory outlined above serves to explore a spectrum of positions from the calls to composition for new literacy scholarship made by Yancey and the New London Group to Bogost's work focused specifically on videogame play. Thus my work in defining videogame-

infused pedagogy in this chapter seeks ways of mapping theories within composition and videogames to apply both to movements within composition studies (as seen in the movements towards new literacy studies and videogames) and composition pedagogy (the Framework for Success). Several works in the body of literature described above show videogames as complementing (Hsu and Wang), fostering (Alexander), and embodying (Zimmerman) advanced literacy practices from within composition studies, whereas Gee and Bogost focus primarily on videogames as a lens for discovering and fostering learning and literacy practices. Videogame-infused pedagogy as I define it here responds to the calls made within the field of composition and the work independently produced in game studies to unite game theory and composition theory using the Framework for Success as a foundation for practical application inside of the classroom space for a range of composition pedagogies. As a result this chapter focused on more direct approaches to bringing together major theories and principles pertaining to videogames and composition studies. By showing the connections between two of the predominant approaches to game analysis and criticism (both focus on literacy as well), texts in composition studies, and the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing (and the Habits of Mind the composition classroom should foster) in previous sections this project attempted to make connections between videogame-infused pedagogy and composition more clear. Relationships quickly emerge from Gee's learning principles and the Habits of Mind and further echo in Bogost's procedurality in addition to an impetus for active gameplay in the classroom. This combination of approaches is not all-encompassing, but both approaches to games as facilitators of learning and procedural critique offer distinct complements to the Framework for Success as noted above.

The vast majority of approaches to illustrating videogames in the classroom (including composition) stop here, at a discussion of potential benefit and theory for videogames, learning, and literacy. This approach served the field well for years, but leaves little else to discuss; exploration of how a videogame-infused pedagogy looks in its implementation remains the untouched lynchpin. Many scholars quickly tell instructors they may tap into the benefits listed above by asking students to design games for/in class, but stop there (Hsu and Wang). This proposition serves those inherently interested in videogame-infused pedagogy well, as they may develop their own plans for how to implement such an approach, but what does this mean for the instructor looking to expand their pedagogical range to answer the calls made by the New London Group and Yancey by teaching with videogames? Or instructors without significant experiences with games or designing them? How can these instructors be expected to explore videogame-infused pedagogy as a practical matter without advanced knowledge of videogames and theory? With the scholarship present in the field today instructors not looking to blaze their own path through videogames and learning in the composition classroom are left without any options but to ignore the potential of videogames as texts for learning valuable skills for composing or make it their personal mission to learn how games work and how to make them a part of their courses. YouTube requires only a computer, the internet, and a play button; this ease of use led to it becoming essential to many modern composition pedagogies. Videogames lack a simple "play button," and this alone renders the barriers to entry significant.

The following chapter will focus on a display of pedagogical materials, assignments, and lessons, in addition discussions of games illustrating videogame-infused pedagogy in accessible ways for a wide range of composition instructors. This explication of videogame-infused pedagogy builds on the movements in education and literacy studies to acknowledge the

potential of videogames despite not showing these elements in practice. Through an examination

of plans and assignments for my course, ENC 1145: Writing About the Rhetoric of Videogames,

composition instructors will see ways videogames can enter the classroom without necessarily

becoming the core focus of their pedagogy. This project presents a pedagogy focused specifically

on videogames, but this need not be the goal of all instructors. This project proposes videogames

as neither a solution nor savior, but rather another way of engaging with the lofty goals of the

Framework for Success in our classrooms. Videogame-infused pedagogy as outlined in the

above sections builds on the work of compositionists, literacy scholars, and game scholars whose

work I successfully mapped onto the Framework for Success' Habits of Mind, thereby locating

videogames specifically within composition studies. In the following chapter I will continue the

work seen in my progression through theory by moving from theory to practice through a model

of implementation that connects the theories of Gee and Bogost to the frameworks outlined in

this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

AN EXAMINATION AND DISCUSSION OF ENC 1145: WRITING ABOUT THE RHETORIC OF VIDEOGAMES COURSE MATERIALS

3.1 The Shift to Praxis

This chapter's focus on praxis represents a key difference between my research and the scholarship on videogames in composition studies and the discussion surrounding videogames and new literacies. While encouraging glimpses into what videogames can do for learning and literacy exist (Bogost, Gee, deWinter, Hsu and Wang, Lieberman, Alexander), the field of composition has yet to provide concrete examples of what implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy *looks like*. I developed a model for video game infused pedagogy that brings together the theories discussed in the previous chapter and the implementation necessary to create a workable class. In this chapter I will discuss logistical considerations: implementations, units, lessons, and anecdotal evidence from a pilot course taught in the spring of 2013. This chapter will extrapolate the units of my course which address several facets of games and composition and show videogames as an active complement to composition pedagogy. Here I will present materials from my own course from Spring 2013, "It's Dangerous to go Alone! Take This: Writing About the Rhetoric of Videogames," embraced the notion of videogame-infused pedagogy to varying degrees in each unit as both a theme for the course and a standard component of topics related to the composition classroom.

First I would like to present a noteworthy caveat to this project: I am not suggesting that this approach is *the* single solution or approach to bringing videogames into the composition classroom, but rather *an* approach to doing so. With so many unanswered calls to composition

studies at large to both engage the new literacies of our students and bring videogames into the classroom, this pilot course and examination serves as a first step towards discussing videogame-infused pedagogy with concrete texts for doing so. Other approaches emphasize the connections between learning and videogames yet those texts (Gee, Bogost, etc.) do not to present approaches instructors can experiment with. The Framework for Success seeks to retain adaptability, adoptability, and scalability as core tenants, and so too does videogame-infused pedagogy as I define it in this project. The Framework for Success does not provide an easily prescribed approach to teaching composition, and my research does not aim to prescribe the best or "most correct" ways of implementing videogames in the composition classroom. Instead, I will outline several projects and games used to support the kinds of learning seen in Framework for Success.

3.2 Course Context and Logistics

I designed the course discussed in this chapter and received approval as an ENC 1145 course at Florida State University to be taught in Spring 2013 as a second semester requirement for First Year Composition. Three separate courses can be taken to fill this second semester requirement (ENC 1102, ENC 1142, and ENC 1145). This means that these courses require parity in addition to meeting the FYC requirements. The nature of the FYC program at FSU mandates that courses like the section of ENC 1145 I designed feature certain components to maintain parity with the required ENC 1102 courses also offered through the English department including journals and a research-intensive unit. These requirements are very much indicative of an institutional reality for every composition instructor: for those capable of incorporating games into their courses, many elements of the course start out predetermined and thus require instructors to shape course objectives around them. I designed this course as a genuine attempt to define what videogame-

infused pedagogy might look like in its earliest forms, but it also serves as a course designed first for fulfilling the needs of an ENC 1102 course as defined by Florida State University. Thus institutional requirements may guide the ways videogame-infused pedagogy can be embraced, or in the case of designing this course, present unique opportunities to build on composition curriculum to better meet the needs of students. In the case of FSU's FYC program the outcomes as stated in the WPA Outcomes Statement (later adapted for the Framework for Success) provided the primary guidelines, and as a result the implementation of videogame-infused pedagogy here focuses on the Habits of Mind and targeting the Outcomes seen in the Framework for Success and Habits of Mind as seen in the previous chapter.

Institutional and contextual issues aside, implementation becomes a primary concern for instructors interested in incorporating videogames into their pedagogical practices. Defining videogame-infused pedagogy thus requires an exploration of the realities of bringing videogames into the classroom space for a variety of contexts and composition studies in particular. Some scholars attempted to tackle this issue, as Jennifer deWinter et al. do in their piece "Computer Games Across the Curriculum: A Critical Review of an Emerging Techno-Pedagogy" by focusing on the harsh realities of implementing videogames in an instructor's curriculum. The reality, as deWinter et al. see it, is that "researching and teaching with games can be a relatively expensive endeavor [...] and generally require specialized machinery such as a console or high-end PC to run" (n.p.). Similarly, questions of access become crucial when considering implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy.

Addressing concerns of access is one of my goals in defining videogame-infused pedagogy. Three crucial ways to address this access come in the form of browser-based gaming, free downloadable games, and game streaming technology. The companies at the forefront of

these movements (Flash-based browser game sites like Newgrounds or Kongregate; the wealth of independently developed free games for computers; Valve and their Steam platform; OnLive's game streaming) provide methods for playing videogames in the classroom which remove the need for advanced hardware (OnLive) or provide games free of cost (Valve, browsers, independently developed games). For instructors interested in exploring these texts further, I created and regularly update a website focused on providing free resources for instructors as they become available ("Videogame-Infused Pedagogy"). The shifts happening in PC videogame distribution means more possibilities exist than ever for implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy, however, instructors should exhibit forethought and planning when pursuing videogame-infused pedagogy. In light of the unknown elements of installing games in the classroom space, especially given the lack of instructors implementing videogame-infused pedagogies, I advise wading gradually into the experience of videogame-infused pedagogy. Jumping directly into a videogame-infused pedagogy may result in barriers to entry sabotaging an instructor's best intentions and efforts. Thus, instructors considering a videogame-infused pedagogy deserve to feel empowered by the new possibilities for their pedagogies opening up via cloud gaming, browser-based games, the wealth of game demos available, and initiatives such as Steam for Schools, but becoming familiar with the limits of the classroom and university structure prove essential.

Beyond concerns of access, however, videogame-infused pedagogy can foster the types of learning we seek in composition studies and what it looks like in practice. The design of my course focusing on videogames served as a pilot for videogame-infused pedagogy built on the body of scholarship noted in previous chapters. I will discuss how I mapped videogame-infused pedagogy onto composition pedagogy in this chapter using the Framework for Success. In total I

split my course into a total of 6 different units, and used each in an attempt to explore a different facet of videogames and feed into a range of projects combined the goals of the Framework for Success and Bogost, which informed my implementation of videogame-infused pedagogy directly: Games and Places, Games as Rhetoric, Games as Stories, Games as Processes, Games as Texts, and Games as Social. I will discuss these units and their projects in further detail below, and each unit provides students unique ways of considering videogames and as a catalyst for the activities of the classroom. All units tie directly into a graded component of my course, and four connect to composition projects students complete both inside and outside of class; Games as Places, Games as Rhetoric, Games as Stories, and Games as Processes. I divided each of these units of the course into weeks and guided classroom activities for set amounts of time. The remaining units, Games as Texts and Games as Social, span throughout the semester and tie together the FSU FYC requirement for journals through a total of 10 blog entries (for Games as Social), and a series of presentations based on chapters of Bogost's book *How to do Things with Videogames* (for Games as Texts) as seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Units of Course

Units of Course	Duration	Assignments	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Targeted
Games as Texts	Semester-long	Multimodal presentations on Ian Bogost's book *How to do Things with Videogames*.	1. Curiosity 2. Metacognition 3. Persistence 4. Rhetorical Knowledge 5. Writing Processes

Table 3.1 - continued

Units of Course	Duration	Assignments	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Targeted
Games as Texts	Semester-long	Multimodal presentations on Ian Bogost's book *How to do Things with Videogames*.	6. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments
Games as Places	Weeks 1-4	Project with a written and visual component asking students to insert themselves into a game world by creating an avatar in the medium of their choice and writing about the component parts of the game world they would be part of.	1. Openness 2. Engagement 3. Creativity 4. Flexibility 5. Knowledge of Conventions 6. Writing Processes 7. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments
Games as Rhetoric	Weeks 5-9	Project with written and visual components asking students to apply Bogost's procedurality, Burke's Pentad, or Schell's Elemental Tetrad to a game of their choosing. Students must also acquire and integrate screenshots into the project.	1. Curiosity 2. Creativity 3. Flexibility 4. Metacognition 5. Knowledge of Conventions 6. Rhetorical Knowledge 7. Critical Thinking

Table 3.1 - continued

Games as Stories	Weeks 10-14	Using simple text-based game creation software (such as Twine), students must create their own game and one piece of promotional material for it (a game box, poster, or trailer).	1. Engagement 2. Creativity 3. Metacognition 4. Knowledge of Conventions 5. Writing Processes 6. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments 7. Rhetorical Knowledge
Games as Instructions	Weeks 15-16	Students play *Portal 2* in class for the final weeks and attempt to create their own puzzle chambers using the software included in Valve's Steam for Schools. Students must also write a set of instructions for the chamber they created, and give those instructions to another student to attempt to duplicate the chamber itself.	1. Engagement 2. Creativity 3. Responsibility 4. Flexibility 5. Rhetorical Knowledge 6. Critical Thinking 7. Writing Processes 8. Knowledge of Conventions 9. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments

Whereas chapter two focused strongly on how Gee's Learning Principles, Bogost's procedurality, and the Habits of Mind outlined in the Framework, this chapter focuses on applying these concepts, and thus incorporates the Outcomes. As noted previously, I did not design my current research to measure the Outcomes and also cannot give definitive statements about the success of these projects in regard to achieving the Outcomes, but my discussion here

illustrates a consciousness of the Outcomes as a crucial part of the Framework for Success, and

to show the theoretical ties I hope to explore further with additional research. While the terms

found in the Framework for Success do not explicitly brand them as such anymore the outcomes

the Habits of Mind fostered through "writing, reading, and critical analysis" consist of Rhetorical

Knowledge, Critical Thinking, Writing Processes, Knowledge of Conventions, and the Ability to

Compose in Multiple Environments. In the following sections I will discuss how each of the

units in ENC 1145: Writing About the Rhetoric of Videogames builds on the tradition of

composition at FSU while also embracing and addressing larger questions in the field and

literature surrounding games and learning, education, and composition pedagogy through the

Framework for Success.

3.2.1 Games as Texts

The first two units of my course I will discuss (Games as Texts and Games as Social) both lasted

the duration of the semester. While I designed these units to complement the timed sections of

the course by discussing them free of the context of the remaining timed units they stand on their

own to allow for ease of adaptation to other contexts. Throughout the semester students in my

ENC 1145 course read articles, watched videos, and read chapters from several texts about

videogames including the required text *How to do Things with Videogames* by Ian Bogost. The

chapters in his book focus on the many things videogames can do (such as simulating travel,

marketing, and art) in order to consider games as texts capable of "doing things" in the same

ways as other mediums we accept tacitly as valid learning texts. This connection served as a

running thread throughout my pilot course and I separated chapters of Bogost's book to relate to

the other units of the course in an attempt to show videogames as texts from a micro and macro

perspective (the world of games at large and how they relate to writing within the course and projects).

One common project in composition classrooms at Florida State University revolves around remediating a traditional alphabetic composition a student wrote by transforming it into another medium, usually a visual representation of the project students then present to the class. Bogost's book provides a unique opportunity to accomplish this same task while also making media microecology a consistent topic of conversation in the classroom through his book *How to do Things with Videogames*. Despite discussing an inherently visual medium in videogames the book contains absolutely no images. Bogost discusses several games briefly, but unlike *Persuasive Games* he provides literally zero accompanying images. This presents an opportunity for students to not only synthesize the content of his arguments about games as texts capable of wide array of things, but also to present these ideas visually and reinterpret them in light of that fact. This surface level connection to the conventions of the composition classroom at FSU provided an impetus for this semester-spanning unit and conversation on Games as Texts (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Games as Texts

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Fostered
Games as Texts	Multimodal presentations on selected chapters from Ian Bogost's book *How to do Things with Videogames*.	1. Curiosity 2. Metacognition 3. Persistence 4. Rhetorical Knowledge 5. Writing Processes 6. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments

Before returning to the Framework for Success I would like to build briefly on Alexander who argues that "through such assignments, we can prompt students to think about games as 'texts,' consider successful (and unsuccessful) communication during game play and the subsequent creation of discourse communities, make connections between gaming literacies and literacy skills students are developing outside of game play, and reflect on their literacy development by putting their experiences into conversation with other students and literacy experts" (53). Alexander discusses how to bring out literate practices through games in this quote, but his call for examining games as texts adds to the important connections assignments like this possess for the composition classroom. The Habits of Mind also play a crucial role in the development of this semester-long in-class discussion. By engaging with Bogost's text intellectually and visually, students engage with; Curiosity, as it asks students to consider games beyond entertainment purposes to "know more about the world"; Metacognition, because by its very nature Bogost's text challenges cultural assumptions and the resulting visual compositions and presentations allow students to "reflect on one's own thinking as well as on the individual cultural processes used to structure knowledge"; and Persistence by being a continuous project for the course and engaging students beyond the walls of the classroom for the duration of the semester and urges them to "sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects."

The Habits of Mind I targeted in this unit also connect to the outcomes listed in the Framework for Success including Rhetorical Knowledge, Writing Processes, and the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments. Rhetorical Knowledge, or "the ability to analyze and act on understandings of audiences, purposes, and contexts in creating and comprehending texts" (1) highlights Bogost's focus on procedural rhetoric in many chapters and considering how to

explain the chapters to an audience of their peers. Instructors as foster Critical Thinking, or "the ability to analyze a situation or text and make thoughtful decisions based on that analysis through writing, reading, and research" (1) through a broad range of topics in Bogost's book and careful consideration of how games operate as texts in several contexts. The Framework defines Writing Processes as "multiple strategies to approach and undertake writing and research." Open-ended explorations and representations of Bogost's chapters and remediating them in a visual manner of a student's choosing support this. The Framework defines Knowledge of Conventions as "the formal and informal guidelines that define what is considered to be correct and appropriate, or incorrect and inappropriate, in a piece of writing" (1). Students exhibit this through the multiple texts comprising their presentations: a performative element, a visual element, conveying information visually, and a written reflection. Lastly, videogame-infused pedagogy as implemented in my pilot course class seeks to foster the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments as frequently as possible, "from traditional pen and paper to electronic technologies" (1). While I left how to visually represent Bogost's ideas open for students' interpretation, many students opted for digital recreations of Bogost's text by incorporating images and video regularly. Like other assignments for this course I designed this one to complement composition pedagogy in several ways including being a product of the FSU approach to FYC, the Framework for Success, leading theories in composition studies, and those most prominent in game design and game theory.

By targeting a range of elements from the Habits of Mind and Outcomes and melding them with questions germane to videogames and composition this unit of my course shows how readings about videogames may support a discussion of videogames throughout a semester-long course focused on videogames. Several chapters of Bogost's book can aid in discussions about

games as texts more generally, but as a course focused on videogames as a topic my ENC 1145 course benefitted from a semester-long discussion about videogames as rich texts capable of doing many things beyond entertainment. In the process students engage with crucial Habits of Mind and Outcomes including the ability to develop rhetorical knowledge and awareness in unique ways, and gaining experience throughout the semester with composing in multiple environments. These Habits of Mind in particular suit videogame-infused pedagogy well as I define it throughout this chapter; through this semester-long unit students actively participate in discussions about videogames and compose multimodal texts to illustrate and synthesize theory on videogames. This unit on Games as Texts asks students to consider the ways games operate as texts, but also to critically examine what they know about the texts they regularly engage with outside of class. Thus a sustained examination of videogames as texts presents several opportunities to engage with the goals of composition pedagogy as seen in the Framework for Success, and focusing on videogames as a topic presents a unique way to accomplish these goals. While this unit does not focus specifically on gameplay it does showcase many ways videogames can complement a composition pedagogy without necessarily requiring a gameplay component in the classroom.

3.2.2 Games as Social

Continuing from my unit on Games as Texts this unit on Games as Social resumes the trend of discussing a semester-long activity in my pilot course removed from context to illustrate its merits as an individual component. The social climate surrounding videogames and their perception in the media present several meaningful opportunities for discussion throughout a given semester. As my pilot ENC 1145 course progressed videogames went through a number of upheavals as Apple's iDevices became an increasingly potent gaming platform, the shooting in

Newtown, Connecticut renewed questions of violent texts in our culture, and major console manufacturers prepared for the first new home videogame consoles since 2006. Questions of ethics, business, and society at large and how they relate to videogames provide several broad topics of conversation for focusing on with videogame-infused pedagogy. These events can become routine discussions in the same way as Bogost's book can become an overarching discussion in the classroom. The ongoing and shifting nature of games in our society lends itself well to fulfilling a mandatory requirement of the composition classroom at FSU: the journal.

Composition classrooms at FSU require students to maintain a journal throughout the course of the semester containing informal writing based on prompts of an instructor's choosing. Each blog entry must be 200-300 words in length and instructors must require at least 10 informal writings throughout the course of a semester. Instructors can meet this requirement in several ways and make it a worthwhile unit of a composition classroom focusing on games. First, the ability to connect directly to the readings in the same way as students do when presenting on Bogost's book and discussing Games as Texts. Topics covered in blog prompts throughout my pilot course included; considering what immersion in games entails; the argument for games as art in Bogost's book; how virtual economies in games like *Diablo 3* and *Team Fortress 2* bleed into real world economies and what this means for players; considering how sexism, racism, and homophobia manifest in games we enjoy; what the shift to videogames as apps means for the ability of games to make serious commentary of social issues; whether or not videogames can tackle national tragedies like Columbine or 9/11; and how graphics relate to emotion in storytelling. These questions also link to the conversations happening in each unit of the course by identifying how videogames relate to Games as Places, Rhetoric, and Stories. While this discussion of games as a larger part of society can fit into any number of needs for a composition

instructor interested in implementing videogame-infused pedagogy its ongoing nature suits the conversation around videogames outside the classroom well. This unit on Games as Social presents a complement to Games as Texts by showing videogames as semester-long support for activities both inside and outside of the classroom.

I designed this unit as open to either current or past events, and interested instructors can take a range of approaches to this topic. I consciously designed these blog entries to consider some of the questions raised by each unit of the course, but informal writings about videogames can just as easily be tailored to other discussions and needs. In the process a wide range of Gee's learning principles can be engaged including those focusing in on Cultural Models such as the Cultural Models about the World Principle, Cultural Models about Learning Principle, and Cultural Models about Semiotic Domains Principle. Using out of class blogs as a way to engage with these topics encourages students to reflect on these topics without the pressure of a letter grade weighing on them, allowing more room to take risks and consider these ideas carefully. Bogost reiterates that:

> Video games are not mere trifles, artifacts created only to distract or to amuse. But they are also not *automatically* rich, sophisticated statements about the world around us. Video games have the power to make arguments, to persuade, to express ideas. But they do not do so inevitably. As we evolve our relationship with video games, one of the most important steps we can take is to learn to play them critically, to suss out the meaning they carry, both on and under the surface. ("Rhetoric" 136)

The lack of actual gameplay in this unit of ENC 1145 does not lend itself well to a prolonged discussion here about processes and procedurality, but it does connect closely to Bogost's belief

that games must be played and considered reflexively as they are "not *automatically* rich, sophisticated statements," but through discussion and consideration can be. Many of these prompts urge students to play games discussed in the entries and become further procedurally literate.

Table 3.3: Games as Social

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Fostered
Games as Social	Blog entries focusing on social issues surrounding videogames.	1. Curiosity 2. Metacognition 3. Persistence 4. Rhetorical Knowledge 5. Writing Processes 6. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments

Similarly, the Habits of Mind suggested by the Framework for Success come into play here (see Table 3.3). On a basic level reflecting on the social circumstances surrounding games opens itself up to; Curiosity, as it asks students to consider games beyond entertainment purposes to "know more about the world"; Openness, since writing and reflecting on videogames means "new ways of being and thinking in the world"; and Persistence, by being a continuous project for the course and engaging students beyond the walls of the classroom for the duration of the semester and urges them to "sustain interest in and attention to short- and long-term projects." This semester-long project also targets multiple Outcomes. In this case, students actively display Rhetorical Knowledge by engaging with videogames as a text through a wide variety of lenses for several different purposes. The nature of the journal requirement at FSU also means students

develop another facet of Writing Processes by writing in a dissimilar but important style to develop. Finally, I encouraged students to write blogs in my pilot course by incorporating videos and images to highlight points being made in their online texts thereby asking students to Compose in Multiple Environments, and become knowledgeable about composing in a unique digital medium.

Like Games as Texts this unit on Games as Social presents another way for instructors to incorporate videogames into their pedagogy as a focus without necessarily requiring gameplay or sustained gameplay in class. Using videogames inside the classroom for learning and engaging with the Framework for Success proves essential to videogame-infused pedagogy as I define it in this project, and Games as Social shows ways of using videogames to accomplish this goal both outside of the classroom and without any requirements for gameplay or particular computers. The following sections will discuss in-class units focused on more traditional assignment structures and course structures as I divided them into multi-week blocks and intended to build from one to the next. Both Games as Texts and Games as Places complemented the assignments in each of the timed units discussed below, yet on their own present several opportunities to engage and immerse students in discussions about videogames that require no gameplay elements. These serve as wonderful complements to a videogame-infused pedagogy embracing videogames to a significant extent, however, through assignments like presentations and journals Games as Texts and Games as Social show how composition instructors can incorporate a videogame-infused pedagogy on their own terms and to varying degrees while still addressing the Framework for Success through both Habits of Mind and Outcomes. Thus videogame-infused pedagogy can be incorporated both inside and outside of the classroom and to varying degrees according to an instructor's desire and level of investment as seen in these two units.

3.2.3 Games as Places

The units of ENC 1145: Writing About the Rhetoric of Videogames discussed thus far revolved around semester-long projects meeting various larger institutional needs and discussions revolving around videogames as texts and how to fit videogame-infused pedagogy into the institutional reality of the composition classroom with required components such as journals. The broad and fluid scope of these kinds of assignments, however, in many ways feeds into the known issues with the literature on videogames and learning. My discussion in the following sections will move into situated discussions of projects and classroom activities I explicitly designed around bringing videogames into the classroom. Presentations and journals do not involve explicit attempts to work games into the classroom by actively playing them, but they do focus on games as a vital part of the periphery of the classroom experience. The unit discussed in this section, Games as Places, welcomes students into the classroom space by design. Gee notes the ability of "good" videogames to bring the player in and provide them with low-stakes spaces to experiment and explore as seen in principles like the Regime of Competence Principle (223) and Incremental Principle (225), and these ideas informed my design of the first unit of the course experience in the first 4 weeks of Spring 2013. The design of this unit and its major assignment attempt to foster Habits of Mind such as Openness, Engagement, Creativity, and Flexibility in order to develop Knowledge of Conventions, Writing Processes, and the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments.

The first major, situated project designed for the purpose of this pilot course entitled "Seeing Yourself in the Game World" (see Appendix A) anchored the first concrete unit of ENC 1145: Writing About the Rhetoric of Videogames. For this assignment I asked students to write a minimum of 1,000 words and create an accompanying visual using a medium of their choice.

Students must create their own avatar and discuss what game world this character lives in, and/or to relate their life experiences to a game character that already exists and to edit the appearance of the avatar to represent their own appearance. This first official unit of the course asks students to do many complex things at once including expanding their understanding of videogames through blogs, presentations, and this project to see games as places and/or worlds connected to their lives. Here students receive their first opportunities to play videogames in the classroom as an active component of learning in the composition classroom. In this way instructors can facilitate conversations about Bogost's procedurality, and students engage with Habits of Mind such as Openness, Engagement, Creativity, and Flexibility.

In this unit I asked students to read a variety of texts that examined games as places and play a game outside of the classroom as well, *LIMBO*. This range of approaches to readings, in-class games, and outside of class gaming presents a cohesive vision of videogame-infused pedagogy. Students must consider games as places initially and seek appropriate ways to insert themselves into the game world by thinking reflectively about their own attributes and how those fit into the complex mythologies and genres present in videogames. One student chose to insert himself into the world of *Soul Caliber*, a popular arcade and console fighting game franchise. The student used the game's rich character creation software to create a version of himself and used game mechanics to illustrate his own experiences, like a Tae Kwon Do fighting style that matched his passion for martial arts growing up, and aesthetic touches like a monocle to illustrate his perceived intelligence and sophistication. Another student imagined an entirely new game world to insert herself into by melding the worlds and stories of Dr. Who and Harry Potter with an avatar she designed using online software to create a cartoon rendition of herself in this world.

Table 3.4: Games As Places

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Targeted
Games as Places	Multimodal presentations on selected chapters from Ian Bogost's book *How to do Things with Videogames*.	1. Openness 2. Engagement 3. Creativity 4. Flexibility 5. Knowledge of Conventions 6. Writing Processes 7. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments

This unit and assignment address multiple Habits of Mind and Outcomes (see Table 3.4). Beginning with the Habits of Mind, Games as Places targets Openness, Engagement, Creativity, and Flexibility. In the decades since videogames began as simple rectangles in black space videogames can now attempt to emulate the world and in many cases simulate it, meaning that more games feature lush worlds students and players can relate to. Beyond these surface level examinations students must consider the elements of games in terms of visuals and gameplay mechanics in this unit. Habits of Mind such as Openness and Engagement can clearly be seen here as students consider the ways their worlds connect with digital ones, and connect personal experiences as well to gain an investment in the project itself. Engagement for many students can also be seen in their interactions inside the classroom with games like *Super Mario Crossover* which features levels inside of the *Super Mario Bros.* and playable characters from several beloved franchises. This gameplay experience inside of the classroom not only engages students with gameplay, but paves the way for subsequent discussions about how different characters and mechanics fit in the world of *Super Mario Bros*. Project 1 also encourages Creativity by asking

students to "use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas" (1) in its visual component. Students must create a visual using character creation software in games, photo editing software, or drawing one of their own. These possibilities ask students to consider the best approach for creating the avatar representing them and the game world they chose to enter and make complex connections between games, visuals, and writing. Finally, this range of possibilities and options tasks students with exhibiting Flexibility by asking them to consider a range of options for meeting the demands of this assignment.

My students' projects as well as the assignments prompting them in the first timed unit of my course all exhibit certain outcomes as well. Knowledge of Conventions manifests first in the written component itself as a personal narrative and its connection to videogame worlds requires students to consider "the formal and informal guidelines that define what is considered to be correct and appropriate, or incorrect and inappropriate, in a piece of writing" (1) or in this case, in a game world. *Grand Theft Auto 4*'s Niko Belic likely has no place in Mario's Mushroom Kingdom, and students must consider what is appropriate both for a specific genre of writing (narrative) as well as a specific genre of game (the one the student chooses to insert their avatar into). Videogames also broach a range of composing processes and urge "multiple strategies to approach and undertake writing and research" (1), since no single approach to the first project can be correct, as seen in the examples from students noted above. Finally, one of the foremost goals of this course and of using a visually-oriented text such as videogames is to urge the development of new literacy practices and this can be done by asking students to Compose in Multiple Environments. In this case students can literally choose anything "from traditional pen and paper to electronic technologies" (1). One student opted to create their avatar using pen and paper whereas several others used rich character creation tools found in freely available games

like *DC Universe* to craft superhero versions of themselves the placed inside of other game worlds. In the case of this assignment students must create using a wide scope of technologies, but the project also invites them to see what they do in videogames as a form of composition itself, one setting itself up for certain kinds of responses in much the same way as a piece of writing does.

Games as Places sets the precedent for the first unit of my pilot course on videogame-infused pedagogy by incorporating a focus on videogames both inside and outside of the classroom to complement the Framework for Success. In this case students played games like *Super Mario Crossover*, *The Legend of Zelda*, and *LIMBO* inside and outside of class as part of an ongoing exploration of games as virtual places, and how they relate to the world we live in. The first traces of procedural rhetoric can be seen here as Bogost argues in the required text for this course "a procedural rhetoric does not argue a position but rather characterizes an idea" (14) in some cases. I designed this unit to take advantage of this opportunity by allowing students to begin engaging with the systems present in videogames and by playing and discussing them in class, facilitating procedural literacy. *Super Mario Crossover* asks students to consider how gameplay mechanics change when applied to different genres of games and whereas titles like *LIMBO* characterize notions like regret through its dreary visuals, gameplay, and themes. This unit also represents a series of first steps and limited engagement with videogames seen through videogame-infused pedagogy. Students only played a small number of games in the classroom during this unit (*Super Mario Crossover* and a few minutes of *The Legend of Zelda*), but they facilitated discussions about how videogames represent space and genres. Asking students to play *LIMBO* outside of class (a relatively short, inexpensive, multiplatform game) introduces concepts of procedurality and encourages procedural literacy through gameplay and classroom

discussions. Games as Places engages the Framework for Success, but also shows videogames as texts whose use can be limited inside and outside of the classroom. This unit shows videogame-infused pedagogy as flexible for gameplay inside and outside of the classroom as well as a helpful introduction for students to key concepts like procedurality and how gameplay operates as part of the course both inside and outside of the classroom.

3.2.4 Games as Rhetoric

As suggested by the course title this unit focuses on developing a sense of rhetorical functions in videogames and addresses Bogost's call for instructors to help students see games differently. Gameplay and discussion in the classroom can foster new literacy practices, procedural literacy in particular. In this unit of my pilot course, the second major project guided students by building on Games as Places' desire for students to begin "Seeing Yourself in the Game World" by then "Seeing the Game World as Rhetorical" (see Appendix B). Using a combination of 2,000+ written words, screenshots from the game being analyzed, and a minimum of 5 sources, students must analyze a game of their choosing by using one of three approaches to criticism, including Bogost's procedurality, Burke's Pentad, and Jesse Schell's Elemental Tetrad.

Beginning with Bogost's notion of procedurality students may choose to examine any game they wish in light of how its processes function. Students chose to focus on a range of different texts including the RTS (real-time strategy) game *Rise of Nations* by examining the representation of systems like resource management, nation building, and war in the game world and what statements *Rise of Nations* therefore makes about the world at large to its players, such as the necessity of war in building a nation or empire. Other students used Bogost's procedurality to consider the representation of criminal justice and gang violence as abstract systems in *Grand Theft Auto* and how *LIMBO* presents an abstracted system of regret and its representation in the

game. Bogost notes frequently in his work that the perspectives represented by games can and tend to be biased, and being able to parse this out and comment on it builds, among other things, procedural literacy. As noted previously Bogost argues that players become procedurally literate through gameplay, and much like in the first unit of the course students must play a game of their choosing outside of class for the purposes of the assignment, and asked to play games in the classroom to illustrate and contextualize analytical frameworks and how they work with videogames. These include the aforementioned games *First Person Tutor* another free Adobe Flash-based browser game titled *Phone Story*.

I introduced other frameworks for analysis to students in this unit as well including Kenneth Burke's Dramatistic Pentad and an adaptation of Jesse Schell's Elemental Tetrad of game design. In the case of all 3 frameworks I introduced students to these concepts through a combination of readings, lectures, and games played in the classroom. I asked students to read Bogost's article "The Rhetoric of Videogames, Bourgonjon et al.'s "From Counter-Strike to Counter-Statement: Using Burke's Pentad as a Tool for Analyzing Video Games," and chapters 4 and 5 from Jesse Schell's *The Art of Game Design*, "The Game Consists of Elements" and "The Elements Support a *Theme*." In many cases, especially Bogost and Bourgonjon et. al's pieces, these texts prove challenging to first-year students. I produced a synthesis of the main ideas of both articles that discusses the ways students can apply these theories to games of their choosing. Few cite Burke's Pentad for its simplicity or user-friendliness, and like the games played in classrooms which utilize a videogame-infused pedagogy, it begs for instructor assistance in synthesis. This means instructors must understand how games relate to these topics, and based on my experiences with these texts, Bourgonjon et al., Schell, and Bogost write for audiences looking to comprehend and apply their models, and make application far easier on its own.

Utilizing games in the classroom makes synthesis of content and understanding its application in context significantly easier. *First Person Tutor* facilitates fantastic conversations in the classroom as noted in chapter two about processes like grading and how grading *should* operate. Games like *First Person Tutor* also provide avenues for discussing Burke's Pentad and considering ratios. Questions like who the Agent is (a destitute TA), what their Agency is (finding ways to fail students), the Scene (a simple desk), the Purpose (to make enough money from failing students to pay back $200,000 in loan debt), and the Act (grading papers), and which control the situation (many students argued for a Purpose-Act and Purpose-Agency being strongest ratios, as the need to finish a dissertation seemed to dictate grading papers and how grading occurred) meant students understood the motives of a grading process better and became critical of how the grading process works. *First Person Tutor* presents a system of evaluation where players spend only 1-2 minutes grading, focus on looking for spelling and grammar errors, and failing students boosts a player's score. As noted in chapter two, this opens up meaningful discussions about how evaluation *should* work, and helps students to understand these concepts. Using contrasting games like Terry Cavanaugh's *Super Hexagon* whose protagonist is a triangle at the center of a hexagon avoiding obstacles to beat best times of survival provides a great way to show how these lenses still apply, and emphasizes the importance of carefully selecting a topic to avoid lengthy discussions about the ambiguity of *Hexagon*'s representation of concepts like survival.

Table 3.5: Games as Rhetoric

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Fostered

Table 3.5- continued

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Fostered
Games as Rhetoric	Project with written and visual components asking students to apply Bogost's procedurality, Burke's Pentad, or Schell's Elemental Tetrad to a game of their choosing. Students must also acquire and integrate screenshots into the project.	1. Curiosity 2. Creativity 3. Flexibility 4. Metacognition 5. Knowledge of Conventions 6. Rhetorical Knowledge 7. Critical Thinking

These lessons and this unit's project all tie directly into the Habits of Mind and the Outcomes noted in the Framework for Success as well (see Table 3.5). By carefully analyzing games and the real world processes presented in them in addition to breaking games into elements and considering them rhetorically, students exhibit Curiosity, Creativity, Flexibility and Metacognition. Rhetorically analyzing videogames through the lenses noted above involves a great deal of Curiosity on the part of students as it requires them to consider how videogames operate in relation to the real world, especially in the case of Bogost's procedural analysis. Thus, this assignment and project asks students to learn more about both the game world of their choosing and the real world by extension, targeting the first Habit of Mind. By asking students to use a videogame as a primary text for this unit and project they may exhibit Creativity on multiple levels including "generating, investigating, and representing ideas" (1) through screenshots taken of the game in question, choosing a rhetorical lens, and considering the angle(s) to examine it from. This also asks students to build on their perceptions of game worlds

from the first project by transferring their exploration of what a game world looks like and how

mechanics define it to what these mechanics mean in the world they live in and tasks them with

developing Flexibility. Finally, students engage with Metacognition constantly throughout this

unit by considering how videogames provide examples of systems and values in the real world

and how the game's systems skew those values. How *Grand Theft Auto* shows gang violence and

criminal justice must be different by necessity to how it operates in the real world (forcing

players to await trials, and possibly spend time in prison would surely break the flow of the game

itself, whereas instant release insures smoother gameplay), but is nonetheless representing a real

system and illustrates several important issues students can explore including gang violence,

criminal justice, and poverty among others.

These Habits of Mind are also complemented by a series of targeted outcomes for this

unit and project. This unit makes great strides in developing Knowledge of Conventions,

Rhetorical Knowledge, and Critical Thinking. While Games as Places tasked students with

developing a basic understanding of game worlds and how they operate and writing in a specific

genre of writing (personal narrative), students may develop a further Knowledge of Conventions

in both writing and videogames in Games as Rhetoric. As a formal research unit students must

reconsider their approach to writing and continue to develop a nuanced understanding of genre in

games and writing. The conventions of formal academic writing and the conventions of different

genres of games and how those mechanics function become crucial in this second unit. By

default this unit also focuses on developing Rhetorical Knowledge in students by asking them to

examine a game rhetorically, but also through their composing practices. In this unit "the ability

to analyze and act on understandings of audiences, purposes, and contexts in creating and

comprehending texts" (1) proves vital as students must attempt to represent a game and theory

they are intimately familiar with to an unknowing audience and consider what must be presented

and where/how images can be incorporated into their projects to produce the best result. The

final and most important outcome targeted by this unit is Critical Thinking or "the ability to

analyze a situation or text and make thoughtful decisions based on that analysis, through writing,

reading, and research" (1). As a research-driven component of the course focused on videogames

students may choose from a range of rhetorical situations present within the game of their choice

and argue for how it relates to the world around us. Returning to the student who wrote about

Grand Theft Auto and its representation of criminal justice and gang violence we can see clear

evidence of a student who has analyzed a situation (the gameplay mechanics within *GTA*) and

through his written project and research thoughtfully conveyed how the game satirizes and

parallels the reality of criminal justice and gang violence. While I did not design this project to

measure these traits on a large scale, this one anecdotal example illustrates this particularly

difficult to articulate Outcome at work as defined in the Framework for Success.

This unit on Games as Rhetoric serves as a strong representation of what videogame-

infused pedagogy can look like from several facets while also fitting into institutional constraints

like those at FSU, and with an active gaming component in the composition classroom.

Videogames complemented my own pedagogy to allow my class to discuss practices such as

grading on the day I returned the students' first projects with *First Person Tutor*. The students

also analyzed it using the frameworks of analysis discussed in class and the classroom became a

place of both critical engagement and reflection but also a space to develop procedural literacy.

Without the guidance of instructors, as seen in the literature surrounding games and learning, the

ability for games to be effective learning tools diminishes to varying degrees. By using a

videogame-infused pedagogy in the classroom instructors can not only carry discussions about

how games and the systems in them work by playing and discussing in class, but also facilitate

productive discussions about basic processes of the classroom such as grading. This unit also

contains a lesson where students play *The Wikipedia Game*, which asks players to find a

particular page on Wikipedia with harsh constraints like time and click counts. This serves as a

way to discuss the process of researching (where and how to begin), but also my stance on

Wikipedia as a source for formal research (a great place to begin due to the wealth of links, yet

despite its merits, I frown upon it in my classroom, as it is not generally considered an

authoritative source). The combination of functional needs games can fulfill for the classroom

coupled with support for the expressed purpose of games analysis shows the scalability and

adaptability of this approach: a game like *First Person Tutor* or *The Wikipedia Game* can just as

easily be implemented for a lesson or built in as support for advanced analysis for an entire unit

of a course.

Games as Places served as a beginning for students and this pilot course, but also as a

way to engage videogames as a cursory element inside and outside of the classroom; Games as

Rhetoric pushes this notion further by asking students to begin with their experiences with a

familiar game and examine it in a new light outside of the classroom while introducing different

types of games and how these games exhibit rhetorical situations and possess procedural

rhetorics. This unit shows that videogames can be a driving force for content inside and outside

of the classroom in addition to supporting the goals of a research-intensive course/unit for first-

year composition. Games like *First Person Tutor* present fantastic examples of procedural

rhetorics and *The Wikipedia Game* serves as a facilitator of classroom discussion in much the

same way as *FPS* does. Both games tie into issues relevant to composition instructors (grading

and research practices) and can be used to discuss, support, or contrast a range of preferences and

approaches. This unit also shows how any composition or rhetoric course can utilize videogames as a topic for digital rhetoric and examine how videogames and procedural rhetoric operate in addition to other forms of rhetoric and arguments. Games as Rhetoric serves as one of the most challenging units for both instructors and students as it involves a great deal of theory and knowledge for both parties, however, the lesson plans and assignment both present opportunities to bring videogames into the composition classroom for activities, single topics, an entire unit, or for discussing digital rhetoric. This unit ultimately illustrates the range videogame-infused composition pedagogy can scale to by incorporating and adapting to university requirements as well.

3.2.5 Games as Stories

The storytelling power of games routinely gets overlooked as the early history of games has stories limited to the likes of *Pong*, *Space Invaders*, and *Donkey Kong*. These games displayed traces of plot elements, but acknowledging their heartfelt stories remained unlikely. The same cannot be said of all games today as developers cut together games like Rockstar's *L.A. Noire* and Quantic Dream's *Beyond: Two Souls* to show at film festivals, and episodic series like *Telltale Games'* first season of *The Walking Dead* won dozens of Game of the Year awards from critics for its story-driven gameplay. A prevalent element in the literature surrounding games and learning suggests asking students to make games; in this section I will attempt to show how this process looks in practice. Hsu and Wang argue in their work that "designing a game requires players to equip themselves with critical literacy rather than just functional literacy: The former literacy demands a much higher level of cognitive skills than would be the case with simply playing a game" (405). Games as Stories seeks to build on Games as Rhetoric's focus on "Seeing the Game World Rhetorically" by tasking students with "Creating a Game World of Your Own."

This unit focuses on continuing to develop the student's relationship to games and writing and to continue to push them to compose in new ways. This unit targets multiple Habits of Mind including Engagement, Creativity, and Metacognition, all attempting to specifically foster Knowledge of Conventions, Writing Processes, and the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments by asking students to design their own games.

The assignment anchoring this unit focused primarily on designing a game, but in sum asks students to write a reflection of at least 1,000+ words assessing their work and discussing the creation process using Jesse Schell's Elemental Tetrad discussed in Games as Rhetoric, a functioning game using technology of their choosing, and a multimodal composition advertising the game itself (see Appendix C). This pushes the previous units' focus on identifying and analyzing genres in games in addition to components like places, characters, game mechanics, and rhetoric, and asks them to put these ideas into practice themselves by actually designing a game and how to represent the game to a buying public. This also emphasizes an important move from consumer to producer in the classroom, allowing students to better understand the process of game design itself. It is not necessarily required that this approach be embedded within a scaffolded consideration as done in my course; advocates like Hsu and Wang and Lieberman demonstrate no pretenses about asking students to consider these questions isolated from concentrated videogame-play in the classroom or in courses wherein games serve as the primary theme. The supporting games and activities inside and outside the classroom for this unit ask students to consider the nature of storytelling across mediums using media from Robert Kirkman's *The Walking Dead* including comics, television, and the Telltale Games episodic series of games for Windows, Mac OSX, PS3, Xbox 360, and iOS.

Few media franchises produce such well-received and tightly integrated media as Robert Kirkman's *The Walking Dead* which revolves around a world built over the course of over 100 comics and adapted for television and multiple videogames. Telltale Games released *The Walking Dead: Season 1* as bi-monthly episodes throughout 2012. Episodic gameplay existed several years prior (as seen in many of Telltale's other games based on properties like *Back to the Future* and *Law & Order*), but *The Walking Dead: Season 1* presents perhaps the most acclaimed attempt in several years to use this model. As a contrast to self-contained experiences like *LIMBO* from Games as Places this allows discussions about not only how the business of videogames has evolved, but also how a story-focused game released over the course of months, keeping users talking and in suspense differs. By also bringing in episodes of the television series and the first volume of the comics (containing the first 6 issues), storytelling differences and devices across mediums can be discussed to encourage students to think reflexively on the different types of media they encounter regularly; how does a black-and-white comic series differ from a live-action television show? What changes in the story are made between the two? What do they say about these mediums? Games as Stories asks students to craft their own stories and characters, but also to consider game stories as they relate to other types of traditional storytelling.

Table 3.6: Games as Stories

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Targeted
Games as Stories	Using text-based game creation software, students must create their own game and one promotional material for it (a game box, poster, or trailer).	1. Engagement 2. Creativity 3. Metacognition

Table 3.6- continued

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Targeted
Games as Stories	Using simple text-based game creation software (such as Twine), students must create their own game and one piece of promotional material for it (a game box, poster, or trailer).	4. Knowledge of Conventions 5. Writing Processes 6. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments 7. Rhetorical Knowledge

Asking students to develop games of their own and discuss storytelling in the same universe across different mediums targets Habits of Mind specifically such as Engagement, Creativity, Persistence, and Metacognition (See Table 3.6). Like the first timed unit on Games as Places this unit asks for students to gain agency as composers by telling a story of their own choosing and thus become invested in its success. Engagement can then be seen by becoming active in the learning and composing process; whereas Games as Rhetoric asked students to consume and parse out information from someone else's text this unit emphasizes the process of creation by targeting Engagement on the student's part. Creativity proves crucial as students must conceptualize a game world from scratch including characters and a world for them to occupy. This assignment does not limit Creativity to the written component of the assignment, however, as students must address questions of fonts, colors, music, and medium, all impossible to avoid when designing the promotional materials for the game or the game itself. This points to the most actively engaged Habit of Mind in this unit: Metacognition. Throughout the process of

75

engaging with videogames, television, comics, and designing a game and visual components for the game students process several sets of conventions and being asked to reflect on their understanding of each and how they relate to the unique affordances of designing a game's story as opposed to a comic's story. The lack of necessary linearity means students must consider how player choice and consequence factors into the game itself. While I chose not to focus on creating rhetorically-focused games this unit lends itself well to instructors asking students to use videogame design as a way of crafting an argument building on Games as Rhetoric. In this unit students must think Metacognitively not only about games, but compositions across a range of mediums in addition to composing in multiple modes themselves. By far this is one of the greatest strengths of videogame-infused pedagogy in the classroom: fostering conversations about how different mediums work as texts that must be both designed and consumed. Lieberman, Hsu, and Wang recommend game use in the classroom for literacy benefits primarily, but the shift to creating as opposed to consuming in addition to the myriad opportunities for students to display Metacognitive awareness and Creativity in their selection and manipulation of modes and mediums to create games and appeal to a targeted audience among others provides several rich opportunities for the composition classroom.

The Outcomes targeted in this unit also focus on Metacognition as students develop Knowledge of Conventions, Writing Processes, and the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments in relationship to videogames and a wide variety of mediums. By focusing on storytelling in this unit, Knowledge of Conventions can be discussed in several mediums with stories as a unifying thread. By writing a game as a story-driven experience in a text-based capacity I asked students to consider the ways their story can and must change based on what the player chooses to do. This approach also leaves open discussions about conventions across

several mediums and for the context of the composition classroom. The Writing Processes associated with game design also challenge students in a variety of ways to write and compose in ways traditional projects do not. Writing with player choice/agency in mind presents students with an entirely new perspective to write from in addition to a new set of rules and needs to consider. How can the paths of a written work branch and join again? Can they? Should they? What choices can and should players be able to make in this game? How does this affect the story being told? Traditional alphabetic texts cannot require this kind of thinking on the part of students, but designing games using text-based programs provides a unique approach to discussing writing processes while also requiring Metacognitive awareness of stories in a variety of genres and applying this knowledge to alphabetic composition.

Asking students to create games and a promotional material for them asks students to metacognitively assess their own work. In the context of this unit I asked students to Compose in Multiple Environments and exhibit advanced Rhetorical Knowledge. Should a student choose to create a zombie game it comes with a set expectation for how their visual should operate (a choice one student made by building on the avatar he created for the first project): this tasks students with developing the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments. Like the first major assignment students created a wide range of visual texts for this unit including a live-action trailer a student made about his game based on his youth, a hand-drawn poster about a maze-based game, and a poster for a satirical game about blockbuster AAA games featuring a sloth wearing aviator sunglasses facing away from an explosion. Asking students to promote their games visually means assessing their game, the medium best suiting it, and how to best reach a buying audience for the game. Understanding the rhetorical situations of their design and the context of the advertisement they create also means developing advanced Rhetorical Knowledge.

Defining a game purchase as a rhetorical situation not only asks students to consider what their audience needs to know, but how to best convey that information, leading to the range of approaches listed above. While this approach to developing rhetorical awareness differs from Bogost's, it represents one of many unique opportunities to develop advanced rhetorical awareness in students. Designing games challenges students in many ways and asks students to exhibit Metacognition in several facets, but when housed within storytelling and videogame design presents a far less daunting a task.

Games as Stories illustrates above all else how videogames and composition intersect and fuel one another at several points. Videogames provide gateways to discussions about several forms of media through licensed games like *The Walking Dead* in addition to complex rhetorical situations like designing promotional materials for a videogame. Asking students to parse these ideas out and move from consumers to producers addresses key facets of the Framework for Success by asking students to participate in a medium which in many cases requires years of experience with computer coding, 3D modeling, or animation. This participation leads to several rich opportunities for students to compose games and multimodal texts in addition to fostering Habits of Mind like Rhetorical Knowledge to a significant extent. This unit shows how videogame-infused pedagogy can be linked to composition pedagogy in yet another context by focusing on a single topic (storytelling) across mediums. Thus this unit illustrates the range of videogame-infused pedagogy by connecting to other topics like storytelling while also presenting opportunities to engage with procedural rhetorics through students' gameplay designs. Hsu and Wang suggest assigning game design as a means to foster new literacies, but Games as Stories shows how game design can be situated into composition pedagogy to not only embrace the

Framework for Success, but to also complement other unifying themes and forms of media like video, print, and graphic novels.

3.2.6 Games as Instructions

I designed the final unit of my course, Games as Instructions, to take advantage of Valve's Steam for Schools initiative and as a way to close out the semester in a small, self-contained unit aiming to encapsulate several goals for videogame-infused pedagogy in this pilot course. This final unit of my pilot course asked students to play *Portal 2* in class and use the *Portal 2 Puzzle Maker* included in Steam for Schools to design a puzzle chamber of their own and write instructions (250+ words minimum) for how to duplicate this puzzle chamber as well as a reflection on the experience (750+ words) (see Appendix D). Scholars such as Stephanie Vie and Mia Consalvo have written about the inherent potential for asking students to play games and design walkthroughs of the game in question in the writing classroom for multiple different contexts, and I designed this unit to do this by making videogame play the focus of the course as opposed to a supporting component to illustrate its ability to carry the content of learning as opposed to simply being a facilitator or accessory of it. This final unit targets Engagement, Creativity, Responsibility and Flexibility as a means to foster Rhetorical Knowledge, Critical Thinking, Writing Processes, Knowledge of Conventions, and the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments. This project targets all of the Outcomes while flipping the role of videogames in videogame-infused composition pedagogy around by making videogame play and design the focus of the classroom and project with composing practices complementing these skills. As the penultimate unit of my pilot course for videogame-infused pedagogy Games as Instructions shows how instructors interested in using videogames as a core component of a course or unit

one can do so while also targeting the goals of composition pedagogy set forth by the Framework for Success.

Table 3.7: Games as Instructions

Unit of Course	Assignment	Habits of Mind and Outcomes Targeted
Games as Instructions	Students play *Portal 2* in class for the final weeks and attempt to create their own puzzle chambers using the software included in Valve's Steam for Schools. Students must also write a set of instructions for the chamber they created, and give those instructions to another student to attempt to duplicate the chamber itself.	1. Engagement 2. Creativity 3. Responsibility 4. Flexibility 5. Rhetorical Knowledge 6. Critical Thinking 7. Writing Processes 8. Knowledge of Conventions 9. Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments

The design of this project targets 4 Habits of Mind specifically: Engagement, Creativity, Responsibility, and Flexibility, building towards fostering *all* of the Framework for Success' outcomes (see Table 3.7). Engagement comes from asking students to play videogames in the classroom as their first and foremost assignment; videogames foster engagement especially well as an interactive medium, and *Portal 2* in particular serves as an engaging experience for players being a puzzle game played in the first-person perspective. Like the previous unit this final one asks students to compose using videogames and engaging once again with Creativity. Unlike the previous unit, however, Games as Instructions asks students to compose from *within* a game as well, and challenges students to alter their approach to creation to match the rules found inside of *Portal 2*. Responsibility is also fostered in this unit and project by asking students to account for

the choices made in designing their puzzle chambers and the effect this can have on the users attempting to recreate this chamber. Lastly, Flexibility can be fostered through this unit and project as students must not only play and become familiar with the world and rules of *Portal 2*, but also to learn how to apply those rules themselves. This harkens back to Bogost as well, and sees students moving between environments and by using one set of tools makes the transition between consumer and producer immediately evident through the software itself, but also by requiring students to create instructions for the chamber and attempt to process someone else's instructions. Moving between the roles of producer and consumer not only helps students to better understand the processes of composing and analyzing, but aids them in becoming flexible with technology and composing practices.

As the final unit of my pilot course using videogame-infused pedagogy I designed this final unit to show how instructors using videogames as a primary text supported by composing practices can target all of the Outcomes listed in the Framework for Success simultaneously. First, Rhetorical Knowledge emerges in the written component of this project by thrusting the students into the role of creator and considering the needs of an end user and provides another unique rhetorical situation videogames can effectively emphasize (Vie, Consalvo). From here students exhibit Critical Thinking in their approach to crafting instructions. Will the student include images? How can they describe items from later in the game other players may not encounter or know how to use? Articulating these concerns for a specific audience focuses on both Rhetorical Knowledge and Critical Thinking. The variety in this task also allows students to consider a wide range of Writing Processes including the level of detail described, whether to use a numbering system, or write out a detailed log of the process (all approaches taken by students in my pilot course). Some students chose to include images while others did not. All of these

choices also feed into the Knowledge of Conventions which proves necessary for this unit. Writing from the perspective of a creator and for an audience attempting to understand a given process means understanding the conventions of instructional documentation, a particular form of composition students are unlikely to have encountered at length, but one frequently seen online in walkthroughs, guides, and Let's Play videos on YouTube. The ability to communicate how to use a given piece of software proves increasingly important as does understanding what makes this kind of document function properly as we become increasingly connected to digital technologies. The final Outcome, the Ability to Compose in Multiple Environments, is also targeted as students must compose within the videogame itself first, and consider finally how this translates into written composition. This reversal of roles means engaging students with a unique form of composition within *Portal 2* and its *Puzzle Maker* software, but also, asking students to consider a unique rhetorical position to engage with by translating this process into written composition.

This abbreviated final unit of my course took place over the course of two weeks at the end of the course and serves as an opportunity to make playing games in the composition classroom a fully realized practice. Other units focus on games outside of the classroom and singular activities based on gameplay, but I designed Games as Instructions to make use of a commercial game capable of running on the computers available in my classroom. Like many of the other units discussed in this chapter Games as Instructions proves ripe for being expanded upon and transformed into a topic for an entire semester. This unit presents a valuable cap to my pilot course and my discussion in this chapter of my classroom plans and projects as they relate to videogame-infused pedagogy. In this case students engage with games, composition, and writing in unfamiliar ways designed to develop procedural literacy by engaging in a series of

82

processes both in writing and composing inside of *Portal 2*'s puzzle maker. This final unit of my course illustrates how playing videogames can become the core focus of composition pedagogy while also maintaining a focus on the Framework for Success and its combination of Habits of Mind and Outcomes. Many instructors may embrace approaches to incorporating videogames into composition pedagogy as a complementary element, but Games as Instructions presents videogames as capable of providing the core content and focus of a composition pedagogy fostering the types of learning seen as important within composition studies.

3.3 From Theory to Practice

While my research attempts to take videogames from a limited discussion of theory to showing how games can be used in the classroom space I wish to reiterate that the sections above do not represent the definitive approach to teaching with videogames in the composition classroom, but a series of beta attempts to show these theories in practice in the hopes of fostering the Framework for Success's Habits of Mind and targeting specific Outcomes in the classroom using videogames. Throughout my discussion of the six primary units of my course I demonstrated connections primarily to the Framework for Success in addition to Bogost and Gee in hopes of showing how the practice of using games as topics, in-class activities, and projects has the potential to successfully do so. In this chapter I attempted to illustrate the potential for videogame-infused pedagogy to engage the Habits of Mind and major game theories in addition to filling the needs of a composition classroom at FSU and highlight these connections.

Fostering the Habits of Mind is important, but the Outcomes proves valuable for considering how the actions we take in the classroom aid our students in developing in their time in our courses. As it stands I lack definitive answers about whether I successfully addressed the Outcomes in my classroom and other important information and data regarding student

perceptions and analysis of the projects students completed. By definition this restricts my scope to remaining theoretical in nature, despite my focus on practical application. That said, by illustrating baseline connections ranging from lessons, projects, units, all adding up to a pilot version of a course embracing videogame-infused composition pedagogy to varying degrees inside and outside of the classroom. I hope to expand the conversations regarding videogames and composition by addressing access to games through free resources, making the process of using games in the classroom more transparent by focusing on classroom experiences, and making the connections between game theory and composition more explicitly clear than connections to literacy and learning in the past by attempting to design and illustrate videogame-infused pedagogy in my pilot course and this project. The final chapter of this project attempts to forecast the future of videogame-infused pedagogy and address some of the key issues present at the moment with implementation not discussed in the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS FOR VIDEOGAME-INFUSED PEDAGOGY

4.1 Limitations of Videogame-Infused Pedagogy

In defining videogame-infused pedagogy throughout this project I focused primarily on the potential benefits for composition pedagogy through a pilot course targeting the Habits of Mind and Outcomes featured in the Framework for Success. Throughout each unit of my pilot course I illustrated many ways videogame-infused composition pedagogy engages the Framework in different ways and with varying degrees of commitment to videogames in the classroom fitting a range of needs and uses. Enormous potential exists for videogame-infused pedagogy and transcends many of the previous and perceived boundaries of videogames in the classroom, but several concerns still loom on the horizon. Many of these instances do not require more than a mid-range computer and a connection to the Internet— features almost any computer-enabled writing classroom will have access to. This does not imply that no other fundamental issues arise from the use of a videogame-infused pedagogy for instructors. Server-based clients may crash or become inaccessible due to Internet safety restrictions (including OnLive and Steam); computers may lack the necessary hard drive space (for large files found in resources like Valve's Steam for Schools initiative); general concerns about proper integration in classroom practices (how to move from one component of teaching to the next) may arise. This chapter will address some of the logistical and implementation challenges instructors interested in videogame-infused pedagogy may face; I will illustrate these concerns with experiences from my pilot course.

Before addressing the remaining limitations for videogame-infused pedagogy I would like to stress the strides made in the past several years in the games industry leading to the possibility for bringing games into the composition classroom. Moves towards cloud-based gaming and the wealth of free games at our disposal erase far more boundaries than those remaining. No better time exists to implement a videogame-infused pedagogy than now thanks to shifts in game development, game distribution, and technology for playing games. Our classrooms and students are better suited than ever to take advantage of these tools and shifting literacy needs place increasing importance on exploring videogames as texts. Videogame development gradually moves away from pure arcade action to attempts to address social and cultural concerns, and through their processes developers consciously craft arguments we can unpack in our classrooms. The increased variety and availability of videogames as texts translates to increased potential and opportunities for teaching and learning to take place. Some shortcomings remain for videogame-infused pedagogy, however.

Returning to deWinter et al.'s piece, "Computer Games Across the Curriculum: A Critical Review of an Emerging Techno-Pedagogy," a series of worthy concerns emerges. Here, deWinter et al. note several valid causes for concern, including Funding, Access, Resistance, Pedagogy, and Assessment. The approach suggested here using primarily cloud-based, browser-based, low-spec, freely available games requiring roughly the power of a netbook, a stable broadband connection, and/or a browser mediates these issues somewhat; almost every classroom outfitted with computers possesses these features. In this final chapter I will attempt to reconcile some of the concerns discussed by deWinter et al in order to illustrate how these shifts benefit videogame-infused pedagogy while reflecting on my own issues with implementing videogame-infused pedagogy throughout the Spring 2013 semester. I will focus specifically on

Funding, Access, and Resistance as this project already focused on Pedagogy, and does not

intend to respond to concerns of Assessment. In keeping with my focus on experience in the

classroom, I will mediate these discussions through my personal experiences with attempting to

implement a videogame-infused pedagogy at Florida State University in a computer writing

classroom (CWC). The issues addressed here may not prove universal and similarly may not be

reflective of all questions and concerns, but present important considerations for any instructor

attempting to implement a videogame-infused pedagogy. Bearing this in mind I present the

resulting issues and the associated limitations for attempting to implement a videogame-infused

pedagogy other instructors may wish to consider before their quest into videogames and

composition begins.

4.2 Concerns of Funding and Network Access

DeWinter et al weave two pivotal concerns throughout their article: Funding and Access. This

discussion of the challenges facing instructors bringing videogames into their classrooms comes

first and, as seen in this project, presents an immediate concern. Dozens of games and services

are available freely and/or with little stress placed on the hardware at an instructor's disposal. In

this way the model of videogame-infused pedagogy I utilized provides a worthy response; I

designed my approach to videogame-infused pedagogy first and foremost with careful

consideration for concerns of cost and hardware access in mind. Without rehashing previous

discussions of the impact of cost on implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy, the lack of

additional funding for software access proves one common thread for videogame-infused

pedagogy. That said, when discussing the use of the prerequisite computer labs for using

videogames in the classroom deWinter et al. do raise a critical point meriting an expanded

discussion. In this section I will discuss my experiences with attempting to install videogames in

the computer writing classrooms at Florida State University, and how these concerns can be addressed by those attempting to implement a videogame-infused pedagogy.

Installing software and Internet connectivity represent two of the most subversive issues associated with implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy. Housed in a discussion of funding, deWinter et al mention that "even if an institution already has the requisite platform, computer labs tend to be very carefully administered. It is not uncommon for instructors to face an uphill battle just to install a game in one of these labs, let alone teach with it" (n.p.). Utilizing services like OnLive or the free tools provided from Valve in their Steam for Schools bundle (including *Portal 2* and its map creation software) requires certain types of Internet connections as part of the use/installation process. Valve's Steam software client uses several security measures and serves as a largely transparent form of DRM, or Digital Rights Management. For games on the PC platform, concerns of piracy gave rise to various ways publishers attempted to control their content. Valve, a game development company, responded by creating Steam, a program requiring players to log in to their servers to access games. In short, many services require certain Internet connection types to connect to servers as anti-piracy measures or to secure or stream content. The resulting problem, however, comes from the connections services like Steam must make in the background to insure games cannot be played in multiple locations.

Naturally, this proves to be problematic as universities have a similarly vested interest in maintaining high standards of Internet security. Certain types of Internet traffic known to be harmful when left unsecured are, in many cases, blocked completely; this held true for the computer writing classrooms at Florida State University. While these classrooms house computers outfitted with central and graphics processing units capable of handling games such as *Portal 2*, FSU's IT department heavily limits internet traffic protocols in my classroom for

Spring 2013. I experienced no difficulties when clearing the installation of Steam for Schools with the administrator of the CWC (possibly because I volunteered to personally install the files/software), however, connecting these computers to Valve's servers proved a far different issue. Games as Instructions depended on using Steam for Schools as an active component of videogame-infused pedagogy in the classroom. Several weeks of communication between myself and the administrators and the IT department yielded no progress for the first several weeks of the semester; administrators applied connectivity fixes behind the scenes for these connections, but none of them opened the classroom to Valve's servers. In short, several issues can arise when implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy and can take several weeks to sort out even if all parties work diligently.

I discovered fixes for these issues through strings of advanced tests I ran personally; all tests required years of prior knowledge of working with computers and the Windows operating system specifically. Access to items such as a wireless USB modem and a secure wireless connection are not likely to be in most instructors' repertoires; tools I happened to possess led to the inevitable breakthroughs in the installation process of Steam for Schools for the CWC. While it remains impossible to authorize and activate the accounts for Steam for Schools using FSU's own wired Internet connections, through my own wireless connection and modem I connected with Valve's servers for the initial ping required for authorization. After the initial connection the computers continued connecting flawlessly. I designed these fixes myself, however, without requesting additional permissions. The CWC coordinator at FSU graciously allowed me to experiment with the installation of Steam for Schools, but many instructors simply will not be as fortunate. Between the knowledge of the Windows operating system necessary to alter firewall settings, access to personal wireless technology, and access to computers with admin clearance,

my situation is one of relative privilege—the IT department complied (unsuccessfully) with addressing my pleas for assistance.

Controlling and installing a range of programs on university computers may not be possible in all universities or for all instructors. Thus developing a videogame-infused pedagogy presents risks for instructors, and despite efforts in my own scholarship to show ways around these rigid restrictions challenges remain with hardware and Internet security to consider depending on the level of investment instructors desire. Those seeking the use of Flash-based browser games for a lesson or two will likely experience few if any issues, whereas those with ambitions of radically altering their pedagogy to accommodate videogames throughout an entire semester would be wise to fully explore their options and limitations before committing to an unsustainable approach. If I had decided to open my course with playing *Portal 2* and my unit on Games as Instructions my plans would have been almost immediately thwarted and resulted in scrambling to alter my course and/or plans. I advise gaining access to the spaces and testing Internet connections, programs, and security either personally or through an administrator before committing serious time or resources to videogame-infused pedagogy. In these first two sections of deWinter et al.'s argument about restraints of Funding and Access, there are clear advantages for my approach to using games in the classroom— many of the games I have outlined can easily be used in any classroom without needing new software to be installed or any sort of advanced clearance. Her point about the relatively walled garden of university computer labs, however, still stands and no easy solution to this concern exists.

In response to the concerns of Funding and Access presented by deWinter et al and my own experiences with attempting to implement videogame-infused pedagogy, shortcomings such as game installations, internet connection protocols, and problems with servers emerge. In my

90

personal experience I corrected many of the issues surrounding implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy, but cannot guarantee this possibility for all instructors and settings. Instructors implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy should test the lab's computers first to insure all games and software can run properly in time for the requisite lessons. Steam for Schools and OnLive respond to problems of funding and access by providing free access to games without requiring high-end hardware, however, these services depend on potentially unstable internet connections and servers. Testing computers and software first proves crucially important for instructors experimenting with videogame-infused pedagogy to ensure games function properly on the hardware in question. Browser-based or freely-available downloadable games or demos further mediate problems with servers and connection protocols, yet these still depend on installing game files and access to the files themselves through downloads or flash drives. In short, I attempt to respond to the issues of Funding and Access introduced by deWinter et al seen in this project, but many of these resources bring additional concerns with internet connectivity. While videogame-infused pedagogy as I define it here presents a response to concerns of Funding and Access, instructors must find the proper combination for their curriculum and computers first. Interested instructors should test software before implementing videogame-infused pedagogy in order to account for the potential shortcomings presented by internet connectivity for select resources presented in this project.

4.3 Resistance from Administration and Students

In addition to testing hardware and software configurations to avoid potential issues with incompatibility or connectivity, obtaining approval for the content of a course focusing heavily on videogames proves vital. DeWinter et al note that:

Administrators' and teachers' concerns [...] lie in a different direction, one

marked with a legitimate anxiety about litigation ("how dare you expose my

children to that kind of garbage?") and pedagogical quality ("what happened to

teaching reading, writing, and recitation?"). Legislators prevail upon parents and

teachers alike to beware the hazards of computer games that feature sex and

violence.

In this section I will elaborate on the concerns cited by deWinter et al surrounding Resistance

from administrators and students alike. While the preceding chapters of this project address

concerns of pedagogical quality by connecting assigned texts to the Framework for Success,

Gee, and Bogost, instructors should account for the potential for a backlash from either

administrators or instructors before developing a videogame-infused pedagogy. In order to teach

an ENC 1145 course at Florida State University instructors must first submit a proposal and gain

approval. The Writing Program Administrator at Florida State University, Deborah Coxwell-

Teague, immediately approved and supported my proposed ENC1145: Writing About the

Rhetoric of Videogames course. The faculty in FSU's Rhetoric and Composition also

immediately supported my research and approach to implementing videogame-infused

pedagogy, but these should not be taken as a given for all institutions or university structures.

Unfortunately videogames remain heavily contested texts with a tendency to come under

public scrutiny for their violent tendencies in the media. Events like the Newtown, CT shooting

thrust videogames into the spotlight once again as potentially dangerous texts, making

administrative approval and support for implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy something

all instructors should bear in mind, especially when working with games containing adult themes

or violence. In my unit on Games as Stories I assigned the first season of Telltale Games' *The*

Walking Dead episodic series as homework. This unit asked students to consider videogame stories along with the television and comics to discuss how storytelling shifts between these mediums even when in the same universe and focusing on some of the same characters. Students in my course viewed, read, and played graphically violent texts throughout an entire unit of my course. While I did not experience any backlash from my peers or administrators I maintained concern about the potential responses of my students or their parents since this game was, by definition, a required text for my course. Telltale Games' *The Walking Dead* excels as a storytelling experience with a unique distribution model, and we discussed it in my course for those reasons. Whether instructors can obtain administrative approval for this remains an open question.

Videogames also receive criticism for a perceived lack of academic rigor. Brilliant titles like *The Walking Dead* and *Bioshock* address these concerns through their complex storylines, systems, and gameplay. Opening up classrooms to these games also means a willingness to discuss the mature themes and blood-soaked violence contained within them along with the necessary discussions about morals, ethics, and the riveting stories contained within each. As videogames have evolved so too have the stories told through the medium to create a new avenue for advanced social critique. This also opens our classrooms to criticism from administration, parents, and students, depending on their sensibilities. These texts facilitate rich discussions about narratives and procedurality, but remain nonetheless volatile. Other titles discussed in the previous chapters like *First-Person Tutor* or *The Wikipedia Game* bring no such burdens associated with them as a testament to the ability for videogames to be scaled to the wants and needs of a given instructor, but taking this approach to its fullest extent bears careful consideration and approval from the necessary sources. Implementing a curriculum laced with

Bioshock, *The Walking Dead*, and *Assassin's Creed* without administrative approval presents

several significant possibilities for offending the sensibilities of everyone involved. Instructors

should inform students of any potentially sensitive content found in the games assigned. Many

titles discussed in the second chapter of this project avoid concerns of violence and are easily

seen as part of the classroom (like *First Person Tutor*), but more challenging texts like *Bioshock*

come with increased risks and rewards.

On this note, instructors should consider the potential of resistance from students as well.

Instructors enthusiastic about videogames and bringing them into their classrooms may not

consider this as a potential pitfall, but deWinter et al. note that "play for our students has been

fetishized and made taboo outside certain well-policed and, in the case of resistant students, self-

policed boundaries" (n.p.). Advice exists for this situation, however, as the authors address the

instance of resistant students:

> Here is the proverbial teachable moment. When students balk at the idea
>
> of learning with games and offer up the standard objections, asking them
>
> to commit their arguments to paper is a worthwhile preliminary exercise.
>
> A subsequent and more transformative exercise in our experience is to
>
> have them explain why such arguments seem necessary in the first place.
>
> Answering this latter question often leads students to critical
>
> examinations of their unexpressed expectations of what is supposed to
>
> happen in the classroom generally and to challenge their own
>
> assumptions about how education is supposed to transform their lives.

I did not encounter these concerns in my classroom, potentially due to my the title of my course

specifically focused on Writing About the Rhetoric of Videogames, meaning that most students

have likely accepted that videogames will play an active role in the course on some level, and enrolled with a clear indication of the course's content. This, however, is not meant to suggest that all approaches to videogame-infused pedagogy should take a similar approach. While I followed this notion to its logical conclusion of developing a full course of materials to discuss approaches several instructors can utilize, I wish to firmly reject the notion that this approach should be the status quo. Courses utilizing videogame-infused composition pedagogy throughout present equal rigor to courses dabbling in the use of videogames, as evidenced in the quote from deWinter et al. above.

Instructors utilizing videogame-infused pedagogy may experience some degree of resistance from administrators, faculty, and students. Instructors can mediate that resistance by ensuring administrators approve the materials first, and presenting these materials to students with confidence. With the potential for controversy and concern renewed frequently in the media regarding videogames and violence, the choice of gaming texts used by instructors becomes increasingly important, and so too does attaining the proper administrative approval. Introducing students to violent or controversial videogames must be done with care and consideration and depends on the willingness of an instructor to grapple with difficult questions about videogames and their content. Titles like *Hotline Miami* criticize violence in videogames through violent gameplay, making them both intriguing and controversial texts for a composition classroom. Attempting to use potentially controversial videogames in the classroom or as part of course curriculum means taking risks, but also requires that the games in question are discussed and handled maturely and responsibly. Teaching with videogames means taking some risks by default, but instructors should first ask: are these texts connected to concerns my course is responding to? How does this game respond to the needs of this course and students in a way

95

other texts cannot? What does this game do that other games cannot? If these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily then choosing less controversial titles may inevitably prove more beneficial. Resistance can come from several angles depending on the uses of videogames in the composition classroom, and resistance from administration and students may present two of the most immediate concerns instructors should consider. Carefully selecting the texts in use, gaining the proper approval, and presenting the content to students as crucial to the experience of the classroom helps to mediate these questions and concerns of resistance.

4.4 Implications

The easiest approach to addressing the criticisms, concerns, and barriers standing in the way of teaching with videogames would be dismissing games altogether; potential hardware failure, connectivity issues, compatibility concerns, and resistance from administration and students alike present several opportunities to dissuade instructors interested in videogame-infused pedagogy. The goal of this project, however, is to begin alleviating these concerns and find practical ways to use videogames in the composition classroom by making connections to the Framework for Success. By developing and teaching a course utilizing videogame-infused pedagogy I attempted to highlight some of the concerns associated with a reliance on videogames as a course topic and a part of my classroom plans. I also attempted to address the concerns laid out by scholars like deWinter et al, and while in some ways videogame-infused pedagogy can, some obstacles remain and my approach introduces new ones. In this section I will address some remaining critiques of videogame-infused pedagogy, revisit the theory presented in the second and third chapters, and discuss how the pilot course will inform my future research.

Returning to the concerns cited in this chapter by deWinter et al., funding and access can be addressed most directly by selecting completely free games without stringent hardware

requirements as discussed throughout this project and housed on my website ("Videogame-Infused Pedagogy"). Similarly, instructors can mediate resistance from administrators and students through approval and discussions in the classroom surrounding the nature of education and why the use of videogames seems questionable in the first place, as suggested by deWinter et al. Pedagogy, Assessment, connectivity, and content remain issues for videogame-infused pedagogy as defined in this project, however. This project focuses first and foremost on the concerns related to implementation; an overarching discussion of evaluation and assessment, however, remains unexplored. This project defines videogame-infused pedagogy and connects scholarship in composition studies and game theory by presenting a pilot course implementing videogame-infused pedagogy and connecting to the Framework for Success. Prescribing precise methods of incorporating videogames or assessing the results of doing so, however, remain outside the bounds of this project. In implementing videogame-infused pedagogy in my own experience, however, the issues of Internet connectivity and content in games remain. Technical support, administrator approval of content, and software installation will vary depending on a case-by-case basis. In my experience I could not connect to OnLive due to issues with internet ports not opening properly, and the Steam for Schools' servers crashed during my final unit, thereby altering plans multiple times throughout my pilot course. These concerns may eventually dissipate as more services become browser-based and consumer-friendly, but for now, even some of the best assets for implementing videogame-infused pedagogy present significant cause for concern and necessitate careful planning.

Despite these concerns this project illustrates how implementing videogame-infused pedagogy connects to the Framework for Success, Gee's learning principles, and Bogost's procedurality. Beginning with the Framework for Success videogame-infused pedagogy engages

with it on both a theoretical level and in practice, as seen in the second and third chapter. Setting up a definition of videogame-infused composition pedagogy necessitated theoretical underpinnings relating to its foundation and application, and chapter two illustrates the many ways Gee and Bogost's work connects to the Habits of Mind seen in the Framework for Success and illustrates the potential for videogames to complement composition pedagogy. This potential led to the development of a pilot course for the implementation of videogame-infused pedagogy targeting a range of approaches for utilizing videogames in the composition classroom as well as the outcomes listed in the Framework for Success. Each unit, assignment, and game discussed in this project connects to either a specific need in the composition classroom or a key component of the Framework and is shown to effectively target multiple Habits of Mind and Outcomes each. Throughout the course of this project videogame-infused pedagogy shifted from a theoretically-informed approach to teaching first year composition to a fully-realized pilot course, successfully illustrating the connections between videogames and the Framework for Success.

The calls to composition and literacy scholars made by Yancey and the New London Group ask instructors to explore new ways of engaging with the new literacy practices of students taking place inside and outside of the classroom. Similarly, scholars like James Gee have shown the core relationships between videogames and good learning principles while Bogost emphasizes the importance of actively playing videogames and processing their ability to make powerful arguments and meaning in the classroom. This project shows how videogame-infused pedagogy answers these calls by situating videogames in the classroom and supporting the forms of learning we seek in the composition classroom by fostering new literacy practices in students and building on the literacy practices many engage with regularly. My pilot course further illustrates these points by focusing on how a range of approaches instructors can take to

videogame-infused pedagogy fits into calls made throughout the field at large, but also, responds to modern concerns about how composition pedagogy should function according to the Framework for Success. Connecting to these major calls and theories in composition studies and mapping videogame-infused pedagogy onto the Framework by putting these theories into action shows the many ways videogames complement composition pedagogy. Scholars connected videogames and composition for years, and this project shows what these connections look like in action while addressing many of the concerns accompanying the implementation of a videogame-infused pedagogy.

Successfully defining and extrapolating videogame-infused pedagogy in the composition classroom led to opportunities to reflect on the process of doing so including the planning process, curriculum, games, and how these components came together in my personal experiences. Planning this pilot course and mapping its components onto the Habits of Mind and Outcomes proved to be one of the easiest overall components of this project; starting with the Framework for Success, Bogost, and Gee as a theoretical foundation made conceptualizing the ways this might operate relatively easy from a planning standpoint. Using procedurality as an impetus for implementing a videogame-infused pedagogy in my pilot course spurred many of the connections to the Framework as seen in my course assignments, units, and lessons by providing rich rhetorical and metacognitive underpinnings to understanding videogames. Implementing these plans, however, presented several unique challenges throughout the semester including connecting the curriculum, finding time to play games in the classroom, and juggling technical hiccups.

While I designed each of the units of my course to successfully scaffold one another this made connecting the semester-long units together far more difficult. While some chapters of

Bogost's required text for my course connected well to the timed units of my course others simply did not, and led to multiple scenarios where students presented on tangentially related facets of videogames. The presentations housed in the semester-long unit Games as Texts also meant students spent a significant portion of class time each day engaged in these discussions; this inevitably took time away from concerns germane to composition and playing games in the classroom. Students played games in class at least a few times per each unit of my pilot course, and each 50 minute class period typically dwindled to about 20-30 minutes following presentations, discussions, and any announcements at the start of the class period about upcoming deadlines or projects. Playing a game and discussing it typically takes at least 10-20 minutes as well, and this means the exclusion of either composition topics or gameplay— never an easy choice to make. As a result the unit on Games as Texts, while theoretically sound, will not be part of future editions of my course. Striking an ideal balance between time spent in class on discussion, playing videogames, and discussing projects directly proved increasingly difficult as the semester continued, and budgeting time accordingly remains a top concern moving forward.

Similarly, issues with the hardware and software reliant on internet connections or servers shaped how my course operated to a significant degree. For multiple class periods Valve's servers for Steam for Schools locked students out of their final projects, and OnLive never once functioned properly. In an effort to embrace the wealth of texts available for videogame-infused pedagogy the titles I chose came with potential issues with servers and internet connections and forced me to radically alter lesson plans and projects. As a result future versions of this course will also focus on cross-platform, DRM-free games without internet connection requirements. In the time since the Steam for Schools servers failed my course, I

obtained approval for games meeting the requirements for my Games as Instructions unit such as *Monaco* and *Little Inferno*. Continued pushes towards games without reliance on internet connections or servers will guide my future work in developing videogame-infused pedagogy in order to provide more viable options for instructors in the future.

Using a combination of theoretical backing from Gee, Bogost, and the Framework, videogame-infused pedagogy manifested in a pilot course designed to address the Habits of Mind and Outcomes in different ways with a variety of uses for videogames throughout. None of this came without issues in implementation, however, as this section highlights. While my assignments and lessons did target the Framework for Success, more issues arose from attempting to accomplish so many things within the confines of a single semester. I scrapped several plans at the last minute to meet the pressing needs of the course, and this led to several classes feeling incomplete in one or several ways. Radically altering one's pedagogy to incorporate videogames leads to several scenarios requiring firm command over time and multitasking skills as I discovered throughout this pilot course. Finding the time to play games, discuss projects, conduct workshops, and hold conferences leaves very little leeway. Thus, instructors should slowly develop ways to effectively integrate videogames into their composition pedagogy. I have presented a full course of assignments, plans, and units here, and beginning with one of those would be best as it presents an opportunity to learn from the challenges of videogame-infused pedagogy without consistently addressing concerns of technology and testing software. Even just a lesson or unit utilizing videogame-infused pedagogy can achieve the goals outlined in the Framework for Success and foster new kinds of thinking and literacy practices in students.

4.5 Future Work

This project focuses primarily on developing a working theory of videogame-infused pedagogy through the design of a pilot course which seeks to bring together composition pedagogy and videogame theory as something practically applicable for a range of instructors. As a result, a very clear path for videogame-infused pedagogy going forward remains: empirical research. This project defines videogame-infused pedagogy and what it can look like in the composition classroom, and future research specifically addressing how students interact with videogames throughout the course of a semester merits exploration. This project lacks a concrete examination of the outcomes of my pilot course, and how these mesh with the Outcomes Statement as per the WPA. This project focused first on presenting a pilot course featuring videogame-infused pedagogy; simultaneously designing and measuring variables in the classroom remained beyond the scope of this project. While videogame-infused pedagogy explicates the connections between videogames, game theory, and the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing, the result of combining these elements has not as of yet been explored or considered, and due to the very nature of this project simply cannot be.

Instructors, myself included, interested in using videogames in the composition classroom owe it to the larger conversations taking place in composition and game studies to make use of valuable guidelines like those laid out by the WPA, NCTE, and National Writing Project to examine the results of using videogame-infused pedagogy. Returning to Simon Egenfeldt-Nielson's research, several studies focus on games and learning, but build on or feature shallow examinations and faulty methods to yield questionable results. One possibility involves filling perhaps the largest gap in the literature: empirical research examining student compositions and student attitudes to explore how videogame-infused pedagogy can achieve the

outcomes listed in the Framework for Success. Several significant gains occurred in the literature coming from both game studies and composition studies, as seen in the previous chapters, however, implementing videogame-infused pedagogy and examining the results proves crucial for the next wave of scholarship examining the role of videogames in learning.

I plan to pursue a quantitative examination of videogames and the composition classroom for my dissertation and building on the foundation established here in this project using videogame-infused pedagogy. Videogame-infused composition pedagogy brings together videogames and learning, aiming to make using videogames in the classroom both practical and accessible. By establishing the connections between composition outcomes and frameworks and videogame-infused pedagogy I demonstrated the potential of a larger scale implementation. I hope that the conversation about games and learning in composition studies starts moving away from examinations of literacy alone and on to how specific videogames within specific contexts can be used to reach a range of outcome in composition and literacy studies. This project's basic definition of videogame-infused pedagogy based on a pilot course utilizing videogame-infused pedagogy outlines several meaningful connections between composition and videogames and provides several snapshots of how games can appear in the composition classroom without focusing exclusively on instructors who use videogames as a primary theme or topic. I hope that instructors interested in continued, focused examinations of games and learning will continue to shape videogame-infused pedagogy as I will in my future research. Furthermore, the work and support of those with cursory experience with videogames who attempt to bring games into the classroom provides ample opportunities for growth both in the field and for a continued discussion about the benefits of using videogames in the composition classrooms and best practices for addressing the necessary concerns accompanying them.

APPENDIX A

SEEING YOURSELF IN THE GAME WORLD

What are we doing? For this project, you'll be creating a game avatar for yourself, and writing about how the visual you've created relates to you and videogames. This will be done in two components:

- The Visual Component: You will create a visual to represent yourself in the game world. The ways in which you can do this are nearly endless. See below for some potential approaches.
- The Written Component: You will be writing a paper of roughly 4-6 pages in length (a minimum of 1,000 words) explaining the representation of yourself you've created.

How are we doing it?

- In short, you'll— 1.) create an avatar, 2.) write about why you created the avatar you did, 3.) write about the game world this avatar would inhabit and why.
- For the Visual Component, you have nearly endless options for how to proceed. Here are some (but certainly not all) potential approaches:
  - You can choose to draw a unique avatar.
  - You can edit images together to combine elements of other characters.
  - You can use character creation software found in free games like *Second Life* or *World of Warcraft*, or anything you can think of that will let you create a representation of yourself in a game world.
  - You can choose to relate to a character you've already created as well, if you desire, should you be an MMO fan.
  - You can also choose to relate yourself to an existing character in a game world, but I will require you to do more than simply print a picture of a particular character and be done for this visual element of the project. You'll need to edit the character in some way to make your presence more obvious (like, as a random example, if I wanted to argue I were closely connected to Link, I might consider editing him to, say, have some of my own features using something like Photoshop, to better insert myself into the game world and project onto the character in question).
  - You have complete control over the visual component and how it's made. This can be confusing, so I strongly encourage you to ask questions if you feel lost or want to try something I haven't listed here.
- For the Written Component you'll need to think about what you did in the Visual Component, and why. Here are some questions you might want to discuss in your project (not all of these are guaranteed to apply to you, but at least some of these should come across in your work):
  - Does the character look like you? Why or why not?
  - Is your character realistic? Fantastical? Why?
  - What colors are you using? Is this character big (like Wreck-It Ralph)? Small (like Young Link)? Powerful (like Kratos)? Fragile (like Cole Phelps)?

- o Who are your characters' enemies? Why?
- o What game or kind of game is your avatar they in? Is it a twitchy FPS (like *CoD*)? An indie platformer (like *Super Meat Boy*)? An artsy experiment (like *Journey*)? What might this say about you or the avatar?
- o Who/what might your final boss be? How does that relate to you?
- o Does the avatar you've created have a history of some kind, and how might that relate to your own history?

What Is Expected? My expectation from this project is for you to do the following things successfully. Doing exceptionally well at these things will most likely lead to an strong grade on this project:

- Visual Component
    1. Create a unique avatar which shows clear signs of effort on your part.
- Written Component
    1. Discuss the choices you made while designing your avatar (size, color, proportions, realistic, fantasy, game genre, inspirations, medium you created it in, etc.).
    2. Relate yourself/your life to the visual component in some way
    3. Discuss the game world your character exists in.
- NOTE: Any concerns I have about your project will be addressed both during our conferences and when you receive your project back. Nothing guarantees an A on my papers, but anything that keeps you from an A I will to make clear upon returning papers. Feel free to ask if you still have questions.

Why Are We Doing This Project? This is a common, and typically unspoken, concern. This semester, you're going to be exploring games in a variety of ways, and a good way to start out is by visualizing yourself in a game world, and thereby understanding what goes into game creation on some level (as you'll be doing that later on). Games are composed of many elements, and some of the most obvious are game characters and worlds. Being able to synthesize images and writing is an important skill and one we will be building on this semester, and so in many ways, this project is a smaller version of many things we'll be working on all semester. Also, like game design, this project serves as something of a "tutorial level"—a low stakes space to do some experimenting, get comfortable with writing about games, and start out by relating yourself to them without being burdened by intensive theory and research.

Logistics

You will complete three drafts (the first and third of which we will workshop in class, the second you will bring to me in conferences), followed by a final draft. All (4) will be due to me on the final due date.

- Requirements:
    - o Written Component
        - 1,000 word minimum for the written component.
            - This is a hardline minimum. Not meeting the required 1,000 words (which *does not* include headers or marginalia) will result in steep penalties to your project's grade.
        - NOTE: Successful projects will be closer to 4-6 pages
        - Formatting (VERY IMPORTANT):
            - Times New Roman font

- 12 point size
- MLA header
- Double spaced
  - o Visual Component
    - ▪ You must create an avatar for yourself.
    - ▪ You can use any number of approaches to creating an avatar, but you must include an image/drawing/render/visual of some kind to present the avatar you've created.

Grade Breakdown

This course focuses on process writing, and therefore, your final product will be graded as well as the progress you have made as a writer throughout this project. You will be expected to show meaningful signs of improvement with each draft. Your process grade will be determined by your growth as a writer in addition to a Process Memo we will fill out before this assignment is due where you assess your own growth as a writer.

- Final Text: 75% (150 pts.)
  - o Visual Component (75 Points)
    - ▪ 50 Points: Visual Representation of Yourself in a Game World
    - ▪ 15 Points: Approach to Character Creation (software/tools used)
    - ▪ 10 Points: Polish and effort
  - o Written Component (75 Points)
    - ▪ 35 Points: Discussion of the Character and its World
    - ▪ 25 Points: Connections Made Between Yourself and Your Avatar
    - ▪ 15 Points: Grammar/Proofreading/Polish
- Process: 25% (50 pts.)
  - o 12 Points: Workshops & Participation
  - o 8 Points: Complete final paper portfolio with all drafts & process memo
  - o 30 Points: The relative quality of the improvements you made through the drafts.

Drafts and Due Dates
- (Shitty) First Draft Workshop: Friday, January 18th
- Second Draft for Conferences: Submit via Email on Sunday, January 20th
- Third Draft Workshop: Friday, February 1st
- FINAL DRAFT AND ALL PREVIOUS DRAFTS DUE: Monday, February 4th

APPENDIX B

SEEING THE GAME WORLD RHETORICALLY

Our second project is designed to draw you further into videogame worlds by asking you to rhetorically analyze a game of your choosing. It must be a game they have played and know well. You will be required to write a paper that interrogates a videogame in search of the rhetorical elements of the game in question including an analysis of the nature and function of the chosen game as an artifact. You might ask such questions as: What systems does the player participate in? What structure does the game follow? What genre is it part of and what elements of the genre are being represented here, and to what rhetorical effect? How does a game like *Civilization* represent social growth and systems, and why does that matter? The purpose of this project will be to build on our examination of games as places and continue pushing Bogost's work to see games as texts which function and express themselves rhetorically in addition to simply an engaging gameplay experience. This will be the primary research component of the course, requiring you to seek out information from our readings in addition to looking for scholarly sources on how games function rhetorically in addition to basic searches for information on the games, developers, publishers, genres, and other elements of games, gameplay, and design in question.

What are we doing? For this project, you'll be rhetorically analyzing a game of your choosing. It can be any game you so desire, as long as it is one you are familiar with, have access to, and can play through again for this project—no going based on memory for this one. I'm expecting close analysis here, and that's not something I expect you to attempt to do from memory alone.

How are we doing it?
- In short, you'll— 1.) choose a game to analyze, 2.) choose a lens to analyze it through, 3.) bring in at least 3 external sources for lenses and claims 4.) take and carefully select screenshots to help illustrate your points 5.) analyze the game in question rhetorically using the research conducted.

What Is Expected? My expectation from this project is for you to do the following things successfully. Doing exceptionally well at these things will most likely lead to an strong grade on this project:
   1. Set up the history of the game (developer, genre, platform, history)
   2. Bring in a lens (or lenses) to analyze the game in question which makes sense for the kind of game you're working with.
   3. Provide plenty of details and screenshots of the game in question.
   4. Make connections between theory and the game itself to show rhetorical systems at work within the game you've chosen.
   5. Bring everything together in the end to show why and how the game you've chosen is rhetorical, and why it matters.
- NOTE: Any concerns I have about your project will be addressed both during our conferences and when you receive your project back. Nothing guarantees an A on my

papers, but anything that keeps you from an A I will to make clear upon returning papers. Feel free to ask if you still have questions.

Why Are We Doing This Project? All too often, we play games without thinking about them. Sure, videogames are all about a fun, challenging, and/or immersive experience, but videogames are built on computer code, and that code constrains what is possible in a videogame. Game also contain all sorts of systems—economies, gameplay mechanics, story elements, and far more. This project is intended to help you see some of the underlying systems at work within the games you love and the games you play. Seeing these game worlds differently allows you to better understand how games function and how those functions impact you and shape the worlds we play in. That said, I don't want this to be, become, or seem like a project designed to "make you hate videogames." I'm not asking you to tear them to bits, and you do not, and should not, hate a game to make the points you're making—analysis does not have to mean "ripping to shreds," nor should it. You should be engaging thoughtfully with a game (maybe even one you truly love) and examining the underlying rhetoric of it.

Logistics

You will complete three drafts (the first and third of which we will workshop in class, the second you will bring to me in conferences), followed by a final draft. All (4) will be due to me on the final due date.

- Requirements:
    - 2,000 word minimum for the written component.
        - This is a hardline minimum. Not meeting the required 2,000 words (which *does not* include headers or marginalia) will result in steep penalties to your project's grade.
    - NOTE: Successful projects will be closer to 8-10 pages
    - Formatting (VERY IMPORTANT):
        - Times New Roman font
        - 12 point size
        - MLA header
        - Double spaced

Grade Breakdown

This course focuses on process writing, and therefore, your final product will be graded as well as the progress you have made as a writer throughout this project. You will be expected to show meaningful signs of improvement with each draft. Your process grade will be determined by your growth as a writer in addition to a Process Memo we will fill out before this assignment is due where you assess your own growth as a writer.

- Final Text: 75% (150 pts.)
    - 50 Points: Rhetorical Analysis of a Videogame
    - 35 Points: Research (effective integration, choice of sources, number used, and effort)
    - 25 Points: Choice of Rhetorical Framework(s)
    - 25 Points: Use of Visual Elements (Screenshots, Images, Information)
    - 15 Points: Grammar/Proofreading/Polish
- Process: 25% (50 pts.)
    - 12 Points: Workshops & Participation

○ 8 Points: Complete final paper portfolio with all drafts & process memo
○ 30 Points: The relative quality of the improvements you made through the drafts.

Drafts and Due Dates
- (Shitty) First Draft Workshop: Friday, February 15th
- Second Draft for Conferences: Submit via Email on Sunday, February 17th
- Third Draft Workshop: Friday, March 1st
- FINAL DRAFT AND ALL PREVIOUS DRAFTS DUE: Friday, March 8th

APPENDIX C

CREATING A GAME WORLD OF YOUR OWN

Now that we have discussed games as worlds of their own and how those game worlds work using a combination of readings and rhetorical theories, it is time to put our knowledge of games and game theory into practices by designing games! Yes, Project 3 will involve designing a game. You'll also be in charge of designing at least 1 promotional material for your game, including items like game boxes, posters, or trailers. Not only is this meant to be something you can have fun with, but it's also a project which will ask you to consider the amount of media which goes into creating a videogame, and how these elements work together. From our last Unit we explored Jesse Schell's Elemental Tetrad, and here, I want you to bring his Tetrad into play as a means of discussing the game you've created.

What are we doing?

For this project, you will need to create a functioning game (using tools of your choice), a visual advertisement for your game, and a 1,000+ word reflection on this process building on Schell. You will be discussing why you chose the game engine you did, what went into creating the game you made, and any additional documentation for it. I will not be restricting what approach to game design you take, however. That is up to you. I recommend using a text-based game and tools for creating one, however, those looking for a challenge or interested in knowing more are welcome to toy with Unity or Blender to create their games. (Warning: it is *far* more work).

How are we doing it?

In short, you'll— 1.) come up with a game idea, 2.) define and elaborate on Schell's Tetrad as it relates to your game, including a Theme, Story, Technology, Mechanics, and Aesthetics, 3.) choose game creation software that you are comfortable with and works with your game idea 4.) create your game using available tools 5.) create an advertisement for it (a trailer, game box, or poster), 6.) write a reflection of 1,000+ words which makes all of the above choices clear and focuses on defining the Elements in Schell's Tetrad and the process of making your materials.

What Is Expected?

My expectation from this project is for you to do the following things successfully. Doing exceptionally well at these things will most likely lead to an strong grade on this project:

1   A game which functions properly.
2   A visual advertisement for your game which ties into your game's theme.
3   A reflection which discusses how you used Schell's Tetrad, what you used to design the other 2 items listed, and how you tried to tie everything together.
- NOTE: Any concerns I have about your project will be addressed both during our conferences and when you receive your project back. Nothing guarantees an A on my papers, but anything that keeps you from an A I will to make clear upon returning papers. Feel free to ask if you still have questions.

Why Are We Doing This Project?

Learning about theory for videogames is fun (well, maybe not for you, but I certainly do think so!). Theory, however, can only help so much to understand how these processes work. Ian Bogost makes clear in the piece we read "The Rhetoric of Videogames" that games work using specific processes. It's much easier to see these processes in isolation and from a distance as a consumer of media than it is to understand them as a composer of media. In this case, you will be designing a game to better understand how games operate, not only as processes, but the processes which go into making them. For Bogost, Procedural Rhetoric and Procedural Literacy go hand-in-hand, and in this case, we're going to be further working to develop your procedural literacy, not only through the games we've played in class, but by designing one of your very own. Also, this project is meant to be fun. So, have fun with it!

Logistics

You will be required to provide evidence of at least 1 previous draft of all of your materials, followed by a final draft. This means a total of 6 items (2 drafts of your game, 2 drafts of your visual component, and 2 drafts of your written component) minimum. Additional drafts will not be *required*, but are strongly advised.

- Requirements:
    - 1,000 word minimum for the written component.
        - This is a hardline minimum. Not meeting the required 1,000 words (which *does not* include headers or marginalia) will result in steep penalties to your project's grade.
    - NOTE: Successful written components will be closer to 4-6 pages in length
    - A Functioning game
    - A Visual Advertisement for your game (a poster, game box, or trailer)
    - Formatting (VERY IMPORTANT):
        - Times New Roman font
        - 12 point size
        - MLA header
        - Double spaced

Grade Breakdown

This project provides some unique challenges to our usual approach, as it is in many ways based on what is seen in final products than in drafts. For this reason, I suggest documenting as much as humanly possible in the process. Your Process Memo will be accounted for in your Reflection, which is the place to account for the work you've done as well. So, make sure you're doing that and you include any struggles you encountered as you tried to create your game in the process.

- Final Text: 75% (150 pts.)
    - 50 Points: Your Game
    - 45 Points: Your Reflection
    - 35 Points: Your Advertisement
    - 20 Points: Writing Mechanics/Overall Polish
- Process: 25% (50 pts.)
    - 12 Points: Workshops & Participation
    - 8 Points: Complete final paper portfolio with all drafts & process memo
    - 30 Points: The relative quality of the improvements you made through the drafts.

Drafts and Due Dates
- First Draft Workshop: Friday, March 29th
- Second Draft Workshop: Friday, April 5th
- Third Draft Workshop: Friday, April 12th
- FINAL DRAFT AND ALL PREVIOUS DRAFTS DUE: Monday, April 15th

APPENDIX D

BECOMING THE TEST SUBJECT

What Are We Doing?

Welcome to the Perpetual Testing Initiative! How kind of you to join us!

Oh... You're not here by choice, are you? Right. Let's try this again:

Solemn greetings, laborer! Your task, should you choose not to fail this project, will be to create a puzzle in our state of the art Portal 2 puzzle chamber creation software. Once you have completed this task, you must write up a formal report of how you created your chamber. These instructions will be passed on to another group of forced laborers in an effort to duplicate it. Happy toiling!

What Is Expected?

Save for complete and utter silence and obedience, we at Aperture expect all labor teams to: 1.) Design a functioning chamber. 2.) Write instructions on how to recreate your functioning chamber. 3.) Attempt to recreate another group's puzzle. 4.) Reflect on the experience of writing and using an instructional document related to a videogame.

Why Are We Doing This Project?

Frankly, we are almost bankrupt. This Jason fellow volunteered student laborers to continue the perpetual testing narrative. We're a bit surprised we didn't think of this ourselves. Interns! What a racket! In exchange for your labor, however, your instructor has bartered for what he calls "a reasonable explanation for why you are performing this work," yet he said "character building" wasn't good enough. Thus, here is what Jason told us:

A surprising amount of the ways you see videogames being engaged with involve a lot of advanced composing techniques: Let's Play series on YouTube, video guides, walkthroughs, all of these are in many ways genres of writing and composing you would see taught in a variety of writing contexts/classrooms. With our final project. Not only will we be culminating with making videogame play the main focus of class time, but also, to take part in an action which happens regularly online. Wait, I'm not sure what's happening right now…. Are those…

Logistics

- Requirements:

- o 500 word minimum reflection on your experiences playing, designing, writing documentation for, and working with someone else's documentation of, a puzzle chamber.
  - (1 per person)
  - This is a hardline minimum. Not meeting the required 500 words (which does not include headers or marginalia) will result in steep penalties to your project's grade.
- o 250 word minimum documentation describing how to duplicate and solve your puzzle chamber.
  - (1 per group).
- o Formatting: Times New Roman font, 12 point size, MLA header, Double spaced.
- Grade Breakdown

- Final Project: 75% (150 pts.)
  - o 75 Points: Reflection on Project.
  - o 50 Points: Instructions for Duplicating Chamber.
  - o 25 Points: Mechanics, Proofreading, and Polish.
- Process: 25% (50 pts.)
  - o 50 Points: Attendance and Participation.

Plans and Due Dates

- Monday, April 15th— Introduce Project 4.
- Wednesday, 17th— Play Portal 2.
- Friday April 19th— Play Portal 2/Designing Chamber.
- Monday, April 22nd— Finish Designing Chamber/Documentation.
- Wednesday, April 24th— Exchange Documentation/Build.
- Friday, April 26th— Finish Building Another's Chamber. Everything Due.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jason Custer is a Connecticut native who had split his life almost evenly between Connecticut and Florida. After graduating with his B.A. in English from Eastern Connecticut State University in 2011, he began studying at Florida State University where he worked with Michael Neal on this thesis project to earn his M.A. in Rhetoric and Composition in the summer of 2013. He is currently preparing to earn his PhD at the same institution. Professionally, Jason hopes to continue to work with videogames in the field of composition studies and rhetoric. In his free time, Jason enjoys playing copious amounts of videogames under the guise of performing research on his PC and Wii U.