

# **DH6116 *Final Portfolio***

by Raghda Fouad Farid Mawlana

**Models, Simulations and Games**

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Lecturer: Dr.Mike Cosgrave  
Student Name: Raghda Fouad Farid Mawlana  
Student Number: 122105291  
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## **Your Gaming Interests and Experience:**

My gaming history is not a big one. It started when I was eight years old, I started playing video games on PlayStation. They weren't much developed or as cool as they are recently. However, they were exciting for me as a kid. Those games shaped my visual interests as I started to like some types of styles and some specific colors. I've known and developed some emotions according to the visuals I see as well. One of the games I remember I played on PlayStation for a long time is Super Mario. I also played online games on the computer such as Barbie and My Scene and I enjoyed playing them as they introduced me to the pinkish and the girly world. I also had a game boy that I enjoyed playing with but I don't remember the games' names.

I also played YoVille on Facebook for a while where I had the opportunity to create a character, design a house and chat with other players. My all-time favorite game is *Grand Theft Auto* (GTA). I have played it on computer for ten years. It has been published by Rockstar Games. Moreover, it has several editions and some of them work on PlayStation and Xbox. Each edition has a different story which makes it even more exciting. The two editions that I played were Vice City and San Andreas but my favorite is San Andreas. Vice City is an older version. However, both of them are based on missions that the player has to complete to level up. Also, my favorite mobile games are Covet Fashion, Hay Day and 8 Ball Pool.

## What is a Game?

### ***Reality is Broken:***

-People have started to spend so much time on their computers and video games a long time ago because they fulfill their needs that the real world is unable to satisfy.

-When real life is boring, games may help people with some interesting challenges.

### ***Ludology podcast:***

- Ludology is the study of games.
- They started by trying to figure out a definition for what a game is, one of them said that it is a diversion/amusement.
- The other one said that it is a competitive activity involving skill chance or two or more persons play according to a set of rules usually for their own amusement.
- They found another definition on Wikipedia which is “a game must involve certain elements. Those elements are interactive, challenge and objective.”
- Some people don't want decision-making games. Can it be a game without making a decision?  
Personally, I think it should always be decision-making. Being interactive is one of the critical elements in game experience.
- Non decision-making games example: Bingo
- Slot machine is a probability machine where we lose money. There's no choices to be made. I don't think it is defined as a game.
- “Every sport is a game. Not every game is a sport.”
- Sports involve physicality which is necessary and required. They feel almost like a game. There are rules, scoring, competition and objective.
- People can watch sports. They tried to watch games too and that is why chess can be watched.
- Video game is a linear fashion. A certain path. It is designed to move you from one spot to another.
- Some people like games according to how fast you can type on a keyboard or use a joystick.
- Interaction is the most important element.

## Apply your definition to a game:

### **Grand Theft Auto, GTA:**

- Since the definition of the game is very personal, so GTA probably goes well with my definition of a game which is diversion, amusement and of course, entertainment. Moreover, it has all the critical elements of a game such as being interactive, challenging and objective.
- It is a story-based game and I can choose my own way to finish each mission to level up. It has several levels and each level is based on a mission according to the loop of the story, hence, it is engaging, strategical and rewarding.
- The design is perfectly done and it boosts the aesthetic features of the game.
- The missions can be skipped by entering some codes therefore, the fun part is always there.
- GTA can be a single-player game or a double-player game. You can choose to play it with one of your friends or by yourself.
- The relationship between the culture and the game, I think, depends on the culture. Some cultures may find it criminal and violating and others may find it entertaining and challenging.
- I read a comment about it on [bbc.com](http://bbc.com), someone said that it is a game where you could be the bad guy and I agree with him.
- The flow definition can be applied here as well.
- What I like about this game also is that it is always up-to-date and you can always find a version of it specially made for every technological device such as computer, Xbox, PlayStation, mobile phone.

# History of Games – Chronology:



## Story to Code Putting Numbers on it:

### **First one:**

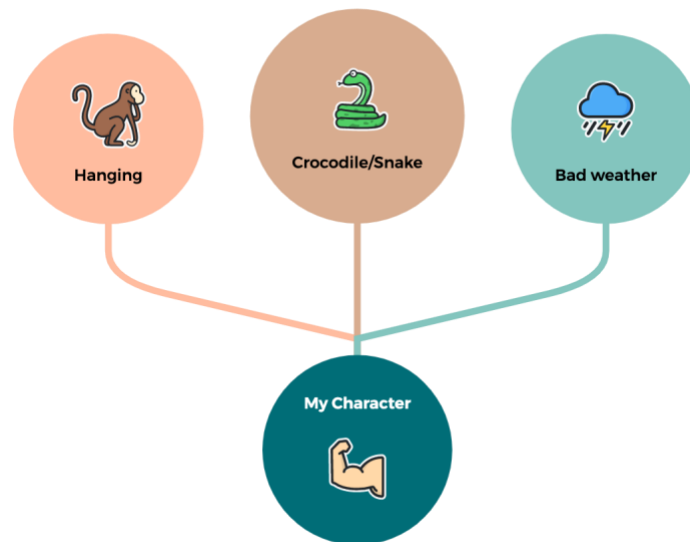
If the ball collects gold coins, it will be stronger and a bit bigger.

If the ball hits a needle, it gets smaller and there's 50% chance to win.

If it keeps going without gold coins, it will get smaller and there's 100% chance to lose.

If it keeps going with gold coins and it avoids hitting the needles, it will get stronger and there's 100% chance to win.

### **Another one:**



A character hanging on a thread of a swing with his hands above a lake: His dexterity in his strong muscles and his flexibility. So his skill level is 10. He'll probably succeed in moving into the other side, if there is only the lake. 95%-100%

He'll be afraid if there is a crocodile in the lake, so there might be a chance of falling into the water. 30%

He also might fail, if the weather is cloudy and it is raining. 50%

He certainly will fail, if he took so long into hanging on the thread of the swing as it will be cut and he will fall. 90%

If the weather is rainy, he might get a higher chance of succeeding (75%) if NPCs helped him with another thread!

## **Wargames:**

### ***Business wargaming:***

Wargaming in business can help businesses in many ways.

- It may be considered as a planning tool.
- It's like a practical role-playing game.
- It helps employees to be on board and to be on track with the strategy and the plan that their company is working on.
- It may help you to predict your competitor's next move.
- It gives insights for the decisions you may want to make.
- It helps you create new plans.
- A good method to examine strategies or solutions for problems you might have to see if they will work.
- It can help you in recognizing hidden strategies or plans.
- Business wargames help in team buildings and also help in the collaborations between the different teams and the different members.

It consists of many stages, the first stage is the pre-game planning stage which is used to define the objectives, people, time and place that will be involved in the game.

The leaders decide who will join, however, most departments have a role.

There is a briefing book which may be around 20 pages or fewer that has all those details and it is given to every player in the company before the game starts to read it well and to understand every detail they are working towards.



## **Roleplaying Games:**

### ***Video with Vin Diesel and Matt Mercer:***

- Watching the video, imagining the scenes and the characters as I was affected mainly by their tone of voice, also by the sound effects and the graphic elements that came out in the description giving me that feeling for every character type.
- The whole scene, the players sitting on that table and those elements on the table. I felt that everyone in that role play had to have that specific tone of voice according to the character they were playing. I think what was missing is the dress code for each character which I could imagine/see in my head.
- I didn't get why is it critical when the dice is 20?

### ***The map with no names:***

- I believe there has been a lot of great work done in the graphic design, the illustrations, the paintings and the typography.
- There are so much details and information and they are written in a very arranged way, which i think it is visually appealing but I feel like it would be better, it would be more interesting as a game, if it is done in a digital way with adding sounds and specific music to it.

### **Prager 2019:**

- Gaming can be entertaining and can make learning fun at the same time.
- Role Playing Games help students build real-life social skills as they have the potential to develop learning skills such as communication, problem solving, and leadership while presenting the learner with narrative agency within the curriculum. They encourage students to spontaneous collaboration, knowledge building, community development and to explore various experiences and situations as well.
- Motivation! While students play, they stay motivated to learn.
- Character development. As well as strategic thinking.
- They offer opportunities to situate student development within an engaging atmosphere. To be honest, they are fun!

Since there are the 'Red Card' or the 'X Card' systems now, it may help students to be aware of how to be nice to each other and to know that it is a crucial thing to respect everybody working together, to respect diversity and to respect different cultures. I think if they learned how to do so, specially from early age, they will have that respect developed in their character while dealing with people along the way in their life. Which I think is a good thing, growing up knowing how to respect the people and the cultures around us.

## **The First year at Uni RPG:**

I see RPG for university students is a bit challenging but also fun. Putting in mind that they are grown ups and they usually come from different backgrounds, different cultures and they have different mentalities as well.

- New students enter a specific area in campus,
- There is like a huge box that has different small balls,
- Everyone choose a ball randomly,
- Each ball has a color or an arrow that leads to a gate,
- Every group of people enter a room's gate and each room has a different request,
- There is a room that has questions that they have to answer which leads them to have things in common so they get to know each other in a fun way,
- Another room may have some challenges like be in groups and do a certain task,
- Another one is to play a game together and the ones that win will have a certain funny mission like pick someone that has the same first name or the same first letter of your name and go to the foodcourt to get ice cream together!

I thought of a name to it which i might change later, and it is "*us on the map*"

## **What i think should be included is:**

- The fun part.
- Getting to know each other.
- Participating together.
- Discovering university places.
- Having a good memory for their first day.

## **MMOs:**

### ***“Play between worlds chapter 6” :***

- “MMOG= Massively multiplayer online game”
- Virtual reality have been popularized because of Warcraft World and EQ.
- “Keeping the real world out is not the battle to be won or lost.”
- MMO gamers do not shed culture when they go online and enter game worlds. Players engage with MMOG on their own terms, therefore, MMOG help in shaping and improving the culture as well.
- There are not specific rules to stick to. You create your own rules and you interact with others. You make your own goals as well.
- Gamers buy and sell their items in real life.
- 'Magic circle' where people enter for game purposes. It separates them from the real world.

## **Directed Study Week 2022:**

### **Readings:**

#### ***Gaming literacy, Eric Zimmerman:***

- Systems, play and design  
Three main concepts, the key components of new gaming literacy, which is a process.
- 'Magic circle'  
I think that magic circle is related to that 'flow' concept. How the players become immersed in the game. Hence, Visuals and sounds have a great effect on that.
- Our world is increasingly defined by systems.
- 'Games are not just about following rules, but also about breaking them.'  
And I can relate that to my definition of gaming (from the very first lecture), which is diversion, amusement and entertainment.

#### ***Wargames for military:***

- Wargame is a type of strategy game that simulates warfare, it is designed to train officers in testing new strategies and it may help them predict things in future conflicts, therefore, it is about decision-making.
- The first wargame for military was developed by an ancient chinese military strategist.
- Kriegsspiel means "wargame" in German, but in the context of the English language it refers specifically to the wargames developed by the Prussian army in the 19th century and was one of the first formal wargames that was accepted as a training technique.
- It is like a training for war. Mainly designed to train officers to make decisions and to take responsibility.
- Military wargames help in training officers and giving insight into actual battles.

- Recently, military wargames use computer-assisted scenarios, which offers a practical and affordable means to improve the training of commanders and their staffs.
- Military wargames help in trying the “what ifs” and planning the decisions.
- “Wargame models do not predict actual outcomes, but the lessons learned from a simulated war will be remembered long after a lecture or readings on the same subject are forgotten.”
- “Wargames do not reproduce history, but by using available historical data, useful wargame scenarios and data bases can be developed which will lend credibility to the wargame outcome.”

### **Confusing or unclear:**

#### ***Story to code - Putting numbers to it:***

- Do I have to put probabilities for my character throughout the whole game? For every action that may or may not happen? Or do i only put probabilities according to my character's skills?
- When do I start putting the probabilities in mind? Do the probabilities go with certain types of games?
- I am not so sure I understand the 3D6 and D20. But I somehow get the percentage method.

#### **Most interesting:**

- Getting information related to game design.

#### **Least interesting:**

- History of gaming.
- Putting numbers to games.

## **Modern Board and Card Games:**

### **Settlers of Catan:**

I've watched the three videos but what I like the most is the one by Rules Girl. It is very short, however, it is straight to the point. I also liked How to play Catan - The beginners guide.

- It is one of the oldest euro-games. Also, one of the few euro-games that has dice on it.
- It is the classic game of trading and building.
- There are several digital versions of it. The current one is called Universal.

### ***Key elements of the game rules:***

- 3:4 players.
- Players need resources to build.
- To build a road, they need bricks and wood. But it isn't worth victory points.
- To build a settlement, players must have bricks, wood, grain and sheep. And it is worth one victory point.
- Building a city is worth 2 victory points but it requires more resources.
- The hexagonal tiles represent the different parts of the island. However, players can expand it for a bigger game.
- There are numbers on those hexagonal tiles, they represent the dice rolling.
- If the dice rolls six, all of the spaces that have a six on them produce resources.
- Players may face difficulty getting the resources they need but they can trade with other players.
- Players gain victory points as their settlements grow. Whoever gains 10 victory points, win.

***The best way to win the game:***

- There should be a strategy or a plan.
- Different players have their different ways to set it up, therefore everyone has his own way to plan and win.
- Players may face difficulty getting all the resources they need so they may trade with other players. But they have to keep in mind that whenever they trade, them and the other players will get to build settlements.
- It requires thought and strategy.

I understand it to try, but i think actually playing it will help me to understand it better along the process. Also, the set up looks easy.



## **Casual Games:**

### ***The End of Casual:***

Briefly, their argument is that there are no wrong games, and they are arguing for the importance of casual games. They want the end of casual but not the end of casual games.

- The earliest iterations for 'casual' and 'hardcore' appear to be from the magazine Computer Gaming World in the mid-1990s.
- Hard-core: typically refers to games that are played heatedly with high-difficulty level.
- Casual: typically refers to games that are cheap or free, can be played for short or long periods of time, easy to learn and accessible.
- Indie games; have appeared to stop the division between casual and hardcore as labels, but in a small way because of limited audiences.

### ***How it relates to my experience with casual games:***

- I've always played games that are linked to Facebook, such as Hay Day, but it wasn't actually played on Facebook, It has an application on mobile that I downloaded from the App Store. Playing it was enjoyable and the best thing about it is that I could play in my free time as it is accessible and customized. And I liked that I could visit my sister's and friends' so yes, i think it is a kind of social game.
- I also played Covet Fashion and 8 Pool which are linked to Facebook too, and I could send and receive gifts from my friends, I could play with other players as well and I've gained new friends through it. It's like having an online community related only to the game.
- My cousin used to play video games such as CounterStrike, Fifa, and some boxing games on PlayStation. However, we were young and we didn't really understand that there is difference between games and that 'gamers' is applied on people like him. But we (kind of) knew that expression exists.

- Also a friend of mine has been playing Flow Free for 1560 days. It is considered as a casual game as it is played for free on mobile. However, the idea of playing a game everyday for over a year is boring for me.
- I tried to play Wordle a week ago, but honestly I didn't answer it easily. However, I think it is a good game. I think the amount of money was paid for the idea of it more than the coding or designing.

***My idea of Casual Games:***

Some of the games that i've played can be considered as casual games and also social games. Some of them is already on Facebook so it doesn't require to download an application. Therefore, they are easily accessible. Casual games usually involve simple rules, require a short time and they don't require very high skills. They add a new audience to the gaming industry. And I think we are developing and the digital world is more about customization for our needs.

## **Games, Learning History & Representations of History:**

*JP Gee:*

Education can be extremely different if it is done in a new method which is teaching and learning through games. Personally, I believe people usually memorise and know things when they are involved and practicing it.

Imagining doing so in an entertaining way, absolutely it'd be very helpful.

Educating through gaming perhaps can improve kids way of thinking in a strategical way, and their imagination as well.

Just because they are playing, it doesn't mean they aren't learning. That way of thinking should be changed, i think we can relate having information within entertainment to how people nowadays get information! Sometimes they get big information (that may have serious effects!) while scrolling through social media, and it can stick to their minds and it may change their lives. Does that mean that this information isn't valuable? It can be. The boring way of learning isn't the right one. Just because it has been there for ages, doesn't mean we can not start thinking for seriously using gaming as a new method for education.

### ***Teaching History with AC:***

- The idea of the students learning in game-based environments has been confirmed, as the students enjoy the experience and learning through games help to develop the existing educational strategies as well.
- Learning outcomes can be focused on through the development of the content of custom-made games, so students get the most out of it in an entertaining way.
- Also, the kind of game and the outcome that should be learnt is based on the type of participants according to their age, gender, and background.
- Learning through games can be effective, it may help students how to engage with each other, how to strategic thinking and how to decision making. Also, they learn how to group-work and how they can win together in a short time rather than individually.

***Discovery tour:***

It is visually interesting. And I think I knew more about the pyramids as I didn't get to enter it when I went there. However, I'd change it to be more interactive and I think I may add some changes to the custom. And may be adding some more accurate information and explanations about history in the shape of illustrations to be more educational.

## **Your local gaming industry:**

<https://www.raghdamawlana.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Gaming-industry-in-Egypt-2.html>

I've made my discussion on Twine,  
I'd like to add some notes as well:

- Locally created content is improving mostly in the card games recently in Egypt. Card games such as 2ool ameme, got popular in a very short time.
- There are big eSports events that happen but usually they are not very popular except for the gamers, most people don't know about them, I think the reason may be that old people usually don't get the gaming industry, they still see their children are playing and having fun so they aren't really making progress through a serious thing in their life so they don't accept their interests in gaming.
- Global Game Jam is an event in which video game developers work in groups to conceptualize, design and build a functioning version of one or more game projects, which help in creating hundreds of new games in a 2 days.
- If i want to start my company, I think little steps will be a good idea. So i'll have to try the actual experience first by may be applying for an internship in one of the studios firstto know how it is actually going here in Egypt as well as going to the events that happen here to get to know more about the work and the community there.

## **Crunch & Diversity:**

From the reading and the video, I'd probably tell that Twitter is a powerful tool. People should use it wisely, especially those with lots of followers.

### ***#1ReasonToBe:***

- Starting the presentation with saving the moment by taking a picture because usually women in the industry weren't on the stage!
- She said that if she celebrated women in the industry, there would have been only 4 chairs! and that is very sad. But I think it is becoming better a little bit.
- Working for a better future, no matter the gender. It should be measured by the work efficiency, not by the gender of the person who is working.
- Girls want to play as girls. And they should feel welcomed to work in the game industry later on.
- Just because the designer is a girl, doesn't mean that the game has to be in pink.
- Women are part of the game market and the game industry. Women are part of the core.
- No one should feel harassed or bullied at workplace. Or any other places.

### ***Weekends became something other people did:***

- "Nothing superb ever gets done by overtired people whose lives have been turned upside down." This is related to every place, whether a company or a school, not only in the game industry.
- 'Crunch' - which means the period of unpaid overtime - leads employees to leave the industry because of the exhaustion, mental and physical health problems.
- Quality of life (QoL) issues are still ongoing in games industry, however, 'crunch' should be discussed in the future work.

### **Final Reflection:**

I was introduced to a whole new topic with many details which I never knew about before, I gained new information about the Gaming whether the games types, the gaming industry itself, the companies and the problems that people face while working in this industry. Also I got to know the use of some types of games and how can games be beneficial to other fields as well.

It is a great module indeed.

Also, I enjoyed using Twine and I've published it on my portfolio:

<https://www.raghdamawlana.org/portfolio/models-simulations-games/>

Thank you so much, Dr.Mike.