

## ENG104: Introduction to Fiction (Re)creation, Interaction, Fiction

WINTER 2017 | MWF 3:00-3:50pm | Lillis 111 | CRN 27143



The Stansted Maze



*The Colonel's Bequest*, Sierra (1989)



*Dysqia*, anna anthropy (2012)

### COURSE INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Justin Brock (English, PhD Candidate)

**Email:** [jbrock@uoregon.edu](mailto:jbrock@uoregon.edu)

**Office:** PLC 241

**Phone:** 6-0531

**Office Hours:** MW 4:00-5:30pm

### COURSE OVERVIEW

In this class, we will analyze games and interactive fiction (IF) as our shared textual objects. We will examine the ways in which these texts interact with readers/users/players in the (re)creation of narrative, worlds, selves, and identities.

As we unpack the genres of IF and games, we will discuss tools to understand and dissect texts, identifying literary concepts and terminology such as narrative, plot, character, and themes, while accounting for the structural, formal and generic qualities of our texts. Throughout the term, you will practice employing these terms and concepts in a variety of assignments including response papers, in-class reflections, class discussions, quizzes, and argumentative essays. As a basic introduction to a major genre in the field of literary studies, this course satisfies the university's Group Requirement in the Arts and Letters category. It also counts as a lower-division elective in the new (2016) English major.

### Course Outcomes

1. Read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. Draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. Perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. Write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. Employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. Employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis.

### **Required Texts, Games, and Programs**

Ernest Cline, *Ready Player One* (2011), \$14.00 @ DuckStore

*Papers, Please* (3909, 2013), \$9.99 Steam

<http://papersplea.se/>

*Gone Home* (Fullbright Company, 2013), \$19.99 Steam

<http://gonehome.game/>

*The Stanley Parable* (Galactic Café, 2013), \$14.99 Steam

<https://www.stanleyparable.com/>

Twine Tool, Free @ <https://twinery.org>

Other course materials will be provided through links or PDFs on Canvas. Ensure to bring printed copies of PDFs to class with you.

### **Accessing and Playing Games**

All games can be accessed through the links provided in the course schedule below. *Papers, Please*, *Gone Home*, and *Stanley Parable* can be purchased through the Steam client <<http://store.steampowered.com>> or through each publisher's website. Other games can be played online for free. If you need assistance with Steam or accessing any games, please contact me. NOTE: Steam games often go on sale. You may want to refrain from purchasing games until the week you need to play it. If any games go on sale, I will do my best to announce it in class.

Each game is available on PC, Mac, and Linux operating systems and are not graphically or computer memory demanding.

The games selected are accessible for new players. If you have any accessibility needs when it comes to playing these games, contact me. Depending on interest, I might offer a "gaming hour" each week to meet and orient everyone on the games if needed. Time and date will be announced.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Close Reading Essays (35%)**

*Close Reading 1* (2-3 pages, 15%) and *Close Reading 2* (3-4 pages, 20%)

Each close reading assignment will require you to select a specific passage of text from our shared readings. The essay should include a thesis statement that poses your claim about the passage, and developing this claim with textual evidence and key terms from our course.

Further details about each essay will be provided.

#### **Creative Assignment (30%)**

*Proposal* (5%)

*Creative Assignment* (25%)

You have three options to complete the creative assignment, each requiring a proposal to be submitted that outlines your initial ideas for the project. Further instructions will be provided.

- (1)** Compose a brief interactive fiction story using Twine, a platform you will familiarize yourself with through tutorials and samples during the term. You are free to include text, images, and other media forms. You will also submit a statement that introduces your work.

- (2) Write a rationale for a narrative-driven video game. You will be required to provide a summary of the game’s plot, an explanation of its genre, a discussion of the game’s audience, and screenshots of the type of aesthetic/art style you would imagine best for your game.
- (3) A thesis- and close-reading focused argumentative essay that compares and analyzes multiple texts and games that we have discussed for the term.

The creative assignment will be evaluated based on the amount of detail, thoughtfulness, and creativity you demonstrate in the assignment.

**Play Journals (15%)**

You will submit a “play journal” on the Canvas discussion boards periodically throughout the term. These journals will allow you to share your thoughts about moments in the games we play that you found interesting or impactful, as well as the way you played that particular part of the game. Some questions to consider: What choices did you make? How did you get to that particular part of the game? Why is this part significant to you?

**Quizzes (10%)**

Periodically, we will have quizzes at the beginning of class. These may be announced or unannounced, and will range from brief multiple choice questions to short responses. The quizzes will focus on defining key terms and concepts from the course as well as covering details from the reading. These quizzes are not meant to trick you, but to help me see how you are preparing and thinking about the course. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

**Engagement (10%)**

Expectations for thoughtful engagement in the course includes the following:

- (1) Presence in class, remaining respectful during interactions with all members of the class (i.e. paying attention, listening, and responding thoughtfully);
- (2) Willingness to discuss course materials and ideas, ask questions, and respond to comments and questions;
- (3) Preparedness for discussion including having carefully read and annotated daily readings and bringing those materials with you to class.
- (4) Use of the discussion board to further engage in the course and with your peers.

**Grade Breakdown**

Close Reading Essays.....	35%
Creative Assignment.....	30%
Play Journals.....	15%
Quizzes.....	10%
Engagement.....	10%
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Attendance**

*Attendance is required.* You are allowed one week of absences (3 class sessions) whether excused or unexcused without penalty. Further absences will lower your grade by 1/3 of a letter grade (~3%). If there is an emergency or you have accessibility needs that will prevent you from

attending class for more than one week, email me or come to office hours so that we may discuss possible options. You are responsible to make up all missed work and material.

You are expected to arrive on time. If it is evident that you have not prepared for class or arrive over 10 minutes late, you will be marked absent for that day.

### **Formatting Assignments**

All typed work must be produced in a word processor and submitted as a Microsoft Word document (either .doc or .docx formats) unless specified in assignment prompts. This ensures that I can open, read, and comment on your work.

Your work should follow the following formatting guidelines and conventions (12pt Times New Roman font, 1" margins, header info with title, double-spaced). Work that does not follow guidelines and expectations will be unable to receive more than a **C grade**. Ensure that all work submitted electronically can be opened and is not corrupted.

Make sure to create backup copies of your work as a precaution. Computers are fragile, susceptible to viruses, malware, and drops from a third story window. Email yourself extra copies or keep documents on a flash drive.

### **Late Work**

I do not accept late work. All work is to be submitted by the deadline. Email me as soon as possible if an emergency has prevented you from submitting work. Extensions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Academic Integrity**

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for the course. This means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, and paraphrases) must be properly documented in MLA format. Please consult *The Purdue Owl* <<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>> for details on MLA documentation. Refer to the *Student Conduct Code* on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website for a concise definition of plagiarism. Contact me with any questions.

### **Accommodations**

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me during the first week of the term if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to education. You may also contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541.346.1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).

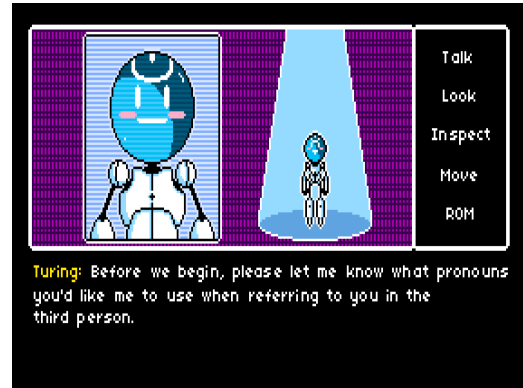
### **Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct**

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, coercion, and/or sexual harassment is encouraged to seek help. Please visit <https://safe.uoregon.edu> for information. You are also strongly encouraged to contact Renae DeSautel, Sexual Violence Response & Support Services Coordinator, [desautel@uoregon.edu](mailto:desautel@uoregon.edu). She will keep your information confidential. In addition, the UO Ombuds office ([541 346-](tel:541-346-)

[6400](mailto:6400) or [ombuds@uoregon.edu](mailto:ombuds@uoregon.edu)) can provide confidential support and assistance. You can also contact any pastor, priest, imam, or other member of the clergy. All of these people, including all UO faculty members, have an obligation not to reveal your name or other specific information without your permission, although faculty members do have to provide “general information” that will help us create a safer campus. As your instructor, I can also reassign work partners and make other necessary accommodations.



Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past (1991)



Read Only Memories (2015)

### Course Schedule

The schedule of assignments is subject to change

	In-Class	Reading/Gaming Due	Writing Due
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Intros</b>		
M 1/9	Cancelled due to weather		
W 1/11	Introductions Syllabus Survey		
F 1/13	Close Reading Exercises and Practice	Close Reading Packet Borges, "Garden of Forking Paths" (PDF)	
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Forking Paths</b>		
M 1/16	NO CLASS		
W 1/18		<i>Intimate, Infinite</i> ( <a href="https://radiatoryang.itch.io/intimate-infinite">https://radiatoryang.itch.io/intimate-infinite</a> ) "Notes on Yoko Ono's <i>White Chess Set</i> " ( <a href="https://www.moma.org/learn/moma-learning/blog/notes-on-yoko-onos-white-chess-set">https://www.moma.org/learn/moma-learning/blog/notes-on-yoko-onos-white-chess-set</a> )	
F 1/20		Le Guin, "Mazes" (PDF) Selections from Murray, <i>Hamlet on the Holodeck</i> (PDF)	Play Journal #1
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Interacting with Fiction</b>		
M 1/23	Twine Tutorial	kopas, "Introduction" and "How to Read This Book" (PDF)	
W 1/25		Hamilton, <i>Detritus</i> ( <a href="http://maryhamilton.co.uk/detritus/">http://maryhamilton.co.uk/detritus/</a> ) <i>Love, Even Cowgirls Bleed</i> ( <a href="http://scoutshonour.com/cowgirl">http://scoutshonour.com/cowgirl</a> )	
F 1/27		Quinn, <i>Depression Quest</i> ( <a href="http://www.depressionquest.com/">http://www.depressionquest.com/</a> )	Play Journal #2
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Narrative Games</b>		
M 1/30		<i>Gone Home</i> ( <a href="http://gonehome.game/">http://gonehome.game/</a> )	
W 2/1	Group Play: <i>Her Story</i>		
F 2/3		<i>The Stanley Parable</i> ( <a href="https://www.stanleyparable.com/">https://www.stanleyparable.com/</a> )	Play Journal #3
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Games, Escapism, Nostalgia</b>		
M 2/6	Thesis and Writing Workshop		
W 2/8		<i>Zork</i> ( <a href="https://textadventures.co.uk/games/view/5zyoqrsugeopel3ffhz_vq/zork">https://textadventures.co.uk/games/view/5zyoqrsugeopel3ffhz_vq/zork</a> )	Close Reading 1 Due on Canvas

F 2/10		Cline, <i>Ready Player One</i> , 1-60	Play Journal #4
<b>Week 6 Games, Escapism, Nostalgia</b>			
M 2/13		Cline, <i>Ready Player One</i> , 61-166	
W 2/15		Cline, <i>Ready Player One</i> , 167-207	
F 2/17		Cline, <i>Ready Player One</i> , 208-248	
<b>Week 7 Transforming Reality</b>			
M 2/20		Cline, <i>Ready Player One</i> , 249-349	
W 2/22		Cline, <i>Ready Player One</i> , 350-372 (end)	
F 2/24		McHugh, "A Coney Island of the Mind" (PDF) Doctorow, "Anda's Game" (PDF)	
<b>Week 8 Simulating Gender/Sexuality</b>			
M 2/27		Dewey, "The Only Guide to Gamergate You Will Ever Need to Read" ( <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2014/10/14/the-only-guide-to-gamergate-you-will-ever-need-to-read/?utm_term=.f5e54c8d1475">https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2014/10/14/the-only-guide-to-gamergate-you-will-ever-need-to-read/?utm_term=.f5e54c8d1475</a> ) Katherine Cross, "The New Laboratory of Dreams: Role-Playing Games as Resistance" (PDF)	
W 3/1	Discussion Group Play: <i>Coming Out Simulator</i>	<i>Dys4ia</i> ( <a href="https://w.itch.io/dys4ia">https://w.itch.io/dys4ia</a> ) kopas, <i>Empathy Machine</i> ( <a href="https://a-dire-fawn.itch.io/empathy-machine">https://a-dire-fawn.itch.io/empathy-machine</a> )	
F 3/3	Thesis and Writing Workshop		Play Journal #5
<b>Week 9 S(t)imulating Empathy?</b>			
M 3/6		kopas, <i>Lim</i> ( <a href="https://a-dire-fawn.itch.io/lim">https://a-dire-fawn.itch.io/lim</a> ) Brice, <i>Mainichi</i> ( <a href="http://www.mattiebrice.com/mainichi/">http://www.mattiebrice.com/mainichi/</a> )	Close Reading 2 Due on Canvas
W 3/8		<i>Papers, Please</i> ( <a href="http://papersplea.se/">http://papersplea.se/</a> )	
F 3/10		<i>Papers, Please</i> (cont'd)	Play Journal #6

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Final Thoughts and Presentations</b>		
M 3/13		Alexander, "It's Time for a New Kind of Power Fantasy" ( <a href="https://howwegettonext.com/its-time-for-a-new-kind-of-power-fantasy-a5ff23b2237f#.so1vo2hkt">https://howwegettonext.com/its-time-for-a-new-kind-of-power-fantasy-a5ff23b2237f#.so1vo2hkt</a> )	
W 3/15	Workshop and Beta Testing		
F 3/17	Presentations on Creative Assignments		
<b>Finals Week</b>	<b>Creative Assignment Due on Canvas by Assigned Finals Time</b>		