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Games and History

Gayle L. Rambeau
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Guenyin Justin Au
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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GAMES AND HISTORY
An Interactive Qualifying Project Report:
Submitted to the Faculty
Of the
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

By

Gayle Rambeau

Guenyin Au

With contributions from

Sean Dyer

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Approved:

Professor Jeffrey Forgeng

Abstract

This project studies the presentation of history through the medium of video gaming. We studied specific topic areas such as educational software, simulation software, and narrative analysis, then applied this to the evaluation of several history games. To conclude, a historical game was developed that attempted to fit the criteria we developed, with an eye towards publication in conjunction with the Higgins Armory Museum.

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Introduction

History is a wonderful basis for a video game because it is at the same time real and nonexistent. It has existed, and its relics and artifacts can be seen today, but its events and people have moved on while we can only attempt to recapture their images. During the course of this project, our group combined traditional research methodologies with hands-on evaluation of representative gaming materials to examine the merits of video gaming as an educational or entertaining medium for the delivery of history. This research must by its stated intent cover a broad range of associated topics, of which we have chosen a few to explore more deeply.

Electronic games have great flexibility as historic modeling systems. Their ability to display the framework of a period is nearly unparalleled. From the day-to-day life of a feudal peasant or the policies of an ancient king, video games have attempted to put the player in an unfamiliar historical perspective. This section of the project collects and studies games that model themselves after a variety of historical situations. Some games utilize “tech trees” to show how civilizations progress, as in the real-time strategy game *Civilization*, where basic technologies are needed before you can proceed to a higher level of advancement. Others, such as *Oregon Trail*, model specific journeys to show you the perspective of a traveler long since forgotten. Still others, like *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, use great historical generals as the backbone of a military strategy game. The entire purpose of creating a game in this area is that it has a broad, yet bounded structure for use in education or entertainment, and can be used to explore the numerous ways in which historical events can unfold.

Historical material may also find application in gaming when introduced in an educational setting. As an important facet of our research, we examined the manner in which gaming and history are combined in the classroom. We focused on both practical and theoretical experiences, affording consideration to both the measured value of gaming as a classroom resource, and existing research in the psychological merits of game-based education. We attempted to describe the balance along the spectrum of historical games for entertainment and education.

Further research into the project deals mainly with the theory of computer games, that is, the ways in which computer games are presented—genres, and narrative as well as ludological theory. We examined how a fast narrative (for example, a first-person shooter game such as *Half-Life 2*) differs from a slow narrative (a general adventure game with high detail, such as *Riven*). In addition we, to a lesser extent, also employed the notion of catharsis in our presentation of games theory, with a discussion of theories of how action is formulated and presented within a gaming medium.

As an extension of our research, we constructed a rubric for evaluating and summarizing historical games. While the criteria do deal with issues of specific interest such as historical accuracy, historical intent, and the appropriateness of the historical presentation to the game's intended audience, we expanded as well into areas of general interest, such as playability and general entertainment value. This decision was based upon a realization during the research phase of the relationship between historical games and their broader genres. To further study this relationship, we constructed a survey to be distributed to student members of the GDC, asking questions on the subjects of historical gaming and general gaming habits. The survey and a summary of results are appended.

As the capstone of our project, we created our own historical video game. We used the research of the previous terms to determine a game type best suited to our intent and abilities, a management simulation based on the Siege of Jerusalem in 1099. This game represents the culmination of our research into such topics as historical accuracy and game value.

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Gaming and Education

Video Gaming in the Classroom

For hundreds of years, history has been considered one of the most essential social studies taught by educators. As the history which is taught evolves and changes, so too does the methods through which this history is presented. Increasingly, educators are seeking new ways to engage the minds of their students on the subject, and supplementing traditional lecture-style education. One promising route is the use of gaming to stimulate the interest of students, and increase their comprehension and recall of historical material. However, as with most new approaches to old problems, there is resistance to this method. We examined both the manner in which video gaming is being introduced as an educational resource, and the controversy over its effectiveness in classroom settings.

We are living in a technological heyday. Everywhere one looks, new technologies are being introduced and integrated into existing institutions. It comes as no surprise that educators are seeking to implement greater technological interaction into their classrooms, but the use of video gaming in education is no recent concept. As early as the late 1970s, educational experts were warming to the idea of allowing the newly prolific computer a greater role in the classroom¹. The arguments for its inclusion were based on a thorough body of research in the value of traditional gaming in increasing student's interest in material. Even when limited by the technology of the time, computers could expand on this concept by providing an adaptable learning experience closer to that of a human teacher. Video game-aided education was seen then as now, a supplement to traditional instruction methods, not a replacement. The novel

¹ Ball, Sara and Howard Ball. "EJ Workshop: Video Games." *English Journal* 68.5 (May 1979): 65-66.

experience of a game presented by new technology was hoped to be a reinforcement of concepts taught by the teacher lucky enough to have access to it.

“Edutainment”

Today, with the introduction of the personal computer and the drastic decrease of its cost, technological options in the classroom are far broader. A new class of software has emerged, dubbed “edutainment,” for its attempted combination of educational concepts into a moderately entertaining package. Unlike traditional video games, the stated aim of games in the edutainment genre is to instruct first, entertain second. Companies are increasingly producing titles of this type for both home and classroom instruction. Students of the mid-1990s may remember some popular titles in this genre, such as the historical simulator *Oregon Trail*, in which students explore the resources and challenges facing early American settlers heading towards the West Coast.

Most well known are edutainment games commercially produced for classroom use, but educators are also finding the medium of video gaming a chance to become personally involved in the design process. Non-commercial history games can now be found in many venues, whether publicity-motivated (such as those provided by the History Channel on their website), or educator-produced. Both commercial and non-commercial edutainment games will be examined below.

Not all in the educational community are so quick to embrace the bright lights and captivating sounds of video game-assisted learning. Some fear a rush towards computer-mediated instruction devalues the position and usefulness of talented teachers in the traditional mode. These educators and administrators see a greater value in the use of computers as a

remedial tool, with a strong concern for keeping teacher-instruction supreme.² And while game-based educational techniques are nothing new, there is concern among some experts that companies are taking advantage of school districts' eagerness to implement new technologies.

Some fear that the games being peddled to schools do not meet the exacting standards of educational value that they should be held to. A common argument from proponents of this view is that edutainment games are focused more on the entertainment portion of their mission, leaving educational value a distant second³. They believe some policy-makers have been blinded to the faults in these games by the push to introduce new technology into classrooms. A contrasting view presented by other experts is that the model of the video gaming industry itself is helpful to the aims of high-quality learning material. They argue that because the design and manufacture of video games is such a highly competitive field, game developers are chiefly concerned with the opinions of the target audience; successful designers are highly focused on delivering a message in an effective and meaningful manner, and very receptive to input from the community they serve. They suggest that increased involvement of educators in the design of this type of game is all that is needed to produce intensely focused and appropriate educational games, while retaining the entertainment value that draws students to them.⁴

This view is of particular interest to our project. In the continuation of our research, we intend to review many types of games, in large part for their accuracy. In this process, we have partially the same aim as is being proposed by some critics of the edutainment genre in schools: greater scrutiny of the educational value of games being introduced for use in instruction. As our

² Sandler, Corey. "Playing to learn. (educational computer games can be effective tools in children's education." *PC World* 11.n10 (Oct 1993): M101(2).

³ Shields, Charles J. "That's edutainment: protesters say it's full of gimmicks and hinders learning. Find out why some experts believe edutainment has its place in the classroom." *District Administration* 39.5 (May 2003): 25(4).

⁴ Galloway, John. "Power Play For the Classroom." *The Times Educational Supplement* 4659 (Nov 4 2005): 20.

basis of research extends beyond educational video gaming, our study has been extended to wider genres than considered by most educators, but this part of our goal remains the same.

Social interaction in gaming

A third area of concern is one that has been expressed in a context greater than that of just edutainment software—the gradual loss of social and cognitive capabilities feared in the modern child raised on software and television as opposed to more traditional forms of childhood interaction. Administrator Dr. Francis Murphy writes, “Television has had a terribly negative effect on children's attention spans. Kids today just don't have the cerebral equipment they had 20 years ago.”⁵ Much media attention has been focused on the culture of gaming, and the isolation some see it encourages. In educational circles, there is a movement by professionals to develop and implement instructional games that not only focus on learning, but interaction. Ironically, it is the paradigm of the MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game), often most highly criticized for the loss of social interaction skills, that is being used to shape computer games in the classroom. In this style of gaming, players take on the persona of a character, be it a detective or a colonial settler, and interact with the game world around them as that character. What separates this from a single-player approach is that many of the inhabitants of the persistent game world are also players, rather than computer simulacra. Games like *Atlantis Quest*⁶ and *Revolution!* provide instruction to students, but they also encourage online collaboration with students both in the classroom and in participating classrooms around the globe. Proponents see it as an opportunity to create not an educational game, but an educational community, reinforcing important concepts of social interaction to students who may be lacking

⁵ Sandler, “Playing to Learn.”

⁶ Whelan, Debra Lau. "Let the games begin! Researchers say that computer games are crucial to learning--and about to hit schools in a big way." *School Library Journal* 51.4 (April 2005): 40(4).

in an increasingly individual-focused technological culture. This approach also showcases what some educators find to be the primary use of computer games in instruction, the ability to tailor material to each student's needs. Studies into the educational gaming habits of school-age boys and girls indicate that girls are more likely to respond in a more favorable manner to educational software if a community aspect is included.⁷ By including broader social interactions into traditionally single-player educational software, the diverse needs of a student body can be more closely met.

A promising avenue is the intensive study on the application of psychological concepts of learning to the technological capabilities available. In a study performed by Ritterfeld, Fernandes, and Vorderer, primary-school science students were exposed to an interactive science program on the subject of astronomy. They found, as they had predicted, that these students demonstrated a greater retention of the information presented than similar students taught with traditional methods. More interestingly, however, they discovered that students taught in this manner exhibited a greater growth of knowledge. That is, students that had participated in the program were more likely to seek out additional information about astronomy on their own.⁸

Childhood in the Electronic Age

A related facet of game-based learning is the question of whether students less likely to be reached by traditional instructional methods may be more likely to develop interest in the subject matter when exposed to it by a video game. It is of no small matter to note that the popular culprit blamed for the decline of intellectual curiosity in children today is increased

⁷ Whelan, "Let the games begin!"

⁸ Ritterfeld, Ute. Rene Weber, Sangeeta Fernandes, and Peter Vorderer. "Think science!: entertainment education in interactive theaters." *Computers in Entertainment (CIE)* 2.1 (Jan 2004): 11.

technology and video games. The pace of modern technological interaction is often given the greatest blame, as game systems used for entertainment in the home by children are commonly complex, and fast paced. Like television, the images are quick, the flow of information in a given moment intense and quickly scanned. A child used to absorbing information and reacting quickly to immediate stimuli may find traditional education too slow and methodical.⁹

Controversy exists over whether or not these students should be catered to or encouraged to conform to a more traditional attention span, with some going as far to claim that the entire institution of traditional education is outdated and not suited to the technological climate of our time. Regardless of attitudes, however, this type of student is becoming increasingly prevalent. Researchers and professionals in the field of computer science hope that problem students of this variety may be more interested in educational concepts when presented to them in a more familiar medium.¹⁰

Key to this approach is the attitudes of students themselves towards game-based education. A recent study by Hans Gremmen and Jan Potters, exploring the learning potential of computer games in macroeconomic education lends some insight into the value of this aspect.¹¹ The research team focused not only on the amount that students learned and retained from both the computer game and traditional lecture instruction, but the amount that students believed they had learned. This was included by the researchers as an attempt to apply a more scientific approach to the study than had previously been attempted, but it is useful to us in itself. The results of the study primarily determined that students using a specially designed computer game learned and retained more concepts of economics than their peers exposed to a lecture on the

⁹ Papert, Seymour. "The children's machine." *Technology Review* 96.n5 (July 1993): 28(9).

¹⁰ Crocker, John. "Active learning systems." *Computers in Entertainment (CIE)* 1.1 (Oct 2003): 14.

¹¹ Gremmen, Hans, and Jan Potters. "Assessing the Efficacy of Gaming in Economic Education." *The Journal of Economic Education* 28.4 (Fall 1997): 291.

same material. Students were then given a survey inquiring as to the amount of material they believed they had learned. The students who had learned from the computer game indicated a much larger believed body of learning than did those in the lecture, possibly implying that game-based instructional support results in more positive attitudes towards learning. Critics of game-based education might respond to this study by focusing on the fact that neither group of students learned as much as they claimed in the survey, and that the increased confidence of the students learning from the game is harmful due to its increasingly false nature.

Some educators, however, view the confidence in learned material as an encouraging side effect of game-based education. Some see the current climate of education as harmfully high-risk, based on traditional high-stakes assessment, and evaluation in front of judgmental peers. Previously mentioned was the individual instruction provided by computer games, which some educators see extended into a low-risk learning environment.¹² Assessment is placed in the silicon hands of an unbiased teacher, and the results are much more private than the question-and-answer format of a lecture. A computer does not become frustrated with a student that does not grasp a certain concept at the same rate as his peers, and each student in the class has the opportunity to learn at their own pace, each receiving a different rate and complexity of information based on increasingly more sophisticated adaptive assessment systems.

Classroom Integration of Video Games

Game-based education faces hurdles in the area of public relations. While games have long been accepted as part of a diverse and engaging educational system, computer games carry with them a stigma of exploding aliens and Italian plumbers. Parents only familiar with the entertainment aspects of computer games are often quick to dismiss their use in the classroom,

¹² McLester, Susan. "Game Plan." *Technology and Learning* (Oct 1 2005): 18.

and unprepared to support their proper extended use in the home. Experts also caution that effective game-based instruction can only be implemented in tandem with properly prepared educators.¹³ The unwillingness of an educator to engage in the game-playing process can lead to a reduction in the learning value of the game itself. Both the instructor and the game itself must provide structured guidance in the game world, or the intent of the material may be overlooked in favor of aimless exploration. When teachers or parents fail to support the value of the game experience, students become less engaged in the material and less confident in their own individual learning skills through the medium. Some professionals believe that emphasizing technology harms students, focusing them too closely on technological interaction when the written word is still a primary means of communication. They argue that verbal interaction and networking are the keys to most future workplaces, and that by interesting students too much in virtual worlds, schools fail to interest them in their own. At its core, this argument relies on a more general push towards traditional lecture education, a view that students should be the ones adapting to learning styles, not educators. Those that support this view believe that education based too heavily on technology, be it computer games or educational television, creates students with a large body of knowledge but the inability to express it in an organic form.¹⁴

Non-commercial Historical Games

In earlier writing, we have discussed the lucrative, fast-expanding genre of video games known as “edutainment.” By this introduction, it would be easy for one to come to the conclusion that the primary motivation of such games is direct profit—indeed, many critics of this type of software allege this same thing. However, there is a growing and useful body of

¹³ McLester, “Game Plan.”

¹⁴ Stoll, Cliff. “Computers in class are lousy teachers.” *The Los Angeles Times* (July 17 2005): M6.

software meant to entertain and educate, and produced in a non-commercial mold. Some of these games, such as the web applications found on the website of The History Channel, are meant to draw interest and attention not to themselves, but to further educational products and services offered by the broadcaster. Programs with similar aim are presented in several other areas around the internet. A second type of non-commercial game is produced not for the sake of publicity, but as academic undertakings.

Web Applications

Children today have at their fingers unprecedented access to the world's largest, broadest font of information available. The World Wide Web fuses libraries across the globe, but with the wealth of information comes concerns about that information's value. Educators using the internet as a teaching tool often turn to websites connected to already trusted offline information sources for material. One such source is the website of the BBC. This website is of particular interest to our project due to a broad selection of educational games available in the child-oriented portion of its content.¹⁵

Most of the games fall into the category of assessment games. The website is intended for use by educators and parents as a supplement to the educational programming available on the channel. Users watch the program module that the games are based on, then test their knowledge of the subject with themed mini-games. These games serve as topical advertising for the program in question. Users who wish to know more are provided with links to information about the material covered.

¹⁵BBC Website. http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/multimedia_zone/games/.



Elizabethan Spying Game: In this Flash¹⁶ game, players are tested on their knowledge of the events surrounding the treason of Mary, Queen of Scots. Many of the progressively harder trivia questions are very specific, due to the nature of the game as an assessment of linked material. A sample question:

“7. Who married Mary, Queen of Scots in 1565 and was murdered two years later?

- a.) Earl of Moray
- b.) Lord Darnley
- c.) Earl of Leicester”

At the end of the game, the player has constructed a message representing secret communications that condemned Mary during her trial. The nature and complexity of the material in this game suggests a target age group of grades 6-12. The game itself does not

¹⁶ Macromedia Flash is a type of web application commonly used for the creation of small games. It allows a large degree of interactivity with less programming overhead than other formats.

competitively judge student progress, wrong answers are noted but student is returned to the question afterwards.



Death in Rome: Players are presented with an interactive scene, and asked to apply knowledge about Ancient Rome to solve a mock murder mystery. Unlike the *Elizabethan Spying Game*, this game does provide consequences for wrong choices, through the device of a time limit. Unlike the previous game, *Death in Rome* is open-ended. Players examine highlighted “clues” and consult game-provided experts from both Roman times and contemporary research. At the conclusion of the game, students/players select those clues they believe most clearly indicated the events taking place before them. This game relies less heavily on memorization of linked material, but much more on critical evaluation of sources. Despite the lower knowledge requirement, the game itself is very challenging, and best suited towards students in grades 9-12.



Less advertised on the BBC is the niche genre of war simulation games. Players are given the opportunity to control forces on several key battlefields in assorted time periods. The **Battlefield Academy** covers four general time periods and military styles: Roman, Medieval, Napoleonic, and WWII. This style of mini-game is less focused on historical knowledge, though players must advance using the resources of the time period. De-emphasized too is strict historical accuracy, successful players can turn the tide of a historical battle regardless of its outcome in real history. The weapons and troop types available to players fit the resources available to commanders of the time period, and players may seek hints and tips from contemporary historical commanders. This game is suitable for more mature players, and even

possesses significant appeal to adult players. Players engage in a single-player simulation mode, but are publicly ranked by performance in the simulations.

Other websites in this vein seek to provide entertainment content linked to programming. National Geographic Kids¹⁷ is clearly aimed at younger viewers, through both the format of games and style of presentation. The games available on the site are not directly associated with specific programs, and fall under general historical headings. Specific historical knowledge is not emphasized heavily, and the games follow more simplistic modes such as matching and fill-in-the-blank for historical terms. This site would be suitable for primary grade students, though not directly applicable to a programming-based lesson plan.

Academically Produced Games



¹⁷ “National Geographic.com Kids: Games.” National Geographic: 1996-2005.
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/games/>.

Another avenue of exploration into non-commercial history games is games developed for research purposes. MIT's Education Arcade initiative seeks to create substantial gaming applications for use in the classroom, while preserving the entertainment of the video game format. The application of greatest interest to our project is **Revolution!**¹⁸, a MMORPG (Massively Multi-player Online Role Playing Game) set in the time of the American Revolution. The format of the game allows an entire history classroom to assume different roles in the game, then interact both with it and each other. The game world is populated not only by student characters, but by NPCs (Non-Playable Characters). NPCs play the rolls of colonists, merchants, soldiers, and even slaves. They provide information about the game world and time period, participate in story-expanding events, and even interact with other NPCs on a simplistic level. MMORPGs are traditionally quest-based, and this format is utilized in *Revolution!*, students log in each day to a new task to be accomplished co-operatively. This game, due to the level of historical knowledge and the added challenges of game interaction, is designed for use in high school history classrooms.

Commercial History Games

Picture yourself as a pioneer, during the height of the westward expansion in the 1800's. Carefully managing your budget, you gear up for the long trip towards what you hope is a better life. Two days after leaving the fort where you began, you reach a river. Do you ford it? Spend what little money you have left to pay a local to ferry you across? You decide to cross under your own power, but midway through the journey the current becomes too strong and the wagon

¹⁸ *Revolution!* The Education Arcade: 2005.
<http://www.educationarcade.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=Sections&file=index&req=viewarticle&artid=9&page=1>.

holding you and your family is swallowed. You watch as your possessions are swept down the raging torrent and sink below the surface—then sigh regretfully and restart the game.



This is a familiar experience to many elementary school students raised on one of the most recognizable commercial history games in production. *Oregon Trail*¹⁹, through many incarnations, has presented students with a snapshot of life crossing the prairie during the heyday of western settlement. As technology advances, students enjoy a more complex simulation with each new incarnation, but the basic concept of the game remains guiding your family towards an eventual home in the Pacific Northwest. The most recent incarnation of the game has been praised by educators for including along with the simulation a story mode based around the experiences of three actual pioneer children.

¹⁹ *Oregon Trail 5th Edition EEV*. Riverdeep Interactive Learning Limited. Cedar Rapids, IA: 2005.
http://rivapprod2.riverdeep.net/portal/page?_pageid=353,133755,353_133756&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL.



Seeing time periods through the eyes of a contemporary child is also the game format utilized by *Liberty's Kids*²⁰. An extension of an educational television program currently running on PBS, this game takes place during the events of the American Revolution. As junior newspaper reporters, students create articles and headlines by interviewing key figures in several historical events of the period. Based on decisions made during the course of the game, the content experienced by players changes on each playthrough. While the television show is meant for an elementary audience, the complexity of the reading material presented within the game makes it more appropriate for history students of grades 6-8.

While many games such as the two above focus on experiencing a time period by playing the role of a citizen, some choose to highlight the cause and effect of historical events in a broader context. The genre of simulation games includes many with general historical themes, but historical simulations with a tighter focus can be highly useful in teaching complex historical concepts.

²⁰ *Liberty's Kids*. Riverdeep Interactive Learning Limited. Cedar Rapids, IA: 2005.
http://rivapprod2.riverdeep.net/portal/page?_pageid=353,136717,353_136718&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL.



One such game is *Making History*, by Massachusetts developer Muzzy Lane Software.²¹ A historical simulation based on the events leading up to and surrounding World Wars I and II, this game is of particular interest to us not only because of its content, but because of its unique structure. The game provides students with the opportunity to control a European nation during the mid-1900's. As the game progresses, students are moved beyond basic simulation tasks of building economies and ruling citizens, and faced with scenarios based on the real events of the time. Students can closely observe the factors that influenced these conflicts, even engage in multi-player modes to see the events played out in a dynamic scale.

What makes this game unique is that in addition to the educator supplements often included with games of this nature, *Making History* has a wide variety of customizable options set by the teacher using the program to dictate the course of student's experiences. Educators can control economic advancement, interaction between countries, even how close events are held to the historical timeline. The teacher using this program is linked to every student playing the game, and can observe the decisions they are making, even provide instant chat feedback and background. They may also choose to play the role of a pivotal European nation in multiplayer

²¹ *Making History*. Muzzy Lane Software. Newburyport, MA: 2005. <http://www.making-history.com>.

mode, seeking to demonstrate more closely the historical choices of the time period. The game is intended for use at the high school level, with the grade level of the material determined by the options the teacher selects during the customization process.²²

²² Loshnowsky, Sherry. "Oak Hill utilizes computer program to teach about WWII." The Peru Tribune. Peru, Indiana: 18 Nov 2005. Accessed online at http://www.miamicountylife.com/articles/2005/11/18/local_news/local67.txt

Historical Modeling

A Brief History of Electronic Games

At present, video games are a large influence in our culture, and one of the fastest growing economic markets. Along with PC (personal computer) developers, the three major game console companies are Nintendo, Sony, and Microsoft. These three companies control the console market with their systems: the Gamecube, The Playstation 2 and the Xbox, respectively. The aim of this next section is to analyze how the current state of video gaming came to be. With the new technology and market reach of these systems and their predecessors, video games have been able to achieve many things.

Starting as early as the late 1950s, when a scientist by the name of Michael Higinbotham made a game called *Tennis for Two* at Brookhaven National Laboratory using an oscilloscope, electronic gaming has become a daily part of life. "I knew from past visitors days that people were not much interested in static exhibits," said Higinbotham, "so for that year. I came up with an idea for a hands-on display – a video tennis game."⁽¹⁾ This was eventually to be the precursor to *Pong*, to be released in 1972, and one of the earliest video games in public recollection.








In 1971, the first arcade game was released under the name of *Computer Space*, which was similar to the earlier game *Space War*, which was created by Steve Russell in 1961, who was an MIT student at the time. An arcade game is a coin operated machine that was usually installed in a place of business to generate further revenue. The most common type of machines would take quarters rather than “tokens”. Tokens would be largely adopted by arcades later due to the lack of an exchange policy on purchased tokens.

In 1980 the game *Battlezone* was released and later reused by the U.S. government for Bradley Fighting Vehicle training purposes. This is not the last time this will be done, as seen by the 2002 game, *America's Army*, which simulates life as a soldier in the U.S. military.

“Commercial computer games have ‘great training value,’ for the Marine Corps, said the service’s commandant, Gen. James L. Jones.” (National Defense Magazine, November, 2000).

Mortal Kombat was released in 1992, and the amount of violence and gore present in the game prompted a response in 1993 from Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) to launch a senate investigation. This led to the creation of the ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board) by Sony, Nintendo, Sega, Activision, EA and others in 1994, which assigns ratings to games based on content. This move allowed consumers of video games to determine whether a certain game would be appropriate, for example, for a four year old to play.

(<http://archive.gamespy.com/articles/july03/25smartest/index15.shtml>) It was through this move that the video game industry was able to maintain its independence.

	<p>Early Childhood</p> <p>Titles rated "Early Childhood (EC)" have content suitable for children ages three and older and do not contain any material that parents would find inappropriate.</p>
	<p>Kids to Adults</p> <p>Titles rated "Kids to Adult (K-A)" have content suitable for persons ages six and older. These titles will appeal to people of many ages and tastes. They may contain minimal violence, some comic mischief (for example, slapstick comedy), or some crude language.</p>
	<p>Everyone</p> <p>As of January 1, 1998, the new "Everyone" designation will replace the "Kids to Adults" rating. Titles rated "Everyone (E)" have content suitable for persons ages six and older. These titles will appeal to people of many ages and tastes. They may contain minimal violence, some comic mischief (for example, slapstick comedy), or some crude language.</p>
	<p>Teen</p> <p>Titles rated "Teen (T)" have content suitable for persons ages 13 and older. Titles in this category may contain violent content, mild or strong language, and/or suggestive themes.</p>
	<p>Mature</p> <p>Titles rated "Mature (M)" have content suitable for persons ages 17 and older. These products may include more intense violence or language than products in the Teen category. In addition, these titles may also include mature sexual themes.</p>
	<p>Adults Only</p> <p>Titles rated "Adults Only (AO)" have content suitable only for adults. These products may include graphic depictions of sex and/or violence. Adults Only products are not intended to be sold or rented to persons under the age of 18.</p>
	<p>Rating Pending</p> <p>Product has been submitted to the ESRB and is awaiting final rating.</p>

The ESRB Rating System

Timeline of Gaming Hardware

In 1972, Magnavox released the first home gaming console, which was called The Odyssey. The first cartridge based gaming console was called Channel F, and it was produced in 1976. It was the first of its kind to utilize cartridges as an efficient method for switching games. Since then, many other systems would use this method, including the more famous NES (Nintendo Entertainment System), SNES (Super Nintendo Entertainment System), Sega Genesis, Nintendo 64, and others.

1983 saw the first laserdisc technology console. At present, the three major consoles are all laserdisc based, and the next generation of consoles is to be laserdisc based as well. 1983 was also the release year of the Famicom system in Japan, which would come over to America in 1985 as the NES and eventually experience a full release in 1986. This system would be home to one of the most recognizable video game characters of all time: Jumpman, later named Mario.

Simulation

A simulation, by *Encyclopedia Britannica*'s definition, is something that "in industry, science, and education, a research or teaching technique that reproduces actual events and processes under test conditions." According to the *Introduction to Electronic Warfare Modeling and Simulation*, "simulation is the creation of an artificial situation or stimulus that causes an outcome to occur as though a corresponding real situation or stimulus were present." A simulation has the important quality of being able to map out a series of events without real repercussions or consequences. As such, realistic simulations of dangerous situations are invaluable to many professions, like the armed services.

Simulation of a military nature is nothing new. It makes very much sense to get soldiers as much training as possible while minimizing the risk of danger involved.

In fact, Video Games are also being used for their tactical aspects in the USMA (U.S. Military Academy). "Modified commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software programs that simulate battlefield conditions, provide exciting interactive learning devices for U.S. Military Academy cadets studying strategic and tactical maneuvers." The main games used, named in the curriculum, are *Delta Force Land Warrior* and *Steel Beasts*, used in the tactics course at the USMA.(USMA Warfighting brochure)

Another use of video games, especially first person shooters and racing games, is to increase reaction speeds beyond normal. Theories also believe hand-eye coordination can be improved in a similar fashion. These two functions alone make it invaluable or even life-saving for soldiers, and helpful to professional athletes. According to a BBC article dated Friday, July 15th, 2005 (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/4682801.stm>), there was also a case where video games were used for their distracting nature to keep a child from biting his lip to the point of permanent scarring. By keeping his attention off of his lip, he was able to let it heal in two weeks' time.

There was a letter written in to Electronic Gaming Monthly which details the story of a man who was driving on the highway when a tractor trailer jackknifes in front of him, so that the trailer section is sweeping where his head would soon be. This man was a fan of high speed games, such as racing games and first person shooters, and he says that while this was happening, he didn't remember stopping to think about what he did. What he did was pulled into a traffic ditch, and ducked his head as the trailer section cleared away the top section of his car. He claimed that he would not have reacted in time if it weren't for video games.

To make such games closer to real life situations as in the Grand Theft Auto series, comprehensive surveys about similar areas of similar locations would have to be recorded for crime statistics, gang activity, police per capita and police response time, population density, and other factors. This can all be avoided in favor of a more challenging and fun game by making the numbers up and utilizing scripting "Fun factor" is another one of the main reasons why a strict simulation might not perform well on the market. The attention span of today's youth dictate that a game must be exciting throughout, and keeping track of real time, or even fixed,

statistics just might not fit well with that assessment. . Hardware limitations may also require that the number of enemy characters onscreen at any time to be reduced.

Not many games accurately portray test conditions for the situations they present, which is another aspect of these games that must be analyzed. The context and extent to which each aspect is explored is an important part of a simulation. Most mainstream video games ignore strict simulation in favor of a more enjoyable game. After all, in Grand Theft Auto (for an easy example), one of the ways to lose is to get caught by the police. It would not be entertaining to watch your character sit in a cell before being released, so that part is always removed to allow the player to get back to playing sooner. The other way to lose is death, which in the real world is a permanent state; not so in almost every single game.

Military modeling systems

The concept of a military modeling system can be a very simple one because it uses one of the most basic premises of a game possible: win or lose. Sometimes the method is more complex than that, but in the end, we are left with the end result of either a win or a loss. Most of the time, each victory is independent from any other, and by that I mean that each new level has predetermined starting resources and units, regardless of what was left after the last round.

The possibility for new and innovative strategies becomes much broader when the units are of more and more variety.

A wargame is an attempt to get a jump on the future by obtaining a better understanding of the past. A wargame is a combination of "game," history and science. It is a paper time-machine. Basically, it's glorified chess. If you've never encountered a wargame before, it's easiest to just think of it as chess with a more complicated playing board and a

more complex way of moving your pieces and taking your opponents. (The Complete Wargames Handbook)

Chess, for example, has 6 different types of pieces on an eight-square by eight-square configuration, and from this, a complex game has been developed, even more complex when you take into account variations on the game like power chess and bughouse chess. Power chess is a variation where one player has the full set of pieces and only one move per turn, but the other player has the king and the king's four pawns, but is allowed 2 moves per turn; bughouse is played with two chessboards and when a piece is taken from you opponent on one board, it can be played onto the other board. Games like *Advance Wars* that have a much larger play area and more pieces with more unique ways of moving and attacking allow the player that much more opportunity to develop a unique strategy of their own.

A military modeling system is one which would attempt to put the player in the position of a charismatic leader with the complete support of the troops. When the historical component is added to this, it requires a careful choice for the leader character. Players usually tend to gravitate toward leaders they can either identify with, or see as a legendary hero, otherwise there's no desire to see this leader succeed.

The other type of possibility for a military simulation game is to place the player in the shoes of somebody in the middle of the action, be it a soldier on foot or a pilot. This can lead to diversity in how a battle is viewed, and as a result, how a real battle may occur. If it seems impossible for a small squadron of soldiers to take over a small town in Germany in World War 2, then perhaps there was more there than that one squadron.

One more consideration in a military game is the difficulty. If a game is too difficult, it may alienate too much of an audience. Too easy and it may have the same effect. Most games avoid his problem through use of a difficulty curve. They start off at the beginning with an

easily accomplished goal and progressively become more difficult. However, depending on the type of simulator and the events of the piece, they usually start off at a difficulty consistent with the target audience's preference.

For the most part, there are three main genres which a military modeling system could fall into: First/Third Person Shooter, Real Time Strategy, and Turn Based Strategy.

A First Person shooter in a historical setting used to be one man against an opposing army, usually something reprehensible and unmistakably evil. Older games would use universal enemies, such as Nazis (as in *Wolfenstein 3D*), gang members, terrorists, zombies, or even monsters of some inhuman kind (as in *Doom*). This strategy would prevent outrage or disgust when the player is required to kill the enemy. More recent games, including the *Medal of Honor* series and *Big Red 1* include teammates to provide backup and support in difficult situations. Although more risks have been taken when it comes to whom potential enemies can be, mainstream game creators thankfully still do not include children as potential targets.

Real Time Strategies adapt themselves well to ancient or modern battles very well. By controlling the armies as single units, it becomes more like a general commanding his officers in the field. Another aspect is that the weaponry will play a more strategic role in real time strategies than in first person shooters, where the rule is: bigger is better. Rather, in an RTS, a good offense will have various units with various strengths and weaknesses that complement each other well.

Turn Based Strategies lend themselves much better to more complex games than battle simulations in real time. It may not be the most accurate in terms of ancient micro-management, but it allows for more control of what happens in the game. The *Civilization* series is a wonderful example for Turn Based Strategies; it uses different fighting unit types, but based on

how each city is developed, they can create new types of buildings in varying time frames. This would lead you to use your larger cities for creation of troops and other immediate necessities.

Economic Modeling Systems

Economic modeling systems are very different from Militaristic modeling systems in that they are much more complicated and require a completely different set of rules for victory. Games that employ economics as a central tenet are also capable of much greater complexity than the win or lose scenarios of military based games. They must create a whole basis for commerce that, under the right circumstance either must continually grow, or can achieve a proper balance. Without this capability for balance, either the game itself becomes a constant struggle, overbearing to the player, or it becomes a losing strategy from the onset.

One of the most well known and reproduced, having versions in almost every economic modeling systems is Milton Bradley's board game "Monopoly" in which the object is to gain control of all the money in play. This is a basic premise; a much more complicated one would require micro-management of properties and assets, a fluctuating market, and seemingly random events that may affect the ideal course of action, and after all of that may not even include a true goal to win.

Historical Adventure Games

Adventure games in general have a heavy reliance on fantasy, many times putting the player in the role of only person capable of saving the world, or something equally as imposing a task. Moving this into a historical setting is quite simple: simply set the object of rescue as a historical kingdom. This then requires the player to move around and figure out how to use

available means to save the kingdom. Adventure games typically do not rely solely on reflex speed for proper enjoyment. For the most part they require instead that puzzles must be solved or a certain item should be used in a proper location in the right way to further the plot.

Plot is a major driving point of these adventure games; it is what draws the player in and compels the player to completion of the title. Without a driving story, the effort just doesn't seem worth it. Likewise, if an adventure game is to be mad in the historical setting, cavemen days seem to be a bad choice, because of the lack of what there would be to figure out. Instead, choosing the medieval times like in many other games allows for greater flexibility, especially if the decision is to include an aspect of fantasy.

Narrative and Ludological Analysis of Games

Before the study of video games in a humanities perspective, computer science departments studied video games from a functional perspective (i.e. coding, programming, etc.) (Dillon). Video games were not studied from a humanities perspective until the late 1990s-2000s (Dillon). The reason for this is that video games, from their creation in the 1970's till the 1990's, were still evolving; from experimental form (PDP-1 computer game *Space War*) to early commercial games (coin-operated arcade video games like *Computer Space*, simple home computer games, and the first home console games like *Pong* for the *Atari 2600*) to more advanced commercial games (3-D games videogames like *Halo* for more advanced consoles like *XBOX*, and games that require the latest in high-end systems like *Doom III*).

Narratology

In the late 1970s-1980s the humanistic study of games evolved out of studies on digital texts within various arts and social science departments (Dillon). As game studies became more specific to games themselves (rather than just part of something else, in most cases, simply as part of narrative study and popular culture study), the study was split into two main elements. The two main elements that comprise a video game are: the game's structure (or *ludus* (explained in the section, "Ludology")), and the story and background of the game (*paidea* (narrative)). The story, or narrative, is studied specifically in a field called narratology. In a literary sense, narratology is defined as:

“...a theory of narrative. It examines what all narratives, and only narratives, have in common as well as what enables them to differ from one another qua [*in the capacity or character of*] narratives, and it aims to describe the narrative-specific system of rules presiding over narrative production and processing”. (Johns Hopkins Literary Guide)

Narratology is a tool used to study stories of all kinds: novels, plays, oral stories, short stories, etc (Johns Hopkins Literary Guide). The term "narratology" is a translation of the French term *narratologie*--introduced by Tzvetan Todorov in *Grammaire du Décaméron* (1969)--and the theory historically falls into the tradition of Russian Formalism (a movement of literary criticism and interpretation, that emerged in Russia during the second decade of the twentieth century) and French Structuralism (a way of analyzing things as literature, linguistics, etc. by contrasting the structures of them in a system of binary opposition). (Johns Hopkins Writing guide) Recently, it has been applied to the study of gaming as a whole subtopic (Dillon), as story is an essential element to the game. The stories' importance in games led to narratology's use in games being, in some people's view, the more important part of the study of video games. In many of today's more sophisticated games especially, which place the player into a whole universe, storytelling is essential to a game's playability and value.

Storytelling and narratology contribute to an element of video games called *paidea*, a Latin term for “story” (Wolf and Perron 250). *Paidea* is the center of modern movie games, like Xbox's *Ninja Gaiden*, in which the player is basically in control of his own Ninja fantasy movie. Although the game is comprised of battles, mini-battles, and puzzles, the story is central to the game and weaves it all together, giving the battles a purpose. In more detailed RPG's, like the

game *Fallout*, the game itself is ALL story, and the player him/herself decides the direction or directions the story will take, and its eventual outcome or outcomes.

Role-playing game concept

A certain kind of game mentioned above, a Role-playing game, or RPG, pushes the use of narratology to a much higher level compared to say, a straight-up first person shooter like *Wolfenstein 3D*, as a role-playing game is almost entirely narrative-based. Manfred Jahn wrote:

In terms of video games, narratology differs little from literature applications. For example, games, especially Role-Playing Games, tend to focus on story narratology, which focuses on the action units that 'employ' and arrange a stream of events into a trajectory of themes, motives and plot lines. (Jahn)

Within a role-playing game exists an often rich, detailed, and sometimes complicated storyline that features a character or characters on a quest of some sort and along the way, the character would gain the experience, skills, and strength required for the final confrontation with the “boss”, whose defeat or mastery is/are the object(s) of the quest. An example of this type of RPG is the game, *Diablo II*, in which your quest is to ultimately defeat the final “boss” of the game, Diablo. Or, in even more non-linear RPG’s, there is no final object or fixed storyline and emphasis is based on character development (character skills and strength), and a storyline that can be created along the way by the players themselves. The first example of this type of RPG is the board game, and later on, computer game, *Dungeons and Dragons*.

Kinds of Narratives

Narratives, a property studied by Narratology, consist of two things: how stories are narrated (how they are told and the linguistic process involved) and the narrated event; the activity and dimensions of the narrated situation which give rise to the story process (Dillon).

There are two types of narratives in games: fast narratives and slow narratives. As described by Theresa Dillon:

“Distinguishing between how the story is told and the events or circumstances which give rise to it enables us to understand certain effects of storytelling, such as temporality, speed and pace. For example, dense description in the narration may equate to slow pace of events in the story world, while shallow description may relate to fast events. From this perspective computer games have been described as having 'slow' and 'fast' narratives. (Dillon)

Narratives that are fast or slow define the game. Each narrative type (fast or slow) is assigned to the game according to its nature. For example, Cyan's *Myst* Series is considered a 'slow' narrative because of its descriptive detail and in-depth focus in storytelling, while id Software's *Duke Nukem 3D* and other First-person shooter videogames are considered a 'fast' narrative in that they use blocky polygonal graphics, attack strategies and fast reflexes during game play. (Dillon)

Narrative Structure in video games

Jesper Juul, also a writer/researcher in games held his own views on gaming. Jesper Juul has noted in particular that one of the difficulties of students studying video games is the selection of examples and case study materials. (Newman 92) According to Juul, the extremely extensive list of titles and types all assembled under the heading “videogames” meant that critical approaches and theories are at risk of being influenced by instances that may come to stand for the whole field. (Newman 92) Jesper Juul stated in his Master’s thesis the importance of narrative in the structure of the computer game. According to him, “this structural examination of the computer game is first and foremost a discussion of the relationship between computer games and narrativity as such”. (Juul)

Ludology

Narratology, explained above provides one side of the story on video game study. But where does *Ludology* come from?

Gonzalo Frasca writes:

We will propose the term *ludology* (from *ludus*, the Latin word for "game"), to refer to the yet non-existent "discipline that studies game and play activities". Just like narratology, *ludology* should also be independent from the medium that supports the activity (Frasca, Ludology meets narratology).

Ludology is basically the study of games in a liberal arts and humanities perspective, and, in this day and age, video games in particular (Wolf and Perron 222). It differs from the narratological

perspective of the humanities study of games because it focuses on the game itself rather than the story *in* the game. More specifically, it had previously applied solely to the study of non-electronic games, mostly board games; therefore the term is not new (Wolf and Perron 222).

According to Gonzalo Frasca:

In 1999, I pointed out the lack of a coherent, formal discipline that dealt with games as one of the reasons why researchers were looking for theoretical tools in literary and film theory and narratology. Since then, the term “ludologist” grew in popularity among the game academic community to describe someone who is against the common assumption that video games should be viewed as extensions of narrative (Wolf and Perron 222).

Frasca, in response to the emphasis on narratology in video game study, stated *in his opinion* that before the term, “ludology” was coined for use in the study of video games; there was no formality in the serious study of video games just as video games (not in a narrative perspective that narratology covered that was already in use to study games) in the late 20th century. Video games suddenly at that point (the turn of the century) became a field of study from a social science and liberal arts and humanities point of view.

Definition of Ludology

Specifically, in the sense we are looking at it (video game study) ludology is the study of the structure and elements (especially the laws) of the game, particularly its nature of branching out (having several different direction options in pursuing the game’s story and final objectives).

Frasca summed it up:

As a formalist discipline, it [ludology] should focus on the understanding of its structure and elements- particularly its rules-as well as creating typologies and models for explaining the mechanics of games (Wolf and Perron 222).

Specifically, a ludologist is a thinker characterized by his/her insistence on treating video games not as a form of narrative or as a text, but instead simply as a game, with the dynamics of play and interaction (between either the player and the computer or the player and another player) being the most important and fundamental part of the game (Frasca, Ludologists love stories too (website)). According to Theresa Dillon's article on ludology and narratology, video games, being different from other forms of media (like television and film), is basically not a story but a form of play, like a sport such as soccer or basketball:

As an academic discourse, ludology was a response to the overemphasis on narrative explanations of gaming, which failed to acknowledge how they were different to other forms of media (e.g. television, film).

One of the leading ludologic theorists is Gonzalo Frasca. Frasca defines ludology as including videogame theory but going "beyond it to include all games and forms of play", stressing that ludology is "*the study of games*". At the heart of this approach is that belief that videos, cybertexts and computer games should be considered as forms of games and play in and of themselves. From this perspective ludologists focus on the game-specific dynamics of games, such as the relationship between rules, strategy and game outcomes. (Dillon)

Ludology, in part, is about whether you win or lose the game (in that whether or not you have completed the game's objectives) and the journey you took, where you are, or what happened to you along the way (which contributes to a game's structure). A game with emphasis on the ludology's views on gaming (the *ludus* view) would be very linear and straightforward, as the objectives are clearly defined, and there is an actual object to the game. Ludology, to sum it up, gives a game its structure. A *ludus* type game would have a defined beginning and end, and Ludology would describe a game's rules, interface, and its underlying concept of play instead of story. Ludology hence separates from narratology, as mentioned before over and over, due to its reliance on these things.

Ludology vs. Narratology

Frasca argues that, although video and computer games share some of the characteristics of narrative (character, plot, setting, and event), they are not like traditional media because they are not just based on representation but on an alternative semiotic structure - simulation. What makes simulations different is how they operate, and it is their unique way of operating which leads to new rhetorical possibilities (Dillon). By contrast, a narrativist would view that stories do hold a significant role in keeping the game's structure together. This difference puts the video game study community into the two debating factions of narrativists and ludologists.

However, according to Gonzalo Frasca, there exists no real debate between ludologists and narrativists, as ludologists also favor stories. According to Frasca's article,

I believe there is a serious misunderstanding on the fact that some scholars believe that ludologists hold a radical position that completely discards narrative from videogames (hence the title of this article). For example, Marie-Laure Rayan argues that ludology should not “throw away” the concept of narrative from it. She even calls for the “development of a new ludology” that includes it.

The puzzling thing is that, from its very beginning, “old” ludology never discarded narratology. When I suggested the term, I clearly stated that my main goal was “to show how basic concepts of ludology could be used along with narratology to better understand videogames”. In case any doubts still remains about ludology’s intentions of peacefully coexisting with narratology, I also added that my purpose was to “not replace the narratologic (sic) approach, but to complement it” [ibid]. If I do not favor narratology as a main tool for game analysis it is not out of a caprice, but because I already invested my early research years trying to use narratology for videogame study without much success. Yes, I confess: I was a teenage narrativist (Frasca, Ludologists love stories, too).

Basically, Frasca had said that despite differences between the narrativists and ludologists, ludology and narratology in games are so compatible (although Frasca still prioritizes *ludus*) that ludology should be revamped to include narratives, as videogames evolve. Frasca was a narrativist himself, despite being known primarily as a ludologist. Newer games in the market today more and more blur the line between ludology and narrative, since both are either important or not important in the games one can play these days. One good example of this is so-called “movie games”, such as the *Grand Theft Auto* Series. This series of games allows the

player to be in his/her own gangster movie, and the player has free reign to do what he/she wants. The player can either explore the world, or play any of a series of missions (essentially mini-games), or do both. There is an object to the games in the *Grand Theft Auto* series, but one does not have to complete those objects to play the game. In fact, there are a variety of missions in the game that have nothing to do with final objective, and the player can just play those missions instead of completing the game (Wolf and Perron 251). This goes to show that in some modern games, the *ludus* part is not important to the overall game or the entertainment the game would provide. Narrative is just as important, since the game series has a storyline to complete as well.

Video games in our Culture

Video games, aside from being a very popular form of entertainment, have established such a deep significance in our world that it became a significant part of our culture. Starting from the PDP-1 computer (arguably the first gaming system) and its game, *Space War*, invented by Steve Russell, Video games have had a profound impact on children's culture (Video game culture (website)). In addition to being entrenched into children's culture, the video game industry also revolutionized technology. As time passed, more and more advanced games were made, advances in graphics design were achieved, and more powerful computers and game consoles came into demand because of the popularity of video games. The article on a video game website discussing its influence on culture summarizes it:

The growth of this new play culture has not been publicly acknowledged. Comparing it with the more glamorized internet technology Stiles (1995), notes that this industries astounding success is due to the manufacturers' constant innovations in technology and

programming. The current home consoles (sold for under \$200 in Canada) pack as much processing capacity as thousands of those original PDP's and 10 times that of the latest Pentium PC's (Video Game culture)

Whole studies have revolved around not only the study of games (as outlined above), but also the study of how games affect today's society, and society's effects on the video game culture. Specifically, video games' themes (violence, language, animated gore, and more recently, sexuality and nudity) tend to conflict with society's more conservative-minded people, who include parents and people in the government. At the same time, America's general culture and obsession with violence tends to feed the gaming industry with more and more players. As Kurt Squire writes:

Since their inception, computer and video games have both fascinated and caused great fear in the politicians, educators, academics, and the public at large. In the United States, this fear and fascination goes back to the early 1980s, when Ronald Reagan extolled the virtues of games to create a generation of highly skilled cold war warriors, while U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop proclaimed games among the top health risks facing Americans. To be sure, such extreme cultural reactions to technological and cultural innovations are hardly new; mid twentieth-century critics feared that television watchers would become addicted to television, never leaving their homes, and critics before them feared that film would pervert viewers. (Squire)

Video Game Business

The video game industry, so deep rooted in our culture as it is, has become an extremely large and profitable business. So profitable, in fact, that a large portion of the US entertainment market owes its profits to video games.

Indeed the video game industry has become the most active and dynamic merchandisers of culture to the young. It has already won 30% of the US toy market, earning \$8.8 billion in the US alone—a share which is larger than the Hollywood box-office gross (\$5.2 billion) and ten times the amount spent on the production of children's television (Video game Culture).

Video games as part of youth leisure culture

These days, the youth of America is increasingly spending time indoors and less time outside than they used to (Video Game Culture). It started with afternoon television programming catering to youths. Television had started to draw more and more children inside and soon, video games began to do so as well. As the Media Awareness Network writes:

...video game culture is developing a loyal following of millions, who prefer interacting in cyber-play rather than 'vegging-out' in front of the television, hanging around with friends or playing street sports. Just as parents were becoming accustomed to the fact that their kids were spending close to three hours a day with television, the video game came along and began changing children's leisure (Video Game Culture)

Children are more likely, the article argues, to spend time in gaming (whether it be in front of their computer or television with a game console) in their spare time than doing things that children of yesteryear had done- going outside, playing sports, and general social activities. Children had become secluded to their own worlds, and the video game provided them with a way to escape the outside world for their own.

It is this addiction to video games that scares many parents. Some parents feel that young children are playing these games too much and wonder why. The Parent Report has an explanation and recommendations:

What makes these games so addictive? Media literacy specialist, Dr. Charles Ungerleider explains that "they're very compelling with increasing complexity, so a child becomes more facile, yet wants to know more and apply new skills." While wanting to improve their game isn't a problem in itself, it becomes one if video games are "taking a youngster away too much from other activities," says Ungerleider. "Then the parent has to intervene and limit the amount of time the youngster spends with the video game." (Video Game Addiction)

Violence, racism, sexism, and negativity in gaming and effects on society

America's culture and history are especially violent. From the way we had conquered the Americas, to the way we were freed from foreign rule (American Revolution) to disputes we had with neighboring countries (Mexican War), amongst ourselves (Civil War), and foreign countries (All 20th Century Wars), America's violent culture was manifested in many different ways. Many extremely violent games, especially first-person shooters such as *Doom*, *Quake*, and more

recent ones like the *Grand Theft Auto Series*, have been under scrutiny for their themes (Kline 146), which include not only senseless violence, but also large amounts of gore, and veiled, violent racism (for example, at a certain point in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, the player is ordered to 'kill all Haitians' which was the name of a gang whose members were portrayed negatively as violent Haitian people).

Sexism is also rampant in video games, as most females in games (especially the more recent (late 90's to early 2000's) games) are heavily stereotyped or "sexed up" in that they have exaggerated, sensual looks that appeal to the mostly male gaming community. For example, in the game *Soul Calibur II*, the female characters, while portrayed just as deadly in their fighting skill as the male characters, have thin bodies and oversized bosoms that shake when the players move the characters. In the 1970s and 80s this was no different, as games such as *Custer's Revenge* (1982) portrayed not only negative stereotypes against Native Americans but also women in that it featured an early version of what women were to be portrayed like in more modern games- thin with large bosoms. Even in games with toned down images of females (such as *Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening*) women were portrayed as damsels in distress. Another example is the *Tomb Raider* game series, the title character, Lara Croft, despite not having any stereotypical "damsel in distress" attributes, and possessing combat abilities akin to the title characters in *Duke Nukem 3D* and *Doom*, is drawn as a large-bosom female wearing skimpy outfits.

In addition, violence in games such as these was blamed for being the contributing causes for crimes and violence by American youth. In particular, the first-person shooter games *Doom* and *Quake* were

...inextricably implicated in North American controversies about youth violence that reached boiling point in April 1999 when two teens massacred thirteen people at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. (Kline 146 and 147).

This event was probably the most circulated example in the media of the perceived effects of video game violence on today's youth. *Doom* in particular was blamed for this incident not only because of the killers' obsession with it (Kline 247), but because of the intense, automatic and indiscriminating violence it contains- the player's character is the only 'good guy' in the whole game, and therefore *anything* else living is a target for the player's virtual arsenal. It was this exact attitude towards other living people, politicians and parents argued, that was manifested by the Columbine killers on their deadly shooting spree- the killers, they said, shot those people indiscriminately as if they were playing a round of *Doom*.

Of course, this incident was regarded by politicians and teachers as the example of the disturbing nature of violent video games, and lawsuits against the industry have been threatened. Recently, lawsuits have actually been filed against the gaming industry as well.

Campaigns against game violence episodically coalesce, calling variously for government censorship, intensified rating systems, industry self-restraint, and a "de-glamorization" of virtual bloodshed. Historically, film and television have shown considerable ability to shrug off such pressures. But in the wake of Columbine and other spectacular youth killings, the possibility of civil actions launched by victims of violence caused the interactive game industry some concern. Such attempts have so far been unsuccessful. But they hold in the back of the game developers' minds and the kind of situation faced

by the tobacco industry: makers of ultra-violent games may yet find themselves liable for gigantic damages (Kline 268)

Recently, video games have been the center of a lawsuit filed against the gaming industry stemming from an incident where police officers were shot and killed by a fan (Devin Moore) of the *Grand Theft Auto* game series (Bradley (website)). The family of the accused (Devin Moore) blames the game's violent themes for Devin's behavior in defense of Devin, and the lawyer representing the case for the defendant argues that the game provided Devin with the "training" for committing the crime. (Bradley). Indeed, the *Grand Theft Auto* series does include violence against police, and as this was already an extremely controversial issue it was made worse by this incident.

As stated above, there have been allegations that violent videogames had led to violent behaviors in people, especially impressionable youth. In the writing of Rebecca Tews: "In the case of violent, aggressive, or antisocial games, we are also reinforced for aggressive, quick-thinking, and blood thirsty behavior" (Wolf (medium of the video game) 173). This *claims* to show that the effects of violent gaming can tend to lead to a frame of mind focused on aggression and somewhat also on bloodlust (although this can be interpreted as virtual, not physical, bloodlust). The fact remains, however, that such a claim is unsubstantiated, as plenty of people play such games but never shoot up a school or blow up a building (Wolf (medium of the video game) 174).

History in Games and Entertainment

History has long been a popular subject throughout the world, due to many factors. History's stories have long interested and inspired people, and these stories were told in many different ways. Among these ways were: oral history, sagas, diaries, poetry, official accounts by eyewitnesses/record keepers, and novelists. History's many stories have garnered attention and appeal for their nostalgic and aesthetic value people place in them. In addition, interest in history is sparked also by recent events, as recent events are caused by historical events. Everything that happens today has a deep-rooted cause, and history explains it. Interest in history has led to people using it in many entertainment purposes, such as novels, movies, and of course, video games.

Modern Interests in History

Recently, one example of renewed interest in history has been sparked by recent issues and events relating to the current situation in the Middle East and Terrorism in the US. Many people wonder how such hatred for the US and the Western World in general came about in the Middle East. Although some speculate that it is simply a matter of religious differences, Western support for the Jewish state of Israel, and oil disputes, the real reasons laid further back in time, to before the time of Christ. But, in my view, the causes between the modern tension between the West and the Middle East lay in the Middle Ages, during the time of the Crusades. Recently, the History Channel aired a special, *The Crusades: The Crescent and the Cross*, which chronicled the Crusades and their impact on the Middle East and the Western world.

According to the special, the Crusades have many parallels to the modern war between the Western powers and Middle Eastern terrorism. With the ongoing war against Middle Eastern

terrorism, there is little wonder of why the History Channel would put a special on that would definitely relate to the terror war's main participants. Although both have different motivations, they share the same deep-rooted causes. It was during the period of the Crusades that the Western Crusader armies committed an unthinkable amount of atrocities (slaughter of women and children, cannibalism, dismemberment of the dead) in the Middle East region that would send shockwaves of contempt and hatred throughout the whole world for literally hundreds of years to come (History Channel). The Crusades also resulted in European domination and subjugation of the region for many years, gained through betrayals, backstabbing, and general extreme mistreatment of Arabs which led to even more contempt for the West by the Middle East (History Channel). In addition with the mistreatment of the Arab people, the Crusaders plundered and looted their cities of wealth, reducing many once-affluent Middle Eastern provinces to ruined, impoverished regions (The History Channel). The result of this rather extensive swath of destruction was today's world and conflicts.

The modern-day interest in the Crusades, which inspired not only this and other History Channel special programs, but also movies such as *Kingdom of Heaven* (which centers around the 2nd Crusades and the defense of Jerusalem), have many reasons. One reason is that the Crusades, being the most famous of all Western versus Middle Eastern nation conflicts can be compared to today's conflict between the West and the Middle East. The Crusades, therefore, can be viewed as a metaphor of sorts for the modern day war on Terrorism, the conflict between Western-backed Israel and the surrounding Arab countries over certain territories (such as the city of Jerusalem itself, which has belonged to the Arab country of Jordan for a long time until the Israelis took it over in 1967 and has held since), and the war in Iraq being fought between the Western (mainly US) and Middle Eastern powers.

History in Film

Films are also a great help in simulating interest in learning history. Films that are action-packed and historically accurate especially help spark interest in history due to the fact that they stimulate the (apparent) fictional violence-loving general public's interest. Two films in particular come to mind- *The War Lord*, starring Charleton Heston, and *Kingdom of Heaven*.

In *The War Lord*, a Norman soldier in Middle Ages England leads a small detachment of knights and archers into a border territory to solidify the reigning Duke's authority over the region, where an earlier attempt to build a defensive castle failed (*The War Lord*). This movie was especially excellent for its accuracy, as the movie portrayed the culture of the pagans, the rules of medieval society, and even the battles (small, pitched battles between a horde of raiders and the small detachment of Charleton Heston's men in the small tower). This film is full of action, romance/drama (Heston's character falls in love with one of the local pagan women, who is betrothed to another man), and drama which is sure to catch the eye of any person watching it. While watching, the viewer will also as a result gain background in the history and culture of the Middle Ages, with little artistic licensing, which makes this film a must-see for those who want to see history in a stimulating way.

In *Kingdom of Heaven*, the bastard son of a French baron goes to fight in the period of the 2nd Crusades in the European-controlled city of Jerusalem in a quest for redemption (*Kingdom of Heaven*). This movie was also praised for its accuracy, as the battles, the weapons, the castles and the very events in the movie themselves were akin to what really went on in that specific time period the movie is set in. The final battle at the end was also quite accurate, (although the trebuchet artillery pieces did NOT throw flaming projectiles, rather just ordinary ones) describing what would happen in such a tremendous siege. While many other artistic

licenses were taken, the movie nonetheless provides the viewer with a terrific portrayal of the Crusades. In addition, it provides the viewer with an excellent metaphor to the modern day West versus Middle East Conflict.

Game Evaluation

Introduction

During the course of our initial research term, each member of the group focused on a single topic area in an effort to understand part of what comprises a historical game. Much of this was theoretical—we researched educational theory, narratology, and the history of video gaming itself. In effect, we had stared at the outside of the problem from different angles. We decided to now approach our topic from a more practical angle, the study of pre-existing historical games.

To focus our study, we created a basic set of criteria that we hoped would express the features we had identified in historical gaming from the research term. Each member of the group then selected games we had encountered during our research, and applied the criteria to each. It was our hope that through studying the results of this evaluation, we could come to understand more fully what made a true “historical game”, in both historical and general terms. Our results follow, grouped by team member.

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BBC Web Mini-games – Strategy

General information

Name: BBC Web Mini-games - Strategy

Publisher: BBC

Year published: (varies)

Platform: PC

Genre: Turn-based strategy

Summary

The four strategy games presented allow the player to replay battles based on specific wars/time periods. Players may seek game advice from commanders and experts of the time.

Historical content

- Varies (Roman, Medieval, Napoleonic, WWII)

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
Players may change the outcome of a historical battle by winning or losing.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
Political and social events of the battles/time period are not focused on.
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?

The purpose of the games is to approximate the battle technology and players in historical time periods of warfare, although some of the battles can be considered historical events. The focus is on a “history-like” experience rather than a strictly accurate simulation.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
Players advance by fulfilling strategic objectives. Resources increase as player meets with success.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
There is no story, per se, but players do gain insight into historical events through tooltips and consulting military leaders from the time period.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
These games are provided free of charge for entertainment, but serve to bring traffic to the website. Educational value is not a focus.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
The player takes the roll of a military commander, who in this case could not be classed as “good” or “evil” unless the player had an existing opinion about politics in that time period.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Players are publicly ranked on the BBC website, so replay would be attractive to a player wishing to increase his/her standing in the rankings.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?
n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
The rankings add an environment of competition, which can serve to attract players and maintain interest. The simulation itself is somewhat shallow compared to commercial strategy games.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The gameplay is the primary draw, as there is little story to speak of.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
The games are available for free on the BBC website, but are somewhat difficult to reach from the top page of BBC.co.uk.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
Anyone with a PC and an internet connection may play, provided that their browser can support Flash.
- How old is the game?
The selection of games has been added to since introduction, none appear visibly dated.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
The intent of the game is to allow the player to make choices relating to tactics in a historical environment, so turn-based strategy is a logical choice.
- How could the game be presented differently?
The game could be a single-player action game, with the player in the role of a single soldier.
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
Yes.

Genre specific: A short description of how the game is a member of its listed genre(s)

The games provide brief explanations of the historical uses of the resources given to the player, but much of the game focuses on the strategy of the battle. Players place resources, troops, and weapons to defend or attack within given parameters.

BBC Web Mini-games - Trivia

General information

Name: BBC Web Mini-games - Trivia

Publisher: BBC

Year published: (varies)

Platform: PC

Genre: historical trivia, problem solving

Summary

These are small games that test the user's knowledge of a variety of historical periods/events. They are presented in conjunction with educational material, both online and televised, and serve as extension and reinforcement of said material. A few (i.e. *Death In Rome*) contain deeper problem solving elements.

Historical content

- Death In Rome – Roman Empire
- Elizabethan Spying Game – Mary, Queen of Scots
- Muck and Brass - the British Industrial Revolution

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
In *Death In Rome*, users solve the mystery with help from clues and characters from the time period, but have the added help of contemporary researchers and medical experts. The other two games are primarily trivia-based, and as such take little license.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
As these games are trivia games, there is not an overriding aim of reproducing an event. *Death In Rome* presents a historical period in a greatly simplified manner.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
The games listed are based around answering questions to win. In *Death in Rome*, problem-solving elements are added, but the intent remains the same.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
Death in Rome demonstrates the highest level of narratology, with a story that the player learns in segments.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
These games are intended as extensions of BBC history programming, so they serve both an educational and a commercial (advertising) purpose.

- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
The main character is not well-defined, leaving control directly to the player.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Varies by game. *Muck and Brass* and the *Elizabethan Spying Game* have very little depth to be explored in a replay, *Death In Rome* can be difficult to complete in one playthrough.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?
n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
If a player was interested in the material, these games would provide enjoyable reinforcement.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The historical and trivia content of these games is a primary draw.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
The games are available for free on the BBC website, but are somewhat difficult to reach from the top page of BBC.co.uk.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
Anyone with a PC and an internet connection may play, provided that their browser can support Flash.
- How old is the game?
The content is updated regularly, some of the older trivia games appear slightly dated.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
Since the games are intended to test knowledge on a subject, yes.
- How could the game be presented differently?
-
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
The presentation of the games suits their purpose and intention.

Genre specific: A short description of how the game is a member of its listed genre(s)

The games test knowledge on a specific historical subject, fitting them into the genre of historical trivia.

Castle Attack 2

General information

Name: Castle Attack 2

Publisher: Firefly Studios

Year published: 2005

Platform: PC

Genre: Arcade, Tactics

Summary

Players control archers in a stylized shooter. The object is to “defend” the workers constructing your castle through defenses such as boiling oil and reinforced walls.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
There is very little historical basis for this game.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
The game uses history only to provide tools to the player, such as appropriate castle defenses. The setting is one of a general “castle”, rather than a specific place/time.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
Players move through several levels of increasing difficulty, gaining more resources and bonuses as they progress.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
The game has almost no story to speak of.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
The game is meant as a promotion for another full-length game marketed on the publisher’s website.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
There is not main character.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Only to obtain a higher score.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?
n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
The gameplay is repetitive, but some might find the pace of the game addictive.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The speed at which the game plays out is a primary draw.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
The game is available on the publisher's website.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
The game does not have high system requirements.
- How old is the game?
The game was published within the last year.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
There is little specific historical content, so the shallow treatment suits the game.
- How could the game be presented differently?
More strategy elements could be added to shift focus from arcade play.
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
Yes, players looking for a simple way to pass time would enjoy this presentation.

|

Europa 1400 – The Guild

General information

Name: Europa 1400 – The Guild
Publisher: JoWood Productions Software
Year published: 2002
Platform: PC
Genre: Strategy

Summary

Player makes decisions in a quest to build his character in a role-playing/strategy simulation based on the Middle Ages

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
Game focuses on the “view” of the character- disease is caused by curses or toad slime, rather than germs. Historical accuracy is less focused on specific events, and more on time period.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
The game reproduces a time period, however the flow of time is fairly static.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
Players expand through resource management and strategic decisions in character development.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
The story is almost exclusively player driven, the branching storyline is strongly ludological.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
The game is intended for entertainment.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
The main character is not well-defined, leaving control directly to the player.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Characters may reproduce after conditions are met, thus extending the game through adding play-content for descendants.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
Player may continue in the role of his/her child.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?

This highlights the lack of major historical flow in the game, children build on their parents but do not focus on innovation.

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
The game has enough gameplay options to vary player experience a great deal. Strategy options are fairly complex.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The long-term strategy aspects of the game are entertaining, as well as their effect on character development.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
The game is (relatively) old.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
The game does not have any extraordinary requirements for a typical PC of this time.
- How old is the game?
Game was released in 2002, which is a relatively long time for computer software.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
Yes
- How could the game be presented differently?
The game could explore its role-playing aspects more fully for a more player-experience based game.
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
Yes.

Medal of Honor – European Assault

General information

Name: Medal of Honor – European Assault

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Year published:

Platform: Playstation2

Genre: Action/Shooter

Summary

Player takes the role of an American military commander in WWII, and engages in strategic combat with his squad through the background of several important battles of that time period.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
The player participates in “stealth combat” missions rather than the historical battles themselves. The weapons used are characteristic of the time period, however.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
Historical events (the battle settings) are somewhat reproduced, but the role played by the main character is less historically accurate than the setting.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
Players advance through levels with specific objectives. Completion of these objectives opens access to new abilities and weapons.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
Greater story elements are demonstrated through the historical flow of the game, but little is revealed about the main character.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
Entertainment/commercial
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
The main character is a hero.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Game has unlockable content and modes.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
Yes.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?

The unlockable game content reduces the historical accuracy of the game somewhat.

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
Yes, the action is fairly fast-paced.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
There is very little character development, the game relies on action.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
This game can be bought easily.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
Any player with a Playstation2 console may use this game.
- How old is the game?
This game is still recent.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
Making the game a stealth action game scales down the scope of the conflict somewhat.
- How could the game be presented differently?
The battles could have been presented as large-scale tactical simulations.
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
The game has a much wider appeal as a shooter.

Oregon Trail 5th Edition

General information

Name: Oregon Trail 5th Edition

Publisher: Riverdeep Interactive Learning Limited

Year published: 2005

Platform: PC

Genre: Problem solving, Adventure

Summary

Children's educational game. Player takes the roll of a pioneer heading to the west. Players outfit their wagon, visit towns, and hunt to replenish food supplies.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
The route and hardships have been simplified for a younger audience.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
The game seeks to reproduce the time period of westward expansion by settlers, rather than a specific event during that time. Once again, it is simplified due to the younger target audience.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
Player makes decisions about resource management that can trigger events such as illness or accidents.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
There is a basic story about the main character's migration westward. This edition also features breaks in action for story elements about real pioneer children's experiences.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
The game is marketed as an educational product.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
The main character is not well defined, but the nature of his quest would classify him as "good" rather than "evil".

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Game experience changes only slightly when different decisions are made.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?

n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
A player above the target age group might find the game simplistic.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The decision-making and historical aspects of the game are intended to be entertaining.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
The game is available at major computer software retailers.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
The game does not have high system requirements.
- How old is the game?
The game has many editions, with the first being more than 12 years old.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
The presentation softens the harsh realities pioneers faced, which is appropriate for younger players.
- How could the game be presented differently?
-
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
Yes. Educational software is a profitable market.

Patrician II – Quest for Power

General information

Name: Patrician II – Quest for Power

Publisher: Ascaron Software

Year published: 2001

Platform: PC

Genre: Strategy

Summary

The player makes decisions to expand his/her shipping concern, with the eventual goal of becoming a major economic player in the sea trade of the 1300-1400.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
Political interactions are simplified. Players may build towns up to levels at which they did not exist in history.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
The game is focused on player advancement.
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
The game attempts to recreate a historical time period over a specific event. It succeeds in a basic level at this.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
The player advances by making decisions about resources and trade routes. As the player progresses, he/she gains access to more areas of management.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
The story is created by the player, very little is scripted and executed by the game unprompted.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
The game has minor educational content into the politics and economic realities of the time.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
The actions of the main character may be heroic or villainous, depending on the situation.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
The simulation can play out in many different ways based on the actions of the player.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?

n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
Gameplay can become repetitive and frustrating. Additionally, game ran very slowly.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The historical and decision-making components were of most interest.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
The game is fairly dated at this time, it would most likely be found in used game sections or discounted, rather than on release shelves.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
Game requires a moderate video card and system to run.
- How old is the game?
Game features clunky CG models which do indicate its age somewhat.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
The game combines several types of simulation (economic, battle), to provide a more varied game experience.
- How could the game be presented differently?
-
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
The game at times seems to be trying to include too many types of simulation, but it is adequate.

Railroad Tycoon

General information

Name: Railroad Tycoon

Publisher: Microprose

Year published: 1990

Platform: PC

Genre: Simulation

Summary

Management simulation in which players compete against computerized opponents to earn money as they construct railroad lines.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
There is very little historical basis for this game.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
The focus of this game is more on simulation than history, though railroad technology improves over time.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
Players are on a quest to make money, which is accomplished by outwitting the computer and adapting to change in terrain and environment.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
The game has almost no story to speak of.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
The game is commercial in intent.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
There is no main character.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
The game saves high scores (earnings). Player can replay to try and earn more money.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?
n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
The game can be very involved for those who enjoy this type of management simulation.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The appeal of this game lies in the complexity of the growing simulation.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
This edition is out of print.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
The game might have problems running on newer computers without adjusting settings or running in a different environment.
- How old is the game?
The game is more than 15 years old.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
Historical events are not a focus, so simulation is appropriate.
- How could the game be presented differently?
The game could rely more on historical events to provide player challenge (wars, land deals)
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
Yes, the game has spawned several popular sequels.

Coliseum: Road To Freedom

General information

Name: Coliseum: Road To Freedom

Publisher: Koei

Year published: 2005

Platform: Playstation2

Genre: Action

Summary

Player takes the roll of a gladiator in ancient Rome. Through successful battles, player earns money used towards an eventual goal of buying freedom.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
Game has been somewhat glamorized (in the style of *Gladiator*). Role-playing elements also tweak the historical storyline.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
The game represents a time period and atmosphere.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
Player gains money through successful combat rounds, which is then used to increase stats or progress the story.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
There is not a large focus on story, but the player is working towards eventual story completion through “freedom”

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
The game is commercial in intent.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain?
The main character’s quest defines him as “heroic”

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Content is unlocked as player completes battles.
- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?
n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
Fans of melee combat genres would enjoy this game.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The gameplay is the primary draw of this game.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
Game can be easily bought.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
Game can be played by any Playstation2 console.
- How old is the game?
Game is relatively recent.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
Since the main focus of the game is on combat and not history, yes.
- How could the game be presented differently?
-
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
The audience is wider.

You Don't Know Jack

General information

Name: You Don't Know Jack

Publisher: Jellyvision

Year published: 1999

Platform: Playstation

Genre: Trivia

Summary

This general purpose game-show spoof includes a large selection of history trivia, on varying subjects.

Historical content

- Because the game is general trivia, historical content tends towards the bizarre and notable above a specific focus on time periods.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment? Questions themselves have historical content, but may be accompanied by voice-overs meant for humor rather than education.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
n/a
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
n/a

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game? Players compete against each other to earn points. Several game modes earn different amounts of points for players.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology? This game has no story content.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational? Though there is factual content in the game, the presentation makes it clear that the aim of the game is entertainment/commercial rather than education.
- Is the main character a hero or a villain? The player interacts with the game directly.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?

The selection of questions is very large, and a round of the game only covers a small amount of these questions.

- Is there more content available after a successful completion?
No.
- How does this change the nature of the game, if at all?
n/a

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
The game is overwhelmingly oriented towards humor and group play, and succeeds in being entertaining.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The humor content and nature of the questions provide the entertainment.

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
This version can be obtained cheaply used. Further editions of this game series are still being released on PC.
- Would an ordinary Player have access to the game and its specific console?
Players with a Playstation or Playstation2 can play this game.
- How old is the game?
The game is no longer available new.

Genre/Game type

- Is the presentation/genre appropriate for the events depicted?
Since the focus of the game is entertaining trivia, yes.
- How could the game be presented differently?
-
- Is it advantageous to present the game in the way that it is?
The presentation is well suited for group-play.

Genre specific: A short description of how the game is a member of its listed genre(s)

You Don't Know Jack is a faux-game show, in which 1+ players participate in rounds of trivia. The game is not oriented towards historical content, but many of the questions deal with very specific information about historical events and figures.

Europa Universalis

Publisher: Paradox Entertainment

Publishing Date: 2001

Platform: PC

Genre: RTS (real time strategy)



Europa Universalis is a game that “tries to simulate the interaction between the European countries during the period between 1492 and 1792 as realistically as possible.” To this end they have built-in scenarios representing European conflicts from the period, including the War of Spanish Succession and the Thirty Years War. Each Scenario holds the option to play as any of the nations involved, each with their own conditions for victory. There is even a scenario from

the period starting around 1773 which includes the American Revolution. A brief description of each scenario is given, and indicators for the difficulty of each.

When the game begins, the player has territory to match the selected period in history. This is different for each scenario and each nation. The game tries to guide the player along the path of history with in-game issues that give the player a choice whether to follow in history's footsteps or try to succeed in his or her own way. There is also the option for random events to take place so historical purists can try to stay as close to the actual proceedings as possible. These purists should be pleased with Europa Universalis's performance in this area. Historians will also be pleased with the Game Manual, as it does include basic histories of the nations in the game for the time frame of 1492 until 1792.



The game can, however, be burdensome. Each city must be managed separately, as well as battles. This becomes a larger issue when you begin to expand your territory. Then it

becomes an issue where the player simply can't keep up with every decision that should be made. It becomes micro-management on a slightly larger scale than it should be, and it's a little frustrating that the computer opponent doesn't have to deal with this issue.

In my opinion, Europa Universalis could be an effective way of getting real time strategy fans more interested in history. A lot can be learned about history from the manual, but the game itself doesn't teach much. During play, other leader characters may contact the player for diplomatic purposes, but this is about the extent to which learning could take place in-game.

The replay value of this game is high. With the number of scenarios available and the number of nations available for play for each one, as well as the individual scenario parameters, including turning random/historical events on or off, make the number of ways you can play a situation very large. It's probably very interesting to play one round as a given nation, and then to play as its direct opponent in the same conflict as the next game.

The pacing of the game can be a little slow, but there is the option to speed up or slow down the in-game speed in one-player mode. And then later when the player has more to deal with, pacing can be slowed for purposes of keeping up. The game itself is relatively simple after playing through the tutorial, although a little boring in times of peace.

The presentation of Europa Universalis is solid, and wouldn't work as any other game genre. By presenting the game as a Real Time Strategy (RTS), the hope is to show the player the difficulty of monarchs in monitoring wars and diplomacy, both of which could take months for results to become known. The Real Time Strategy format also allows the player to see what's happening more effectively and requires less planning ahead. The time scale is a little skewed, with one minute equaling one day, but it's reasonable, as the full scope of the game could be as much as 300 years. Being a Real Time Strategy means that time travels at a constant rate

throughout and subdivision into months seems appropriate for a game with such a large scope of history.

Age of Empires II



Historical content

This game recreates the Middle Ages era of Europe and Asia- from the post-Roman period to the early Renaissance (about 700 AD to about 1500 AD)

Historical accuracy

The historical accuracy of this game resides in the game's races and ethnic groups and cultures, which are portrayed accurately in terms of economic situations, attitudes, technology, etc. There are no real actual historical events depicted, although historical events were used in the game to increase the game's accuracy regarding the attitudes, culture, and economics. But there the historical events role stops. The aim of the game is to reproduce a historical time period, not a historical event or events..

Intent

The intent of the game is mainly commercial, and it has very limited educational value, however, the since the game explores the actual attitudes and culture of each race and ethnic group represented. This gives the player an idea of what the culture of each and every ethnic group in the game was like in the Middle Ages.

Replay value

There is a purpose to playing over again; it is a strategy game with many different races and ethnic groups to explore, so the player will have much fun playing from not one, but many points of view when playing the game over and over again. There is no real "end" to the game per se, as the game, while possessing campaigns, mainly simulates the Middle Ages and it can

shift any way, depending on the player's skill and the Artificial Intelligence of the game. This difference in every time the player plays the game makes the replay value high.

Fun

The game is a lot of fun, there are numerous ways the player can go, the game is challenging, and there are a lot of different challenges with each ethnic group. The most entertaining aspects are namely the history involved, as it IS a historical simulation game, with the player in control of his/her own nation.

Availability

The game is an older release as of 1999, even so, any electronics/software store or any store such as Target will have the game in stock. It is a computer game, so if the player has an up to date system (at least 6 years old as of 2005) then the player can play the game. The game is under a year old.

Genre/Game type

The game is a strategy/management game, and the presentation and genre is appropriate for what is depicted (running a country in the middle ages) since a country needs skillful decision making and strategizing in order to be run effectively.

Bibliographical information

Developer: Microsoft Games

Copyright: 1999 Microsoft Corporation

Game review

The game is quite fun in that you are in charge of a whole country, which is a large responsibility. While fighting seems to be a large part of the game, it is only part of what the game is about- many economic and political decisions await the player, and the way he/she makes those decisions will decide whether the player's empire will grow or be destroyed. The game's best parts are its animation and detail.

Narrative Aspects of the game

The game does not follow a strict story per se, as the game is a historical simulation set in a historical period, which relies on the ludological aspect more. Narrative aspects include the stories in history which were used to simulate the culture, attitudes, and overall manner of the races in the game.

Ludological properties of the game

This the most important, as the game relies almost entirely on ludology, as the game relies more on the challenge of managing a country and its resources than a storyline to hold it together. The strategy and the player's control over his/her resources and units comprise the properties of ludology in the game.

Age of Sail

Historical content

This game attempts to recreate 18th and 19th century naval combat between sailing ships, representing different countries such as Britain, France, and Russia.

Historical accuracy

Generally, this game focuses on naval combat between sailing ships. Although there are campaign missions in this game, really, there aren't any real significant historical events portrayed in the game. The aim of the game is to reproduce a time period, particularly in regards to the period's style of naval warfare. It provides a simplified version that is very marginally accurate overall but accurate for what it wants to do nonetheless (it is a strategy game that simulates naval warfare by having the player maneuver ships to fight in a naval battle in a manner that fits the historical period). Singular historical events seem irrelevant, as the game simply simulates general naval battles, using real 18th and 19th century naval battles from history as guidelines (not FULLY historically accurate, since the outcome of the battles can go either way, rather than what REALLY happened)

Intent

The intent of the game partially commercial and partially educational, however, the educational intent is quite low, as it really teaches little more than a few sailing maneuvers and some naval combat maneuvers. The game is mainly for those who wish to have known what it was like for sailing ships to battle in a strategic manner. As it is a historical game, there is little application to real life nowadays, since naval warfare has changed since. There exists no real villain or main character in the story, the player chooses his/her own allegiance (which can vary).

Replay value

The replay value, if the player is interested enough, can be very good, as the game does not follow a very strict storyline and therefore the player can experience something new every time (the game has Artificial Intelligence and behaves/learns something new each time the player engages it) instead of seeing the same strict story and sequences every time the player wishes to play again. Even after successful completion of all campaigns, the difficulty can be altered and the campaigns redone in a different way, if the player wishes, to challenge himself.

Fun

For a mid-nineties audience interested in historical naval sailing combat, it can be, however, a contemporary audience (2000's audience) might, just might, lose patience with it. I myself found the game to be much too slow paced (it is in real-time, and sailing ships are *slow!!*) and boring, hard to learn, and the graphics were very, very primitive and blocky (by today's high-tech 3D standards). I did not think personally that it was too fun a game at all, despite all efforts to try to pry anything from it. On that note, it does not contain character development or a real story in the strictest sense (only a series of campaigns based on history).

Availability

Since the game is old by today's standards (it was made almost 10 years ago, released about 9 years ago) it would be hard to locate the game in a store. One would have to search the Internet, used game stores, or collections of friends to find this game. All in all, hard to find due to its age, and it's market (strictly historical-based naval combat with not a lot of flexibility). This is a computer game, so the an ordinary player with at least a 9 year old computer system with 600MB of hard drive space and a CD ROM can allow them to play it. As stated before, the game is about 10 years old.

Genre/Game type

The presentation is appropriate, as the presentation is simply the field of battle for this game, which is real-time strategic naval combat. The game's depiction was well made for what it wants to do and presenting it differently would not allow it to fully convey its function as a strategic naval combat simulator. It is advantageous to present the game in this fashion because it allows the strategy to be played out the easiest by the player- the player has full view of the field and can deploy his strategy well

Bibliographical information

Developer: TalonSoft, Inc. under license to Global Star Software Limited
Copyright 1996 Talonsoft, Inc.

Game review

Overall for a contemporary gamer, a less than average game. If the gamer is very interested in historic naval warfare, this game might suit them, I found it to be slow, boring, and its graphics unimpressive.

Narrative Aspects of the game

Campaigns can be created by the player or the player can choose a campaign in the game's memory. The game's narrative is based around actual naval battles, using the names of the ships involved.

Ludological properties of the game

The game is real-time strategy, and has many ludological aspects, more so than narrative aspects. In fact, the game would be entirely ludological if it weren't for the campaigns in the game, using the stories of actual naval battles. The game's ludological properties include the strategy, the player's control over the outcome of the battles fought in the simulation, and direct control by the player of his units.

BBC Applets

General information

Name: **BBC Applets**

Publisher: British Broadcasting Corporation

Year published: unknown

Platform: PC

Genre: various (mystery, strategy, battlefield simulation)

Summary

The games vary according to what they are, the Death in Rome and Elizabethan Spy game were mystery games, and the battlefield simulations were strategy games.

Historical content

The game, “Death in Rome attempts to recreate the historical period of the Roman Empire. The game, “Elizabethan Spy game” attempts to recreate an event in the Tudor period of England in the late 16th century, in which Sir Walsingham is trying to decode the message exposing the treacherous Mary, Queen of Scots. The battlefield simulations simulate various historical battles.

Historical accuracy.

The history in the Elizabethan Spy game was altered in that the message the player needed to decode was made up, otherwise the events (plot against Elizabeth I) and period (Elizabethan England) were real. The history in Death in Rome was accurate and based on archeological, medical, and historical evidence. The battle simulations were accurate to the period, and somewhat to the events, but the outcome can go either way, not necessarily how history actually went. Important events were not really left out in any of the games, other than in the battle simulations where the outcomes can be altered by the player. The aim of the game Death in Rome aims to recreate a historical time period, Elizabethan spy game aims to recreate a historical event, and the battle simulations recreate various historical battles, recreating historical events.

Ludological/Narratological content

The ludological aspects of the games are apparent in that they are either puzzles or simulations that challenge the player and allow him/her to be in control. In the puzzle games, Death in Rome and Elizabethan Spy game, each game has in its own way, a challenge to it (Death in Rome challenges the player’s observational skills, Elizabethan spy challenges a player’s historical knowledge). The battle simulations also produce a challenge for the player, namely his/her decisions in battle situations. Narratology concepts are demonstrated in Death in Rome and Elizabethan spy by their historical settings, and in Elizabethan’s case, a historical event. The Death in Rome game, in particular, has a made-up, but nonetheless interesting, story to tell set in Ancient Rome. Elizabethan spy game has also an interesting story, but it is based on fact giving the game a much more interesting edge.

Intent

The intent of the games is educational, as the game Death in Rome uses archeology and modern scientific method to solve, and the Elizabethan spy game requires knowledge of history. There is almost no commercial value as it is free and doesn't promote any other game. In the games, the only game with a real main character is the Elizabethan Spy game, in which you play hero Sir Francis Walsingham, Queen Elizabeth the First's personal spy.

Replay value

There is little use in playing these games again because you would know the answer to the games after beating them once, giving them NO replay value. There is no content in addition after the games are played out.

Fun

For free and educational games, the games are fun because the player would get involved in solving the mystery and the story in the game. The most entertaining part of all the games are the stories they tell, and they get the player really involved in the stories.

Availability

The games are not hard to find, they are on the BBC website, www.bbc.co.uk. Any player with a internet- capable computer can access the game, and the games and they can be played on the PC. The age of the games are unknown due to lack of publication dates.

Genre/Game type

The genre and presentations for the games are excellent, as they do not divert from their educational value, but they stimulate the player's interest at the same time. The games can have better graphics, in particular the Elizabethan game and the battle simulations.



Death in Rome



Elizabethan Spying Game

Caesar III

Historical content

This game attempts to recreate the world of Europe during the time of the Roman Republic and Roman Empire.

Historical accuracy

The historical accuracy of this game lies in its simulation of the ancient Roman world- Rome itself, which the player builds, complete with Coliseum and Circus Maximus, two of the most famous buildings in Rome. The most important events of Rome, namely the assassination of Julius Caesar himself, has been largely left out, with the player making the city himself and essentially being Caesar himself. The aim of the game is to reproduce a historical time period.

Intent

The intent of the game is purely commercial, and does not have any educational value of any significance. The main character a hero essentially, though not one in the traditional sense.

Replay value

There is no real goal in this game, as the purpose is to form, manage, and protect an empire, so there is no “end” in the traditional sense. There is no real “completion” in the traditional sense so therefore post-game content is irrelevant. This does not change the nature of the game.

Fun

This game is a city-builder with a warfare component, but there is no real good action in the game, in my opinion. The most entertaining part of the game is the simulated warfare, despite the fact that it has little action.

Availability

The game is a little old, it was released around 1998, and therefore the game is a little hard to find, but can be bought on eBay or any software store if one asks for it. Any Player with a 7 year old computer can play the game. The game is around 8 years old.

Genre/Game type

The presentation is appropriate for what was depicted- the game is a strategy building game, it is well made with a 3D view of the game world and does not have to be presented differently. It is advantageous to present the game in this way because it makes the game appealing to play.

Bibliographical information

Developer: Sierra Entertainment, Impressions Games. Copyright: 1998 Sierra.

Game review

This is a really great view of Ancient Rome, however, too many similarities with SimCity and not enough warfare. More action would be a plus.

Narrative Aspects of the game

No set story is followed, the player is essentially creating Rome almost from scratch.

Ludological properties of the game

The ludological properties of the game include the player's skills in diplomacy, decision making, and building strategically.

Castle Attack 2

Historical content

This game recreates a general Middle Ages era castle siege, with the player being the defending side.

Historical accuracy

Generally, this game focuses on siege combat with the player being on the defensive, trying to protect his castle from enemy forces out to destroy it. Since it's a highly generalized battle, there aren't any historical events portrayed in the game. The aim of the game is to reproduce in a highly, highly fictionalized form, a siege battle set in the middle ages. It provides a highly simplified, very marginally accurate (historically) portrayal of a siege, in a manner. The events of the simulated siege are fabricated for the purpose of entertainment- since the player has direct control of the weapons available to him- archers, boiling oil, mangonel barrage, and flaming logs, the siege, while given time delays for the weapons' deployment (i.e. arrows had to be restrung after shooting off a volley, the oil was poured slowly, etc.). The main purpose of the game is to reproduce a historical time period- the middle ages- but only in respect to period warfare, only in that sense is it accurate, though marginally, as stated above.

Intent

The intent of the game is a purely commercial, and not intended to be educational at all. The game is actually used a promotional device for the larger game Stronghold 2 and is in fact hosted on Stronghold 2's website. The game gives the player an idea, albeit a very highly simplified one, of one aspect of Stronghold 2's game- siege battles. While the game is many times simpler than Stronghold 2, it is nonetheless a very fun game to play and thus makes it a really good promotional device. The main character is almost nonexistent, the player is in total control, and his/her side is the "good" side.

Replay value

The replay value is quite good, as the game gets harder and harder to play as you advance the levels, and therefore one can play this game over again, to see if he/she can advance further. I have not been able to beat the game, so after successful completion (if it is possible) no more content exists. This does not change the nature of the game at all.

Fun

The game is simple to play, and the quality of the graphics for a Shockwave applet is not bad. The game gets difficult as you advance to higher levels, so the challenge of keeping the enemies off your castle is enough to keep any player interested. I myself had a very fun time playing the game, and I play it again and again to see if I can advance further.

Availability

It is not hard to find this game; it is on the Internet on the Stronghold 2 website. Any ordinary player that has an internet-capable computer can play this game. The game itself is not

that old, maybe made within the last 3 years if that, and has been up on the website ever since about 2004.

Genre/Game type

The game is a strategy game, and the presentation and genre is appropriate for the events depicted (a siege battle) since a siege requires strategy and skilled decision making (albeit in this case simple decisions)

Bibliographical information

Developer: 2K Games, Inc a subsidiary of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. in partnership with Firefly Studios

Copyright: 2005 2K Games, Inc.

Game review

The game serves its purpose well as an advertising device. It's also an extremely fun game, and deserves as much respect as more advanced games in its genre. I found it to be very entertaining, and at times couldn't stop playing it.

Narrative Aspects of the game

Not much here, as this strategy game is simple and has no real complicated back-story. Basically, the game is more ludological. The game in essence, has no narrative to speak of.

Ludological properties of the game

This component is especially important. Since the game is a real-time strategy type, the properties in this category include the strategy, the player's total control over his/her units in the game, and the player's objective. That is to defend the castle until the keep is built, and as the battle rages the keep is being built.



Diablo II

Historical content

The game attempts to use elements of the entire medieval period (from the 600's to 1500's AD) including settings, weapons, armor, and characters, to form its fantasy story.

Historical accuracy.

There is little interest in historical accuracy, as the game is apparently timeless and in a different world, that is BASED on our own. Although it's settings (Western European moors, Middle Eastern desert, and South American/East European swamplands). The weapons and armor of the game include early (chain mail) AND late (full plate armor) middle ages design, but are based on ACTUAL weapons, shields, and armor of the period, with correct names for them (flail, glaive, targe, rondache, etc.). The historical undertones are omnipresent, as the characters themselves, while fantasized, are also based on real warrior types, with the exception of the Necromancer, Sorceress and the Assassin, which are completely fantasy. However, the Barbarian, the Paladin, the Druid, and the Amazon are based VERY loosely on actual historical warrior and character types (although the Amazon is based on mostly mythology and fewer facts).

Intent

The intent of the game is entirely entertainment, with no historical value other than the weapons and armor contained in the game, which can be used somewhat as a popular reference. This game is for those who like a great fantasy game with a rich story and set in a medieval period with medieval undertones. There is no real life application to this game. The main villain of the game is a demon based on the Devil himself, named Diablo, who essentially looks like an oversized Devil, complete with horns and fire attacks. The other main villain of the game (the main villain of Lord of Destruction) is a giant demon named Baal with cold attacks rather than fire.

Replay value

The replay value is high, as the player, upon beating the game, will only be around level 30 upon beating Diablo, and level 40-46 upon beating Baal if on single player- the maximum level is 99, and the player can play the game over again in an increased difficulty- the maps are randomized so it will be different looking and the creatures, while based on certain models will have different names and will be harder to beat. The only thing constant throughout the single player game is the story and the main enemies.

Fun

This game is a lot of fun and has a HUGE fan base, especially among fans of fantasy Role Playing Games (RPG's) which is the genre of game this is. I personally got into the story and the way it was told- not only through the game itself but the cinematics, which made the game worthwhile and entertaining, connecting the different chapters of the game together. This game contains a rich story and very good character development. In addition, the multiplayer option of this game is excellent, and made it one of the most popular online games ever.

Availability

The game, while old (made in 2000 5 years ago) still has a widespread fan base and retains much popularity through the US. Therefore the game is still available at nearly every major software/electronics store and most major department stores and malls. It is very easy to find, and one can even get them used from friends. This is a computer game, so an ordinary player with a computer that's at least 5 years old can play this game on their system.

Genre/Game type

The presentation is excellent, it is an isometric third person view so you can move the character around in a map easily and see all around it. The genre of the game is Role-Playing Game (RPG) and the presentation is ideal. It is advantageous to present the game in this fashion due to the ability of the player to fight the creatures, demons, and other characters in the game effectively.

Bibliographical information

Developer: Blizzard North, under license from Blizzard Entertainment.

Copyright: Blizzard Entertainment, 2000

Game review

Overall for a contemporary gamer, an excellent game. As stated before, a rich story, high quality graphics in the cinematics, interesting themes, addictive game play.

Narrative Aspects of the game

The story holds the entire game together in the single player mode. The game's narrative takes the player on a journey as the player advances, killing major bosses and gaining skills to prepare for the final confrontation with Diablo, and in Lord of Destruction, Baal. The story starts out with your quest to defeat the demons, and along the way, you will do missions that will cause the story to branch out and come together in the end

Ludological properties of the game

The game is Role-Playing, so the player takes on the role of the hero who sets out to destroy the evil that is Diablo. RPG's are focused mainly on story and narrative, but the ludological properties are the battles you fight, as well as the decisions you make throughout the game, such as the mini-boss battles and the optional missions which will gain you experience, etc.



Emperor

Historical content

This game attempts to recreate the imperial era of China, with no particular dynasty specified.

Historical accuracy

The historical accuracy of the game lies in the architecture of the buildings that the player can assemble his city with, as well as the Ancient Chinese names (such as Huang Di, which means Emperor), government (Imperial), and even parts of Chinese culture (such as acupuncture medicine). There are no real historical events portrayed in the game at all, just a world inspired by the actual history. The aim of the game is to reproduce a historical time period.

Intent

The intent of the game is purely commercial, as there is very little educational value in it, in fact almost none. It was not intended to be educational. The main character is the player, who is essentially the “Emperor”, essentially the hero.

Replay value

This game is much like SimCity set in the Ancient Chinese Empire. There is no real “goal” per se, since the object of the game is to manage and maintain an empire. Completion is not really possible in the traditional sense, but a player may stop playing if he/she feels that they’re bored with the game. There is no real “completion” in the traditional sense so therefore post-game content is irrelevant. This does not change the nature of the game.

Fun

If the player is a fan of city-building games, with downplayed violence, then this game is a sure thing. I myself found it to be boring and not enough action. The most interesting part is the city development.

Availability

The game isn’t really that old, it was released around 2002, and is therefore the game is available wherever software is sold. Any Player with a 4 year old computer can play the game. The game is around 3 years old.

Genre/Game type

The presentation is appropriate for what was depicted- the game is a strategy building game and its genre is appropriate for what it wants to do- provide the player with a simulation of Ancient China. It is well made with a 3D view of the game world and does not have to be presented differently. It is advantageous to present the game in this way because it makes the game appealing to play.

Bibliographical information

Developer: Sierra Entertainment, BreakAway Games. Copyright: 2002 Sierra Ent.

Game review

This game is like SimCity also, same as Caesar III but with a different setting. Again, boring and in need of more action. City building can only be so fun.

Narrative Aspects of the game

The player is creating his own story essentially and no set story is followed.

Ludological properties of the game

The ludological properties of the game include the player's decisions throughout the game, the ability of the player to build up a city and his own empire.

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Knights of Honor

Historical content

This game attempts to recreate the medieval world through a warfare simulator.

Historical accuracy

The historical accuracy of the game relies on the medieval-style setting, characters (all with appropriate roles of the period), medieval style warfare, medieval diplomacy, and medieval weapons/resources. The game portrays the Middle Ages in general, and therefore the game does not portray much in the way of events, but rather uses the whole of the events and history of the middle ages as inspiration. No events from the middle ages were included at all. The aim of the game is to reproduce a time period, not a historical event.

Intent

The intent of the game is purely commercial, with little to no real educational value. The game is a simulation of managing a kingdom and an army to fight and conquer simulated enemies. While one might learn a few things about medieval diplomacy and warfare, that's where the educational value stops. The main character is the player (a lord), who can be seen either way as a hero or villain, since the ultimate goal of the game is to conquer and subjugate Europe.

Replay value

There are many different paths to the "goal" of the game, so the player, while playing the same game if he/she were to play the game again, the path can be done differently making the game interesting to play again. Personally, though, I wouldn't do such a thing, I'd just move on after playing as much of the game as I want. There really isn't a real "goal" in this game, however, if you become elected Emperor of Europe or turn Europe's population entirely into vassals, the game ends. The real "goal" of Knights of Honor is to establish and rule a medieval empire.

Fun

The game is kind of slow, and the real action begins when you fight to conquer a new territory. There is still much buildup to the action, however, and can frustrate a player who wants more instant action. The most entertaining parts of the game, in my view, is the character/kingdom development and the battles.

Availability

The game is new, having been released on May 10th, 2005, so the game can be found wherever software is sold, even in department stores. An ordinary player with a relatively new computer should be able to play the game with little problem.

The game is less than a year old.

Genre/Game type

The presentation and genre is appropriate for the events depicted, as it uses a strategy simulation of the medieval period to depict the middle ages. The game is great as is, since it gives you a sharp, 3-D view of the world you build, so there is no need to present the game differently. Since the game has a great graphics and game play engine, the way the game is presented is advantageous as it is much more appealing to play.

Bibliographical information

Developer: Black Sea Studios, Inc, Publisher: Sunflowers

Copyright: 2004 Black Sea Studios

Game review

The game serves its purpose well as a medieval strategy game that has a very wide goal: total domination of Europe, with your loyal knights by your side. But, even the Middle Ages didn't have fighting 24/7. The game explores espionage, sabotage, alliances, resource building, and weapon building.

Narrative Aspects of the game

There is little in this department, as this is the kind of game which you create your own story. There is no set storyline that the game follows.

Ludological properties of the game

This is more prominent, as the game is entirely Ludological. The game is a management game with skills required in areas of diplomacy, deception, and detection. The ludological properties of the game include: various strategies you must employ, as well as management of resources, and development of units, alliances, and intelligence.



Medieval Lords

Historical content

This game recreates the middle age period city much like Age of Empires II does, but with less diversity- the game is set in medieval Europe only.

Historical accuracy

The historical accuracy lies in the portrayal of a medieval land that you can control. No real historical events are portrayed in the game, however there are 10 scenarios you will play which are based very loosely on historical events. The aim of the game is to reproduce a historical time period, not a historical event.

Intent

The intent of this game is mostly commercial, and has as much education value as Age of Empires II, which is very little. The player can learn non-historical things however, like finance and resource management and economics in general. The main character is a “hero” of sorts, basically the lord which the player controls.

Replay value

As you can play the scenarios in different ways, the game’s replay value is moderate, but eventually you’ll be doing the same thing over and over. There is little else outside of the scenarios to play, so after beating the game there is little to do but manage your kingdom. This doesn’t change the nature of the game.

Fun

This game was similar to Age of Empires II, and therefore I had fun playing it, however, there is a lack of racial diversity in game, which makes it less interesting than Age of Empires II. The most entertaining part was the kingdom development, specifically the resource and city building..

Availability

The game was released in 2004, so the game is not hard to find- one can find it in any electronics/software store. Anyone with at least a 2 year old computer can play this game, as it has enhanced 3D graphics newer systems can handle. The game is a year old.

Genre/Game type

The presentation and genre is appropriate for the events depicted, which are the building of a medieval city. The game does not need to be presented differently. The way the game is presented is advantageous as this is a strategy/management game, and the player gets to play around with a whole country.

Bibliographical information

Developer: Monte Cristo Multimedia, published by O-3 Entertainment
Copyright: 2004 Monte Cristo Multimedia

Game review

The game is like SimCity in the Middle ages, only with war involved. You manage a medieval city much like in SimCity, but differently as you have to constantly prepare for war.

Narrative Aspects of the game

The narrative aspects of the game consist mainly of the 10 scenarios that make up the game. However, the game's story is very sparse, and the player is mainly doing a simulation of a city.

Ludological properties of the game

The ludological properties include the player's ability to manage resources and forces to fight, as well as simulation of life in the period.

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Railroad Tycoon

General information

Name: **Railroad Tycoon**

Publisher: MicroProse Software, Inc.

Year published: 1990

Platform: PC

Genre: Historically-set Management Simulation

Summary

The game is centered on a late 19th early 20th century railroad business, and the player is in charge of it and is trying to capitalize on it and lead it to success. The object of the game is to build a railroad company (as well as manage it, of course), and make every decision related to the railroad- laying track, building stations, buying and scheduling trains, etc. The game also features a small stock market which players can buy and sell stock in their own companies or in competing companies.

Historical content

This game attempts to recreate the late 1800's and early 1900's railroad industry.

Historical accuracy.

There are no events portrayed, so there are no events fabricated or altered. Since to real historical events were portrayed, all related important historical events have been entirely left out. The game is strictly a management game set in a historical period, and is therefore attempting to recreate a historical period, rather than historical events. The game's historical accuracy is minimal, as the details are largely made up (i.e. the money amounts earned/spent, etc)

Ludological/Narratological content

The Ludological content of the game is evident in the strategy needed in order to advance in the game, the player's control over all aspects of the simulation (money, purchasing, trains, stations, etc.), and the game's stock market accessory, which allows the player to play a game within a game. The narratological concepts of this game are largely absent, as the player is simply in a simulation world without following a strict storyline.

Intent

The game's intent is purely commercial and for entertainment purposes. There is little educational value in the game.

Replay value

There is a purpose to replaying the game, as the game can be different every time it is played (the player can start a new company and take a new direction, etc.) as this game is like a 19th century set SimCity. There is no real "end" to the game, since the game is a simulation it goes on and on until the map is deleted. So after-end content is irrelevant.

Fun

For its time, it was a pretty entertaining game, as the game allowed entertainment compatible with the technology at the time. For a contemporary gamer, however, it might slightly bore them, since the graphics are primitive and the numbers that the game uses (money, stocks, time, speed, etc.) are largely what the player sees.

Availability

The game is no longer sold, but is available for free at www.abandonia.com. Any player with a computer hooked to the internet can have access to the game, and the game is played on the computer itself. The game dates back to 1990, making it almost 16 years old.

Genre/Game type

The presentation of the game was appropriate for both the genre it was in (strategic simulation) as well as the technology available at the time. The game cannot be presented differently due to its nature. It is advantageous to present the game in the way that it is because it is strategic management game, and therefore relies on numbers.



Stronghold

Historical content

This game recreates a Middle Ages era castle simulation, with the player building and defending his own castle.

Historical accuracy

The game focuses on the general middle ages, particularly the castle life. There are no historical events portrayed in the game. The aim of the game is to reproduce a time period, not historical events. Castle life is portrayed somewhat accurately, with parts romanticized/simplified for the game. Particularly, castle sieges are the most accurate of the game, with period weapons, armies, and siege machines involved.

Intent

The intent of the game is mainly commercial, and has a very marginal educational value as the game focuses on the castle life, not just castle warfare. There is one real main character, the player's leader, the King/Lord of the Castle, who has a small back-story and is the "hero" of the game.

Replay value

The replay value is quite good, as the game allows one to have many different paths to build a castle, manage one's resources, and fight one's battles. There are, in the campaign version, some content available after completion, namely you can play further. This does not change the nature of the game.

Fun

The game was a lot of fun to play, and the game allows you to build a castle, essentially allowing you to be in the world of the middle ages as the leader of your own kingdom. The most entertaining is the character development and the setting of the game in the rich historical middle ages.

Availability

The older version of the game was released in 2001, and the newest version, Stronghold 2, was released in 2005, so the game, both versions, is available widely at any electronics/software store or any store like Target. The game is a computer game, so the any player with access to a computer at least 6 years old as of 2005 can play the game. The game is less than a year old.

Genre/Game type

The presentation and genre of the game is very appropriate for the depicted events, as the game's story is set in the Middle ages and the strategy and warfare fits the game's genre perfectly.

Bibliographical information

Developer: 2K Games, Inc a subsidiary of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. in partnership with Firefly Studios
Copyright: 2005 2K Games, Inc.

Game review

The game serves its purpose well as a strategic medieval castle simulation with heavy emphasis on building and managing a castle and fighting siege warfare on both sides (defensive and offensive) the game's battles are depicted accurately enough. I found the game to be well made, and the story that tied it together was fun to follow as well.

Narrative Aspects of the game

The Narrative aspects of the game include a story about a King, whom you serve, who has gone into hiding after his armies are destroyed. You must win the kingdom back for him through besieging and building. The game's story gives you a purpose throughout the game.

Ludological properties of the game

This component was especially important due to the fact that simulated battles are a large part of the game. The game's ludological properties include: battle strategy, resource management, and unit training. The goal is to ultimately restore the king's power, giving you a set end to strive for.



Gamer Evaluation

Having a more clear idea of how a historical game was constructed, we decided to research how these games were generally received by a greater game playing public. We constructed a survey about game playing habits, both historical and general, and distributed it to members of WPI's GDC (Game Development Club). The responses are attached as an appendix to this report. The findings were as follows.

General

In evaluating the surveys received, it became evident that perhaps a general demographic section would have been useful in analyzing the data. Nevertheless, the surveys received all spanned the same approximate age group (WPI students), and the number of female respondents was within a proportion similar to that of WPI's student body. The only other thing of interest to note in terms of general survey protocol is that female respondents were far more likely than male to follow the directions pertaining to where to send completed surveys; more than half of male participants sent to the individual group members.

General—Gaming

The respondents owned a wide variety of gaming platforms, with most owning at least one console and a PC. As a whole the students who responded did not play more than 1-2 hours per day, which may indicate our sample was skewed towards casual gamers.

Historical Games

In reviewing this section of the responses, we noted that a “one month” span of time for measuring history game activity seemed to be too short, and that a year might have been more meaningful. Only one participant indicated a strict dislike of history games to the point of avoidance, and stated a perceived lack in quality among games of this type. Females were more likely to become interested in a time period or event through experiencing it in a game than males.

Of primary interest was the reaction of gamers to historical accuracy in the historically-based games they played. Aside from one respondent who did not understand the concept of a “historical basis,” most respondents were not heavily skewed towards either end of the spectrum of acceptance in this matter. A few students stated without qualification that historical accuracy played no part in their enjoyment of a historical game, while fewer were intolerant of inaccuracies at any level. Most students stated that a lack of historical accuracy was only a factor if it occurred on a large scale, and cited other factors as more important to enjoyment such as non-historical story, gameplay, and graphics.

Returning to general questions, the reasons given by students for lack of enthusiasm about historical games tended to fall along genre lines. Fans of shooters and action games complained that historical games in this genre could be one-dimensional, or too similar to want to play more than a few. Fans of strategy games and RPGs tended to express concern that most games with a historical basis tended to be first person shooters or action games.

Hold Jerusalem: The Making of a Historical Game

Introduction

In the first term, our group focused on the ways history found itself expressed in video games. Then we used this knowledge to study specific examples and survey typical gamers—our intent was to find out what was considered a good game, and what components were needed to make one. As the capstone of our project, combining the knowledge from these terms seemed a logical avenue. It was decided that a video game showcasing elements from our individual research was the most logical culmination, and in addition the tangible interface to our research it provided might be useful as a showcase.

We considered what we had learned from applying our criteria to games, and the resources that we had inside our group. It was decided that a short game was the most feasible, and as we had all studied the games provided on the BBC website we immediately focused on the possibility of a web applet. To make use of our individual research, we decided that an educational management simulator based on a real historical event would be an ideal choice. After determining the format of the game, we decided that of the choices available to us the crusaders' siege of Jerusalem in 1099 fit many of the criteria for pacing and enjoyable gameplay that we required. We divided our tasks such that the majority of programming responsibility centered on Gayle, while Justin (Guenyin) researched the historical background of our game and Sean determined the overall design.

Historical Background

The Crusades, in many ways, were a time of sweeping change in Europe. They not only ended Europe's isolation resulting from the Dark Ages but also were the beginning of the end of Europe's feudal system (although feudalism would still endure for another 300 years after the end of the First Crusade). This was due to the Crusades opening trade with Asia and creating towns which very gradually displaced manors as the main source of work and income for the people of Europe. The process was to start, however, not from motives of profit, but from motives of power. The Roman Catholic Church, having dominated life in 11th century Europe, sought to gain a more firm dominance over the European powers²³. At the time, the countries of Europe were in a state of chaos and plagued by ceaseless violent conflict over power and land. Pope Urban II, leader of the Roman Catholic Church, then made a speech at the Council of Clermont calling all upon the major European powers to unite and assemble an army to retake the Holy Land of Jerusalem from the Saracens (Fatimid Muslims) who had occupied it²⁴.

Major Powers of the Crusades

The major European powers during the Crusades included France, The Holy Roman Empire (Germany), the Papal states (present-day Rome and surrounding countryside), and Italy (the parts of Italy excluding the Papal states; mainly the southern part of present-day Italy)²⁵. Allied (although very loosely) with the Crusaders was the Byzantine Empire (present-day Greece and Macedonia), who despite giving aid in the beginning ultimately betrayed them²⁶. Opposing the Crusaders were the Fatimids (Muslims of North Africa, particularly Egypt, who occupied

²³ Cox, George W. pages 32-33

²⁴ Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade>

²⁵ Riley-Smith, Jonathan. page 21

²⁶ Runciman, Steven. pages 180-181

Jerusalem itself) and the Seljuk Turks (a loose alliance of independent Muslim tribes that controlled different areas of present-day Turkey and Syria)²⁷.

Important Cities in the Middle East

Several cities along the way to the Holy Land were important objectives the Crusaders took. Occupied by the Seljuk Turks and the North African Fatimids, these cities protected the Holy Land and also became part of the Crusaders' supply line after they were taken. The most important ones were Nicaea, Dorylaeum, Edessa, Antioch, Arqa, and of course, Jerusalem itself, which was the final objective²⁸. The target cities were chosen for their value and their position (i.e. whether or not seizing them would give the crusaders a military advantage). In some cases, such as Edessa, the city was taken because of the greed of one of the crusader commanders, for the city's land and wealth. Edessa was taken because one of the commanders, Baldwin of Boulogne, had lost his wealth due to the death of his wife, (who died on the journey to the Holy Land). Having lost his wife's wealth, he ventured to capture his own wealth in the Holy Land, and Edessa was an easy target²⁹. It not only provided Baldwin with the wealth he wanted, but help to supply his army as well.

The crusaders took different routes to Constantinople (since they came from different lands), but united on a long and difficult path through the Holy Land as a group (With a few exceptions, namely Baldwin's army diverting to Edessa to take it over). (See below map for the crusaders' routes). The route the Crusaders took was to take them through modern-day Turkey

²⁷ Historical Atlas: Europe and Mediterranean Lands about 1097

²⁸ Cox, George W. pages 57-74

²⁹ Knox, Ellis L. (A) <http://history.boisestate.edu/westciv/crusades/index.shtml>

(cities of Nicaea, Dorylaeum, and the Armenian city of Edessa), to Syria (the cities of Antioch and Arqa), and finally to Palestine (modern-day Israel, which contained Jerusalem itself)³⁰.



³⁰ Historical Atlas: Europe and Mediterranean Lands about 1097

The Crusader Army

The Crusaders consisted of several different classes of people. They included the knights (led by the European barons), hailing from France, the Papal states (Italy), and the Holy Roman Empire, as well as the duchy of Normandy, ruled by the Norman kings of England; the poor, who accompanied the knights on the Crusade seeking redemption in the Holy Land as well as escaping boredom in their homes (many of these poor were convicts hoping to get forgiven in the Holy Land); and finally impoverished knights of Europe seeking to build their fortunes in the Holy Land³¹. The noblemen army (The army under direct command of the barons) consisted of about 27,000 men total. This group consisted of 7000 knights and 20,000 foot soldiers, all of whom were recruited by the barons (in other words, the 27,000 men consisted of the combined total of all the barons' personal armies, from their respective lands in Europe)³². The foot soldiers included spearmen armed with short lances, archers on foot, servants, auxiliaries, common soldiers armed with clubs and daggers, and engineers and technicians that worked on siege engines; these soldiers in turn also had servants with them who were helpful in running the Crusaders' camps and in siege operations³³. The poor (the "*paupere*" soldiers) consisted of many groups, including peasants who followed the knights, convicts, and the "Tafurs" which were a large group of peasants and poor knights, led by Peter the Hermit³⁴. Most of these men had no more than the clothes on their back and an old weapon³⁵. The Crusader army had a beginning total of around 60,000 men, mostly consisting of the poor, who numbered around 33,000- slightly larger than the noblemen-led army³⁶.

³¹ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. pages 83-85

³² Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. page 86 and Riley-Smith, Jonathan page 11

³³ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. page 86

³⁴ Lamb, Harold. page 63

³⁵ Lamb, Harold. pages 63-65.

³⁶ Runciman, Steven. page 169

Leaders of the Crusaders

The Crusaders' noblemen leaders were numerous, and the most important ones were: Raymond of Toulouse, papal legate Adhemar of Le Puy, Bohemund of Taranto and his nephew Tancred, brothers Godfrey of Bouillon, Eustace, and Baldwin of Boulogne, Robert of Flanders, Robert of Normandy, Stephen, Count of Blois, Hugh of Vermandois, and Peter the Hermit (who wasn't a noblemen but was very important because he led the poor, which was the largest group in the army)³⁷. Raymond of Toulouse, Robert of Flanders, Robert of Normandy, Stephen, Count of Blois, and Hugh of Vermandois represented different regions of France (Raymond was from Provence, the rest were from Northern France), brothers Godfrey of Bouillon, Eustace, and Baldwin of Boulogne represented the Lorrainers of the Holy Roman Empire, and Bohemund of Taranto and his nephew Tancred represented the Normans of southern Italy³⁸. Accompanying Raymond of Toulouse was the papal legate Adhemar of Le Puy, representative of the Pope³⁹. Peter the Hermit, who was from Amiens, France, was a charismatic monk and orator who led the poor part of the Crusader army, and was responsible for their well being⁴⁰.

The Muslim Armies

Opposing the Crusaders was the Muslim armies of the Seljuk Turks and the Fatimids consisting of thousands of soldiers armed with javelins, swords, battle axes, and maces; mounted archers, archers on foot, and long range "foot-bow" archers, as well as spearmen on foot and engineers⁴¹. The Muslim armies' specialties were their archers, as their mounted archers and long-range foot-bow archers decimated Crusader forces every time they engaged the Crusaders

³⁷ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. page 86

³⁸ Riley-Smith, Jonathan pages 21-23

³⁹ Grousset, Rene. Translated from French by Noel Lindsay. pages 16-17

⁴⁰ Lamb, Harold. page 63

⁴¹ Runciman, Steven. pages 185-186 and http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/isaa/hd_isaa.htm

in battle⁴². Their foot-bow archers were unique as they used a long-range giant bow that they propelled using their feet as leverage. This resulted in the ability for the archers to do long-range barrages that destroyed many Crusader formations long before the Crusaders could even start engaging the Muslim armies⁴³.

The numbers of the Muslim armies varied. At the first major battle between the crusaders and the Seljuk Turks, Dorylaeum, the crusaders faced an army numbering in the tens of thousands⁴⁴. The siege of Antioch also pitted tens of thousands of Muslim armies against the crusaders, the city of Antioch had a relatively small number of troops compared to the crusaders; but the relief army consisting of Seljuk Turkish, Fatimid, Persian (Modern-day Iranian), and Mesopotamian (Ortuqids, Turks living in present-day Northern Iraq) troops, numbered in the tens of thousands⁴⁵. The Fatimid garrison that protected Jerusalem numbered around 1000 men, consisting of Arab and Sudanese troops⁴⁶, and the relief army sent by the Fatimids to break the Jerusalem siege numbered around 50,000- five times the number of troops the crusaders had⁴⁷.

Of the two ethnic factions, the Seljuk Turks had far better armies, but the Turks as a whole were split into independent factions that quarreled and fought each other so as to render them ineffective in destroying the invading crusaders, which they were certainly more than capable of doing⁴⁸. When battling the crusaders, the Seljuk Turks demonstrated great organization and military strategy and technology, as in the battle of Dorylaeum which the Seljuk Turks used archers to great effect⁴⁹. However, their disunity made them ineffective, as evidenced by the battle of Antioch when one of the major Seljuk Turk commanders, Duqaq,

⁴² Lamb, Harold. page 124

⁴³ Lamb, Harold. page 127

⁴⁴ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. page 90

⁴⁵ Riley-Smith, Jonathan page 29

⁴⁶ Runciman, Steven. page 279

⁴⁷ Grousset, Rene. Translated from French by Noel Lindsay. page 33

⁴⁸ Lamb, Harold. page 128 and Knox, Ellis L. (B) <http://crusades.boisestate.edu/Islam/>

⁴⁹ Lamb, Harold. page 127

deserted the main Seljuk Turk army battling the crusaders outside Antioch⁵⁰. The Fatimid armies were more united amongst each other, but poorly organized and therefore not as powerful. This was evidenced by the Battle of Ascalon, in which the Fatimid relief army, on its way to Jerusalem to break the siege, was crushed and forced to retreat due to poor organization and resulting panic, despite the fact that the Fatimid relief army was five times the size of the attacking crusaders⁵¹.

Muslim Army Leaders

Commanding the Muslim armies were numerous Seljuk Turkish and Fatimid Muslim sultans who commanded independent regions throughout the Middle East. Most Seljuk Turks commanded independent lands based around cities, such as Nicaea, Dorylaeum, and Antioch. A stronger alliance once existed among the Seljuk Turks, but this alliance was broken upon the arrival of the crusaders; the independent tribes of Seljuk Turks scrambled instead to guard their own territories rather than uniting to fight the crusaders together⁵². One major Muslim commander was the Seljuk Turkish sultan Kilij Arslan I, who was the Sultan of Nicaea. He lost his capital city to the Byzantines and fought them in one of the First Crusade's first major battles, Dorylaeum⁵³. Other major leaders included Antioch commanders Yaghi-Siyan and Kirbogha⁵⁴, both Seljuk Turks, and the Fatimid ruler of Jerusalem, Iftikhar ad-Dwala⁵⁵.

⁵⁰ Runciman, Steven. page 248

⁵¹ Grousset, Rene. Translated from French by Noel Lindsay. page 33

⁵² Knox, Ellis L. (B) <http://crusades.boisestate.edu/Islam/>

⁵³ Hillenbrand, Carole. page 56

⁵⁴ Hillenbrand, Carole. page 56

⁵⁵ Runciman, Steven. page 279

Precursor Battles to Jerusalem

The crusaders' campaign began in Constantinople in the end of April, 1097 AD⁵⁶, where the 60,000-man army assembled for the first time. The crusaders made a deal with the rulers of Constantinople, the Byzantine Empire: in exchange for food and supplies, the crusaders would pledge loyalty to the Byzantine Empire and to give back Byzantine lands, occupied by the Seljuk Turks, after the crusaders had taken them⁵⁷.

Despite the initial help, the Byzantines soon showed their true colors when reaching the first objective city, Nicaea, on May 14th, 1097. Through a secret agreement with the city's rulers, the Byzantines trailing the crusaders were able to take over the city without a fight on June 19th, 1097. The Byzantines did not allow the crusaders to plunder the city nor go inside it without escort. This betrayal separated the two sides and the crusaders never trusted the Byzantines again⁵⁸.

The next major battle for the crusaders was Dorylaeum on July 1, 1097, which was fought against the ruler of a Seljuk Turk tribe whose capital, Nicaea, was taken in part due to the actions of the crusaders; his name was Kiliç Arslan. With revenge in mind, Kiliç ambushed the crusader army at Dorylaeum, but was unable to break the crusader lines. A surprise charge led by Godfrey swept the Seljuk Turk lines and captured their camp. Kiliç was forced to retreat⁵⁹.

After this major battle, the crusaders marched through the rest of present-day Turkey virtually unopposed. However, the journey was not pleasant by any means. The crusaders faced

⁵⁶ Martin, Robert W. <http://militaryhistory.about.com/library/lists/blcrusadestimelinefirst.htm>

⁵⁷ Cox, George W. page 51

⁵⁸ Runciman, Steven. pages 180-181

⁵⁹ Grousset, Rene. Translated from French by Noel Lindsay. pages 18-19

hardship, starvation, and thirst. Many of the crusaders died along the way to Jerusalem, and the crusaders looted and pillaged in order to receive necessary food and to slake their greed⁶⁰.

Edessa, an Armenian city, was the next to be taken, except that this one was taken by Baldwin of Boulogne alone. Since Baldwin had lost his wife's wealth as a result of her death, he sought to conquer and plunder land to gain his own wealth. He traveled to Edessa where he was eventually adopted as the heir to the throne of Edessa by Edessa's king. Soon after the King of Edessa was assassinated, Baldwin assumed the throne in March 1098. Baldwin remained in Edessa for the rest of the First Crusade with his army, assisting the crusaders with money and food but no direct action⁶¹.

On October 20th, 1097 the crusaders faced one of the biggest obstacles along the rest of the path to Jerusalem- the massive fortified city of Antioch. Antioch was so large that the crusaders were unable to completely surround it, causing the resulting siege to last 8 months⁶². During the arduous siege, the city expelled its Christian inhabitants, thinking they would help the crusaders⁶³. Meanwhile, the crusaders were ravaged with disease and starvation and were frustrated⁶⁴. Finally, Bohemund of Taranto secured and bribed a traitor in the city, who was in charge of guarding the gates. The traitor allowed the crusaders to infiltrate the city via ladders, open the gates, and let in the rest of the crusaders. The crusaders proceeded to slaughter the entire population of Antioch indiscriminately. By June 3, 1098, the Crusaders controlled the city⁶⁵.

⁶⁰ Lamb, Harold. pages 136-147

⁶¹ Runciman, Steven pages 202-212

⁶² Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade>

⁶³ Runciman, Steven page 214

⁶⁴ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. pages 104-105

⁶⁵ Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade>

A few days after, a combined army of Fatimid and Seljuk Turkish Muslims arrived at Antioch, besieging the crusaders in the city⁶⁶. The crusaders' morale lowered significantly, and panic was about to ensue within the ranks. It was at this point that a lowly monk named Peter Bartholomew claimed to have found the Holy Lance, the spear that stabbed Jesus Christ in the side, and that it was a sign of impending victory⁶⁷. On June 28th, 1098, the crusaders then mounted a tremendous offensive and broke the invading army, assisted by the disorganization and disunity of the invading Muslims, as the Fatimids abandoned the Seljuk Turks, fearing they would become too powerful if the crusaders were defeated; adding to this was the desertion of Duqaq, commander of a major part of the Seljuk Turkish army, which did not help things either⁶⁸. The remaining Muslim army then retreated. The crusader commander Bohemund then claimed the city of Antioch for himself⁶⁹.

Siege of Jerusalem

The crusaders then fought a relatively minor action at Arqa, with no success, before reaching Jerusalem itself on June 7, 1099⁷⁰. At this point, the crusaders had only around 1,500 knights and 12,000 healthy foot soldiers left, out of the beginning count of 7000 knights and 20,000 foot soldiers⁷¹. The city of Jerusalem was itself well-prepared and provisioned, and the Fatimid ruler of the city, Iftikhar ad-Dawla, expelled the city's Christians, drove away livestock, filling and poisoning the wells outside Jerusalem, and razed the surrounding land of trees and foliage⁷². The crusaders set up camp on the northern and western sides of the city; with

⁶⁶ Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade>

⁶⁷ Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade>

⁶⁸ Runciman, Steven. page 248

⁶⁹ Grousset, Rene. Translated from French by Noel Lindsay. pages 27-28

⁷⁰ Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade>

⁷¹ Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade>

⁷² Runciman, Steven. pages 279-281

Godfrey's army on the north side and Raymond's army on the west side, not having enough troops to encircle it completely⁷³.

An assault was made on the walls on June 13, which resulted in failure⁷⁴. Throughout the whole siege, every single assault made upon the walls with ladders resulted in repulsion and failure. The crusaders' water and food were running out fast, as there was little of either surrounding Jerusalem due to the razing of the surrounding land, and time was getting short for the crusaders⁷⁵. A few weeks later, around the end of June/beginning of July, wood from Samaria arrived from a group of Genoese that were forced inland by the Fatimid fleet, allowing the crusaders to build a massive siege tower to assault the walls⁷⁶. Tancred also found hidden in a cave a large supply of timber that the Muslims tried to hide, allowing the crusaders to build another siege tower⁷⁷. The crusaders then regained their morale after a three-day fast and barefoot procession march around the city, which they were instructed to go on by a priest named Peter Desiderius, who claimed a divine vision said that the city will fall if they had done this. The crusaders began the fast on July 8th, although they were already starving, and began the procession afterwards⁷⁸.

On the night of July 14, the siege towers were prepared, and were rolled up to the walls for the final assault⁷⁹. Throughout the night, the towers were pummeled with arrows and flaming projectiles, resulting in Raymond of Toulouse's tower (which was slowed down by a ditch) being destroyed after being hit by firepots and flaming arrows⁸⁰. On the morning of July 15th,

⁷³ Runciman, Steven. page 280

⁷⁴ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. page 134

⁷⁵ Lamb, Harold. pages 222-225

⁷⁶ Grousset, Rene. Translated from French by Noel Lindsay. pages 29-30

⁷⁷ <http://www.taoc.co.uk/>

⁷⁸ Halsall, Paul. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html#The%20First%20Crusade> and Runciman, Steven. page 284

⁷⁹ Runciman, Steven. page 285

⁸⁰ Runciman, Steven. page 285

Godfrey's siege tower, under cover of catapult fire, breached the walls at a weak point near the northeast corner gate, and the crusaders poured past the city's outer wall⁸¹. As soon as the wall was breached, the defenders of the gates on Raymond's side surrendered and the crusaders swept through the city of Jerusalem, indiscriminately slaughtering every single inhabitant inside, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian alike⁸². The only ones who made it out of Jerusalem alive were the Fatimid governor, Iftikhar ad-Dawla, and his bodyguards, who were spared after a negotiation between him and Raymond⁸³. Following crusader victory, Godfrey was named *Advocatus Sancti Sepulchri* (Advocate (Defender) of the Holy Sepulchre) on July 22nd (essentially leader of Jerusalem)⁸⁴. Godfrey then led an army out on August 12, 1099 from Jerusalem to Ascalon to intercept the relief Fatimid army that was sent to break the Jerusalem siege. The massive Fatimid relief army, caught off guard, unprepared and disorganized; panicked and retreated back to Ascalon. This was considered to be the last great action of the First Crusade. After this battle, most of the crusaders went home⁸⁵.

Siege Warfare

Siege tactics- Attackers

Basic siege tactics and weapons of invading armies started with the destruction of all buildings, villages, and towns around the fortification. Then the invaders proceeded to surround the fortification, or if the fortification were too large, they would block the main gates, as mentioned earlier in the paper. Surrounding a fortification allowed defenders of a castle to be

⁸¹ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. page 136

⁸² Lamb, Harold. pages 235-237

⁸³ Runciman, Steven. page 286

⁸⁴ Grousset, Rene. Translated from French by Noel Lindsay. page 32

⁸⁵ Oldenbourg, Zoe. Translated by Anne Carter. pages 152-153

starved out if necessary⁸⁶. The invading armies might then proceed to storm the fortification walls with ladders to try to end the siege (which was often useless since most walls were too strong)⁸⁷. A lengthier siege would have had the invaders set up siege engines, such as catapults and towers, and begin bombarding the walls with stones⁸⁸. If the castle had a moat, the moat could be filled in using bundles of hay to reach the walls⁸⁹. The invaders then attempted to breach the walls, using covered battering rams to knock a hole in the wall or gates⁹⁰. The invaders also tried to attempt to mine underneath fortification walls to destroy foundation and thereby collapse part of the wall⁹¹. Disease could be introduced into the city or castle by catapulting dead bodies of animals or people, especially those who died of disease, over the walls of the castle or city and into the castle or city itself⁹².

Siege towers could also have been prepared, sometimes as a last resort, to breach and storm the walls more effectively. Siege towers were large towers made of wood and covered with wet animal hides or metal to protect from fire and projectiles such as stones, arrows, and firepots. Such towers were used to allow troops to enter fortifications with less risk than using ladders⁹³.

However, by far the easiest way to invade a castle was to have a traitor let you in, which might be done by bribing a gate guard or swaying an enemy dissenter, as was done during the

⁸⁶ Warner, Philip. page 32

⁸⁷ Warner, Philip. page 26

⁸⁸ Warner, Philip. pages 29-31

⁸⁹ Biesty, Stephen page 4

⁹⁰ France, John. page 116

⁹¹ Warner, Philip. page 23

⁹² Warner, Philip. page 30

⁹³ France, John. page 117

siege of Antioch during the First Crusade⁹⁴. If the castle would be ultimately unassailable, a formal agreement, (a peace treaty, essentially) could end the siege peacefully⁹⁵.

Siege tactics- Defenders

The defenders of a castle typically began by evacuating nearby surrounding peasantry, animals, and burned excess crops and filled in/poisoned wells to prevent them from falling into enemy hands, as was done in the precursors to the Siege of Jerusalem⁹⁶. Food was stockpiled in the fortress from the surrounding lands to guard against starvation by the invading army⁹⁷. The defenders had archers at the battlements (tops of towers) and walls of the castle; and a constant rain of arrows was brought to bear on the invaders⁹⁸. To repel ladders and climbers, the defenders pushed them off using forked sticks, in addition to using pots of hot oil, hot sand, melted lead, or quicklime, to pour on climbers and burn them⁹⁹.

The defenders could defeat covered battering rams by pouring hot oil on them and setting them on fire, which burned the operators of the ram to death¹⁰⁰. The defenders could also hook the ram's roof with a grappling hook and flip it over, rendering it useless¹⁰¹. The grappling hook can also be used to catch the head of the ram, and when the ram's head was pulled up, the battering ram will stop functioning. Another battering ram defense involved using ropes to lower a mattress or a large, soft bag of hay in front of the battering ram's head to cushion the blows¹⁰².

⁹⁴ France, John. page 109

⁹⁵ France, John. page 104

⁹⁶ Lamb, Harold. page 222

⁹⁷ Warner, Philip. page 33

⁹⁸ Warner, Philip. pages 16-17 and page 19

⁹⁹ Warner, Philip. pages 28 and 40

¹⁰⁰ Warner, Philip. page 28

¹⁰¹ Biesty, Stephen page 11

¹⁰² Warner, Philip. page 29

Mining could be defeated by one of two ways. If mining could be detected early, before they can make significant progress, archers could kill the would-be miners¹⁰³. If the mining was detected after the attackers had made progress, a countermine could have been dug by the defenders to intercept the enemy mine, leading to the defenders fighting the attackers in a fierce underground battle¹⁰⁴. Mining in progress was usually detected by placing a bowl of water on the floor of the castle, and looking for ripples in the water. The ripples indicate mining activity¹⁰⁵.

During the siege, the defenders could prevent disease by burning their dead, as well as any dead animals and people the attacking army might throw into their fortress using mangonels and trebuchets¹⁰⁶.

Even siege towers could even be defeated, if the defenders had the right equipment. Siege towers could be destroyed or disabled from a long distance if the defenders had catapults or trebuchets. Siege towers could also be set on fire if the defender managed to set the inside of a siege tower on fire with a firepot or torch¹⁰⁷. Siege towers could even be pulled down, using ropes and grappling hooks, which, with the other end of the rope pulled by a large team of men or a counterweight, can pull the siege tower to the ground¹⁰⁸.

Finally, another defensive tactic would be a “sortie”. This involved a small group of knights from a defending castle who would ride out from a small, often hidden door called a “sally port”. The knights would then ride out and through the besiegers’ ranks, killing catapult and trebuchet operators, soldiers, enemy laborers, even commanders, in the style of a raid¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰³ Warner, Philip. page 23

¹⁰⁴ Warner, Philip. page 23

¹⁰⁵ Warner, Philip. page 26

¹⁰⁶ Warner, Philip. pages 29 and 30

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.taoc.co.uk/>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.thehistorynet.com/mh/bltakingjerusalem/index2.html>

¹⁰⁹ Warner, Philip. page 93

Siege weapons

Siege weapons of the invaders included: the Battering Ram, the Siege Tower, the Mangonel (short trajectory catapult), the Trebuchet (large trajectory catapult with huge throwing arm, throws much heavier projectiles than mangonel), and the Ballista (giant crossbow, shooting large spears)

The defenders could generally use the same siege engines as the invaders (i.e. mangonels, trebuchets, and ballistae) except of course the battering ram, in addition to firepots, fire arrows, and pots of oil, sulfur, pitch, or quicklime to pour on invaders and burn them to death¹¹⁰.

Famous Sieges in the Middle Ages

Throughout the Middle Ages, numerous sieges of castles, fortifications, and cities took place, confirming the devastating effectiveness of every one of the above mentioned siege tactics. All things were possible during a siege, and especially in the Crusades, the besiegers often gave no quarter. Outstanding examples of sieges included: the siege of Rochester Castle, the siege of Dover Castle, the siege of Kenilworth castle, and several sieges during the Crusades- the cities of Nicaea, Antioch, and the castle Krak des Chevaliers.

The siege of Rochester was one of a small number of cases in which the garrison defeated by starvation. In September 1215 AD, King John of England, who had been fighting rebellious knights during the fall, trapped and surrounded a rebel army consisting of 100 knights, as well as crossbowmen and men-at-arms. The rebel goal was to use the castle as a barricade to prevent King John from being able to retreat to London. The castle was not well supplied when the rebels captured it, however, and with little time to prepare for the siege, despite Rochester

¹¹⁰ Warner, Philip. page 28

Castle's strength, the rebels completely ran out of food, and were forced to surrender to King John after holding out for 8 weeks¹¹¹.

The siege of Dover Castle ended with a truce, and was an example of a castle that held firm against a siege. In 1216, the rebel forces fighting King John invited Louis VIII a French prince, to take the English crown from King John. Louis had already captured Canterbury, Rochester, and London, and besieged the forces of King John in Dover, under Hubert De Burgh, on July 19th, 1216. Louis then laid an arduous siege, eventually successfully mining underneath and toppling the gate, but was stopped at the breach by De Burgh's men, who blocked the breach with timbers. A great supply of food kept the army within Dover Castle from starving, and the siege was called off after a few months as Louis, having suffered defeats because of too much allocating of resources to the siege of Dover, gave up his claim on the throne of England¹¹².

The siege of Kenilworth was a slightly similar situation to Dover, despite being in a different war 50 years later, in 1266. However, the siege of Kenilworth was also the longest in the history of England, lasting almost one year. Lord Edward encircled the castle and laid a long siege. Excellent supplies and defenses proved effective in holding off Edward's soldiers, despite Edward attacking the weak north wall. The north wall was defended only by a double moat, but it proved to be very effective, despite the use of large siege towers, barge attacks, and constant bombardment. Finally, a formal agreement was reached, and a treaty called the Dictum of Kenilworth was signed to end the long siege¹¹³.

The sieges of Nicaea and Antioch (ending in 1097 and 1098, respectively), which were summarized earlier in the paper, both took place during the First Crusade. Nicaea was taken through a treacherous secret agreement between the Byzantines and the occupying Seljuk Turks.

¹¹¹ Deem, James. <http://64.227.44.238/castlestory2.htm>

¹¹² Warner, Philip. page 138 and France, John. pages 116-117

¹¹³ France, John. page 104

Antioch was taken through the use of a traitor who relaxed the defenses during the night, allowing Antioch to be taken easily.

The siege of the castle Krak des Chevaliers was an interesting one. Krak was a massive castle originally built for the emir of Aleppo, in modern-day Syria. The castle was then placed in the hands of the crusader order of the Knights Hospitallers, who expanded the castle to make it the largest crusader fortress in the Holy Land, with an outer defense consisting of seven guard towers and a thick outer wall, all standing 2300 feet above sea level. The strength of the castle, in addition to the defenses, the concentric design, and the massive storage facilities dug into the cliff under the fortress (allowing the Hospitallers to store enough supplies in to withstand a siege for almost 5 years), made Krak des Chevaliers virtually impregnable by any ordinary means. The castle did, indeed, survive numerous attempts to take it- twelve attempts were made to besiege and storm the castle, but to no avail. Finally, in April 8th, 1271 AD, Krak des Chevaliers was taken through trickery after a lengthy siege by the Fatimid commander Baibers. The tired and battle weary crusaders received a forged letter sent by Baibers, supposedly from the Count of Tripoli, the Hospitallers' grand master, with instructions to surrender. The Hospitallers, having been either tired of fighting or believing the letter to be genuine, surrendered and were allowed to march out of Krak des Chevaliers unharmed¹¹⁴.

¹¹⁴ Husn, Qalaat A. <http://www.syriagate.com/Syria/about/cities/Homs/krakdeschevalier.htm>

GAME DESIGN

Preliminary Setup: June 6, 1099

The Historical Period for the Siege: June 7, 1099 – July 15, 1099

Gameplay

- Gameplay will take place as a series of day long events
- Decisions as to the course of action to be taken will take place as a single decision session at the beginning of each day
- The player must decide the best course of action to take for the day and what products to create.

Preparation

- The Player is allowed 1 turn before the Crusading army arrives
- An advisor will instruct new players to raze the land and chase away livestock and other food sources. It is in the player's best interest to do so.
- The player may begin construction during this turn.

Morale

- The Player will start with higher than average morale
 - Good morale counts towards the final score
- Morale is affected by the decisions of the player during events.

Resources

- Resources are the visible equivalent of “money” for a player, resources are consumed by events and during item creation.
- The player will start with 2000 food units.
- The player will start with 3000 wood units.
- The player will start with 200 units of oil

Items

- Items are a form of investment for the player. They consume resources to create but are worth more in final score calculation.
- Player may only start creation of one of each item type at a time. If player is currently making an item, attempting to create another will have no effect.
- Some events may destroy items directly.

People

- Every 5000 people (rounded down) will require 5 food units a day. There are 50,000 people in the city to begin. Running out of food units ends the game.

Events

- Events happen randomly, at the beginning of a turn. The player is presented with a decision that may affect the score directly, or through population/morale/resource scores.
- The advisor may be consulted to give the player a hint of what path to take in a civil event

- The scout may be consulted to give the player a hint in battle events.
- Some days (especially at the beginning of gameplay) may have no events.
-

Game Mechanics

The primary concern of any web-based entertainment application is scale. A user playing a mini-game is not looking for a sprawling, multi-hour experience. In the construction of **Hold Jerusalem**, I tried to keep in mind a small scale at all times. Through time steps in the order of single days, with most days having an event occurring, the game pace adheres to this scale. Simplicity is another key concern, as this game has been produced in a relatively short development cycle and with a programming team of one. For this reason I chose as my language of implementation Macromedia Flash, which is a multimedia animation program with scripting that allows for game play construction. The decision to use Flash did add some overhead to game construction, as I was not wholly familiar with the language and needed some time to relearn basic concepts and expand into advanced ones.

The basic flow of the game has been described in the preceding game design section. The events chosen follow a somewhat random pattern. The pattern is not completely random because certain events are triggered by different subsets of the score or game timer—certain days such as July 8th and July 15th have consistent story events every play-through. In general, the earlier in the game the player is, the fewer events will be encountered each day, and the less severe events will be when triggered. As score increases or decreases, the range and frequency of events selected increases. This provides the game's primitive difficulty scaling.

Each event carries with it two subset events—the advisor event and the scout event. These events are triggered by the player by pressing the corresponding interface buttons. In civil

(populace) events, the advisor will give a hint as to the decision the player should choose. The scout fulfills the same role for battle events.

Score is computed in many ways. Individually, scores like morale and food may be added to and subtracted from directly. As mentioned before, when a resource is consumed to produce a siege item the resource counts for more in the final score. The final score factors in all sub-scores and the decision made at the final event described below.

There are only two ways for the game to end prematurely. One is for the entire population to perish, which is very hard to accomplish even if one deliberately selects towards bad decisions in events. The other way, somewhat more likely, is for the city to run out of food. The food score is automatically deducted when the turn is changing, and if it falls below 0 the game ends instead of proceeding to the next event. If neither of these events is encountered, the player receives an event on July 15th that figures heavily into the final score. Unless the player has been doing very well, much of the final score rests on the decision made on this day. A player who chooses incorrectly but had a score in the “moderate” range, or chose correctly but had a score too low to win receives a losing ending in which the correct decision is explained (“only one siege tower is destroyed”). A player who chose incorrectly and had a low score receives the general “lose” ending, and a player with a good score who chose correctly is presented with the win. Regardless of ending, all players are informed of the real historical ending of the siege and returned to the introduction screen. It is our hope that the random occurrence of events increases the replay value of the game. The introduction to the game is in Appendix B, typical game screens may be found in Appendix C.

As a final judge of the structure of our game, we apply to it the same criteria which to which we held its inspirations during the previous term.

General information

Name: Hold Jerusalem
Publisher: JLS-0052 IQP Students
Year published: 2006
Platform: PC
Genre: Management Simulation

Summary

Player takes the role of the commander in charge of defending Jerusalem from the attacks of the Crusaders during the time of the Siege of Jerusalem. Player must manage resources to withstand the siege successfully.

Historical accuracy.

- How have events been altered or fabricated for the purpose of entertainment?
The real Siege of Jerusalem ended with the city being sacked in a famous bloodbath. In the game, the player has the possibility of winning against the besiegers.
- Have important events been left out entirely?
Events have been shortened in duration (the barefoot procession) or moved in date to fit the time span of the game
- Is the aim of the game to reproduce a historical event, or a simply a time period? Is it accurate in neither sense?
The time period is reproduced somewhat accurately, with the most accuracy being found in the information pertaining to siege warfare. The events of the siege, though condensed, are fairly well reproduced.

Ludological/Narratological content

- How are the concepts of ludology expressed in the game?
There is not a strong ludological component to the game. Score influences the final event and random event selection, but not in a manner visible to the player.
- How does the game demonstrate concepts of narratology?
The game not only tells the story through events as they occur, but through explanation in the introduction and introductory materials, and a primary source referenced in the conclusion of the game.

Intent

- Is the intent of the game purely commercial, or does it have some application to real life activities? Is it intended to be educational?
The game is academically produced and is entirely for educational purposes.

Replay value

- Would there be a purpose to playing over again?
Event selection is random, so no two playthroughs are exactly alike. However, the game is fairly simple and playthroughs will be similar after a few repetitions.

Fun

- Is it entertaining enough to keep a player interested?
The game is short enough to provide a fast-paced game, and the historical content is presented in a brief manner.
- If so, what about it is entertaining: story, history, or character development?
The element of chance in story flow provides much of the entertainment

Availability

- How hard is it to find this game?
This game is available publicly online.
- How old is the game?
This game is still in release candidacy.

Conclusion

Our team was begun from a point of relative unfamiliarity, as it was not self-formed. During the PQP we refined our topic and lost two team members. As a result, the main work of our project was divided into three focused activities, each corresponding to a term of the project duration. In B Term, each member of the group produced a written body of work on a subject within the catch-all of “historical gaming”. With one exception (and the loss of two members from A Term), the group completed our work. The written term serves as the backbone of the final produced project, and a good introduction to the goals we tried to accomplish in making our game. In C Term the group selected games we had encountered in our research that we believed were good representations of our chosen genres as a whole, then wrote a template for criteria by which to express key features of each game. In retrospect, this template could have been more focused, and it led to a corresponding lack of focus in this term’s work. We also conducted a survey of gamers to determine what parts of a game (historical or otherwise) they focused on in terms of quality, in preparation for Term D. In D term, we were attempting to construct a small game based on a historical event that fulfilled some of the criteria for a “good” game we had collected. Our main challenge in this term was the concentration of programming knowledge in one person in the group, thus making progress somewhat uneven. As well, Sean chose this term to leave the project group, which set the pace of our work back.

In terms of extension, in some manners our work has extended itself. Sean’s research into modeling simulators led to the game we are producing in Term D, which seems a logical extension. A future IQP group might bring more focus on to one of the other two research areas. For example, a group might choose to explore more deeply the educational uses of historical gaming, perhaps producing an educational game or working with Worcester schools to make a

short game-enhanced curriculum around a specific event. A group more interested in Justin's work might instead turn their focus outwards, comparing the applications of narrative and game theory in video games with those in more established fields such as film and literature. This would also mean an expansion on the evaluation work in Term C.

Were we to attempt this project again, we might make minor changes to the schedule. While Term B was the logical place to begin intensive research work, leaving the creation of the historical game till Term D resulted in an undue amount of stress and an uncertain deadline. Since game planning pre-production did not take a significant amount of time, in a future project it might be wiser to create the game in Term C, leaving the less intensive work of criteria and survey for Term D when the project is concluding. This way a superior game might be more assured.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

PS2, GameCube, PS1, PC

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

FPS, action, occasional rpg

How many hours/week do you play video games?

Very few, stupid school

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

0

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Vagely to very familiar

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

yes

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

not specifically

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

no

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

I assume you mean historical accuracy. Its not important unless it is a game like call of duty, like if the germans suddenly won or something.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Story and game play

General

What consoles/platforms do you own?
PC, PS2, GC, XBOX, GBA

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?
Role-playing, Sports, Rhythm

How many hours/week do you play video games?
2-3 hours/week

Historical
How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?
1

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the
game(s) you play represents?
Slightly familiar, don't know many details

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a
game?
yes

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?
I'm neutral, if it's a fun game, I'll play it.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?
Not really, on occasion it has annoyed me though.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game
play/storyline/etc.?
No. Not at all.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?
Story and Gameplay are tied.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

Playstation 2, GameCube

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Sports, Action, RPG

How many hours/week do you play video games?

3-4

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

0

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

On a scale of 1-10, about a 7

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Yes, Battelfield 1942, Medal of Honor

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

I play what I think I would like, so no, I don't discriminate against certain historical games

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

No

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

More important

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Story

General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

NES, gameboy micro

I have access to (my boyfriend owns): xbox, ps2, psx, dreamcast, snes, genesis, master system, vectrex, n64, gameboy, gameboy sp, virtual boy, jaguar, 3do, gamecube

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

arcade games, rpgs

How many hours/week do you play video games?

0-1

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

0

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

fairly

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

no

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

no

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

no, but it can bug me

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

more important if the game is made to target an older audience

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

game play

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

-Just a PC.

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

-Strategy, some RPG

How many hours/week do you play video games?

-About 2 to 4.

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

-Three.

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

-Very.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

-Yes.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

-I'm a big fan of history, and alternate history, as subjects, so it makes the game more interesting.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

-Only if it's blatant, and the game purports to be historically accurate.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

-Game play is the most important. Accuracy just makes it more interesting.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

-Game play. In the end, great game play can carry a game with a poor story. The reverse is almost entirely untrue.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

Playstation 2, Xbox, Gamecube

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Action/Adventure, FPS, RTS

How many hours/week do you play video games?

10ish

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

2

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Pretty familiar

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Yes

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

Not that is related to history, more so related to the quality of the product regardless of time period.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

No, provided that it makes some kind of sense.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Less

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

First Game play, then story. The rest are just details.

General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

Gamecube, PS2, GBA, DS.

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Strategy, action, FPS.

How many hours/week do you play video games?

6

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

0 if you're referring to a game completely based around a historical event (like the game Gods and Generals). 1 if Resident Evil counts as 'historical basis' since it takes place in 1998 in the US.

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Again, if Resident evil counts, I'm pretty familiar with 1998.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

No.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

They have a tendency of sucking real bad. I can't recall one game that was based on a historical event that was worth spending more than 10 minutes on.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

No. If Metal Gear Solid 3 says the Cuban Missile Crisis was stopped when the Soviets got back a scientist so he could work on their nuclear tank program, that's not stopping me from playing the game.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Less important. I don't care if the writers still think the earth is flat, if the gameplay is amazing, that's all there is to it.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Game play. Everything else comes secondary. No one played Contra or Madden 2005. for their amazing storyline or historical context. It's about gameplay and nothing else. Story is just the icing on the cake.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

I own PC, Xbox, GameCube, NES, SNES

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Shooter, FPS to be exact. But I play sports and racing and others.

How many hours/week do you play video games?

When home, around 15, when at school around 4.

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

1, Call of Duty 2

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Pretty familiar, I know a good amount WWII.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

No, but the game itself gave me a better understanding of era, even if not totally accurate.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

No.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

Yes, but I usually won't know that unless someone tells me before hand or I find out while playing.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Less important because you play the game for fun, not the learning value.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Gameplay is #1, story is #2, sound is #3, graphics are #4, history is really not even in there

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

Playstation2, GBA

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Adventure, Action

How many hours/week do you play video games?

3-5

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

0

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Not very familiar

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

No

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

None of them interest me.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

No

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

No

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Game play

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

Nintendo 64, Game Cube, PS2, Gamy Boy Advance, PC

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Puzzle, strategy, RTS, Super Smash Bros.

How many hours/week do you play video games?

More than healthy, or about 20

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

None

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Well, other than playing fairly little of these games, I have a general understanding of their historical periods.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Nope

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

A good portion of historical games are FPS, and I don't personally like those

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

Not usually. I understand, say, a situation where you're playing a flight sim as, say, Germany. It's not any fun to blow yourself up to intentionally lose the war, just to be historically accurate.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Somewhat less important

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Story and game play are the biggest parts

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

Playstation 2, windows

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Fighting (soul caliber), Strategy (starcraft), FPS (doom), role playing (Final Fantasy)

How many hours/week do you play video games?

3 or fewer, on average

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

1

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Better than average (US citizen, wpi student... but certainly not better than average for a history major)

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

no

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

Historical games are, in my experience, insufficiently accurate. This neither encourages or discourages me from playing... but it forces me to treat them as 'games'

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

yes

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

The game industry has insufficient quality control and products are forced to market before complete all too regularly. I demand (in vain, naturally) both accuracy and good game play, a good storyline, etc. (For your purposes "equally important")

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

While this depends on the game, when the story of a game ties in well with its history and really enthralls / surprises me, that is the best part. Much as few books achieve this status, so too do few videogames transcend mediocre results. (Deus Ex, Thief, and System Shock 2 are all examples of this)

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

PS1, Xbox, PowerBookG4

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Uh. Halo, Bloodrayne(s), Morrowind, Gun, Call of Cthulu, Evil Dead. (I don't know if you want genre like movie genre, or something like shooter, platform, quest, puzzle... I like all of those too. 丷)

How many hours/week do you play video games?

3-4, cut back some. Used to be 10-12. (Darn grad school!)

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

Gun

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Somewhat familiar. Most games seem historically unembarrassing if not historically accurate.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Not particularly.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

I like video games to escape to another era, so I like historical games. A well done historical game, like Call of Cthulu, is a real pleasure. A silly game, like Bloodrayne, I appreciate for its gameplay and NOT its accuracy.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

No, but it's more refreshing if there ISN'T alien technology in WWII... or somesuch. I'd be more likely to buy the game vs rent it if it were more accurate.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

I'm largely story driven, but it depends on how seriously the game takes itself. Rocket packs in BloodRayne? (WWII?) Not likely, but fun. Enfields and Colts in Gun? still fun, and a bit more accurate.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

I'm largely story driven.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

A vintage Sega Genesis (unfortunately broken), N64, GCN, GBA SP. In my apartment there is also an NES, SNES, PS1, PS2, and Xbox which I am currently playing Morrowind on. A nice computer that could play most of today's games if I actually bought them.

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Sonic games, Zelda games, RPGs, tons of rhythm games (DDR, Donkey Konga, Karaoke Revolution, Stepmania, etc.). Games with awesome plot. I used to play turn-based strategy games until I realized I sucked at them.

How many hours/week do you play video games?

In relation to stuff I should be getting done, too much.

In relation to how much I want to be playing, too little.

Maybe around 20 hours if I play through the weekend, 7ish if I don't.

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

None.

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

N/A.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Well, I did a report in 8th grade about feudalism because of Sid Meier's Civilization.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

Guess I've just never picked one up. A lot of them are FPS or turn-based strategy, neither of which I'm good at.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

If it was inaccurate due to sloppiness, it would definitely be a minus. However, if it were artistic license, it'd probably not bother me too much.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Game play and plot are ALWAYS the most important part of a video game.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

I love a good story more than pretty much anything, but if the gameplay sucks, I wouldn't be able to put up with it. I'd say I enjoy gameplay and plot the most, with plot a little more than gameplay.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

PC, Atari 2600, NES, SNES, N64, GameCube, GameBoy, GameBoy Color, GameBoy Advanced, Sega Genesis

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

First person shooters, RPGs, Adventure (like Metroid)

How many hours/week do you play video games?

10-20

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

One

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Fairly familiar

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

No

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

Just seems like fun

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

Not too much, but accuracy in the game does make the game more enjoyable

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Less

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Gameplay

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

PC, Dreamcast

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

Strategy, Simulation, sports, shooters

How many hours/week do you play video games?

If computer games fall under that then say, 25. Otherwise 1

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

Many. At least 15

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

I like to think I am quite familiar. I consider myself a bit of a history buff.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Yes. My love of history, and my love of games grew at about the same time.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

They bring another level of interest into the game for me. Playing the game is fun, but the history is fun too.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

It is a strike against the game, but if it is otherwise good, I am forgiving

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

It depends whether the game is trying to be accurate. If it bills itself as realistic and fails, that is bad,

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Probably gameplay. If a game is bad the story or historical context probably won't save it/.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

PC, nes, snes, n64, gamecube, gameboy, gba, gamegear, playstation, ps2, psp, palm pilot.

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

racing, strategy, simulations, fps, action, stealth, rpg, hockey

How many hours/week do you play video games?

0 - 60
typically 10 or so.

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

1 - multiplayer Call of Duty: United Offensive

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Somewhat.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Yes. For example, Sid Meier's Pirates! has a super educational manual and in-game pirate encyclopedia, and Tropico has detailed historical dictatorship biographies.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

Yes, the Civilization series accounts for %90 of that reason.

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

It may deter me from purchasing, but games generally fall under "fiction". History, factual or not, most often falls under "setting". I would not play only if were significant to the point of the game, and detrimental to the gameplay.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Gameplay matters most, but accuracy can help. Silent Hunter 3 is an accurate submarine simulation, and it benefits greatly from the accurate historical details. The original SH had William "Bud" Gruner, actual WWII pacific submarine commander, as a technical advisor during development.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Gameplay.

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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

PC and Xbox

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

RPG, FPS and Adventure

How many hours/week do you play video games?

15

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

1

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Only slightly familiar.

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

No.

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

Not many historical games within my genres of interest (except all the WW2 shooters, and frankly, if you've played one, you've played them all).

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

Not at all.

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Much less.

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Gameplay, first and foremost. But I can also enjoy a game entirely on the graphics engine alone.
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General

What consoles/platforms do you own?

NES, SNES, PS1, PS2, GB, GBC, GBA, PC, N64, GBASP

What genre(s) of game do you typically play?

RPG, Adventure, Fantasy

How many hours/week do you play video games?

5-10+

Historical

How many games with an historical basis have you played in the last month?

0

Generally speaking, how familiar are you with the historical period the game(s) you play represents?

Not familiar at all

Have you ever tried to learn more about an historical period because of a game?

Yes

Is there a reason you do/don't play historical games?

Not many peak my interest

Does historical inaccuracy in a video game deter you from playing?

No

Do you find accuracy in a game more or less important than game play/storyline/etc.?

Less

What part of the game do you enjoy the most? Game play? History? Story?

Game Play & Story

Appendix B

In the year 1095, pope Urban the Second, in an attempt to expand the influence of the church, called upon the rulers of Europe on a campaign to recapture the Holy Lands from Muslim control. Promises of salvation and redemption in addition to the promise of profit drove thousands of men to an arduous journey to capture Jerusalem.

The Crusaders set off with high hopes and around 60,000 men by the time they reached Constantinople, the last Christian controlled city before reaching the Holy Lands. The Crusaders pressed on and after capturing Antioch were weary and suffered heavy losses, but still vastly outnumbered the defending garrison of Jerusalem.

You are Iftikhar ad-Dawla, in charge of defending Jerusalem against the invading Crusaders. The men and resources are at your disposal. Use them wisely if you are to survive through the siege.

Appendix C

<http://users.wpi.edu/~rambeau/IQP/frames.html>

hold JERUSALEM

a GAME OF SEIGE WARFARE

introduction instructions background about


Introduction

In 1099, Jerusalem was a city under siege. The Muslim occupants of the Jerusalem watched in horror as the Crusader army crushed city after city in their conquest to take the Holy Land for themselves in the name of Christianity. The siege lasted a month, but after a hard fight the city fell to the besieging army and was brutally sacked.

Can you change history? Play the role of a commander within the city. Make decisions to help your people outlast the invaders at the gates. It's up to you- will Jerusalem hold or fall?

play now!

TIP: Explore the "Background" section to learn more about the Crusades and siege warfare, and become the best commander you can be!



rules.html

Instructions



Gameplay in Hold Jerusalem! revolves around events. Each day, you might be presented with an event. If you are, it's up to you to select the correct choice- there are

no right answers, but use the "Background" section to discover which ones are best! When you have made your decision, select the choice you've made and click the arrow to proceed to the next day.



If you need more help, you're not in this fight alone. Your trusty Advisor and Scout are just a click away, at the top of the screen. The Advisor can give hints about events that effect your people, while the Scout specializes in battle tactics.



Events aren't the only thing to deal with in this siege. If you want to increase your chances of coming out alive, it's also wise to build up your defenses. To build defenses on a particular day, select the "X" under the defense you would like to build. As the day changes, your resources will be depleted to build them. While they won't directly effect your performance in events, defenses will count towards your final score, so build wisely!



How are you doing? You can estimate the current state of your fight by paying attention to the information under resources and morale. Morale is the overall attitude of your people- if it's low, you might not win what would otherwise be a certain victory. Your resources are consumed by events, defense building, and even the passage of days. Running out of resources such as food can have dire consequences!

The game ends with a final event on the last day of the siege, so try and set a good foundation to bring your people out alive!

[back.html](#)

Background

The Crusade

- ◊ [General information](#)
- ◊ [The Crusaders](#)
- ◊ [The Muslims](#)
- ◊ [The Siege of Jerusalem](#)
- ◊ [Other famous sieges](#)

Siege Warfare

- ◊ [Offensive tactics](#)
- ◊ [Defensive tactics](#)
- ◊ [Weapons](#)

General Information

The Crusades, in many ways, were a time of sweeping change in Europe. They not only ended Europe's isolation resulting from the Dark Ages but also were the beginning of the end of Europe's feudal system (although feudalism would still endure for another 300 years after the end of the First Crusade). This was due to the Crusades opening trade with Asia and creating towns which very gradually displaced manors as the main source of work and income for the people of Europe. The process was to start, however, not from motives of profit, but from motives of power. The Roman Catholic Church, having dominated life in 11th century Europe, sought to gain a more firm dominance over the European powers. At the time, the countries of Europe were in a state of chaos and plagued by ceaseless violent conflict over power and land. Pope Urban II, leader of the Roman Catholic Church, then made a speech at the Council of Clermont calling all upon the major European powers to unite and assemble an army to retake the Holy Land of Jerusalem from the Saracens (Fatimid Muslims) who had occupied it.

The major European powers during the Crusades included France, The Holy Roman Empire (Germany), the Papal states (present-day Rome and surrounding countryside), and Italy (the parts of Italy excluding the Papal states; mainly the southern part of present-day Italy). Allied (although very loosely) with the Crusaders was the Byzantine Empire (present-day Greece and Macedonia), who despite giving aid in the beginning ultimately betrayed them. Opposing the

about.html

Game background: Guenyin Justin Au

Game design: Gayle Rambeau

Art design: Gayle Rambeau, Sean Dyer

Scripting: Guenyin Justin Au, Gayle Rambeau

This game was created as part of the Games and History Interactive Qualifying Project at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. The purpose of this project was to study the relationship between history and its presentation in the video game medium. Group members were Justin Au and Gayle Rambeau, with contributions from Sean Dyer.

Material in the Background section has been adapted from material in the **GAMES AND HISTORY Project Report**. Citations for Background material can be found in the original version available below.

Download the **GAMES AND HISTORY Project Report** (7.17MB) [download](#)