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WHAT GAMES DO YOU PLAY?
Children Playing Games

Painted in 1560, Pieter Brueghel’s painting is like an “encyclopedia of children’s games” — it shows 250 children engaging in some kind of games. Over 80 are still being played today and have been identified, while others not known to the 20th century have yet to be recognized.
I remember playing games like this one...

“跳飞机” (Hopscotch)
Then came computers, multimedia computers, desktops, laptop, mobile PC, ....

Digital Technology... Digital Games
In the early days...

West of House

You are standing in an open field west of a white house, with a boarded front door. There is a small mailbox here.

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Zork I (1981)

A standalone text-based game...

Eventually led to Multi-User Dungeon (M.U.D.)
In the early days...

Neverwinter Nights (1991)

Early graphic games...
After a few years...

Neverwinter Nights (2002)
- By BIOWARE (http://nwn.bioware.com)
Neverwinter Nights 2 (2006)
- by Obsidian Entertainment (http://www.nwn2.com)

And a few more years...
Multi-User Dungeons

- MUDs are interactive online user environments
- Mostly text-based (a few have graphical environment)
- Most MUDs are Role-Playing Games (RPG): e.g. Lord of the Ring, Star Wars, fantasy worlds, etc.
- Player assumes the role of a character in the game and interacts with other characters along a storyline that differs depending on the MUD. Some MUDs had been used for educational, social, and other purposes.
- Examples of MUDs:
  - MUCK: Multi-User Chat Kingdom » SecondLife
  - MUSH: Multi-User Shared Hallucination
  - MUSE: Multi-User Simulated Environment
  - MOO: MUD, Object Oriented
Most (older) MUDs require Telnet to play...
IRON REALMS

- Four, “free,” Flash-based MUDs offered by Iron Realms Entertainment
- Text-based MUDs (with color!)
- [http://www.ironrealms.com](http://www.ironrealms.com)
What Can You Learn With MUD?
Massive(ly) Multi-player Online Games

- MMORPG: Massive(ly) Multi-player Role Playing Game
- MMOG (general name) encompassing RTS, FPS, etc.
- What about SecondLife?
Second Life (SL)

- Many colleges are considering SL for educational use, some have even added SL to their programs.
- Companies like IBM, Microsoft, Xerox are creating virtual buildings in SL and holding virtual meetings.
- Entire cities exist in SL (e.g. Prague).
- Universities who want to use SL must purchase private islands in SL to build on. This additional cost can pose a problem for university.
- SL is a learning tool and is still being researched by higher education and business sectors.
- Use “SLURLs” to access the location (SL-URL).
What Can You Learn in SL?

**Pro:**
- Educators (particularly Higher Ed.) are increasingly interested in SecondLife
  - Good for exploratory teaching method, research
  - Innovative and experimental teaching sites (SLURL)
  - ISTE and AECT both have a presence in SecondLife to provide education technology resources
  - [http://secondlifegrid.net/slfe/education-use-virtual-world](http://secondlifegrid.net/slfe/education-use-virtual-world)

**Cons:**
- Not really created for education
  - Lots of distraction (flying, dancing people)
  - New Education/Teen SecondLife not as well populated as the original SL
  - Require high speed Internet
  - Steep learning curve, very time consuming

**Cautions:**
- Naked people wandering looking for cyber-sex
- Not suitable/dangerous for minors
Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) Games
Education Approaches

From Easy to Hard:

• Re-purposing COTS Games
  – Think MUD

• Modding (COTS Game SDK/Editor)
  – Rezzing (Second Life specific)

• Making your own (COTS/Free Game Engine)
  – I/ITSEC: Serious Games Challenge & Showcase
Repurposing

• Very little changes to the game contents
• Straight from the shelves
• Teach – (Play) – Debrief
• E.g., Civilizations, War Games to teach geography, history
• Good: Easiest way, wait for a right game to be made
• Bad: No control of contents
Game as Tool

• Using images / screenshots from games to encourage writing (CWILL)
  – Obstacle: Internet connection
• Children/students making games as learning activities
  – problem: must teach programming to children
  – Alternative: GameMaker Pro (free before v 6)
• Parallel of game and real world (journalism)
Make Your Own Games

• Start from scratch
  – Flash-based
  – By hand
  – Commercial Game Engines ($$$$
• Game Maker Pro ($)
• Torque
• Free Engines (Standalone? Online?)
• Good: You Own It
• Bad: Time consuming, Labor intensive, High learning curve, Rarely 1 person job
• Lesser tools = Poor production quality! [example]
Hinterland

- Real COTS games – made with Torque Game Engine
- [http://www.tiltedmill.com](http://www.tiltedmill.com)
TORQUE 3D

- Torque Game Engine: Proven standard (>25 successful commercial games)
- Used by game design and development programs in art & game design schools, technical colleges and universities
- Academic friendly policy & educators forum [link]
- Low pricing: Students can afford to purchase this engine
- **Important Features:**
  - Multiplatform
  - Full Source Code
  - Tools and Editors
  - Networking for Full Multiplayer
GAME MODDING
Modding/Rezzing

• First modified game: DOOM » MarineDoom
• Since then, many modifiable (moddable) games
  – Module (mod) – Require original game to play
  – Modders, modding (person, action)
• Most of them are editors (Map, Enemies)
• Some are SDK (e.g., Neverwinter Nights -Bioware)
• Story-based (Narrative/narratology) games are best for learning (critical thinking, problem solving, social learning, making meaning)
Moddable Role Playing Game

- Neverwinter Nights (most used within the Educational/Research community in US/UK)
- Neverwinter Nights 2 (Obsidian)
- The Witcher
- Dragon Age Origin (Bioware)
- Serious Games Showcase & Challenge (Aug-Sep) http://www.sgschallenge.com
Dragon Age Journey (Online)

Look familiar? [link]

Are we returning to the MUD days? Perhaps a MUD revolution?
Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset (http://idt.siu.edu/nwpedia)

Q & A / DEMO SESSION