

VIDEO GAMES AND STORYTELLING

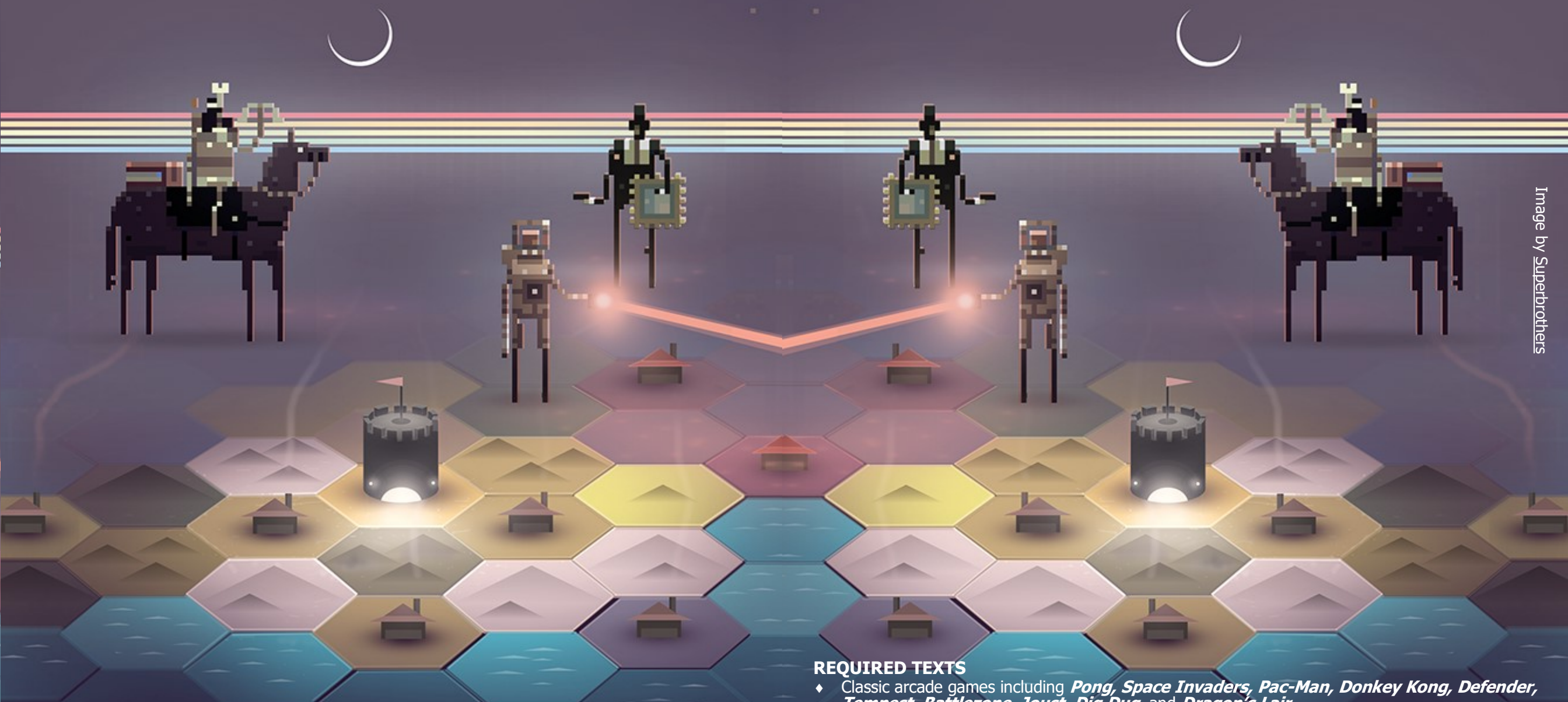


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ENGLISH 2090, Spring 2020

Tues. and Thurs. 2:00-3:20 p.m.

Dr. Alf Seegert

- ◆ Fulfills HF (Humanities Exploration) Gen Ed Requirement
- ◆ Writing 2010 is strongly recommended as a prerequisite (students will compose short essays that require solid college-level writing ability)

Video Games and Storytelling explores the interplay between *game* and *story* in video game media. Students will **play** and **analyze** video games, specifically those with strong narratives, and engage with broader literary/theoretical issues in video game and literary studies. Texts include video games themselves, as well as a broad selection of films, fiction, and critical/ theoretical resources.

Assignments include regular critical responses (essays) plus a midterm and a comprehensive exam.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- ◆ Classic arcade games including *Pong*, *Space Invaders*, *Pac-Man*, *Donkey Kong*, *Defender*, *Tempest*, *Battlezone*, *Joust*, *Dig Dug*, and *Dragon's Lair*
- ◆ Early console games including *Adventure* for Atari 2600
- ◆ Early Text Adventure games such as *Colossal Cave Adventure* and *Zork*

More recent video games that we will play include...

- ◆ *Thomas Was Alone*
- ◆ *The Stanley Parable*
- ◆ *Photopia* and *Choice of the Dragon*
- ◆ *West of Loathing*
- ◆ *Shelter* (the badger simulator!)
- ◆ *Papers, Please*

We will also discuss cutscenes and gameplay in the legendary games *Another World*, *Ico*, and *The Last of Us* (though these games won't be assigned).

Assigned books include Ernest Cline's novel *Ready Player One* and *Understanding Video Games (3rd Edition)* — available at the Campus Bookstore!

Films and video include Charlie Brooker's *How Video Games Changed the World*, *The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters*, and *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*. Note: some changes to books, films, and games listed above might occur.