REL 109 (GPR, WI)
Evil and Video Games
MW 2pm-3:15pm
Curry 303

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Office Hours: MW 1-2pm, or
by appointment

PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES: None

FOR WHOM PLANNED: The course is intended for Religious Studies majors and non-majors who are fascinated by how video games reflect the role of evil and hope in human life, the part of digital media in contemporary society, and the role of play in human being. It is an introductory class. Although helpful, no prior religious studies or media studies courses or knowledge is required or expected. Also, while we will do *close play* of video games, you are being evaluated not on how well you play, but upon your demonstration of the basic knowledge of, and comprehension of the categories of evil, hope, popular culture, the digital and play. You will also be evaluated on how you apply these terms using written, visual and digital forms of communication, as well as analyzing, evaluating and creating critical and imaginative assignments.

EIGHTFOLD STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. Critical thinking
2. Ethical and civic responsibility
3. Technological literacy
4. Categories of evil and hope
5. Categories of digital media, popular culture and play
6. How to read scholarly texts
7. How to be participate in a seminar
8. How to be part of a peer research team.

TEACHING METHODS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR ACHIEVING LEARNING OUTCOMES: To instill a progressive pedagogy, while primarily based on a Socratic face-to-face seminar method, as well as the use of introductory lectures and one-on-one conferences when required, the course blends online teaching, and hands-on computer labs to facilitate student achievement of the stated learning outcomes. The students' primary responsibility will be to read and discuss the course materials. Yet they will also engage in group-work, presentations, game design, and hands on exploration of digital media.

> **Progressive Education facilitates Student Learning Outcomes by**:
> 1. Emphasizing hands-on projects, exploratory and experiential learning
> 2. Basing curriculum on thematic units
> 3. Integrating students' personal and community experiences into the classroom
> 4. Emphasizing critical thinking and critical imagining
> 5. Engaging in group work and other collaborative and cooperative learning projects that develop social skills
> 6. Forming democratic and social responsibility, that recognizes the larger social and historical context, rather than just rote knowledge
> 7. Personalizing the curriculum for each student's goals
> 8. De-emphasizing textbooks in favor of varied learning sources that look forward to the skills need for future technological literacy
> 9. Emphasizing lifelong learning and social skills that teach students how to teach themselves
> 10. Evaluating and assessing based on each student's projects and productions.
>
> See: "Media Man explains Progressive Teaching Methods"
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8PNfkdxC_I

EIGHTFOLD PATH OF RULES
1. Come to Class [After six unexcused absences you will be dropped from the course].
2. Do the reading [You must bring a PRINTED and MARKED version of the reading to class each day that it is assigned. You *must* have completed your reading paragraph. Not doing so will count as an absence.]
3. Come and see me [If a problem arises it is your responsibility to contact me].
4. No late work
5. No hats or sunglasses
6. No phones, smart or otherwise
7. No use of Wi Fi without instructor's permission
8. No Eating in Class

ATTENDANCE POLICY: You may miss up to six classes (excused and/or unexcused). On the seventh absence you will be dropped from the course. NOTE 1: Coming to class without a hard paper copy of the reading will count as an absence. NOTE 2: Arriving after class begins or leaving before it ends will count as an absence.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY: Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to UNCG *Undergraduate Bulletin/Graduate Bulletin.*

REQUIRED READINGS AND OTHER MATERIALS: Readings will be emailed and available on Canvas as PDF's. You are responsible for computer access, as well as printing these and bringing to class. You are also responsible for watching some videos available online. Your

Research Team will need to have a flash drive. Your Research Team will need to pay for lamination of a poster.

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION
1. Profile Reading Card (PRC ®). 3 points
2. Reading Paragraphs . . . . 25 points
3. Seminar Paragraphs . . . . 27 points
4. Quest_labs ® 1-7 . . . . 15 points
5. Midterm exam . . . . 25 points
6. Proposal. . . . . 8 points
7. Paper. . . . . 12 points
8. Video. . . . . 20 points
9. Website. . . . . 30 points
10. Poster . . . . 20 points
11. Power Point . . . . 30 points
12. Presentation . . . . 50 points

A+	97 - 100%	C+	77 - 79
A	93 - 96	C	73 - 76
A-	90 - 92	C-	70 - 72
B+	87 - 89	D+	67 - 69
B	83 - 86	D	63 - 66
B-	80 - 82	D-	60 - 62
		F	below 60

Grand total = 200 points !

COURSE SCHEDULE

Section I —nOOb: Explore, Understand and Apply

Week 1: Introduction

Wednesday 1/18: Meet Media Man, and the Three Sciences of the University

Week 2: What is Digital Media?
Monday 1/23:
    Read: Marshall McLuhan, "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man."
    [excerpts]
    Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description"
    Evaluation: Reading Paragraph # 1 and 2
    Assignment: Profile Reading Card

Wednesday 1/25: Understanding the Cultural Context of Digital Media
    Greg Grieve, "CyberZen." [excerpts]
    Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #3 and 4
    Questlab_1 [Due Monday Jan 30] [.5 points]

Week 3: What is Popular Culture?

    Monday 1/30: Understanding Theology and Popular Culture
        Read: Lynch, "Understanding Theology and Popular Culture." [excerpts]
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #5
        Questlab_1 due

    Wednesday 2/1: FanFic
        Read: Jenkins [excerpts]
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #6

        Questlab_2 [Due Monday Feb 2] [.75 points {must have completed Q1}]

Week 4: What is play?

    Monday 2/6: "Religion is Playing Games, Playing Video Gods, Playing to Play"
        Read: Brent Plate[excerpts]
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #7
        Questlab_2 due

    Wednesday 2/8: "Playing with Reality"
        Read: Huizinga and Winnicott [excerpts]
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #8 and #9

        Questlab_3 [Due Monday Feb 13] 1.125 points {must have completed Q2}]

Week 5: What is a Video Game?

    Monday 2/13: Three Levels of Video Games
        Read: Vit Sisler [excerpts]
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #10
        Questlab_3 due

    Wednesday 2/15: Play Between Worlds
        Read: T.L. Taylor
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #11

        Questlab_4 [Due Monday Feb 20] 1.75 points {must have completed Q3}]

Week 6:

Monday 2/20: Visit DMC
          Questlab_4 due

Wednesday 2/22: Midterm (25 points)

Middie: Evil and Hope?

Week 7: The Problem of Evil

Monday 2/27: Mark Larrimore, "The Problem of Evil"
          Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #11

Wednesday 3/1: Andrew Delbano, Death of Satan
          Timothy Beal, "Religion and its Monsters."
          Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #12 &13

          Questlab_5 [Due Monday March 6] 2.5 points {must have completed Q4}]

Week 8:

Monday 3/6: Jennifer Geddes, "Evil After Postmodernism" [excerpts]
          Zygmunt Bauman, "Postmodern Ethics" [excerpts]
          Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #14 & 15
          QuestLab_5 Due

Wednesday 3/8: Jonathan Glover, "Nietzsche Challenge" [excerpts]
          Claudia Card, "The Atrocity Paradigm" [excerpts]
          Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #16 & 17

          Questlab_6 [Due Tuesday March 20] 3.5 points {must have completed Q5}]

Spring Break March 12 — March 18

Week 9: Godwired

Monday 3/20: Rachel Wagner, "What you play is what you do?" [exceprts]
        Roger Caillois: "Man and the Sacred."
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #18 and #19
        QuestLab_6 due

Wednesday 3/22: Rachel Wagner, "What you play is what you do?" [exceprts]
        David Miller: "God and Games."
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #20 and #21

        Questlab_7 [Due Monday March 27] 5 points {must have completed Q6}]

Week 10: Hope?

Monday 3/27: Jane McGonigal, "Reality is Broken" [excerpts]
        Ernest Cline, "Ready Player One." [excerpts]
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #22 and #23
        QuestLab_7 due

Wednesday 3/29: Manuel Castells, "Networks of Outrage and Hope."
        Richard Rorty, "Philosophy and Social Hope." [excerpts]
        Evaluation: Reading Paragraph #24 and #25

EndGame: Play, Create, Imagine

Monday 4/3 IN CLASS Brainstorming = Final Assignment!
Wednesday 4/5 IN CLASS: Paper Training
        Proposal Due (8 points – Must have completed Q7)
Monday 4/10   IN CLASS: Paper Workshop
Wednesday 4/12 IN COMPUTER LAB: Video Training
        Paper Due (12 points — Must have completed proposal)
Monday 4/17 IN DMC: Video Workshop
Wednesday 4/19 IN COMPUTER LAB: Website
        Video Due (20 points — Must have completed paper)
Monday 4/24 IN DMC: Website Workshop
Wednesday 4/26 IN CLASS: Power Point and Poster
Website Due   (30 points —Must have completed paper)

The Boss! Wednesday May 10, Noon-3pm.
Poster Due (20 points)
Power Point (30)
Presentation (Instructor 30 points, Other 20 points)