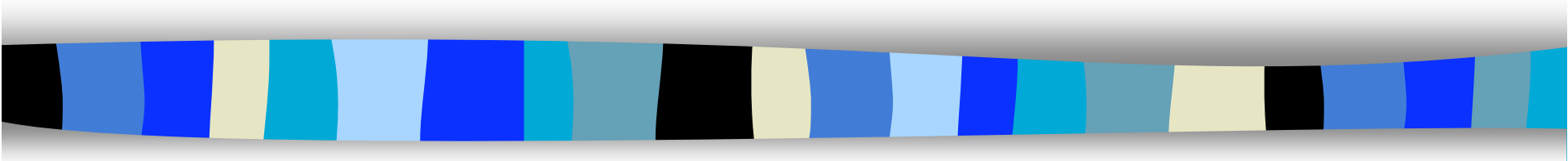


Games: What Are They?



Topics in Game Development

UNM

ECE 495/595; CS 491/591

Date back to ancient times

- Found in virtually every culture
- Not only for entertainment
- Also served serious functions



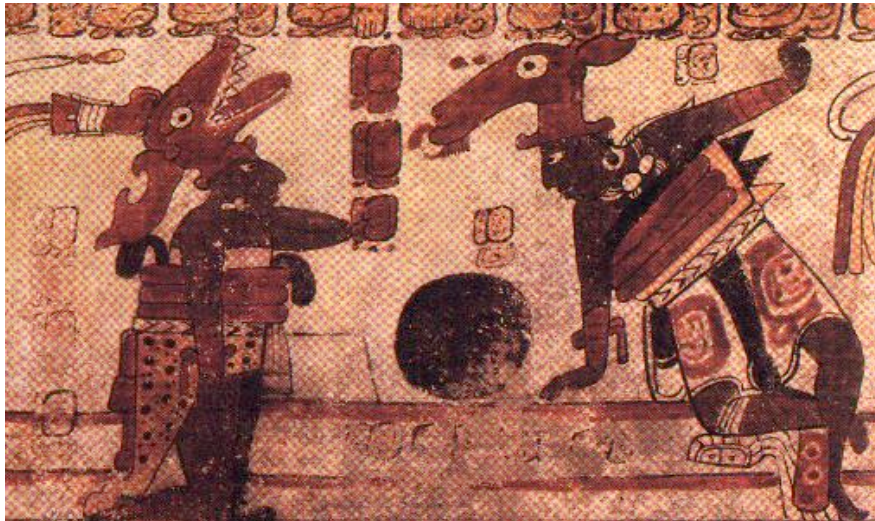
Used to train for hunting and warfare...



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Also used for religious purposes



- Way to communicate with deities
- Of great importance to both athletes and spectators
- Called for highest level of skill

Ancient games could have life and death consequences...



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Traditional games often contain story elements



- Sumo recreates an ancient legend
- A link to Japan's spiritual history
- Both a physical competition and a culturally significant event

Games offer intense excitement



- May be dangerous, require courage
- Contain a great deal of action
- Clear cut objectives (catch fox)
- Obstacles (fences; ditches)
- Worthy adversary (wily, fast)
- Allies (hounds; fellow hunters)

Games contain the basic elements of drama



- Conflict: 2 sides fighting
- Greeks: competition for a desired prize (**agon**)
 - The prot**agon**ist (the hero; the one going for the goal)
 - The ant**agon**ist (the opposing force; the adversary)
- Obstacles & challenges

Games also have:



- A structure (beginning, middle, end)
- Clear cut rules
- Rewards and penalties
- A defined playing space (court, field, track)

Ancient board games similar to ancient athletic games



- Often rooted in spiritual traditions
- Senet: found in King Tut's tomb
- Tomb paintings indicate symbolic opponent: spirit from afterlife
- High stakes: immortality

Modern board games



- Similar to athletic games (win/lose; competitive; have a structure)
- But safer environment
- Experienced as “play”
- Can act out fantasies

Board games also...

- May be built around a story
- Include elements of the unexpected
- Offer interactions with other people; social experiences



Board games may also...



- Include colorful characters
- Be set in a fantasy environment
- Stimulate imaginative play
- Thus, similar to video games in all respects

Modern games contain ancient and universal themes

Joseph Campbell:
articulated
concept of “**The
Hero’s Journey**”
myths of life and
death expressed
in rites of
passage (coming
of age)



“Hero’s Journey” found in...



...ancient literature like the Odyssey

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“Hero’s Journey” found in...

...Ancient beliefs
about the
afterlife: the
Egyptian Book
the Dead



“Hero’s Journey” found in...



... modern motion pictures

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“Hero’s Journey” also found in...



...today's video games

As with ancient games, today's games
may be used to teach and train...



- Used for diverse array of subjects (“serious games”)
- Used for diverse array of skills
- Used for diverse groups of audiences, both adults and kids

May also be used to inform...



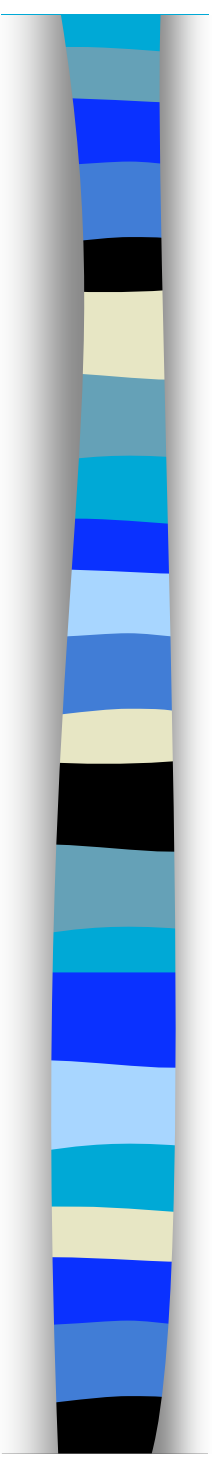
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And to promote and advertise

Genres include:

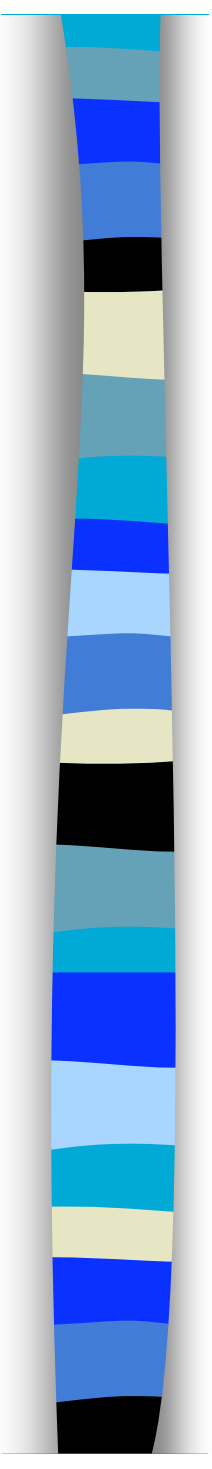


- Alternate reality games (ARGs)
- “Advergaming”
- Recruitment video games



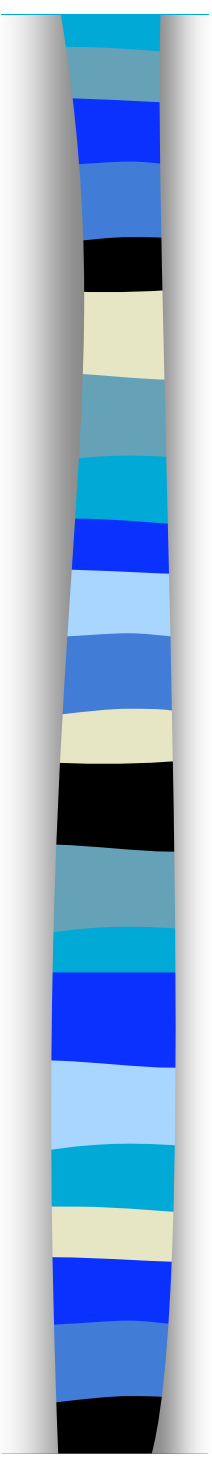
In sum, games are:

- More than entertainment
- Rooted in ancient traditions
- By nature dramatic
- By nature exciting
- By nature full of action
- Conducive to fantasy play and role play



In general, games have:

- A structure (beginning, middle, end)
- Clear cut rules
- Rewards and penalties
- A defined playing area (setting)
- Opportunities for social interaction



...and always have:

- Conflict: 2 sides fighting
- A clear-cut goal
- Characters (protagonist; one or more antagonists)
- Obstacles and challenges to overcome
- An end result: winning or losing