GAT 110: Game History

Course Instructor:

Richard Thames Rowan

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About Your Instructor

Richard Thames Rowan

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- Game Industry Professional for 18 Years
  - Wizards of the Coast
  - Rubicon Games
  - Microsoft Game Studios
  - Gaslight Press
  - Hourglass Games
  - The Amazing Society/Gazillion Entertainment
  - Glu Mobile
  - Auric Games

- Currently the CEO for Auric Games.

About Your Instructor

- MUDs/MMOs/PC Games
  - Legacy (LPmud), Asheron's Call, Allegiance, Asheron's Call 2, Marvel Super Hero Squad Online
  - Windows Vista Inbox Games, Windows Vista Hold'Em
- Console Games
  - Retail games include Nightcaster, Raven (canceled), Psychonauts, Tork, Sudeki, Jade Empire, Shenmue II, True Fantasy Live Online (canceled MMO), and Citizen Zero (canceled MMO).
  - Downloadable console games include UNO, Aegis Wing, UNO Rush and 3 other canceled titles.
- Web/Messenger/Download Games
  - Bejeweled Web, Bejeweled Messenger, Bespelled Deluxe, Bespelled Web, Catan: The Computer Game, Catan Online, Collapse! Deluxe II, JEOPARDY! Deluxe, JEOPARDY! Web, JEOPARDY! Deluxe Puzzle Packs 1 & 2, Rocket Mania! Web, Rocket Mania! Deluxe, RumbleCube Web, RumbleCube Deluxe, Wheel of Fortune Web, Wheel of Fortune Deluxe, Wheel of Fortune Deluxe Puzzle Packs 1 &2, Wheel of Fortune Messenger Multiplayer, Wheel of Fortune Zone Multiplayer, Quarto Messenger, Spades Web, Checkers Web, UNO Web, UNO Messenger, Sudoku Web, Sudoku Too Web, Jigsaw Too Web/Messenger, Jigsaw Web, and Flowers.
- Handheld/Mobile Games
  - Labyrinth (Zune HD), Astroquest (canceled iOS MMO), Dragon Storm (iOS MMO), Age of Fate (iOS)
- Card & Board Games
  - Magic: The Gathering, Netrunner, Battletech, and Vampire: The Eternal Struggle
  - Giza: The Great Pyramid (board game 2012), Up the Creek! (card game)
- Roleplaying Games
  - Everway, Earth & Sky roleplaying games
  - D20 module supplements under the Sun & Scale brand.
- Puzzle Events
  - Microsoft Puzzle Hunt 9, Microsoft Puzzle Hunt 3-11, etc.

About Your Instructor

- I have a bad memory for names and there are a lot of you. Please do not be offended if it takes me a while to learn your name.

- I welcome questions and comments – just raise your hand to give everyone an opportunity.

- There will be times when I need to move things along, so I don't promise to answer every question during class.

- I have a tendency to use bad puns. You might even say I have a punchant for them…

Course Syllabus

Detailed Overview

GAT 110 Syllabus

https://distance.digipen.edu/2012-fall/course/view.php?id=99

Summary:

- Educate aspiring game designers in the historical basis of the profession.
- Show the relevance of historical games to modern day games.
- Understand the framework of the evolution of games throughout history and how each genre of games developed from the ones that came before.
- Emphasis on games that establish core principles of game design (dice, racing, war games, card games, etc.).
- Develop domain knowledge and game analysis skills.

Course Goals

- Learn the basics of game origin in human societies.

- Study the roots of modern games by examining their historical counterparts, with an emphasis on how these early games apply to today's game designs.

- Build compositional skills by writing detailed analysis papers on the games studied in the course.

- Develop game analysis skills by keeping a design journal to analyze games and design concepts.

Course Goals (continued)

- Gain a basic understanding of playtesting by modifying known games and testing the results.

- Understand the impact of technology on game development and design.

- Understand the growth and change in game design from a societal and historical view.

- Understand the evolution of new genres based on technology and society.

Additionally

- Discipline
- Structure
- Professionalism
- Develop good habits!

Reading Materials

- Posted on the Distance Learning (Moodle) site.
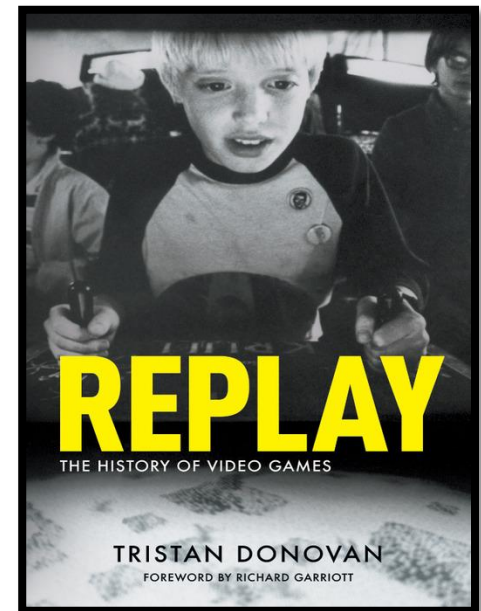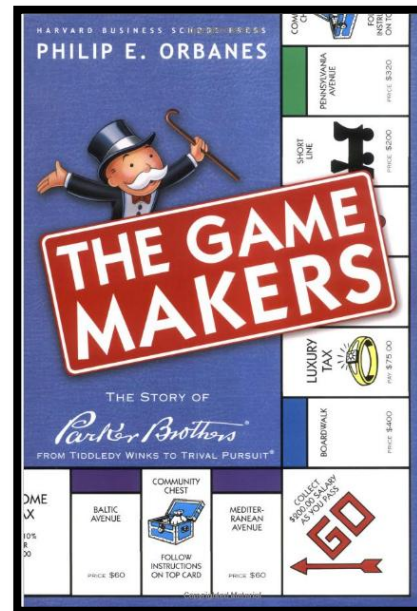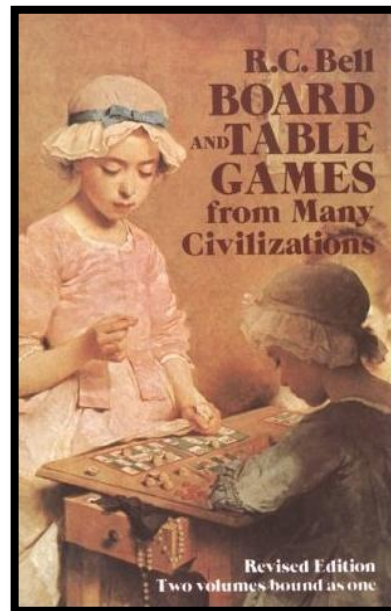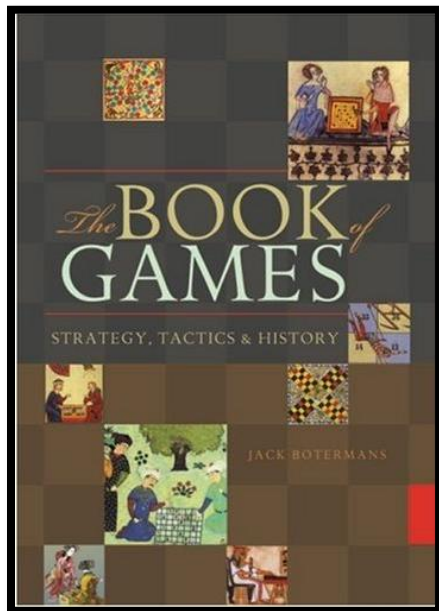
Rules and Procedures

- Last Day to Withdraw – October 28, 2012
- Disabled Student Services
- Academic Integrity Policy

Rules and Procedures

- Attendance
  - Missing class WILL affect your final grade.
  - After the first class missed, EVERY missed class will reduce your final grade by 5%.
  - Attendance will be taken within the first 15 minutes of class.
  - If you miss the sign in because you are late, you will be considered absent.

NO EXCEPTIONS

Rules and Procedures

- Class Behavior
  - No electronics on in class. This includes laptops, school computers, PDAs, cell phones, etc.
  - No private discussions or talking during lecture.
  - No eating in class.
  - No sleeping in class.

Violation of these rules will result in you being asked to leave class for the day and WILL have an effect on your final grade (at my discretion).

Rules and Procedures

- Late Policy on Assignments
  - Papers are expected to be handed in on time.
  - Every day late is 10% off the grade of the paper.
  - Papers are due at the beginning of the class marked on your syllabus and will be considered one day late after midnight of the same day.
  - Design journals are due every Wednesday – failing to turn in your completed journal on time results in a 1% penalty to your final grade. Poor journaling has the same penalty.
  - Tests cannot be made up if they are missed.

- Be here and turn things in on time!

Rules and Procedures

- Grading Policy
  - Grades are a weighted average of the assigned papers, midterm, and final exam.

Paper #1	10%
Paper #2	15%
Paper #3	15%
Paper #4	20%
Midterm	20%
Final	20%
Design Journal	-1%/wk
Quizzes	0%

F	D	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A
0-59	60-69	70-72	73-76	77-79	80-82	83-86	87-89	90-92	93-100

Design Journal

Weekly Assignment – Due Wednesdays!

What is a Design Journal?

- Your design journal is where you will begin a weekly habit of analyzing and designing games.

- Each week, you are required to write at least one journal entry of at least <u>one typed page</u> on any one of the following:
  - An Original Game Design
  - Analog Game Analysis
  - Digital Game Analysis
  - Game Design Article Analysis

- You may repeat these in any combination, but each journal entry must be a topic you have never covered before.

- You may include supplemental diagrams, pictures, images, or staple on a referenced article instead of written analysis, but this page must contain <u>meaningful</u> content that you reference in your written analysis.

Journal Rubric

- The first line of each entry MUST be the title "Week N – Title" where N is the week number of the class identified in the syllabus and Title is a unique name that you call that particular entry. Each entry should start on a new page.

- Your journal must be in Microsoft Word or Open Office format.

- Expected word count is at <u>least</u> 250 words per entry, but feel free to include more – this is for your benefit.

- Journals submitted online.

- You CAN get extra credit for: Quantity, Quality, or Presentation

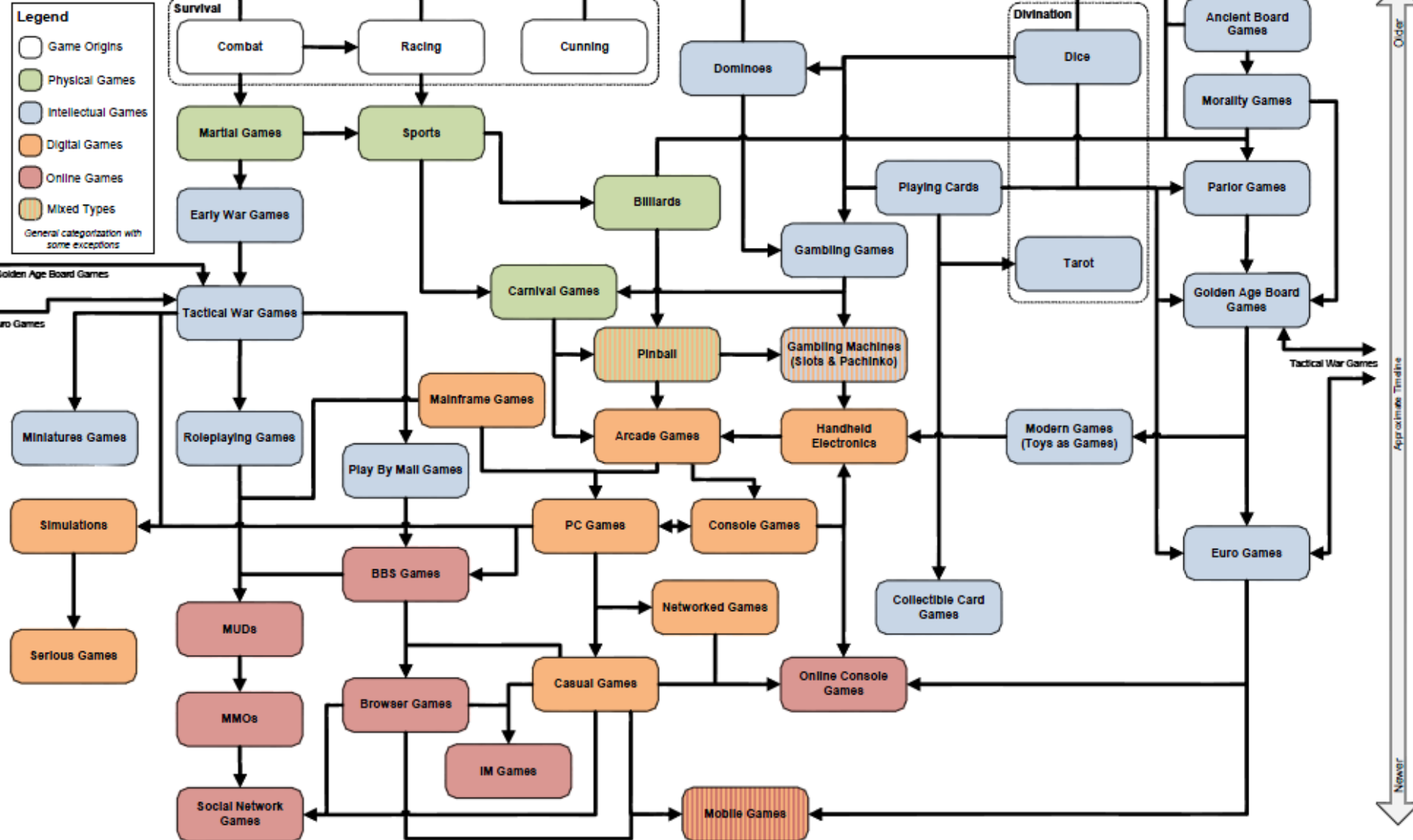| Turned in on time	0%
Turned in late	-0.5%
Never turned in	-1%
Missing entry	-1%
Missing week or entry title	-0.25%
Journal missing your name	-1%
Poor journal quality or sparse content	-0.5%
Extra credit available…	Up to 5%

Evolution of Games

Course Handout

Evolution of Games

Prehistory to Today

Legend

- Game Origins
- Physical Games
- Intellectual Games
- Digital Games
- Online Games
- Mixed Types

General categorization with some exceptions

Survival: Combat → Racing, Cunning

Martial Games, Sports, Billiards, Carnival Games

Early War Games, Tactical War Games, Roleplaying Games, Miniatures Games

Golden Age Board Games, Euro Games

Mainframe Games, Play By Mail Games, Pinball, Arcade Games, PC Games, Console Games

Dominoes, Dice, Playing Cards, Tarot, Gambling Games, Gambling Machines (Slots & Pachinko)

Ancient Board Games, Morality Games, Parlor Games, Golden Age Board Games, Modern Games (Toys as Games), Handheld Electronics, Euro Games

Divination

Simulations, Serious Games, MUDs, MMOs, BBS Games, Browser Games, IM Games, Casual Games, Networked Games, Collectible Card Games, Online Console Games, Social Network Games, Mobile Games
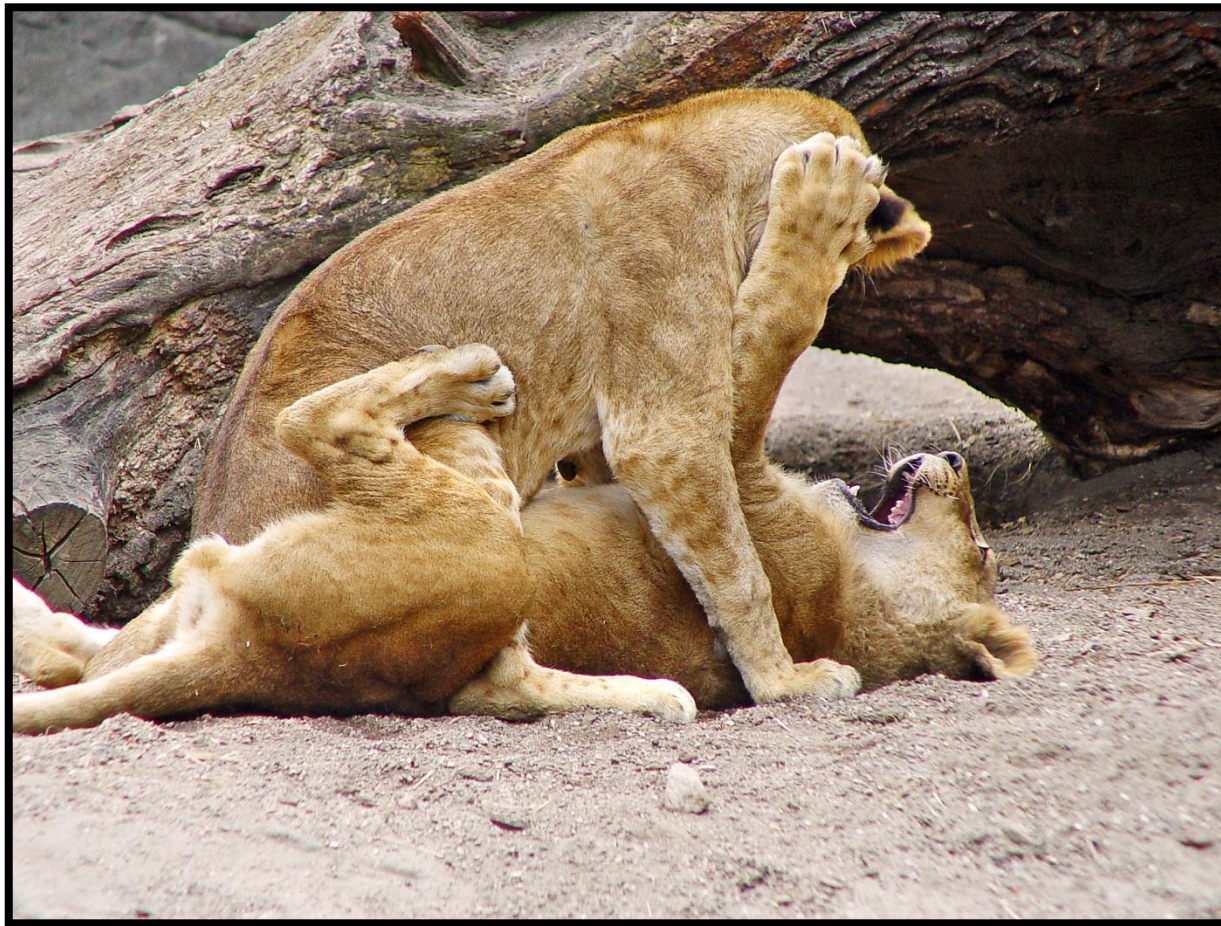
Older / Approximate Timeline / Newer

Tactical War Games

Origins of Games

Why We Play

Why Animals Play

Why Animals Play

- Learning Survival Skills
  - Hunting
  - Defense
  - Chasing Down Prey
  - Running Away From Predators
  - Environment Familiarity
  - Body's Limits

- Practice & Mastery

COMBAT

RACING

Why Humans Play

- People, like all animals, practice for the same reasons.

COMBAT	RACING	CUNNING

- Humans have the power of ABSTRACT THINKING to extrapolate these skills to many other non-physical simulations.
  - Games
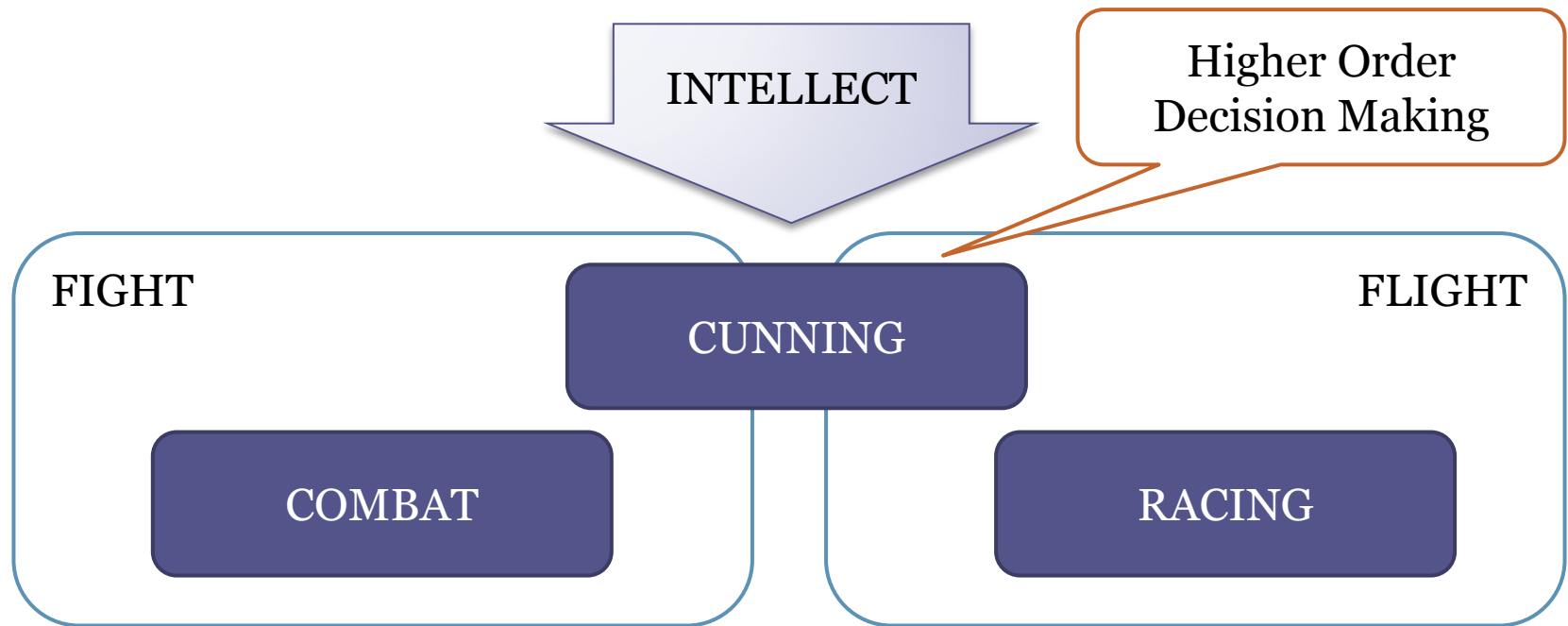 - Probabilities
  - Tools
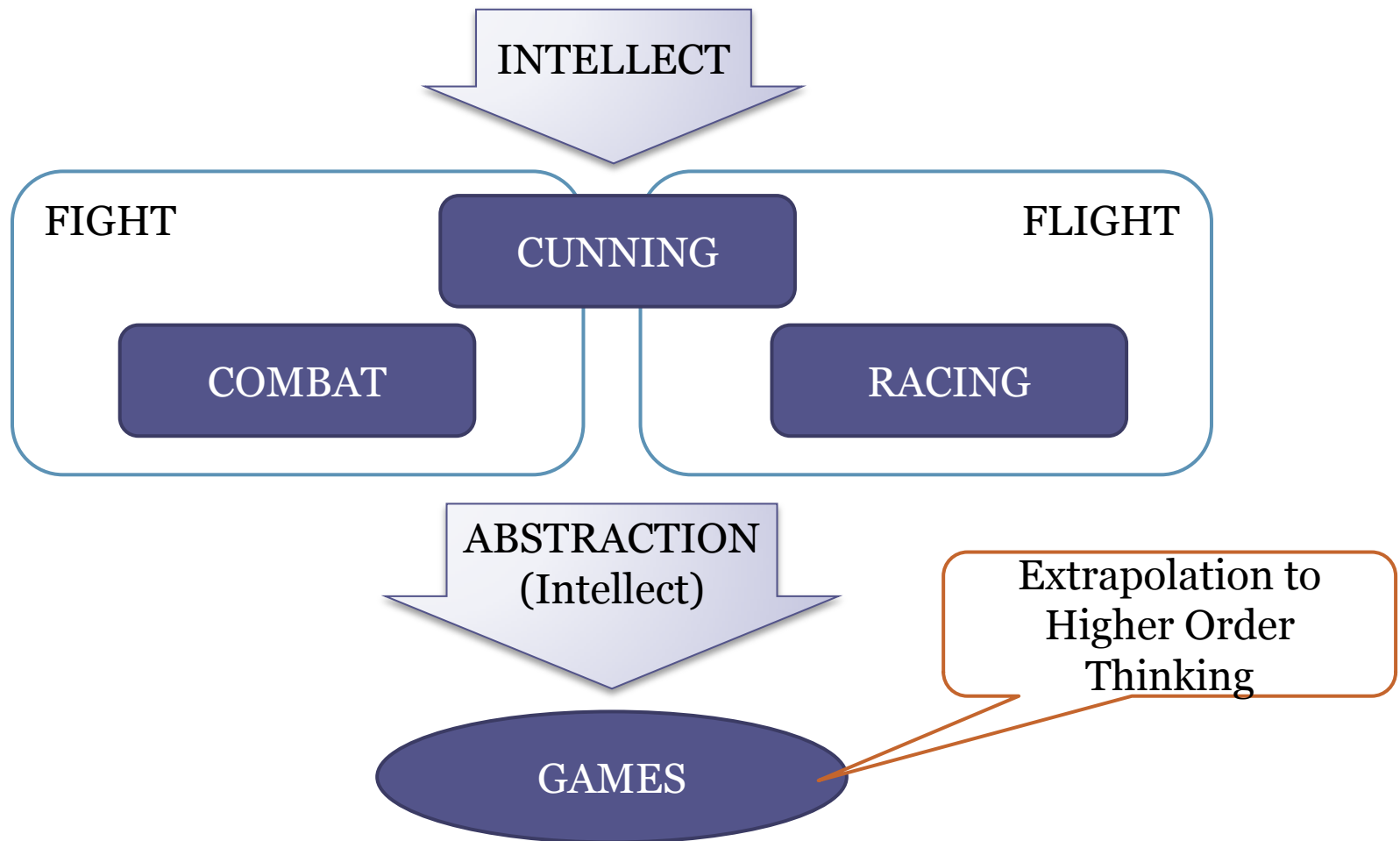
Fight vs. Flight

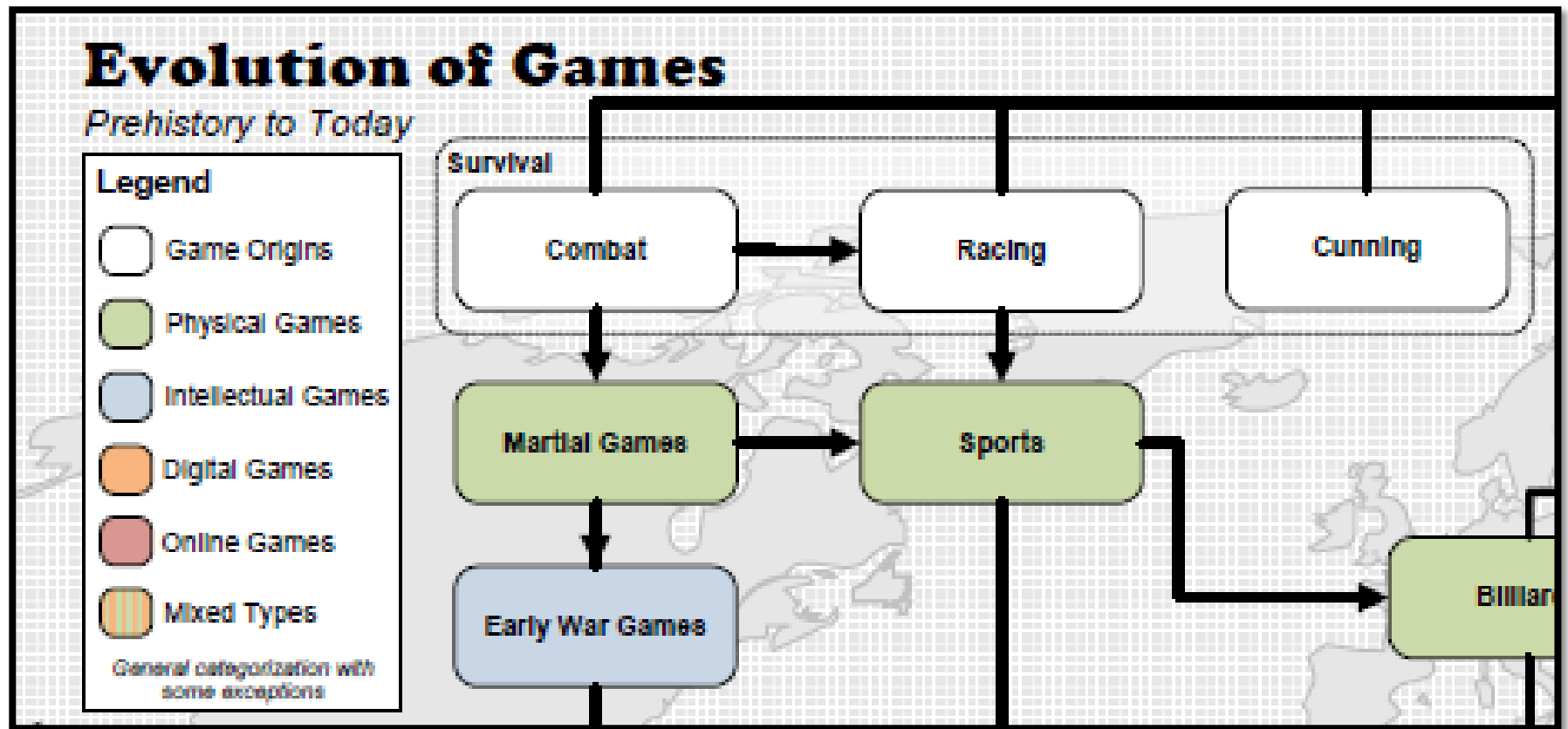FIGHT

COMBAT

FLIGHT

RACING

Animals

Fight vs. Flight

INTELLECT

Higher Order Decision Making

FIGHT

FLIGHT

CUNNING

COMBAT

RACING

Humans

Fight vs. Flight

Evolution of Games

Evolution of Games
Prehistory to Today

Legend

- ☐ Game Origins
- ☐ Physical Games
- ☐ Intellectual Games
- ☐ Digital Games
- ☐ Online Games
- ☐ Mixed Types

General categorization with some exceptions

Survival

Combat → Racing   Cunning

Martial Games → Sports

Early War Games

Billiar

Why We Invent Games

Where Games Come From

Why We Invent Games

- Games are abstractions of some of these core survival skills.

- We invent games when opportunities present themselves:

  - BOREDOM
  - FOUND MATERIALS

Boredom

- Our brains have evolved to help us survive.

- When we're not actively trying to survive something, our brains look for ways to fill the void, which causes a sense of weariness or restlessness.
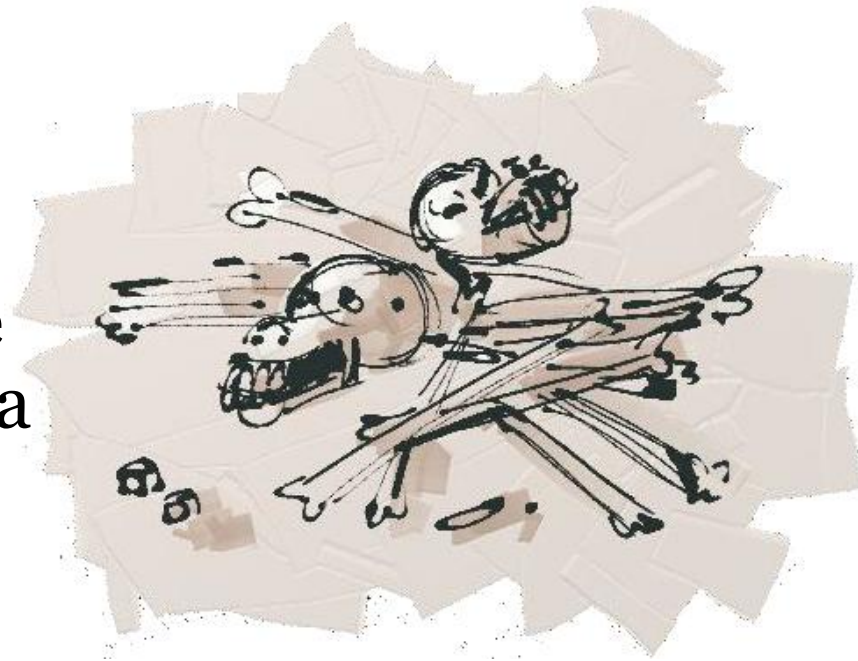
Boredom

- You're a shepherd guarding a herd of sheep.

- There's no one around.

- Sheep are just plain boring. You wish a wolf would attack just so you'll have something to do.
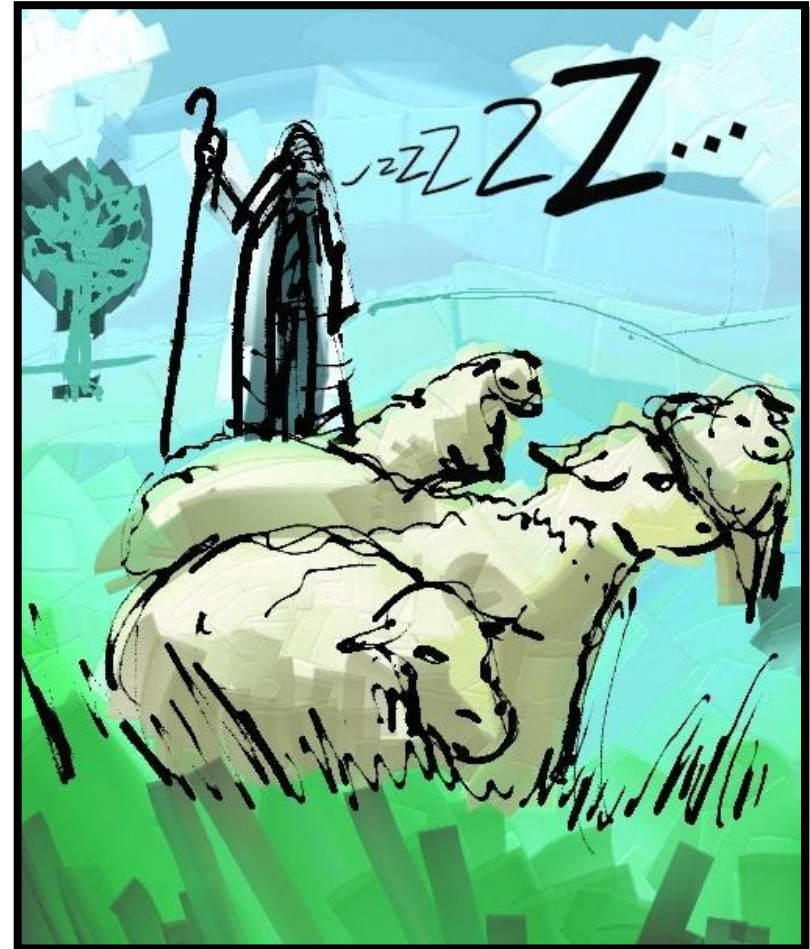
Boredom→Opportunity

- You're eating a lot of sheep. After all, there's nothing else to eat out in the fields.
- You notice that every time you eat a sheep, there are a lot of bones left over.
- You also notice that the knucklebones have six sides and roll pretty well.

Boredom→Opportunity→Game

- At first, you think about trying to invent bowling, but the knucklebones are pretty small for that. Then you think; what if I put marks on them and rolled them? And tried to guess which mark would come up.
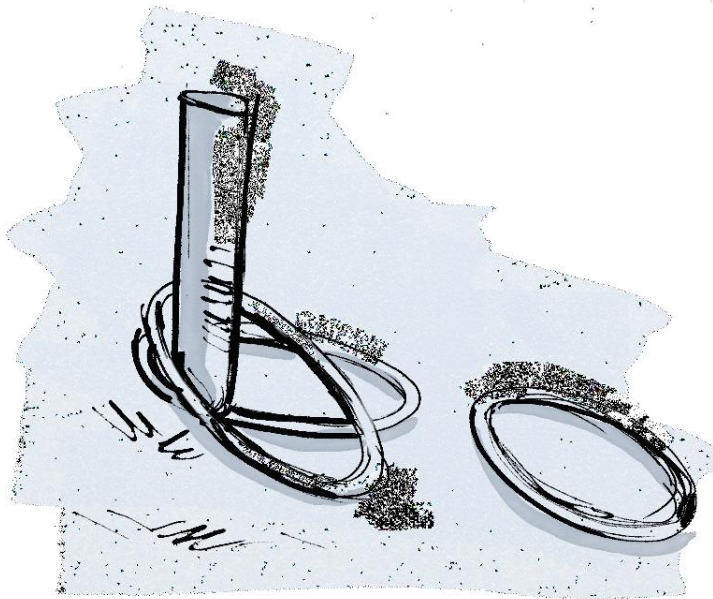
Found Materials

- Found material games are games that use whatever the maker has available. If you have belaying pins and cannon balls...

...you invent bowling.

Found Materials

- And if you have belaying pins and those loops that are used to attach sails to a mast…

…you invent ring toss games.

Found Materials

- If you have a smooth wooden deck, a couple of flat pieces of timber and a mop…

…you invent shuffleboard.

Games as Culture

How Culture Shapes The Games We Play

Games as Culture

- As civilization forms, games can also grow.
  - We have time to do something more than just trying to stay alive.
  - Transmission of culture as tribes coalesce into cities, then nations.
  - These games spread to other tribes, villages, nations.
  - People in a common profession (farming, shepherds, army).
  - Kids on the playgrounds.

Toys & Play

Where do Toys & Sports Come From?

Toys & Play

- A toy may seem a lot like a game. But it often doesn't have formalized rules.
  - Play is defined as unstructured activity.
  - No one attaches rules or victory conditions to Barbie.
  - Only adults really apply them to GI Joe.
  - Toys and Play allow for the development of skill.
  - Low risk practice for the "real world".

Toys & Play

- When a society's tech base rises, you get toys.
  - Kids can make their own toys.
  - Adults have an impetus to make better toys for kids.
  - Makes them happy.
  - Shuts them up on long trips.
  - This also improves the tech base, as craftsmen have more chances to practice their art.

Toys & Play

Transition between playground games and sports.

- Street/Playground Games. These are like knucklebones and early dice.
  - Marbles are another form.
  - Keep away, hide and seek are all games.
  - They also have some sports elements.
  - Tug of War: Sport or playground game?
  - Piggyback: Sport or wife selection tool in Finland? http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wife_carrying

Transition to Sports

- Sports are games too. But the emphasis is on physical prowess.
    - This limits the participants somewhat.
    - It also requires money, as the biggest and best talent can be expensive.
    - Sports in the early days were also a way of settling disputes without warfare.
    - We tend to view sports as physical contests, games as mental.
    - Spectators as a defining characteristic?

Transition to Sports

- When do we move from toys to sports to games?
  - When you don't have a lot of technology, you tend to get sports.
  - They actually use many of the same implements as warfare:
    - Balls = Missiles
    - Bats = Clubs, etc.

Games Defined

What is a Game?

What is a Game?

- Games are an activity.
- Games have components.
- Games have rules.
- Games involve conflict (players or game itself).
- Games have goals.
- Games usually involve decision making.
- Games are voluntary.

What is a Game?

- Games have an uncertain outcome.
- Games involve no material gain.
- Games are artificial, they are safe, and <u>usually</u> outside ordinary life.
- Games have systems or mechanics.

Transition to Complex Games

- More complex games can exist when you have the following:
  - Literacy
    - So you can write complex rules down
  - Mathematics
    - So you can work out the underlying numbers
  - Leisure or Priest Class
    - To pay artisans and crafters to make components
- The Game of Ur was used as a gift to neighboring kings.
- It also became a religious burial item for kings.

Transition to Complex Games

- As complexity arises, the reasons people game expand:
  - Morality games (Senet has elements of this)
  - Teaching games
  - Gambling games
  - Competitive games
  - Role assumption games

Assignments

Weekly Deliverables

Reading Assignment: Week 1

- Evolution of Games Handout

Writing Assignment: Week 1

- Start your Design Journal

Next Lecture

- Game Families
- Analyzing Games
- Designer Tools of the Trade
- GAT 110 Papers