CS4303 – Practical 4

**God is Dead**

# Introduction

This practical involved the design and creation of our own game utilising the Processing library. The game I ultimately decided to implement was the same game idea which I had pitched, God is Dead. Even though we were tasked with implementing the game using Processing, I also had various other elements, namely p5.js, the Node framework Express and aspects from the cloud computing company DigitalOcean, to complete my game. In God is Dead, I managed to create a game that relies on players being deductive, deceptive, and attentive.

# Design

## Genre

To prevent my game from being extremely like other games that would be created for this practical, and games which are currently incredibly popular, I initially decided that I would want to focus on a specific aspect of the game and implement it flawlessly. My choice, networking. Unlike Physics, AI, and Procedural Content Generation, Networking would allow me to explore a different aspect regarding video games, which was not as heavily covered in comparison to the former.

Upon deciding on a heavily networked game, I aimed at finding a core theme behind my game. I eventually chose philosophy. This was chosen as I wanted to make the players of my game heavily engaged with the game and requiring them to thoroughly contemplate their actions, as well as the events that would unfold before them. I had initially hoped to formulate an idea which would make the player question their own consciousness and existence, as well as that of objects within the game, as this branch of philosophy (phenomenology) had the potential to provide the exact user experience I desired. I managed to come up with a couple game ideas regarding this branch of philosophy, such as:

* A mystery free-for-all where you’re only certain of your own existence
* A puzzle/mystery game akin to “The Stanley Parable” where the player must explore and find clues to discover whether they are conscious or not

However, the ideas I came up with would have been either too complicated to accomplish within the timeline or have gameplay which could be synonymous as being “buggy”. For example, with the user finding themselves “teleported” to a bed at the start of a level after they believe they have moved around, but they had never woken up in the first place.

Instead, I turned to deduction. While not as heavily linked with phenomenology as I had hoped, this allowed me to define the genre of my game as a Social-Deduction Party Game (also referred to as a Social-Deduction Strategy RPG in my pitch). Despite lacking the ability to incite an existential crisis in the player, this game genre allows me to ensure that players are not passive participants. Players, in order to increase their chances of winning, must be fully invested.

# Context

## Town of Salem

A significant aspect of the game genre is the fact that God is Dead is a party game. Unlike Town of Salem, God is Dead is designed to be played with your friends in the same room as opposed to strangers on the internet.