

I plan to engage with *The Iliad* and the wider myth of the Trojan War. I will explore how pretexts are used to justify and glorify war, both in ancient and modern contexts. My chosen medium is a side-scrolling video game.

I chose the Trojan War for my material because of its enduring resonance as a depiction of war. It's timeless. *The Iliad* has powerful themes that have been used in art and literature for centuries and applied to contemporary wars, especially in war poetry. It touches on so many themes, wrath and glory and grief and mortality that will always be applicable to warfare no matter the time period. I wanted to choose material that applied to modern issues. However, I don't want to touch too much on the themes of *The Iliad* or follow the narrative of the Trojan War too closely, rather use the myth as a touchstone for war in the cultural consciousness. The main idea I want to explore in this project is how pretexts are used to justify and glorify war. In the myth, Helen allows the Greeks to frame their war on Troy as a moral necessity. By drawing on the story of Troy, I aim to explore how this same language of righteousness and necessity continues to surface in modern conflicts, where wars are often presented as acts of liberation, protection, or justice.

My creative vision is to explore these ideas through a side-scrolling video game in the style of ancient Greek pottery art. The game will use artwork and character designs taken directly from Greek vases. The contrast between dialogue and gameplay will reveal an increasing distance between the rhetoric of the war and its reality. The player will discover that they are not fighting heroic battles to rescue Helen, but capturing and plundering villages around Troy while the supposed cause of the war remains absent.

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As the player moves through the levels, I want them to question the justifications given by the narrative. I plan to emphasise the destruction and loss of life in contrast to the dialogue or game instructions which will highlight the glory and nobility of the battle. I will also include references to twentieth- and twenty-first-century wars, with scenes and dialogue that echo modern propaganda to show how this same pattern of justification continues across time.