Ludology

- Game Study
  - Analysis of abstract and formal systems that games describe
  - Interactivity
  - Dynamic, always changing
  - Systems Approach
  - Non-linear
- Representations are incidental
- Juul’s (2001) problem of translation of story
  - Stories can be translated among movies, books, and theatre
  - Games differ from these: different idea of time, different relations of player/game vs. reader/viewer vs. story world
- Games are not media (Lantz)
  - Conversations between player and game system

Narratology

- Uncharted 2
- Heavy Rain
- Games are understood through the stories they tell
- Definitions:
  - J. Hillis Miller: Components of a narrative:
    - Situation (initial state, change, insight = events)
  - Character: Personification of events (via a system of representations, signs)
  - Form: Representation is constituted by patterning and repetition
  - Braven: Mind as creator of meanings through narrative, not information processing

Group Activity 1

- Role of Narrative
  - Can game narrative be considered in the same way it is for books, movies, etc.?
  - Do all games have narrative?
  - How do you think we should describe the relation of narrative and games?

Structuring Narrative

- Story told by the game
- Player Experience
  - Each session is unique
- Greater Meaning
  - Tetris as an analogy
- Embedded or Emergent Narrative
- Micro-narratives
Model for Game Narrative

Ways to Portray Narrative

- Narrative Descriptors (Salen and Zimmerman)
  - Making sense of the world
    - Characters
    - Setting
    - Events
  - Cut scenes
  - Audio/text
  - Events/Situations

Cutscenes (Salen and Zimmerman)

- Surveillance or Planning tool
- Game Play Catapult
- Scene and Mood Setting
- Choice and Consequence
- Rhythm and Pacing
- Player Reward
- Halo Wars
- WoW - Frozen Throne Intro
- WoW Frozen throne 2

Using Narrative

- Core Principles (Salen & Zimmerman)
  - Goal of the Game
  - Conflict
  - Uncertainty
  - Core mechanics
  - Narrative Space

Educational Games

- Uses for narrative
  - Delivery of learning content
  - Motivator
  - Context
  - Scaffold
    - Simulations (Molecules and Minds)
  - Affect
    - COD: Modern Warfare 2
    - Ethics (not so much for educational games)

Group Activity 2

- Develop a narrative for your educational game!
  - What are you trying to convey?
  - How will it be structured?
  - Apply the core principles we discussed.