Alternative Scholarship Through Deck Based Role-Playing Games

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AGENDA

MOTIVATION
Why LIS needs games?

GOAL
How is the game used?

GAME DESIGN
Introduction to the game

Future ideas
MOTIVATION
Games in Libraries

Libraries have a history of housing games for their patrons since the mid-nineteenth century. (Martin and Martínez, 2016 & Nicholson, 2013 & Elkins and Hollister, 2020)

The oldest chess club still existing was founded by the San Francisco Mechanics Institute Library. (Nicholson, 2013)

Games are still an important part of our society, the impact of games and the social acceptance of games continues to grow. (Elkins & Hollister, 2020)
• ~77% of US libraries have games/game supports in their collections BUT very few LIS courses contain gaming content (Nicholson, 2009)

• LIS educators are primarily in a demographic that doesn’t play games. Many have no previous exposure to games during their MLIS degree. (Elkins & Hollister, 2020)

• LIS curriculum gap suggests that new librarians are underprepared to understand and support games & gaming when they enter the workforce. (Elkins & Hollister, 2020)
MOTIVATION

Why we need games in LIS

Educational benefits:

• Gaming connected with curriculum content areas can help develop pro-social and critical thinking skills

• “Exposure to games can change the mindset of those participating not only about games, but also about approaches to information and expertise.” (Martin & Martinez 2016)

• Builds community

• Creates a lot of choice for master level students who previously only had heavily scaffolded education (Martin & Martinez, 2016)

• Pre-services librarians to understand the education value of games

• Increases awareness of game genres, game culture, and game communities
GOALS

• Create a pedagogical tool to introduce LIS concepts and ideas & to reinforce concepts learned in class
• Create greater engagement with the course material and provide multiple methods for approaching material (Gee, 2005)
• Introduce students to game-based learning and RPG/deck-based games
• Help them understand game play and game communities to understand the needs of their patrons

• The goal of game design is to produce a game that offers the player the opportunity for meaningful play. (Salen & Zimmerman, 2003).
Concepts to consider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9001</th>
<th>9005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is librarianship?</td>
<td>Organization culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is librarianship a profession?</td>
<td>Management structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information commons</td>
<td>Applying to jobs (Resume, cover letter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyright</td>
<td>Disaster planning etc.</td>
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</tbody>
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Example encounters: Copyright infringement, fire/flood, pandemic, budget cuts

Professional setbacks/perks also speak to these concepts

Post-game Debrief:

- How did you react to the encounters you came across?
- How did you work together to prioritize and balance the encounter load?
- Were the encounters accurately weighted to real life?
- How would you react in this situation in a real setting?
- What surprised or challenged you?
GAME DESIGN

Concepts for ARC Points & Skills
• D&D Classes inspired Title Skills
• D&D Skills inspired our General Skills
• ARC Points started off Health Points/Stat Points (D&D)
• Reach & Advocacy came from understanding the role the public players in Librarianship (Superman 64 video game)

Concepts for Encounters:
• ALA’s Future Trends (2014)
• News & Current Events
• Personal Experience

Mechanics of the game are derived from many sources
• Dungeon & Dragons (Wizards of the Coast)
• Munchkin (Steve Jackson Games)
• Magic (Wizards of the Coast)
• Chez Geek (Steve Jackson Games)
• Fiasco (Bully Pulpit Games)
Players work together to create enough impact through advocacy, reach, and credibility (ARC points) to overcome encounters they face in each year of their career. Encounters are overcome when their impact score is reduced to zero. Through their career players get promotions, enabling them to overcome higher encounters. The game ends when the card deck is complete. Roleplay to discuss various issues facing librarianship is encouraged!"

- Objectives, “Our LIS Careers Game Packet”
OUR LIS CAREERS

Character Sheets & ARC POINTS
Encounters

- **Level 2: Copyright Infringement**
  - Impact: 20
  - Proceeds from the sale of the infringing copy go to the player.
  - Affects 2 players.

- **Level 3: Budget Cuts**
  - Impact: 40
  - Each player must choose 2 skills to abandon.

- **Level 4: Fire/Flood**
  - Impact: 60
  - Each player must choose 2 skills to abandon to prevent the fire/flood.

- **Level 5: Corporate Influence**
  - Impact: 80
  - Each player must choose 2 skills to abandon to avoid influence.

Perks

- **Public Figure**
  - Can spend 2 Credibility points as an action.
  - Immune to & avoid non-critical actions.
  - Need 5 Credibility to use this card.

- **Social Media Manager**
  - Can dedicate one point from every ARC category to a problem as an action.
  - Needs 5 Reach to use this card.

- **Keynote Speaker**
  - Give one action to another player.
  - Need 5 Advocacy to use this card.

Professional Development

- **You host a conference**
  - +2 Skill points to each player.

- **You improve local accessibility**
  - +1 Skill point to each player.

- **You earn a new certification**
  - +2 Skill points to each player.

Professional Setbacks

- **Learn new office equipment**
  - -1 Skill point to each player.

- **Sick Leave**
  - -1 Skill point to each player.

- **Stuck in a Meeting**
  - -1 Skill point to each player.
In depth:
Many of the encounters were directly inspired by the ALA future trends

http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends
FUTURE IDEAS

Open Source

• Many games have licenses that allow enthusiasts to invent and share their own material, for example, D&D has an open game license

• We intend for “Our LIS Careers” to also be freely shared and modified by teachers and others to adapt the game for their classroom and personal fun.

• With community involvement this teaching tool can become richer overtime!
References


