

Narratology & Ludology Assignment **Videogame Theory & Analysis Course**

For this week, we are examining what is now considered to be a red herring in the field of videogame studies: the so-called narratology vs. ludology “debate.” For many games scholars, the notion that games ought to—indeed, even can be—defined singularly as either interactive narratives or by their structural activities is a silly question to begin with. It depends on context, perspective, genre, and a whole host of other variables, depending upon the research question. Trying to define what a videogame is based on singular criteria ignores all of the situational and contextual factors that are key to this nascent and ever-changing medium.

For class today, I’d like you to figure out for yourselves why the current trend in games scholarship is to reject the narratology/ludology debate. You will work on a group exercise whereby you build on your knowledge and experience with last week’s readings and activities and apply this week’s theories as well.

The Activity

In groups of no more than three, I want you (as a group) to choose one of the following perspectives:

- Player or Player Community
- Designer/Developer/Programmer
- Film/Literature/Media Scholar (i.e., narratologist)
- Traditional Game Scholar (i.e., ludologist)

Your goal is to write a short argument that will be presented to the class at 12:00 that will make the case for studying games from your perspective. Your goal is to persuade the rest of the class that your perspective is the “right” one and is the most versatile and pervasive definition of games that we have.

In your argument, you should cite authors read for this week (Frasca, Juul, Jenkins, Matteas & Stern) AND at least 1-2 videogames that help support your point.

The goals and objectives for this exercise are to make a solid argument from your perspective, to cite examples and theory from the text, and to apply that argument to one or two games.

Good luck and have fun!