

# English 391

## Games and Interactive Fiction: A Study in Genres

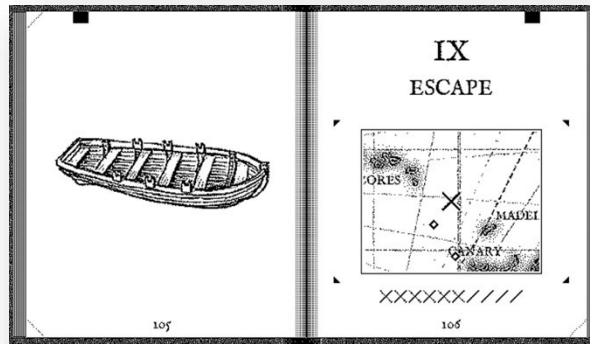
### Spring 2023

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#### Course Description

*Games prompt us to play, but how do they tell stories? And how do those stories correspond with established genres of fiction? We'll survey genres such as fantasy, science fiction, mystery, metafiction, horror, and comedy to consider how each affects our understanding of narrative and play. Then we'll attend to games that defy genre distinctions or invent their own. I'll ask you to select a game to study throughout the term, and I'll assume no previous experience with games or genre. As the course unfolds, you'll learn to write critically about genre and explain why it matters.*



*Image: Return of the Obra Dinn (2018), by Lucas Pope*

#### Assignments:

- Three short responses to assigned games (20% x 3); one response may be revised
- Workshops on key concepts in games and genre (totalling 15%)
- Final response to assigned games (25%)

#### Proposed Texts (*you will not be required to purchase any of these*):

- Wren Briar, Tim Dawson, et al., *Unpacking* (2021)
- Matthew Seiji Burns and Zach Barth, *Eliza* (2019)
- Naphtali Faulkner et al., *Umurangi Generation* (2020)
- Geography of Robots, *NORCO* (2022)
- Leighton Gray, Vernon Shaw, et al., *Dream Daddy* (2017)
- Brendan Patrick Hennessy and Izzy Marbella, *Birdland* (2015)
- Meg Jayanth et al., *80 Days* (2014)
- Frank Lantz, *Universal Paperclips* (2017)
- Greg Lobanov, Lena Raine, et al., *Chicory: A Colorful Tale* (2021)
- Momo Pixel, *Hair Nah* (2017)
- Playdead, *Limbo* (2010)
- Lucas Pope, *Return of the Obra Dinn* (2018)
- Davey Wreden and William Pugh, *The Stanley Parable* (2013; 2022)