

# Sean C. Duncan

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## Current Research: The Gamers As Designers Project

In order to uncover learning and literacy practices in engagement with “new media,” I am studying a range of online discussions about videogames, identifying the forms of design thinking that arise in communities of passionate game players. In an age in which the Internet increasingly features user-generated content (e.g., “Web 2.0”), understanding *gamers as designers* may help us to better characterize learning and “new literacies” in the increasingly ubiquitous, networked contexts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Other Research Interests

Informal scientific reasoning; argumentation; digital media literacy; learning and literacy implications of online participatory culture; cognitive science and computational modeling.

## Education

Ph. D. (expected 2009), University of Wisconsin-Madison, Curriculum & Instruction (Major: Educational Technology; Distributed Minor: Learning With New Media). Tentative thesis title: *Gamers As Designers: Online Communities As Informal Design Spaces For Learning and Literacies*. Advisor: Constance Steinkuehler.

M.A. (December 1997), Bowling Green State University, Cognitive Psychology. Advisor: Ryan D. Tweney.

B. Phil. (May 1993), Miami University. Major: Interdisciplinary Studies (Cognitive Science). Advisor: Christopher R. Wolfe.

## Selected Publications & Manuscripts

Duncan, S. C. (in preparation). To play is to design: An analysis of player/designer interactions In *World of Warcraft*. Manuscript for T. Wright, D. Embrick, and A. Lukacs (Eds). *Utopic Dreams and Apocalyptic Fantasies: Playing In Virtual Realms*. New York: Lexington Press.

Duncan, S. C. (in preparation). Gamers as designers: Tracking design literacies within online communities. Manuscript for *E-Learning*, upcoming special issue on game design literacy.

Duncan, S. C. (in preparation). World of craft: Gamer communities and the philosophy of design. Manuscript for L. Cuddy (Ed.), *World of Warcraft and Philosophy*. Chicago: Open Court.

Duncan, S. C. (accepted for publication, Mar 2 2009). Paradigmatic and narrative thought In *Zelda* timeline debates. Submitted to the *International Journal of Gaming and Computer-Mediated Simulations*.

Duncan, S. C. and Gee, J. P. (2008). The hero of timelines: Argumentation and epistemology in *Zelda* chronology debates. In L. Cuddy (Ed.), *The Legend of Zelda and Philosophy*. Chicago: Open Court, 85-101.

Squire, K., Duncan, S. C., DeVane, B., Wolfenstein, M. and Hunter, R. (2008). Gamer communities, design, and learning. In K. Schrier, C. Swain, and M. Wagner (Ed.), *Proceedings of Sandbox 2008: An ACM SIGGRAPH Videogame Symposium*. New York: Association for Computing Machinery, 31-33.

Steinkuehler, C. A. and Duncan, S. C. (2008). Scientific habits of mind in virtual worlds. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 17 (6), 530-543.

Steinkuehler, C. A., Duncan, S. C., and Simkins, D. W. (2007). Massively multiplayer online games & education: An outline of research. In C. Chinn, G. Erkins, and S. Puntambekar, (Eds.) *Proceedings of the Eighth Conference of Computer Supported Collaborative Learning*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, 674-684.

Duncan, S. C. & Tweney, R. D. (1997). *Mathematica: A flexible design environment for neural networks*. *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, & Computers*, 29, 194-199.

## Invited Presentations

Games, I. A., and Duncan, S. C. (May 2009). Videogames and 21<sup>st</sup> century education. Invited keynote and workshops, to be presented at Area IV Learning Technology Center, Rantoul, IL.

Duncan, S. C. and Games, I. A. (November 2008). Enhancing education with online and electronic games. Invited keynote and workshops, presented at Networking For Information 2008, Galena, IL.

Duncan, S. C. (September 2008). Designed narrative In games and online communities. Invited talk, presented to University of Wisconsin Learning Technology and Distance Education (Engage) Group.

Duncan, S. C. and Dikkers, S. (April 2008). Games, libraries, and learning. Invited talk, presented to American Association Of School Librarians (Region III), Madison, WI.

Duncan, S. C. and Steinkuehler, C. A. (July 2007). Learning in virtual worlds and fan communities. Invited talk, presented to AT&T Research, Morristown, NJ.

## Recent and Upcoming Presentations

Games, I. A., Duncan, S. C., and Wolfenstein, M. (May 2009). Promoting a designer mindset with games. Panel to be presented at Games For Change, New York, NY.

Duncan, S. C. (April 2009). Gamer communities as design spaces. Paper to be presented at the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

Duncan, S. C. (April 2009). Narrative and paradigmatic thinking in informal design spaces. To be presented in symposium entitled "Design thinking in new media spaces" at the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

Steinkuehler, C., Duncan, S., King, E., Simkins, D., Fahser-Herro, D., and Alagoz, E. (April 2009). Mixed methods research in virtual worlds. To be presented in symposium entitled "Tracing learning across, within, and between 'real' and 'virtual' worlds: A discussion of methods, ethics, and findings" at the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

Steinkuehler, C. and Duncan, S. C. (August 2008). Informal scientific reasoning in online game forums. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Boston, MA.

Duncan, S. C. (August 2008). The hero of timeline(s): Gamers, designers, and *The Legend of Zelda*. Panel presentation at Sandbox 08 (ACM SIGGRAPH co-located event), Los Angeles, CA.

Duncan, S. C. (July 2008). Design, in and around games. Panel organized and presented at Games+Learning+Society 4.0, Madison, WI.

Duncan, S. C. (July 2008). Toward a taxonomy of gamer forums. Presented at Games+Learning+Society 4.0, Madison, WI [Poster]. Awarded Outstanding Student Poster Award (Theoretical).

Duncan, S. C. and Gaydos, M. (July 2008). What it means to rock? A cognitive analysis of expertise in Guitar Hero II. Presented at Games+Learning+Society 4.0, Madison, WI.

Duncan, S. C. (March 2008). Literacy implications of online fan debates. Roundtable presentation at American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.

Steinkuehler, C. A., Simkins, D. W., Duncan, S. C., Johnson, B. & King, E. (July 2007). Mixed-methods research in virtual worlds. Presented at the 2007 Games+Learning+Society Conference, Madison, WI.

Steinkuehler, C. A., Simkins, D. W., & Duncan, S. C. (July 2007). Pop cosmopolitanism in virtual worlds. Presented at the 2007 Games+Learning+Society Conference, Madison, WI.

Steinkuehler, C. A., Duncan, S. C., and Simkins, D. W. (July 2007). Massively multiplayer online games & education: An outline of research. Presented at the 2007 Computer Supported Collaborative Learning Conference, New Brunswick, NJ.

Steinkuehler, C. A. & Duncan, S. C. (February 2007). Working with forum data: Methods, analysis, pitfalls, and successes. Presented at Games+Learning+Society brownbag, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI.

Steinkuehler, C. A. & Duncan, S. C. (February 2007). Scientific habits of mind in virtual worlds. Presented at the 2007 Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, San Francisco, CA.

## Selected Teaching Experience

Guest Lecturer, University of Wisconsin-Madison (June - December 2008). Invited lectures on games, virtual worlds, and learning for courses on Human Abilities and Learning (Educational Psychology), Critical Internet Studies (Media & Cultural Studies), and The Role of Play in Child Development (Educational Psychology).

Advisor, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Miami University, Oxford, OH (January 2002 – May 2005). Individualized degree advising and advising of year-long interdisciplinary senior theses (ranging in topics from cognitive science to filmmaking to game studies).

Visiting Instructor, Social Systems I: “Stuff: The Life Cycle of Material Goods”, Miami University (August 2003 – December 2003; August 2005 – December 2005). Team-taught interdisciplinary first-year course on social scientific interpretations of consumerism and consumption.

Visiting Instructor, Interactive Media Studies Practicum, Miami University (August 2004 – December 2004). Assisted senior-level capstone course in interactive media studies.

Visiting Instructor, Advanced Seminar: “Comics & Sequential Art”, Miami University (January 2004 – May 2004). Junior-level seminar on cognitive and social interpretations of graphical narratives.

Visiting Instructor, Social Systems I: “The Self”, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Miami University (August 2002 – December 2002). Team-taught first-year interdisciplinary course on self and identity.

Visiting Instructor, Interdisciplinary Technology: “Webs We Weave”, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Miami University (August 2001 – December 2001; August 2002 – December 2002). Team-taught first-year course on the social, cultural, and educational impact of information technologies

## Selected Research and Professional Experience

Project Assistant, University of Wisconsin-Madison (August 2006 – present). Employed under a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Digital Media Literacy Grant grant (for Dr. Constance Steinkuehler) to investigate informal scientific reasoning in virtual worlds.

Manager of Digital Technology, Project *Dragonfly*, Miami University, Oxford, OH (February 2005 – May 2006). Management and development of collaborative web platform utilized for distance learning in educator professional development.

Usability Intern, Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA (May 2001 – August 2001). Usability assessment and analysis of user interfaces on Microsoft web properties (MSN.com, Carpoint.com, MSN Explorer web browser).

Research Analyst, Study Skills Laboratory, Bowling Green State University (May 2000 – August 2000). Conducted outcome analyses to assess effectiveness of mentoring programs.

## Service

Reviewer, Games+Learning+Society 5.0 Conference, June 2009 (Madison, WI)

Reviewer, 4<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games, April 2009 (Port Canaveral, FL).

Reviewer, International Conference on Facets of Virtual Environments, July 2009 (Berlin, Germany)

Reviewer, Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 2009 (San Diego, CA)

Reviewer, International Conference on Advances in Computer Entertainment Technology, December 2008 (Yokohama, Japan)

Coordinator, Games+Learning+Society 4.0 Poster Session, July 2008 (Madison, WI)

Conference Staff, Games+Learning+Society 4.0 Conference, July 2008 (Madison, WI)

Reviewer, Games+Learning+Society 3.0 Conference, July 2007 (Madison, WI)

Conference Staff, Games+Learning+Society 3.0 Conference, July 2007 (Madison, WI)

## Selected Media & Press

Thompson, C. (September 9 2008) "Games without frontiers: How videogames blind us with science." *Wired*. Available online:  
[http://www.wired.com/gaming/gamingreviews/commentary/games/2008/09/gamesfrontiers\\_0908](http://www.wired.com/gaming/gamingreviews/commentary/games/2008/09/gamesfrontiers_0908)

LeBlanc, S. (August 17 2008). "Studies: Video games can aid students, surgeons." *Associated Press* (Massachusetts and national news wires). Reported widely, including on CNN.com, MSNBC.com, NPR.com, Yahoo! News, USAtoday.com, FoxNews.com, Guardian.co.uk, and gaming blogs (including Kotaku.com, Gamepolitics.com, and WoWInsider.com). For example:  
[http://www.usatoday.com/tech/gaming/2008-08-18-video-games-learning\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/gaming/2008-08-18-video-games-learning_N.htm)

Thomas, R. (November 27 2007). "Video games move off the couch." *Capital Times* (Madison, WI).

Available online:

[http://www.madison.com/tct/archives/index.php?archAction=arch\\_read&a\\_from=search&a\\_file=%2Ftct%2F2007%2F11%2F27%2F0711270257.php](http://www.madison.com/tct/archives/index.php?archAction=arch_read&a_from=search&a_file=%2Ftct%2F2007%2F11%2F27%2F0711270257.php)

Koskovich, E. (June 23 2007). "Video game addictions? A medical disorder?" *NBC 15* (Madison, WI television affiliate). Transcript available online: <http://www.nbc15.com/home/headlines/8142547.html>

Contributor (2006-present), Joystick101 games and learning collaborative weblog.

## Additional information

References, course syllabi, and writing samples provided upon request.