

## Week 2

### *Homework Questions*

#### **What advergames have you played? Did they influence a purchase outside of the game?**

I used to play virtually with *Webkinz* when I was a kid, and this definitely influenced purchases outside of the game. We could create a free *Webkinz* account that included a default pet to play with friends, but this led us to ask our parents for the officially branded stuffed animals. The game brought our imaginations to life and simulated how we interacted with our stuffed animals irl. Many of my friends had collections.

#### **Why do the advergames "tooth protector" and "escape" work? What makes "chase the chuckwagon" and "shark bait" fail?**

*Tooth Protector* and the *Escape* game work as advergames because their mechanics demonstrate a product's functionality, as it would be experienced in real life, and reflect the brand's purpose. They encourage the player to consider their products as a logical system rather than a moralistic one, and allow them to challenge a brand's claims through the gameplay experience. *Chase the Chuckwagon* and *Shark Bait* fail because their mechanics are disconnected from what is being advertised, and are described by the reading as "forgettable".

#### **What does Volvo's "drive for life" accomplish?**

Volvo's *Drive for Life* allows players to simulate their safety features, and then remove them, showing the difference that improved mechanical safety can make. It addresses "procedural rhetoric about mechanical consequence" and has a greater impact than purely visual or verbal forms of demonstration.

#### **What company used in-advergame advertising?**

Bed Bath & Beyond used in-advergame advertising in the *Dodge Stow 'n Go Challenge*. Their store was featured as one of the locations the player could select in the game.

### **What was one of the first home-console advergames and what beverage was it for?**

One of the first home-console advergames was *Kool-Aid Man*. The game was released for the Atari 2600 and Mattel Intellivision systems to sell more Kool-Aid. The beverage company also incentivized consumers to obtain the game through a mail order program. This required consumers of the product to collect purchase points (equivalent to 62.5 gallons of the drink).

### **What makes “the toilet training” game sophisticated and do you agree?**

“The Toilet Training” game is sophisticated because its focus is on an undesired lifestyle to promote the product. I do agree that it’s sophisticated because it poses a social argument regarding alcoholic overindulgence and encourages players to question their own consumption practices.

### **What do advergames and anti-advergames have in common, and what principles do they share?**

Both advergames and anti-advergames use procedural rhetoric to support an argument. The rules are designed with the player’s perspective in mind, and encourage discovery within the gameplay experience. The difference is that while advergames are trying to connect with the consumer to sell a product, anti-advergames are typically created with the intention of challenging social systems or corporate influence.

## ***Monopoly (CAT-OPOLY)***

### **What made the experience fun or not?**

I’ve always enjoyed playing Monopoly. The version we played had additional rules that we had to play by, and this greatly impacted the outcome of the game. I was player 1 (middle class white males) and played by the standard monopoly rules, but other players had significant advantages and disadvantages based on their socioeconomic status.

### **What is the motivating factor to get or keep players playing?**

There are competitive elements and a sense of agency over decision making, even though the game's outcome is primarily due to chance. Buying up properties and accumulating wealth is a motivating factor in the game. Women and minority players had major disadvantages and therefore expressed a lack of the motivation that players in the middle class and 1% experienced.

### **Is the game persuasive, and what is it trying to get you to do outside of the game?**

Yes, this version of the Monopoly is persuasive, especially when played by the additional set of rules we were given. The additional rule sheet simulates economic divides by giving certain players systemic advantages and disadvantages. It demonstrates how starting conditions and social perception can drastically change the outcome of the game. Outside the game, it encourages players to reflect on privilege and financial inequality.

### **What is the game's metaphor and which of the game's mechanics stand out?**

Monopoly on its own is a metaphor for capitalism, but this version expands that metaphor to account for generational wealth and the systemic marginalization of minority groups. Players start out with different amounts of money and disparities in the accumulation of wealth which are standout mechanics for the game's metaphor.

### **Describe the game in 3 sentences or in the form of a haiku.**

*CAT-OPOLY* is a version of Monopoly where players move around the board buying different cat breeds instead of properties in the traditional game. Players can then buy litterboxes to place on squares they own and collect rent from the others. The goal is to earn the most money and avoid going bankrupt.

## ***The McDonalds Game:***

### **What made the experience fun or not?**

The game was fun, however I found the rules to be confusing at first. There is a lot going on at once and it is difficult to multitask the different scenes.

### **What is the motivating factor to get or keep players playing?**

The motivating factor is the risk of going bankrupt. The player works to grow the business, which includes farming soy and cattle, managing the franchise, and the corporate office.

### **Is the game persuasive, and what is it trying to get you to do outside of the game?**

*The McDonald's Game* is a persuasive anti-advergame against the chain's practices and corporate greed. It is trying to get players to question corporate ethics and think about where their food comes from outside of the game.

### **What is the game's metaphor and which of the game's mechanics stand out?**

The game's metaphor is about running a fast food chain and being forced to make the uncomfortable financial decisions in order to stay in business. It sheds light on the environmental and ethical tradeoffs to mass produced meals. The standout mechanic is having to multitask multiple pages while making these quick decisions, simulating what goes on behind the scenes.

### **Describe the game in 3 sentences or in the form of a haiku.**

The McDonald's Game effectively makes a statement against harmful profit driven corporate decision making. It was fun to play and engage in the discovery gameplay experience, as it allowed us to challenge what we have been sold by these companies. I want to eat fast food even less than before having played the game.

### ***CoolSpot:***

#### **What made the experience fun or not?**

I did not enjoy this game. Maybe the controls are different on Mac, but I thought the controls were really difficult. For example, clicking the control button at the same time as clicking the right movement arrow caused my laptop to switch homescreens mid-game. It was really frustrating to get around the obstacles, with limited controls, and made it less fun to play.

**What is the motivating factor to get or keep players playing?**

Progressing through the game and collecting other red dots/ points. The player feels motivated to kill the crabs, but I was unable to get past the first level and don't know what objectives change in the game.

**Is the game persuasive, and what is it trying to get you to do outside of the game?**

Yes, the game aims to get the player to think of, and therefore buy, 7-Up outside of the game.

**What is the game's metaphor and which of the game's mechanics stand out?**

The metaphor is an experience where the 7-Up mascot must face challenges in a game designed around the soda company's branding. The game uses the design of Spot, the mascot, to represent the brand's persona, and how they want their consumers to feel when drinking 7-Up. The standout mechanics is the collection of the red dots, jumping over obstacles, and blasting enemies with soda bubbles in order to free the other trapped dots.

**Describe the game in 3 sentences or in the form of a haiku.**

*Cool Spot* is a laterally progressive platform game where the player controls the 7-Up mascot through different levels of the game. The main objective is to collect Points and rescue trapped "Spots" while avoiding enemies. Players must avoid these obstacles and collect items to progress in the game.