ENGL 447: Gaming Culture   Spring 2014
How We Use Story and Play to Make Our World Better

- **Does our behavior in virtual environments have anything to do with our behavior in "the real world"?**
- **Why do people play games?**
- **Can games change the world? And would they still be fun if they did?**
- **Is violence in gaming cathartic or de-sensitizing?**
- **Are immersive games like *Skyrim* or *Mass Effect* interactive novels?**
- **Should buying in-game characters, equipment, customization or "property" be taxed?**

If some or all of these questions sound interesting, look into ENGL 447 this Spring. This new course explores these questions and the concept of play as recreation, specifically, re-creation of the self. Gamers work hard in their play, but what that work is creating is often hard to pin down. We will explore how play is reshaping reality.

Partial Reading List:

Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*
Ernest Cline's *Ready Player One*
George Elias Skaff, Richard Garfield (the creator of *Magic: The Gathering*) et al, *Characteristics of Games*
Jane McGonagall's *Reality Is Broken*

Broad Overview of Course Activities:
Out of class, you will be reading and writing as well as playing games in groups and independently. We will spend class time discussing our reading and our experiences with reading and game-playing. Additionally in class, together we will work to build theories about why we are drawn to the virtual realities of our reading and gaming, as well as how we are influenced by these virtual activities.

Meeting Time: MW 2-3:20
Pre-requisites: Completion of Sophomore English Requirements
Professor: Bill Carroll (Feel free to direct questions to him at william.carroll@acu.edu)