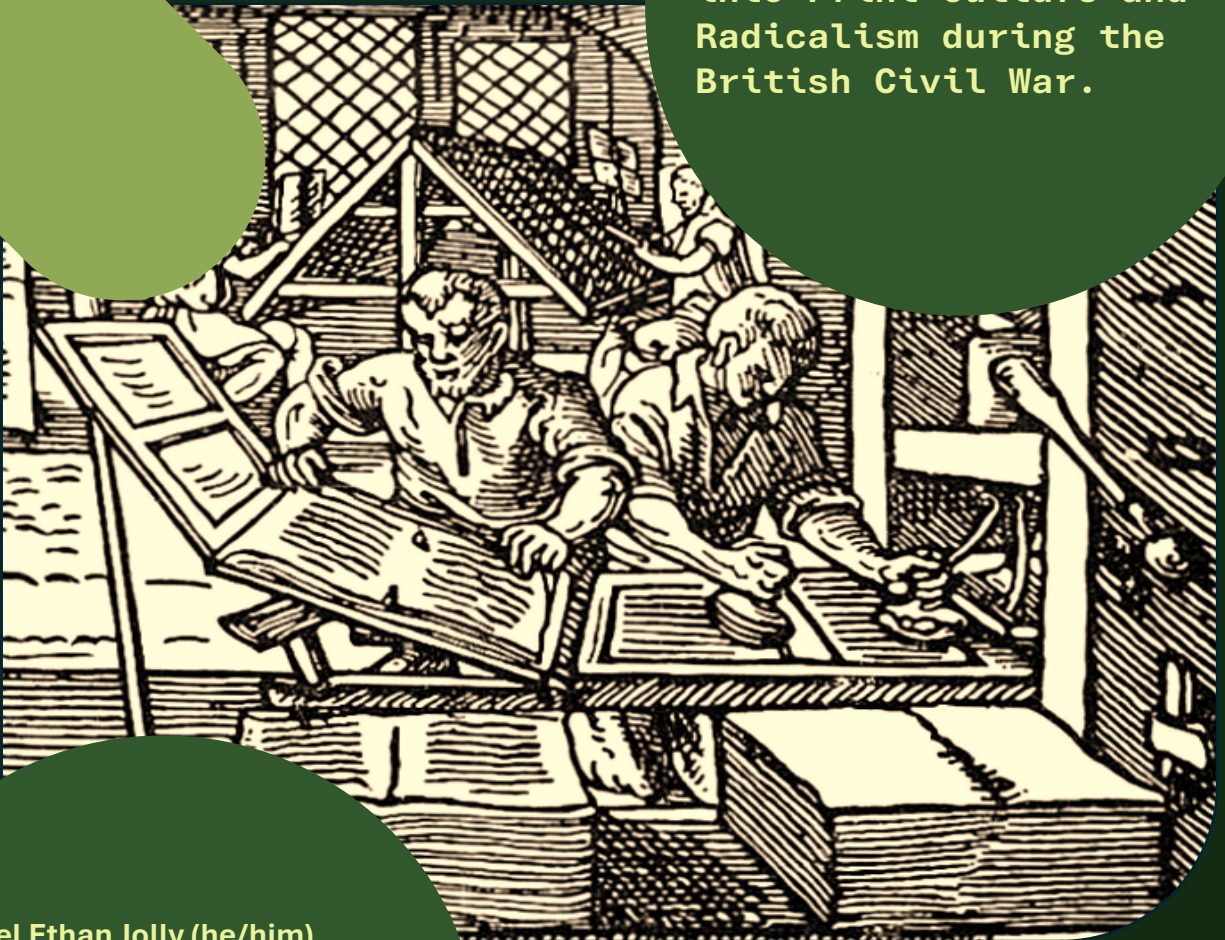


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CYCLICAL LUDO-HISTORY RESEARCH:

How Ludo-Narrative Can
Communicate and Inform
Historical Research
into Print Culture and
Radicalism during the
British Civil War.



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Dissertation submitted in
fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts in
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Figure 1 'Der Buchdrucker' in *Eygentliche
Beschreibung aller Stände auff Erden*



Keywords:

Serious Games, Diggers, Heritage, Historical Empathy, Game Design

Abstract:

This dissertation aims to utilise game design methodologies to create a game proto-type representing 17th century print culture and radical Diggers movement. By presenting the period authentically, the board game will aim to encourage player historical empathy. The game performs two key roles: heritage tool and research practice. This project aims to test this method of history's effectiveness in fostering historical empathy and to encouraging unique research practices. This dissertation examines the historical record and academic writing of the Diggers and 17th century print culture to create a proto-type board game. It playtests it with participants and gathers their feedback. This then integrates into the board game's next proto-type creation. This cycle of creating, testing, and re-creating forms the dissertation's main demonstration as a method for researchers to change their approach to creating history whilst showing that game design reveals unique historical research questions unique to this methodology.

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Author Declaration:

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the Manchester Metropolitan University. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text, and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree. The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination either in the United Kingdom or elsewhere.

Signed: Samuel Ethan Jolly

Date: 19th September 2025

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1: INTRODUCTION

1.1: BACKGROUND

This dissertation grew from observations on 17th-century woodblock printing. Often, printers used woodblocks to create pictorial representations on prints. These blocks found many uses, and printers traded their collections to colleagues.¹ The trade of these small woodblocks mirrors resource management found in many board games. Connecting 17th-century print ephemera and board games spurred a conceptual 'serious game'. It began on the theme of contemporary print culture, particularly radical print culture, prominent during the 17th century.² In a previous dissertation, the creation of a historical serious board game found success. This present dissertation aims to consolidate the processes used in that previous dissertation with new research and deeper

¹ A. Franklin, 'Making Sense of Broadside Ballad Illustrations in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in *Studies in Ephemera: Text and Image in Eighteenth-Century Print*, eds. by K. D. Murphy & S. O'Driscoll (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), p. 170; S. Chess, 'Woodcuts: Methods and Meanings of Ballad Illustration', *English Broadside Ballad Archive*, 2007 <<https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/woodcuts>> [accessed 22 August 2025].

² N. Becu, E. Escano, D. Marcos, & E. N. Speelman, 'Serious Games and Citizen Science; from parallel pathways to greater synergies', *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, Vol. 64 (2023), pp. 1-9.



methodological techniques. The aim is to develop a methodological guide, heritage tool and reflective account.³

General public history glosses over print culture and radicalism of the 17th-century. It does not feature as a statutory part of the national curriculum, at GCSE level, nor the focus of any major UK museums.⁴ Few pieces of media portray these topics. There is only one game on contemporary print culture: the board game *Printing Press* (2023). Its is present as a small mechanic or item in games like *Sid Meier's Civilization* series. Even the wider media about the 17th-century shies away from print culture and radicalism. Most pieces of all kinds focus on military themes. *To Kill a*

³ As seen in my undergraduate dissertation, S. Jolly, 'Tyne and Tweeds: Playing the Rise and Fall of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers', (unpublished thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2024).

⁴ Department for Education, 'The National Curriculum in England: Framework Document', *Gov.uk*, December 2014
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7db9e9e5274a5eaea65f58/Master_final_national_curriculum_28_Nov.pdf> [accessed 23 August 2025] pp. 245-251; AQA, 'GCSE History 8145', AQA, September 2019
<<https://cdn.sanity.io/files/p28bar15/green/8ce7740f340e7b7014741572fe0c0e1782e664cb.pdf>> [accessed 23 August 2025]; CCEA, 'CCEA GCSE Specification in History', CCEA, May 2017,
<<https://ccea.org.uk/downloads/docs/Specifications/GCSE/GCSE%20History%20%282017%29/GCSE%20History%20%282017%29-specification-Standard.pdf>> [accessed 23 August 2025]; OCR, 'History A', OCR, January 2024
<<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/207163-specification-accredited-gcse-history-a-first-teaching-2019-with-first-assessment-2021-j410.pdf>> [accessed 23 August 2025]; Pearson, 'GCSE (9-1) History', *Edexcel*, 2024
<<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/History/2016/specification-and-sample-assessments/gcse-9-1-history-specification.pdf>> [accessed 23 August 2025]; WJEC, 'WJEC GCSE in History', WJEC, April 2025
<<https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/11ub1lg3/wjec-gcse-history-spec-from-2017-e-160725.pdf>> [accessed 23 August 2025].



King(2003), *Cromwell*(1970), *Witchfinder General*(1968), *A Field in England*(2013) exemplify this trend.

Winstanley(1975) is an exception to the trend in films depicting the period between 1625 and 1660. It depicts the Diggers' radical movement with accuracy and deftness. The Diggers impact on present day popular culture may be larger than print culture's impact. Media representing radicals outweighs print culture presentations. Some examples are the song *The World Turned Upside Down*(1975), the book *As Meat Loves Salt*(2001), and the play *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*(1976).

However, the themes of radicalism and particularly of the Diggers has received scarce attention in the media since *Winstanley* debuted. Some of the few examples can be found in community and environmental projects like the Centre for Alternative Technology(CAT)'s *Zero Carbon Britain*(2017), the 1995 The Land is Ours protest by George Monbiot, and various localised Digger movements: The Manchester Urban Diggers(MUD), Bolton Diggers, etc.⁵ In a preface to an interview with

⁵ Centre for Alternative Technology, *Zero Carbon Britain: Making it Happen* (Machynlleth: CAT Publications, 2017), p. 156; G. Monbiot, 'A Land Reform Manifesto', *Monbiot*, 22 February 1995 <<https://web.archive.org/web/20080517032438/http://www.monbiot.com/archives/1995/02/22/a-land-reform-manifesto/>> [accessed 10 September 2025]; 'About', *MUD*, <<https://www.weare mud.org/about>> [accessed 10 September 2025]; 'Bolton Diggers', *Bolton Green Umbrella* <https://www.boltongreenumbrella.org.uk/view-group?group_id=287> [accessed 10 September 2025].



Winstanley's director, Kevin Brownlow, the author noted that 'it is perhaps surprising that the more radical-political-heroic aspect of the country's past have remained largely untouched by mainstream producers...'⁶ He stated that '*Witchfinder General* has... been alone in mobilizing that particular period. [and] *Winstanley* goes some way to remedying the situation...'⁷

These works have few companions to showcase this historical period to audiences. With little help from literature, games, or museums, the diggers and radical printing lays untapped.⁸ Considering 'consumers spent £7.6bn on video games', and \$1bn on board games in 2024, there is room for the creation of a historical serious game on these topics given its dearth.⁹ This project attempts to remedy this dearth.

⁶ V. Glaessner, 'Winstanley: An Interview with Kevin Brownlow', *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (1977), pp. 18-19.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ A notable exception to the dearth of heritage projects about the Diggers is the Surrey Diggers Trail created in 2005
<<https://elmbridgemuseum.org.uk/surrey-diggers-trail/>>.

⁹ UKIE, 'Ukie urges Government to back UK Games Industry or miss out on £500m opportunity', *Ukie* <<https://ukie.org.uk/press-releases/ukie-urges-government-to-back-uk-games-industry-or-miss-out-on-500m-opportunity>> [accessed 23 August 2025]; GVR, 'Playing Cards and Board Games Market Size, Share & Trends...', *GVR*, <<https://www.grandviewresearch.com/horizon/outlook/playing-cards-and-board-games-market/uk/reports>> [accessed 23 August 2025].



1.2: CONCEPTS

This project is historiographical and pedagogical in nature. It aims to utilise ‘serious gaming’ to create a methodological approach. It aims to create a ‘heritage tool’ representing ‘authentic’ historical narratives through ‘ludo-narratives’. Through playing a game representing a period of history, players will come to gain ‘historical empathy’.

Serious games exist for a ‘purposes other than mere entertainment’, usually educational.¹⁰ The large contingent of work on ‘serious games’ gives it a broad definition. Susi et al outlines that there are commonalities between definitions. However, its links with simulations blurs that definition.¹¹ Serious games are a ‘broader category’ which holds participatory exercises and role-playing systems within it. A myriad of fields utilise these games: medicines, economics, military.¹² Critics state that a ‘captive audience’ performing these games diminishes their reliability and suggest that

¹⁰ T. Susi, M. Johannesson & P. Backlund, ‘Serious Games – An Overview’, *IKI Technical Reports*, (2007) p. 1.

¹¹ University of Michigan Library, *Video Game Studies*, <<https://guides.lib.umich.edu/c.php?g=282989&p=5955091>> [accessed 25 August 2025].

¹² O. Barreteau, G. Abrami, B. Bonté, F. Bousquet & R. Mathevet, ‘Serious Games’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods for Social-Ecological Systems*, eds. by R. Biggs, A. de Vos, R. Preiser, H. Clements, K. Maciejewski & M. Schlüter (London: Routledge, 2022), p. 176.



players should play the games in their everyday life instead.¹³ Common claims made about the benefits of ‘serious games’ are seen in Wim Westera’s article, *The Devil’s Advocate*. They provide criticisms of these claims, seen in Figure 2, that are not, however, unique to games. Films, books and other media often carrying these accreditations.¹⁴ Westera’s criticises that ‘serious games’ use inappropriate score systems, hold ‘a naïve interpretation of experimental learning’, that ‘cognitive flow reduces the quality of learning’, that games are orientated too far towards performance, they ‘rely too much on extrinsic motivation’, have a ‘superfluous strive for realism’, and have ‘inferior validation approaches’.¹⁵ However this dissertation aims to provide evidence that these criticisms are merely criticisms of bad serious games, rather than axiomatic of all serious games. As Westera is only playing ‘Devil’s Advocate’, their positive attributions and criticisms of serious games act as a guiding measure for the strength of this dissertation’s completed proto-type.

¹³ R. S. Jacobs, ‘Winning over the Players; Investigating the Motivations to Play and Acceptance of Serious Games’, *Media and Communication*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2021), p. 29.

¹⁴ W. Westera, ‘The Devil’s Advocate: Identifying persistent problems in serious game design’, *International Journal of Serious Games*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (2022), p. 117-122

¹⁵ Ibid.



CONCEPT	CLAIM
Playfulness	Games make learning fun
Challenge	Games are exciting
Motivation	Games are motivating
Flow	Games induce cognitive flow
Meaning	Games provide a meaningful context
Activation	Games are activating (learning by doing)
Experience	Games provide penetrating learning experiences

Figure 2 Table taken from Westera's article.

This dissertation also tracks the debate of 'authenticity' and 'accuracy' in historical representations and aims to create a game proto-type displaying historical authenticity. Whilst 'media outlets... use those terms ['authenticity' and 'accuracy'] interchangeably', their difference is important for understanding and creating a historical 'serious game'.¹⁶ Academic studies use 'Accuracy' to refer ways media may 'correctly present the historical record...' ¹⁷ In contrast, 'Authenticity' refers to ways media strays from the historical record to make it presentable to a modern audience.¹⁸ 'Authenticity' accepts that 'unknowability

¹⁶ J. Burgess & C. Jones, 'Exploring Player Understanding of Historical Accuracy and Historical Authenticity in Video Games', *Games and Culture*, Vol. 17, No. 5 (2022), p. 817.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid, pp. 819-820.



of the past...' requires narrative omissions and constructions.¹⁹

'Historical Empathy' is a term for how individuals relate to the past and 'judge the past in its own terms.' By trying to 'understand the mentality, frames of reference, beliefs, values, intentions, and actions of historical agents...' an individual may gain that empathy.²⁰ When audiences foster this empathy it allows them to understand the past and interpret it for themselves. Historical empathy makes the '...process of history-making more accessible...' to more than academics.²¹

'Serious games' foster this 'historical empathy' by situating players closer to 'historical agents'.²² A great example of a game utilising historical empathy is *Train* (2009). Players compete to transport as many passengers through rail networks as possible.²³ Once the game ends, players learn they aided the Holocaust, moving victims to concentration camps. Brenda Romero constructed this acclaimed game to foster 'complicity'

¹⁹ K. Harris, 'Part of the project of that book was not to be authentic': neo-historical authenticity and its anachronisms in contemporary historical fiction', *Rethinking History*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2017), p. 194.

²⁰ K. Yilmaz, 'Historical Empathy and Its Implications for Classroom Practices in Schools', *The History Teacher*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2007), p. 331.

²¹ N. Basaraba & T. Cauvin, 'Public History and Transmedia Storytelling for Conflict Narratives', *Rethinking History*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2023), pp. 221-223.

²² Yilmaz, 'Historical Empathy', p. 331.

²³ Brenda Romero, 'Train', *Brenda Romero* <<https://brenda.games/train>> [accessed 1 August 2025]; GDC, *Train* (or How I Dump Electricity and Learn to Love Design), GDCVault <<https://www.gdcvault.com/play/1012259/Train->> [accessed 4 August 2025].



amongst players. They also aimed to induce a better understanding of the period.²⁴ This paradigm inspired part of this dissertation.

²⁴ E. Thurm, 'Just Playing Along: What an antisemitic, Nazi-era board game has to teach us about the nature of complicity', *Jewish Currents*, 7 October 2019 <<https://jewishcurrents.org/just-playing-along>> [accessed 5 August 2025].



1.3: RESEARCH QUESTION

This dissertation carries multiple aspirations. First, it aims to show how ludo-narratives can communicate historical research. This historical research relates to the radicalism and print culture during the English Revolution. And an analogue game will demonstrate this skill. Secondly, it aims to use analogue gaming to provide heritage education. Finally, it aims to gather remarks from those who play the board game. Once gathered their feedback will suggest the suitability of the prototype as a heritage tool. The ultimate research question is ‘to what extent can serious games foster historical empathy for radicalism and print culture between 1625 to 1660.’



2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies and projects have inspired this dissertation, namely the serious games of Brenda Romero, Laura Saxton's article on accuracy and authenticity and Mortara et al's study on 'learning cultural heritage by serious games.'²⁵ These works intersected and thus spawned this project. Innovative and evocative serious games made by Romero like *Train* melded history with narrative to engender an emotive response from the players. This emotional response linked with works on historical empathy like Espanol-Solana et al's article mentions. The creation of these historical serious games brought to light questions of authenticity and accuracy. Using Laura Saxton's study as an initial point the wider studies of authenticity inspired the notion of creation an historical serious game that both inspired historical empathy and held up as historically authentic way of displaying heritage.

²⁵ M. Mortara, C. E. Catalano, F. Bellotti, G. Fiucci, M. Houry-Panchetti & P. Petridis, 'Learning Cultural Heritage by Serious Games', *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2014), pp. 318-325.



2.1: SERIOUS GAME

Definitions of serious games vary almost as much as each attempt to define them. Studies have been conducted to ‘elucidate the important characteristics of current serious games’, which illuminates their common features to provide a definition.²⁶ The categories found by the studies systematic review of serious game characteristics revealed that there were four main types of ‘primary learning principles’ that games attempted to resolve: ‘practising skills,’ ‘knowledge gain through exploration,’ ‘cognitive problem solving,’ and ‘social problem solving.’²⁷

Alvarez and Djaouti’s 2011 definition of serious games provides a simple equation to represent their definition: ‘serious game = utilitarian function(s) + video games’.²⁸ They expand this by stating that a serious game carries two aspects: ‘it combines video game and one or several utility functions,’ and ‘it targets a market other than only entertainment.’²⁹ Despite Alvarez and Djaouti’s definition falling into the common pitfall of omitting analogue games, their study is useful for addressing ‘hijacking’, where a game

²⁶ R. Ratan & U. Ritterfeld, ‘Classifying Serious Games’, in *Serious Games: Mechanisms and Effects* (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 10.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 17.

²⁸ J. Alvarez & D. Djaouti, ‘An Introduction to Serious Game Definitions and Concepts’, *Serious Games & Simulation for Risk Management* (2011), p. 12.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 14.



created for non-serious play, can be reused for a serious purpose.³⁰

The ‘overlapping domains’ that surround serious games adds elements of confusion to the term. Susi et al explain that ‘e-learning, edutainment, game-based learning, and digital game-based learning’ all blur the lines between what is a serious game and what is not.³¹

This dissertation will work with its own definition of serious games: as ‘games’ are an activity oriented around a goal and separated from reality with their own internal rules: a serious game is designed with a purpose besides entertainment usually towards education and research.³² Whilst this definition is rather bare, it gives room for various sectors to utilise it without it existing in an overly narrow capacity.

Serious games have a variety of uses and have changed in relevancy as demonstrated by Ratan and Ritterfeld’s study.³³ Overwhelmingly their data shows that Academic games make up the majority of serious games, with most of those academic games aimed at curriculum-based teaching. Their prevalence saw

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Susi et al, ‘Serious Games’, p. 2.

³² M. W. Rowe, ‘The Definition of ‘Game’, *Philosophy*, Vol. 67, No. 262 (1992), pp. 467-479; Alvarez & Djaouti, ‘Serious Game Definitions’, p. 12.

³³ Ratan & Ritterfeld, ‘Classifying Serious Games’, pp. 14-15.



a rise in the early 2000s before plateauing and then declining after 2011 according to Google search activity.³⁴ It has since seen a steady climb since 2021.³⁵

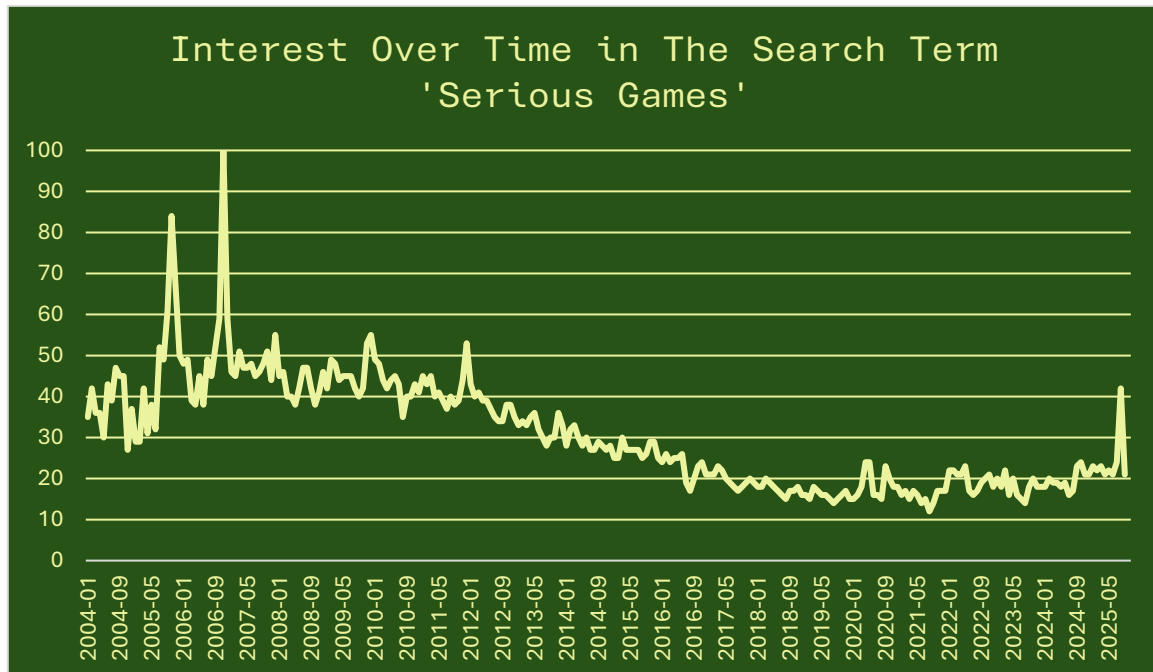


Figure 3 A Chart Displaying Interest in the Search Term 'Serious Games' from <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&q=serious%20games&hl=en-GB>

2.1.1: 'Learning Cultural Heritage By Serious Games'

Mortara et al's article, 'learning cultural heritage by serious games', by Mortara et al provides a 'state-of-the-art' overview on serious games. They then posit that 'virtual worlds... [allow] the broad public to appreciate remote cultural content.'³⁶ These 'virtual worlds' and 'virtual museums are claimed to 'lack a powerful mechanism to engage the large

³⁴ See Figure 3.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Mortara et al, 'Learning Cultural Heritage', p. 318.



public.’³⁷ Mortara et al offers ‘serious games’ as a way to fill that engagement gap left by these virtual worlds.

One of the aspects which Mortara et al propose serious games are uniquely suited for representing is ‘intangible cultural heritage.’³⁸ They give several categories which serious games can present cultural heritage: ‘cultural awareness’, ‘historical awareness’, and ‘heritage awareness.’³⁹ By representing a historical culture, serious games may induce ‘historical empathy’, in the player. The three-aspect listed in the article all lend to this ‘historical empathy’, despite the article not overtly utilising that term. Although they segment serious games between various categories, it could be more accurate to display them in a Venn diagram. This diagram would display some of the overlapping between categories that the article ignores.⁴⁰

³⁷ Ibid, pp. 318-319.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 319-321; see Figure 4 for suggested Venn diagram.



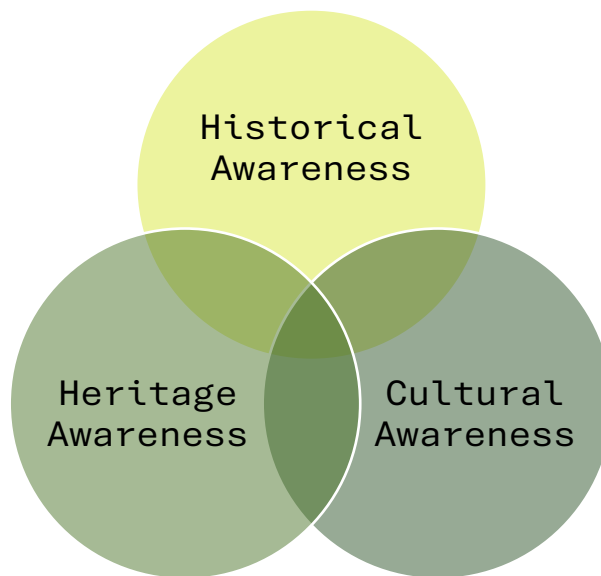


Figure 4 Venn Diagram of improvements to modelling Mortara et al's categories.

The article analyses the utility of different game genres for creating serious games. They attempt to quantify which games, from their designated categories, are most often represented by different game genres.⁴¹ They display this data in a table which does not accurately represent the complexities of defining game genres and serious game categories.⁴² Whilst a game can belong to multiple of their created categories, they can also belong to multiple genres.

Whilst it neatly defines several purposes a serious game can be made for, it over simplifies the serious game landscape and ignores an entire section of serious games: analogue. From this article the categorisation of purposes is most applicable in this dissertation if they are not treated as mutually

⁴¹ Ibid, pp. 324-325.

⁴² Ibid.



exclusive elements. As gaming in an analogue medium has its own benefits and drawbacks it cannot be neatly subsumed within serious video game analysis.

2.1.2: 'The Art Of Serious Game Design: A Framework And Methodology'

This study by Djafarova et al provides a framework and methodology to assist with designing a 'serious game.'⁴³ Despite this article intending to create a framework for interdisciplinary teams its applicability to this dissertation is not affected. This is due to its clear through-line of the process that aids both teams and individuals.

Their concept-development stage, as part of their ideation phase, is clear and self-explanatory. Through the phases described in the article, a team or individual may create the concept for a serious game within four hours.⁴⁴ This timescale is going to be similar across most field where the information is already known by the designers, thus not requiring any new research as part of the design process. However, a historical serious game, as this project aims to create, may pose new questions as the game is being created,

⁴³ N. Djafarova, A. Dimitriadou, L. Zefi & O. Turetken, 'The Art of Serious Game Design: A Framework and Methodology', *AIS Transactions on Human-Computer Interaction*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2023), pp. 322-349.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 338.



thus requiring impromptu research. Therefore, this proposed methodology should be altered for this project.

Djafarova's article assumes the purpose of serious games is to be an effective method for teaching information and concepts to players.⁴⁵ Therefore, as this dissertation does not solely aim to educate through serious games, but also provide a new research method, this methodology cannot be completely relied upon. This project's aim to showcase game-designers development as well as educate and stimulate player historical empathy means that its methodological requirements are more diverse than this paper provides. It is, however, still useful for providing a methodology for player education.

2.1.3: 'An "Alternative To The Pen"? Perspectives For The Design Of Historiographical Videogames'

This article, by Bazile, argues that historiographical points can be made by creating video games to represent them.⁴⁶ It proposes that, rather than the traditional 'literary prose' that historical argumentation usually takes, academics should find alternate methods to communicate history.⁴⁷ This article suggests that by following a rigorous framework, the game-

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 339.

⁴⁶ J. A. Bazile, 'An "Alternative to the Pen"? Perspectives for the Design of Historiographical Videogames', *Games and Culture*, Vol. 17, No. 6 (2022), p. 856.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 857.



designer may create a historical video game that demonstrates a historiographical argument.⁴⁸ Some of the other methodologies studied in this literature review cover only part of the aims of this project. As with other studies this article also needs to be taken in part. Its principal aim is about conveying historiographical arguments rather than encouraging historical empathy. Whilst this project's proto-type will aim to portray historiographical understandings of its period it does not solely aim to do that, yet however it will have to take a historiographical stance.

Bazile states that a historical video game would have 'recognized... "winning" or "losing" conditions.⁴⁹ They clarify that without these end game conditions the game would merely be a simulation. In the end game conditions available to the player, they note that difficulty should play into how those conditions are achieved. Given that the outcome of the game is not pre-determined and depends on player actions they might not experience the entire game. This missed content on the behalf of the player encourages re-playability as Bazile suggests. Overall, their conclusion that 'historiographical game designer will have to be an effort in letting the player

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 862.



control the game, and the historian control the game design,' sits in line with this projects own thesis.⁵⁰

2.1.4: 'Experimental Game Design'

This chapter, by Annika Waern and Jon Back, discusses best approaches in game design experimentation. They suggest how the design process 'grows out of each play session.'⁵¹ They do however posit that these play sessions and playtesting do not always require players but rather can be made of simulated players or using spreadsheets to 'calculate game balances.'⁵²

Their chapter's main argument explains how experimental game design can be performed and tested. Whilst their main examination is on how game design elements can be examined, their methods for game creation are utilised for this dissertation. They purport gathering data from experimental game design as a way to analyses mechanics. This dissertation aims to utilise this to gather data on player interaction with game mechanics in order to judge their benefit to historical empathy.

⁵⁰ Ibid, pp. 866-867.

⁵¹ A. Waern & J. Back, 'Experimental Game Design', in *Game Research Methods: An Overview* (Pittsburgh: ETC Press, 2015), pp. 341-342.

⁵² Ibid.



2.1.5: 'Designing And Using Digital Games As Historical Learning Contexts For Primary School Classrooms'

Juan Hiriart's chapter examines the uses of historical video games in an educational setting, particularly primary schools. It gives a view of his PhD where he created several game prototypes to present the history of post-roman Anglo-Saxon Britain.⁵³ They describe the process and the playtesting experience.

Hiriart clarified that game design should scale with the resources the researcher has available.⁵⁴ They consulted frequently with advisors and chose a medium they were particularly familiar with in order to ease production. Their method for designing their prototype originated with them deciding upon a historical period to represent: the Anglo-Saxon period.⁵⁵ They asked themselves 'what will this game be about?'⁵⁶ Then their production followed this question, as they began to narrow down what themes and topics they could represent.

⁵³ J. Hiriart, 'Designing and Using Digital Games as Historical Learning Contexts for Primary School Classrooms', *Historia Ludens: The Playing Historian*, eds. by A. Lünen, K. J. Lewis, B. Litherland, P. Cullum (London: Routledge, 2021), p. 37.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 38.

⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 38-39.

⁵⁶ Ibid.



Hiriart focuses their design on several important characteristics.⁵⁷ Of their game they required it to...

- ... represent the history accurately.
- ... communicate historical dynamics.
- ... centre the player within the game world and social environment.
- ... convey historical narratives, whilst allowing the player to construct non-linear stories.
- ... to be engaging and fun, to emotionally invest players.

Alongside these game design-based decisions, Hiriart also had to choose what was left out of the history represented. They chose to exclude violent conflicts and focus on 'non-violent' everyday life.⁵⁸ Their chapter explains that opting for an 'in-authentic' design choice could be preferable on occasion as the authentic choice brought too many negative effects if it was to be included: violence can be often a games core feedback loop.⁵⁹ This choice is wise given the games purpose. It also provides a disciplined example where the game's needs and whole medium may explain the unique approaches a historically motivated game design may create.

⁵⁷ Ibid, pp. 40-41.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 42.

⁵⁹ Ibid.



Their design carefully considers what players would interact with. They qualify the presentation of individuals, the environment, and objects based on a keen awareness of the criticism other games have received.⁶⁰

Their test of the prototype followed a rigorous methodology by drawing measurable data from their participants. They got the participating children to represent Anglo-Saxon life through drawing. They then collected game data as they played, before asking them to draw another picture representing Anglo-Saxon life.⁶¹ This was followed by small interviews.

Overall, their method and data gathering fulfilled the research aims. They answered criticisms of the game. They also provided a methodological reflection that will aid with this projects method and game creation.

2.1.6: Síochán Leat

Originally released in 2009, by Brenda Romero, *Síochán Leat* featured at the Strong Museum of Play in New York. It features as part of Romero's *The Mechanic is the Message* project.⁶²

⁶⁰ Ibid, pp. 44-45.

⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 46-47.

⁶² J. Brophy-Warren, 'The Board Game No One Wants to Play More Than Once', *Wall Street Journal*, 24 June 2009 <<https://web.archive.org/web/20200305091418/https://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2009/06/24/can-you-make-a-board-game-about-the-holocaust-meet-train/?guid=BL-SEB-2186&dsk=y>> [accessed 1 August 2025]; B. Romero, 'Work', *Brenda Games* <<https://brenda.games/work-1>> [accessed 1 August 2025].



The game title is Irish for “Peace be with you.” The game represents the 1649-1653 invasion of Ireland. The board game itself requires being set in relation to the cardinal directions on a compass: ‘one corner of the board represents Northern Ireland and needs to face the correct direction.’⁶³ The board game relates to Romero’s own family’s relation to these conquests and so ‘imbued the board with personal messages’, and with aspects of herself: ‘she had mixed a vial of her own blood into the ink used to write the instructions.’⁶⁴ The meta-textual creation of the game presents thoughtful interpretations and presentations of the conflict.

The mechanics of the game are likewise thoughtful representations. When players are ascribed their role, the faction they would act on behalf of, Romero told the player playing ‘the Irish’ that they’ve ‘already lost’ before the game had begun.⁶⁵ This gives the game a different mechanical meaning as the typical aspiration of all players to win begins resolved. Winning is not an option for those playing the Irish, instead they must aim to lose ‘the fewest amount of game pieces possible-each piece represents thousands of Irish

⁶³ S. Symonds, ‘Brenda Romero: “The Mechanic is the Message”’, *The Strong National Museum of Play* (25 June 2013) <<https://www.museumofplay.org/blog/brenda-romero-the-mechanic-is-the-message/>> [accessed 1 August 2025].

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.



people.’⁶⁶ As the game progressed the mechanics would end with ‘the Irish losing their land and huddling together in increasingly crowded areas,’ mirroring history.⁶⁷

Her game is among games classed as ‘deep games’, for their ability to have the player experience the whole ‘spectrum of the human experience and making it tangible through gameplay.’⁶⁸ As a designer, she is well known for her creations that challenge the players to consider every aspect of the game. When presenting her game *Train* at a convention a Rabbi spoke to her and after looking at her board game. The Rabbi then told her that he did not want to play.⁶⁹ She replied by telling him that he had already played the game by deciding not to play. The game *Train* tests players by having them compete to aid the Holocaust, although the ultimate goal is obscured at first. Some recognise by the physical game pieces, like the Rabbi did, what the game is about, whilst others are oblivious until it is revealed to them after the game has reached its conclusion. Romero’s mastery of ludo-narrative and mechanics as shown here inspired much of this projects own philosophy.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ D. C. Rusch, *Making Deep Games: Designing Games with Meaning and Purpose* (London: CRC Press, 2017), p. xvii.

⁶⁹ GDC, *Train*, 13 March 2010.





Figure 5 A Photograph of Brenda Romero's *Síochán Leat Game*

2.1.7: The Campaign For North Africa: The Desert War 1940-43

Opposed to the slim and daring designs of Brenda Romero, the game *The Campaign for North Africa* takes to simulating the complete North African campaign during the Second World War. Its vast rule book contains a dizzying quantity of statistics and unique rules to simulate the entire conflict. It simulates everything from movement and combat systems to ‘the care and feeding of prisoners’, to the ‘weather’. One of the most famous rules is ‘The Italian Pasta Rule’, which simulates the effects of Italian soldiers being supplied with pasta as part of the rations. The rule criticises the uses of pasta by the Italians as it has “one serious drawback in the desert: you need water to cook it!”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ R. Berg, ‘Air & Logistics Games Rules of Play and Scenarios’, in *The Campaign for North Africa: The Desert War 1940-43* (New York: Simulations Publishing, 1979), p. 22.



Westera's criticism of serious games for their 'superfluous strive for realism' seems aimed at *The Campaign for North Africa*. The rules span almost 200 pages and is said to 'take ten players up to 1,500 hours to complete.'⁷¹ As mentioned in Karl Egerton's article, simulation is much better achieved in video game form.⁷² The designer of *The Campaign for North Africa*, Richard Berg, states that the game is 'intended for the sophisticated wargamer and the serious student of history.'⁷³ And so in Richard Berg's design for the game, he wanted to 'see how far [he] could take simulation gaming'.⁷⁴ He claims the game is largely unplayable as a merely a game, but instead is a something 'one immerses himself in.'⁷⁵

This game is an exercise in replication of history in game form. It does not attempt to challenge historical biases but aims solely to simulate the period. This type of game loses its potency for historical empathy and immersion despite what Berg claims. Analogue mediums are not best suited to the use of simulations as the mechanics and mathematics required

⁷¹ T. Ambrosio & J. Ross, 'Performing the Cold War Through the 'Best Board Game on the Planet': The Ludic Geopolitics of Twilight Struggle', *Geopolitics*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (2023), p. 874.

⁷² K. Egerton, 'Player Engagement with Games: Formal Reliefs and Representation Check', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 80 (2022), p. 99.

⁷³ R. Berg, 'Land Game Rules of Play', in *The Campaign for North Africa: The Desert War 1940-43* (New York: Simulations Publishing, 1979), p. 4.

⁷⁴ Berg, 'Air & Logistics', p. 39.

⁷⁵ Ibid.



from the game obscures the player from ludo-narratives.

Opposed to Romero's *The Mechanics are the Message*, this game's mechanics are simply mechanics. The game does not question its form as a wargame; it simply takes the fetish for wargaming to the most extreme without questioning its own utility.⁷⁶



Figure 6 Photograph of the Contents of 'The Campaign for North Africa', by Charles Picard <<https://medium.com/@terryboon/playing-the-very-long-game-thoughts-on-the-campaign-for-north-africa-f51a8669b3b4>>

2.1.8: Pank-A-Squith

The Pank-a-Squith board game, originally published in 1909, 'depicts the suffragettes' struggle with Prime Minister Herbert Asquith and the Liberal Government.'⁷⁷ The game

⁷⁶ P. Sabin, *Simulating War: Studying Conflict Through Simulation Games* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), pp. 29-30.

⁷⁷ H. Nielsen, "'Men should try playing the woman's part to see what it feels like. Remember, it's only a game": The Representation of Gendered Experience in Chance-Based Board Games', in *Material Game Studies: A Philosophy of Analogue Play*, eds. by C. Germaine & P. Wake (London: Bloomsbury, 2022), pp.121-123.



originally fulfilled part of the WSPU's plan to utilise 'commercialized material culture' to promote the suffrage movement.⁷⁸ The game functions like most other typical chance-based board games of the period with many players alternately rolling dice to move their figure a certain number of places towards the centre. *Pank-a-Squith* uses the same formula to portray its own messaging. The players choose a small model of a suffragette to place on the board. These figures resemble suffragettes in design.

The rules of the game are simple.

*'The game may be played by 2 to 6 players. Each player chooses a "suffragette" and places same[sic] outside square 1. The game proceeds by dicing with one dice and moving the "suffragette" as many squares forward as dots are cast.'*⁷⁹

When players reach a certain numbered square they must follow a unique temporary rule. These rules can include moving back spaces, missing turns, or to 'send a penny to the suffragette funds.'⁸⁰

The game is overtly political. Its mechanics do not portray an overt representation of the political struggle

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ 'Pank-a-Squith', *Johns Hopkins Sheridan Library*, <<https://www.library.jhu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/08/Pank-A-Squith-Digital-PDF-Color.pdf>> [accessed 5 August 2025].

⁸⁰ 'Pank-a-squith', *People's History Museum*, NMLH.1993.441



towards universal suffrage. Its message lies in its artistic display. The game revolves around players attempting to reach the end goal of Parliament, where it is inferred that once the players reach it, the suffragettes will have gained suffrage. Each square displays an image that represents an aspect of the suffragette movement. These images create the narrative of the game, showing police arrests, hunger strikes, rallies, etc.⁸¹ These squares can carry a mechanic effect when they carry one of the special rules. These rules link to the images and presenting them as either positive or negative towards the suffragette movement by whether they move the player closer or further away from their goal of parliament. These squares can be seen in Figure 7.

This board showcases how those wishing to represent a certain narrative have historically utilised board games to their assistance. The outward display of the board game curates the main message that the players will interpret. The mechanics are incredibly simple; the player either progresses towards their end goal or is moved backwards. This represents the suffragette movement as an inevitable move forwards with frequent but not fatal setbacks. If the players role the dice enough they will eventually reach the goal of the movement.

⁸¹ Ibid.



The setbacks presented are all representations of the state and their attempts to limit protests.

Games like Pank-a-squith are important to this dissertation as they enlighten the history of serious games and gives context to previous game design philosophies. This game does not overtly tie its message to its mechanics as strongly as others and instead coopts existing mechanics. This utilisation of artistic messages without much mechanical assistance is something that this dissertation's proto-type could utilise.





Figure 7 'Pank-a-squith', People's History Museum, NMLH.1993.441

2.2: HISTORICAL MEDIA

This literature review tackles the ways in-which history has been previously presented in media, along with academic works that tackle accuracy, authenticity and games. Whilst this dissertation focuses on the medium of games, this review will extend beyond that and into the medium of film. This straying will assist with creating an understanding of how historical media may vary amongst mediums and how the period of focus for the proto-type game is represented in media.

The definitions of ‘accuracy’ and ‘authenticity’ regarding historical media have been disputed by academics. Whilst most use them interchangeably this dissertation will agree with the definitional observation of Burgess and Jones. In short, ‘accuracy’ refers to the historical record and how closely a piece of media adheres to it, whilst ‘authenticity’ speaks to the editorial choices made to represent history with the allowance of both omissions and constructions.⁸²

Criticisms of a film’s historical ‘accuracy’ have been rising online. Youtube hosts scores of creators who analyse how close a piece of media sits in regard to the historical record. Some of these channels, such as *History Hit*, *History*

⁸² Burgess & Jones, ‘Historical Accuracy and Historical Authenticity’, pp. 817-820.



Buff, and *Kings and Generals* will identify a single piece of media to analyse and produce a single video per piece of media. A channel like *History Buffs* has over 100 videos as of the time of writing. Most of these relate to an individual piece of media: *Braveheart*, *Amadeus*, etc.⁸³ Among all of these videos, the presentation of the period is most commonly critiqued: clothes, hair, weapons, architecture, etc. Some channels like *History Hits* will recruit public historians to critique visual media with their analysis tending to run wider and more inline with historical authenticity. A good example of this is when historian Roel Konijnendijk analysed *300* for *History Hit* in 2024. Konijnendijk began by saying that instead of talking about the ‘very stylized’ film and whether the stylisation plays into presenting the period authentically, he stated that he was ‘just here to unpack some of these scenes to try and trace whether they’re based on any actual source material.’⁸⁴

The public has been exposed to the reception studies on social media platforms, but academics have been utilising this same method. The commodification of heritage and history that

⁸³ History Buffs, *YouTube* <<https://www.youtube.com/@HistoryBuffs>> [accessed 20 July 2025].

⁸⁴ History Hit, *Ancient Sparta Historian Breaks Down ‘300’ Movie | Deep Dives*, 8 July 2024, < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6oIpCHbaJA>> [accessed 20 July 2025].



has long been critiqued. Gordon Waitt shows that the label of ‘authentic’ is over coopted to be attached to any historical project that is intended to be legitimized. Their study on ‘The Rocks’, Australia, examines how the location has received the label ‘authentic’ and is taken to mean ‘real.’⁸⁵ The idea of what is ‘real’ history is not so open and shut as tourist boards, Youtube influencers and directors may claim.⁸⁶ Directors like Ridley Scott may have even allegedly banned historical consultants from the sets of his films.⁸⁷ Scott is perhaps a classical example where neither accuracy or authenticity is chosen but instead choosing to portray what feels ‘right’ instead.

2.2.1: ‘A True Story: Defining Accuracy And Authenticity In Historical Fiction’

Laura Saxton’s study on the definitions of ‘accuracy’ and ‘authenticity’ is influential upon this dissertation. She attributes meaning to these terms which has been co-opted and utilised by this study to understand the best ways history can

⁸⁵ G. Waitt, ‘Consuming Heritage: Perceived Historical Authenticity’, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (2000), p. 836.

⁸⁶ L. Saxton, ‘A True Story: Defining Accuracy and Authenticity in Historical Fiction’, *Rethinking History*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (2020), pp. 127-128.

⁸⁷ S. Osborne, ‘When historians and directors clash: ‘Ridley Scott was Napoleonic – there was no doubt who was in charge’’, *Guardian*, 16 November 2024 < <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2024/nov/16/gladiator-bridgerton-history-consultants-napoleon-favourite-ridley-scott> > [accessed 01 July 2025].



be represented in game form such as this dissertation's ludic output. She argues that 'accuracy' is the least subjective of the two terms and that 'authenticity' is more 'complex' and 'variable.'⁸⁸ They argue that 'authenticity' exists in the mind of the audience and their own internal measure of 'whether it captures the past'.⁸⁹

Historical authenticity is a perception made by the audience and can exist completely independent of historical accuracy but is not exclusive from accuracy.⁹⁰ Figure 8 shows the relationship between accuracy and authenticity as explained by Saxton. 'Authenticity' is informed by multiple elements that an individual is aware of. Only those known elements will impact an audience-member's interpretation of a piece of historical medias 'authenticity'.⁹¹ If the audience-member is not aware of the accuracy of a piece then their picture of what a historically authentic piece of media looks like will not be influenced by accuracy at all.

The term historical authenticity is important to acknowledge and use as an academic creating historical fiction or games. Saxton explains that as the historical record is never complete there is always a gap of knowledge that the

⁸⁸ Saxton, 'A True Story', p. 128.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.



creations of artists, authors and game designers may help to fill. Historical ‘accuracy’ can too often diminish the reality that a historian may make assumptions from their own ‘perspectives, politics, and privileges.’⁹² The term ‘authenticity’ leaves room for that discussion about unique perspectives rather than one ‘correct’ perspective of history.

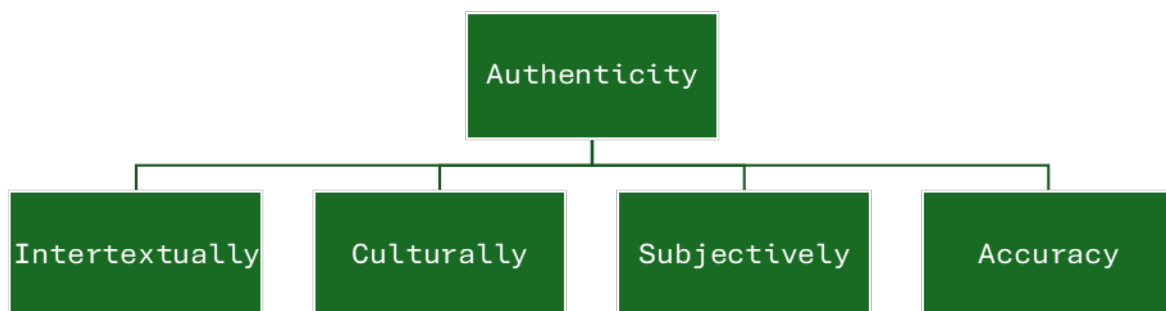


Figure 8 Chart displaying Saxton's model for Authenticity

History is a debate, and the term accuracy assumes that the debate has ended with a firm conclusion for all aspects of history. Saxton mentions the book *The Other Boleyn Girl* to examine this idea. Saxton explains how the book displays Anne Boleyn having committed incest.⁹³ This depiction was criticised by historians who claim that it is only ‘concocted’.⁹⁴ This depiction does bare historical weight however as it was one of the charges put against Anne Bolelyn. Saxton offers that Philipa Gregory’s *The Other Boleyn Girl* does not have the

⁹² Ibid, p. 129.

⁹³ Ibid, p. 130.

⁹⁴ S. Bordo, *The Creation of Anne Bolelyn: A New Look at England’s Most Notorious Queen* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013), pp. 224-225.



space to ‘offer competing narratives’ and so had to choose one.⁹⁵

Saxton’s article is a useful tool in understanding that ‘if we look only to the most basic facts then we risk neglecting the interpretative work that writers... undertake.’⁹⁶ She is clearly able to provide a final point that ‘neither accuracy nor authenticity relate to the translation of absolute truth.’⁹⁷ Just as historians must make choices between competing sources as to which one is most likely, so must historical fiction writers and game designers.

2.2.2: ‘Exploring Player Understandings Of Historical Accuracy And Historical Authenticity In Video Games’

Using an analysis of the online comments made by players of the *Assassin’s Creed* games, along with an online survey, Jacqueline Burgess and Christian Jones attempt to quantify how players understand the terms ‘authenticity’ and ‘accuracy’. Their study examines how players interpret these terms. As a result of their study Burgess and Jones created their own ‘player-centric definition of historical authenticity.’⁹⁸ There definition is represented here:

⁹⁵ Saxton, ‘A True Story, p. 130.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 137.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 141.

⁹⁸ Burgess & Jones, ‘Historical Accuracy and Historical Authenticity’, p. 828.



‘Using historical (selective) authenticity to develop video games means that the overall appearance and significant details of the depiction of a historical context are historically accurate and thus align with the historical records and facts. However, historical authenticity does allow for some artistic license in the form of speculation, changes, or additions that are still grounded in the historically accurate record to present an accessible narrative.’⁹⁹

Their observations, made whilst conducting their study of players of *Assassin’s Creed*, found that player definitions of ‘historical accuracy’ resembled that of academic definitions. Players frequently explained that ‘accuracy’ of a historical video game related to its ‘depiction... of a historical setting and events’, based on research, and made an attempt to be ‘presenting and telling what actually happened.’¹⁰⁰ These player definitions of ‘authenticity did sometimes claim that there was no difference from ‘accuracy’.¹⁰¹

Burgess and Jones’s study is a useful addition to the foundation of this dissertation as it provides an updated definition for ‘authenticity’ and ‘accuracy’ that stands in-line with players’ own interpretations and usage of those terms. For creation of this dissertations historical game, historical authenticity will be something aimed for rather

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, pp. 825-826.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 827.



than accuracy as it allows the project to change some elements for the benefit of the player rather than monotonously relying on a patchy historical record to inform all choices. Game design is creative and as Burgess and Jones' definitions explains, there is room for artistic license.

2.2.3: Literature Analysing Crusader Kings 3 By Paradox

Development (2020)

Crusader Kings 3 (CK3) aims to be a historical simulation game of the medieval period from 867 AD until 1453 AD.¹⁰² It provides the player the opportunity 'take command' and exist in the 'meticulously researched Middle Ages.'¹⁰³ It presents itself as a 'historically accurate' game in a 'simulated world'.¹⁰⁴ It seems its main aim is to get the player to 'immerse' themselves in the game.¹⁰⁵ Whilst there is no overt acknowledgement from the marketing or game's design that it is not aiming for historical accuracy, the game does tend towards historical authenticity. Luciano Anastasi gives the game a 77% accuracy in his review of it.¹⁰⁶ Understanding the academic caption to games like CK3 allow for better understanding of

¹⁰² *Crusader Kings III*, (Paradox Interactive, 2020), PC.

¹⁰³ 'Crusader Kings III', *Paradox Interactive*, <<https://www.paradoxinteractive.com/games/crusader-kings-iii/about>> [accessed 15 July 2025].

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ L. Anastasi, 'Crusader Kings 3: Historical Accuracy in Grand Strategy', *History Medieval*, 18 July 2025 <<https://historymedieval.com/crusader-kings-3-historical-accuracy-in-grand-strategy/>> [accessed 20 July 2025].



what elements hinder a games utility in educating on- and representing- the past.

Kirk Lundblade's research into CK3 examines the communities response to their level of historical accuracy found with CK3. Their article showcases player engagement and understanding of the historicity of the game.¹⁰⁷ Their study evaluates where the lines between critiques of the game are drawn between historical and ahistorical comments. In their findings they assessed that whilst this 'one historical game community' has not gone much below the surface of critiquing the games 'historically accurate' adherence to the historical record, the game itself does hold a lot of potential for 'historians and historical scholarship.'¹⁰⁸ Lundblade states that game designers should be aware of the potential for players to start 'reading historical narratives into games not designing with this in mind.'¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ K. M. Lundblade, 'If Your Empire Last More Than Two Centuries, You May Need to Speak to Your Doctor: The Effects of Historicizing Discourse in the Crusader Kings 3 Community', *FDG '23: Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games*, No. 31 (2023), p. 1.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.



2.3: HISTORICAL EMPATHY

For this project historical empathy is an important consideration. As public history is about the bridging of academic history with the public's understanding of history, empathy is where that understanding flourishes. When those engaging in public history are rewarded with the best understanding of history, it is usually in part thanks to historical empathy. Much of the endeavours of public history institutions and individuals is to foster historical empathy. Films, performances, museums and games all aim to seed historical empathy amongst the minds of its audience. As this dissertation is itself a practice in creating a public history tool, an understanding of historical empathy is vital in creating an effective proto-type board game.

2.3.1: 'Historical Empathy And Its Implications For Classroom Practices In Schools'

Kaya Yilmaz, in their article, presents varying definitions of 'historical empathy'. They begin their article by providing a simple definition; historical empathy is 'the ability to see and judge the past in its own terms by trying to understand the mentality, frames of references, beliefs, values, intentions and actions of historical agents using a variety of



historical evidence.’¹¹⁰ Their study involves discussing the alternate definitions provided by other scholars, amongst these is Stuart Foster’s claims that historical empathy does not require imagination but is instead an appreciation for the actions of historical agents.¹¹¹ However this dissertation will refute the claim that imagination is unimportant for the fostering of historical empathy, and is in fact vital. Yilmaz agrees as seen in their remarks on the requirements to foster said empathy: access to sources, speculation, investigation, reliving individual experiences, reconstruction and suspending modern world-views.¹¹²

This dissertation aims to take the advice of Yilmaz when it comes to the creation of the proto-type. In their article they provide methods for practically involving historical empathy into a classroom. Although this dissertation does not entail classroom teaching as part of its methodology, the board game proto-type it aims to create will function as a possible classroom tool. Her advice claims that practically, participants should be provided with complex situations in the past, basic outlines of the historical context surrounding

¹¹⁰ K. Yilmaz, ‘Historical Empathy’, p. 331.

¹¹¹ S. J. Foster, ‘Historical Empathy in Theory and Practices: Some Final Thoughts,’ in *Historical Empathy and Perspective Taking in the Social Studies*, eds. by O.L. Davis, E. A. Yeager, & S. J. Foster (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), pp. 169-175.

¹¹² Yilmaz, ‘Historical Empathy’, pp. 333-334.



said events, introductions to primary sources, encouragement for criticism of sources and the urging to ask questions.¹¹³

Throughout the creation of the proto-type these practical guides will aid the design. Ideally, players will gain a sense of historical empathy via these practical and theoretical adjustments to the proto-type.

2.3.2: ‘Document-Based Historical Role-Playing As A Tool To Promote Empathy And Structural Understanding In Historical Memory Education’

In Corredor et al’s study on the implementation of roleplaying’s use in classroom environments they revealed its use for encouraging historical empathy amongst participating students. Their approach is meant to offer an alternative to the ‘names, dates and places’ approach to teaching history that often connotes objectivity.¹¹⁴ Roleplaying, as they propose does not offer objectivity but subjectivity to those students participating.

Their study focuses on memory and history education. Specifically, they aim to highlight how education can be altered to promote understanding of a historical period to

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 334.

¹¹⁴ J. Corredor, C. Castro-Morales & T. A. Jiménez-Rozo, ‘Document-Based Historical Role-Playing as a Tool to Promote Empathy and Structural Understanding in Historical Memory Education’, in *Transitioning to Peace*, eds. by W. L. López & L. K. Taylor (London: Springer, 2021), p. 269.



avoid remaking the mistakes of the past.¹¹⁵ In this learning journey, they propose that empathy is the key factor that allows those participating in history education to truly learn from the past and choose to make different choices in the future.

Their work focusing on classroom changes to improve historical understanding posits that only through narrative can history really be understood. They criticise the lists of facts that are often presented as history and posit that narrative is fundamental to writing history.¹¹⁶ Like with most games, or pieces of media the progression of time, and the unwinding of a narrative allows individuals to comprehend the whole of something rather than just unempathetic data.

Through the creation of roleplay games, Corredor et al found that they allowed players to take on the role of historical agents, thus fostering historical empathy.¹¹⁷ The roleplaying was heavily linked to documents which were presented to students to study, before their document-based knowledge was enlisted to roleplay several historical scenes such as ‘land reinstitution trial’ based on 2010s legal mechanism in Colombia, or ‘a TV news program’ with students

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 270.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 271.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 272-273.



making their own 80s and 90s news broadcasts based on contemporary historical documents of Colombia.¹¹⁸ These allowed the players to ‘face some of the structural constraints and historical forces that survivors had to face’ which is part of the main aims of this dissertation.¹¹⁹ In utilising the research of Corredor et al, this dissertation aims to foster historical empathy amongst players of the proto-type via understandings of the historical narrative and granting them the role of historical agents.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, pp. 274-276.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 282.



2.4: RADICALISM AND THE DIGGERS

As this dissertation will be focusing on Radicalism, and more specifically the Diggers in the creation of its proto-type, a historiographical understanding of those topics should be fundamental. Whilst receiving little main stream public attention the Diggers have received far more attention academically. Debate has raged over their identity, true politics and significance. Several key strands of argumentation can be identified, Marxist, Revisionist, Post-revisionist and ecological. These variations challenge each others' definitions of the Diggers. Understanding the various interpretations and historiographical presentations allows for a conscious creation of a proto-type to represent them that chooses its own representation.

2.4.1: Marxist

The Marxist presentation of the Diggers and radicalism during the English Revolution can be traced to Christopher Hill's *The World Turned Upside Down*.¹²⁰ His work argued that the Diggers exemplified 'proto-communists' with emergent class consciousness and acted as challenges to capitalism.¹²¹ Much of this Marxist interpretation of the Diggers is in conflict with

¹²⁰ C. Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London: Maurice Temple Smith, 1972).

¹²¹ Ibid, pp. 40-46.



the notion that the Diggers, particularly Gerrard Winstanley, reached their philosophical stance via theology and millenarianism.¹²² Diggers as Marxist figures does however illuminate their opposition to fundamental inequalities in revolutionary England, but claims that this is primarily areligious. There is also a pattern amongst Marxist historians to claim that the Diggers were but a 'tip of the iceberg of True Levellerism'.¹²³ Prior works to the Marxist turn, often held theology as a core element like in the works of Juretic.¹²⁴ Perhaps the most damning criticism of the Marxist interpretation is in its anachronistic usage of terms like 'communism' which would have been unrecognisable to the Diggers, and in which they do not fully fit the definition.¹²⁵

2.4.2: Revisionist and Post Revisionists

Revisionist notions of the Diggers and Radicalism held that rather than being the 'tip of the iceberg', their views were instead 'not typical of the "common people"'.¹²⁶ This later turn against the previous iterations of representations of the

¹²² P. Elmen, 'The Theological Basis of Digger Communism', *Church History*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (1954), pp. 214-215.

¹²³ Hill, *World Turned*, p. 97.

¹²⁴ G. Juretic, 'Digger no Millenarian: The Revolutionizing of Gerrard Winstanley', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (1975), pp. 263-280.

¹²⁵ Hill, *World Turned*, p. 275.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 97; M. J. Braddick, 'Introduction: Christopher Hill's *The World Turned Upside Down*, Revisited', *Prose Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (1975), p. 176.



Diggers criticised both Whigs and Marxists for their ‘teleology, anachronism and determinism’.¹²⁷ Works like J. C. Davis’s *Utopia and the Ideal Society* focused on the utopian writings from the 16th to 18th centuries.¹²⁸ Works in this Revisionist trend argued that the Diggers were both moral and theological, but they criticised the ideas of radicals in the English Revolution being class-based.¹²⁹ The Revisionist read Christianity back into the actions of the Diggers and other contemporary radicals.¹³⁰

These views altered since their first conception. The splintering of thought can be found in the works of Gurney, Hessayon and Curelly et al’s *Radical Voices, Radical Ways*.¹³¹ These historians create a picture of the Diggers that is more varied and nuanced than either the Whig, Marxist, or Whig interpretations. Whilst excepting the socio-economic factors into the picture, like that of Hill’s work, authors like

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 177.

¹²⁸ J. C. Davis, *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing, 1516-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

¹²⁹ G. Burgess, ‘Introduction’ in *English Radicalism, 1550-1850*, eds. by G. Burgess & M. Festenstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 1-16.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ J. Gurney, *Brave Community: The Digger Movement in the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); A. Hessayon, ‘Gerrard Winstanley, Radical Reformer’, in *Varieties of Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century English Radicalism in Context*, eds. by D. Finnegan & A. Hessayon (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), pp. 87-112; L. Curelly, & N. Smith, ‘Introduction’, in *Radical Voices, Radical Ways: Articulating and Disseminating Radicalism in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Britain*, eds. by L. Curelly & N. Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), pp. 1-37.



Gurney also posit forward theological and environmental causes for the Diggers' radicalism.¹³² Among this, Hessayon posits a biographical reconstruction of Winstanley that reads the mystical, radical and socio-economic factors congruently into his life.¹³³ Many of them also pick out themes amongst radical like that of 'community good' as Cavaillé notes and hold them in a radical 'spiritualist and millenarian religious' light rather than the coldly political of Marxist interpretations.¹³⁴

2.4.3: Ludic Lens

This dissertation aims to take a historiographical lens that acknowledges the past interpretations but will ultimately align with that of the post-revisionists. Whilst some of the class-analysis of Hill and colleagues is useful to frame the Diggers and their radicalism in a simple and classified way, the sheer number of anachronisms is likely to hinder the modern player from interpreting the Diggers with historical empathy as historical empathy requires the player to meet the historical record rather than have it twisted out of recognition for their benefit.¹³⁵ A few anachronisms can be

¹³² J. Gurney, *Brave Community: The Digger Movement in the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 1-20.

¹³³ Hessayon, 'Gerrard Winstanley', pp. 87-90.

¹³⁴ J. Cavaillé, 'Community of Goods: an unacceptable radical theme at the time of the English revolution', in *Radical Voices, Radical Ways: Articulating and Disseminating Radicalism in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Britain*, eds. by L. Curelly & N. Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), p. 41.

¹³⁵ Harris, 'Neo-Historical Authenticity', p. 194.



useful for situating the player in the mindset and ideas of the period under-review but quantity and depth of certain anachronisms like that of using the term ‘communism’ prove unhelpful. This work also takes the geographic and statistical work of the post-revisionists like that of Gurney, who create fruitful pictures of the full context of the Diggers which assists in aiding historical empathy as it places the player next to the ‘historical agents’.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Yilmaz, ‘Historical Empathy’, p. 331.



3: METHOD

The following method has been created with consideration of the criticisms of ‘serious games’. Some of these criticisms have been raised by Westera, in their article *The Devil’s Advocate*. This project intends to create an educational board game to represent a historical period. Even though there is a ‘high degree of creativity’ involved in creating a ‘serious game’, a reasoned methodology is crucial for understanding the process and improving it as a historical tool for history-makers.¹³⁷ In Barbosa et al’s article, they list several aspects a ‘serious game’ should have in order to assist meeting its design goals: ‘the fun factor must be maintained’ and ‘players must solve problems to progress through the game... by accumulating the necessary experience...’.¹³⁸

Laurence Hanes’s thesis on *Presenting Ancient History Through Serious Games*, provides some methodological guidance. Hanes creates their own ‘serious game’ to present Assyriology. They utilise the various ‘surviving artefacts of distinct types’ to present the player with.¹³⁹ They explain that

¹³⁷ A. F. S. Barbosa, P. N. M. Pereira, J. A. F. F. Dias & F. G. M. Silva, ‘A New Methodology of Design and Development of Serious Games’, *International Journal of Computer Games Technology*, Vol. 2014 (2014), p. 1.

¹³⁸ Ibid, pp. 1-4.

¹³⁹ L. Hanes, ‘Presenting Ancient History Through Serious Games: A Case-Study In Assyriology’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of



‘objects must be imbued with meaning’, thus this dissertation should endeavour to provide information of the contextual items it provides.¹⁴⁰ That search for information within the game can serve as that engagement with the player.

It seems that ‘serious games’ are frequently created as video games whilst analogue media can often be all-but-forgotten.¹⁴¹ A particular counter to this is Rajkovic et al’s article where they describe how the use of board game creation by students demonstrated their knowledge and historical understanding.¹⁴² Although their project involved encouraging students to create their own board games rather than an individual researcher creating one, there are aspects to their methodology that are applicable for this study. They found that the quality of the game mechanics determined the ‘educational potential of their games.’¹⁴³ The student-creators of the study considered ‘historical’ and prioritised controlling the players environment and choices as to put them

Birmingham), p. 171

<<https://etheses.bham.ac.uk//id/eprint/10121/7/Hanes2020PhD.pdf>> [accessed 25 July 2025].

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ This is most obvious in Anderson et al’s article, which does not mention board games as a valid method for creating ‘serious games’, E. Anderson, L. McLoughlin, F. Liarokapis, C. Peters, P. Petridis & S. de Freitas, ‘Developing serious games for cultural heritage: a state-of-the-art review’, *Virtual Reality*, Vol. 14 (2010), pp. 255-275.

¹⁴² A. Rajkovic, M. S. Ruzic & B. Ljubic, ‘Board Games as Educational Media: Creating and Playing Board Games for Acquiring Knowledge of History’, *International Association for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2019), pp. 1-5.

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 9.



in certain situations that would ‘trigger empathy.’¹⁴⁴ In their methods, the ludic elements had to fulfil design aims. Taken in this project’s instance, the design of ludic elements will follow ‘historical empathy’ and so will have to follow certain patterns of gameplay.

At the ‘History Through Games and Games Through History Colloquium’ [21 May 2025] Jennifer Cromwell presented their own TTRPG from a soldier’s experiences before the Battle of Qadesh. They designed this game to encourage historical empathy from the player and to encourage unique research questions from themselves during its creation.¹⁴⁵ Their method of creation sits similar to this dissertation’s. These methodological similarities do not hinder this projects utility and originality as the implementation of ‘serious games’ is a lens through which to examine any aspect of history. As radicalism and print culture during the British Revolution has not been examined through the lens of ‘serious games’ then this examination can be deemed original.

This project is significant due to its unique approach to presenting and researching history. As it aims to produce a game prototype as research output, this method may provide a

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ J. Cromwell, Qadesh: A Soldier’s Journey, Lecture from History Through Games and Games Through History Colloquium (University of Leeds, 21 May 2025).



blueprint for other researchers aiming to recreate this methodological approach. It also showcases the use of ‘game-creation’ with a reception study of the prototype. This project’s attempt to intertwine several game-based approaches with the study of history makes it a further progression of other game-based studies.

Given the importance of the method to this dissertation, a thorough explanation of it is required. The use of ‘game-creation’ as a methodology for targeting historical research has been outlined by Annika Waern and Jon Back.¹⁴⁶ In their chapter ‘Experimental Game Design’ in *Game Research Methods*, they detail how game-creation can prompt the researcher to answer research questions.¹⁴⁷ Alongside this, game-creation can also be utilised to form a ‘reenactment’ rubric where it encourages methods ‘...to understand and feel [history] as much as possible through live or computer simulations.’¹⁴⁸ This allows players insight into a historic periods by playing a game designed to encourage ‘historical empathy’.¹⁴⁹ The game as research output can be altered after a period of playtesting

¹⁴⁶ Waern & Back, ‘Experimental Game Design’, pp. 341-353.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 341.

¹⁴⁸ D. Espanol-Solana, J. Franco-Calvo & J. Gonzalez-Gonzalez, ‘Educating in History: Thinking Historically through Historical Reenactment’, *Social Sciences*, Vol. 11, No. 256 (2022), pp. 1-2.

¹⁴⁹ J. Pitkanen, ‘Studying Thoughts: simulated recall as a game research method’, in *Game Research Methods: An Overview*, (Pittsburgh: ETC Press, 2015), p. 127.



to respond to player feedback. This creates a cyclical process where new research questions are generated in response to design needs and player feedback. A researcher using this method can continually generate research questions and outputs, deepening their analysis.

As seen in Figure 9, the process can be broken down into several aspects: Research, Game-Creation and Reception. Each part in the process for this project requires reflection on its utility. The parts must sit in-line with the project's goal of being able to research and communicate the historical information through game design.

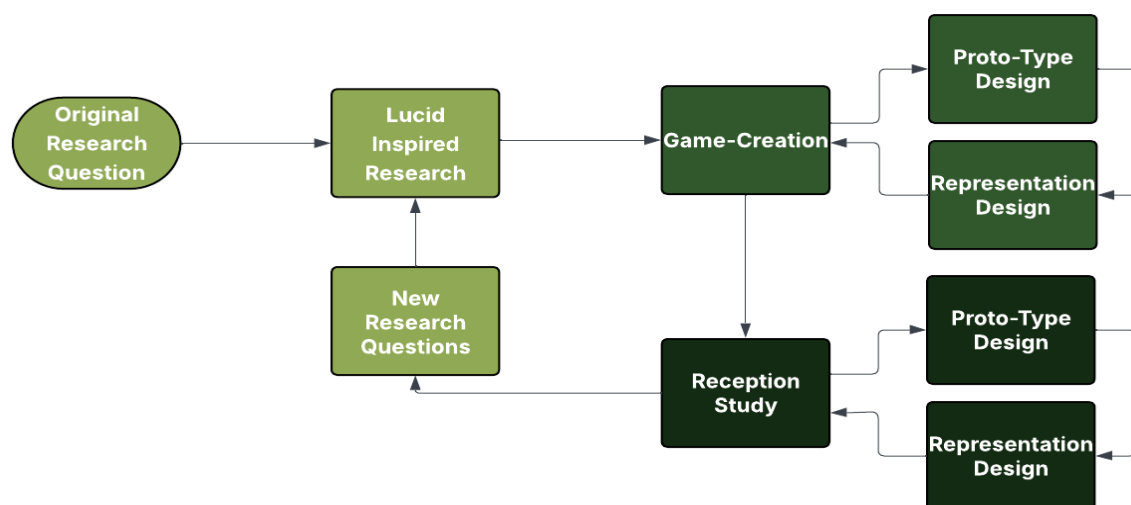


Figure 9 Chart showing the method of this dissertation.

‘Original Research Question’, relates to inception of the historical research.¹⁵⁰ At this stage a research question will

¹⁵⁰ See Figure 9



be chosen to be examined by this process. For this project the question is ‘how did radicalism during the English Revolution utilise printed media and enact its ideals.’ This question then needs to be answered with ‘Ludic Inspired Research’.¹⁵¹

Figure 9 demonstrates the cyclical nature of this project, where by the proto-type will be create, then tested. These tests provide fruitful reflections and more research questions that can in turn inspire new iterations of the proto-type.

¹⁵¹ See Figure 9



3.1: HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Once the beginning on the project's proto-type, historical research needs to be the foundation from which it is built. This includes the academic studies on the topics of radicalism and print culture during the period of 1625-1660. This historical research should not occur separate from ludic research. The historical research should be undertaken with heed paid to what aspects of the discovered research could be utilised and represented as a game mechanic. As the historical research of the themes and concepts of the period are understood the project can be move on to Ludic based research.

The historical research conducted for the creation of the proto-type of this project will examine the Digger movement and the print culture surrounding them. The diggers have been chosen for their radical nature and utilisation of print culture. The academic works on the period will be synthesised and interpreted to create the board game proto-type. Primary sources will also play a vital role in the creation of this game like that of the geography, material culture and especially the printed sources of the Diggers. Alongside the writings of the diggers attention will be paid to the perception of the diggers from the outside.



3.2: LUDIC RESEARCH

Once several aspects of the historical record have been identified to be represented as a game mechanic, ludic research can begin. This is both historical research that is conducted with the aim of answering mechanics-based questions, and research into game mechanics for the purposes of representing the history. As a game design employs creativity, it cannot be pre-empted with a distinct method for ‘how to be creative’. To rectify this, an auto-ethnography will be conducted throughout the creation of the game as to detail the method taken when undertaking ludic research and game creation.

‘Ludic-Inspired Research’ can be conducted in a creative process where the research is targeted to fit a ludic output. It is best to choose a format and genre of game in which to represent the research and work backwards to inspire the research. For this project, the historical research will be targeted towards analogue board games, in the genre of an economic game. The ‘economic’ game genre has been selected because of its ability to model socio-economic dynamics and other chains of relationships.¹⁵² Engaging in the research

¹⁵² An example of games used to teach socio-economic dynamics can be seen in NomadSed; K. Frank, I. Breuer, A. Gruschke, B Muller & R. Drees, ‘Scientific Background of the Strategic Board Games “NomadSed”’, *UFZ* (2014).



would begin with general background reading, then targeted research to fit the topic into the game with various primary and secondary sources.

As with Romero's *Síochán Leat* game, the physical aspects of the game will be represented. This can be done by understanding the geography and environment in which the diggers existed.

Part of the ludic inspired research will consist of understanding the rules the Diggers themselves would have obeyed and which they would have broken. Considering that they were a radical group and broke the law to attain their political aims like digging upon St George's Hill common land, an understanding of their own internal rules will inform the rules the game may apply to the players.¹⁵³ As games require a win-condition to some degree, an examination of the aims of the Diggers and of their opponents will form part of this ludic-based research.

¹⁵³ J. Gurney, '"Furious Divells?": The Diggers and Their Opponents', *Prose Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1999), p. 73.



3.3: GAME CREATION

Once the research is completed, the 'Game-Creation' can begin. This process is split into several aspects: the creation of the prototype, the playtest, and the design. The creation of the prototype forms a majority of the 'Game-Creation' stage. In that part, the aspects and elements found throughout the research phase are channelled to create the prototype, and any outstanding questions that occur during the prototype creation can be answered by further research. The design of the games appearance and mechanics should be in line with historical authenticity.¹⁵⁴

The game creation relates to the tangible and intangible aspects of the game: pieces and mechanics rules. This too is a creative element, and so not easily quantifiable. Endeavours will be made to create a proto-type, rulebook and other supplementary parts of the game that fulfil the aim of this project. Each design element of the tangible game will be considered before being implemented on its representative merits and how any one piece contributes towards the proto-types 'historical authenticity'.

¹⁵⁴ The term authenticity is utilised according to L. Saxton, 'A True Story', p. 129, which describes it as 'necessary as a distinct term because it acknowledges the 'gaps' in historical knowledge that are the territory of historical fiction'.



3.4: RECEPTION STUDY

Once the design is complete, the project can move on to the ‘reception study.’ In this section, players will be fielded to provide playtest feedback. This feedback will be taken into account in the redesign of the game, as seen in the second ‘prototype design’ and ‘representation design’ sections. After this section is completed, the game may yield unique research questions from either playtest data or from intrinsically found questions noted in the auto-ethnography. An example of the questions asked of the participants can be found in the appendix.



3.5: AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY

Congruent to the game design and playtesting, an auto-ethnography will be constructed that details the thoughts and design choices made during the game creation stage. This auto-ethnography will function as a game designers journal that bares relation to all elements of the proto-types development. It will also contain observations of playtests, reflections on feedback and design alterations made.



4: RESULTS

The results for this dissertation are split up into several categories. First there is the auto-ethnography, which details the historical research, design considerations and personal creative choices that were made in the design of this project's proto-type. Then the results will cover the proto-type itself with a details description and display of its various elements. That section will also contain explanations of the proto-types design. And finally, playtest data will be discussed in the auto-ethnography with the data being found in the appendix.

4.1: AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY

In researching the Diggers and adapting their history for a ludic creation, I asked myself a series of research questions. Each question aimed to provide me with more historical material to represent in the form of a game. The first question I asked myself was 'who were the Diggers.' Once I answered it, I could further align the player with the position of the Diggers to encourage 'Historical Empathy'. These first set of questions aimed towards creating the first proto-type.



From there I also detailed my creation process in making each proto-type, and how both observations and feedback influence further design changes. Throughout this auto-ethnography I outline how I moved from the ideation phase all the way through to playtesting and redesigning. Once my series of historical questions were answered, I moved onto alteration based historical questions where the alterations of my games were the inspiration for more historical research to align them with historical authenticity and ground them within the historical record.

4.1.1: Who were the Diggers?

Having conducted research, the Diggers were not homogenous. They did not exist in one location, belong to one social class, nor live lives uniform to one another. Some people merely aided the Diggers in their quest without actually labelling themselves as one, like the radical printer Giles Calvert.¹⁵⁵ Others fought under the name of the Diggers directly, like their lead writer Gerrard Winstanley.¹⁵⁶ Some flocked to their cause or set up their own imitation of the

¹⁵⁵ M. Caricchio, 'News from the New Jerusalem: Giles Calvert and the Radical Experience', in *Varieties of Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England Radicalism in Context*, eds. by D. Finnegan & A. Hessayon (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 69-86.

¹⁵⁶ J. D. Aslop, 'Gerrard Winstanley: Religion and Respectability', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (1985), pp. 705-709.



Diggers life on St. George's Hill like the Wellingborough, and Iver colonies.¹⁵⁷

In *The True Levellers Standard Advanced* (published on the 26th of April 1649), members of the 'George-Hill' colony identify themselves. They identify themselves as follows:

- William Everard,
- John Palmer,*
- John South,*
- John Courton,
- William Taylor,
- Christopher Clifford,*
- John Barker,
- Ferrard[sic] Winstanley,*
- Richard Goodgroome,
- Thomas Starre,*
- William Hoggrill,*
- Robert Sawyer,*
- Thomas Eder,*
- Henry Bickerstaffe,
- John Taylor,

¹⁵⁷ London, Guildhall Library, R174628; London, British Library (BL), Thomason, 669. F.15 (21).



- along with a nameless ‘&c.’¹⁵⁸

These members are not the entirety of the Diggers movement. A later publication *A Declaration From the Poor Oppressed People of England*, published on 1st of June 1649, attached forty-five names to the Digger movement.¹⁵⁹ Of the names addended this later publication, only 8 from the previous 15 were mentioned again. This could suggest members leaving over time, with others replacing them.

One of John Gurney’s studies of the Diggers examines several of their members, and reveals that a large number lived in, or bordering, the parish of Cobham.¹⁶⁰ Gurney also traces that a few may have originated from the town of Kingston-Upon-Thames, some 8 miles away.¹⁶¹ Overall, Gurney has the number of known ‘George-Hill’ Diggers at 74, with ‘a third’ of their number being local inhabitants.¹⁶² These named

¹⁵⁸ London, British Library(BL): Thomason, E.552[5]; the date is provided by a catalogue of George Thomason’s tracts, *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books and Newspapers, and Manuscripts Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration, Collected by George Thomason 1640-1661: Volume 1*, ed. by G. K. Fortescue (London: British Museum, 1908), p. 794.

¹⁵⁹ London, BL: Thomason, E557[9]; *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books and Newspapers, and Manuscripts Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration, Collected by George Thomason 1640-1661: Volume 1*, ed. by G. K. Fortescue (London: British Museum, 1908), p. 747.

¹⁶⁰ J. Gurney, *Brave Community: The Digger Movement in the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 128-130.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p. 131.

¹⁶² Ibid.



inhabitants also held houses in the local parish, as Winstanley writes of their houses being destroyed.¹⁶³

Gurney does manage to reveal the possible 'sole surviving record of women Diggers names,' yet does not himself question the gender disparity among the movement.¹⁶⁴ In the movement as a whole women do not feature in much of the literature except as a point of criticism from outside. Common accusations made against the Diggers were that they held their 'women to be common' like the claim rebutted in Winstanley's *A New-Yeers Gift for the Parilament and Armie*.¹⁶⁵ Many contemporaries to the Diggers would have claimed that 'it was the husband's role to determine the beliefs and actions of that one [marriage] unit.'¹⁶⁶ Gerrard Winstanley's own writings do not echo the common religiously motivated discounting of women on the grounds of 'the Fall'.¹⁶⁷ He can be found to criticise patriarchal religious sentiments in his writing titled *The New Law of Righteousness*.¹⁶⁸ Yet even this inference takes some

¹⁶³ 'An Humble Request to The Ministers of both Universities...', in *The Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley* eds. by T. N. Corns, A. Hughes, & D. Loewenstein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 255-272.

¹⁶⁴ Gurney, *Brave Community*, p. 171.

¹⁶⁵ 'A New-yeers Gift For the Parliament and Armie', in *Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 107-160.

¹⁶⁶ S. C. W. Jones, 'Women, Radicalism, and Revolution: A Study of Women and the Radical Movements of the English Revolutionary Period' (unpublished postgraduate thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1991), p. 16.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 27-28.

¹⁶⁸ J. Cook, 'Truth Lifting Up Its Head Above Scandals: The New Law of Righteousness Proposed by Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers' (Unpublished These, University of Richmond, 1986).



leaps of logic to assume that Winstanley is in fact including women in his overtures towards an equal society. Meaning women may have featured as members of the Diggers communities but not proactively in its facing roles.

When relating this to gameplay, I felt the answer to this question encouraged me to make the players perspective one of locality. Considering a majority of the Diggers were locals themselves, their view of the entire English country should be limited. Much of the game's scope thus relates mostly to the local parish of Cobham, rather than a large view of the country as most games aim for. Whilst this question encourages a locally based scope, my ideas for players' awareness of the outside country decided that it should come through the same methods that parish members received news. As many of the Diggers are named, it felt reasonable to give players a character card that relates to certain diggers. Although in the first version of the game this idea had not yet been ironed out. My ideas related that these cards could bare their skills and perspectives. As little is known about the perspectives and skillsets of most of the Diggers, I decided that omission and addition would be necessary to attribute more rounded attributes and qualities to members of the local parish and Diggers. I decided that I could extrapolate skills that may have been present amongst members of the wider parish



to the Diggers as a way of adding authenticity, even if these skills might have been absent amongst the Diggers. This utilises other aspects of the historical record to create a picture of authenticity even if it is not entirely accurate.¹⁶⁹

On the back of this I found myself asking two more questions, ‘what did the Diggers want?’ and ‘To what extent would members of the parish been aware of the outside world. These rose from my own desire to give players a context for the country as a whole to put their game narrative into perspective, and to also find the gameplay goal for players who played the role of Diggers.

4.1.2: To What Extent Would Members of The Parish Have Been Aware of The Outside World?

I found during my research that prior to the 1640s printed information of national topics saw limitation and censorship from the government.¹⁷⁰ International news was the most widely circulated prior to the war, seeing prevalence in hand-written newsletters along diplomatic channels.¹⁷¹ This information travelled out from central nodes on news networks, such as

¹⁶⁹ Burgess & Jones, ‘Historical Accuracy and Historical Authenticity’, p. 828.

¹⁷⁰ R. Cust, ‘News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England’, *Past & Present*, No. 112 (1986), p. 62.

¹⁷¹ N. Moxham & J. Raymond, ‘News Networks in Early Modern Europe’, in *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, eds. By N. Moxham & J. Raymond (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 1-16.



urban centres. These networks would use the postal routes as the basis for their distribution to non-urban areas.¹⁷² Given George-Hill's location only a few miles from London, the news that members of Cobham Parish would have received would have come from that metropolis.¹⁷³ Given that the Diggers had their writings published in London, it is likely that it functioned as the nearest node in their news network.¹⁷⁴ In terms of time, it likely took between 5 and 10 hours to get news from London, as shown by Schoesberger et al's map.¹⁷⁵ Cobham sat along the road to the South-West, with those delivering to Southampton, Portsmouth, or Exeter nodes passing close by.¹⁷⁶

Through this network members of the parish may have received news from the central London node fairly quickly and reliably. They may have also received news from pedlars who would have carried printed media from London to local towns to sell. The local Cobham community would have possibly been able to source their printed media from the local alehouse or at fairs, where pedlars would have offered their wares to

¹⁷² Ibid; N. Brownless, 'Newes also came by Letters': Functions and Features of Epistolary News in English News Publications of the Seventeenth Century', in *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, eds. by N. Moxham & J. Raymond (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 394-419.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Evidence for the Digger's publishing location can be found in their pamphlets; Caricchio, 'News from the New Jerusalem', pp. 69-86.

¹⁷⁵ N. Schoesberger, P. Arblaster, M. Infelise, A. Belo, N. Moxham, C. Espejo & J. Raymond, 'European Postal Networks', in *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, eds. by N. Moxham & J. Raymond (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p. 56.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 52.



customers.¹⁷⁷ Most pedlars became more suited to selling political and religious literature of controversial nature. The means of distribution for the more radical and controversial pieces was either through the postal network or networks of activists.¹⁷⁸

These pieces of the historical record inspired the idea that sending literature to London to be printed from the Diggers could be a fundamental mechanics. In the first iteration of the game, I did not include the characters of pedlars or activists as I wanted to keep the first version simple and build up its complexity in future designs. These aspects lent to the design of the prototype as they conjured an image of the network of communication along Britain. Adding in a small network map with nodes relating to the stops of pamphlets towards and from London would also have added to the players understanding of the print network. This information did not immediately sprout more research questions, so I'd

¹⁷⁷ N. Brownless, 'Newes also came by Letters': Functions and Features of Epistolary News in English News Publications of the Seventeenth Century', in *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, eds. by N. Moxham & J. Raymond (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 394-419; Peacey, J., 'Wandering with Pamphlets': The Infrastructure of News Circulation in Civil War England', in *Not Dead Things*, eds. by R. Harms, J. Raymond & J. Salman (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 97-114.

¹⁷⁸ Peacey, J., 'Wandering with Pamphlets': The Infrastructure of News Circulation in Civil War England', in *Not Dead Things*, eds. by R. Harms, J. Raymond & J. Salman (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 97-114.



like to return to one which I surmised from a previous question.

4.1.3: What Did the Diggers Want?

After I grew an understanding of who the Diggers were, understanding their aims enlightened the goals that players could work towards. As games should have goals that players can work towards, and should require a challenge in completing them, I aimed to understand what the Diggers aimed for, and what forces they used to achieve their goals.

The material desires of the Digger's were to extend the benefits of the 'revolution' from the middling classes to all other classes.¹⁷⁹ They aimed to redress the 'plight of the landless.'¹⁸⁰ They also wished to oppose the enclosures across the country that excluded the lower classes from the perfectly fertile wastes and commons that had been reserved for livestock. There is however no clear separation of theology and politics in the Digger's writing. The lens through which the Diggers view their economic plight was one of religion.

As the Diggers decry the yoke enslaving the English people, placed by that 'Norman Bastard William', they

¹⁷⁹ Elmen, 'Digger Communism', p. 207.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.



entreated readers to help free the 'Israel of England'.¹⁸¹ Through *The True Levellers Standard Advanced*, the Diggers refer to the wealthier classes of land-owners across England as being in contravention of the 7th and 8th commandments. In owning their land, the Diggers claim, they must have gained it via either murder, theft or oppression. They explain that these ill-gotten gains have been taken from the poor by 'enslaving English Israelites.'¹⁸² Common iconography throughout their published works refers to the biblical stories of Cain and Abel, with the older brother harming their younger kin. The Diggers likens this to the ruling classes harming the lower classes. They detest class hierarchies and state how 'no branch of mankind should rule over another.'¹⁸³

They declared enclosure unnatural and the major reason for the enslavement of mankind. They wish for people to take up their call and overthrow the oppression that they faced by digging upon the commons and wastes, but 'shall not do this by force of arms.'¹⁸⁴ Speaking directly to the reader, they asked them to come and 'by labouring the earth in righteousness together to eate[sic] our bread with the sweat of our brows,

¹⁸¹ 'The True Levellers Standard Advanced', *Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, eds. by T. N. Corns, A. Hughes & D. Loewenstein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 1-30.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.



neither giving hire, nor taking hire but working together and eating together as one man.’¹⁸⁵

They added authority to their message by claiming to have heard a voice from the divine beseeching them to ‘work together, eat bread together, declare this all abroad.’¹⁸⁶ This task is seen as their spiritual mission to fulfil the promise in the bible that ‘the great creator... made the earth to be a common treasury.’¹⁸⁷ They saw printing as an important aspect of their fulfilment of the divine message. To spread the message, they wrote and dug as the main aspects of fulfilment.

To complete their task required them to encourage all of mankind to follow suit and free their English Jerusalem of oppression. Whilst the Digger’s chief writer, Gerrard Winstanley’s writing has been interpreted in many ways, I tend towards the diagnosis that his radical views sat on religious foundations. Winstanley’s previous mystical and millenarian philosophy steer the views of the Diggers.¹⁸⁸ I would agree that Winstanley’s views were not distinguishable between the aspects of economic, political, or theological. Winstanley did however see the Second Coming as an already begun process.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ D. R. Sutherland, ‘The Religion of Gerrard Winstanley and Digger Communism’, *Essays in History*, Vol. 33 (1990), pp. 18-20.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 21.



And that through the ‘individual spiritual transformation of men and women’, the kingdom of heaven would be established.¹⁹⁰

In terms of how I implemented these ideas into a game, I aimed to represent the place of religion. Imagery and counters were something I decided to use in representing the Diggers progress towards to Millenium and have game mechanics that brought the Diggers closer towards their end goal.

4.1.4: Who Opposed the Diggers?

Those who regularly attempted to oppose the Diggers were that of the parishioners who lived beside the commons and wastes that the Diggers occupied.¹⁹¹ These parishioners comprised of bands of men who were utilised by leading landowners to fulfil their aims of removing the Diggers. These leading landowners can be identified as several different people relating to the different locations that the Diggers dug upon: Parson John Platt and Francis Drake MP are the most notable. It was not however entirely the fault of the local landowners for the popular opposition from the locals. Many locals seemed to have genuinely opposed to the Diggers.¹⁹² This grass-roots opposition to the Diggers is something that I aimed to

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Gurney, *Brave Community*, p. 153.

¹⁹² J. Gurney, ‘“Furious Divells?” The Diggers and Their Opponents’, in *Winstanley and the Diggers, 1649-1999*, ed. by A. Bradstock (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 74.



represent in the game but decided to make sure that the local landlords were represented first (mechanically), before moving on to the addition of more wholesale opposition.

I found that much of the cause of opposition to the Diggers is split amongst several different categories: theological, legally and personally. Some, like Parson Platt opposed the Diggers on theological grounds. He likely balked at their 'rejection of orthodox belief and... opposition to tithes.'¹⁹³ The Diggers 'refusal to attend church' also upset many on theological grounds.¹⁹⁴ The tract 'Britain's Triumphs' lists the Diggers as one of the various splits of religion in England which the author likens to 'hydra's heads'.¹⁹⁵

Legally, individuals like Henry Sanders opposed the Diggers for their violation of laws regarding their occupation of commons.¹⁹⁶ They were subject to several attempted legal actions by local authority such as court proceedings which they were unable to represent themselves.¹⁹⁷ Locals inhabitants who would have use for the commons occupied by the Diggers felt that they were blocking them from using their customary rights like that of a lord.¹⁹⁸ The locals saw the Diggers as

¹⁹³ Gurney, "Furious Divells", p. 80.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ London: BL, G.3516, Britain's Triumph, 1656.

¹⁹⁶ Gurney, "Furious Divells", p. 74.

¹⁹⁷ Gurney, *Brave Community*, pp. 161-165.

¹⁹⁸ Gurney, "Furious Divells?", p. 74.



outsiders who extinguished their resources and rode roughshod of their own rights and property.¹⁹⁹

4.1.5: What tools of opposition were used?

A myriad of tools were utilised by opponents of the Diggers physically, legally, and socially. The most immediate weapons of opposition they faced would have been the physical attacks from the local community. When station first upon St. George's Hill, the Diggers were targeted by prolong campaign against their property.²⁰⁰ Their houses were pulled down, burned and made so they could not rebuild them.²⁰¹ Their livestock was brutalised, and crops destroyed.²⁰² Sometimes they were beaten by gangs of local thugs, and even imprisoned in churches.²⁰³ Some of this was locally generated violence, but some of its came from the state in the form of the army. Twice the army was called in to disband the Diggers.²⁰⁴

Legally, the Diggers faced opposition in courts. Sir Francis Drake managed to get the Diggers fined with £10 of damages against.²⁰⁵ To pay his damages, his 'cows were

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, pp. 74-75.

²⁰⁰ G. Aylmer, 'The Diggers in Their Own Time', *Prose Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1999), p. 15.

²⁰¹ Gurney, *Brave Community*, p. 153.

²⁰² A. Hessayon, 'Restoring the Garden of Eden in England's Green and Pleasant Land: The Diggers and the Fruits of the Earth', *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2009), p. 4.

²⁰³ Hessayon, 'Gerrard Winstanley', p. 110.

²⁰⁴ Aylmer, 'Diggers in Their Own Time', pp. 14-15.

²⁰⁵ Gurney, *Brave Community*, p. 162.



distraigned'.²⁰⁶ The Diggers appeared in court, in Kingston, but were refused by the court unless they 'would fee an attorney to speak' on their behalf.²⁰⁷ The Diggers themselves argued that they had not trespassed as they justified that the commons should be 'a free land.'²⁰⁸

Socially, the Diggers were also opposed by the press in London. Marchamont Nedham wrote against the Diggers in his pro-government work, *The Case of the Common-wealth of England*.²⁰⁹ Published letters to Thomas Fairfax criticised the 'contagion' of the Diggers 'to other parts of the country.'²¹⁰ Others generally held them in contempt like that of Mercurius Republicus.²¹¹

4.1.5: The Making of the Version One

Once I had completed this research I began creating version one of the proto-type. This version, I made to be rough and cheap. I spent no money on this version, only scrapping materials together from discarded materials. In making the first proto-type, I wrote the rules first. They arose from my

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ 'A Watch-Word to the City of London, and the Armie', in *Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 79-106.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ London, BL, 100.f.12, *The Case of the Common-Wealth of England*, 1650.

²¹⁰ L. Curelly, 'When Heterodoxy Became News: The Representation of the Diggers and the Ranters in Contemporary Newspapers', *Etudes Epistémè*, Vol. 35, 2019.

²¹¹ London, BL, E.556.(29), *Mercurius Republicus*, communicating martiall actions with other affairs to the nations of England and Ireland, 1649.



creative combination of several of the researched events and dynamics.

I wanted to create a tiled game, where the tiles could be moved and shifted. This shifting would allow for players to change the games layout to take control of the narrative in their several iterations of play. The pieces for the 'Digger-meeples' were taken from other board games and reused for this game. These pieces would have been familiar to players. I chose green to represent the Diggers due to the relation in players mind between the environment and the Diggers. I chose red to represent the 'Parish' as red connotes opposition, and rivalry. Particularly in traditional war games, red and blue are usually opposing forces. As the game board was represented in black and white, I wanted the players' pieces to stand out against those tiles, thus not being black and white but coloured. In the creation of the 'Millenium Tracker', I hammered some gold-coloured fittings into the shape of a cross to give it a sense of three dimensions and translate the religious element immediately to the audience. The tracker which moved closer towards the Millenium was made from an acorn and twig. These natural pieces, I hoped, would relate themes of nature and elicit thoughts of the commons the game took part on. I wrote a short piece describing some context to the players and artificially aged the paper with tea bags and



the heat of the sun. To give the game some more three-dimensional aspects, I folded paper together to form a church. Aiming to do the same with manors, I gave up and represented them with some red game pieces I had from other games.

4.1.6: Feedback & Observations

When playtesting of the first prototype began, I found that overall, there were positive reactions to the games. I came across several pieces of reoccurring responses from players to the game. Most players liked the London Bridge representation, pictured in Figure 10. They felt like this piece added to the depth of the board game and added to their empathy for the period and events since it added visual qualities.

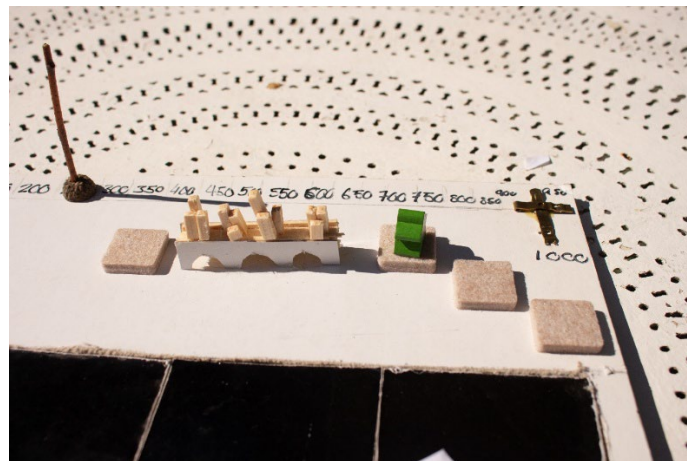


Figure 10 The Bridge of London Representation in Proto-type One

Much more of the feedback from players surrounded wanting more historical knowledge and context to add more depth to the



abstract pieces like the meeples. The playtesters wanted more relation to history through named characters and other elements that allowed them to empathise with individual figures.

In terms of observations of the game player, the Diggers won most frequently. On the times when they lost they often fled around the board, avoiding the Parishioners which seemed to match some of the historical record on the relationship between the parishioners and Diggers. During the gameplay, a stalemate outcome occurred frequently. Since the rules meant that churches made the Diggers immune whilst stationed on that tile, if they became surrounded by the Parishioners then they were unable to be taken nor move from that tile. This left a stalemate which did not accurately portray the period's dynamic between the two opposing sides.

These observations and pieces of feedback can be found in the playtest data and observation data.

4.1.7: Second Creation Overview

Once the first version had been created and playtested, the feedback, observations and more own analysis of the piece gave rise to several improvements I wanted to make. These elements changed the method in which the second proto-type could be created. With the first version, historically founded research



questions gave rise to gameplay mechanics. Alternately, in the second version gameplay mechanics from first version inspired historical research which would found the second version's design. Design choices originated from already existing mechanics rather than the historical record first. These changes and improvements that were found in the observations of the first proto-type needed to be measured against the historical record for their accuracy before a balance of authenticity could be reached.

4.1.8: 3D Elements

Given that players enjoyed the three-dimensional elements to the game, I wanted to create more aspects that maintained this theme with architecture and geography.

In the second version, I changed the tiles from simple flat squares of cards to three dimensional wooden tiles with textured and painted surfaces. As the tiles represent the geography of the English countryside, I attempted to mimic the natural elements.

Finding that roughly a quarter of land in England was common during the 17th century, I mimicked this by making 9/36 of tiles commons.²¹² Then, I used air-drying clay to create a

²¹² G. Clark & A. Clark, 'Common Rights to Land in England, 1475-1839', *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (2001), pp. 1009-1036.



textured land mass resembling a hill with a flat plateau. These represented the common lands that were officially owned by the lord of the manor but with rights of use being extended to the local community.²¹³ As local landownership was usually a requirement for access to the benefits of commons, popular opposition to the Diggers arose from their use of the commons despite not the entirety of their membership originality in the parish.²¹⁴ To display the radicalism of the Diggers, it is important to note that notion of the commons ‘belonging to all’ was not a universal concept, and they were perhaps ‘ahead of their time’ in their call.²¹⁵ The likening of the ownership over commons to the ‘Norman-yoke’ plays a part in both the Digger’s philosophy and repeated in modern times.²¹⁶ Therefore, the centrality of the game pieces representing the commons would need to be more detailed to encourage the empathy for the Digger’s radicalism. The commons were themselves typically grazing land, and thus more likely to be more rugged than the easy to farm flat regions of a parish.²¹⁷

²¹³ C. P. Rodgers, E. A. Straughton, A. J. L. Winchester & W. Pieraccini, *Contested Common Land: Environmental Governance Past and Present* (Oxon: Earthscan, 2011), p. 4.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p. 6; Gurney, *Brave Community*, pp. 128-130.

²¹⁵ Rodgers et al, *Contested Common Land*, p. 27.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ L. D. Stamp, ‘The Common Lands and Village Greens of England and Wales’, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 130, No. 4 (1964), p. 460; W. G. Hoskins & L. D. Stamp, *The Common Lands of England and Wales* (London: Collins, 1963), p. 47.



I attempted to represent London, first the bridge and then other parts of the city. This added to the authenticity of the three-dimensional elements. In authentically representing London Bridge I relied on several reference images: *Old London Bridge* by Claude de Jongh (1630), *The Frozen Thames* by Abraham Hondius (1677) and *A View of the West Side of London Bridge...* by S. & N. Buck (1749). These images display a crowded and cramped bridge stretching from one bank of the Thames to the other. Low arches hop across the waters holding up the various structures on it. I then recreated the bridge from these paintings in spirit rather than painstakingly accurate. To create an accurate model would not be worth the time and energy. Considering the scale at which I was working also meant that it would not be physically possible to create it accurately, so authenticity-in-feel was chosen instead.²¹⁸

²¹⁸ Seen in Figure 11.





Figure 11 View of London Bridge on Proto-type Two.

The city of London is also a three-dimensional aspect I represented in Version Two. Most of the references I used for it came from two types of sources: literary and cartographical. The cartographical sources ranged after the period of the Diggers by a decade but still remained valid if considered with cartographical sources from before the Diggers.

The 1660, *Londinvm Vulgo London* map provides a detailed view of London shortly after the Digger's time. It's tight streets and clustered buildings cling to the north bank of the Thames.²¹⁹ A few wide streets stretch across the city, with the Tower of London left prominent and lonesome in the east of the city rather than being central and surrounded as in the modern-day city. A prior map made in 1592 by Francesco Valegio

²¹⁹ Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, EME.s.56, *Londinvm Vulgo London*, 1660.



displays a simpler rendering of the city but essentially shows the same concept: a city huddled on the north of the Thames with smaller clusters of settlements on the southside of the river.²²⁰ The tower here stands to the east of the city again not surrounded by housing. A large road leads from the south straight towards London Bridge which provides an approach the Diggers may have taken to London in-order to get their writing published.

In plays *The Roaring Girl*(1611) by Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, and *Epicene*(1609-1610) by Ben Jonson their are showcases of the urban space of London.²²¹ *The Roaring Girl's* main character Moll Cutpurse manages to move effectively through a tight and constricting London.²²² There is a sense of being overlooked and watched, of everything on top of itself. Jonson's *Epicene* shows the sprawl of London with towns amalgamating into to London on its borders.²²³ This led me to creating a compact vision of London that players would only get a glimpse of.²²⁴

²²⁰ Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Smith.b.09.36, Londra, 1592.

²²¹ K. J. Stage, *Producing Early Modern London: A Comedy of Urban Space, 1598-1616* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018), pp. 134-178.

²²² T. Dekker & T. Middleton, *The Roaring Girl*, eds. by E. Cook (London: Bloomsbury: 2014).

²²³ B. Jonson, *Epicene, or The Silent Woman*, eds. by R. Dutton (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 2003).

²²⁴ See Figure 12 City of London displayed in Proto-type Version Two





Figure 12 City of London displayed in Proto-type Version Two

Due to the scale of the game some three-dimensional pieces were kept as representational: meeples, crop-tokens, etc. These pieces were numerous and so would have been too time consuming to design multiple unique pieces. I also believe that since I have introduced character cards within the second prototype the players would more empathise with those characters rather than the faceless meeple who would merely act as extensions of their own will. This means that not all characters were something that the players are intended to empathise with intensely but perhaps through their empathy for the named characters they might begin to empathise with the scores of meeples representing meeples and parishioners.



4.1.9: Representation

I considered the presentation of certain factions in proto-type one and found that most of them did not give much detail. In correcting this, there were several characters I wanted to represent. I wanted players to have an understanding of each character they would play the role of and perhaps write a small biographical section to allow for more empathy from the player. The characters I wanted to represent were Gerrard Winstanley, William Everard, John Platt and Francis Drake. These characters form leaders of factions within the games, with Winstanley and Everard representing the Diggers, Platt and Drake representing the Parishioners.

These characters would be who the players acted as, giving them a link to these figures and hopefully encouraging historical empathy. Other characters besides these were decided to appear contextually in different places i.e. cards and small texts.

I also wanted to increase the importance of the role of print culture in the second version considering many of the playtesters found that element was not filled out much in proto-type one. To achieve this, I made it a mechanic, players would be able to utilise the act of printing pamphlets in order to receive boons.



4.1.10: Mechanical Fixes

As the game had a stalemate outcome possible, I aimed to fix this. Whenever the player representing the Diggers moved all their meeples onto a church tile, and the Parish player moved their meeples on to the same church tile. The Diggers could not leave the church, nor could the Parish remove them from the game. This meant that neither player could move towards victory unless the Parish relented. Despite the fact that Diggers were imprisoned with a church, they were not indefinitely imprisoned there. This stalemate is not, therefore, something that I want to be represented in version two.

Some of the solutions I decided upon were as follows:
Have the protection of the church last only a short amount of time, giving it an even more limited use by the Diggers.
Remove the church mechanic altogether. Give the Parish player a reason not to remain in situ around the church such as another external goal that their meeples would need to attend.

Several players believed that the game ended too quickly with the speed of the Millenniums arrival being too easy to achieve. Suggested alterations were to have the points received by the Diggers to be lowered and less attainable. This was done in proto-type two.



The Parishioner-player's goals felt lacking. Their only goal was, in proto-type one, to remove the Diggers from the commons. This simple and singular goal meant that players felt little sympathy for the parishioners as they did not have their own intrinsic goals like the Diggers did. To solve this, I researched some of the desires of the land-owning classes around the period and tied them to game mechanics. Parson John Platt was a member of the religious establishment as well as being a land-owner.²²⁵ His role would have been to collect tithes for the church from locals.²²⁶ Tithe collection benefited himself as well as the church.²²⁷ Therefore I made Tithe collection a secondary goal for players acting as Parson Platt to work towards.

Sir Francis Drake was another land-owner who did not hold a clerical position like Platt did. His goals, external to the Diggers, were not clear from the historical record. Instead, I imbued him with goals that might have been common to many of his class and status. Considering that he was an MP, and a landowner I decided that he could be a good way to give the players and experience of enclosures first hand through

²²⁵ Gurney, *Brave Community*, p. 50.

²²⁶ G. Herbet, *The Country Parson*, eds. by A. Russell (London: SPCK, 1993).

²²⁷ W. J. Sheils, 'The Rights of the Church'; the Clergy, Tithe and the Courts at York, 1540-1640', *Studies in Church History*, Vol. 24 (1987), pp. 231-255.



mechanics. To do this, I made one of Drake's intrinsic goals to enclose pieces of commons throughout the game.

4.1.11 Historical Context

Considering that players called for more historical context to their actions within the game, I decided to include both character cards, 'fun fact' cards, and context summary cards. The character cards have already been covered by the 'fun fact' for me felt like an element to add to other cards rather than outright adding just 'fun fact' cards. I added historical context to each card and detail in the game where appropriate. This gave players the chance to understand more context to their historical actions and thus improve the likelihood of historical empathy.

Context summary cards are an element that I had included in the previous proto-type. I wrote an introduction for the players and an end-of-game epithet that related to a specific outcome. These elements were to be repeated but fleshed out. I specifically wanted to have a branching narrative were depending on the actions in the games, players would be faced with a different ending. Much of this was grounded in the historical record. For example, I referenced William Everard's incarceration in Bedlem, Parson Platt's dismissal from the church and Winstanley's turn towards Quakerism.



4.2: PROTO-TYPE

The first game was created as cost-effectively as possible as a game should only be made by a designer according to their available resources.²²⁸ It was created with only scrap material and cost this dissertation no additional funds. This enabled the proto-type to not be seen as precious or valuable, enabling it to be changed without any personal connection to this version. The second game drastically improved upon both the mechanics and design of the first one. It took all the elements of design and improved them drastically.

4.2.1: Version One

The first version consisted of one large board with an indented space in its face. That space had a four-by-four grid of tiles. The tiles were black on the obverse and white on the reverse. These tiles represent the type of land: white for common land, and black for non-common land.

The tiles take up approximately four-fifths of the board, with a space along the top kept flat. On that space several square tokens glued to the board act as stepping stones. In between the penultimate and ultimate token sits a representation of London Bridge. These small square stepping

²²⁸ Hiriart, 'Digital Games as Historical Learning', p. 38.



stones acts as the road to London. Once players have traversed their meeples across the Bridge they are considered inside London.

Further up the board, adjacent to London Bridge a numbered line is drawn. The numbering begins at 50 and increases by 50 until it reaches 1000. The 1000 marker is represented by a golden cross. This is called the 'Millenium Tracker' and represents the Diggers progression towards enacting the Millenium in apocalyptic millenarian thought.

Alongside the board are various pieces. There are two different colours of meeples: red and green. Green was chosen to represent the Diggers for their link to the common and the environment, an element picked up by some of the post-revisionist writers covering the Diggers.²²⁹ The red meeples represented the Parishioners who would oppose the Diggers. The colour red was chosen to match the traditional use of red for antagonistic colours used in many different types of games.²³⁰ There was also green 'food tokens', just represented as green cubes for simplicity, and red manor tokens represented by red plastic tokens.

²²⁹ Hessayon, 'Restoring the Garden', pp. 1-25.

²³⁰ A. Kauranen, *How Colours Guide the Player in Video Games* (Unpublished Thesis, Tampere University of Applied Science, 2023), p. 52.



Besides this pre-manufactured pieces that had been co-opted from other board games, the game contains several originally made pieces: churches, and the opening summary. The Churches were made by folding paper into the shape of several contemporary churches local to Cobham.²³¹ The opening summary was typed and printed onto paper before being tea-stained and damaged to create an artificial aged look.

Photographs for this proto-type version can be found in the appendix as well its rules.

4.2.2: Version Two

The second proto-type I created received more care and attention as it represented an improvement on the already tested design of the first proto-type. The second proto-type replicated some of the similar elements found in the first proto-type, namely the tiles, road to London, and the Meeples. Much of the design existed as an elevation upon the first one.

The board is large and rectangular. It has room for a selection of tiles to be placed upon it. There are thirty-six wooden tiles that can be grouped into three categories: nine commons, three churches and twenty-four private land tiles. These are arranged on the large board in a six-by-six grid.

²³¹ This was done by searching www.heritagegateway.org.uk for statutory and non-statutory data within a 5-kilometre radius of George's Hill. From these I selected relevant churches.



There is a rectangular board that can be placed in the remaining space. This rectangular board represents both the City of London and the Millenium tracker.

The commons tiles have been made with air-drying clay and pain to create a rough landscape texture. The clay has been heaped up to create hills with a flat plateau for simplicity of placing Meeples atop. The church tiles are made similar to the commons, with air-drying clay and a wooden-church carved and placed in the middle. Finally, the private land tiles are made with the air-drying clay and a cross-road leading to adjacent tiles imbedded in them. These cross-roads help to display the direction of movement possible in the game.

The larger rectangular board representing London has an authentic model of the city. It aims to represent the themes of the burgeoning metropolis, directly showing the Tower of London and London Bridge. These space next to the city shows the new version of the Millenium Tracker.

The accompanying pieces to this version are also improved from the previous proto-type. In this there are as follows: Tithe tokens, Food tokens, Parishioners meeples, Diggers meeples, Pamphlet cards, Event cards, Character cards and Player-aid cards. The tithe tokens, food tokens, Parishioner meeples, and Digger meeples are all premade items, with the



only change made from the previous proto-type is for the Parishioner's meeples to be made white. As for the custom pieces, the pamphlet cards have been made by hand writing texts from Digger pamphlets and adding on unique rules into them to give them ludic purpose. The event cards are also handwritten cards relating to contemporary events with unique rules written on them. Player aid cards are simple cards with the basic rules written out on them. Character cards are small cards with description of the character's lives and unique goals attributed to which ever player is given them.

Photographs of this proto-type can be found in the appendix as well as its rules.



5: CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to provide a methodology for researchers to create their own serious games as both extensions of their own research and as heritage tools. It created two proto-types focusing on telling the story of the Diggers through a ludo-narrative. The first proto-type received playtesting and then saw a second proto-type made on the back of those suggestions and observations. The primary research question of this dissertation asked, ‘to what extent can serious games foster historical empathy for radicalism and print culture between 1625 to 1660.’ Besides this line of inquiry, it also sought to showcase how ludo-narratives can communicate historical research.

5.1: INTERPRETATION

Understanding how the proto-type showcased several of the main themes under review will provide a clearer picture of the success of this project. The main themes of Diggers/Radicalism and Print Culture were displayed in various ways throughout both proto-types. Evaluating that display shows how well serious games can portray research as heritage tools for an audience. Reflecting upon the ludic-inspired research



undertaken to answer game specific questions also answers this dissertations main aims.

5.1.1: Diggers

Proto-type one portrayed the Diggers as a more unified faction, almost alluding to the class-consciousness of the Marxist historiography.²³² It did this by mechanic, as the Digger's meeples moved all directed by one player. They acted uniformly and challenged another uniform enemy, of the land-owning parishioners. It did however keep an understanding of the Digger's radical theological beliefs by making the Millenium a central component of the Digger's win-condition.²³³ The Diggers never militantly acted for owner-ship over the means of production, or the eradication of the bourgeoisie, but rather towards an earthly heaven grounded in theological understanding.²³⁴ This, in someway, was demonstrated through the mechanics although the purity of this historiographical point was mixed with others, like the Marxist interpretation. Their grievances were not communicated through mechanics, but rather exposition at the beginning of the game, in the opening

²³² Hill, *World Turned*, pp. 40-46.

²³³ This can be seen in the Appendix.

²³⁴ Burgess, 'Introduction', pp. 1-16.



summary. Players felt that they wanted to understand more about the Digger and craved closer empathy with them.²³⁵

Players interpreted the Diggers as opposing oppression and often relayed that they felt the Parishioners felt outright immoral. They seemed to gravitate their sympathy towards the Diggers.

In the second proto-type, the Diggers were designed to be more consciously crafted than the first iteration. Character cards were created to give players certain ‘historical agents’ to relate themselves to and provide narrative consequences to their actions once the game completed.²³⁶ These character cards allowed for more thorough understanding of individuals like Gerrard Winstanley and William Everard to filter into the players understanding of the Diggers. This also provided some context to the Diggers concerns. This element further added to details of the theological and spiritual aspects of the Diggers philosophy by describing the visions experienced by them. It also provided examples of their printed work that enlightened the philosophy further.

²³⁵ This can be seen in the Appendix.

²³⁶ Yilmaz, ‘Historical Empathy’, p. 331.



5.1.2: Print Culture

Proto-type one only lightly touched on print culture, as players would be told that when sending a meeple to London they would be printing a pamphlet that would in-turn recruit more Diggers. Beside this it held little aspect of the print culture about it.

This was improved in the second proto-type, where mechanics were specifically added in to the game to account for print culture. The Diggers had their own pamphlets published which the game mimics by having the players send pamphlets to London to be published. These pamphlets go into the event card pile which itself has more publications within it from other sources. This system better realises the themes of print culture in the period and exposes the players to historical sources considering that the majority of these pamphlets were published in London.²³⁷

5.2: IMPROVEMENTS

5.2.1: Proto-type

In terms of improvements that could have been made to the proto-type, there are numerous. Having the proto-types so meticulously designed mitigates having large numbers of

²³⁷ Caricchio, 'News from the New Jerusalem', pp. 69-86.



playtesters completing the game concurrently. Whilst the proto-types unique physicality does add to the historical empathy experienced by some of the players, it also limits the ability for large amounts of play-testing data to be gathered on the ludo-narrative aspects alone.

I would recommend for further iterations of this methodology to begin with a simple pen-and-paper version that can be photocopied and supplied to larger numbers of players. Once that playtesting has been completed, it would then be feasible to create more bespoke designs that can be play-tested among smaller groups with the material aspect of the gaming being examined.

I would improve the display of the rules, often the rules were either written digitally and read to the players or provided in rough player-aide cards. I believe the rules would have better been serviced by providing bespoke rulebooks that also carried some material and visual details to further interest players.

A print-and-play option would also be beneficial to the longevity of the games reach. Having the option for players across the globe to download and print the game would also be beneficial for transmitting the game to larger audiences. The medium of board games was chosen due to its accessibility for



both the researcher and players. Video games require extensive knowledge of programming which is not realistic to expect of historical researchers wishing to create serious games about their research. Board games are thus a more accessible option for the creator. Not only is it more accessible for the creator but audiences need only obtain a copy of the game to be able to play, it does not have the limitation that a video game might have like hardware(PC, Console, etc), electricity, internet connection, etc. A print-and-play option provides a simple alternative to have in addition to a physical ready-made proto-type.

5.2.2: Methodology

Improving the methodology, there were several elements noted for correction. Completing only one iteration of making-playing-making meant that there was not chance for players to further pass judgement on the alterations to the proto-types. I believe that having players see the improvement would enlighten upon more changes in their historical empathy towards the period and its 'historical agents.'²³⁸

An improvement to the questions asked would vastly improve the quality of the player-data gathered. As they stand they enlighten only some of the players perceptions of the

²³⁸ Yilmaz, 'Historical Empathy', p. 331.



game, it would be better to conduct a more thorough interview one-to-one to gather more bespoke information and prod individuals about their opinions. Before does that one-to-one interview set criteria should be laid out for measuring historical empathy and marking their answers against it.

5.3: FINAL REMARKS

Creating a serious board game to showcase the Diggers fundamentally provided new research questions and design choices that uniquely displayed the Diggers and print culture. Without game design as a core focus these research questions would not have been evident. It allowed for fruitful non-traditional research that evaluated the Diggers on unique terms by asking research questions around game design. Whilst the process and methodology of creating a board game was time consuming, it allowed for a unique method of creating history for audiences and as a researcher.



6: APPENDICES

6.1: PROTO-TYPE ONE

6.1.1: Rules

Setting Up the Game:

- Place the 16 tiles on the board so that they all fit. 4 of them should be turned so the white-side faces upwards. The rest should be black side up. These should be arranged randomly.
- Two churches should be placed on two different black tiles randomly.
- Three Manors should be placed on one black square each that are not already occupied by church.
- The player who last dug the earth will play as the Diggers. (If this is not any player's first time playing this game, they can choose which side to play.)
- The player who is not playing as the Diggers, is designated as the 'Parish'. The Parish is given three red 'Meeples' known as the 'Parishioners.'
- The Digger is given two green 'Meeples' known as the 'Diggers.'



- The Digger then places all their Meeples on one of the Common tiles.
- The Parish then places their Meeples in any combination on any of the Manor tiles.
- A play will then read out the game's beginning sheet.

Play:

- Players take it in turns to complete one action. Each player has their own unique set of actions they can complete.
- The Diggers and the Parish players each have their own individual moves unique to them.
- At the end of the Digger's turn they gain 50 points for each crop token that exists on common land tile.
- The Diggers actions are as follows:
 - o Once per tune the Digger can select one tile on the board that contains their 'meeples'. They can move any number of their 'meeples' from that tile to an adjacent tile unless that tile is occupied by a manor token.
 - o Once per turn the Digger can also do one of the following actions: Attend Church, Sending News to London, or Dig.



- The Digger can only use the Attend Church action when they have 'meeples' are present on a church tile. By using this action, the Digger-player can remove one 'Call the Army' dice from the Parish-player's pool.
- The Digger can only use the 'Sending News to London' action if they have a meeple on the tile adjacent to the first step on the road to London, or already on the road to London steps. The Digger can use their action to place one meeple that is adjacent to the starting tile on the road to London, and/or move all their meeple that occupy a space on the road to London forward one place. If a Meeple reaches the end of the road to London then the Digger removes it from that tile and returns it to any common land tile they wish along with an extra Meeple from the game's store. The Digger also gains 100 points on the Millenium tracker. The Parish gains a 'call the army' die. The meeple already on the road to London cannot move backwards along the trail and must move forward. They can only move forward if the player chooses to use the 'Sending News to London' action.
- Dig is another one of the actions that the Digger can take on their turn. The Digger can select a



common land tile that is occupied by their meeples. They can place crop tokens on that common land tile up to the number of their meeples that occupy that tile.

- The Parish actions are as follows:

- Once per turn, the Parish player can select one tile that contains their meeples and can move any number of their meeples from that tile to one adjacent tile.
- Once per turn, the Parish player can complete one of the following actions: Capture Churchgoers, Destroy Digger's Commune, Call the Army, and Attack a Digger.
- When the Parish player chooses to use the Capture Churchgoers, they must have at least one meeple stationed on a tile that contains a church. If the Digger player has any of their own meeples stationed on this tile, then the Parish player can use this action to stop the Digger's meeples from moving off this tile in their next turn. The Parish player must use this action each turn in order to halt the Digger's meeples from leaving on their subsequent turn.



- If a Parish meeple is stationed on a common land tile that has crop token on them, then the parish player may use their actions to remove all of the crop tokens from the tile as long as they have a meeple stationed on that tile when they want to use this action.
- As an action, the Parish player may use the 'Call the Army' move. This involves the parish player rolling all of their 'Call the Army' dice in their dice pool. If they roll a 12 or more, then the army is successfully called in to clear a common tile. The Parish player may select a common land tile, which is then turned upside down so that it becomes just an ordinary black tile. Any crops on it are removed and any meeple on it are removed another piece of common land. After these rolls are completed then all of the dice are removed from the pool and returned to the games store no matter the outcome of the dice roll.
- The parish player may use their meeples to 'attack a dig'. The parish player may select a tile that hold both their own meeples and meeples belonging to the diggers. The parish player may then remove digger meeples up to the number of parish meeples stationed



on that tile. They cannot complete this operation if the tile in question has a church on it.

- Victory Conditions:

- The moment the Millenium tracker reaches the 1000 mark, the Digger has won the game and must read out the Victory Epitaph of the Diggers: “You have reach the end. All of Mankind is free. Jesus has arrived and brought the kingdom to all. No longer does one branch of mankind rule over another. As the great creator made the earth to be a common treasury, now it is so. Without force of arms and by on the sweat of your brow, you have thrown off the Norman yoke.
- If all diggers meeples have been removed from the game board, or if there are no more pieces of common land left then the parish has won and reads the following victory epitaph: “You have ended the actions that have hitherto been only ridiculous. Fear they have some design in hand you have undone it. Neither Athenian nor Roman levellers ever arrived to this high pitch of madness, as Diggers who dig upon this ground. They claimed that God is our common-father, and the earth our common-mother, and that the origin of property was pride and covetousness. They wanted all held in common like



Scythian nomads, and to renounce towns and cities.
Now they are scattered and the order leads by the
council of state prevails in this corner of surrey
again.



6.1.2: Material



Figure 13 Overview of the Proto-type Set-up





Figure 14 Close up of Proto-type set-up

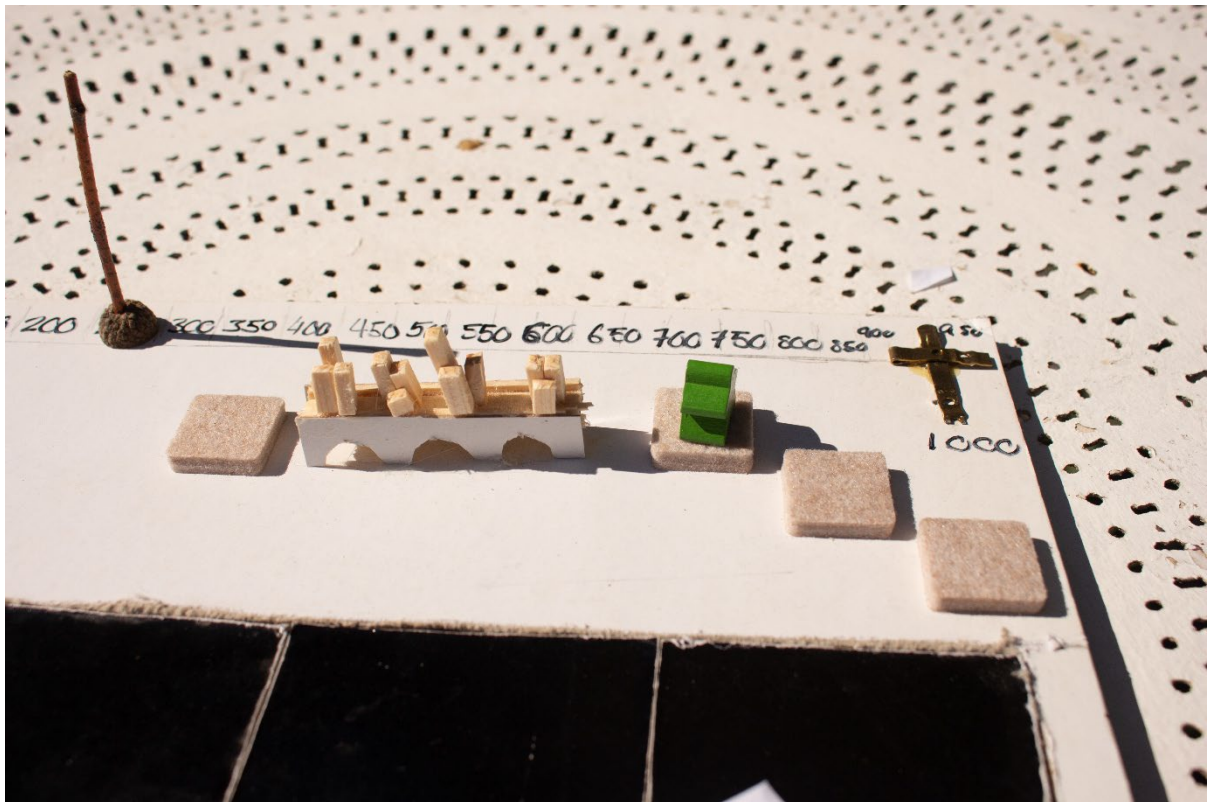


Figure 15 Close up of the Proto-type's 'Millenium Tracker' and 'Road to London'

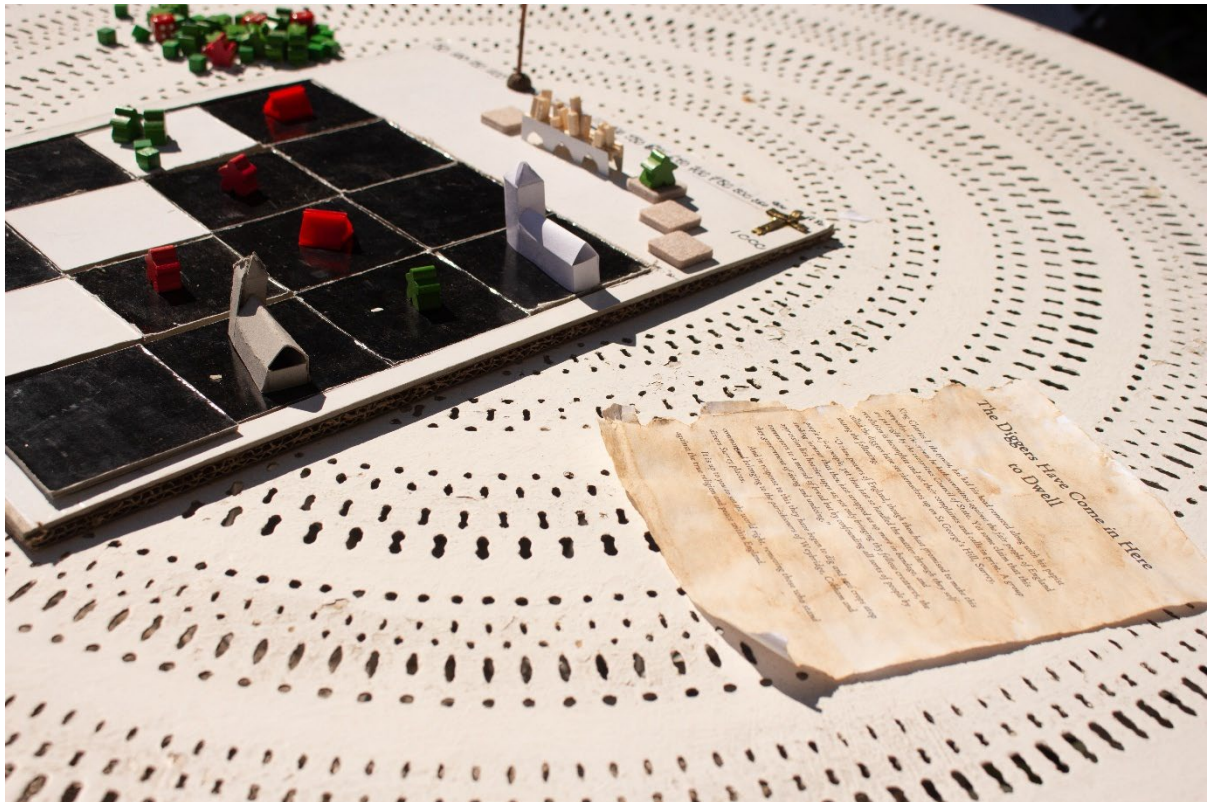


Figure 16 Close up of Proto-type's starting script

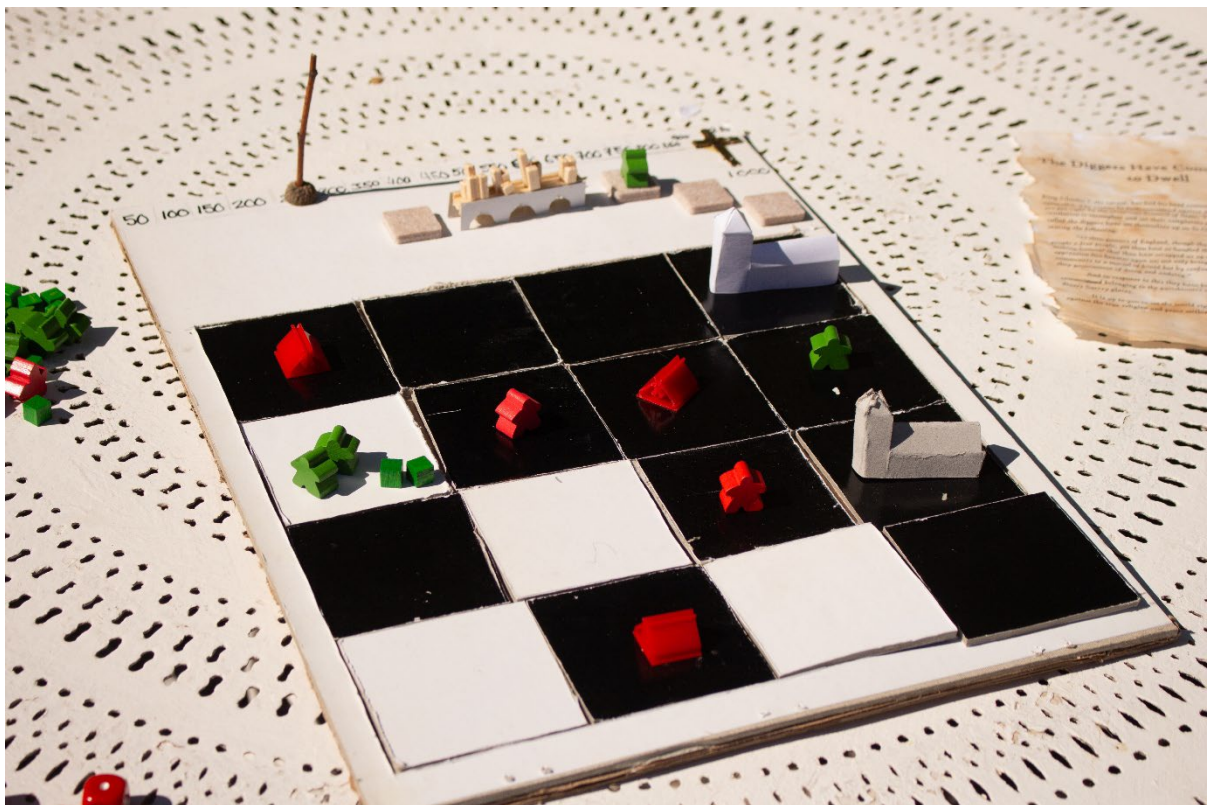


Figure 17 Overview of game in play

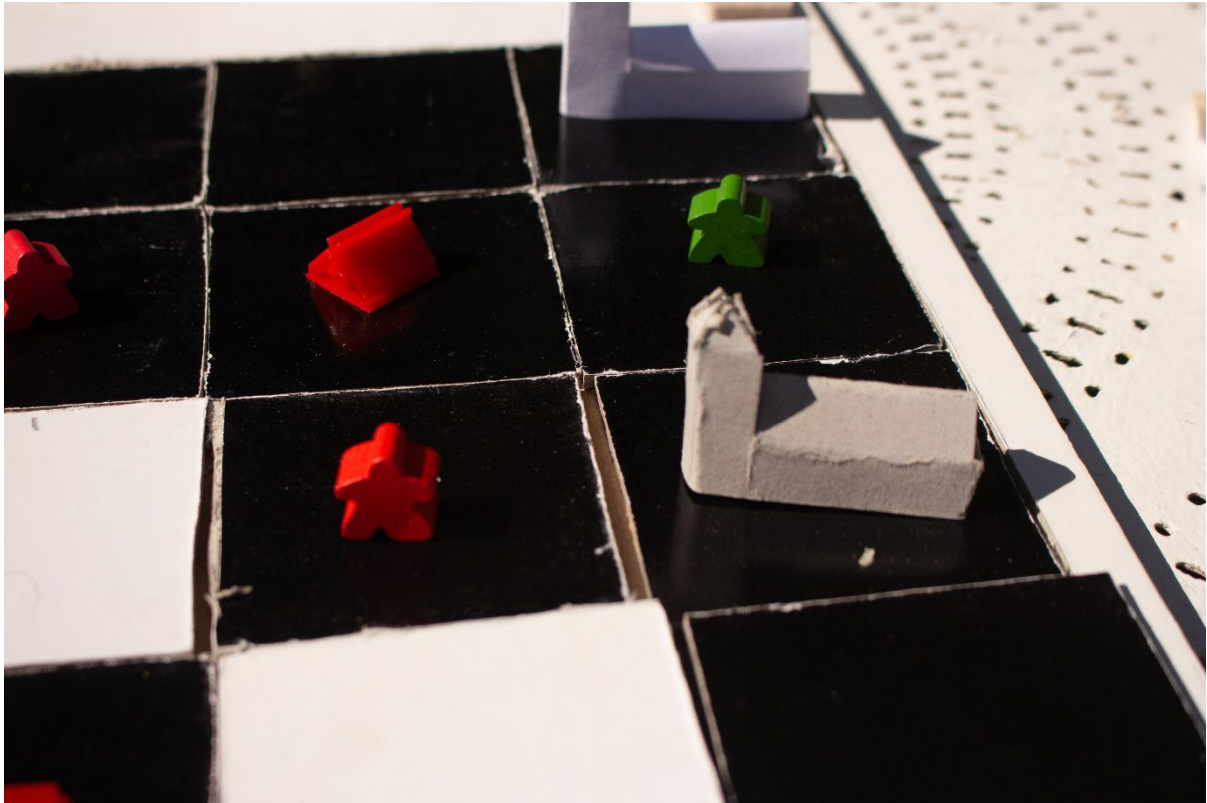


Figure 18 Close up of Churches

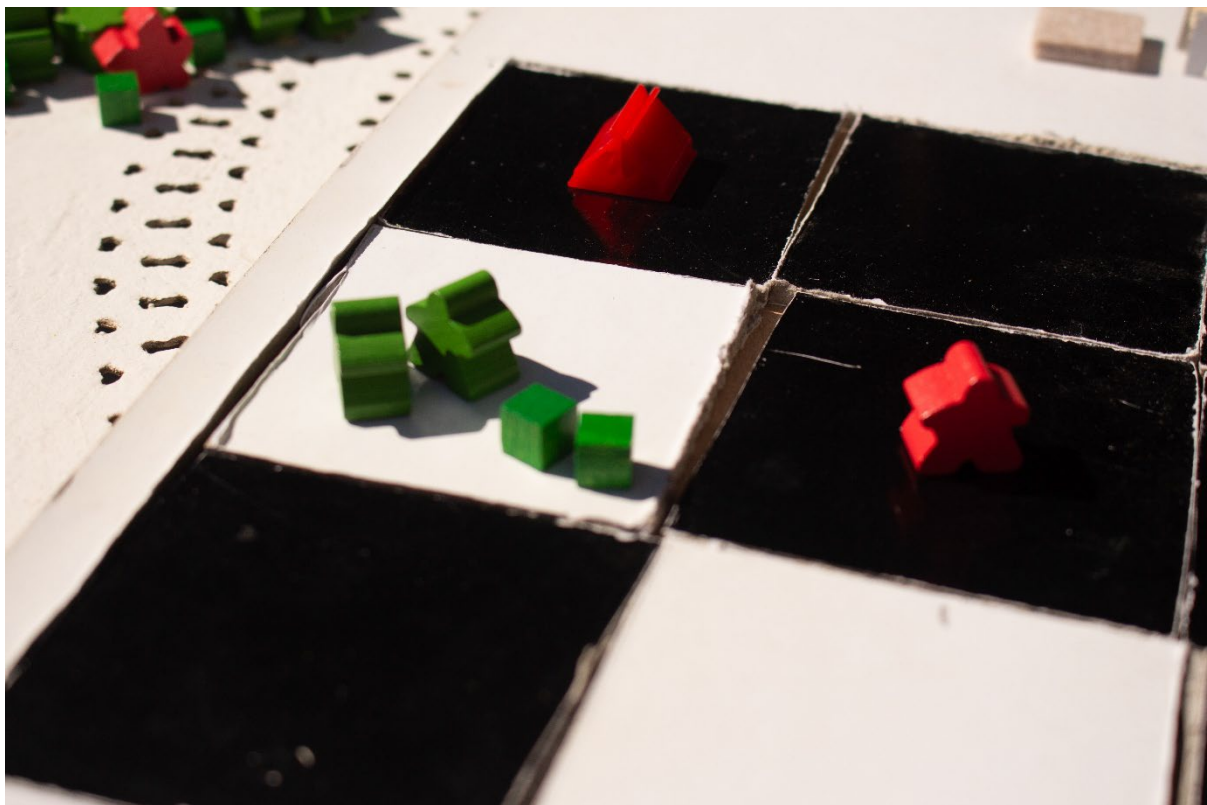


Figure 19 Close up of 'Digger-Meeple' on a 'Commons Tile' surrounded by a manor and a 'Parishioner Meeple'



Figure 20 Photo of game completely set up and in mid-game

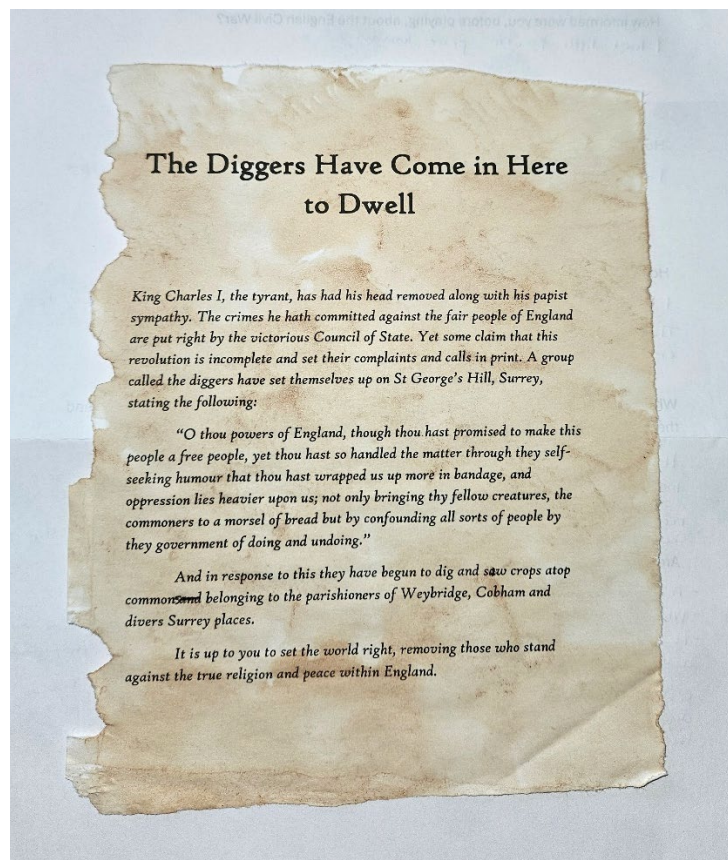


Figure 21 Photo of Introduction Pamphlet



6.2: PROTO-TYPE TWO

6.2.1: Rules

Setting Up the Game:

To begin playing, each player must select a Character card. These character cards dictate what role they'll be playing and what their conditions for victory will be. One player must be a Digger, and one player must be a Parishioner.

The board must begin empty. The tiles of the game should be at hand. Place the London tile at one end of the board so that three of its four sides are flush with the edges of the board. Then on the remaining open space players take it in turns placing tiles in any place they like until the space is filled with tiles.

The Digger player is given three green meeples, and the Parishioner is given three white. The players take it in turn to place one meeple on any tile that they would like until both have placed down all of their meeples. Then the Digger is dealt a hand of three pamphlet cards.

If the Parson Platt character card is taken by a player then two dice are rolled. The numbers represent the grid coordinates for tithe tokens to be placed. These dice are re-



rolled, and tokens are placed accordingly until there are no more tithe token not on the board.

The players then must read out the opening summary:

“For years England has seen rising strife. The civil war has waged against a background of radicalism and fiery journalism. Printing presses churn out the words of fanatics and devoted citizens alike. Amongst the various radical groups like the Fifth Monarchists, Levellers, Ranters, and many more stands the True Levellers, or the Diggers as they have come to be known. The Diggers have marched on to Commons in Surrey, previously accessible to the inhabitants of the local parish. There they have begun to dig up the soil and plant crops to sustain themselves in a time of hardship and harsh harvests. There leaders write pamphlets that are printed in London, spreading their radical ideology of England held in common by its people rather than its landowners. They claim that even though King Charles I has been beheaded and a republic reigns in England, that members of the ruling classes have usurped that kingly power to maintain the tyranny previously harboured by Charles I.”

Win Conditions:

Each character card has assigns win-conditions to each player depending on who is in possession of each. Those



players who have either the Gerrard Winstanley, or William Everard cards must move the Millenium tracker to 1000 in-order for them to win the game. Those players who are playing as Parson Platt or Sir Francis Drake must eliminate all Digger meeples from the game board to win.

Play:

The players take it in alternative turns to make moves according to a certain list of moves. On each players turn they must begin by drawing an event card. On a player's turn they can perform any of the following moves in any order only once: move meeples, perform an action. Each player has a different array of actions they can perform. Diggers can only perform one of the following actions: 'dig upon the commons' and 'send news to London'. Parishioners can 'destroy the commons', 'attack the Diggers' and 'collect a tithe payment' (if the parishioner player is a playing as Sir Francis Drake then they cannot take the tithe payment actions).

When player chooses to move their meeples, they can only move the meeples adjacent to their current tile. If the Digger's meeple is in the top-right hand corner adjacent to the first step on the road to London, they can move one of their meeples on the first step. Each turn they can move their meeple along one step on the road to London.



When the Digger player chooses to perform the 'dig upon the commons' they place a number of food tokens on the commons tile their meeples occupy each to the number of digger meeples on each tile. At the end of the Diggers turn, the Millenium tracker is moved forward by 50 if there are five or more token on one tiles.

When there is a Digger meeple on the final step of the road to London, the Digger player take the 'sending news to London' action which returns that meeple back to any tile on the board they wish. The Digger then places one pamphlet card on top of the event deck and draws a new one into their hand.

When the Parishioner chooses to take the 'collect a tithe payment' action they must have a meeple on a tile with a tithe token. When choose this action, the tithe token becomes attached to their meeples and moves with the meeples as they move. If the meeples are split up then the tithe stays with one group of the players choosing. The player must manoeuvre these tokens back towards the church tiles in order to gain any reward from them at the end of the game. If the tokens are on the church tile they can simply remove the tithes from the attached meeples and keep it on the church tile without costing a move.



If the Parishioner chooses to take the ‘destroy the commons’ move, they must have at least one meeple on a common tile. If they do, then they designate one common tile that their meeples occupy and can remove food tokens from it up to the number of parishioner meeples attending that tile. Any Digger’s meeples present on the tile are moved to adjacent tiles as the Digger sees fit.

If the Parishioner chooses to take the ‘attack the diggers’ action then they can choose one tile that their meeples share with digger meeples and remove any number of those digger meeples up to the number of parishioner meeples present.

Unique Card Rules:

There are a total of twenty event cards with four unique types: ‘Call in the Army’, ‘Take the Diggers to Court’, ‘Rival Publication’ and ‘Imprison in Church’. There are also five different types of Pamphlet cards: ‘New Leveller Standard Advanced’, ‘A Declaration from the Poor’, ‘A Watch-Word to the City of London’, ‘A Vindication of Those Whose Endeavours is Only to Make the Earth a Common Treasury’, and ‘An Humble Request’

When the ‘Call in the Army’ card is drawn, it is placed next to the board. If four or more of them have been drawn and



placed next to the board then the Parishioners win. Until then it has no immediate effect.

The 'Take the Diggers to Court' card, when draw, must be placed on the discard pile. Its affect is that the Parishioner chooses one meeple on the board and moves it to another tile of their choosing that is not already occupied by Parishioner meeples. They cannot choose Meeples on the road to London.

The 'Rival Publication' card adds a meeple to the Parishioners side or it can be traded into add a discarded card to the top of the event card pile. The choice is up to whoever's turn it is drawn on.

The 'Imprison in Church' card allows the Parishioner to move one Digger meeple to a church tile of their choosing and keep it there, unharmed, for two of the Digger's turns.

The 'New Levellers Standard Advanced' card, when revealed send a new Digger meeple to any tile that the Diggers wishes.

The 'A Declaration from the Poor' card

The 'A Watch-Word to the City of London' card

The 'A Vindication of Those Whose Endeavours is Only to Make the Earth a Common Treasury' card

The 'An Humble Request' card



End Game:

The game ends once one of several events occurs: if the Diggers no longer have any meeples left on the board, if the Diggers have moved the Millenium tracker to 1000, or by virtue of an event card. Once the game ends players begin calculating the outcome for their character.

If Digger achieved their goal then the outcome summary read is that of 'Digger Victory.' Whereas if the Digger's were entirely removed from the board then the 'Parish Victory' is readout.

Alteration to these pieces is found depending on the character cards chosen by players. Parson Platt has their own victory condition. If Parson Platt had more the four tithe tokens present on any church tiles then 'Parson Victory is read out after the ending summary. There are two different types of 'Parson Victory' speeches, one for if the Parishioners win and one for if the Diggers win.

'Parson Defeat and Parishioner Victory'

Even though the Diggers have been completely expunged from the county and wider country other changes have brought disaster. After years of plenty and prosperity, John Platt's time as Parson of the local parish has come to an end. As a



puritan, he received no mercy from the new administration of King Charles II that returned to England after the death of the republic. His distaste for puritans and puritanic clergy push Platt out of the church.

Gerrard Winstanley goes on to become a Quaker after leaving the Diggers behind him as a failed experiment. Despite Winstanley's best efforts, he returns to relative obscurity. His companion and fellow leader William Everard suffered more after the downfall of the Diggers. Repeatedly imprisoned by the government his mind was eventually labelled as lunatic. His own wife decided to have him admitted to Bethlem Hospital for his deteriorating behaviour and state of mind.

'Digger Victory':

The True Levellers or Diggers have succeeding in bringing about the Millenium. The land of England has been returned to the people as their common treasury. No one man acts as a lord over another. Equality is the word of the day, with the early commons in Surrey proving to be the nesting ground for greater biblical change. The leaders of the Diggers assist with the rebuilding of this new heavenly world.

'Parson Victory and Parishioner Victory'



The Diggers have been completely expunged from the county and wider country other changes have brought disaster. After years of plenty and prosperity, John Platt's time as Parson continue to enrich him. His wealth allows him to survive the persecution of puritans once King Charles II returned to England after the death of the republic. His distaste for puritans and puritanic clergy could have pushed Platt out of the church but with money and influence Platt survives this.

Gerrard Winstanley goes on to become a Quaker after leaving the Diggers behind him as a failed experiment. Despite Winstanley's best efforts, he returns to relative obscurity. His companion and fellow leader William Everard suffered more after the downfall of the Diggers. Repeatedly imprisoned by the government his mind was eventually labelled as lunatic. His own wife decided to have him admitted to Bethlem Hospital for his deteriorating behaviour and state of mind.



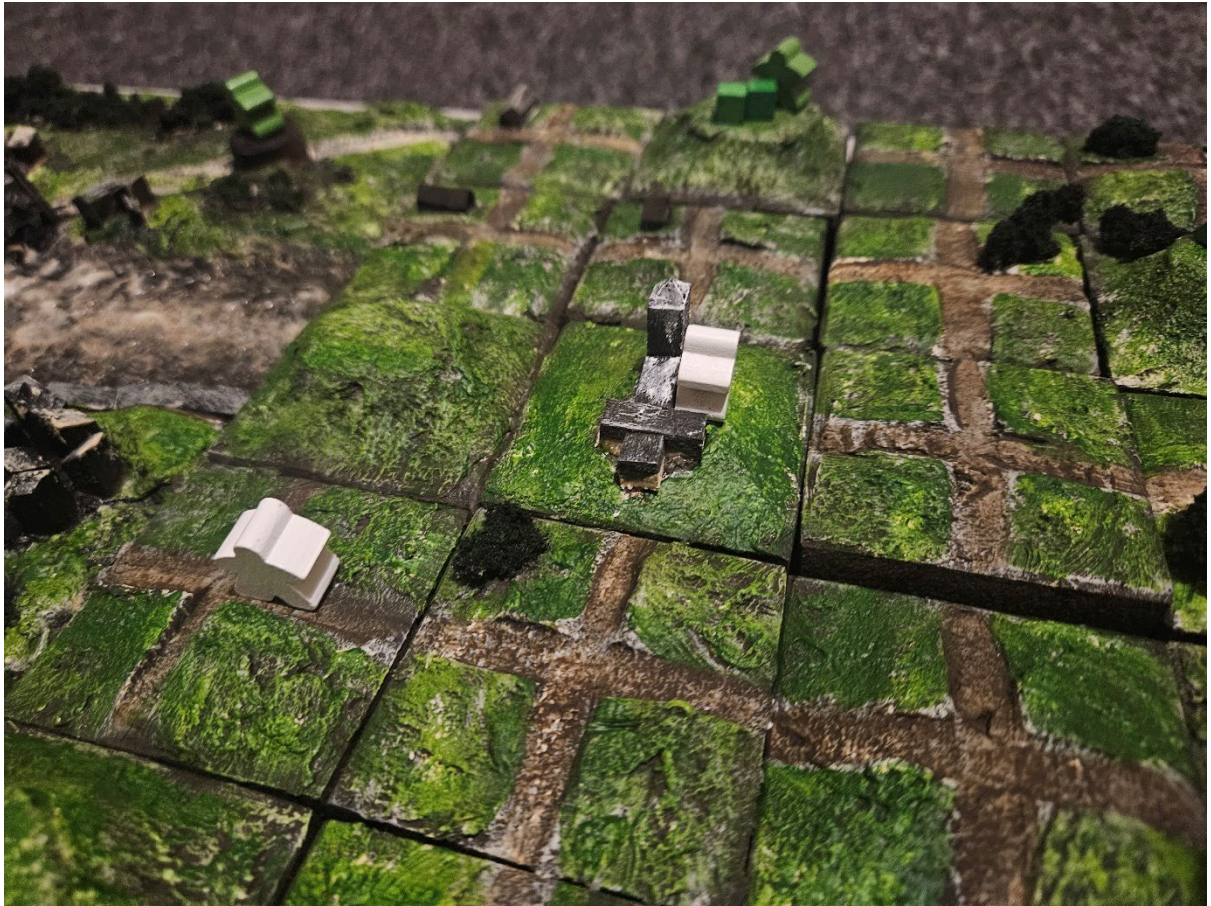
6.2.2: Material













6.3: PLAYTEST DATA

6.3.1: Playtest Version One Questionnaires

Here are the answered questionnaires filled out by participants.

Participant: 1

How informed were you, before playing, about the English Civil War?

I knew a little bit, I knew about the diggers and Charles I

How informed were you about the Diggers before playing the game?

I knew that they used common land and they were proto-communist in a commune. I knew the film existed.

How informed are you after playing the game about the aims of the Diggers?

I knew learnt that it was a long journey to get fruit to London and in turn they gained more popularity. I didn't know it was illegal to till common land.

What do you think about the connection between radicalism in the English Civil War and the beginning of journalism?

I enjoyed the connection that I previously didn't know too much about. The concept of early journalism here wasn't clear to me but it is nice to know I learned about it.

Are there any aspects of the game you want to be improved?

I would have different prints from cards you can pick from a pile that the diggers take to London from a fruit card.

I think the diggers were quite easy, I would change how many points they gain with the crop tokens.



Second Game:

The odds seemed stacked against the diggers with the parishioners having the upper hand. If it wasn't for a mistake made by the other Party I do not think I would have won.

Third Game:

It seems unfair to the diggers to allow the Parish People to stay on common land for multiple turns for game play.

Fourth Game:



Participant: 2

How informed were you, before playing, about the English Civil War?

I didn't know anything.

How informed were you about the Diggers before playing the game?

I was informed that the Diggers were using the common land to grow crops which was illegal to do that.

How informed are you after playing the game about the aims of the Diggers?

With the Diggers going to London to recruit more help to produce crops on the common land.

What do you think about the connection between radicalism in the English Civil War and the beginning of journalism?

Not sure.

Are there any aspects of the game you want to be improved?

Player aid card to remind me of the rules.

I'd like to put the digger actually on the Bridge when you've reached London.



Participant: 3

How informed were you, before playing, about the English Civil War?

Nothing - cursing 'roundheads' etc.

How informed were you about the Diggers before playing the game?

A tiny bit, knew of them and the cold winters but little detail

How informed are you after playing the game about the aims of the Diggers?

A little more - didn't know about religious side.

What do you think about the connection between radicalism in the English Civil War and the beginning of journalism?

I didn't pick up this connection from the game.

Are there any aspects of the game you want to be improved?

- ① A way to make it last longer??
- ② Consider randomising where the manor houses are located e.g. roll two dice and position accordingly
- ③ ~~Not~~ Bring a connection to journalism into it

Participant: 4

How informed were you, before playing, about the English Civil War?

Not informed at all

How informed were you about the Diggers before playing the game?

Not informed at all

How informed are you after playing the game about the aims of the Diggers?

To my understanding the diggers are aiming to stop oppression and make life fairer for all

What do you think about the connection between radicalism in the English Civil War and the beginning of journalism?

→ diggers
going to London

If there were more components to the game that involved an explanation into the history behind the board game that would have helped. For someone that didn't know anything I understood the underlying themes/concepts but would like

Are there any aspects of the game you want to be improved?

A card/rule book for each ~~people~~ person. the information to back it up.

→ prefer to read than hear the rules read aloud.

More historical information to support why they go to London, why they are digging etc.

How it started → could there be more of a back story at the beginning of the game.



Participant: 5

How informed were you, before playing, about the English Civil War?

I had little to no prior knowledge.

How informed were you about the Diggers before playing the game?

I didn't know who they were, I hadn't heard the name before.

How informed are you after playing the game about the aims of the Diggers?

I had a ~~much~~ clearer idea of who they were and what they stood for. The game made me interested to learn more about the period and its events.

What do you think about the connection between radicalism in the English Civil War and the beginning of journalism?

It would be nicer to have a little more introductory info about both sides. Maybe an ~~info~~ infographic / role cards could provide this.

From an explanation from the creator I think this was an important step for the birth of modern journalism.

Are there any aspects of the game you want to be improved?

- A clearer explanation of each side: their goals, beliefs etc.
- What the outcome was - i.e. scenario/ending cards for what would've/could've happened
- ~~It was quite difficult to stop the last digger from getting to London when there were two on the board I found this~~
- Could there be ~~an~~ a benefit/risk to the manors/churches. Could the diggers pose a threat to them / the parish gain some kind of benefit for controlling them?



6.3.2: Playtest Version One Observations

Participant 1 vs 2:

Participant 1 decided not to pursue the Digger and chose as the Parish to only go to church. They said they quite liked the Diggers and didn't want to use their full movement or actions to impede the Diggers. Participant 2 therefore decided to continue with moving towards the millennium and succeed in only a matter of turns. With next to no opposition, the Diggers won. Participant 2 struggled to learn the rules until participant 1 aided them. When asked what they thought about the physical pieces, they responded by saying 'they liked the setting, particular the bridge, manor house could have been clearer. Liked bridge. Preferred piece to be more natural. Parish being red felt inherently negative.'

Having watched one game already some additions and alterations have come to mind. The player with little historical knowledge would benefit from more literal and less abstract pieces. London bridge has so far been a popular piece. That seems to be due to its more comparative shape and form to real life/historical record.

Participant 1 vs 3

The next game was between participants 1 and 3. This made it participant 2's second game and participants 3's first game.



In this game the diggers also won but it was a competitive game. The diggers seemed to flee around the board more, and avoid the parishioners, mimicking the historical diggers. There was more interest this time from the players. The game was close, not a runaway at all. It never progressed to a point. The parishioners won the third game by ruthlessly chasing the digger and eradicating any of their financial or economical gains, they also dogged the road to London forwarding to avoid the chance of any news getting to London and more recruits arriving the players discussed the methods of changing the way the pieces and tiles were located, wanting a more equitable game.

Desiring to play another game, they set up another one. They theorised that if played over and over they might get the same results. They began to see that events and game outcomes as inevitable. They found a stalemate outcome where they became stuck permanently barricaded in a church. Without an allowance in the rule to alleviate the stale mate the players began to choose to end the stalemate and just play on. This game ended in a digger victory. Most player discussion ended on mechanics rather than history. Participant 3 saw it as an arms-race between the parish and diggers as trying to generate interest before their crops are destroyed. The participants wanted more historical connection in the pieces to give them



incentives. The rules as written don't relate to the historical record as much. They saw the game as missing a wider scope. More historical relations .the millennium drew conversation about its connection to sectarianism. It is possible that having the millennium tracker hidden from the Parishioner-player could be beneficial.

Participant 4 vs 5

The next game was between participant 4 and participant 5. These players did not perceive and previous gameplay from participant 1, participant 2 & participant 3. An observation is that it might be better so diggers cannot be taken except on common land so that they are more invulnerable. Yet that might throw off the balance. The game with participant 5 and participant 4 felt more tactical on their playstyle. There was little discussion on the history without prompting. Diggers won that game meaning that they have won most games so far. When finished I am going to ask them more questions. Once they completed the questionnaire they revealed that they got a general impression. They wanted to understand why there were diggers: maybe a card describing ideas to players. Participant 5 saw it as a cat and mouse. There were several strategies they would have employed. They enjoyed the different ending epithets. Give more details, in the epithet. Found the game



engaging to be able to rewrite history. The boards set up is something they believe dictated the outcome. More tangible historical elements .Maybe more people trying to do different things, parliament, army, etc. more diversity in the use of commons: chickens, hovels, crops, etc. they also desired fun fact cards. They wanted more relation to history. Characters and people would add more the game to have story. One participant spoke to the fact their interest in history came from playing historical themes in video games. They spent some considerable time asking me more questions about the diggers since their interest in it had been peaked.



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