Virtual Worlds & Video Games Final Project

Think back to the questions asked at the beginning of the quarter: Why are virtual worlds and video games important? Why study these "imagined worlds," what values do they have, and how might we read, consider, and write about them to theorize race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, and so on? We have read a wide range of texts, explored different authors' worlds, and worked through critical scholarship—now to create from and with what we have discovered.

Mix and Mash

For this assignment, we will borrow and use the "mash-up" and the "mix" from the domains of computers, media, and music in order to imagine and produce a unique kind of writing project. The "mash-up" is the combining, blending, and layering of different texts, sources, even genres to produce a 'new' text (sampling, heavy metal mashed with pop, *Harry Potter* and *The Sound of Music*). The "mix" is the selecting and arranging of texts to produce a collection, usually organized around some theme or feature or narrative (80s mixes, dance mixes, road trip mixes). The best mixes and mashes have a central idea, argument, or goal in mind.

Your final project is both a mix and a mash: 1) you will identify a **critical question, claim, or concept** that will frame and organize your project, focusing a practice or artifact of feminist science fiction or feminist world building; 2) your claim should **demonstrate** your engagement with the readings, theories, and ideas raised by the course, 3) you will develop a paper (preferably multimodal or multimedia) or project (which also includes writing) that explores, illuminates, represents, and analyzes your organizing claim, 4) you will organize an **academic bibliography** with at least **five** additional recent, relevant, and useful sources (not counting our texts). Your final project might take the form of (not an end-all-be-all list):

- a more traditional 8-10 page research paper that can include multimodal examples or evidence (e.g. drawings, images, verse)
- a research paper "remediated" into a shareable Power Point or Prezi presentation that includes multimodal examples or evidence suitable for a 15-20 minute academic talk
- an analysis and demonstration of a virtual world or video game building via a user's guide, podcast, comic, even "how to" video, which includes a researched and analytical "artist's statement" or "project statement"
- a media artifact, such as a short film, animation, recording, web page, digital game, which includes a researched and analytical "artist's statement" or "project statement"

The most successful projects will have a clear frame and specific organizing analytic, will use different kinds of support and evidence, and will demonstrate media studies principles, methodologies, materials, and concerns. Overall, be creative, take intellectual risks, and have fun.

Guidelines and Due Dates

Format: 8-10 pages, academic paper OR the equivalent project
Papers should follow MLA or APA manuscript conventions, citation and bibliographic format, use 12-point Times Roman, 1" margins, double-spacing, proper heading and name block, page numbers, and single-sided printing, neatly stapled together
Mixed media projects should be neat, complete, preferably easily transported or digitally shared, include academic inquiry, analysis, and writing (of at least 1250 words, about 5 pages)
Papers or projects must have complete bibliographies

Due: Thursday, December 14, 8 AM, uploaded to Blackboard