

Ernest W. Adams

For privacy reasons I have not included my address.

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EDUCATION

PhD in interactive storytelling from the School of Computing, University of Teesside, UK. Awarded 2013.

BA in philosophy, Stanford University, USA. Awarded 1984.

EXPERIENCE

26 years in various roles in the video game industry, and 15 years (concurrently) as a corporate trainer and lecturer in higher education.

Current and Ongoing

Senior Lecturer. I am a senior lecturer at the University of Uppsala (Campus Gotland) in Sweden, and for five years I also taught part-time at the University of Ulster Magee in Derry, Northern Ireland, sponsored by a grant from the Royal Academy of Engineering. In addition I have taught on an ad hoc basis at a large number of other institutions of higher learning. Among these are the University of Teesside, UK; the University of Skövde, Sweden; Instituto Superior Técnico, Portugal; and the Northern College of Leeuwarden, the Netherlands.

Game Design Consultant and Trainer. I have undertaken a variety of projects of different sizes. I also do game design training, both for junior staff and as refresher or a break for senior designers. My clients have included [Sony](#), [Activision Blizzard](#), [Ubisoft](#), [Crytek](#), [BioWare](#), [THQ](#), [Guinness World Records](#), [Ragdoll](#), [Glu Mobile](#), and many others. I also do due diligence consulting for funding agencies.

Published a variety of textbooks on game design. The most recent is *Fundamentals of Game Design, Third Edition* (January 2014). The previous editions were published in 2009 and 2006, and the original basis for all of them was *Andrew Rollings and Ernest Adams On Game Design* (May 2003), with Andrew Rollings. I also wrote *Game Mechanics: Advanced Game Design* (June 2012) with Joris Dormans. These are the first comprehensive books on commercial game design specifically intended for both professional and student designers. All have been widely adopted as university textbooks.

Patent litigation consultant. I have served as a consultant or witness in several patent lawsuits related to online gaming, because of my experience working on *RabbitJack's Casino* for AOL in the early 1990s.

Published another book, *Break into the Game Industry: How to Get a Job Making Video Games*, for McGraw-Hill, May 2003.

Author of *The Designer's Notebook*, a paid regular column on game design for the *Gamasutra* webzine (<http://www.gamasutra.com>), 1997-2013.

8/99 – 9/00

Lead Game Designer, Bullfrog Productions Ltd.

Consulted in the design of a next-generation **Theme** franchise game, details confidential. Earlier projects included:

Dungeon Keeper 3. DK3 was an outdoor version of Dungeon Keeper with castle construction and unique hero characters. A new race was also introduced. Gameplay was a form of "role-playing strategy" incorporating both warfare and character management.

Genesis: The Hand of God. I transferred from EA headquarters in California to Bullfrog to lead a prototype team in designing a new god-game franchise in the spirit of the original *Populous*. I provided the vision and wrote the design documents; also oversaw a six-person team in building a 2D testbed and a 3D engine containing a groundbreaking realtime water simulation.

6/92 – 7/99

Designer and A/V Producer, Electronic Arts

As a member of the ***Madden NFL Football*** production team, I was closely involved with the creation of the best-selling sports video game of all time. Projects included:

Audio/Video Producer for *Madden NFL Football* for Sony Playstation, Sega Saturn, Nintendo 64, IBM PC

- Managed all video production, editing, and processing for EA's most television-like sports game experience ever, with a budget of over \$100,000 per year. This role involved writing scripts, hiring the crew and facilities, directing the shoot, and managing subordinates who edited and compressed the video.
- Additional duties included analysis and selection of new platforms, add-on devices, and video compression technologies for EA Sports games; and advising producers about the technical capabilities of outside developers based on interviews with their staff and analysis of their design documents.

Lead Designer of *John Madden Football* for 3DO

- Wrote the design script. Provided design guidance to programmers, artists, and audio engineers throughout the development process.
- Designed screen layouts, user interface, and some underlying algorithms.
- Wrote shooting script for John Madden video clips included in the game and edited resulting audio and video. Wrote recording script for voiceover play-by-play narration; directed recording session; edited resulting audio.
- Selected NFL Films video, working closely with legal department to avoid publicity-rights infringement of players featured. Directed all video and audio capture and compression processes for the game.

2/92 – 6/92

Software Engineer, Electronic Arts

Began code analysis to upgrade *Earl Weaver Baseball II* to a new generation of IBM PC baseball products. Work included substantially improving simulation speed and investigating the feasibility of doing 640 x 480 3D rendering at a suitable frame rate. Project was abandoned by the company when 3DO development began.

3/89 – 2/92

Software Engineer, Interactive Productions (now pf. Magic)

Programmed and collaborated on the design of *Third Degree*, a CD-I multi-player party game for adults. Created optical disk layout mechanisms with

multiple interleaved audio tracks, thus minimizing seek times. Pioneered use of "name insertion" into playing audio, permitting game hosts to call players by name — over 350 names were recorded, with four variant pronunciations per name.

Developed *RabbitJack's Casino*, a suite of four IBM PC games to be played on the America On-Line network. Code was written in Microsoft C and 8086 assembly language. Tasks included development of a tile-based animation system for the CGA, EGA, VGA and Tandy 1000; writing a sound driver for the PC's internal speaker; and writing hardware interrupt handlers for the serial port

ADDITIONAL EXECUTIVE EXPERIENCE

5/91 – 9/95

Director, Computer Game Developers' Conference, Inc.

Built CGDC from a small, undercapitalized company with previous financial losses into a profitable million-dollar business, in partnership with my fellow directors. Attendance in this period grew from 525 to 2387.

In October 1995, the assets of the CGDC were sold to Miller Freeman, Inc. (now CMP Media). I wrote portions of the prospectus, conducted initial discussions with potential bidders, and provided documentary evidence confirming the value of the company during the due diligence phase.

CGDC innovations for which I was responsible :

- Founded the International Game Developers' Association (see below).
- Created "Sponsored Sessions" to provide a place for commercial presentations apart from normal non-commercial lectures.
- Created the Job Fair (50 companies in 1995), affording attendees and potential employers an opportunity to meet.

Other services added during my tenure:

- Manufacturer's Expo (56 booths in 1995)
- Honors for developers of the best products of the year ("Product Spotlights")

My roles included hiring and managing the registration and customer service staff; layout, printing, and mailing management for some publications; directing the labor of the conference's staff of 50 over the 3 days of the event; budgeting for my departments; serving as Master of Ceremonies at the awards banquet.

6/94 – 1/97

Founder and President, International Game Developers' Association

With backing from CGDC, Inc. founded the IGDA (originally the CGDA), a non-profit professional society for the interactive entertainment industry. I served for 2½ years as part-time president. The Association enrolled nearly 1200 members in its first 15 months of operation.

AWARDS

Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Game Developers' Association, 2014.

5-year Royal Academy of Engineering grant to teach integrated system design as a Visiting Professor at the University of Ulster Magee, Derry, Northern Ireland, 2006–2010.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Visiting Professor, University of Portsmouth (UK), 2015–
 External examiner, Dublin Institute of Technology, 2011–2014
 Judge, Global Game Jam Leeuwarden (Netherlands), 2012
 Juror, Extra Credits Innovation Awards, 2011
 Advisory Board, Rochester Institute of Technology, 2008–
 Advisory Board, Women in Games International, 2006–
 Program Review Board, Digital Games Research Association Annual Conference 2005
 Editorial Board, ACM Computers in Entertainment Magazine, 2004-2005
 Juror, Independent Game Festival, 1998 and 2003
 Juror, Playstation Art Futura Award for Videogame Creation, 2002
 Symposium Organizing Committee, AAAI Symposium on Computer Games and AI 1999-2000

LECTURES AND PUBLICATIONS

Designing for Serious Fun. Keynote address, 2014 Serious Games to the Rescue conference, North West University, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa.

The Mechanics of Love: Practical Challenges of Implementing Mathematical Models of Love and Sex. Lecture, 2014 Lyst Summit, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Fundamentals of Game Design, Third Edition. San Francisco, California: New Riders Games, January 2014.

Herding Cats Doesn't Begin to Describe It: Reflections on 20 Years of the IGDA. Lecture, 2014 Game Developers' Conference, San Francisco, California.

Game Mechanics: Advanced Game Design (with Joris Dormans). Berkeley, California: New Riders Games, June 2012.

Introducing Machinations: A New Tool to Design Game Mechanics. Lecture, 2012 Game Developers' Conference Europe, Cologne, Germany. Delivered jointly with Joris Dormans.

Making MMOGs More Storylike. Lecture, 2011 Game Developers' Conference Europe, Cologne, Germany.

A Requirements Specification Template for Interactive Storytelling. Lecture, 2011 Game Developers' Conference, San Francisco, California.

Single-Player, Multiplayer, MMOG: Design Psychologies for Different Social Contexts. Lecture, 2010 Game Developers' Conference, San Francisco, California.

The Promise of India: Ancient Culture, Modern Game Design. Lecture, NASSCOM Animation and Gaming Summit, Hyderabad, India, November 2009.

Fundamentals of Game Design, Second Edition. Berkeley, California: New Riders, September 2009.

What's Next for God Games? Lecture, 2008 Game Developers' Conference, San Francisco, California.

Ten Commandments for Game Development Education. Opening keynote at the Academic Summit, 2008 Game Developers' Conference, San Francisco, California.

S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Shadow of Chernobyl: Ludic Space as Memorial. *Space Time Play*. von Borries, Friedrich, Steffen P. Walz, and Matthias Böttger, editors. Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag AG, 2007.

Celebrating Female Game Developers of Yesteryear. Article on the *Next Generation* website, August 2007.

Rethinking Challenges in Games and Stories. Lecture, 2007 Game Developers' Conference, San Francisco, California.

50 Books for Everyone in the Game Industry. Article on the *Next Generation* website, October 2006.

Will Computer Games Ever Be a Legitimate Art Form? *Journal of Media Practice*, volume 7, number 1, 2006.

Interchangeable Dialogue Content, in *Game Writing: Narrative Skills for Videogames*. Ed. Chris Bateman. Boston: Charles River Media, 2006.

Fundamentals of Game Design (with Andrew Rollings). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, September 2006.

Hacking Through the Jungle: Interactive Storytelling Made Easy and Profitable. Lecture, Develop Conference, Brighton, England, 2006.

A New Vision for Interactive Stories. Lecture, 2006 Game Developers' Conference, San Jose, California.

Developing Backwards and in High Heels. Lecture, Women in Games Conference, Dundee, Scotland, 2005.

Letting the Audience onto the Stage: The Potential of VR Drama. Lecture, Virtual Storytelling Conference, Strasbourg, France, 2005.

Emerging Issues in Game Design. Lecture, FuturePlay Conference, Lansing, Michigan USA, 2005.

Interactive Narratives Revisited: Ten Years of Research. Lecture, 2005 Game Developers' Conference, San Francisco, California.

Introduction to 21st Century Game Design, by Chris Bateman and Richard Boon. Boston: Charles River Media, 2005.

Design Considerations for Interactive Storytellers, *Developing Interactive Narrative Content* (a Sagas and Sagasnet Reader), ed. Brunhild Bushoff. High Text Verlag, 2005.

The Philosophical Roots of Computer Game Design. Lecture, 2004 Game Developers' Conference, San Jose, California.

Break Into the Game Industry: How to Get a Job Making Video Games. Osborne/McGraw-Hill, May 2003.

Andrew Rollings and Ernest Adams on Game Design (with Andrew Rollings). Berkeley, California: New Riders Publications, May 2003.

Exploring the Fringe: Interactive Entertainment for the 21st Century. Lecture, 2003 Game Developers' Conference, San Jose, California.

Game Design Workshop. Hands-on workshop, Art Futura Art Festival, Barcelona, Spain, 2002.

The Construction of Ludic Space. Lecture, Ars Electronica Art Festival, Linz, Austria, 2002.

Getting into the Game: Skills & Careers in Game Development. *Game Developer 2002 Game Career Guide*, Fall 2002.

Problems with Justice in On-line Communities. Lecture, Academy of Converging Media, Berlin, Germany, 2002.

Bad Game Designer, No Twinkie! Lecture, Computer Game Technology Conference, Algoma University College, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, 2002.

Lessons Learned from the Game Industry. Lecture, University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain, 2002.

Why We Shouldn't Make Games. Lecture, 2002 Game Developers' Conference, San Jose, California.

Interactivity versus Narrative: This Time, It's War! Lecture, Digital Media World, London, 2001.

Fundamental Principles of Game Design. Lecture, University of Abertay, Dundee, Scotland, 2001.

Dogma 2001: A Sermon on Technology, Creativity, and Art. Lecture, 2001 Game Developers' Conference Europe, London, 2001.

Will Computer Games Ever Be A Legitimate Art Form? Lecture, 2001 Game Developers' Conference, San Jose, California.

The Four Myths of Game Design, *Game Developer* magazine, volume 7, number 12, December 2000, pp. 34–40.

Eurostylin': An American Game Designer in Europe. Lecture, 2000 Game Developers' Conference, San Jose, California.

Innovation: Games that Changed the Industry. Lecture, 1999 Game Developers' Conference, San Jose, California.

Immortality for Game Developers, *Game Developer* magazine, volume 6, number 4, April 1999.

Putting the Ghost in the Machine. Lecture, 1999 American Association for Artificial Intelligence Symposium on Computer Games and AI, Stanford University, Stanford, California.

The Secret of Eternal (Product) Life: Lessons from J.R.R. Tolkien and John Madden. Lecture, 1997 Computer Game Developers' Conference, Santa Clara, California.

In Praise of Sex and Violence. Lecture, 1996 Computer Game Developers' Conference, Santa Clara, California.

The Computer as Projector. Lecture, Interactive Entertainment Developers' Forum, London, 1995.

Computer Game Development in the United States: A Historical Perspective. Lecture, Symposium on Electronic Entertainment, Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, Taejon, South Korea, 1995.

The Challenge of the Interactive Movie. Lecture, 1995 Computer Game Developers' Conference, Santa Clara, California.

Celluloid to Silicon: A Sermon for Newcomers from Hollywood, *Proceedings of the 8th Computer Game Developers' Conference*, April 1994.

Programming the CD-I Player, *Proceedings of the 6th Computer Game Developers' Conference*, April 1992.

The Problems and Promise of On-Line Games, *Proceedings of the 5th Computer Game Developers' Conference*, April 1991.

Relational Database Design: A Tutorial and Case Study for Egyptologists, Adams, Ernest W. and Strudwick, Nigel, *Informatique et Egyptologie* 7 (Paris 1990).

An On-Site Archaeological Database, Adams, Ernest W. and Foley, Mary Ellen, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*, 37 (1988) 3.