Analysis Project
Culture Paper
GAM 224, Prof. Robin Burke
Winter 2008
Due: 3/18/2008

What is it:
Write a 5 page (1200 word) essay analyzing the game that you selected in Milestone #1. This paper will address the game primarily with respect to its use of the cultural concept of heroism. How does the game enact certain ideas of what it means to be a "hero"? For what cultural precedents / examples are these concepts of heroism drawn? Does the notion of heroism have a gendered component?

Your paper must have a thesis, a central claim that it argues with respect to heroism. You need to be very specific in making your argument. This means discussing particular objects, images, behaviors and interactions that you need in your analysis. Be sensitive to the fact that any cultural artifact can have multiple interpretations. Argue persuasively that your approach is a valid one, but don't fall into the trap of claiming it is the only one.

Your paper must be adequately documented. For this paper especially, you will need to cite not only the game itself and the book, but also sources from which the game draws, evidence of the cultures associated with the game, etc.

What to turn in:

Hints
- You may wish to do additional research on Campbell’s idea of the "monomyth". The Wikipedia entry for "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" is a good place to start. Don't forget to cite on-line sources!
- There will be no rewrites for the "Culture" paper.
- Refer to the Analysis Project Handout available on the course website for information on citation. The "Footnoting" section has detailed instructions for how sources should be documented.
- The rubric below describes how Analysis Papers will be graded. To use it, look at the grade you wish to get for the assignment and then read the criteria underneath it. A paper will be graded based on which set of criteria best described it.

Sample Outline
I. Introduction
   a. Thesis
   b. Introduction to the game
II. Imagery and Mechanics
   a. Heroic (and non-heroic) character presentation and narrative
   b. Settings and environments
   c. Hero-related mechanics and gameplay
III. Consequences
   a. Cultural influences
   b. Cultural rhetoric
   c. Meaningful play
IV. Conclusion
Rubric:

A = Exceptional

- Reflects unusually thorough and comprehensive understanding of the cultural aspects of the game.
- Analyzes, evaluates, and synthesizes evidence very effectively.
- Presents a clearly articulated thesis and highly persuasive argument that is probing, creative and nuanced.
- Reaches highly informed conclusions based on the evidence.
- Includes all of the most relevant and significant supporting evidence.
- Contains no factual inaccuracies.
- Is very well focused and organized.
- Is very well written and proofread with few to no errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, etc.
- Is very well documented with no errors or omissions in citation.
- Employs a mature vocabulary, is highly attentive to word choice, and uses metaphors effectively.

B = Commendable

- Reflects clear understanding of the cultural aspects of the game.
- Analyzes, evaluates, and synthesizes evidence effectively.
- Presents a clearly identifiable thesis and defensible argument.
- Reaches informed conclusions based on the evidence.
- Includes relevant and significant supporting evidence.
- Contains only minor factual inaccuracies.
- Is well focused and organized.
- Is well written and proofread with few errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, etc.
- Is well documented with few to no errors or omissions in citation.
- Employs a relatively mature vocabulary, is attentive to word choice, and uses metaphors effectively.

C = Competent

- Reflects adequate understanding of the cultural aspects of the game.
- Analyzes, evaluates, and synthesizes evidence somewhat effectively.
- Presents a thesis and argument that are reasonable but unpersuasive, simplistic, superficial, or logically flawed.
- Conclusions are reasonably well founded.
- Includes some supporting evidence but not all of it relevant.
- May have a major factual inaccuracy but most information is correct.
- Demonstrates adequate focus and organization.
- Is adequately written and proofread with some errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, etc.
- Is adequately documented but may contain a minor errors or omissions in citation.
- Employs a limited vocabulary and relatively unsophisticated narrative style.

D = Limited Evidence of Achievement

- Reflects poor understanding of the cultural aspects of the game.
- Ineffectively analyzes, evaluates, and synthesizes evidence.
- Thesis and argument are unclear and/or very superficial.
- Reaches incomplete or inaccurate conclusions based on the evidence.
- Omits most of the relevant evidence and includes information that is largely inaccurate.
- Demonstrates inadequate focus and organization.
- Is poorly written and proofread with many errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, etc.
- Is poorly documented with many and/or serious errors and omissions in citation.
- Employs a limited vocabulary and unsophisticated narrative style.

F = Minimal Evidence of Achievement

- Work that does not adequately meet ANY of the standards set forth above, or which is exceptionally inadequate in its thesis, ideas, evidence, writing, or documentation.