

#	Game	Year	Age	Details
1	Shocky Game (I'm not even sure how to categorize this)	1987	5	This was a ritualistic early morning game for my brother and I, wherein we'd scoot our socked feet around the shag carpet in the basement and touch the metal airvents, creating sparks. We had a very elaborate system of scoring sparks based on size and color, but this was secondary to the fascination of having power over science (besides, I half-wonder if different color sparks were a figment of our imaginations entirely...I haven't tried in awhile)
2	Leopard Game (make believe)	1987	5	I had a leopard costume leftover Halloween that I wore all the time. The back yard was the savannah, the house was the forest, the basement was the cave, and I ruled the lot! Having a costume makes it that much easier to suspend one's disbelief.
3	Sparkling Cloud & Doo Doo Devil (make believe)	1987	5	This was a game my brother and I played on roller skates. I had found some transparent, gauzy piece of sparkly fabric that I considered quite cloud-like, and thus put it on and deemed myself Sparkling Cloud. My brother made his own character, and we went on grand ethereal adventures on our skates, for celestial beings must travel very swiftly, yes? The key of this game was the speed involved; playing on foot would not have sufficed.
4	Little Red Riding Hood (make believe)	1987	5	I was always the wolf. I'd re-enact my favorite scene, usually making my grandmother be Little Red, and when it came down to "What big teeth you have!" I'd switch it up and say "to eat up that basket of goodies with!" (haha! I found myself very clever, at 5 years old). I remember always getting frustrated because Little Red would still shriek and run away, and I'd be like "no no! I just want the goodies! Don't run!" My grandma never seemed to get it. I think the idea of switching from the norm of the story, and perceived cleverness, really made this game for me. Now, how can I find a way to make a player feel astoundingly clever...

5	Candyland (board game)	1987	5	I loved this game for the visuals on the board, specifically the version my grandmother owned, as newer versions of Candyland just don't cut it for me. In fact, sometimes I just wanted to hang out in the lollipop woods. Who wants that dumb old gingerbread house anyway? I'm happy here! Nevertheless, I was a brat and a sore loser at this game, so my brother and grandmother would try desperately to find ways to let me win (this is extremely difficult in a game that involves NO strategy whatsoever). I'm pretty sure this is the board I like... http://gamesmuseum.uwaterloo.ca/VirtualExhibits/Whitehill/candyland/board.jpg
6	Pooyan (Tandy CoCo II)	1987	5	Pooyan was a game that my brother had for his Tandy Color Computer 2, with which I was absolutely fascinated. I recall being addicted to the music, and because the characters were all animals, I was immediately attached. My brother would never let me play this game, claiming I was too little to "get the controls," so I had to be content to watch. This probably just added to the mystique of the game for me, now that I think about it. (Several years ago for Christmas, my brother found and emulator and rom of Pooyan for me as a gift. It was in Portugese, but it still had that addictive music, so it was all good).
7	Riddlee Riddlee Ree (playground game)	1987	5	My grandmother would incite this game if she had to take me someplace boring where there was a lot of waiting to be done. It worked! The portability of this game is its best feature. Unless, say....you're in Antarctica...or the colorless dystopia of the future.
8	Captain Power (make believe)	1988	6	Captain Power and the Soldiers of the Future was a huge deal for my brother and I, and our best friends (who were also brother and sister). We had the toys and we shot at the TV show, but that was not enough, we had to go on our own adventures. We never argued about who was who, because everyone seemed to innately know their place and latch to a single character. My brother's friend, who was the oldest, was naturally Captain Power. My brother, who was the smartest, was always Hawk. My friend, who was the girl, was always the girl character. And I, the smallest of the bunch, was always Tank, the genetically engineered ground assault unit who was apt to break through walls. Oh how I loved role reversals!

9	Legos (building and make believe)	1988	6	Ah, legos were such a huge part of life for my brother and me. We had a big table in the basement on which we devised our city (mostly space legos, but some castle and pirate ones too). I think the significant thing about legos was the 2-part game: first the building phase, then the play-pretend phase. They balanced each other out nicely, and in fact, we would occasionally have Godzilla stomp through lego city, so that we would be required to do repairs.
10	Live Q-bert (make believe)	1988	6	One year my parents got new carpet, and for awhile the old carpet was rolled up and setting out on our patio in stacks. My brother and I (and our best friends) found this a perfect setting in which to play pretend Q-bert. I'm pretty sure I never actually played the game Q-bert, but I was somehow familiar with it, at least enough to provide context for jumping up and down between levels of our "pyramid." I always enjoyed finding ways to transfer game settings into real life (unfortunately, my reality/fantasy line problem convinced me that all the fictional powers should come along with this, so I was often disappointed when I couldn't sprong great distances simply because we had a play Q-bert board).
11	Ceiling Walking game (make believe?)	1988	6	Every year for Christmas I would ask for suction cup shoes, so I could walk on the ceiling (I had a real problem with that whole fantasy/reality line). In order to train myself, I would walk around holding a mirror just under my chin, and looking down, pretending that I was actually looking at the floor. My favorite thing about this game, I think, was how it turned ordinary spaces into extraordinary exploratory opportunities. It did require massive suspension of disbelief on the part of the player, so many of my friends had difficulties finding this game fun. Not for me, I still think about it from time to time (I think the ceiling of Schell Games, when you just come off the elevator, would be really fun to walk on).
12	Mr. Wolf What Time is It (playground game)	1988	6	Yes yes, this game had a very high sense of anticipation the closer you got to Mr. Wolf. When would he shout midnight? Each time given brought you that many steps closer to danger! Anticipation, excitement, whatever, I just wanted to get to be a wolf.

13	Super Mario Bros 2 (NES)	1989	7	This was the first video game that I beat all by myself without my brother's help. I was drawn to it by the intricacies of the world, visually, and the uniqueness of the characters and monsters. Many of my childhood drawings were populated with characters from this game. I remember the fact that I got to choose which character I played was extremely important to me (and of course I always picked Toad, because he was the farthest from human I could get).
14	Turkey (playground game)	1989	7	My grade school didn't have a playground, but we did have a parking lot...This was a tag game where you had to run around on the yellow parking lot lines (touching the black asphalt was instant death). Players were turkeys escaping the pilgrim, who was "it." I loved this game for how it threw a twist on an ordinary space. Unfortunately, this was a game that could be outgrown...when you could move from one yellow line to another just by stepping...instead of a dramatic and risky leap...it just took all the excitement out.
15	Chicken (playground game)	1989	7	A single-player/non-tag version of Turkey, where you merely explored the parking lot via the yellow lines. It was a handy means of solitaire if no one else wanted to play, and very low-key compared to Turkey. It also suffered the same "outgrowing" problem.
16	Ghost Busters (make believe)	1989	7	My brother and I, and our best friends, would occasionally hunt for ghosts using high-tech detection gadgetry (made out of batteries and duct tape). It was serious business. I recall becoming so caught up in the fantasy of the game that we eventually scared ourselves too badly to continue playing. The interesting thing was that, compared to my other pretend games, the fantasy was relatively mundane. It took place in the here and now and the setting was our neighborhood, and we were even hunting something that couldn't be seen. If fantasy settings had an uncanny valley, I suppose we were right on the brink.
17	Whirlpool (pool game)	1989	7	Um, pool games? Yeah! Having a circular, above ground pool in Louisville may tip your reputation a bit further towards the white trash end of the scale, but it is the perfect venue for playing the whirlpool game. And such a simple game! Throw your rafts in there, get everyone along the edge, and forge ahead! Soon the current sweeps the smaller of us (me) spiraling out of control. Ah, the joys of science! Note, I have tried this game in an in-ground pool, but the rectangular shape and variation in depth ruin it.

18	Uno (card game)	1989	7	Uno was a game frequently played with my grandmother, my brother, and my numerous cousins. It was simple enough for the youngest of us to grasp, and still let us in on the strategic decision-making (color or number?). We had a lot of fun playfully berating my grandma for occasionally laying down the wrong color, as we thought she was playfully trying to fool us. I found out later that she's color blind.
19	Spy (make believe)	1989	7	The moment we figured out how to make a periscope out of cardboard and mirrors, the natural progression of play was of course to spy on the neighbors. Our neighborhood setting was equipped with perfectly tall privacy fences to peer over, and plenty of secret routes in and out of various backyards. Feeling sneaky is empowering.
20	Pictionary (board game)	1990	8	Being "the one who could draw," I had a natural affinity for Pictionary. Unfortunately, my artistic interpretations of things had a tendency to confuse the average adult, so having me as a partner was a double-edged sword. I think a commonly overlooked aspect of Pictionary is its incorporation of flailing, and other such kinesthetic expressions, to assist in the guessing. I noticed this the first time I played online Pictionary, when I couldn't encourage someone on the right track by waving my arms excitedly.
21	Space Cow (make believe)	1990	8	For a brief period of time, my entire third grade class (there were 14 of us) would play Star Trek at recess. I didn't watch Star Trek at the time, so I made up a new character to fit in the theme...the elusive talking Space Cow. Dr. McCoy was intent on catching me and turning me into a normal earth cow. The scenario would usually go like this... (Becky, aka McCoy, would capture me and zap with with some kind of device. She and her staff would lean in and listen carefully) Me: "Moooooo....." McCoy: "The operation was a success!" Me: "Hooray! A successful operation!" McCoy: "Noooooooooo!!!" Me: "Bwahahaha!" (at which point I would flee in triumph). There were two things I loved about this game: 1) Fitting in the world, but still being just a bit off in terms of character and 2) Thinking myself very, very clever.

22	Guerilla Warfare Barbie (SCIENCE)	1990	8	Everyone goes through a phase in their childhood where they blow stuff up with fireworks, right? Right?!?! I'm not sure if this was a game so much as a very scientific study comparing the durability of Barbie dolls to that of the average G.I. Joe. My friends and I conducted a series of tests with bottle rockets and Roman candles. Barbie didn't have a chance. I believe we all knew this from the beginning, but there is a certain human fascination with destruction that drove us forward.
23	Walkie Talkie Hide and Seek (playground game?)	1990	8	In this game, one of us would hide somewhere deep in the neighborhood, and give clues to our whereabouts via walkie talkie. Ah, what game can not be improved by the incorporation of this technology? (Don't answer that). It certainly allowed us to stretch our range from "the backyard" to "the entire neighborhood," and there was always a sense of excitement and anticipation as you closed in on the hider, for they would announce that they could see you, or start speaking very quietly because you were close enough to hear them. It was partially terrifying, for being so very close, and knowing that they could see you...knew exactly where you were...but their location was still a mystery.
24	Abandoned House Game (make believe...sort of)	1990	8	I lived behind an airport, and they decided to expand and kick us all out of our homes, thus there was a period of time when people started moving out where our neighborhood was full of abandoned houses. What a perfect exploring opportunity! We would be adventurers, and select a location for our home base (often a shed or garage we broke into), then set out and break into the houses to explore and gather supplies. We were very sneaky in order to avoid our imaginary pursuers. Being the smallest, I had a very important job. The others would bust out a window, and I would have to carefully reach through the sharded glass to unlock the window or door. The best part of this game? Um, immersion? Hello? What was more exciting than actually exploring actual new spaces! The imaginary monsters that lived within were merely a bonus. **NOTE: Please never mention the existence of this game in the presence of my parents.**

25	Perfection (board game)	1991	9	Ugh, this game. I blame all my anxiety problems on this game. My brother and I would get SO STRESSED OUT playing this. I mean, you could even tell when the stupid thing was going to pop, because it slowed down, but that made the anticipation even worse! UGH! And yet...for some reason...we kept playing it. Perhaps there is some joy in being startled out of your mind? I suppose it goes back to surprises, even bad ones, lighting up pleasure centers in your brain.
26	Where's Waldo (puzzle book? Does it count as a puzzle?)	1991	9	I was not content to stop when I found Waldo, oh no, I had to find every oddity and scenario they listed in the backs of these books. The detail of the picture puzzles were pleasing, but I remember being impressed by the coherence of the illustrations as a whole. There was always some kind of story to these things. I occasionally tried to make these kinds of puzzles myself, but found the challenge in creating such a detailed world overwhelming.
27	Shut the Box (board/dice game)	1991	9	This is a dice game known by many names, and the most important memory I have of it is its social significance to my family. At family events even today it still gets dragged out. It involves very simple math, so the young kids of the family can play with the adults and elders, and its inclusion in a small box-like board makes it easy to pass around the circle, so you can carry on your typical social family conversations while playing.
28	Restaurant (make believe)	1991	9	My best friend in the new neighborhood had a huge collection of fake food. Little plastic eggs and meats and meals and tiny dishware. We would play elaborate games of restaurant, where we could take turns being the cook and the customer. There was a challenge and fascination in creating "meals" that were believable.
29	Ants (make believe)	1991	9	The nice thing about construction sites are the large piles of dirt they leave scattered about for the climbing. Playing ants, I think, was really all about digging your hands into the earth and getting covered in dirt. I'm not sure one can replicate the tactile benefits of clamboring about on huge piles of dirt in a way that is socially acceptable for adults.

30	Gemfire (NES)	1992	10	This little-known strategy game won me over with its variation in play modes (having different "world" and "battle" events), its careful attention to passage of time, and its clever use (and re-use) of music. It is probably best suited to those new or not so good at strategy games, because once you know how to work the system, you can basically steamroll the computer-controlled enemies in the game. Fortunately, I'm terrible at strategy games, so it made this a rewarding challenge.
31	Sonic the Hedgehog (Sega Genesis)	1992	10	When the newest wave of consoles came out, I was captivated by Sonic the Hedgehog, which led a Sega Genesis into my possession that year. Mario was fine and well, but any game where you played an animal as the main character had an advantage in my book. The focus on speed in the game was something quite new to me, and they found ways to make achieving high speeds insanely gratifying.
32	MarioKart (SNES)	1992	10	Now this was a racing game I could get into! My group of friends and I became obsessed with MarioKart. I loved it because of its fantasy elements...the characters you could play, the crazy settings for courses, the weapons and power-ups, it was all very silly. This appealed to me much more than any "realistic" racing game did.
33	Wolves (make believe)	1992	10	Being forced to move out of my old neighborhood did have its advantages. My new neighborhood had woods! I'd always wanted woods! My friend and I would frequently play wolves, which incorporated not only the woods, but the entire neighborhood. We would do the typical wolf things...like build dams in the creek (what?) and running and hiding from hyenas (the annoying boys one block over), but the game was made by having a true environment in which to play.
34	Mario Paint (SNES)	1993	11	This game was the first piece of technology put into my hands that made it possible for me to make animations. I was already skilled in the making of flip books, so this prospect excited me. I would do the drawings and animations, and my best friend would compose the score. Our most popular cartoon was "Severed Heads Rolling Down a Conveyor Belt." When we figured out how to hook the VCR up to record what was playing on the SNES, our feeling of power exploded. We were making our own cartoons! How awesome was that!

35	The Goblin Game (make believe)	1993	11	In this game, my friend and I would put on our goblin costumes (from the most ghetto performance of The Hobbit ever, ask me about it sometime). We would "kidnap" another friend and hide her somewhere. One of us would stay with her in case she tried to escape, while'st the other would scurry off to distract the hero (usually my brother). Another example of costumes making it tons easier to suspend disbelief. Having three roles in the game, instead of just two, added a lot of thrill to the game. It had the competitive/cooperative aspect of a regular team game, but each team had entirely different methods and goals, so it made the experience quite interesting.
36	Ultimate Easter Egg Hunt (um...)	1993	11	At the respectable age of 11, a simple Easter Egg hunt was much too childish for us neighborhood kids. We devised a much more EXTREME version of the game, and I had more fun on the hiding end than the hunting end. One other friend and I hid the plastic eggs throughout the woods, while the others set out for the hunt. In addition to just hiding the eggs, we could also pounce upon and attempt to steal eggs from the hunters. We then stashed stolen eggs in our hidden burrow (which turned out to be an actual animal burrow, ask me about that some time). It added an EXTREME sense of adventure to a traditional game. As a further randomizing effect, some of the plastic eggs were stuffed with candy, but some were stuffed with Vienna sausages. We thought it might level the playing field. Turns out it was just gross. Anyway, this may have been my first experience as the facilitator of fun, rather than just the participant
37	Lost Woods Magic Shop (make believe)	1993	11	The setting of this game was taken from the Zelda for the SNES. I was that aardvark kid who sold bombs in the Dark World, and she was one of those pickle things that zapped you when you hit them. We decided to set up a venue for competition for the Magic Shop on the other side of Hyrule, and created a shop of our own in the Lost Woods (my friend's basement). We constructed the biggest, most elaborate sheet-and-couch-cushion architectural structure of my childhood career. Hands-on creation of "buildings" is fun in and of itself, but never so much fun as a solid context.

38	Sonic 3 (Sega Genesis)	1993	11	The best part of this game was that I was totally not expecting it. In fact, I did not even know of its release until it arrived in my hands on my birthday. I had asked for, and was looking forward to Sonic Spinball, when my parents were like "Wait, we have one more present..." Kudos to my observant parents. Having no pre-conceived notions of a game of one of my favorite genres, I felt that playing it was somewhat of a mystical experience. Surprises for the win! Also, the fact that you could control Tails' flying in this game, AND cart Sonic around by doing so, made it a favorite co-op game for my best friend and me.
39	The Nugget News (make believish)	1994	12	In the 5th grade, my neighborhood friends and I decided to start our own newspaper. We set out among our respective school friends to collect ridiculous stories, silly drawings, and other such features (horiscopes! Seek and find puzzles!). We then set to work compiling, printing, and binding copies of our newspaper to distribute among said school friends. It was fun to put everyone's creative work into print form, but it was more fun to provide a connection among our remote friends who did not know one another, especially since this was before the internet became popular.
40	Shining Force (Sega Genesis)	1994	12	I loved this RPG for its vast array of playable characters. You had your warriors and wizards, and your humans and elves, but you also got to play centaur knights and bird people and werewolves and a steampunk armadillo. It certainly sparked my imagination.
41	Haunted Woods (make believe)	1994	12	By this age, my friends and I were well familiar with the ins and outs of the local woods, and thought it would be a fantastic idea to create a "haunted woods" to lead the younger neighborhood kids through around Halloween. We had a tour guide and a carefully plotted route through the woods, and spent days preparing the path and setting up scary scenarios. The only thing more fun than being totally immersed in an experience is contributing to someone else's total immersion!
42	Donkey Kong Country (SNES)	1994	12	There was a lot of fuss over this game for its pre-rendered 3D graphics, and well-deserved fuss, in my opinion. The thing was beautiful! I remember loitering in certain levels just to gaze at what was going on in the background. The soundtrack kept up with the visuals, too. Addictive music = win!

43	Mao (card game)	1994	12	Yeah, this is that card game where you aren't allowed to talk about the rules. The most exciting point in playing this game is just after enough games that you figure out the rules, and get to play with others who do not know the rules. There is some strange pleasure in watching someone else suffer through something that you had to go through, only now you get to laugh at them from the other side.
44	Old School D&D (tabletop rpg)	1995	13	Hells yeah, in the box! The neighborhood moms bought a set for us kids, figuring we would enjoy it (have I mentioned that I love my parents?). The other kids in the group made me be the Dungeon Master, claiming that I was the most organized and most responsible. I took up the challenge and found that I delighted in leading others through imaginative challenges and scenarios. It certainly kicked me along enough to go out and buy all the AD&D books, spiraling me into the tabletop roleplaying world.
45	Doom II (PC)	1995	13	The first PC first-person-shooter I ever played, I'm not even sure how I obtained it...I think my dad brought it home from work, where one of his employees lent it to him, because he thought I might enjoy it (I love my parents). This was a whole new perspective on video games for me (wah wah waaah), and I was very easily immersed in the world. It got to the point where I would creep nervously up to a corner, then physically lean out of my chair, attempting to physically peer around the on-screen bend. I usually caught myself and felt rather silly and embarrassed, but Doom set up enough stressful surprises that it had me well trained in caution.

46	Doom level builder (PC)	1995	13	A continuation of the previous entry, imagine my joy when I found software that would let me build levels for my favorite game!! How exciting! This was a game in and of itself. I would spend hours carefully crafting tricky, artsy levels, trying to create my own stressful surprises, fighting with the flakey software, and forcing my best friend to play through them. The biggest problem with designing Doom levels was that the levels aren't truly 3D height-wise, in that you can't have things like rooms on top of one another, or bridges you can go both over and under. I once built a level to represent my high school, and had to use cleverly placed wreckage to block off stairs, and teleporters as "elevators" to different floors (which were, in fact, different units altogether). Note: this was well before Columbine, thus no one thought I was gonna go shoot up my school because I did this. Anyway....POWER! CONTROL! I wants them.
47	Balderdash (board game)	1996	14	This game is awesome, especially after you've played a few times and start to learn strategic ways to word silly definitions. I think that Baldurdash is one of the few board games that could benefit from computer assistance, as it's sometimes tricky not to give bias by having trouble reading someone's hand-writing (ah, they are having trouble, that is clearly not the original definition!). I don't know about an online version, though, a lot of this game's spark comes from being in the same physical space as a bunch of silly, giggly people.
48	Chat RPGs (tabletop RPG....sort of?)	1996	14	After discovering the magic of the internet, I stumbled upon chatroom RPG games. What was this? RPGs without dice? Purely relying on storytelling and all the fun parts about D&D without all the tedious math parts? Sign me up! This is also where I began to learn that I express myself much more clearly and fluently through text than through speech, so it made the roleplaying experience that much more real to me.
49	Taboo (board game)	1996	14	The fatal flaw, and yet still my favorite part of this game is the severe advantage a pair of close friends has over a pair of mere acquaintances. There is something fascinating it reveals about the brain power in friendship. "Uh...the thing! The thing with the thing!" "Macedonia?" "YEAH!" Surely there must be a way to distill and extract that.

50	Man Hunt (playground game)	1997	15	<p>Playing Man Hunt at the park at dusk was incredibly exciting. There was an array of strategies to pick, from flat out sprinting away to sneakily hiding to keep from being found in the first place (I was of the latter strategy). Part of what made it so exciting was the range we covered. Having longer legs mean you can expand your "out of bounds" to take up the whole park. Playing at dusk added a certain mystique to the game, but also upped the danger factor. When a friend of mine, during a daring escape, stumbled into a concrete pit and busted his face open on some fallen telephone poles? Yeah...we stopped playing Man Hunt in the park at dusk after that.</p>
51	Yahtzee (board/dice game)	1997	15	<p>I'd played Yahtzee on and off through my life, but for some reason I went through a serious Yahtzee kick at this time in my life. Throwing a handful of dice has always appealed to me, tactilely, and the game was extremely simple while still allowing for critical decision-making.</p>
52	Alfandria MUCK (rpgish)	1997	15	<p>Early on in my internetscapades, I discovered a newsgroup about dragons (ding!) which led me to the related MUCK. I get to be a dragon? Hells yeah, let's do it! Exploring the world, albeit text based, was still exciting just from the prospect that normal, everyday users were the ones building it. And then, when I figured out how to make my own addition? It was a flashback to building Doom levels, only with a much more variable context. My excitement was short lived, however, when I discovered that it actually wasn't the norm for users to go exploring the world, but rather to sit in the main garden and treat it like any ordinary chat room. Boo that.</p>
53	Tekken 3 (Playstation)	1998	16	<p>A fighting game I was good at! Amazing! I fell in love with this game after the champion among my friends convinced me to play around, claiming they would go easy on me, and I totally handed his ass to him. CONFIDENCE! This was a game a beginner could play with frantic button mashing and still hold their own against a veteran. That aspect was a big criticism of the game for many people I knew, but to me it was fantastic. It leveled the playing field, and the challenge in playing against new people came from their vast unpredictability. It was merely a different challenge to the game.</p>

54	Magic: The Gathering (card game)	1998	16	I'm not gonna lie, the biggest thing that attracted me to this game was the pretty pictures on the cards. My friends were caught up in the card-collecting obsession, but I got my only deck as a gift from some boy who had a crush on me. I've always struggled with the decision-making process needed for strategy games, so wasn't very good, but I'd play anyway. When someone laid down a card, I'd pick it up, pretending to read the description, but really I was just admiring the artwork.
55	Hacky Sack (playground game)	1998	16	One day, my soccer-minded friends decided to teach me the ways of hacky sack. I fell in love with the game purely for its spontaneity of play. You could be at any gathering, especially waiting lines, and toss one out, and surely a group would straggle together to join you. Having a means to almost immediately establish bonds with strangers has always been something that intrigues me.
56	Vampire: the Masquerade (tabletop rpg)	1999	17	The single most exciting thing about this campaign was that the GM decided to set it in an alternate reality for the city we lived in. Thus, any place in the city was fair game to go to and play in. In fact, we spent an inordinate amount of time picking our lairs, because all of us had grown up in the city, and so had some place or another that we had found fascinating, and made sure everyone else in the game knew *exactly* where it was. It also solved the common problem with tabletop RPGs of difficulty in imagining scope of distance and time. We knew exactly how far it was from one place to another, and it made the game all the more believable and exciting.
57	Spyro the Dragon (Playstation)	1999	17	A game where you get to play a purple dragon? Clearly, this series was marketed directly towards me. It worked, I set out and bought a Playstation soon after seeing a commercial for this game. I was not disappointed. Spyro was the first 3D platformer I played, and thus I was mesmerized and delighted by the exploratory possibilities in the game. Finding that I could glide over to an entirely new area that I thought was merely decorative background often made me squeek with joy.

58	Breath of Fire III (Playstation)	1999	17	Another game with a dragon as the main character (by now I'm sure you've noticed a theme). I really loved the story of this game. The characters and conflicts were thorough and believable, and you really cared about what was going on in the world. Unfortunately, this game has a sadly disappointing ending. When you beat it, you get a vague bit of dialog and a very short cutscene that offer no closure whatsoever. Thus, occasionally I am inspired to play through this game again for the fantastic story, but it's always with a bit of sadness that I know I'm going to be let down in the end.
59	Silent Hill (Playstation)	1999	17	My first experience in the horror game genre, this game was a joint effort between my brother and I. I loved it because it was not about shooting zombies, it was about solving puzzles. Nevertheless, it would have been nothing without its horrific setting. I suppose it's a nod back to my Perfection entry that my brother and I take a certain joy in having the bejeesus scared out of us.
60	Major MUD (rpgish)	1999	17	My usual D&D crowd got me involved in my first MUD. Not surprisingly, it was the social aspect that captured me. Chatting with friends is fun, killing monsters is fun, but killing monsters with friends in a chat environment is exponentially more fun! It made it easy to play together, and I found the social aspect much more important when I set out to college, when I couldn't physically play with these people anymore. MUDs provided an outlet for that.
61	Final Fantasy 7 (Playstation)	2000	18	This game was lent to me by a high school friend who discovered, in horror, that I'd never played any Final Fantasy games before. I distinctly remember the moment I fell in love. I had been somewhat disappointed by the gritty, steampunkish setting of the game, as a good portion of the beginning is played there, and I assumed that's just what the setting of the game was all about. But then came the point when I got out onto the world map, and I was blown away. There was so much more content to see, I was surprised and delighted by the scope. Since this was really my first final fantasy game, I was not expected the amount of content I was given. The experience was intoxicating.

62	Science Center Sardines (playground game)	2000	18	I volunteered at the Science Center in Louisville, and we would have an overnight event and party each year for the teen volunteer program. Playing silly playground games in the space was delightful. Especially for me, as it had always been a dream of mine to run about and play among the exhibits of the museum. Setting setting setting!
63	AD&D with high school friends (tabletop rpg)	2000	18	I started this campaign with a few girls I'd bonded with my senior year, and the best thing about it was that none of them had played before, so had no expectations. I used this to my advantage in that I pretty much eliminated battles from the game altogether (I had always found battles tedious, but in the past had played with AD&D veterans who were very picky about the rules). My players didn't notice that a huge element of the game was missing, and had a blast ("okay, roll that dice....you killed the dude!" That was the complexity of my battles), we got to spend much more time on the more fun parts of the game. I also recall that occasionally, whenever they would enter a place or perform an action, I would say "okay, wait..." and roll a dice ..."alright, keep going." It was for nothing, of course, but it certainly kept them on the edge of their seats.
64	Science Center Capture the Flag (playground game)	2000	18	This game had the same context as sardines, but it was where I learned that there comes an age when one is too smart for capture the flag. Each team had selected such a strategic, fortified location for their base that it was nearly impossible to sneak in to do a jailbreak, let alone snag the flag. I remember distinctly that it came down to a diplomatic exchange of prisoners, which took place on a catwalk on the third floor, high above the lobby of the museum. After a series of frustrating stalemates, we all gave up, deciding that we were too smart for capture the flag. Physical environment makes some games more fun, yes, but sometimes you need external forces (like a computer) to level the playing field.

65	Ultimate Frisbee (athletic game)	2000	18	I was very involved in this game during college, loving it because it turned out to be the only athletic game based on the manipulation of some object that I was any good at. Regular play was a distinguishing factor for this game. A group of us played every day, we never kept score, and we learned each others' strengths and values so clearly that everyone was organized in such a way as to feel useful. Eventually, the regulars graduated, and the newcomers seemed more concerned with making powerhouse teams and keeping score and competing, and that was the end of that.
66	Cranium (board game)	2001	19	I love this board game because it supports a variety of strengths in its players, not to mention a huge player base at a time. I am horrendous at trivia, but I can nail those drawing challenges, so it gives me a chance to team up with someone with a very different skillset than my own. Unfortunately, if you don't have enough skillsets to lend around, getting suck on a lacking team can be a devastating disadvantage.
67	Ninja Assassin (make believe)	2001	19	My undergraduate college campus was extremely small, and it was inevitable to spot someone you knew when walking from one place to another. In this game, two or more of us would follow another person, hiding behind trees and doing ninja dives into bushes to not be noticed. The trick is, the other person didn't know they were playing the game. The game, in fact, was to see how long it took the person to noticed they were being followed by a band of amateur ninjas. Being in the know when someone else is not can be delightful, especially in silly situations.
68	Dominos (board game?)	2001	19	Mexican Wild Train is the standard in my family when it comes to Dominos. I love the drastic chance for reversal in this game, and all the chaos that can come from having to back up a double. I've known versions of the game where that rule is not in place, and they are simply boring in comparison. A non-backed double can wreck your entire train, and form bitter rivalries that last deep into the rounds (or in the case of my family, last across entire games). It's very exciting!

69	Kirby Superstar (SNES)	2001	19	I played this game with a friend in college, and reveled in the role of the "helper." This is a role that shows up from time to time in video games (notably Tails in the Sonic games) but which I wish were more present. Being the helper is such a low-stress, low-responsibility job, and makes it very easy to cooperatively enjoy a game with someone who is extremely good at it (having played it regularly since their youth). I like Plasma the best.
70	Castle RPG (online rpg)	2002	20	This was a free-form chat RPG that I got involved in. It was memorable to me because I wanted to challenge myself, role-playing-wise, and decided to make my character a mute. Communicating purely through actions was a challenge, but a delightful one. I found it interesting to see that some other players embraced the challenge, and worked with my character to find great story-driven ways to communicate. Other players, however, found it frustrating, and frequently wanted to cure my muteness with magic potions and spells, just so that I could speak. They seemed befuddled to hear that, no no, I actually like this challenge...
71	Egyptian Rat Screw (card game)	2002	20	Any card game that entails violence is fine by me. What? Nevertheless, I also like this game for the wild potential to favor one way or another. The strategy is more based on careful observation than a lot of pre-planning. The fact that you can go out in the game yet still have a chance to slap back in boosts it in my favor. It's nice in that anyone can walk up and join just by poisoning to slap in.
72	Super Mario 3/no warps (NES)	2002	20	At this point in our lives, my friends and I had specific synapses in our brains devoted entirely to the play of Super Mario 3. But there was one other challenge we shared in common. Sure, we'd all play the usual way...get the whistles, warp, warp from the warp area, straight to world 8, right? But we had never played the game straight through with no warps. It took us 2 days of swapping play turns, but we eventually saw every world the game had to offer, even that stupid hard one in level 5 that you can barely get past. It speaks of this game's awesomeness that it had enough stimulating content to drive us through many years after we'd all first played.

73	Halo (XBox)	2002	20	This game became a staple of my junior year of college, wherein I started off as the underdog to be picked on. The second underdog and I decided to train by playing the co-op mode, and I discovered my love of FPS co-op. The game seemed be set up just perfectly for a pair such as us. He was the sort of "rush into the fray guns 'blazin" player, whereas I was more of the cautious, "hang back, calculate the scenario, and snipe" sort of person. Together, we were unstoppable! I'm all for a game that supports vastly different playstyles, especially when opposing ends of the spectrum benefit each other (2 of the guns blazin variety would merely die repeatedly, 2 of the cautious types would never get anywhere in the game).
74	Ghost Recon (Playstation 2)	2003	21	This game stresses me out worse than Perfection. I review the mission, get my one little band all set up with their objectives, and send them along. Then I set out with the second band. A few steps out, I'm like "Wait...I'd better check on the other band...I don't know if I trust the computer not to do anything stupid..." so I switch over. All is well here...then I'm like "Well...I really should check in on my first band..." and switch over. Still, the nervousness remains, and...what? Gunfire? FIRST BAND! What did you DO?? I switch over "Stupid computer, I told you not to engage!" A notice that someone in my other band has been killed. Shit! Switch over. What the hell, guys? I TOLD you not to engage....SHIT! TANKS! SHIT! SHIT! Mission failed. And yet...I still play....maybe I like stress?
75	Sunday Night Basketball D&D (tabletop RPG)	2003	21	Probably the best campaign of D&D I'd ever played. It was with a group of people who'd all played D&D in high school, and I'm pretty sure all of whom had DMed at some point or another. Thus, playing the game was like having it run through a quality check filter. If you are a player with the experience of having DMed, you tend to look at the puzzles in a different way, and treat the story with a certain level of respect. Everyone in the game worked to serve the narrative, so to speak, and it made the story of the game much easier to get into. Ask me sometime about the whole Basketball thing, that's a fun story in and of itself.

76	Nitrous Oxide (Playstation)	2003	21	This is an older game for the PS that I played very much during a summerstock theater program. It is an extremely simple button-masher, wherein you fly through tunnels and shoot bugs. Its trippy color scheme, Crystal Method soundtrack, choice of mushrooms as power-ups, and...well...the name itself...made it quite clear that this game was best enjoyed "under the influence." Nevertheless, having never done any drugs in my life, I was still able to enjoy and appreciate this game's unique aesthetic and mindless objective. It was a nice wind-down game.
77	Munchkin (board/card game)	2003	21	As a D&D veteran by this point, I was delighted by the tongue-in-cheek humor in this board game. It is wily and silly and gets viciously competitive, but in the most ridiculous of sense. I can get into a competitive game as long as it doesn't take itself too seriously. I find that the greatest flaw of this game is that, when people know what they're doing, a single session can drag on foreeeever. It gets to the point where I begin helping the person in the lead, just to speed along the end of the game.
78	Dynasty Warriors 4 (Playstation 2)	2003	21	This game is fun in how much power it gives you as a player. From the very start you can mow through ranks of Chinese infantry with the greatest of ease. For more advanced players, there are deeper and more involved goals to try and accomplish. Advancing the game unlocks new characters, with their own campaigns and storylines. There are horses to be won, new weapons to be discovered, and new sets of bodyguards to train. Plenty to do! I guess what I'm saying, is, it has great replay value.
79	Text Twist (PC)	2004	22	This simple casual game is fun to play with multiple people in the room. During my work at the theater in Connecticut, the props carpenter and I made a habit of playing at lunch. I was the typist, and he (and anyone else who wandered by), helped by shouting out words in the jumble as he saw them. The fact that people can join in and drop out with as much ease as wandering over to the computer to peer over your shoulder makes me very cheerful. Playing the game alone is fun, but never so much as with a group of eyes behind you.

80	WarioWare (GameCube)	2004	22	The microgame: extreme mental reflex challenge? Or perhaps a contributing factor to the development of ADD? Who can say! But goodness, the microgame format in Warioware makes it the perfectly ridiculous party game. It goes quick, the controls are simple, and it's just stressful enough to elicit squeals of panic among its players. The tiny games are just as much fun to watch as they are to play, thus making it a fine game for a decent sized group to pass off at. Look at me ending sentences with prepositions! I'm out of control!
81	Yahoo Scrabble (PC/board game)	2004	22	At this point in my life, I was up in Connecticut away from my many Kentucky friends. We fell into the habit of playing Scrabble with one another on Yahoo games. Now, I love Scrabble as much as the next girl, but playing it in person and having to wait for turns is torturous! By playing it online, one could casually perform one's other internet duties while waiting for one's turn. It was a nice solution to Scrabble's fatal flaw (the only thing that can top it is Facebook Scrabble, where you can play with one another asynchronously).
82	Nobilis (tabletop rpg)	2005	23	Nobilis is a diceless rpg that I played with a group of friends via internet chatrooms (we were all in different states at the time). The story structure in this campaign was amaaaaazing, and I contribute a lot of that to the large brains of the folks I was playing with. Especially the GM, who had a very "yes, and..." approach to everything we did, story-wise. Battles in the game are also incredibly exciting, especially compared to the dicey tedium you get in AD&D. There is a sort of resource system in place for performing great feats that is very natural to the newcomer, or at least it was for me. Another fantastic thing about this game was that its story structure supported the presence of outrageous powers and abilities, but still kept the world challenging. It is, perhaps, my favorite tabletop rpg to date.
83	Citadels (card game)	2005	23	Okay, this was a fun and cleverly structured card game and all, but I can't focus on that. What brings it to mind is the plastic game pieces they use to represent gold. They look like butterscotch candies. I can't help picking them up and sticking them in my mouth. I get yelled at for it. I guess the significance here is simple, subtle, yet highly effective "spectacle" of play pieces. It's kind of like in WoW when I keep opening and closing my map, over and over, because God I love that sound.

84	Donkey Kong Jungle Beat (GameCube)	2005	23	I love this game for its unique use of a game controller, and also for a nod back to side-scrolling platformers. You play with the kongas (normally used to play Donkey Konga), and it's just a totally bizarre way of controlling a character on screen. Its focus on combos and bonuses make it a game you can play through several times, once you get the hang of the weird controls. It certainly gave me a lot of self confidence
85	Stopwatch Game (board game)	2005	23	Curses if I can't remember the real name of this board game, but it centered entirely around stopwatches. There were challenges where you had to stop at a certain time, stop as fast as you can, stop at a certain time without looking at the stopwatch...you know, all the things you normally do when just playin around with a stopwatch. The fact that someone wrapped those natural things all up into a board game struck me as particularly clever.
86	World of Warcraft (mmorpg)	2006	24	I'd avoided mmorpgs all throughout college, fearing they would sap up my time. No longer could I resist. There are many things I love about WoW, but one of the most clever things through the eyes of a beginner was how accomplished they make you feel. It's not a boring grind, you have to DO things for people. Yes, I know, that's just a grind in disguise, but you feel so helpful and accomplished when you are going off and completing quests for NPCs! Accomplishments release endorphins.
87	Nintendogs (Nintendo DS)	2006	24	This was one of those games that I scoffed at, until I actually got around to playing it. There was something addictive about taking care of a little virtual dog, and training it, and playing with it. I suppose it appealed to the nurturing part of me. The addiction was short lived...I devoted all my time to my virtual puppy for several weeks. Now I only see them when I take my DS traveling with me (they never die, just are really hungry and filthy).
88	Shadows Over Camelot (board game)	2006	24	I love this board game because it is cooperative. It is the entire group playing against "the game," which seems to be hard to pull off in a board game. Camelot does it in a well-balanced and natural-feeling way. Then, of course, there is the element of having a secret traitor, it just adds an extra layer of excitement to the whole experience.

89	Okami (Playstation 2)	2006	24	This is one of the most solid platformers I have ever played. Its theming is so very consistent: art style, music, story, character development...everything serves the narrative and as a result makes the game a very immersive experience. The gameplay mechanic of the Celestial Brush, while quite new and different, was completely natural in the context of the game. It really made you feel as though you had a direct connection with the game world, even if it was through accidentally chopping down a tree in the background when you were trying to draw a slash through an enemy.
90	Super Mario Strikers (GameCube)	2006	24	This silly soccer game for the GameCube sucked in my group of friends. There weren't many console games at the time that let you play with 4 people cooperatively, and that was certainly the most appealing part. In fact, I don't think we ever even touched the 2 on 2 versus mode. The tournaments, especially on the harder modes, were long, and we'd plow through them with serious intensity. There came a point, however, where we became so skilled and our strategies so clever that we lost a lot of the challenge. Strikers was put away for some time, then, until we got rusty enough again to make it a struggle.
91	Guitar Hero II (Playstation 2/XBox)	2006	24	Another game I scoffed at until I got my hands on it. Once you got over the fact that you looked ridiculous holding that tiny plastic guitar, the rhythm game took over your brain! There was something about this game that made you WANT to be good at it...I think it had a lot to do with the image of the game. You weren't just solving a mere rhythm puzzle, you were a BADASS ROCK STAR. The cooperative mode in Guitar Hero II was by far the favorite among my school of friends.
92	Dogs in the Vineyard (tabletop RPG)	2006	24	Contrary to Nobilis, this is an RPG centered ENTIRELY around dice. Large handfuls of them, in fact. It has this dice pool/bidding/raising aspect to conflict of any sort (fighting monsters, but also verbal persuasion). I love it because it is the only context in roleplaying in which I can ever win an argument. It gives me a chance to experience being a character that is not just a shade of myself. The dice say I win the argument, so you have to respond in roleplay as though you are persuaded, even though what I actually said is quite silly. Muaha!

93	Betrayal at House on the Hill (board game)	2007	25	This board game is brilliant! It has so many tricky, exciting elements. One is that you build the playing board as you go, drawing and laying down tiles to represent rooms of the house, so it can be different each time you play. Another is how it is split into 2 phases...the haunting and pre-haunting, and how each time you find a new omen, the likelihood of the haunting becomes greater and greater. It makes each haunting roll more and more intense and exciting. Lastly, the post-haunting game play can be vastly different each time, depending on a variety of circumstances (the omen that triggered the haunting, the room you found it in, which character found it, etc.) Plus, any game that has a traitor is fine by me. To sum it up, it is extremely versatile and has great replay value!
94	Peggle (PC - casual game)	2007	25	This game introduced to me the incredible power of gratuitous, candy-like feedback. Who wouldn't want to play this after how good you feel when you get extreme fever? When I'm feeling down, sometimes I just play a round of Peggle just to feel better about being alive. Spectacle might be the least important of the Poetics, but it sure can release the endorphins.
95	WoW-and-Go-Seek (PC...sort of)	2007	25	Okay, sometimes in World of Warcraft, I like to play hide and seek with friends, okay? LEAVE ME ALONE. It's really quite fun. There are a few house rules: you have to turn off visible player names, no stealthing, no tracking, no /target...but beyond that it's just regular hide and seek, except in WoW. It even elicits similar effects of normal hide in seek, in that you find the perfect hiding space, then get all giggly and excited while you wait, then goddammit, you have to pee. I love to see what clever hiding places I can find in the virtual world...of warcraft. I have at least one friend who is horribly embarrassed that I play this. "You're not advancing the game!" he fusses, "it's just a huge time sink!" Oh, yeah, like WoW itself isn't just a huge time sink? Hmph!

96	Unreal Tournament 3 (PC)	2007	25	I was nervous about playing this, as I hadn't played a PC FPS since Doom II, but I fell into the swing of things quite quickly. The best thing, of course, about this game was the social context. Playing together in the bullpen as a form of stress relief was an incredible bonding experience, especially since most everyone played (even having never touched a FPS in their lives). The fact that we were all together in the same room sealed the deal, as the physical aspect of shouting and cheering and people laughing in half-shock when I rambled out obscenities really connected us.
97	Super Mario Galaxy (Wii)	2007	25	My favorite thing about this game is that Nintendo figured out that "hey, there are some people who like to play games, but they have friends who maybe are not so good at playing games...or maybe their friends just like to watch....what if we find a way to let them be involved too!" I am the best bit collector ever!
98	Rock Band (xbox 360)	2008	26	Rock Band's awesomeness stems from how connected you feel with your bandmates. It is truly a game centered on helping one another out, and my favorite parts are saving a failed bandmate, and activating star power not to boost your own points, but to lift up someone else who might be struggling. Hooray for cooperation!
99	Once Upon a Time (card game)	2008	26	My favorite card game EVER. The freedom of making up a story from scratch and using cards as a mere guide to one's imagination is quite joyful! The trick is, you have to play with people who follow the improv rules. People who are more focused on the competitive part of this game than the cooperative one are no fun to play with.
100	Set (card game)	2008	26	This game hurts my brain. I find I can only focus on a particular set at a time, and it's usually easiest for me to pick out 3 that are entirely different than to try and find a common feature. This game does not support playing with newbies and veterens at the same time (let's face it, Andy would have destroyed Cash and me, if he weren't being nice and letting us spot some sets on our own).