

**Blog Post 4: Close Reading *Dear Esther*, *Gone Home*, or *The Stanley Parable***

Minimum 500 words

Due Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup>

As I have asked you to do all semester in one way or another, for your final blog post I would like you to pick a small, specific moment from either *Dear Esther* (2012), *Gone Home* (2013), or *The Stanley Parable* (2013) to interpret. Further, I would like you to focus on a moment where the relationship between form and content, between the narrative and the game's mechanics seems especially rich, and to investigate this relationship. There are many things to think about in each game: from the densely worded, highly referential literary monologues of *Dear Esther*, to the historically specific detritus scattered around specific rooms in *Gone Home*, to the endings of *The Stanley Parable* that self-reflexively comment upon other videogames—each meticulously constructed, complex game has a host of features that deserve close, critical attention. We have talked about media-specific modes of critically reading texts in a variety of ways throughout the semester, and each game we are looking at for the next two weeks offers a number of avenues toward critical inquiry, into thinking about, unpacking, and questioning the different kinds of meaning that can be produced and constructed by videogames. So there are many directions you might take this and I look forward to seeing where this assignment takes you.

As always, I am primarily interested in your *argument for an interpretation*, so the more specific and incisive you are here—*closely* and *carefully* reading the *text/game*—the more complex your *argument* will be. Also, feel free to think of this as preparatory writing for your final essay.