

STEPHEN WALTER

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"...neither more nor less than capacity to share in a give and take of experience. It covers all that makes one's own experience more worthwhile to others, and all that enables one to participate more richly in the worthwhile experiences of others." John Dewey, in *Democracy and Education*, in 1916; words I believe describe, depending on the occasion, the meaning of a good user experience, democratic process, story, education, piece of art, technology, life.

EDUCATION

Emerson College

B.A. (Summa Cum Laude)

Visual and Media Arts: Film, May 2011

Minors: Philosophy; Women's and Gender Studies; Honor's Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Engagement Lab

Founding Managing Director | 2011 – 2015

I worked with executive director Dr. Eric Gordon in creating and leading the Engagement Lab, an applied research lab that designs and studies civic technology, engagement, and play. We've implemented major design action research projects in Detroit, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Sweden, Moldova, Zambia, Uganda, Egypt, Ghana, and Bhutan. Our work spans from the design and development of online games, to the organization of civic technology researchers and practitioners around the world, to the dissemination and teaching of playful user experience design in both digital and analog contexts. <http://engagementlab.emerson.edu>.

United Nations Development Program

Consultant | January 2014 - Present

I've consulted with the UNDP on stakeholder engagement projects in Egypt, Moldova, and Bhutan, facilitating workshops, conducting user research, designing and implementing projects, and helping to create local networks around the use of technology and media for civic engagement.

US State Department

US Speaker and Expert Exchange Program | 2014

I worked with the US State Department and the US Embassy in Dublin as both a host to an Irish delegation of tech experts in the US, and as an official US speaker on civic technology and engagement in Dublin, Ireland, and Derry, Northern Ireland.

Coxswain Social Investment Plus (CSI+)

Consultant | 2014

I helped research, prototype, and develop a game-based social network aimed at engaging kids throughout the world in development and global aid processes. Funded by the Gates Foundation and user tested in Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, Seattle and Boston.

Red Cross / Red Crescent Climate Centre

Consultant | May 2013 - Present

I've worked with the Climate Centre on design action research projects ranging from flood preparedness and communications systems in Zambia, to publications and workshops on games for humanitarian relief worldwide.

Other Past Affiliations

Boston Transportation Department and National Parks Service

Media Consultant | 2013

NOVA (TV Series), PBS

Production Assistant | August 2011 – January 2012

FRONTLINE (TV Series), PBS

Production Intern | January 2011 – August 2011

Harvard Graduate School of Education

New Media Consultant | March 2011 – August 2011

Boston Public Health Commission / Boston EMS

Multimedia Producer | May 2010 – June 2011

Community Music Center of Boston

Multimedia Producer and Counselor | May 2008 – August 2010.

Skyways Communications

Production Assistant | 2009

Co-Lead Designer and Researcher | 2012-15

COMMUNITY PLANIT

Community PlanIt is an online social game for community deliberation, urban and policy planning, and local fundraising that has been implemented in Detroit, Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles, Salem, MA, Quincy, MA, Cape Cod, Malmo, Sweden, the Republic of Moldova, and the Kingdom of Bhutan. The time-limited game is a platform that has been used in a variety of contexts, including master urban planning, school policy deliberation, wastewater mitigation, climate change, media literacy, healthy food access, and youth unemployment in the developing world. It has been played by over twelve thousand people who have contributed over 65,000 comments to local civic planning initiatives.

<https://communityplanit.org/>

Co-Lead Designer and Researcher | 2013-14

UPRIVER

UpRiver is a two part early warning / early action game for understanding and predicting river levels along flood-prone areas of rivers in the developing world. The first part is an analog game designed to help those in flood-prone communities better understand the nuances of river flooding and the importance of upstream-downstream communication. The second part, an SMS-based game played on cellphones, aims to further these concepts and both put into place an actual communication network for relaying upstream information and to crowdsource river level data to improve computer models. The game is being co-designed with Red Cross volunteers living along the Zambezi River in Zambia, and is also part of a larger ethnography project about games and play in the developing world.

<http://engagementgamelab.org/projects/upriver/>

**SELECTED
DESIGN ACTION
RESEARCH
PROJECTS**

Co-Lead Designer and Researcher | 2014

RISK HORIZON

Risk Horizon is a game for helping people throughout the world experience key lessons of the World Bank's flagship report, the "World Development Report 2014, Risk and Opportunity: Managing Risk for Development." The game was played by over 7,000 people in 178 countries throughout the world over the course of only one week. <http://riskhorizon.org/>

Co-Lead Designer and Researcher | 2012-15

CIVIC SEED

Civic Seed is an online RPG, collective art piece, and civic resume generator for college students hoping to volunteer in communities, designed in collaboration with Tufts University's Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service. While many civic education programs teach students using traditional pedagogical methods of assigned readings or online learning modules, Civic Seed uses the interactive structure and narrative of a game to compel players to actively seek out, reflect upon, and apply content as they gain new knowledge. Game actions and responses are recorded and transformed into a civic resume -- a sharable profile, owned by the player, that lets partners understand a student's background, skills, goals, and motivations. <http://civicseed.org/>

PUBLICATIONS

Gordon, E. and **Walter, S.** (2016). "Meaningful Inefficiencies: Resisting the Logic of Technological Efficiency in the Design of Civic Systems," *The Civic Media Reader*, eds. Paul Mihailidis and Eric Gordon, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gordon, E. and **Walter, S.** (forthcoming). "The Good User: Tech-Mediated Citizenship in the Contemporary American City," *Companion to American Urbanism*, ed. Joseph Heathcott, New York: Routledge.

Gordon, E., **Walter, S.**, Suarez, P. (2013). "Engagement Games: A Case for Designing Games to Facilitate Real-World Action," *International Red Cross / Red Crescent Climate Centre and Engagement Lab*.

Walter, S. (2013). Review of *Missions for Thoughtful Gamers* by Andrew Cutting, *Journal of Media Literacy Education*, 5.1: 359-361.

Walter, S. (2011). Honor's Thesis: "Spiraling Thoughts: Transcribing Images of Time and Memory"

Workshop Facilitator, "Games for Development," *United Nations Bhutan*. Thimphu and Paro, Bhutan. (October 2014).

Public Lecture, "Games for Development," *United Nations Development Program SHIFT Week*. The Greek Campus, Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt (September 2014).

Workshop Facilitator, "Games for Development," *United Nations Development Program SHIFT Week*. Cairo, Egypt (September 2014).

Workshop Facilitator, "Play to Engage," *Pearson Foundation Pre-Conference at Building Learning Communities*. Boston, MA (July 2014).

Workshop Facilitator, "Play to Engage," *National Charter Schools Conference*. Las Vegas, NV (June 2014).

For U.S. Department of State, U.S. Speaker Program:

- Keynote, "Playful Civic Learning," *Creating Smart Skills for a Smart Economy, Presented by the U.S. Consulate in Northern Ireland and St. Mary's College*. Derry, Northern Ireland (April 2014).
- Panelist, "Innovative Citizenship: The New Civics," *Smart People for a Smart Economy: Technology, Education and Closing the Skills Gap, U.S. Embassy Dublin's Annual Economic Conference*, Dublin, Ireland (April 2014).
- Keynote/Discussant, "Ed Tech and Development," *Smart People for a Smart Economy: Technology, Education and Closing the Skills Gap, U.S. Embassy Dublin's Annual Economic Conference*, Dublin, Ireland (April 2014).

- Invited Speaker, "Engagement Games: a Case for Designing Games for Real-Word Action," *National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland* (April 2014).
- Discussant, "This is Not a Game," *Workshop hosted by the U.S. Embassy Dublin, Dublin, Ireland* (April 2014).
- Invited Speaker, "Creative Placemaking: Lessons Learned from U.S. Cities," *U.S. Embassy Dublin Speaker Forum, Dublin, Ireland* (April 2014).

Conference Presentation, "Upriver, Online and Offline: Designing Multimodal Experiences in the Developing World," *MacArthur Digital Media and Learning Conference*. Boston, MA (March 2014).

Conference Presentation, "Civic Seed: How an Interactive Video Game Can Prepare Students for Effective and Meaningful Active Citizenship," *Association of American Colleges and Universities Annual Meeting: Quality, E-Quality, and Opportunity: How Educational Innovations Will Make—or Break—America's Global Future*, Washington, D.C. (January 2014).

Conference Presentation, "Getting to Blue by Going Green," *SNEAPA Annual Planning Conference*. Worcester, MA (October 2013).

Invited Speaker, "Civic Startups: Engage and Improve," *Techonomy Detroit: Competitiveness, Jobs, and the Urban Future in an Age of Technology*. Detroit, MI (September 2013).

Conference Presentation, "Play to Plan: How Games Can Change Public Participation in Urban Planning," *Games for Change*. New York, NY (June 2013).

Invited Speaker, "A Play-Based Approach to Community Engagement," *Engaging Constituents for Community Impact*. Mel King Institute. Danvers, MA (June 2013).

Conference Presentation, "More Engaging Planning," *American Planning Association National Conference*. Chicago, IL (April 2013).

Conference Presentation, "Forward Public Engagement: Making Planning Fun," *American Planning Association National Conference*. Chicago, IL (April 2013).

Conference Presentation, "Badges for Lifelong Learning Competition: Civic Seed," *Digital Media and Learning Conference*. San Francisco, CA (March 2012).

Discussant, "Using Games for Community Engagement," *Knight Foundation Media Learning Seminar: Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy*. Miami, FL (February 2013).

Selected grants and projects I have helped write and manage:

**SELECTED GRANT
/ CONTRACT
MANAGEMENT**

Results Based Financing In Health Learning Experience, World Bank. 2015. \$386,000

The Civic Technology Initiative, Knight Foundation. 2014. \$75,000.

Risk Horizon: A Game for Risk Management, The World Bank. 2014. \$77,000.

Engagement Games for Unemployed Youth in Moldova, United Nations Development Programme. November 2013 – April 2014. \$20,000.

Habit@: A Constellation of New Civic Technologies in Boston's Dudley Square Neighborhood, Knight Foundation (PI: Gordon, E.). March 2013 – September 2014. \$145,000.

Community PlanIt and Planning Ecosystems in American Cities, Knight Foundation Technology for Engagement Initiative (PI: Gordon, E.). January 2012 – December 2013. \$675,000.

Game-based Curriculum Design for High School Civics, Pearson Foundation (PI: Gordon, E.). January 2013 – December 2013. \$75,000.

Games for Wastewater Awareness and Action in Cape Cod, Cape Cod Commission. May 2013 – December 2013. \$44,000.

Games for Urban Risk, International Red Cross / Red Crescent. April 2013 – June 2013. \$5,500.

Games for Predicting River Levels in Zambia, International Red Cross / Red Crescent. May 2013 – September 2013. \$12,000.

Design Action Research for Government, MacArthur Foundation (PI: Gordon, E.).
June 2012 – September 2013. \$250,000.

Civic Seed: An Online Game for Civic Education, Tufts University. June 2012 –
September 2013. \$96,000.

Planning Games for the Boston Metropolitan Area, HUD Sustainable Communities
Funds, MAPC. January 2012 – January 2013. \$28,000.

**ADDITIONAL
SELECTED
CREATIVE MEDIA
WORK**

Director/Producer/Editor	<i>Connect Historic Boston</i> (Public video)	HD Video	2013
Associate Producer	<i>Folk to Folk</i> (Documentary Series)	HD Video	2013
Director/Producer/Editor	<i>Hubway Hackathon</i> (Public video)	HD Video	2012
Designer/Developer	<i>chrono-synclastic-infundibulum.com</i>	Website	2012
Producer	<i>Foundling</i> (Fiction)	16mm Film, Color	2011
Post Production Assistant	<i>The Fabric of the Cosmos</i> (Documentary)	HDTV	2011
Designer/Developer	<i>Not-Looking</i>	Interactive Media	2011
Designer/Developer	<i>Not-Coded</i>	Interactive Media	2011
Designer/Developer	<i>W-E-B</i>	Interactive Media	2011
Dir/Writer/DP/Editor	<i>The Ideas of Ideas</i> (Documentary)	HD Video	2010

Dir/Writer/DP/Editor	<i>Monday: IR-A-TRABAJAR</i> (Documentary)	HD Video	2010
Designer/Developer	<i>wake-down.com</i>	Interactive Media	
Assistant Director	<i>Coda.</i> (Fiction)	HD Video	2010
Dir/Writer/DP/Editor	<i>Sunday :00AM</i> (Documentary)	HD Video	2010
Assistant Director	<i>All The Usual Things</i> (Fiction)	HD Video	2010
Director/Writer/Producer/DP	<i>An Epic Man Pt. 2</i> (Fiction)	HD Video	2009
Director/Writer/Producer	<i>Poor Lady</i> (Fiction)	16mm Film, Color	2009
Assistant Director	<i>Arigato</i> (Fiction)	HD Video	2009
Assistant Director	<i>Magic Pencil</i> (Fiction)	16mm Film, Color	2009
Director/Writer/DP/Editor	<i>Narrating</i> (Fiction)	16mm Film, B&W	2008
Director/Writer/Editor	<i>Regardless</i> (Experimental)	16mm Film, B&W	2008
Director/Writer/DP/Editor	<i>And What Then?</i> (Experimental)	Digital Video	2007
Director	<i>No Exit</i>	Theatre	2007
Director/Writer	<i>Misplaced</i>	Theatre	2007
Director/Writer	<i>The Shawn Shank Redemption</i>	Digital Video	2006
Director/Writer	<i>The Passion of the Bush</i>	Theatre	2006

**TECHNICAL
SKILLS**

UX, Research, and Project Management: Mixed Methods User Research, Dedoose Qualitative Research Software, Agile/Scrum Software Development, Pivotal Tracker, Trello, Balsamiq Wireframing, Slack, Basecamp, Google Analytics, IRB protocols, Budget Management, Lean Startup Management, Grant and Contract Writing, Enterprise Resource Planning Software (Banner), HR Software Solutions (PeopleAdmin)....

Coding: HTML5, CSS, Javascript, jQuery, PHP, MySQL, DOM, Canvas, Node.js, Actionscript....

Media Software: Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects, etc.), Final Cut Studio, Avid Media Composer, Unity....

Hardware: MakerBot 3D Printers, Leap Motion Sensors, Arduino Kits, Oculus Rift VR Headsets, Google Cardboard, DSLR cameras, film cameras...

“What I propose, therefore, is very simple: it is nothing more than to think what we are doing.” - Hannah Arendt.