

December 11, 2019. Santa Cruz, CA.

I am in a good position to turn my master's thesis into a book.

The thesis was completed in December 2017 under the guidance of faculty from UCSC connected to the Center for Games and Playable Media. The degree awarded was in Computational Media, a new department at the intersection of computing and arts: which includes games in particular.

The actual thesis is 97 pages double spaced, with 146 footnotes, some of which are mere citations and some of which do include helpful trivia. While the postscript appendices are nice, I don't really think they need to be included, other than perhaps a stray paragraph or two. In grand total, the thesis is 193 pages.

Frankly, I think the material is good enough already to be read in the form of a short book. Certainly more images is one idea. I'm quite open to working with an editor to fit the thesis into a book to be sold. While I am interested in profit, I am predominantly interested in furthering the ideas, and I think a publication on the shelves might help get the word out. To this end, I will summarize the contents.

There is a standard structure to theses required by universities as seen in the table of contents. In my case, I divided the work into three parts. First, an introduction to World Game. I discuss the fundamental components as Fuller envisioned, and make a formal argument in logic that World Game is required in furthering human evolution. Second, I take the fundamental components of World Game, a database + map + simulation, and discuss the technologies today — that did not exist in Fuller's time — which make World Game a much more realizable idea. Specifically, I explain in a gentle manner machine learning for simulation and blockchain for databases. Third, I discuss realization possibilities: obviously Google could build a gigantic World Game. I also make the ethical and humanitarian case: we are wasting time and life every day due to the horrible organization currently in place at world scale.

The first real chunk of text is the abstract. I crafted it in a way that is very technical, and meant for an academic audience. It basically says that Buckminster Fuller's World Game is the first and only conception of a global problem-solving engine, and that the use of computers to drive our decision making is necessary at this point on the planet due to the scale of data which is the foundation of civilization. In other words, civilization is so built-up that without computers helping us to navigate, we cannot progress. The technical language invokes formal logic to prove World Game, or something like it, is either going to be built as a way to prevent crisis, or our world will regress due to some preventable catastrophe.

Then I have a little vignette which I think is cute, and go into a bit of the history of World Game. I also begin to set up one of the story arcs, which is about Alan Turing using computers to help win WW2, and how we are in a similar position today. Alan Turing, like Buckminster Fuller, deserves more attention from a broad audience.

The meaty bits begin at the explanation of World Game's components: a database + map + simulation. Essentially, World Game is a resource management game. Such a game could be used to organize the world, acting as a problem-solving engine. By having a database of world resources, a map upon which to visualize it, and a simulation which predicts optimal organization of these resources, such as logistics, we have the power to reshape the planet into a high-functioning society, instead of the real mess we have today. Today, without the use of computers as the forefront of our decision making. I also give a lengthy introduction to games. World Game was conceived in contradistinction to military war games. Indeed, mutually assured destruction is calculated by computer simulation, displayed on a map, and uses a database of the enemy and ally armaments. I also happen to be a gamer, and discuss the potential for World Game to be crowdsourced as an actual video game. University teams all over the world are the ideal players. Finally, I give my "World Game Hypothesis" which is the formal logic argument. By proof of contradiction, we can see that without a database we have amnesia, without a map we swim in a sea of numbers, and without a simulation we play a game of chance instead of a game of strategy. At the conclusion of Part One, the case for World Game as necessary has been made. At this point, the reader thinks, "World Game is a good idea. But how will it happen?"

Part Two then lines up the technologies which would allow for a globally secure database + map + simulation. Machine Learning, and specifically work coming out from Deep Mind with game AI agents such as AlphaGo, are very promising for a global problem-solving engine. Blockchain, separate from cryptocurrencies, is also a great boon toward the realization of a database across global powers at war, because blockchain is more or less uncheatable. Maps are basically solved, and Fuller invented and patented a map for playing World Game, known as the Fuller Projection. At the conclusion of Part Two, the reader thinks, "World Game can be built with these technologies. But will we actually do it?"

Part Three then gives a little sermon to Silicon Valley. Nothing will matter if we all die from global chaos. We are in a time of crisis. And, I have made a strong and formal argument using logic that we can prevent collapse through the use of computers in this way. It could even be fun in the form of a game. Therefore, I say, "build it already!" I also make room for the idea of other entities besides governments or Google to get the ball rolling. In the final paragraph of my homily, you can imagine me banging at the keys with great ferocity as Bach might have done.

I think the book reading audience is interested in the spirit of this thesis. I think the argument is very well formed, and there is definitely a skeleton, if not a full-fledged book already written. And most of all, I think the message is literally the most important one on Earth. I am personally very concerned for the fate of mankind, I take it very seriously, and I know of no other pathway out of global chaos besides World Game. So I think publishing the book is not only of interest to people, but also an important step for organizing the world before it is too late. That's what I think. What do you think?