<u>Response Paper 2</u>

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One of the main connections between Vilhauer's paper and Ruspoli's movie is both of their emphasis on the lack of understanding and the confusion between the separation of the mental and the physical. In Ruspoli's movie, he stresses the fact that "philosophers are very concerned over how it is that we engage with objects in the world" (Ruspoli, 0:45), and that he ponders "how it is that we human beings engage with and make sense of the world around us" (Ruspoli, 1:00) in an effort to generate a real sense of connection and understanding. Similarly, Vilhauer mentions that "a breakdown in genuine dialogue and understanding" (Vilhauer, 75) is what corrupts and confuses proper communication. Vilhauer goes on to elaborate that "we simply cannot understand each other because of differences in gender, race, class, religion, sexual orientation [and] political affiliation discourages us [from] even trying to communicate" (Vilhauer, 75). This disconnect between interaction and understanding is at the core of both pieces, and is an excellent way of emphasising the importance of explanation and holistic worldviews, as well as focusing on the key attributes of being open-minded and willing to expand one's beliefs to incorporate and understand and properly connect with the subject matter that is presented to us. In this way, we are able to grasp the concept expressed by Ruspoli when he asks "what, if anything, gives meaning to our lives?" (Ruspoli, 2:05).

In regard to my own projects and research, this paradigm of truly attempting to connect and understand is extremely useful. For all three of my tutorial projects, I have endeavored to highlight or showcase some form of understanding and connection to meaning in places where one might not traditionally seek to make these connections. In the first case, it was to generate an understanding and correlation between the act of playing a game, namely *Magic: the Gathering*, with a sense of community and a connection that extends beyond the obvious connections of players and a game, and expand it into the lexicon of knowledge of what it means to be engaged in something beyond play, and into the realm of culture and community. For my second case, I attempted to inject the realm of literary value and understanding into an avenue that would not normally be considered for a literary analysis, and in such a way as to highlight the possibilities that lie both within and without the normal or "typical" realm of literary understanding by extending the principals and theories behind literary analysis into something non-traditional, namely the physical aspects of *Magic: the Gathering*. Lastly, I tried to expand my own understanding of the history of the game of *Magic* by delving into the moral panics and social climate that surrounded the game in its early years, and as such I attempted to make a connection and learn from and understand the importance of symbols and allusion generated by the individuals involved in this historic time for the game.

In all of these cases, I feel like I have endeavored to include and dissect different ways of conducting research, and emphasising meaning in non-traditional places. In a way, my projects have all be focused around the same concepts of Vilhauer in that "what or who we already are [is] an achievement that we want to reach with each other" (Vilhauer, 83), that the knowledge and emphasis of

meaning that I have already associated with something is not necessarily a universal, and as such this meaning and knowledge needs to be expanded collectively and made more easily accessible for people of a different mindset or set of experiences or understandings.