

Statement of Purpose

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Ever since I was little, my greatest passion has been well told stories. From the time I learned to read, I could rarely be found without a book of some sort. I found my second passion when I was first introduced to video games through *Super Mario Brothers 3*. At that time I became fascinated with platformer games such as the Mario, Sonic, and Mega Man series. But it wasn't until shortly before my 13th birthday when my love of stories and my love of games combined.

I started writing my first novel at age 12. Shortly after that, a friend introduced me to the recently released *Final Fantasy VII*. I was quickly captivated, not only by the amazing graphics and top quality music, but by the deep and twisting plot, which surpassed that of any book I'd read at the time. By the time I'd reached the end, I knew that I wanted to write stories like that, and I wanted to create the games to go with them.

I continued to write as the years passed and have now completed eight full length young adult fantasy and sci-fi novels, with plans for many more. Throughout that time, I worked to expand my skills and knowledge by reading books and playing games across a wide variety of genres. As I read those books and played those games, I always tried to recognize the best and worse parts of the writing and/or game play, and use what I found to improve my own writing and game ideas.

Aside from my reading, writing, and game playing, my other hobbies include piano, Seibukan Shorin Ryu Karate (in which I'm currently a 3rd degree black belt), cooking, hiking, traveling, and photography.

Throughout all that, I remained focused on my goal and began to experiment with game design. I enrolled at [The University of Advancing Technology](#) in spring of 2004 to study game design. During my time at UAT, I worked on several mods (both individual and team projects) and led an original 3D strategy RPG project. I graduated a Bachelor of Multimedia with an emphasis on Game Design in April of 2007.

At that point, I decided to take some time off to try something different and improve my Japanese (which I had been studying on and off since high school), so I found a position teaching English in Japan. I spent eight months teaching at Nogi Elementary School and two nearby preschools in Nogi-machi (a small town about an hour north of Tokyo). I loved the country and the experience and wrote an extensive photo filled travelogue. However, as much as I enjoyed Japan, I missed game design so, after completing my contract, I turned down their renewal offer and returned to the US.

After some time spent helping my family and working on various other projects, I returned to UAT in the fall of 2008 to pursue a Master's in Game Production, which I completed at the end of 2009. During that time, I wrote my [Master's Thesis](#) on storytelling and interactivity in games and other media. In June 2010, I signed a contract with Focal Press to write a textbook based on my thesis work titled [Interactive Storytelling for Video Games](#), which was released in March of 2011 to very positive reviews. And, in the winter of 2010, the demo of my in-development indie game, [Game Washer: Summer of the Ninja](#), won third place in Intel's Level Up competition.

In August of 2011, I began working at [Florida Gateway College](#), where I developed and taught their Game Design certificate program. At the same time, I founded an indie studio named [Pen and Sword Games](#) for my various game and writing projects. The first game released under the Pen and Sword Games label was *Car Washer*, in February of 2012.

In the summer of 2012 I released newly edited versions of my fantasy trilogy, *The Verities*

Silex, on [Kindle](#). And in early 2013, I was hired by Sony Online Entertainment to write novella tie-ins for [EverQuest Next](#). Shortly after, I began to focus heavily on my latest indie game, [Aurora's Nightmare](#).

I left Florida in the summer of 2014, moving to Hawaii to develop and teach the game design portion of the Creative Media program at the [University of Hawaii – West Oahu](#), where I currently work while continuing my indie and contract projects.

Today, my two greatest passions remain stories and games. I'm a writer, a gamer, and a game designer and I always will be.