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Professor Michael J. Streibel
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Dear Professor Streibel:

I first met Kurt Squire at MIT seven years ago when he was a fellow on the Games to Teach program. A colleague suggested that we had similar interests in the use of games in teaching history. Upon meeting, we discovered that we shared a common interest in using Sid Meier's large-scale historical game *Civilization* as a teaching tool. Kurt had written on the subject for his dissertation, and at the time was working intensely to understand how high school students made use of, and learned from *Civilization*.

Kurt has since published a number of impressive articles on the way in which students from several different locales and socio-economic groups have reacted to *Civilization* as a teaching tool. In addition, I was also impressed by Kurt's role in creating two environmental science games (*Mad City Mystery* and *Environmental Detectives*). Having created a large, highly successful educational website on the history of science, I was impressed by the thoughtfulness and depth of content appearing in both games. Furthermore, *Mad City Mystery* and *Environmental Detectives* seemed like engaging ways of teaching science.

In my capacity as a professional historian, I would like to emphasize how impressed I have been by Kurt's genuine interest in teaching history. History is not an easy subject for creating games, because unlike the sciences, there are no universally agreed upon set of rules by which events unfold. And there are no longer any large "Rise of the West" stories that make sense to an increasing Asian and Latin American student population.

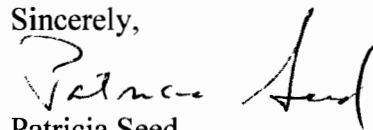
Early in his research on teaching history with *Civilization*, Kurt taught students how to modify *Civilization* as a way to engage students, who are (as he rightly notes) increasingly disaffected with traditional history. Kurt wanted to inspire students to do research into historical periods, and thus increase their ability to research and understand the past. He directed students to utilize online and conventional written sources to create the game modifications, and in the process was teaching students respect for the discipline.

While I met other people involved in the Games to Teach program at MIT, what impressed me most about Kurt was his interest in the historical content of the program. While a great deal of his research since then has dealt very intelligently with the way in which students learn from video games, and how to improve those abilities, he was the only one who showed significant interest in grappling with the ways in which different historical approaches could be introduced into the learning process.

From the very first encounter, Kurt's dedication to understanding how students learn via video games was impressive. While he has produced a remarkable collection of scholarly articles, academic prose fails to convey his levels of personal commitment to understanding and improving the ways in which video games are incorporated into the contemporary curriculum. Kurt's interest in the subject is genuine, heart-felt and of long standing.

Given his scholarly record of accomplishment, Kurt Squire would most certainly be granted tenure at the University of California-Irvine.

Sincerely,



Patricia Seed
Professor