

Independent Project - Project Project Proposal - Jared Nickson

by Jared Nickson

Submission date: 20-Oct-2025 10:24AM (UTC+0100)

Submission ID: 265717896

File name: 50303_Jared_Nickson_Independent_Project_-_Project_Project_Proposal_-_Jared_Nickson_699522_591522366.docx (1.96M)

Word count: 1743

Character count: 9709

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Assignment title: Independent Project

Name of proposed Supervisor: Richard William Morgan

Date when I finished the proposal: Sunday 19th of October 2025

What are we tasked to do?

For this final major project, we each are able to do what we want to further enhance our skills and display our best work to possible future employers.

Project Proposal and the aims of the project:

For my final major project, I want to focus on environmental design with environmental storytelling.

I have already had an idea of what my project is going to be about for a while, and I am excited to model a big scene from World War 2, as this is my favourite period of history.

I will focus on a scene centred on the perspective of the Schutzstaffel (Most commonly known as the Waffen-SS) and Nazi Soldiers in early World War 2 Berlin before the 5th of June 1940 bombing of Berlin by the Royal Air Force. I want this scene in Berlin to make the viewer feel the Nazis overwhelming dominance, control, and a sense of fear from inferiority and "smallness." I will do this by strategically placing oppressive architecture, Nazi propaganda, banners featuring the swastika of the National Socialist German Workers Party, Waffen-SS, and Wehrmacht Soldiers in strategic positions, and strategically placed German tanks, and artillery. This scene will take place in a small section of Berlin leading up to the Brandenburg gate and it will feature numerous models, such as, a few tanks, old cars, artillery, roads and pavements, a few building variants, rubble from bombed houses, lamp posts, flags, banners, signs and street signs, boards with propaganda posters, and I may add models of soldiers, however my main goal is to get the oppressive feel and authoritarian architecture done first, soldiers will be low priority and will only be done if I have managed to do everything I have previously mentioned in a reasonable time.

The Resources/Software that I will be using:

I will be doing my modelling, and my UV unwraps using Maya, I will then export the UV maps to Adobe Substance Painter where I will be doing the texturing for all of my models, and then I will export my models as FBX files using the game exporter in Maya and I will then place them into an Unreal Engine 5 scene where everything will end up in.

Here are some examples of the unscathed street in Berlin – Minus the civilians walking [1]:



[2]



[3]



And a damaged building in berlin from bombing [4]:





Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-L08880
Foto: o. Ang. | August 1940

I aim to model a full street of Berlin Germany in 1940 with one end being heavily damaged due to the accidental Royal Air Force bombings of civilians, and further down the street where there is less extensive damage due to it being further away from the bombings.

This will include detailed high poly oppressive buildings laid out strategically, and in a way to make the viewer feel smaller and insignificant. The Nazis purposefully created these buildings to make people feel small and give a sense of grandiose.

I will also have a few tanks models of the “1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler or SS Division Leibstandarte” [6]

As they participated in numerous Marches and Rallies as a form of propaganda by awe.

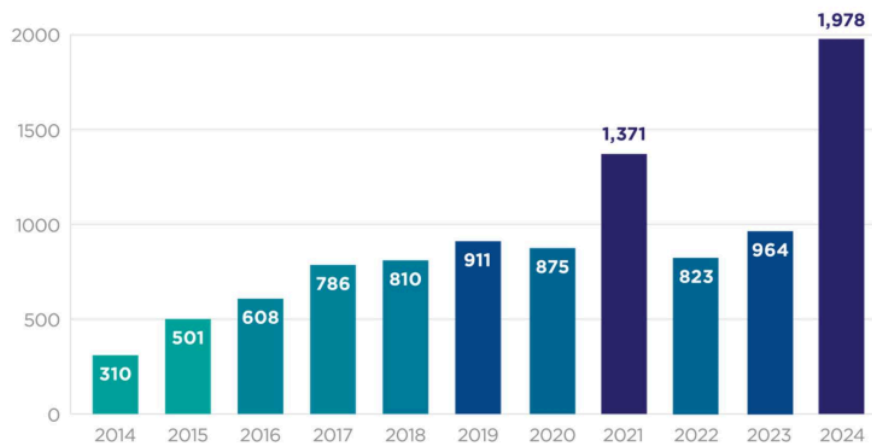
I want to include the Waffen-SS as they are rarely if ever highlighted in media, games, or movies. This also plays into the topic of my dissertation.

Initial Idea of my dissertation:

For my dissertation I want to explore something that is rarely talked about, mainly due to it being a controversial topic and aspect of history. My dissertation will be about Online Radicalisation in online echo chambers because of censorship of controversial aspects of history.

This can be of simple things, most commonly we see this by censorship of the Swastika or SS symbols by replacing them with the Iron Cross or removing the symbols entirely. Another reason is the one-sided portrayal of the Nazi regime as the eviller of both the allied and axis powers, which is problematic because if people find things that never get shown or taught about they could in turn believe what they have found as “hidden truth” which then leads to radicalisation in online echo chambers.

For example, below is a graph that showcases the rapid rise of antisemitism by year and reported cases of antisemitic incidents [7]:



Another thing that I believe is worth mentioning is the fact that Communism is openly supported by huge portions of the youth of today's age, which I find absurd due to Communism historically being one of the biggest causes of mass deaths and suffering from famine and democide.

Below are a few German tanks I will model during this project:

I skipped the Panzer I because it looks remarkably similar to the Panzer II, and it also does not look as imposing as the other tanks shown below.

Panzerkampfwagen II (Sd.Kfz. 121) [8], [9]



Panzerkampfwagen III (Sd.Kfz. 141.) [10], [11]



Bundesarchiv, Bild 101-185-0137-14A.
Foto: Grimm, Arthur | 1941

Panzerkampfwagen IV (Sd.Kfz. 161.) [12], [13]



In the street there will be propaganda posters to keep up with the sense of oppression and scrutiny of the Nazi party. Below are some examples I could use as posters in the streets plastered on lampposts, boards, and walls [14]:



[15]



[16]



The Plan with estimated timescales of the work:

Stage 1 - Project Proposal:

- This is the current stage where I have laid out my ideas for this project.

Stage 2 – Asset list and Research to keep Historical Accuracy – Estimated to take 1 – 2 weeks:

- For this stage I will be creating an asset list either on Word or Excel. This is where I will be figuring out everything I will be modelling during this project and assigning each model in order of high priority to low priority.
- I will also research each model to make sure it is historically accurate and makes sense – (This means that I will make sure the models actually were made/existed during the time)

Stage 3 – Folders keeping orthographic views of each model – Estimated to take around 1 – 2 weeks:

- During this stage I will be neatly organising folders for ease of access. These folders will be named for each model, It will include an image in colour and a front, back, side, and top view – I may not be able to get every angle due to the photos being really old, but there will be at the very least 1 orthographic view of the front.

Stage 4 – Research on the entire historical scene including research about the environmental storytelling – This will take place throughout the whole project:

- During this stage I will be researching several topics regarding this historical period, and research about any game design features that could appear in my project. This is also the time where I will be preparing to defend my thesis.

Stage 4.1 - Modelling and Texturing – This will take place throughout the whole project:

- This is where I will be starting to model and texture all my props in Maya and Adobe Substance Painter.

Stage 5 – Interim Viva – This will take place roughly around Thursday January 15th/Friday January 16th 2026:

- During this stage, I will be defending my thesis and receiving feedback from my supervisors.

Stage 6 – Starting the dissertation – This will take place just after the Interim Viva:

- During this stage I will be starting to write my dissertation including the research of Radicalisation from censorship of controversial aspects of history.

- This will also include some research into the history of the time period of my scene.

Stage 7 – Models finished and fully textured will start to be implemented into my Unreal Engine 5 scene – I am unsure of when this will be completed as this is a year from now, but I am hoping it will be done around mid-March to early April:

- During this stage I will be starting to import all of my fully textured models into Unreal Engine 5

Stage 7.1 - Finishing touches of my Unreal Engine 5 scene including feedback of the environment design from supervisors and peers:

- During this stage I will be harshly scrutinising my scene, this could be me changing locations of props, moving, and adjusting models about.

Stage 8 – Dissertation and Unreal Engine 5 Scene fully completed and ready to be submitted:

- This is the final stage where I will have completed all my work successfully and it being ready to submit for marking.
- The Dissertation will be submitted on Friday 1st May 2026 3pm.
- And the Final Viva/Games Demo will be roughly around Wednesday 6th/Thursday 7th May 2026

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- [13] Plasto et al. (2019) Plasto's Tamiya 1/48 Panzer IV Ausf H, Britmodeller.com. Available at: <https://www.britmodeller.com/forums/index.php?%2Ftopic%2F235047821-plasto%E2%80%99s-tamiya-148-panzer-iv-ausf-h%2F> (Accessed: 19 October 2025).
- [14] Hitler Youth NPEA students youth leaders shirt (no date) Malcolm Wagner Militaria RSS. Available at: <https://www.malcolmwagner.co.uk/hitler-youth-npea-students-youth-leaders-shirt/> (Accessed: 19 October 2025).

[15] (john@spartacus-educational.com), J.S. (no date) Spartacus Educational.
Available at: https://spartacus-educational.com/Herbert_Lutz.htm (Accessed: 19 October 2025).

[16] (No date a) Waffen SS - WW2 German poster - epic militaria. Available at:
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GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

BA GAMES – PROJECT PROPOSAL – ACCA6020
INDEPENDENT PROJECT (5%)

Student: Jared
Nickson
Mark
58

Intro / A&O (500 words)		
Project title; Identification of a specific problem to be investigated; Well-defined aims and SMART objectives; Explaining why this project is worth doing; Discussion of what the project needs to do in order to be a success; Description any deliverables that will be produced at the end of the project	40	22
I think it may be good to expand upon the rationale of the project and possibly reframe or refine the central idea. Controversial topics are allowed – and often encouraged – as long as they explore perspectives and draw conclusions in an objective, neutral manner. I would suggest the research focuses on the pursuit of a fair historical representation using Nazi Germany as a focus, as this period of history is an interest of yours and also serves as a good topic for research (many instances		

and portrayals in games and other media exist as case studies, and a number of these have been altered or censored to comply with a modern-day world view). In this instance, a historically-accurate recreation has value from an educational perspective, even if some people may feel the imagery and sentiment could be seen as insensitive or offensive. The research could include the effect of censorship in media and how this can affect people's historical knowledge and worldview. Deliverables are covered in detail with clear milestones defined throughout the project with approximate dates included – this is good to see.		
Background to the Project (500 words)		
Description of how the work to be done by in the project relates to the work identified in the literature review; Discussion of any ethical issues raised by the project Identifying what has already been done within the field; Topic familiarity; Brief literature review using appropriate sources – 6-8 journal papers and book chapters	40	25

rather than just websites; Selection of relevant models & concepts A detailed list of environmental components is described in relation to a theme – it is clear to see what the objective and intended output will be. Historical knowledge related to Third Reich structure, philosophy and mentality is demonstrated in the work. At present, the proposal for research involving online radicalisation may be too much of a departure from the practical work and may cause complications or be problematic when trying to access resources and research content. I feel there's a good project at the heart of this but it may need to be refined a little more to come up with a robust research question that you can provide an answer for. In addition, it is possible that this content may need to be ethically evaluated and approved, which is not a problem as this can be explored in the next stages while early research is being conducted.		
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Document Presentation		
Correct spelling, grammar and punctuation; Flow of narrative/fluency; Coherence; Word processed ; Correct use of referencing with bibliography; Strict word limit The proposal is articulated well, though a little more in terms of rationale would be good to see. Try to remain objective with political viewpoints in academic work as the ability to remain neutral is highly valued and helps to avoid conscious or unconscious bias in research and project work. References have been provided for supporting imagery in the submitted work. Some more in-text references would be ideal, showing application of relevant literature, which is something that will become more important in the dissertation itself. A good amount of imagery relating to the practical project elements have been provided as examples. These are appropriately captioned and referenced in the proposal, which is good to see.	20	11

TOTAL	100	58

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