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Dan Jackson
Northeastern University, danjackson@neu.edu

Martha F. Davis
Northeastern University, m.davis@neu.edu

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Gaming a System: Using Digital Games to Guide Self-Represented Litigants

Dan Jackson
Northeastern University – School of Law

Martha F. Davis
Northeastern University – School of Law
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by

Dan Jackson¹ & Martha F. Davis²

The pro se litigant is climbing a virtual mountain and plucking necessary documents and forms from the trees before reaching the courtroom at the summit. She encounters “shieldmaidens”³ offering protection from the dangers ahead, but only if the player is able to arrange for back-up child care for her court hearing date. A map of the hiking trail shows her how far she has climbed, and the uncertain terrain that lies ahead. Those are just a few of the ideas generated as part of our efforts over the last year to create a digital game that will help people without lawyers navigate the Connecticut state court system and advocate for themselves in court. Although our game did not end up being sited on a digital mountain, those ideas were developed further and incorporated into scenarios sited in more realistic environments such as a courtroom, the courthouse hallway, and the clerk’s office.

As increasing numbers of people represent themselves in legal disputes where the health, safety, and welfare of their families is in jeopardy, the justice community has responded with excellent resources for people without lawyers to help them create and file the necessary documents and navigate the system to get their day in court. Once that day comes, however, most pro se litigants lack the skills or experience needed to effectively represent themselves in adjudicatory proceedings. We think digital games hold promise as a uniquely interdisciplinary response to the access-to-justice crisis by providing virtual experiential learning. Accordingly, the NuLawLab at Northeastern University School of

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¹ Executive Director, NuLawLab.
² Professor of Law, Northeastern University School of Law; Faculty Director and founder, NuLawLab.
³ For those unfamiliar with digital fantasy games or Norse mythology, shieldmaidens are female warriors.
Law⁴ has embarked on a multiyear collaboration with Drs. Casper Harteveld and Gillian Smith from our university’s game design faculty to design, deploy, and evaluate the approach in Connecticut courts. With funding from the Legal Services Corporation’s Technology Initiative Grant program, the project is led by Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut in partnership with New Haven Legal Assistance Association. The game itself – RePresent – will be hosted on CTLawHelp.org, and available to play free of charge. The idea alone – without a single line of code written – was compelling enough to be named one of three finalists for a 2014 Innovating Justice award from The Hague Institute for the Internationalisation of Law.

As a result of the project, which has been running since January, 2015, we have learned a great deal about the application of digital games in the legal space. This paper is an effort to impart some of that knowledge to the community of lawyers, technologists, and others exploring the use of digital technology to close the access-to-justice gap. Part One of our paper provides a brief scan of the multitude of efforts to date addressing access to justice, in order to help make the case for consideration of creative, interdisciplinary solutions. Part Two summarizes why we see digital games as a promising experiential learning environment for pro se litigants. Part Three provides some context on the state of digital games as applied in the legal space, which we define to include legal service and information delivery, as well as legal education. Part Four details the unique co-design process we employed to engage pro se litigants, court service center personnel, and legal aid lawyers in the game design process, and the results thereof. We close with some thoughts on the potential we see for future efforts in legal gameplay.

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⁴ The authors of this paper are the executive director and founder and faculty director, respectively, of the NuLawLab – an interdisciplinary innovation laboratory at Northeastern University School of Law. See http://nulawlab.org/ (accessed October 6, 2015).
Part One: The Creativity Imperative

There is no shortage of information demonstrating a civil “justice gap” in the United States. The United States is a “nation of laws,” where the “rule of law” is fundamental, yet civil legal remedies and legal institutions are inaccessible to most low income people. According to the National Center for Access to Justice (NCAJ) at Cardozo Law School, some states have fewer than one civil legal aid lawyer per 10,000 low income residents. No state fully meets the legal needs of its poor residents.

Further, even when poor people try to represent themselves, they may be stymied by a system that is designed to serve people who are represented by highly-trained lawyers. For example, the NCAJ reports that nearly one-quarter of states have no rules allowing court clerks to help unrepresented litigants, and nearly half of state judicial websites have no information in languages other than English. Writ large, this unequal access to the courts, and therefore to government-enforced remedies for civil wrongs, poses a problem for democracy. It reinforces existing economic inequalities, often along racial or gender lines. Further, the absence of low income people from courts ensures that judge-made law develops without their input and arguments, and without a complete understanding of the law’s impacts on that unrepresented sector.

Recognizing this crisis, many commentators have offered recommendations for change. Some of these accept the structure of the civil justice system as basically sound, and argue that the problem could be solved with more funding of courts and more effective deployment of (and more funding for) legal aid lawyers. Indeed, the movement for a right to civil counsel, while transformational in many ways, takes as a starting point the idea that there are simply too few lawyers available for low income people.

Others note that this justice gap is not new, but is an old problem, and that more funding may not ultimately solve it. They question whether more structural changes are needed to begin addressing
the issues in a sustainable way. For example, Washington State and others have begun experimenting with expanded roles for non-lawyers in providing legal services. The pioneer in this area, Washington has created a new class of professionals called “limited license legal technicians” to help fill the void, a step that some have called “transformational.” Similarly, in a comprehensive report addressing the serious challenges posed by the justice gap, the New York City Bar Association surveyed the use of non-lawyers nationally and internationally, ultimately making two recommendations: (1) permit “courtroom aides” to participate in judicial and administrative hearings beyond those in which they are authorized to participate now; and (2) permit “legal technicians” to provide specified forms of assistance outside judicial and administrative hearings. Other reformers have argued for structural changes in the way that civil legal aid is funded and delivered, including proposals for town legal centers and more flexible, demand-based funding approaches.

Finally, the magnitude of the access to justice problem has encouraged thinking that is even more radical, that takes as its starting point that justice institutions themselves must change. Many of these initiatives adopt an entrepreneurial mindset and employ problem-solving techniques drawn from the creative disciplines intended to open the door for more comprehensive re-design of the justice sector. There are models for this approach. For example, the Hague Institute on the Internationalisation of Law has created a Justice Accelerator to identify, refine, and support promising “out of the box” ideas for promoting justice. Likewise, the organization Namati focuses on “putting the law into people's hands” by promoting innovative and transformational approaches to legal issues in developing countries. As described below, the NuLawLab is applying similar creative, entrepreneurial, and interdisciplinary techniques in a U.S. context, bringing a bear a new, wider range of tools on the challenge of access to justice.
Part Two: Why Games?

Two developments in 2013 helped point our Lab towards exploring digital gameplay as an interdisciplinary means of educating self-represented litigants. The first was a serendipitous meeting with Dr. Casper Harteveld, at the time a new hire in Northeastern University’s College of Art, Media, and Design (“CAMD”). Dr. Harteveld holds a Ph.D. from Delft University of Technology, where he worked as a researcher in the faculty of Technology, Policy & Management, and is the author of Triadic Game Design, which proposes a design philosophy for developing serious games.5 At the time of the meeting, Dr. Harteveld was just beginning a collaboration with Dr. Gillian Smith, an artificial intelligence expert and game designer with a joint appointment to CAMD and the College of Computer and Information Science. They sought to build an intuitive game authoring platform – currently named Mad Science – that would allow for crowd sourced viral web experiments in human decision-making. And they were looking for opportunities to apply their platform in service of a serious purpose. With the Legal Services Corporation’s Technology Initiative Grant program’s (“LSC-TIG”) David Bonebrake playing matchmaker, we were introduced to Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut (“SLS”) and New Haven Legal Assistance Association (“NHLAA”), where Kathy Daniels, Kate Frank, and Susan Garcia Nofi were looking for game designers to help them realize their vision for a digital game to teach pro se litigants the basics of court self-advocacy.

At nearly the same time, in May 2013, Dr. Julie Macfarlane, Professor of Law at the University of Windsor, released “The National Self-Represented Litigants Project: Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Self-Represented Litigants.”6 Her qualitative and quantitative study examined the experience of pro se litigants from a decidedly non-legal perspective, focusing in large part on the emotional involvement

and impact of the self-representation experience. Among other things, her study surfaced the following pointed critique of available online resources: they emphasized substantive legal information but did not include information on practical tasks such as how to serve a document, how to present your case in court, how to address the judge, what to bring to court, where to stand, and how to prepare.

Beyond the practical inadequacies of online resources, the Macfarlane study shed a disturbing light on the emotional impact of appearing in court without a lawyer:

Even the most self-confident SRL’s [“self-represented litigants”] experienced anxiety about speaking for themselves in front of a judge. Those who felt that they were well-prepared for the experience told us that they were surprised at how nervous they became as their court date approached, often losing sleep and sometimes becoming fixated on their case and arguments. This more confident and well-educated group also reflected that if they experienced this level of stress, how much harder it would be for others without their skills and advantages. One university-educated, confident and articulate SRL spent six years working on a case that required her to appear before a number of different administrative tribunals and judges. “It was tremendously, tremendously difficult. I am an educated individual – but I go to court all the time with other people who are just way over their heads... (H)ow can a person handling issues like this on their own figure this out?” Many SRL’s described themselves as terrified about the prospect of appearing in court. Some broke into tears in our interviews just thinking about it. Many recounted being unable to sleep for several or many nights before their appearance; shaking with nerves as they stood to speak; leaving court feeling upset, shaken and even humiliated; and experiencing stress-related symptoms for days afterwards.⁷

With these findings in mind, and with the guidance of Drs. Harteveld and Smith, we began to take a careful look at the developing body of thought and science behind “serious games.” In doing so, we found the framework that emerged from Constance Steinkuehler’s 2012 White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (“OSTP”) Academic Consortium on Games for Impact⁸ as an accessible way to communicate the potential we see for access-to-justice in game-based learning:

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⁷Macfarlane Report at 95.
⁸See http://gamesforimpact.com/ (last visited October 9, 2015).
Games are pervasive. Games have become a dominant medium by which we consume information and learn. This means an infrastructure exists, more so than ever before, that can be harnessed for reaching people in order to have them participate in research and/or to educate them.

Games include models and simulations that are based on reality. The virtual nature of gaming provides a safe space for construction, experimentation, and exploration of real-world scenarios, even ones that people do not typically experience in reality, such as self-advocating in court and before regulatory agencies. So called “serious games” have been developed for teaching students about history and incentivizing patients to adhere to medication schedules, among other things.

Games are engaging. They have the ability to captivate and sustain the attention of players, even for otherwise tedious or stressful tasks, like preparing for court. Serious games are designed to entertain while addressing their main educational goals. Engaged involvement in an activity is essential for deep learning to occur.

Games have proven to make a positive impact on cognition and behavior. One reason games are successful is that they are experiential learning environments par excellence: through trial and retrial, users attain the necessary (virtual) experience that will help guide future action in reality. Game play involves repeated actions that strengthen the brain cell connections underlying memory and learning. The dopamine-reward system is fueled by the brain's recognition of making a successful prediction in a given context, executing a good decision, or achieving mastery of a concept. Games demonstrate motivation and incentive systems science.9 Badges, ranking, achievement points, and other feedback tools in games make success obvious to the brain and help engage the system. Through such a feedback system, that neuronal circuit becomes stronger and more durable.10 In other words, memory of the

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10 Id at 35.
mental response used to achieve the dopamine reward is reinforced. When learners have opportunities to participate in learning challenges at their individualized achievable challenge level, their brains invest more effort to the task and are more responsive to feedback.11

**Digital games enable a data exhaust.** Game designers can track and monitor each and every possible action in a controlled environment. This potential for large data has led to the emerging field called game analytics, which is broadly defined as the application of business intelligence-based theory and methods in the specific context of games.

**Games provide a safe environment.** Players are able to test their answers and improve themselves without fear of judgment, harm to their reputation, or embarrassment. When followed by immediate and direct feedback, failure in a virtual learning environment enhances the learning process by allowing players to learn about their strengths and weaknesses so they may focus appropriately and improve. Perhaps as importantly, in a game environment players are free to experiment with different approaches to the same problem.

When one compares the findings of the Macfarlane study (the need for information on practical tasks such as how to serve a document, how to present your case in court, how to address the judge, what to bring to court, where to stand, and how to prepare) with the Games for Impact construct (reality-based, safe, engaging simulations with a positive impact on cognition and behavior), the potential of digital games comes into focus. As any good lawyer knows, when it comes to trial and oral advocacy, preparation is everything. Because our judicial system demands that unrepresented litigants navigate and make their case within a system that is designed around the concept of representation, and that they do so without any extended, formal legal training, a reality-based digital preparation opportunity just might fit the bill.

11 *Id.*
Part Three: The State of Games in the American Legal System

The NuLawLab’s effort is certainly not the first in the U.S. to tackle legal issues through gameplay (both digital and otherwise). Although what follows is not an exhaustive examination of all the attempts to date, it does offer a reasonably complete picture of the types and approaches currently in existence. Efforts to date fall into one of three broad categories: (1) games intended to educate people about substantive law; (2) games intended to develop empathy in the player; (3) games being used in legal education or secondary civics education. Each category will be addressed in turn with a handful of examples.

Substantive Law Games. An early pioneer in the application of digital games to the law is Stephanie Kimbro. Her Game On Law initiative\(^\text{12}\) proposed a game called “Estate Quest” - a mobile game adventure that teaches the player about estate planning through a player/detective who travels back in time and discovers clues about what the decedent should have done to make the will valid. Kimbro also began to develop an “Eviction Game” for Illinois Legal Aid Online that put the player in the shoes of a landlord in order to learn about the eviction process and other landlord/tenant laws. Kimbro’s work stands out to us as an example of digital games designed primarily to educate non-lawyers about the law. In her case, the focus was on substantive law. Though her efforts in this space currently appear to be on hold, credit is due for early efforts to harness digital games in the service of legal aid.

Empathy-Development Games. A fascinating sub-genre of law-related games is those designed to elicit from the player an empathetic response to an otherwise foreign scenario or experience. A compelling example of this is “ICED: I Can End Deportation,”\(^\text{13}\) designed in response to human rights violations committed against immigrants in the United States. In ICED, the user plays one of five

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\(^\text{13}\) Iced: I Can End Deportation: http://www.icedgame.com (last visited October 9, 2015).
immigrant teenagers seeking U.S. citizenship, and must avoid ICE officers and correctly answer questions about immigration law. Incorrect answers or poor decisions result in detention. Other creative examples of this can be found in the work of Lien Tran, who designs compelling empathy-elicitation and lay person education games that do not rely on digital technology.\(^{14}\) Otherwise known as “board games”, her efforts include “Cops & Rubbers” (promoting advocacy and empathy in support of public health and human rights of sex workers) and “Toma El Paso / Make a Move” (teaching undocumented youth about the release from detention process).

**Legal & Civics Education Games.** By far the most dominant use of digital games in the law is in legal education and secondary civics education. The most prominent, and well-funded, of these efforts is retired Justice Sandra Day O’Connor’s iCIVICS\(^{15}\) - a non-profit organization designed to promote civic learning through “interactive and engaging learning resources,” including printable lesson plans, games, and digital interactives. Users may play games such as “Crisis of Nations”, “Do I Have a Right?”, “Branches of Power,” and “Supreme Decision.” Players earn points, which they may spend or donate to community service projects drawn from Ashoka Youth Ventures. Although the games are designed for teachers and elementary/secondary school students, iCIVICS products have also appeared on other websites that are geared toward adult users. The work of Law-Related Education\(^{16}\) is similarly focused on grade school and secondary civics education, and includes games such as “Objection! Your Honor” (basic rules of evidence) and “All Rise” (comprehending the Texas state court system).

Also in this vein are Margaret Hagan’s nascent Law Dojo efforts.\(^{17}\) Although Law Dojo was designed for all types of users, including law students, lawyers, and lay people, its current iteration

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\(^{15}\) See iCIVICS: [https://www.icivics.org/games](https://www.icivics.org/games) (last visited October 8, 2015).


Part Four: RePresent – Co-Creating a Digital Game for Self-Represented Litigants

As the above elucidation of legal games shows, efforts to date have largely focused on educating lawyers and non-lawyers alike on more substantive areas of law. None have focused on providing pro se litigants with the generally applicable skills and tasks required for adjudicatory proceedings, such as how to address the judge, how to cross-examine a witness, or the pragmatic details of navigating a given judicial system. Our project seeks to change that. Broadly stated, our idea furthers two goals unique in the legal space in the U.S. First, we are creating a digital game that provides pro se litigants in Connecticut\textsuperscript{18} with some foundational advocacy experience before doing it for real. Second, we are using a highly collaborative design process in order to maximize the value of the game to the intended end-user, as well as contribute to building a community of support around the needs of those navigating the court system without lawyers. This final section of our paper details the unique co-design process we employed to create the game, and the results of that process to date.

We kicked off the game design process in November, 2014 at the 2014 Innovating Justice Forum, convened by The Hague Institute for the Internationalisation of Law, where the project was one of three finalists for the Innovative Idea award. Although our game idea did not ultimately win the top prize, we were able to workshop the idea with a global gathering of justice sector innovators, including the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Kenya and the former Justice Minister of Rwanda. We left the forum bursting with ideas for the game, but resisted becoming overly invested in potential features until we had our Connecticut stakeholders at the table. That process began in earnest in January, 2015.

\textsuperscript{18} Funded under an LSC-TIG grant to Connecticut legal services organizations, the initial iteration of the game is designed around that state’s court system. Wherever possible, we have generalized the game details so that only minimal modifications will be required to make the game relevant to other jurisdictions.
Our Connecticut efforts began with a meeting of potential project stakeholders on January 7, 2015. At the table were representatives from all the major legal aid providers in the state, state court service centers, state court law libraries, public library system, bar associations and foundations, and a number of public service organizations working directly with our targeted population of pro se litigants. That meeting was followed immediately by in depth end-user research conducted by Northeastern law students enrolled in our standing Laboratory Seminar in Applied Design & Legal Empowerment. By mid-January, our game design faculty colleagues had opened their Game Design Studio, where they employed an interdisciplinary mix of graduate and undergraduate students (e.g., psychology, digital art, cognitive science, programming) working to realize a number of projects, including ours.

The month of February was devoted to three structured co-design sessions, held in Hartford and New Haven, Connecticut. Relying on our growing network of stakeholders, we convened front line court service center staff, legal aid lawyers, and current and former pro se litigants to collectively brainstorm the features and focus of the game. We started with a truly blank slate, limited only by the expected technical specifications of the Mad Science platform on which we were building the game. Although each co-design session was structured slightly differently to account for differences in participants, each roughly followed the game design methodology that Dr. Harteveld proposed in *Triadic Game Design*. That process guides small groups through three spaces of exploration: Reality, Meaning, and Play. *Reality* asks participants to imagine the problem state to be tackled, the factors involved in that problem state, and the process to be followed in moving from problem state to desired state. *Meaning* explores the intention for designing the game and the strategy for achieving that purpose. Finally, *Play* interjects the gamification elements of a genre, a title, a goal, and the mechanics of game play. In using the *Triadic* approach, we were able to focus participants on the very serious reality and meaning of the pro se litigants.

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se experience before turning our collective energies towards the fun (but foreign for lawyers) process of
gamifying the experience. By moving from abstract notions of “problem state”, “intention”, and
“strategy” to the mechanics of, say, fantasy role-play games, we were able in a very brief period of time
to develop dozens of ideas for consideration and further development. By our second and third
sessions, we began to focus participants on specific spaces and concepts, such as the hallway outside
the courtroom and court hearing advance preparations ranging from weeks to hours.

Two months into the project, we had collected all the raw creative material we needed to begin
to articulate the structure, and features, of the game. By early March, we had settled on a modular
game that would move through the following five spaces/timeframes: (1) home preparation weeks
before a hearing; (2) the court service center and clerk’s office; (3) home preparation the morning of the
hearing; (4) the hallway outside the courtroom; and (5) the courtroom and hearing itself. The next two
months were dedicated to development of digital art assets, and the outlines of each of the scenario
scripts, all in preparation for testing our ideas with our co-design participants.

That testing took place on April 30, and May 1, when we returned to Hartford and New Haven
with paper prototypes of the game. By now, the group of core co-designers had grown beyond the
numbers we first convened in January and February – a good sign for the project overall. At each
session, we shared “visual decoys” of the game that provided a rough sketch of the digital art for each
module, together with a ten-frame storyboard of the script for each. We specifically sought feedback on
the look and feel of the game and the basic contours of the game play. Using paper cut-outs of the
characters-in-development, we brainstormed more nuanced gameplay within each scenario and came
up with additional game features. For example, at the New Haven paper prototype testing session,
participants came up with the idea for a “confidence meter” that would measure a player’s progress
across the game in a way that also tracked the extent to which they were making the right choices.
Early summer was dedicated to generating detailed branched scripts of the game, coding them into the underlying game framework, refining the art assets, and internal testing of digital prototypes. We next convened our co-design participants in early August for two sessions of digital prototype testing (and ice cream). Again, the group had grown from our last convening. As an indication of growing local interest in the project, we were joined at one of the sessions by a local NBC television news crew, who produced a segment on the project for the local evening news.20 Our task for these two sessions was to observe participants playing two scenarios – the courtroom hearing and preparing at home – and obtain detailed group feedback from co-designers/testers. With observational results and comprehensive feedback, we returned to Boston for an autumn sprint to the finish line. This includes settling on a name for the game, which presently has a working title of “RePresent”.

As of the submission of this paper, the game modules are being stitched together and refined in preparation for beta-testing, which commences in mid-October and runs for four weeks. Week one will see the game tested by Julie Macfarlane’s National Self-Represented Litigants Project network.21 We are on track for over 50 individuals who have completed their pro se experience to volunteer to test the game. Week two will test the game with pro se litigants seeking the help of SLS’s security deposit clinic.22 Weeks three and four will see the game tested in a number of Connecticut’s Court Service Centers. Testing will involve gameplay and completion of a brief post-play questionnaire. Final adjustments to the game will be made based on tester feedback and our analysis of gameplay analytics.23

21 See http://representingyourselfcanada.com/ (last visited October 9, 2015).
22 See http://ctlawhelp.org/security-deposit-clinic-wethersfield (last visited October 9, 2015)
23 Consistent with one the articulated benefits of digital games, we have built into the back end of the game robust gameplay analytics, which will allow for examination and analysis of player behavior and decision making. In addition to the value that data will bring to improving the game, we expect it to help provide a better understanding, over time, of the self-representation experience.
So what end product has emerged as a result of this process? The game starts with a brief automated sequence, showing the player’s avatar having a disastrous experience in court (while at the same time educating the player on the basic game mechanics). Fortunately for the player, the opening sequence is just a dream, and he or she now has the opportunity to prepare properly for the court hearing. The first game module walks the player through preparing for court several weeks in advance, and covers specifics that range from gathering relevant documents and arranging for the participation of necessary witnesses, to lining up childcare (and back-up childcare). From there, the player moves to the courthouse, where he or she interacts with staff at the clerk’s office and court service center, learning as a result the role of each department, and the appropriate place to turn for help, depending on the need. Then it is back to home for preparations the morning of the player’s hearing, including pragmatic details such as the importance of eating a good breakfast. The penultimate module takes place in the hallway outside the courtroom where, among other things, the player learns how to navigate a confrontation with the opposing party’s attorney, and how to respond to well-meaning strangers who want to share some advice. The game concludes in the courtroom, and covers practicalities such as where to stand and how to address the judge, as well as some of the basics of trial advocacy, including offering documents into evidence and conducting direct and cross-examination. At the conclusion of the game, the player is presented with some basic analytics on how they did navigating the various modules, areas for improvement, and resources to assist them with same. But don’t take our word for it; attendees to the UC Hastings Conference on Advancing Access to Justice will have the opportunity to play RePresent as part of a game arcade that will showcase a number of law-related digital games. As of January 1, 2016, the game will be available for anyone to play at www.CTLawHelp.org.

Readers from the legal profession or academy may be struck by how much of the gameplay focuses on decidedly non-legal subjects like the value of a healthy breakfast and the importance of lining up back-up childcare. These subjects were identified as crucial by people who had been through the
self-representation experience themselves in every co-design session we held. As one of the participants noted, without that practical foundation, pro se litigants would stand little chance of navigating more complex trial mechanics. The elevation of pragmatic guidance in RePresent is also a testament to the value of collaborative end-user design methodologies when developing resources for pro se litigants. For those of us with a legal education and practice expertise, it is exceptionally difficult to put ourselves in the mindset of those navigating the judicial system without that background nor the assistance of someone with it. In this regard, we think every individual and organization working to develop self-help resources should engage potential end-users in a robust co-design process, the better to meet the actual needs of this growing segment of customers of our judicial system.

Conclusion

Would-be airline pilots obtain their first hands-on “flight” experience in sophisticated simulators that mimic the look, feel, and experience of a jumbo jet cockpit. While such simulators cannot reasonably be described as digital games, they share some of the characteristics that we think elevate games’ potential as self-help resources for pro se litigants. Trainees learn in a reality-based environment that offers a safe place to make mistakes, and practice until they are ready for the real thing. From the perspective of a pro se litigant, the stakes of proceeding to court without a lawyer can seem just as high as piloting a jet with no prior experience. As the cost of entry to sophisticated digital game platforms continues to drop in the coming years, more and more non-profit and governmental organizations will have the opportunity to explore adding digital games to their repertoire of self-help materials. Based on our experience to date, we encourage them to do so, and reiterate the importance of designing the games with pro se litigants at the table.