

# Experiential Learning on the HTC Vive

Virtual reality is the next frontier of educational technology, poised to do for the next ten years of higher education what laptops have done for the last ten. This project is a pilot study into the production and evaluation of virtual reality games that is being developed by PhD candidate Michael Ovens in collaboration with UWA's Prof. Andrew Lynch, Curtin's Prof. Erik Champion, and UWA's Futures Observatory. This study, which has been part-funded through an Education Futures Scholarship Grant and Secondment at UWA, is designed as an experiment in experiential learning whereby students can duck, parry, and swing at virtual opponents in order to discover the physical, cultural, and emotional histories of medieval and early modern representations of combat.



"The felon with the fine sword freshly he strikes,  
The felettes of the ferrer side he flashes in sonder,  
Through jupon and gesseraunt of gentle mailes,  
The freke fiched in the flesh an half-foot large..."

Mordred slays his father, King Arthur,  
in the fifteenth-century *Morte Arthure*



*Thine Enemy* is the name of the educational virtual reality game being developed by Michael Ovens as a case study in how virtual reality can enhance student learning. The game responds to the observation that students and academics alike often have difficulty visualising, and thereby understanding, medieval and early modern literary representations of interpersonal combat like the one above. Building upon Michael's doctoral thesis, which was supervised by Prof. Lynch, *Thine Enemy* will teach students how representations of combat were used to encode social, political and ethical meaning with particular reference to the early fifteenth-century Middle English poem known as the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*. By taking up their own virtual sword, students will learn first-hand how the anonymous author of this poem leveraged historical performances of violence to create giants who fought like peasants, Romans who fought like Frenchmen, and knights who fought like Englishmen in order to comment on sociopolitics during the Hundred Years War (1337-1453).

[thineenemyproject.wordpress.com](http://thineenemyproject.wordpress.com)