My name is Aaron Oldenburg and I teach in the simulations and digital entertainment department. I myself am a game designer and I create experimental games. I tend to work in a series of experiments. short games based upon a theme. My most recent series of experiments were sound based games, audio games. The world of audio is very different than the world of visual. If you look around your room you can gauge the distance between yourself and say a wall. But with audio your basically inferring the presence of something based on a world that is constantly moving past you. An example of this is a game a created for the IPhone called Optic Echo. And the inspiration was this, to create visuals that are rendered in the way audio is experienced. It was inspired by the theorist Frances Dyson who said that the closest visual equivalence to sound is fire. Fire is always coming into and out of existence. Fire is constantly changing. And so my intention was to create visuals that reference this, that were inspired by that.

So in this game Optic Echo the player is creating the visuals through their own sound. It uses a microphone and it takes their audio input to create sort of an echo location based mechanics. Where when they make loud noise the environments is revealed to them, but it's not revealed to them in a sense of switching on a light. It's revealed through particles that are bounced off of the environment, off of objects in the environment. So the player does not see any sort of solid environment. The player has to infer a sense of the environment based on the movement and origin of these particles. The game play is set-up as a maze and you're tracking someone through the maze, who you can only see through their footsteps. This non-player character that you're chasing is actually the only object in the maze that makes sound of it's own. So you can track it by its footsteps without having to make sound. The series of games range from collaborative chance-based musique concrete composition to games that were inspired by conceptual sound art. Games that were less occupied with reproducing sound than with simulating the ways in which we engage with sound.