# GAM 399 Treasure Map – Walls (Working Title)

Logo placeholder

(I also made a lot of grammatical mistakes, but this document will constantly be changed throughout the quarter anyways)

## Overview

### Logline

*Walls* is a game where the player can command two distinct characters who are separated by a wall and they must overcome the challenges to discover the story.

### Game Vision

*Walls* is a top down hack and slash action adventure that concentrates on a single player controlling two characters at the same time. The player will discover these characters and story through play. They will engage in battle with villainous “guards” to destroy the wall that separates two groups of people. The more the player engages with the story and characters the more skills they can unlock, which eventually changes the gameplay rules.

* What is the big idea?
  + Discover story through play and vice-versa
  + Aid players to think about their circumstances
  + Character development driven
  + 2.5D perspective to allow player to see the whole field
  + Control two characters
* What is the gameplay?
  + Centered on completing levels
  + Create combos with both characters
  + Skills allow the player to control the environment
  + Overcome enemies to move one
  + Overcome simple puzzles to move on
  + Unlock battle skills
  + Each level has a different goal that the player has to find
* What are the physical challenges?
  + Navigate the various lands with two characters
  + Solve simple two sided such as moving items, hitting switches, racing against time, etc.
  + Sync combos to use the wall to open up new paths
  + Avoid receiving damage from all obstacles
  + Learning how to complete the level
* How does story tie in with gameplay?
  + Player makes choices in play which changes the narrative
  + While completing tasks the play receives short notes
  + Story is told more by visuals than words, which allows the play to take more control
  + The visuals come to play by exploration, battle, etc
  + Who is making the game?
  + DePaul University - Students developing the game
* What is the business model (goals)?
  + To create a short polished game for portfolios
  + Explore new game design techniques
  + Establish a strong combat system that is simple to use
  + Design a human experience through sound, art, and play
  + Create levels that show the progression of the character's state of being

### Game Audience

*Walls* is target to players who want to try new gameplay styles. While *Walls* does contain some game mechanics that have been used before, this game blends these game mechanics in a way that has not been done yet. It also target the players who are looking for an 'escape' from life, but also want some kind of answer to engage the problems that real life throws at them. *Walls* mostly looks at a teen audience, but it is also appropriate for most ages.

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| --- | --- |
| Audience: | Males, Females 10-28 years old |
| Genre: | Hack 'n' slash action adventure |
| Platform: | PC |
| Property: | DePaul? Ours? |
| Expected Rating: | E10+ |

## Game Design

### Gameplay Overview

*Walls* is a level centric game whereas the player has to complete all the challenges and reach the end to finish the level. The player has the ability to go back and replay levels to discover all the possibilities through the choices they make. The levels will usually begin with a visual story cue that the player has to complete to move the visual story. The player will engage in multiple challenges in the level and will have the option to choose which way they want the level to end. After the player has completed the level, they will return to their “home town” and prepare for the next level. Levels are in sequence and almost all take place along a section of the wall.

The characters combat system will not be independent from each other for that will make combat too difficult. Imagine you are fighting with one character, but you have two independent locations and two sets of the same weapons. When the player learns new combos they will be the used by all characters which will allow the game to increase in difficulty by the environment. To use a skill the player will have to use the same combo as both characters. Skills control the environment which will be needed to solve some puzzles. Different skills are activated by using different combos. Skills can be unlocked by completing optional challenges or it is given to the player in special circumstances.

### Story Summary

Alidia(name will change) meets her grandfather on the other side of the wall and wants to find a way to open the wall. Later, she witnesses that her grandfather is killed by the neighboring country’s forces for trying to escape. 10 years later, Alidia has made it her life goal to dismantle the wall. She meets many citizens of the neighboring country who want to aid her in destroying the wall. Later she finds out that she built that wall, and she has been using it to separate herself from her dear ones. She must overcome her weakness to vulnerability to free her peers.

### Game Scope

*Walls* will only have a small scope for the first stage of development, but it can be extended to a full game in the future.

* 2 characters
* 1 level
* 2 paths
* 3 enemies
* 2 puzzles
* 3 combos
* 2 skills
* 5-8 minutes of play
* Alternate short story

### Core Mechanics

The core mechanics that are listed are based on one level play and not a complete game.

1. **Main Play**

* The player will control two characters at the same time to overcome puzzles and defend themselves. The two controlled characters can attack and solve obstacles, or sync their movements to overcome greater obstacles. The player will gain the ability to control the wall later and use it to solve puzzles, such as in an event when the player is surrounded by enemies, they can use the slam the wall on all their enemies to take them all out. The player will gain new wall powers by meeting more people from the neighboring country or by completing special challenges, and etc. The challenges that the player must overcome is controlling two characters, staying alive, and completing the level.

1. **Combat**

* Combat involves basic attacking and defending against enemies and obstacles. In *Walls* the player will not have the ability to change weapons and fighting styles due to it may increase to an impossible difficulty. If it is possible for one to complete the level with two characters that each have different play styles, it may be added in the future.
  + For now there are only two types of attacks and there are punching/slicing and kicking. In this world it is hard to find “normal” weapons due to the authorities prohibiting them. Punching/slicing (leading more towards slicing) will be faster weak attacks and kicks will be the stronger slow attacks. Attacks work in a three stage process where used in succession will activate the next attack to be different.
    - 1st slice will involve a quick left horizontal slice that will cause minimal damage.
    - 2nd slice is the same thing as the first slice, but will come from the right instead of the left.
    - 3rd slice is a vertical slice that cause more damage than the previous slices
    - 1st kick is a slow uppercut knee attack that causes more damage than slices
    - 2nd kick is an extended slow kick
    - 3rd kick is a half round house kick that knocks the enemy back a little
    - Dodging will be as simple as moving out of the way of attacks. It will not be complicated more than that.
  + Using a combination of these attacks can create combos. The player will not need to land all hits on an enemy to activate the combo. There will be a combo button to give an option to the player if they want to use a combo. Both characters have to be using the same move to use the combos.
    - Combo 1 is achieved from using slice, slice, slice, combo button. This causes the player to throw daggers to at least 3 nearby enemies. This allows the player to have a form of a projectile attack.
    - Combo 2 is achieved from kick, kick, kick, combo button. The player will dash to the closest enemies and temporary stun them by kicking their faces. They player can use this time to inflict more damage.
    - Combo 3[locked at the beginning] is achieved from slice, slice, kick, kick, combo button. The player will jump up and strike all enemies (does not necessary destroys them) is a small circle down. The player can choose where they land in a small vicinity from where they jumped.

1. **Skills**

* By using combos a certain amount of times, the skill gauge will fill up. When the skill gauge is full the player can use a skill by hitting the skill button. Skills allow the player to gain a upper hand in battle or they can save it for latter to change the puzzle. This is the more tactical part of the game and will be slowed down compared to combat.
  + Wall Smash (Help me come up better names for these)
    - Wall smash will take a piece of wall and extend it out to smash everything that can be smashed in a horizontal line. The game will pause and let the player choose where it will be unleashed and on what side for the wall they want it unleased. After it has been unleashed it will pull back into the wall.
  + Wall Block
    - Block with summon a piece of wall from underground and it will act as a shield for the player and it will move forward a short distance knocking movable obstacles down. The game will pause for a little bit allow the player to move to a spot where they want it to be used and on what side of the wall they want to use it.

1. **Puzzles**

* Puzzles are where story collides with play. They can be complicated by at least two different ways and involve both sides of the wall. Some puzzles are optional and they unlock new combos or skills.
  + Block Puzzle
    - The player will come across an old abandon building with box like objects, moving doors, and switches. This will be an optional puzzle, but it does unlock the last combo. The player will enter the building on both sides and move blocks to open the door at the end. The switches move doors in the building to allow the player to move on in the building. The switches open doors on opposites on the wall. When the player moves off a switch the door will close. The player can use wall smash to destroy a door. There will be enemies in this puzzle that will want to destroy the blocks; which will make the puzzle unsolvable.
  + Time Puzzle
    - The time puzzle begins with a refugee trying to climb over the wall and a soldier run to stop him. This occurs in a maze like camp and when the soldiers run to him they will call for back up. The timer will begin and the player has to navigate out of that area before backup arrives. The player can use the wall skills to open up areas to finish the maze quicker. The player can also choose to try to help the refugee to get over the wall. On one side of the wall there is a group of enemies that are waiting for the refugee. The player will have to take all them out. On the other side it is only the refugee there that is trying to climb over. The player will have to help the refugee up to climb over the wall all before backup arrives. If the player succeeds, the refugee will show the player an alternate path to take to get away before back up arrives.

1. **Controls**

* *Walls* requires a unique set of controls and it will be difficult to try to design it around a standard set by typical PC games. This game will use a duel stick controller with two sets of shoulder buttons.
  + Left stick – moves left character
  + Right stick – moves right character
  + Left and/or right stick button – combo special
  + R1 – right character slice
  + R2 – right character kick
  + L1 – left character slice
  + L2 – left character kick
  + Left face button(D-pad) right – left character interact
  + Right face button(The A,B,X,Y) right - right character interact
  + Left face button down – left cancel
  + Right face button down – right cancel
  + Left face button up – left skill
  + Right face button up – right skill
  + Start – pause

1. **Enemies**

* *Walls* can have more diverse characters, but for this stage of development it will be lowered to three.
  + Bomb dude (Will think of better names)
    - This will be the first enemy to show up to allow the player to have some time to learn to fight. This little guy simply walks up to the player and bumps the player to cause minimal damage. After a bit it will explode and this will be indicated by flashing.
  + Common scout robot
    - This is a typical enemy. It will walk up to the player and attack with its weapon. It will try to dodge attacks. It will also rush to the player in a short distance which will push the player back.
  + Giant wall robot
    - Based on changing scope this can be reduced to a enemy instead of a boss.
    - This is a boss character that sits on top of the wall. It has two arms that sit on a side of the screen respectively. It will lift its fists and try to hit the player. It will at times place both of its arms on one side of the screen and turn its back to the other exposing a weak spot on its back. On one side the player has to dodge the attacks and on the other side the player needs to cause damage to the weak spot. If the player can cause damage to the fists they will break which will allow the player to run up to the head and cause damage for a small amount of time.

1. **Screen set up**

* It will be preferred to have no HUB, but if it is needed it will be added. The screen set up is rather simple. It will be set up where the characters are usually traveling up or down and there is a vertical placed wall in the middle. If one character moves far forward, the other character will be pushed by the edge of the view screen in the direction. Instead of using a skill gauge where the player can see it fill, the character will glow when the gauge is full. Health will also not be shown, but when the player is low on health the edges of the screen will get darker and there will be a sound playing to warn the player.

## Art Style

*Walls* will follow a more dreamlike are style that is more about color and painterly cartoon like art style. In a full game it will begin with dull colors and the player progresses the colors become more vivid. For this one level, a mixture of pastel and vivid colors will be used.

For this single level, it will take place at grassy plains with lots of trees. It will have old structures broken down laid about that look like to come from a unique culture. There newer high technology structures that look like are used by the soldiers. This technology will follow a style of sharp edges that is commonly seen. It mostly is made up of a rounder architecture, while the older structures will have a sharp edge look.

All characters will follow a three color palette system for their designs, and will consist of simple design character designs, but they also consist of unique looks where they can be easily distinguished form each other.

The game will consist in a 2.5D style in whereas the 3D objects look like they are 2D. This is done by locking the camera at one angle and creating strong painterly 2D textures for the 3D objects. It will also require creating shaders to bring out the colors and textures instead of the shadows. The 3D models do not have to be high poly due to the stronger focus on textures.

## Audio Design

### Music

*Walls* has three sets of music for this project. It will title screen music, game, and then ending. The overall theme of the music is based on environmental sounds that set the mood for the game. It will be focused on a feel of being in a dream and make the player feel at peace in the midst of the chaos of the game. The music should be a mixed of smooth electronic and acoustic sounds. It should not change a lot and sound stay at an ambivalence level and be easily loopable.

The whole game's music would have a progression of peaceful music to leading up to chaotic ending. For this project, the title screen would be the most peaceful, and the ending would be the most chaotic. The title screen should be an electronic melody playing with the sound of the environment (waves, rain, or wind). The ending would still need to have a dreamy feel of it, but it will have to contain heavier sounds. This would consist of a dark ambivalence style.

### Sound Effects

Sound effects would consist of more natural sounds than digital sounds. Sound effects have three levels in this game. There is direct sound with the player, background, and environmental. The environmental sounds will range from wind, birds, rain, waves, etc. The environmental sounds will also help set the mood for the game with the music. The background sounds are more like sounds are made by the player. These sounds are realistic and not comical. They consist of gun shots, human chatter, rocks hitting the ground, etc. The sounds made by the player/controlled characters are based of music instruments and can be comical. For example, when the player slices it can sound like a guitar sting being pluck.

## Technology

Walls requires processes that can handle two character synced attacks, along with managing the wall. There will be semi-intelligent AI that does not become too difficult for the player to attack while controlling two characters. The most difficult part will be creating the wall’s controls in regard to the one player controlling two characters. Another challenge will be creating a button set on the average controller that the player will be comfortable using. This game will be isometric top-down and in 2D.

This project will consist of learning how to make a 2D game in Unreal and also learn how to fully polish a game.

## Closing Summary

### Goals

The goal of this project is for DePaul game development students to create a single fully polished game that can be used as a portfolio piece for future employment. This game will also be used to explore many challenges in development which will cause each member of the team to push their skills further. It will also be the first time using Unreal for most of the students and it will help them to gain an edge on this new engine that is increasingly becoming popular in the game industry.