**Action-Adventure**

* Hybrid genre
* In games, you sort your genre by mechanics rather than theme
* **Key Game: Adventure**
  + Atari2600, 1979 CE, Atari/Warren Robinett, Key Games List
  + You play a square going through a maze, fighting a dragon, picking up keys
  + Warren Robinett
    - Started at Atari in the 1970’s
    - Went on to study nanotechnology
    - He is one of the most consequential game developers
      * This is one of the most games and influential games all semester
      * The beginning of a mechanical language of videogames that we all take for granted.
  + WHY?
    - The first of its kind
    - First to do many things
      * Objects that could be picked up and carried place to place
      * Each object has a location in a room and did something
      * The chalice wins the game
      * Every object has a function and is a tool
      * He created the idea of picking up an object by running into it
        + When you run into another object you drop current object
      * How do you simulate non-Euclidean geometry?
        + Setting up a way to loop back on maze in mysterious and confusing ways.
      * He’s representing the text adventure
      * First use of “Fog of War”
      * First Easter egg
        + Warren Robinett put his name in the game
    - Robinett’s cursor is representing the player.
    - Created the idea to travel off the screen and end up on another screen on the proper side. There was no language for moving around.
    - He wanted to create an Adventure game, a text adventure game, but one that was graphically represented.
* Action Game
  + Avatar Based, Positional, Reflex Intensive, AI Controlled Enemies, Linear Progression
* Adventure Game
  + Exploration, collecting objects, puzzles, storytelling
* Warren Robinett was faced with design problem of figuring out how to make an action game that felt like the text adventures he loved.
  + So he did it. He just mashed the two together.
  + Rather than compromising a little here and there, he just did both.
* THE ACTION/ADVENTURE GAME IS BORN!
* It’s a set of mechanics from two genres, which is why it’s hyphenated.
* **Key Game: Legend of Zelda (series)**
  + 1986-present, Shigeru Miyamoto, Japan, NES
  + Zelda is adventure with a nicer coat of paint
  + Has been released on like every platform EVER
  + WHY
    - It’s the gold standard by which the industry measures itself
    - It’s the gold standard of an Action/Adventure game
      * All the best of both
    - Not the only way to do action adventure
* **Key Game: Another World**
  + 1991 CE, Platform: Amiga, Developer: Eric Chahi, Region of Origin: France
  + Eric Chahi
    - Enormous influence
    - Not that prolific
    - He built the whole thing by himself
    - Primarily an artist, not a programmer
    - Served as an ancestor of the indie model
    - From Dust is most recent game by him.
    - WHY
      * The cinematic platformer
        + Briefly lived way of doing platformers
        + First one was Prince of Persia
        + Not a platformer in the Mario way
        + There’s much more of a pulp influence
        + They tend to be platformers in the sense that you move the character to the platform. Almost like interactive cartoon.
        + Flashback (1992) is another one.
      * Enormously influential in the idea of videogames as a beautiful digital medium.
        + An atmospheric story
        + The graphics of games are not there primarily as representation, they take the foreground.
      * Ended up being super important for big names in game development in Japan
      * Hideo Kojima himself says that Another World is important.
* **Key Game: Tomb Raider (series)**
  + 1996-present, Core Design, Platform: Sega Saturn, England
  + Three eras of Tomb Raider games
    - Core era, released games annually
    - Crystal dynamics era (2006-2008)
    - New era (2013, 2015)
      * WHY
        + One of the things that made Tomb Raider popular is that it was one of the first games to translate being in a puzzle box into a 3D space.
        + The potential of 3D and moving around is that the whole temple is the puzzle box. Not a puzzle you’re working ON, but one you’re working INSIDE OF.

Environmental puzzles

* + - * + Lara Croft

Super recognizable

Toby Gard

Creative director of Tomb Raider and designer of Lara

Conceived of Lara Croft as a woman adventurer that was similar to Indiana Jones

During development of Tomb Raider 1, there was a lot of people that made Lara into more of a sex symbol

This pissed Toby Gard off.

Lara was SO successful that Toby Gard was pushed out of the project.

* + - * + It took until just recently for Lara Croft to be “reclaimed”
        + Sad thing about new Lara Croft was that they made her into a victim and powerless BEFORE giving her power.

Stark contrast to the original Lara who didn’t need an excuse to be an adventurer other than that was what she enjoyed.

* + - * + First Tomb Raider is the first game that passes the Bechdel Test
* **Key Game: Castlevania: Symphony of the Night**
  + 1997, Koji Igarashi w/ Konami, Playstation, Japan
  + All the concept art are huge oil paintings
  + Koji Igarashi worked on Castlevania his entire life
  + Before this game, were side scrolling action games
  + Symphony is a large departure, it stars Alucard, a vampire himself who must get his powers back.
  + Side scrolling action game, but it is NON-LINEAR
    - You’re exploring and backtracking
  + WHY
    - Sometimes a key isn’t a key
      * A key could be a weapon
      * A key could be turning into mist
        + Or a wolf
      * You’re progress through the game is not linear, but rather picking up keys to doors you’ve already seen
    - Metroidvania is the style of the game
      * A game with a large world that is divided up into different sections that must be accessed with tools acquired in other sections of the world.
      * And it’s also a platformer.
    - “You should always show the player something they can’t do, and then give them the ability to do it” - Shigeru Miyamoto
* **Key Game: Grand Theft Auto (series)**
  + 1997,- present, Rockstar Games, PlayStation, USA & Scotland
  + GTA I & II, 1997, 1999
  + GTA3 (2001)
  + GTA gets a lot of credit for being very innovative
    - In its DNA is Adventure for the Atari 2600.
    - GTA is just Zelda.
  + GTA4
  + GTA5
  + All mechanically similar
  + Sam Houser and Dan Houser are lead designers (producer and writer)
    - Decided they wanted to make videogames
    - So they bought DMA designs, called them Rockstar North
    - Makes the open world game
    - The vast majority of the world isn’t used, it’s just tooled around in
  + Thematically it was important
    - Shifted scope to a more modern setting
    - Simulate real places and real cities
  + WHY
    - We want to talk about the peculiar combination of emergence and progression.
      * You can do all this crazy stuff
      * And there’s also a “serious” gangster story.
      * Emergence
        + Games where there are simple rules that lead to a bunch of unanticipated game states
      * Progression
        + Games where the ruleset accurately describes every state you will see. If you can read a walkthrough, it’s a game of progression.
      * With action/adventure games, you get both emergence and progression.
        + You can’t exactly find an optimal way to get through the thing, you just need to get through it.
        + There IS a story you’re moving through, but there is also a big emergent world that you can find tricks to do things in.
* **Key Game: Dark Souls**
  + 2011 CE, Hidetaka Miyazaki w. Software, PS3, Xbox360, Japan
  + Miyazaki studied social science in Japan, couldn’t find a job
  + Became an account manager for Oracle.
  + One day, someone shows him Ico and he decides then that he wants to make videogames.
  + He is in his 30’s, never studied computer science, can’t find a job at any videogame companies. Starts at low budget studio. Comes across Demon Souls, totally abandoned by the studio. So he gets himself transferred to that team. He slowly takes the team over, “if I could find a way to take control of the game, I could be in charge, and if it’s great, awesome, if it sucks, it was going to fail anyways”
  + When it came out, there was a huge surge in imports for the game. It does pretty well, and it’s enough that Microsoft approaches them and decides to sponsor Dark Souls.
  + The game punishes you for not taking it seriously
  + WHY
    - Risk and reward
    - Souls loop
      * 1) Encounter Enemy
      * 2) Die.
        + You drop all your souls. Super important.
      * 3) Find Souls
        + If you die finding the souls, the souls are lost forever.
      * The further you go, the more souls you accrue, the harder it gets, and the more you have to lose. Risk and reward. In the back of every soul player’s mind, there’s a huge sense of risk and reward.
      * 4) retrieve souls
      * 5) repeat
    - Every success you have is raising the stakes of failure.
    - Also, it’s an action/adventure/RPG
      * You get stronger as you play more
* **Key Game: Metal Gear (series)**
  + 1987-Present, Hideo Kojima, Konami, MSX2, Japan
  + Stealth/Action/Adventure
  + MG1&2 (1987 and 1990)
    - Similar to Zelda with open world space, exploration, “dungeons”
  + Original inspiration for Metal Gear is Castle Wolfenstein (1981) for the Apple2
    - Influenced both Zelda and Metal Gear and Wolfenstein 3D
      * Secret most influential game
  + MGS1, 2, 3, 4 (98, 2001, 2004, 2008)
  + MGSV (2015)
  + WHY
    - No compromises
    - Hideo Kojima is an auteur in the film sense. Enormously influential within the machine of AAA.
    - Has a distinct style of making games.
      * He has an interesting no compromise stance
      * Much more influenced by film and television
      * Wants to merge love of movies with games
      * His games tend to be games AND movies.
    - Long Story Vignettes
      * Kojima wants to give these characters as much time as possible
    - Linear-ish open world structure
      * Unlike most heavy story games, this should be a spy thriller and a videogame, he will not compromise.
    - Highly Emergent
      * All of his games have really highly emergent game things
    - Concept of the GESAMPTKUNSTWERK
      * The TOTAL ARTWORK
      * A theory put forward by Richard Wagner
        + Spent most of his life in exile running from creditors
        + Inventor of modern symphonic music
        + Considered by some to be the greatest composer in history
        + In opera, music should be subsidiary to the drama taking place.

The light motif

A character will have a particular theme or melody associated with them

A lot of his operas are about weaving these light motifs.

He believed the value of artwork was that it could the total artwork

Acting drama, dance, sculpture, design, song, all of culture in humankind could be fused together in this orgiastic experience.

Tannhauser

1846 Germany Opera

Recitative/Aria

You have shifting melodies/full melodies

You can’t both tell a story and have it move along and ALSO have super melodic music.

WHY TANNHAUSER

Opera is an excellent example of PRODUCTIVE TENSION

We sometimes think our job is to resolve tension. Take out what’s not necessary and make it minimal and design centric.

BUT there are many art forms that’s depend not on a perfect thing, but the tension between two things, like the storytelling and the music, and that tension needs to be navigated. All these games are trying to do TOO much and it works.

THE FLAVOR IS IN THE TENSION.