



This is a graded discussion: 15 points possible

due Dec 4

Week 14: Discussion 6: Approaches to Game Design

9

Game Dev Topic: "Approaches to Game Design"

Participation in this discussion is required for this module.

Your participation is worth a maximum 15 points of your total class point score. In order to earn a full score of 15 points, you must post two or more times before this discussion closes.

A. This Week: Make your first post with your own thoughts on different approaches to designing games after doing the following task:

- Read any single article from Gamasutra's "Game Design Deep Dive" archives, found at <https://www.gamasutra.com/deepdives> (<https://www.gamasutra.com/deepdives>). You choose the article.

In your initial post, address these questions:

- *What challenge did the game designers face in the Gamasutra article you read?*
- *How did their solution affect the mechanics, dynamics or aesthetics of gameplay?*
- *Be sure to identify the article and its URL too!*

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- > Blackbird Interactive Senior Programmer
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- > WOLCEN STUDIO Senior Network Programmer
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Game Design Deep Dive: The Spinning Plates approach of Bomber Crew
by Dave Miller [11.28.17]
"The intention was to keep the focus on the decisions made by the player both before and during the missions, rather than simply relying on the player's skill in a particular mechanic."
Console/PC, Indie, Programming, Design, Video, Deep Dive

Game Design Deep Dive: Managing randomization, frustration in Everspace
by Hans-Christian Kühl [10.03.17]
Hans-Christian Kühl of Rockfish Games on dealing with randomization and frustration in Everspace, a 3D sci-fi shooter with roguelike elements.
Console/PC, Indie, Design, Production, Video, Deep Dive

Game Design Deep Dive: Maintaining tension in Nex Machina
by Henri Mustonen [09.22.17]
"We needed to cut as much of excess fat as possible and figure out what was really necessary to get the feeling you are on the "knife's edge". - Henri Mustonen, Senior Level Designer at Housemarque.
Console/PC, Indie, Programming, Design, Production, Video, Deep Dive

Game Design Deep Dive: Mixing VR and non-VR in Lola and the Giant
by Matt Duff [09.19.17]
"VR...especially mobile VR...can be an isolating experience. We decided to try and create

B. Next Week: Follow up with a second post.

Respond to your classmates' shared perspectives on the challenges of designing gameplay.

Be sure to read a "Game Design Deep Dive" article of your choosing before posting.

This topic was locked Dec 14 at 11:59pm.

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O <https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/48981> Michael Rosenhahn https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_games_.php Dec 1, 2018

I chose the article titled [Ethics 101: Designing Morality in Games](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_games_.php) (https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_games_.php).

In this article the developers are trying to come up with a system to allow players to make a moral choice in game that is not so binary (good or evil). This has not been an easy problem for

game developers to solve and it is a problem they are still working on.

Some approaches they have tried is creating a story where the player will [emotional bond](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php) (https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php) with the character they are to interact with and make them act contrary to what they would otherwise do. This was something that was done in [Oblivion](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3) (https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3) to make the player feel uneasy about their actions. Another method being tried is to have the player make a surprise decision in seconds such as is be done in [Army of Two: The 40th Day](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3). (https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3). In [Far Cry 2](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3) (https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3) the player has to decide whether to help/not help or kill the rescue-ready buddy if they are wounded. Finally one other idea being looked at is [the discontinuation of rewards like Achievements and Trophies for earning the "good" or "bad" ending of a game](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3) (https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/133712/ethics_101_designing_morality_in_.php?page=3) around morality.

The take away I got is that coming up with a good, compelling morality system is not an easy task in game development.

Edited by [Michael Rosenhahn](https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/48981) (<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/48981>) on Dec 1 at 9:20pm



Ethan Wilde

(<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/88400>)

Dec 3, 2018



Games with narrative frameworks really get to experiment in very rich ways with player emotions.

Forcing people to make spot decisions is a great way to "test" their moral fiber.



Gregor Gonzales

(<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/51207>)

Dec 4, 2018



The article that I read was about the VR game called 'Spartaga'. This game was made by the company 'House of How' and is an interesting take on the virtual reality game setting. Spartaga uses the classic space shooter element, like 'Galaga', and incorporates a 3D setting in the virtual world. In the article the founder of House of How, Russ McMackin, explains what the plan for Spartaga's design. He states that the primary factor that he wanted in the game is the thought of being 'clean'. Russ defines 'clean' as a unified perspective that the player can enjoy and avoid any errors that could distract the player from game play. This goal proved to be difficult.

The team strived to have a clean game with smooth physics and controls, but the platform that they chose for the game proved to be the challenge. Virtual reality games are still being tested, and often renders games out of sink or even suffer frame rate drops which leads to LAG. With how Spartaga is designed, it has many sprites and the player has a lot of challenges to face, too much of this at once will cause the game to malfunction. To bypass the risk of their game crashing, House of How made the game to a set number of enemies, when the player beats the last enemy the game is over and the player wins. This approach solves many of the errors to virtual reality games. The first problem being player fatigue. Virtual reality games require a lot of physical movement, so having a short game will allow the player to rest before starting the game again. Plus, the limited gameplay will enable the game to maximize the contents of the game without risking overloading the program and causing errors.

https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/304607/Game_Design_Deep_Dive_Making_Spartaga_a_VR_twinstick_shooter.php

(https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/304607/Game_Design_Deep_Dive_Making_Spartaga_a_VR_twinstick_shooter.php)



Munte Murad

(<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/132439>)

Dec 4, 2018



So I chose the article: Level Design Deep Dive: Making an *I Expect You To Die* VR puzzle level on a budget

In the article the Designer is trying to make a VR puzzle game on budget which effected them a lot, as there were some ideas that were cut from the game "*I Expect You To Die*" as a result to their budget. Or because they didn't have the right people people to do them for example they didn't have any seen characters in the game specifically the train level, instead they have used a creative solution which make the characters only by voice, here they face another problem as they need to make a good voice acting and make the characters feel alive and make an emotional bond between the player and the characters.

Another challenge they faced is the VR or really the feel of the VR as the train in the train level stared making people feel sick so what they did is changed the sizes of the game as in the story make the room of the player locked so the player couldn't

move which I think is a good solution because its putting a limit to the player without making them feeling it.

Here we see that the effect of the limits of the developer can be a problem, but where the developers showed off here is by how creative they are by making the player limited without feeling it.

My

URL:[https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/312369/Level_Design_Deep_Dive_Making_an_I Expect_You_To_Die_VR_puzzle_level_on_a_budget.php](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/312369/Level_Design_Deep_Dive_Making_an_I	Expect_You_To_Die_VR_puzzle_level_on_a_budget.php)
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[\(https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/15167\)](https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/15167)

Dec 4, 2018



I'm really interested in art in general, so I chose [Art Design Deep Dive: The hand-drawn art and animation of Jotun](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/255371/Art_Design_Deep_Dive_The_hand-drawn_art_and_animation_of_Jotun)

[\(https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/255371/Art_Design_Deep_Dive_The_handdrawn_art_and_animation_of_Jotun.php\)](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/255371/Art_Design_Deep_Dive_The_handdrawn_art_and_animation_of_Jotun.php).

The article details just how much time and effort it takes to establish so basic an element of a game as the art direction. Most of the trouble arose from finding an art style that captured the essence of Norse mythology, established a good tone for the game, and was convenient for the entire design team to use. On top of all of that, they wanted to tell a story with the art alone.

The end result of the effort put into the art and graphics has been revered by critics. It created a lively, gorgeous world with lots of personality that formed the foundation for the game as a whole.



[https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/312369/Level_Design_Deep_Dive_Making_an_I Expect_You_To_Die_VR_puzzle_level_on_a_budget.php](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/312369/Level_Design_Deep_Dive_Making_an_I	Expect_You_To_Die_VR_puzzle_level_on_a_budget.php)

[\(https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/45309\)](https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/45309)

Dec 4, 2018



Game Design Deep Dive: Rocket jumping in Rocket League

(https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/251633/Game_Design_Deep_Dive_Rocket_jumping_in_Rocket_League.php)

This article exemplifies a case where developers had created a mechanic by accident and liked it so much that they decided to use this feature in another game. The developers had implemented a jump and boost mechanic for a previous racing game, and had found that advanced players could exploit these mechanics to make the car essentially fly.

It's interesting the choice developers have to make when encountering an exploit in gameplay. Developers will sometimes patch these exploits when they find that they cause too much imbalance within the game mechanics and if they can't they'll change the mechanics in later versions.

Discovering that these unintended flight exploit had added depth to the game's skill curve is what made the developers decide to keep it in.



Greg Hughes

(<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/63033>)



Dec 5, 2018

Lewis,

I love seeing the title of your post. Rocket League is a game I played many, many times with friends, and still occasionally play today. I like to think of it as FIFA on steroids. I had no idea that the game was designed around another feature from another game. I guess it just shows that inspiration can come at anytime. The rocket mechanics and physics of the game, and close attention to detail is what makes that game so fun and addicting. As well as the level of competition against other players.



William Cooper

(<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/48869>)



Dec 4, 2018

I read

[\(https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/279715/Game_Design_Deep_Dive_Building_truly_cooperative_play_in_Overcooked.php\)](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/279715/Game_Design_Deep_Dive_Building_truly_cooperative_play_in_Overcooked.php)

Overcooked is a very fun party game. If you've never played it, I highly recommend you do. The developers managed to take the concept of "you're cooks in a kitchen" and make it incredibly fun. It's one of the best cooperative games out there. The basic premise: you and your friends are chefs and have to cook a bunch of meals with a time limit. This requires grabbing ingredients, prepping them, and then cooking them properly. Different levels are designed in different ways to make the task more challenging. The kitchen may be completely split in half, requiring good communication. You've got to let your teammates know what they need to know to help you. Maybe the ingredients and the stove are on one side, but the cutting boards are on the other.

They keep it fresh with various different themes and mechanics. Conveyor Belts may require you to grab stuff quickly before it falls into the abyss. Rivers of lava require you to be careful and patient. There is a bunch of variety in level locations/mechanics.

It can get frustrating, for sure. Fortunately a single missed meal doesn't mean failure, and you get a rating out of three stars, so you can try for perfection!



[Greg Hughes](https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/63033)

(<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/33387/users/63033>)



Dec 5, 2018

I read the

article: [\(https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/306257/Game_Design_Deep_Dive_Managing_randomization_frustration_in_Everspace.php\)](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/306257/Game_Design_Deep_Dive_Managing_randomization_frustration_in_Everspace.php)

It talked about how the developers wanted to create a game that was rewarding but at the same time difficult, and they did so developing the game Everspace. The problem they wanted to tackle was changing the behavior of a player when they died in the game. They wanted to convey a feeling of success even though it ended, and didn't want players to get frustrated feeling like they

wasted their time. This ended up changing the dynamics of the game a lot. They first aimed at setting an acceptable expected time for running a level. They then helped players feel like their time wasn't wasted by giving them rewards like coins from their current run that they can use to upgrade their ship next level. To help further, they designed the game around being randomly generated each time so that the maps and enemies never felt the same every time.