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Analysis of Video Game Genres

**Role Playing Game (RPG)**

Loosely defined, an RPG is a game that allows the player to identify as the character they are playing. This can take many different forms, from extensive character customization and creation to giving the player decisions through their character.

Notable characteristics:

* Player character given freedom and choices in the game that are meaningful.
* Player can choose between different classes (warrior, mage, archer, etc.).
* Character customization.

Examples:

* Witcher 3: Wild Hunt (2015) by CD Projekt RED
* Diablo III (2012) by Blizzard Entertainment
* The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim (2011) by Bethesda Game Studios
* Final Fantasy VII (1997) by Square

**Dungeon Crawl**

Popularized by J. R. R. Tolkien’s fantasy novels The Hobbit (1937) and The Lord of the Rings (1954), dungeon crawl aspects are prominent in the tabletop game Dungeons & Dragons (“Literary Sources of D&D”, 2007). Dungeon crawl characteristics are simplistic in nature and loose in interpretation allowing them to applied to wide range of game genres.

Popular characteristics:

* Frequent combat with many, easily-defeated enemy monsters (sometimes followed by one difficult enemy boss).
* Rare items dropped from enemy monsters and treasure chests in the game world.

Examples:

* Darkest Dungeon (2016) by Red Hook Studios
* The Elder Scrolls II: Daggerfall (1996) by Bethesda Softworks
* Torchlight II (2012) by Runic Games

**Roguelike**

Generally paired with dungeon crawl mechanics, roguelike qualities are defined by several key features in the game’s gameplay. Although there are variations of the exact implementation, roguelike video games usually feature permanent death. That is, when their player character dies, the user must restart the entire game. To levy the repetitiveness of such a mechanic, roguelike often randomly generate aspects of their game levels, from hidden treasures to the layout of the entire level.

More characteristics involve:

* Management of scarce, yet important, resources.
* Turn-based combat system.
* Encouragement of creative solutions to the game’s problems.

Examples:

* Binding Of Isaac (2011) by Edmund McMillen and Florian Himsl
* Rogue Legacy (2013) by Cellar Door Games
* Dungeons of Dredmor (2011) by Gaslamp Games

**Massively Multiplayer Online (MMO)**

Broadly speaking, an online multiplayer game is any game that allows multiple people to play through some sort of ethernet connection, LAN or otherwise. Massively multiplayer games are often defined by the number of people playing at the same time, being able to support thousands of players simultaneously. MMOs are, for the most part, open-world experiences, allowing players to roam the world without restrictions. Furthermore, they have virtually extended to include all other genres of video games, from racing to music/rhythm.

Frequent characteristics:

* Less importance of a strict, linear storyline.
* More importance on building an entire fiction universal that the player can be immersed in.
* Distinction between the many player characters.

Examples:

* World of Warcraft (2004) by Blizzard Entertainment
* RuneScape (2001) by Jagex
* EverQuest (1999) by Daybreak Game Company, 989 Studios, Verant Interactive

**Turn-Based Strategy (TBS)**

Another video game genre to get its characteristics from table-top games, turn-based strategy usually limits the number of players that can perform actions to one. The limitations of early hardware may have contributed to this genre, as it would allow for acceptable input and processing delays. Even with less technological forced restrictions, turn-based systems are still favored for their slow-paced combat. This allows for players to fully think about their moves, adding a strategic element to the game.

Characteristics:

* Players take turns performing actions.
* The gameplay is slow downed due to the restrictive nature.

Examples:

* Civilization V (2010) by Firaxis Games
* XCOM: Enemy Unknown (2012) by Firaxis Games, Feral Interactive
* Divinity: Original Sin (2014) by Larian Studios

Works Cited

DeVarque, A. “Literary Sources of D&D”. (2007). *WebCite*. Web. Feb 10. 2017. Retrieved from http://www.webcitation.org/query?url=http://www.geocities.com/rgfdfaq/sources.html&date=2007-07-20+21:51:07