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HST495

October 23, 2016

Research Project Proposal

**Title**

[TBD]

**Abstract**

We want to create an educational, historically informed, and engaging video game experience based on the horrific experiences seen during meltdowns of nuclear reactors like Fukushima and Chernobyl, and seen during disasters at nuclear weapons sites, like Damascus. The game will take place in a fictitious nuclear power plant, and the player will witness a disaster unfold through the eyes of a maintenance worker. Through simple but fun gameplay mechanics, witty and informative dialogue, and historical accuracy, we aim to provide an experience that will help people understand the gravity and consequences of these events, while dispelling some incorrect notions people already have.

**Background**

Both of us are on the executive board of the Stevens Game Development Club, and we have many years of experience with game development. We believe that games are a very powerful and valuable storytelling medium, and believe that a game project such as this could be very instrumental in dispelling misconceptions about nuclear power and nuclear weapons, while also providing an engaging experience to players. Games can give unique, memorable experiences to players who can feel like they are a part of something, and the lessons taught have the potential to resonate more powerfully with our user base than a research paper might.

**Project Plan**

Professor Wellerstein has provided us with various books about the Trinity test, Fukushima, Chernobyl, and more. We plan to use these to inform our studies and provide an experience that is both fun and engaging to players while remaining faithful to historic accounts. The final result of this project will be a playable game exploring the causes and consequences of nuclear meltdown, and allowing the player to witness firsthand the horror and desperation throughout. Games are memorable, accessible, and fun experiences that can keep a player’s attention while still teaching them lessons that they might not otherwise be interested in. This is why we are creating a game, not writing a research paper.

**Project Team**

James Romph – Gameplay Systems, Visual Style, Programming

Adam Gincel – Programming, Level Design, Dialogue, Game Direction

[discussion of outside help for maybe art / music]

**Timeline**

11/10 – Functioning Gameplay Systems (movement, dialogue, etc)

11/24 – Dialogue, Story introduction and narrative progress

11/29 – 12/6 – Presentable game, gameplay presentation in class

**References**

*No Breathing Room* – Medvedev, Grigori

*The Day The Sun Rose Twice –* Szasz, Ferenc Morton

*Understanding Comics* – McCloud, Scott

*The Making of the Atomic Bomb* – Rhodes, Richard

*Command and Control: Nuclear Weapons, the Damascus Accident, and the Illusion of Safety* – Schlosser, Eric