

# ZOMBIE KING

By Joseph Ennever, Daniel Lasry, Miles  
Lennon, Benjamin Ludman, Conor  
Russomanno, Jordan Schau

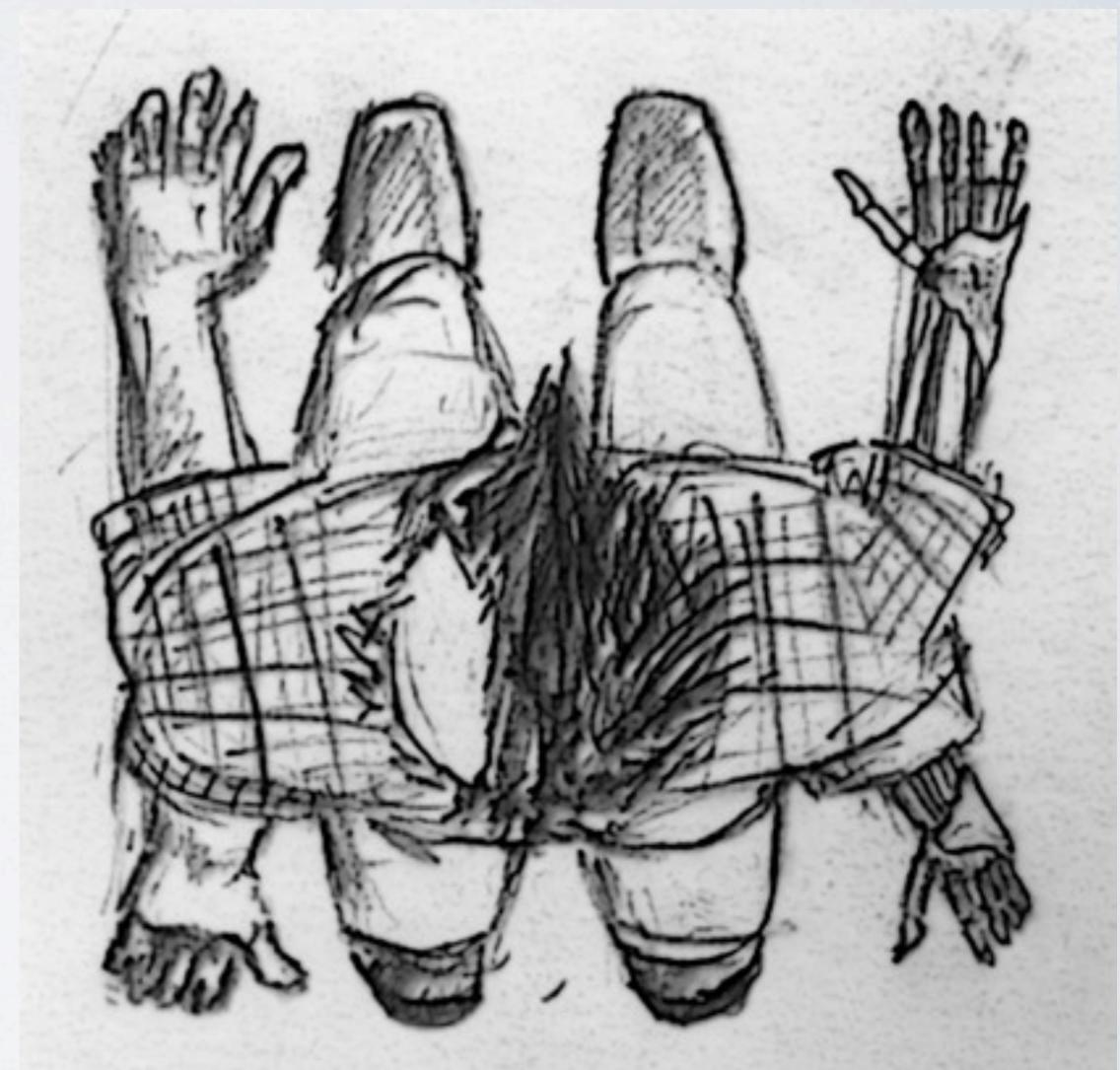


# INITIAL CONCEPT

- Team Goal: Play as a Zombie
- Implementation:
  - Benevolent zombie that remembers his humanity
  - Try to keep zombieism under control
  - Eat humans only as a necessity
  - Find a cure for zombies

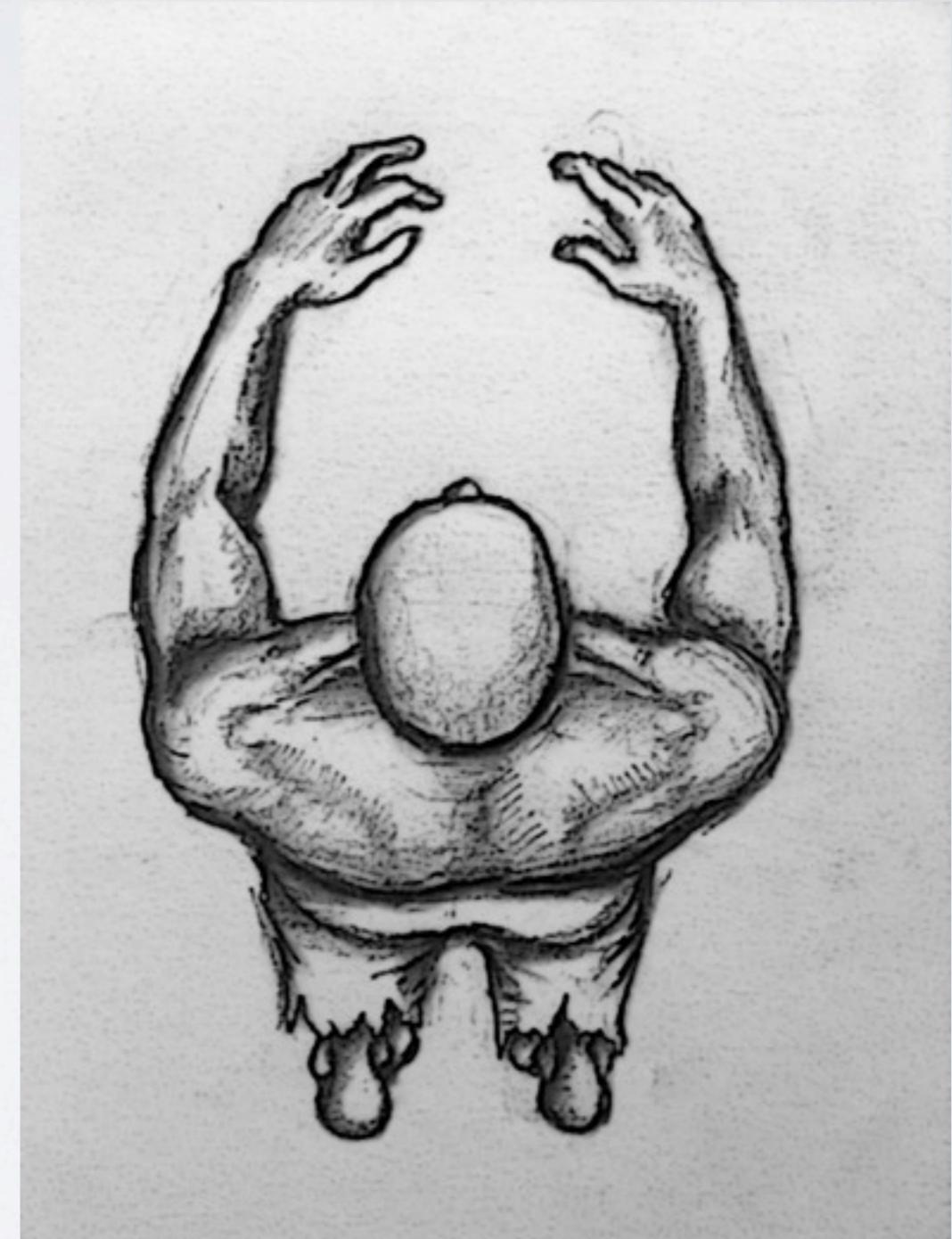
# WHAT RESULTED (FIRST DEMO)

- Built an adventure game with powerups, powerdowns (consequences), and melee attacks
- No infection, no uncontrollable craving for brains, no other zombies
- Focused on negative consequences of zombie behavior (benevolence), not playing as zombie



# PIVOT

- Focus on the player *being* a Zombie!
- What we could salvage:
  - Game framework
  - Enemy AI
  - Enemy / Player combat
- What we left behind:
  - Powerups / Powerdowns
  - Level traversal
  - Aversion to killing humans



# GAME FLOW



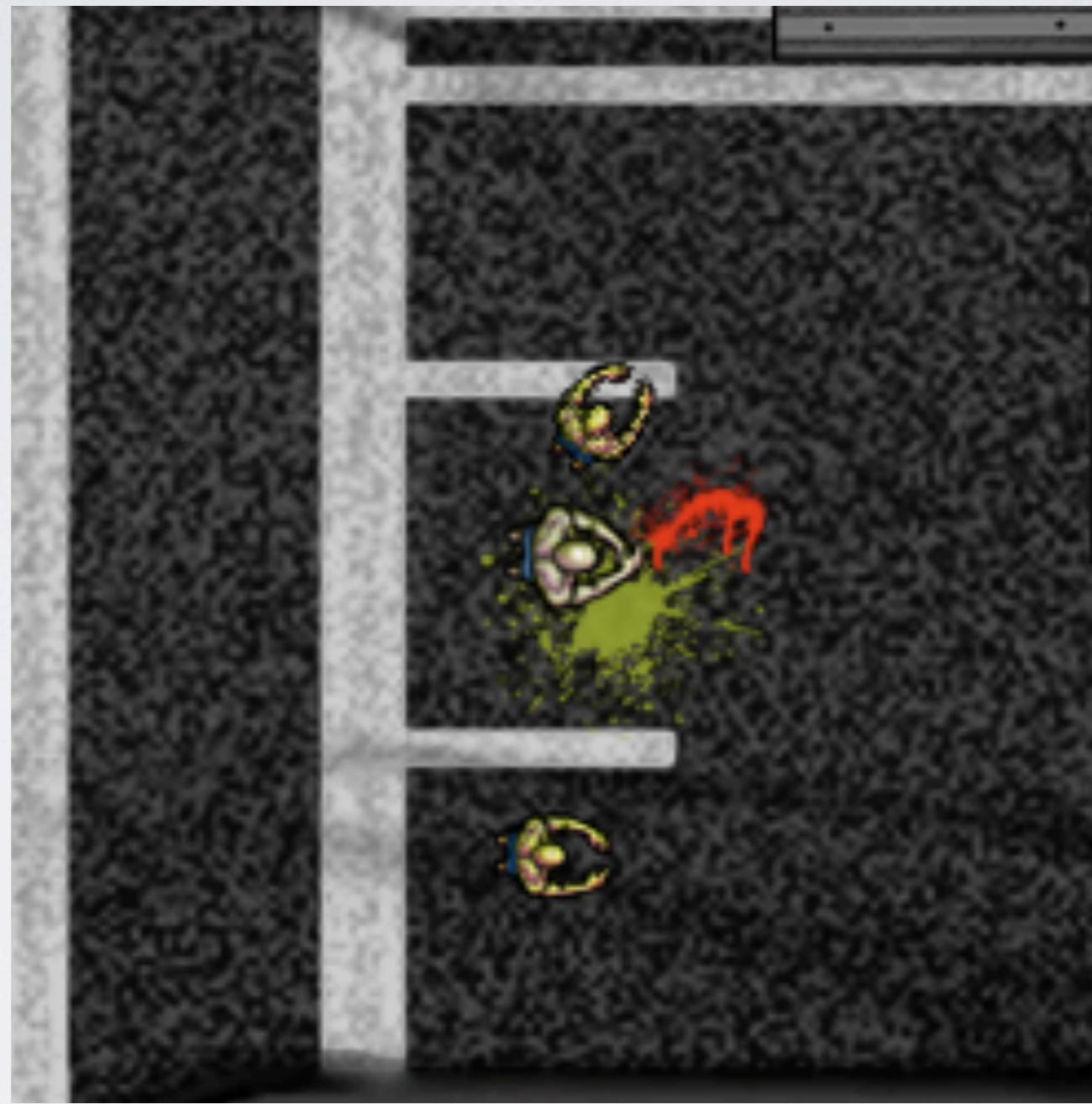
Start Screen

# GAME FLOW



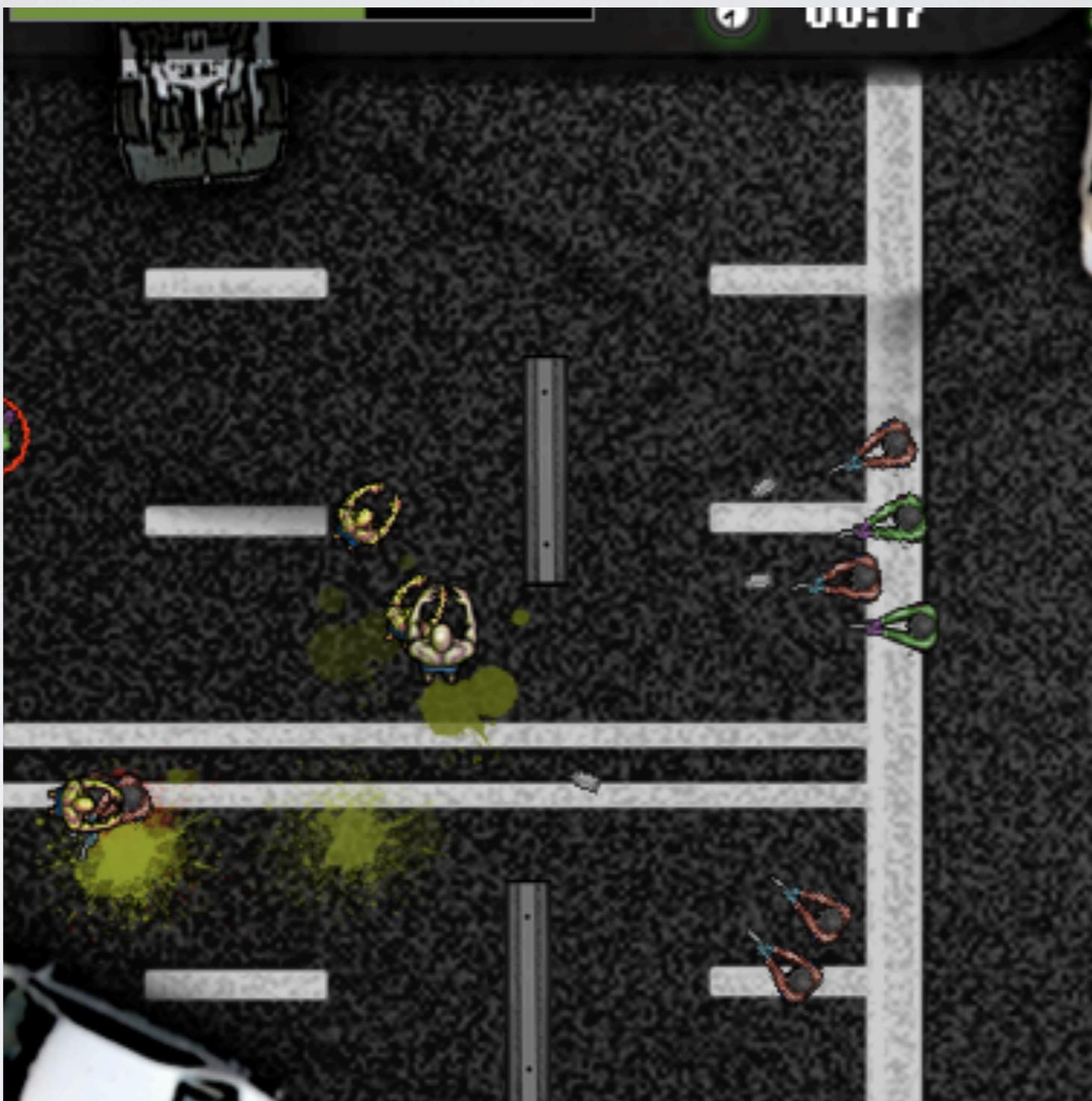
Combat

# GAME FLOW



- Build your horde

# GAME FLOW



Survive

# GAME FLOW



End game screen

# REVISED CONCEPT AND MECHANICS

- Went back to original goal: Play as a Zombie
- What does it mean to be a zombie?
  - Constant craving for human flesh
    - Slow, constant health decay
    - Killing humans and eating their brains increases health
    - Zombie horde gives you more health too, incentivizing infection
  - Hunted by humans
    - Humans band together to eradicate infection
  - Terrifying
    - Make humans more vulnerable when they are scared
  - Sluggish
    - Humans are faster than zombies

# REVISED CONCEPT AND MECHANICS

- First revision lacked player agency
- Let the player take control of his zombie horde
  - Tested the game with and without zombie horde management
  - Play testers had a better experience when in control of the other zombies
  - Played more consecutive rounds
- Result: Add fine grain controls to manage the zombie horde

# REVISED CONCEPT AND MECHANICS

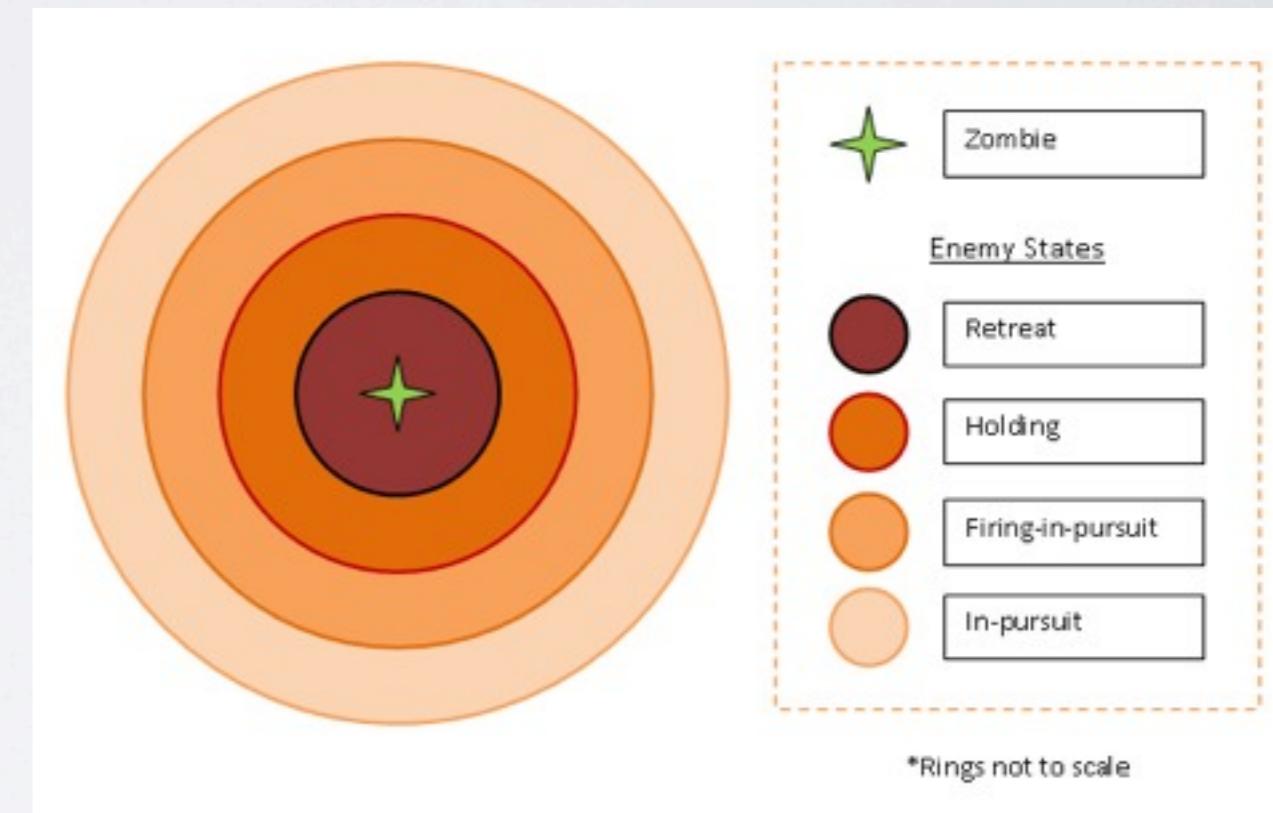
- First revision lacked progression and scoring system transparency
- Play tester didn't know whether they were doing well or poorly
  - HUD brain counter alone still didn't clearly communicate progress
- Result: Added scoring system based on survival (time) and infection (brains)

# REVISED CONCEPT AND MECHANICS

- First revision had one big endless wave of humans
- Constant flow of humans lacked dramatic curve and the feeling of progression
- Predictable entry points of humans led to undesirable strategies
- Result: Multiple Waves
  - Waves increase in difficulty over time creating tension
  - Humans enter randomly from different entry points

# REVISED CONCEPT AND MECHANICS

- First revision had *really* primitive AI
- Play testers commented that AI was far too predictable and easy to overcome
- Result: Improve AI and introduce multiple enemy classes
  - Follow, firing, hold and retreat radii
  - Three different enemy types: Regular, Cautious and Fearless

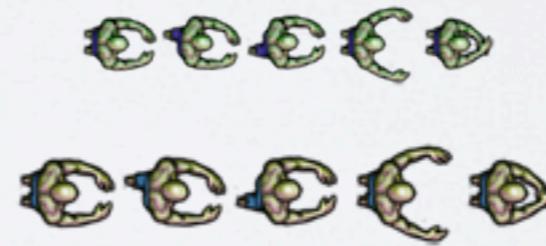


# REVISED STATE OF THE WORLD

- Zombies are nearly eradicated
  - Day 100: The humans are winning
- The player is surrounded by human defense forces
- Switch from level maps (adventure) to contained combat area (action) that incentivises mayhem and havoc

# REVISED ART DIRECTION

- Switch to darker, less iconic sprites



# REVISED ART DIRECTION



Desolate urban wasteland ravaged by zombies

# EMERGENT STRATEGIES

- Fine controls over horde during the first couple of waves
- Use horde as cannon fodder for later waves
- Make enemies vulnerable by cornering them when they retreat  
(eliminates speed advantage)

# WHAT'S NEXT

- Improve AI
  - Pathfinding
  - Obstacle avoidance
- Saved Scores
  - Personal bests
- Leaderboards
  - Compete against other players
- Choose a map
  - Increase replayability even more
- New terrain may lead to new and interesting behavior
- More enemy classes at later waves
- UI
  - Start Screen
  - End game screen