Playlab fOr inNovation in Games

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO
DIPARTIMENTO DI INFORMATICA

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OGD:

The Genres of Games

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Summary

1. Action games
2. Strategy games
3. Role Playing games
4. Sport games
5. Simulations (games)
6. Adventure games
7. Puzzle games
8. Party games
9. MMOs & MMORPGs
10. Board & card games

References (some):

- E. Adams "*Fundamentals of Game Design*" Second Ed. (2010) caps.13-21
- M. Lopez "*Gameplay Fundamentals Revisited: Harness Pacing & Intensity*" (2008) http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/3848/gameplay_fundamentals_revisited_.php?page=1
- M. Lopez "*Gameplay Fundamentals Revisited, Part 2: Building a Pacing Structure*" (2008) http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/3863/gameplay_fundamentals_revisited_.php

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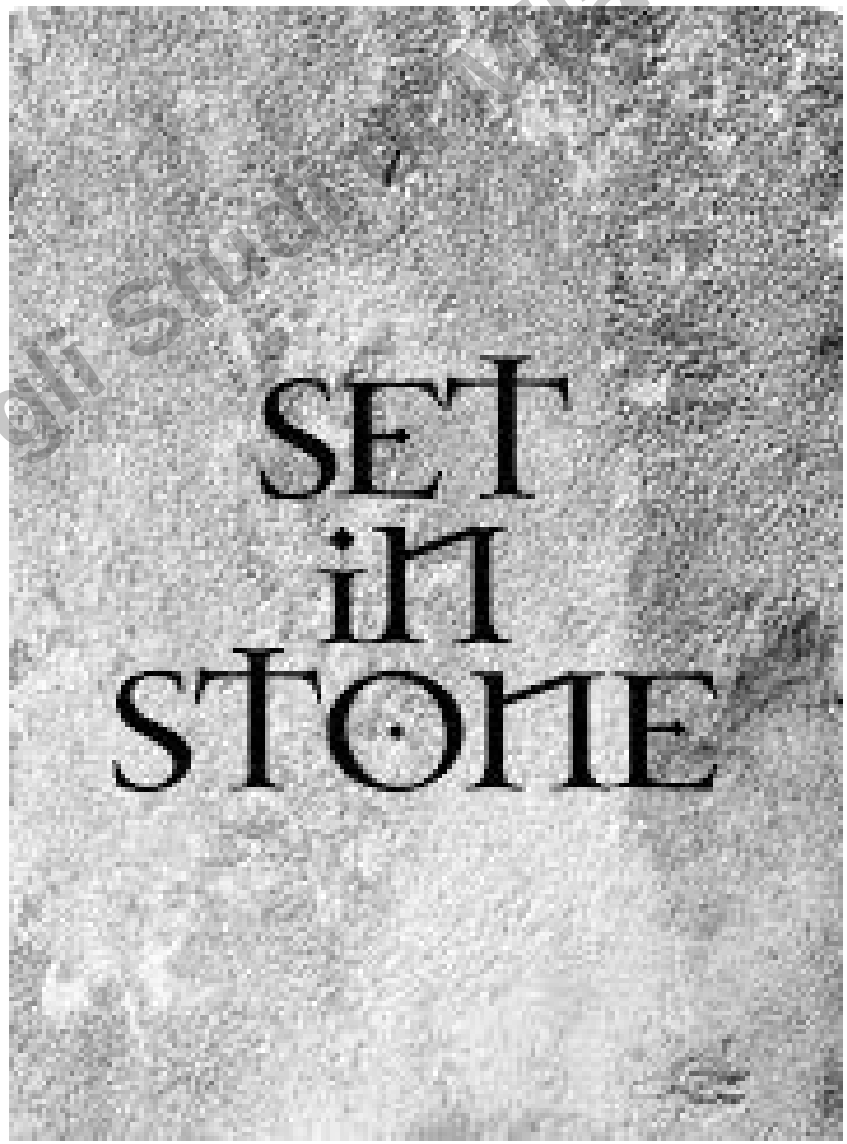
The genres of games

- Taxonomy NOT set in stone
- The same game may be classified under different genres (hybrid games)
- Overview useful for game concepts lab … !!

  please …

  READ IT … ! ;-)



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1. Action games

- Emphasis on physical challenges (eye-hand coordination and motor skill)
- centered around the player, (controls most of the action)
- earliest video games are generally considered action games
- still a vast genre, with many subgenres

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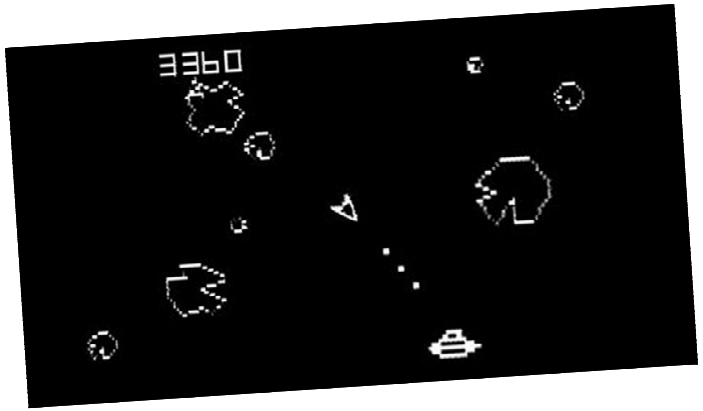
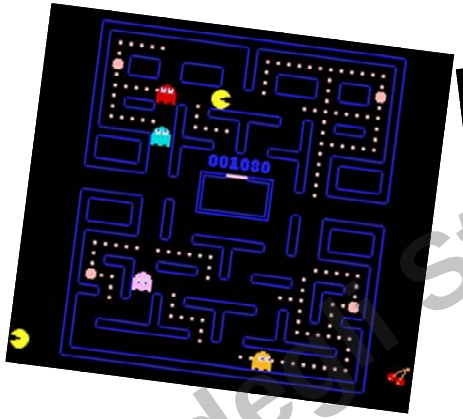
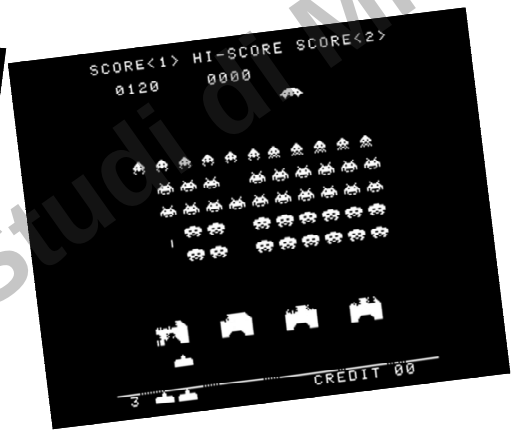
1. Action games

- Earlier (arcade) videogames: Asteroids, Pac-Man, Space invaders







- The majority of challenges are **tests of the player's physical skills and coordination**. Puzzle-solving, tactical conflict and exploration are often present as well
  - Hand-eye coordination
  - Quick reaction (motor skill)
  - Twitch (fudamental in the fastest action games)
  - Also: accurate aim/rhythm/timing/combo

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1. Action games

- Many (often intertwined/hybridized) subgenres:
  - Shooters & hero shooters
  - Platform (or Platformers)
  - Fighting and beat 'em ups
  - Stealth
  - Fast puzzles
  - Action-adventure
  - Music/dance/rhythm/singing
  - Other

Survival and survival-horror

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1. Action games: shooters

- Players:
  - use ranged weapons
  - action at a distance
  - violent gameplay: lethal weaponry to damage opponents (exceptions: Splatoon)
  - First/third person view
  - Can be collaborative/team based (ex. Team Fortress)

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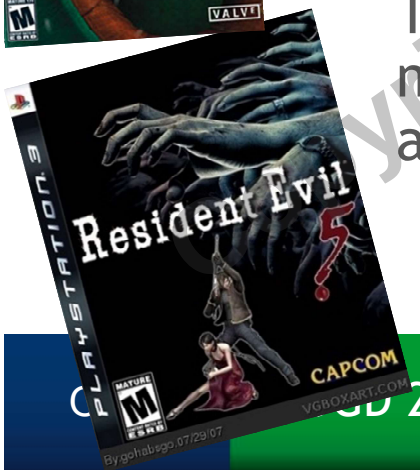
1. Action games: shooters

a. **2D** (Robotron: 2084, Gauntlet)

b. **3D** (Maze War, Halo, Battlefield 1943, etc.)

1. Rail-shooters (Half-Life): players have few choices
2. Tactical shooters (Ghost recon): stealth and cover are important
3. Survival horror (Silent Hill, Resident Evil): also elements of exploration
4. Arena games (Quake III: arena, Unreal Tournament, Battlefield 1942): multiplayer/team deathmach in confined areas (both in/outdoor)



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1. Action games: shooters examples

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1. Action games: hero shooters

- **multiplayer** (1st or 3rd person) based on **cooperative** play within a team
- pre-designed "**hero**" with unique attributes, skills, weapons, and activated abilities
- inspired by Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (**MOBA**) games

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1. Action games: hero shooters examples

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1. Action games: platforms / platformers

- highly <u>unrealistic physics</u> (jumping and bouncing from platform to platform)
- Cartoonish style
- Low conflict (OK for younger kids)

- Two types:
  a. **2D** (Mario, Sonic, Rayman)
  b. **3D** (Crash Bandicoot): control quite difficult

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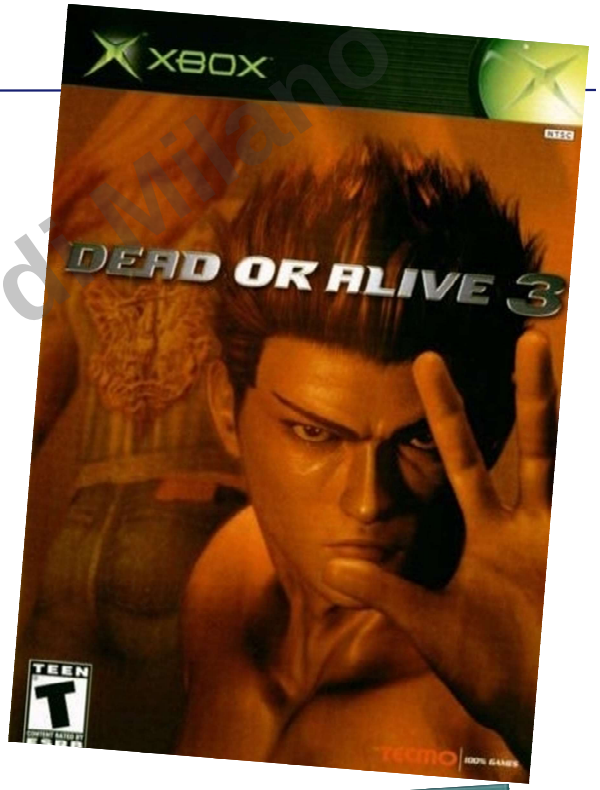
1. Action games: fighting

- Little in common with other action gs. (no exploration/shooting/puzzle solving), but great demand on physical skills (reaction time and timing)
- Exaggerated moves martial-arts like
- Combo moves (& combo meter)
- Generally 2D side view
- Two types:
  a. One-to-one
  b. Beat-'em-ups

- NB: realistic boxe belongs to the sport genre !!



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1. action: Stealth games

- Emphasis on **subterfuge** and **precision strikes**: players still able to engage in loud combat, but can penalized for it
  - Metal Gear, Sly Cooper, Dishonored

- NB: the inclusion of stealth as a mechanic in a game DOES NOT necessarily make it a Stealth game
  - Skyrim has an entire tree dedicated to "Sneaking", but few opportunities to use it effectively

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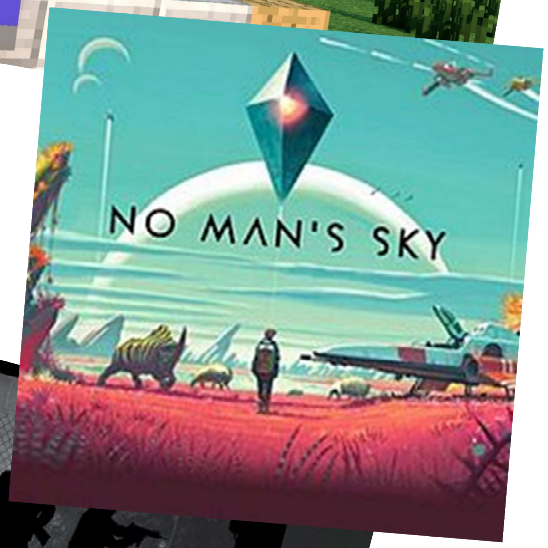
1. Action games: survival / survival horror

- player starts with **minimal resources**, in a hostile environment, and has to collect resources or to craft tools, weapons, and shelter, in order to **survive as long as possible**
- May be set in **procedurally-generated environments**, and be **open-ended**

- **survival horror**: the player must survive within a supernatural setting (ex.: a zombie apocalypse)



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1. Action games: fast puzzles and action-adventure

- **Fast puzzles** (es. Tetris, Bejeweled, Collapse!, Candy Crush, etc.)
  - Solve a problem as quickly as you can
  - Simply, limited control set, easy to design and develop
  - No stereotypes (guns, dragons, scantly clad women, etc.)
  - Ok for mobile devices

- **Action-adventure** (Zelda)
  - Hybrid genre: action combined with storytelling, many characters, inventory, etc.

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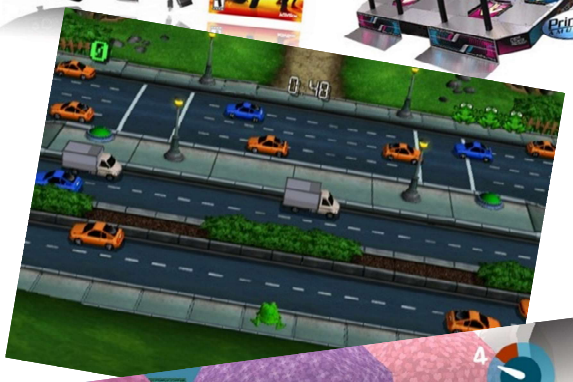
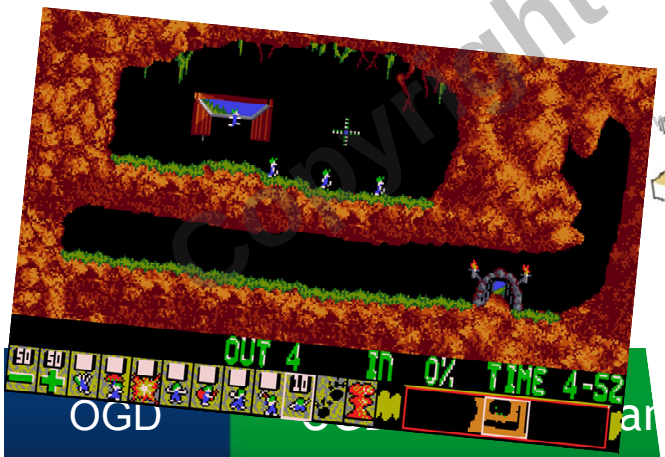
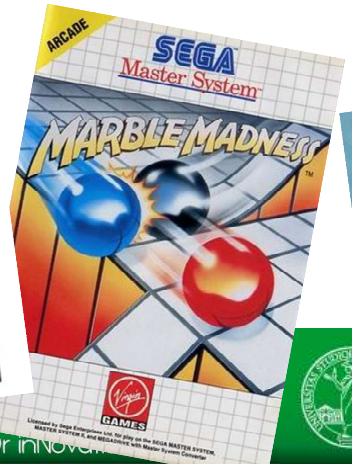
1. Action games: Music/dance/rhythm & Other

- **Music/dance/rhythm** (Dance dance revolution, Guitar Hero, PaRappa the Rapper, Just Dance, Rocksmith, etc.)
  - Challenge player's sense of rhytm
  - Also specialized controllers

- **Other**
  - Skills demanding, puzzle solving, but NO shooting/fighting
  - Es.: Frogger, Pac-Man, Marble Madness, Katamari Damacy, Lemmings, Q*Bert, etc.







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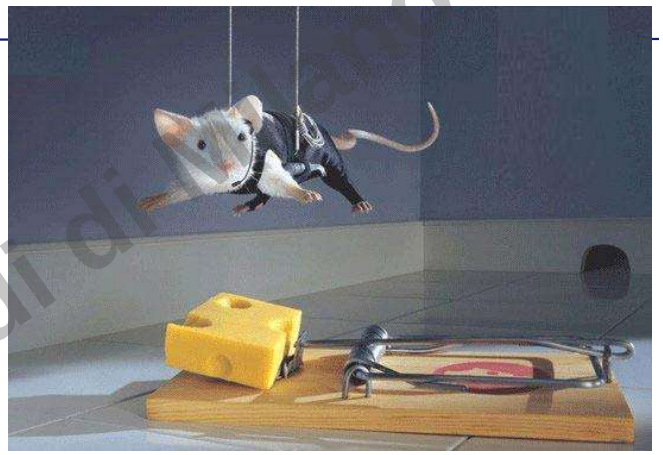
1. Action games: game features



- AGs set simple, obvious goals and offer clear, direct ways to reach them:
  - players learn what tasks are ahead and how to accomplish them by trial & errors

1. **Progression**: levels progression is generally linear (exceptions are possible – e.g. Spyro the dragon). Progression within a level may or may not be linear. Hidden shortcuts can occasionaly be found.
   - NB: carefully plan intensity & pacing structure IN ADVANCE *
   - Consider the use of checkpoints
   - … and of level exit, level warps, teleporters

* see: M. Lopez on Gamasutra

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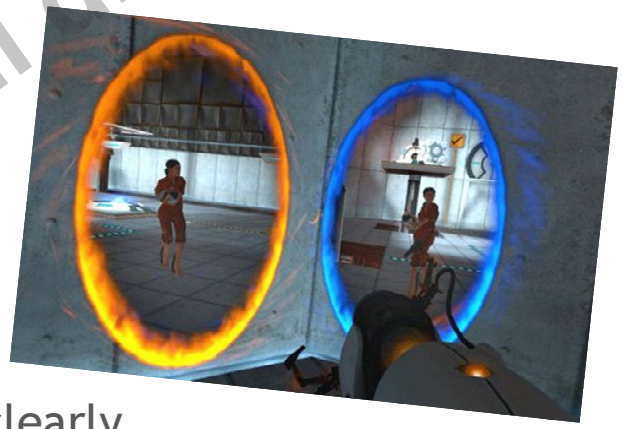
1. Action games: game features

2. **Challenge**: generally related to physical skills (speed, reaction time, steering, shooting, timing on rythm, execute combos), may include also: pattern recognition, exploration and puzzle-solving (Tetris, Portal). Consider wether or not to add:
   - Obstacles and danger (active and passive)
   - Vawes of enemies
   - Big bosses and wildcard enemies (UFOs in Asteroids)
   - Monster generators and spawn points



3. **Core mechanics:**
   - Core mech **simple, obvious**, small number of resources clearly linked with actions (energy points, etc.)
   - Use of "**lives**"
   - **Energy**/hit points/health
   - **Powerups**
   - **Collectibles** (raise points, reveal secrets/bonus, etc. NOT essential in the game)
   - **Time limit**
   - **Score** (may have multipliers)

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1. Action games: game features

4. Player actions:

- Possible special actions: **smart bomb** & **hyperspace escape**

5. Victory conditions:

- May not exist: **unwinnable** games (Space Invaders) => outdated model, ok for old arcade
- If storylines exists, victory conds. may **change/evolve** during the game (Half-Life)

6. Interaction media:

- Usually **avatar** (Space Invaders, Half-Life), but it varies according to the game type (Lemmings and Tetris have no avatar!)

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1. Action games: game features

7. **Camera models:** player must react quickly
=> critical choice!

a. **2D** camera models:
- **side** or **top-down** view
- **Side/top/continuous/variable**
- **parallax** scrolling: only cosmetic, no effect on the gameplay

} affect gameplay!

b. **3D** camera models:
- **First** person (Quake)
- **Third** person (Tomb Raider)

c. **Context-sensitive** model:
the camera moves around depending on the circumstances, controlled by AI (Ico)

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1. Action games: game features

8. **User interface:** "as simple as possible, but not simpler" (A. Einstein) => minimum distraction, controls responsive & easy to learn

   a. **Visual & audio indicators**:
      - Use graphics, not numbers, no submenus, etc.

   b. **Characters & objects**:
      - Avatar – if existing! - easily detectable (e.g. tea blue of Lara Croft shirt used nowhere else in the game)
      - Color schemes to indicate enemies

   c. **Controls**:
      - Consider using NUIs (Kinect, Wiimote, …) that map player's movements directly into the game

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2. Strategy games

- require careful and skillful thinking and planning in order to achieve victory
- action scales from world domination to squad-based tactics
- Generally the player has a godlike view of the game world, indirectly controlling the units
- origin rooted in board games
- take one of the archetypal forms, depending on whether the game is turn-based or real-time and whether the game's focus is upon strategy or tactics

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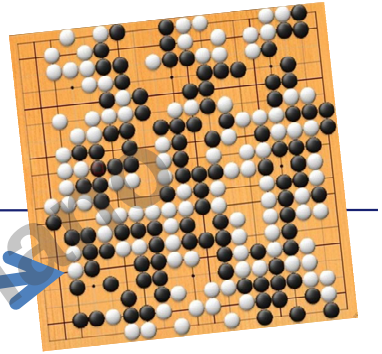
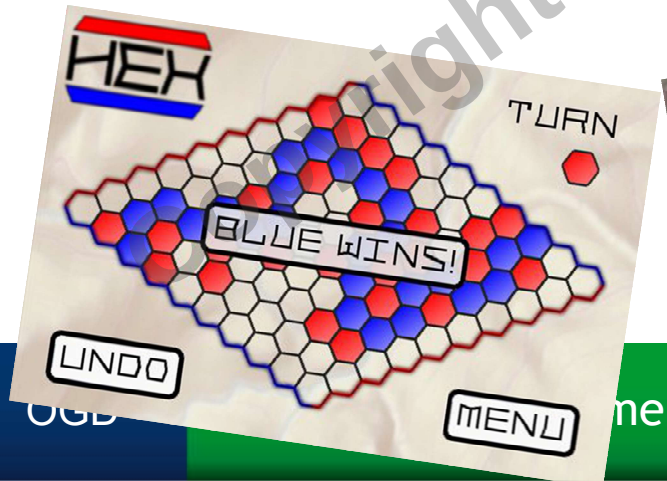
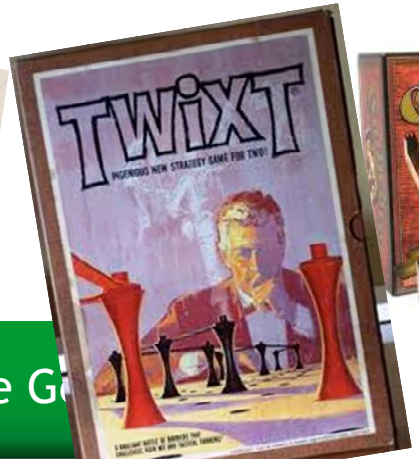
2. Strategy games



- Among the most ancient form of games:
  - Go dates back to 2200 BC
  - The Royal Game of UR dates before 2600 BC, the oldest board game equipment ever found (still played in IRAQ)

- Player achieves victory through **planning actions against one or more opponents**, chance has a lesser/minimum role
  - Many war games: Checkers, Risk, Axis and Allies, Chess
  - But also other: tic-tac-toe, Hex, TwixT, Go, Cathedral





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2. Strategy games: game features

1. **Subgenres**: **turn-based** (tipically pure strategy games) and **real-time** + many others

2. **Challenges**:
   - **Strategic conflict**: combat between "units" (supported by "factories")
   - **Diplomacy/crisis management/espionage** (e.g. Cid Meyer's Civilization)
   - **Exploration**: use "fog of war"
   - **Economic**: use of resources

3. **Player actions**:
   - Giving orders (move, attack, stop, hold, produce, formation, retreat, dash, patrol, …)

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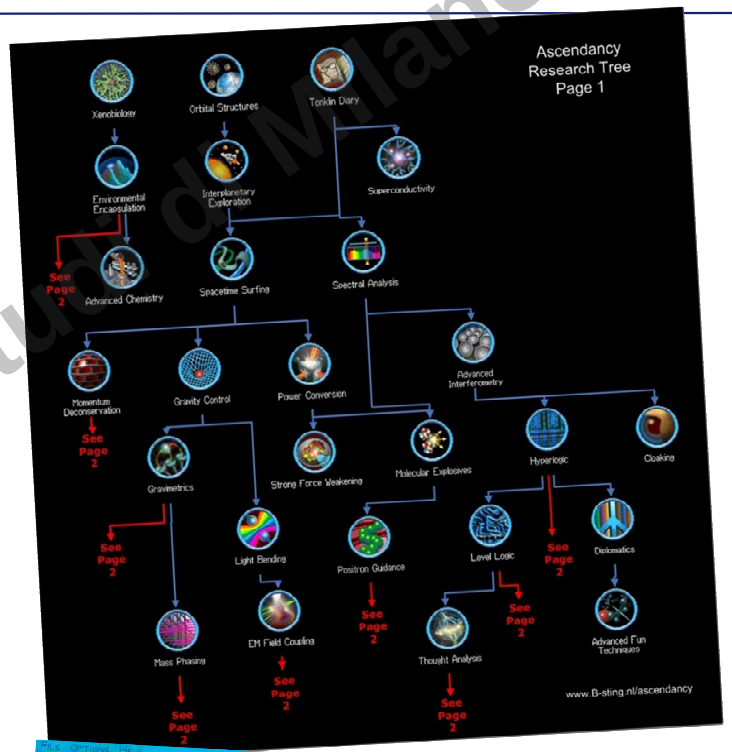
2. Strategy games: game features

4. Core mechanics:

- **Units**: numeric attributes, special capabilities, value (cost), production rate, etc.
- **Health, morale, fighting efficiency**
- **Technology trees**: useful to evolve/ upgrade units
- **Logistics**: supply & consumable items, supply lines (routes vs abstract distribution – e.g. Warcraft), road-building, influence maps (Zeus)



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2. Strategy games: game features

5. The game world:

- **Historical settings**: military strategy games (real past or mythology), but … market oversaturated with World War II
- **Modern settings**: risk of negative public opinion/controversity unless use of fictional settings (Call of Duty 4: modern warfare)
- **Future settings**: beware … if the world is not enough compelling, it won't capture players' imagination (=> failure!)
- **Fantasy settings**: we have enough of elves, trolls & c. !!! Why not exploring eastern/african/etc. myths?

6. Presentation layer (interface): MUST present very complicated information in clear, well-organized ways, otherway the game may result overwhelming

7. Artificial opponents: you'll need plenty of them (AI)

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres

- 4X
  - eXplore, eXpand, eXploit and eXterminate (primary goals)
  - turn-based or real-time
  - often give the player the control of an entire civilization or species
  - have historical or science fiction setting
  - Ex.: Empire Earth, Civilization, Golden Age of Civilizations, Master of Orion, Galactic Civilizations

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres

- **Artillery**
  - early 2 or 3-player (usually turn-based) games involving tanks fighting (and derivatives)
  - among the earliest computer games
  - extension of the original use of computers (used for military-based calculations)
  - Ex.: Pocket Tanks, Hogs of War, Scorched 3D, Worms

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres

- **Real-time strategy (RTS)**
  - the action is continuous, and players make their decisions and actions within a constantly changing game state
  - gameplay is characterised by obtaining resources, building bases, researching technologies and producing units
  - Ex.: Starcraft, Warcraft, Age of Empires, Dawn of War, Command and Conquer, Dune II
  - Few RTS not for PCs: Battle for Middle-earth II, Pikmin, Halo Wars

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres

- **Real-time tactics (RTT)**
  - tactical wargames played in RT, simulating considerations and circumstances of operational warfare and military tactics
  - Differs from RTSs for:
    - lack of resource management and base/unit building
    - greater importance of individual units
    - focus on complex battlefield tactics
  - Ex.: Warhammer: Dark Omen, World In Conflict, Close Combat, early tactical RPGs (Bokosuka Wars, Silver Ghost, ...)

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres - MOBAs

- **MOBAs** also known as Action Real-Time Strategy (ARTS):
  - a fusion of: action, role-playing and RTS games
  - a player controls a character in a team who compete versus another team
  - Goal: destroy the opposing team's main structure with the assistance of spawned units
  - characters have various abilities and advantages that improve over the course of a match, contributing to the team's strategy

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres - MOBAs

- genre began with Aeon of Strife (AoS), a custom map for StarCraft
- Defense of the Ancients (DotA), a map based on Aeon of Strife for Warcraft III: Reign of Chaos and The Frozen Throne, was one of the first major titles and the first MOBA with sponsored tournaments
- Ex.: League of Legends, Heroes of Newerth, Dota 2, Heroes of the Storm, Smite.

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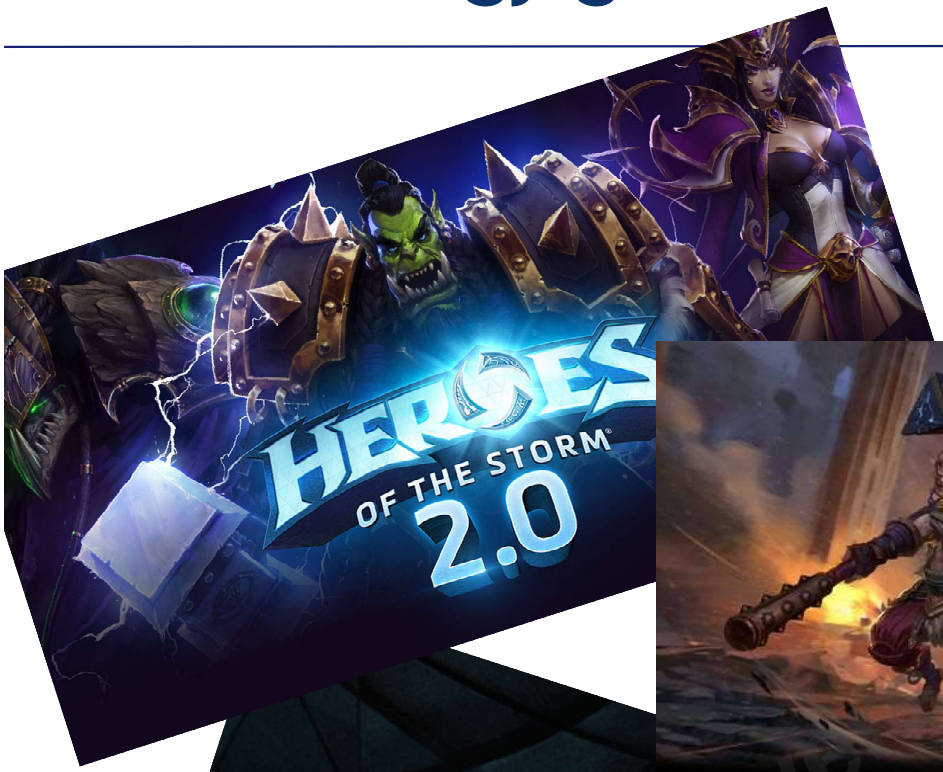
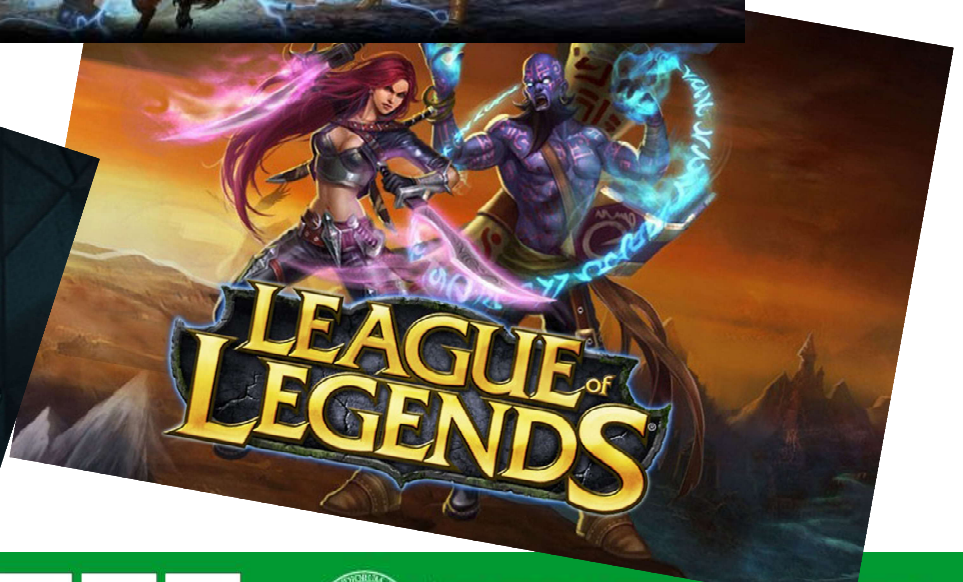
2. Strategy games: MOBAs examples





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2. Strategy games: main subgenres

- **Tower defense**
  - very simple layout
  - computer-controlled monsters (creeps) move along a set path, the player places towers to kill the creeps or to interrupt their movement/ change their path
  - different towers may have different abilities
  - player awarded resources that can be used to buy more towers or upgrades

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres

- **Turn-based strategy (TBS)**
  - player has a time for analysis before action
  - some games allow only a certain number of moves or actions per turn
  - Ex.: Heroes of Might and Magic, Making History, Advance Wars
  - NB: recent TBS has simultaneous resolution of turns: each player prepares actions in the planning phase, then the game follows the orders given at the same time, causing interruptions by the opponent(s) actions

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2. Strategy games: main subgenres

- **Turn-based tactics (TBT)**
  - players must complete their tasks using the combat forces provided, within a realistic (or at least believable) representation of military tactics and operations
  - Ex.: Wars, Jagged Alliance, X-COM series, Fire Emblem, Final Fantasy Tactics

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3. Role Playing Games

- Based on traditional RPGs like D&D
- player has the role of one or more adventurers, with specific skill sets, progressing through a storyline
- Generally an overworld allows access to more important game locations (towns, dungeons, castles ...)
- the emergence of PCs coincided with the popularity of paper and pencil RPGs, hence they were one of the first video games genres and continues to be popular
- Older games were turn-based games, while many modern games are real-time

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3. Role Playing Games (RPGs) - single player

- RPGs are an outgrowth of D&D
- Allow player to:
  - interact with the game world in a **wider variety** of ways
  - Play a **richer role** than in other videogames
  - Have **experiences impossible** in the real world
- The player:
  - earns **more and more powers** in time
  - can **choose her skills**
  - Has **more constraint** than in tabletop RPGs (in a videogame no rules can be invented on the fly!)

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3. Role Playing Games (RPGs) - single player

- RPGs have <u>many hybrids</u> (elements in common with other genres). E.g.:
  - War games: Heroes of Might and Magic
  - Action games: The Elder Scrolls: Morrowind, Oblivion
  - Adventure: Final Fantasy

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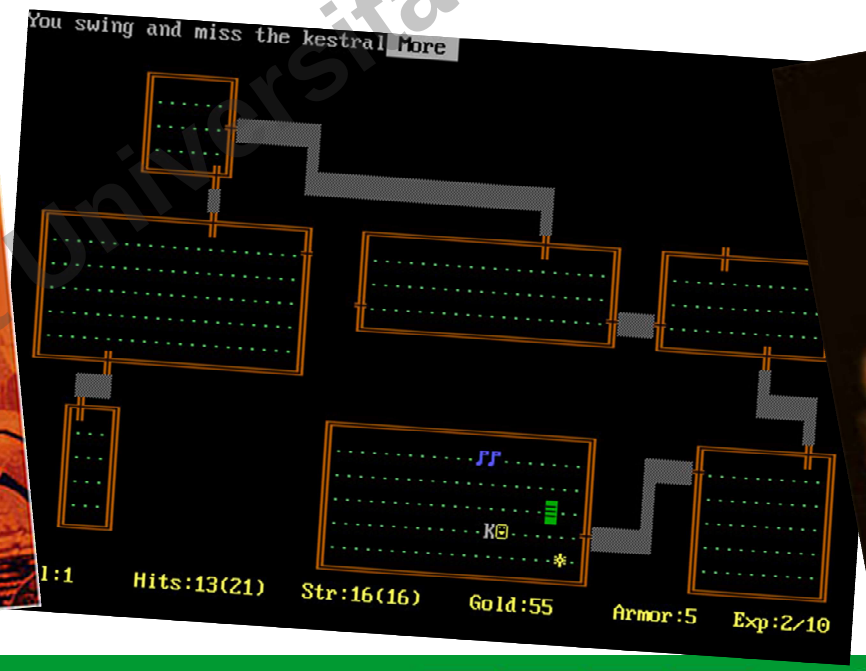
3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): game features

- **Exploring + combat** heavily used in RPGs
- Levels can be <u>randomized</u> (Rogue, NetHack, Diablo)
- **Theme**: tipically “Only YOU can save the world!” (overused, try something else => Planescape: torment)



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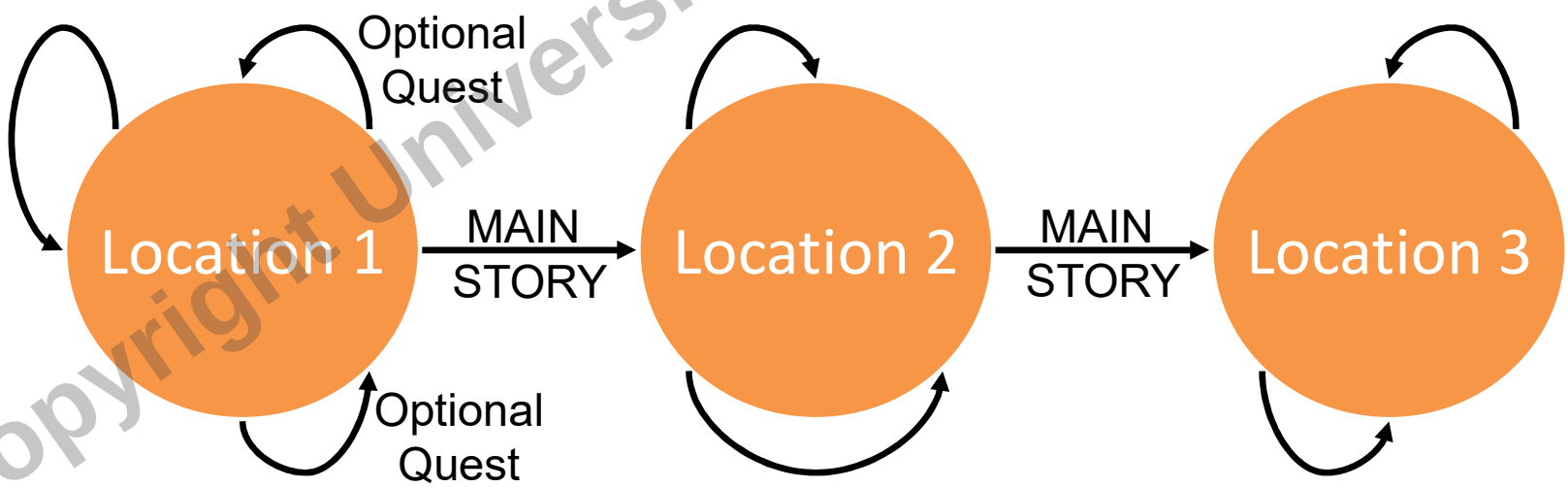
3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): game features

- **Progression**: RPGs generally tell a story
  - the progression usually is unlinear (unlike rail-shooters or side-scroller)
  - To pass from one chapter to the following the player's party should have enough "strenght"



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3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): game features

- **Gameplay modes**: RPGs try to emulate tabletop RPGs flexibility => <u>more activity than any other genre</u> (exploration, combat, stealth operations, conversation, buying & selling, etc.)
  - Exploration & combat
  - Conversation
  - Trade
  - Inventory

  } Different interfaces/interaction models!!

- **Core mechanics**: focus on these aspects:
  - Rolling dices
  - Character attributes
  - Magic & equivalents
  - Skills & special capabilities
  - Character design (pre-defined avatars or not?)

Tip: try reading a tabletop RPG manual … ☺

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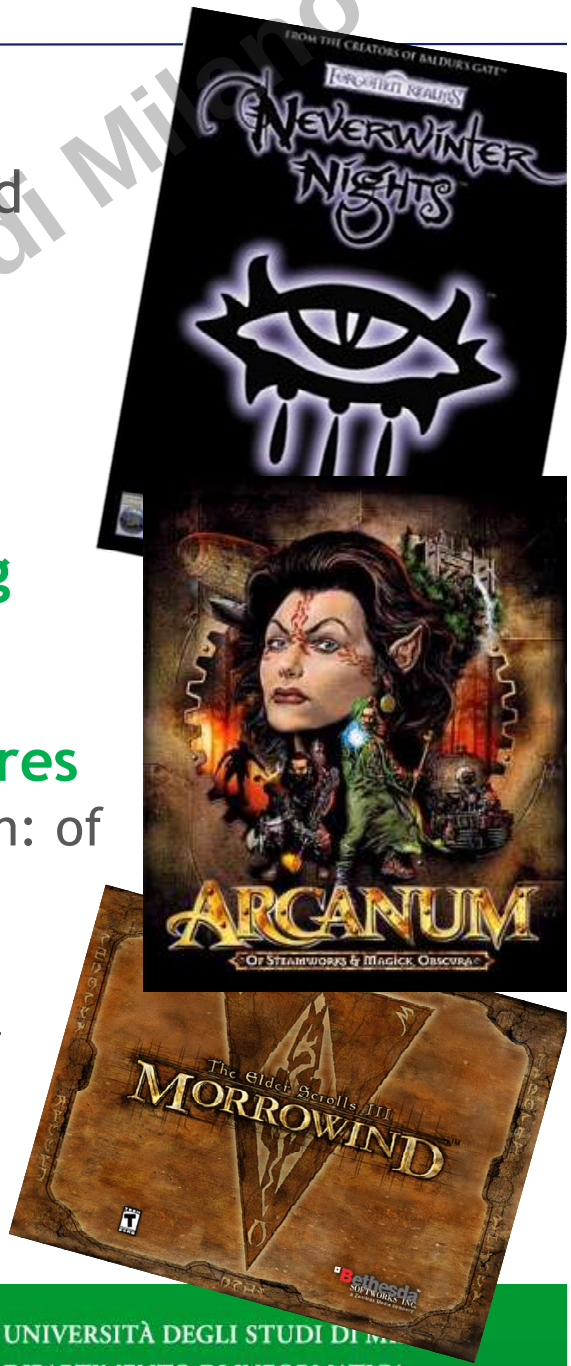
3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): game features

- **Game world & story**:
  - Design the setting BEFORE the story!! (as every good DM should know …)
  - Fantasy/science fiction help diminishing disbelief (monsters, magic, technology, etc. are "credible")
  - Spend plenty of time in making the world **appealing** to explore
  - May let players **create their own scripted adventures** (Neverwinter Nights, Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind, Arcanum: of steamworks and magick obscura)
  - **Story should sustain player's interest**: a pretty big novel!



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3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): main subgenres

- **Action RPG**
  - incorporates elements from action or action-adventure
  - first were produced by Nihon Falcom in the 1980s, the Dragon Slayer series and Ys series
  - heavy emphasis on combat, often simplifying or removing non-combat attributes and statistics
  - combat in real-time
  - player's ability to perform particular actions with speed and accuracy determine success, rather than the use of the character's attributes

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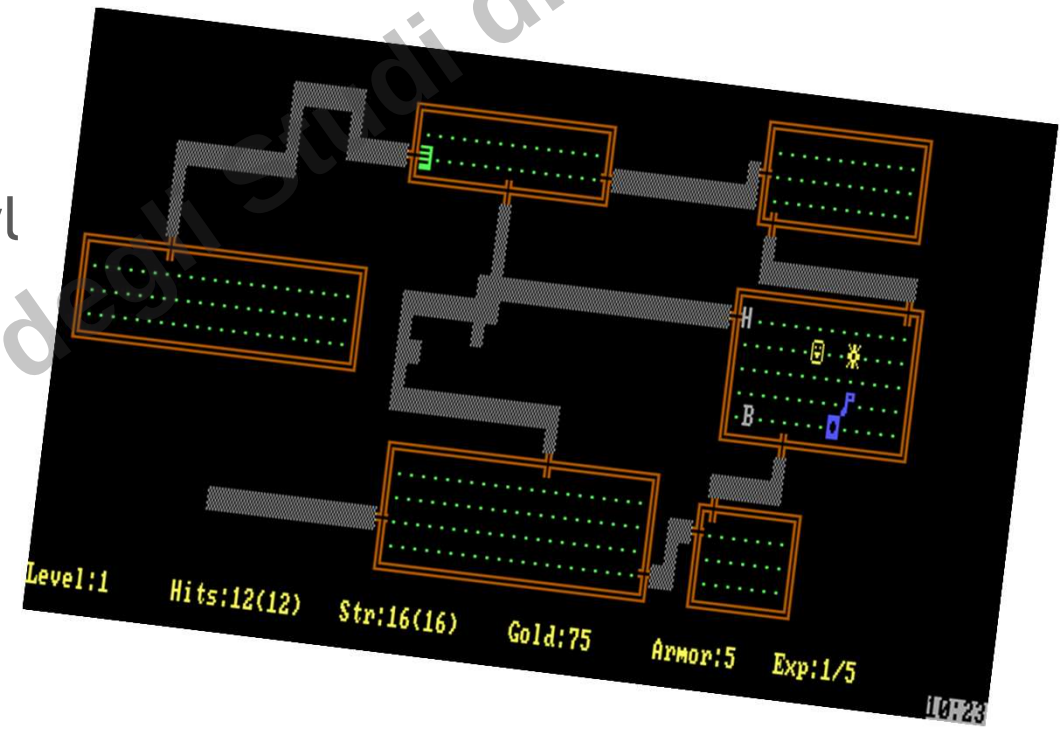
3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): main subgenres

- **roguelike**
  - borrows name and gameplay from the 1980 computer game Rogue
  - two-dimensional dungeon crawl
  - high randomness and emphasis on statistical character development
  - traditionally featuring a text user interface, many games uses graphic tiles
  - Ex.: Pixel Dungeon on PC, Android and iOS



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3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): main subgenres

- **Sandbox RPG or Open World RPG**
  - large amount of freedom and free-roaming (player not confined to a single path restricted by rocks or fences etc.) world
  - Large: number of NPCs, amount of content, maps, amount of secondary content not critical to the game's main storyline
  - longest playtimes of all RPG
  - Ex.: Dragon Slayer, Dragon Quest, Zelda II, Wasteland, SaGa and Mana, System Shock 2, Deus Ex, The Elder Scrolls, Fallout, Fable, Gothic, Xenoblade, Souls

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3. Role Playing Games (RPGs): main subgenres

- **First-person party-based RPG or DRPG (Dungeon RPG)**
  - the player leads a party of adventurers in first-person perspective through a dungeon or labyrinth, typically in a grid-based environment
  - Environmental and spatial puzzles are common
  - Can be turn-based o real-time (ex.: Dungeon Master, Legend of Grimrock, Eye of the Beholder)
  - Ex.: Wizardry, Might and Magic, Bard's Tale, Etrian Odyssey, Elminage

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4. Sport games

- Simulations of actual sports
- opposing team(s) or players can be controlled either by other real life people or by agents with some artificial intelligence

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4. Sport games

- **Challenging** (veeery!) for the game designer: people have high expectations (no imaginary world, but a very well known one)!
  - Exceptions: e.g. Mutant League Football

- Many games simulates only **matches**, but several also **management functions**

- PS for racing games, see also vehicle simulations

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4. Sport games: game features

1. **Player roles**: athlete (more than one in team sports), coach, manager
2. **Gameplay & rules**: goals and rules are generally the same of the corresponding sport
3. **Competition modes:** single-player, competitive, cooperative, team, league (constrained by type & number of input devices)
4. **Victory/loss conditions**: generally the same of the sport
5. **Opportunity for creative play**: quite few (athlete/team creation, strategy design/playing field desing)
6. **Miscellaneous issues**:
   - **Invented sports**: quite risky (sport-games lovers not interested, nor other players)
   - **Weather** affecting athlete performances
   - **Instant replay**

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4. Sport games: game features

7. Core mechanics:

- **Physics**: very complex (human body movements), but should be adjusted to players' ability, not be too realistic!
- **Rating athletes**: input for the AI that simulates the athletes. Should be carefully planned & designed
- **Athlete AI**: players expect athletes to behave LIKE A HUMAN
- **Injuries**: if you want to simulate them, avoid making them frustrating (e.g. may be turned off)
- **Arcade vs simulation**: excitement vs accuracy of the simulation
- **Matches authomatic simulation**: can be bypassed by generating fake results (e.g. to simulate a season)
- **Home-field advantage**: better not to implement it (game perceived as unfair by players)

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4. Sport games: game features

8. **The game world**: generally it's the normal venue for the sport, accurately simulated
   - **Licenses, trademarks, publicity rights**: beware to respect trademarks & c., can be very costly …….
   - Audio commentary
9. **Presentation layer** (interface): realistic graphic and audio, presented in a TV-style

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5. Simulation games

- Vehicle simulation
- Construction and management simulation
- Artificial life

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5.1 Vehicle simulations

- Simulations should **provide a sense of realism**
- Can be on ground/water or in air/space
- May include races, exploration, etc.
- **Flight simulator**:
  - Civilian
  - military
- **Driving simulators**:
  - Organized racing
  - Imaginary racing
- **Players**:
  - Purists: accurate sims
  - Casual

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5.1 Vehicle simulations: game features

1. **Player's role**: pilot/driver, but also mechanic, tail gun, etc.
2. **Competition modes** (if any): campaigns, shooters, etc.
3. **Gameplay & victory conditions**: challenge is to learn to control the vehicle, victory condition may <u>not</u> exist
4. **Core mechanics**: mostly about physics
   - **Opponents**: should have different characteristics
   - **Damage**: how accurately simulated?
   - **Game world**: try to exploit it to add immersion

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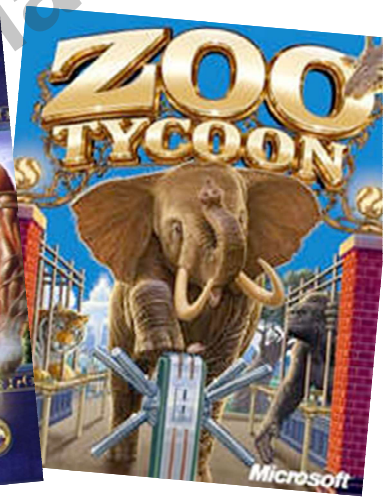
5.2 Construction and management simulations

- Games about **processes**: the better the player understands the process, the more success she has
- **Free-form** construction mode + **prebuilt scenarios**
- Also on **mobile devices**



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5.2 CMS: game features

1. **Player role**: address the **desire to CREATE**
2. **Progression**: generally absent
3. **Gameplay**: challenges are economic
   - **Indirect control**
   - **Construction**: plan-and-build vs purchase-and-place
   - **Demolition**: should be allowed
4. **Victory/loss conditions**: generally only the loss condition exists (unless pre-built scenarios are provided)
5. **Competition modes**: generally **single-player** (multiplayer stimulate competition and deprives creativity)

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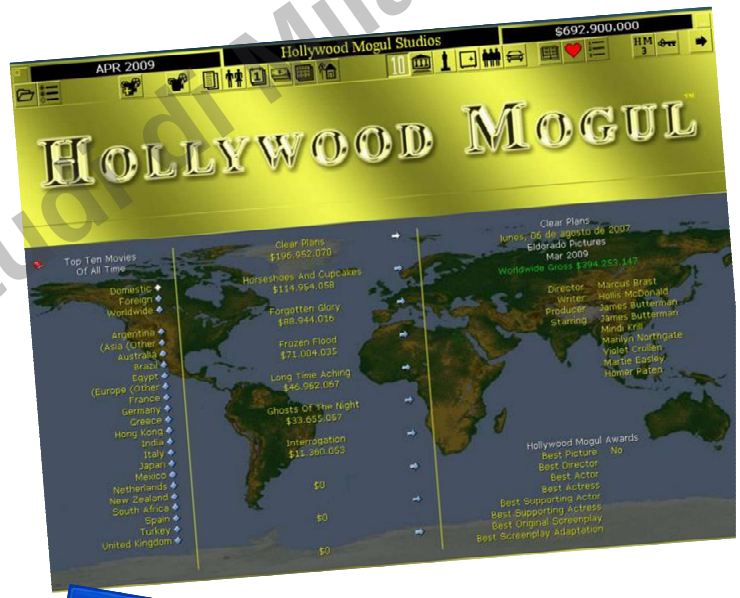
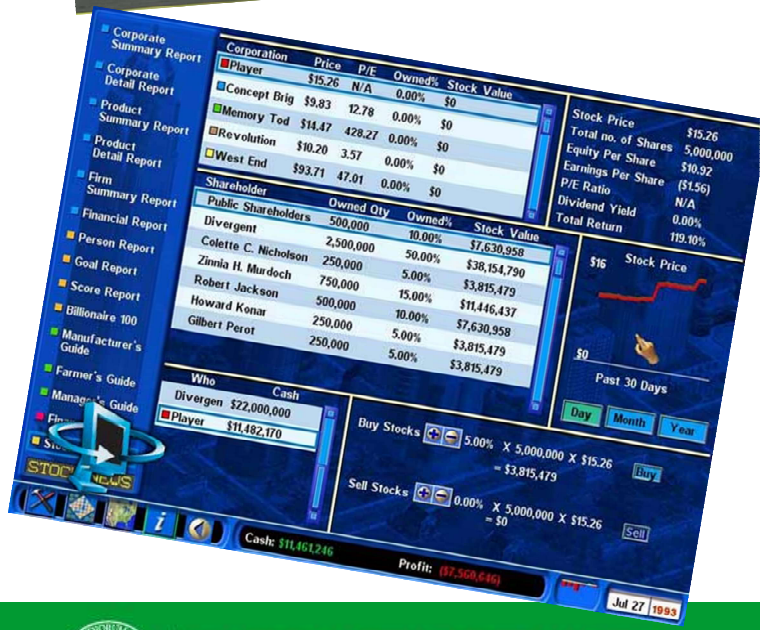
5.2 CMS: game features

6. **Simulating individuals** (many): statistical aggregates vs specific behaviour, need of behavioural models
7. **Mind reading**: to know thoughts of a specific subject
8. **Advisors**: character that pops up to give suggestions
9. **Pure business simulations**: player build pure financial empires, no visible worlds (Hollywood Mogul)
10. **Hybrid games:** Civilization, Dungeon keepers, Settlers





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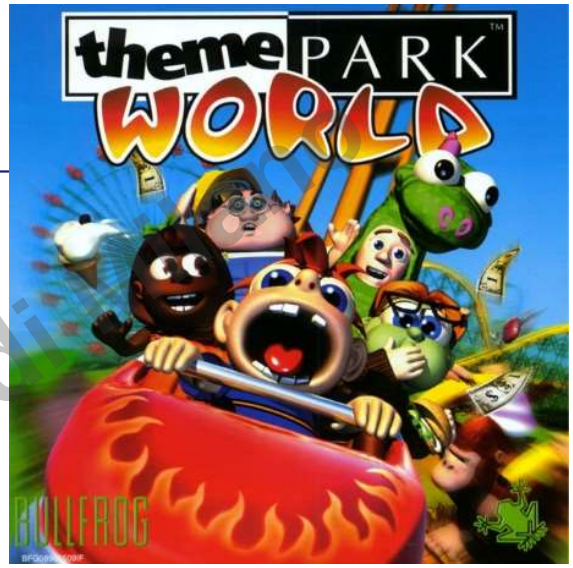
5.2 CMS: game features



6. **Core mechanics:** you'll need
   - **Resources**: money, workers (… with feelings!), land, food, etc. (see next table)
   - **Construction converter**: conversion activity that changes resources into buildings
   - **Drains**: a feature that takes a resource <u>out of the game</u> for good (decay, emigration, etc.)
   - **Maintenance**: resources may decay (and get out of the game) if the player does not tend them
   - **Disasters**: add dramatic effects to the game

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5.2 CMS: game features - resources

RESOURCE	SOURCE	DRAIN
Money	Taxation on people/gold mine/production/commerce /…	Purchases & constructions
People	Immigration & reproduction	Emigration & death
Food	Farms	People eating
Labour	People	Construction activities
Land	Exploration	Limited amount
Construction materials	Raw form in the environment (e.g. wood)	Converted by construction activities
Buildings	Constructed from money, materials & labour	Destroyed (demolition, disasters, …)

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5.2. CMS: game features

7. **The game world**: the "process" <u>must</u> be meaningfully displayed and <u>must</u> fire the player's imagination (attractive setting)
   - Usually **2D/2.5D**: more simple to plan constructions

8. **The presentation layer** (interface):
   - **Emotional tone enforcing creativity & growth** (avoid darkness, fog, shadow): clean, strong lines, flat shading, uniform lighting
   - No avatar (difficult to control CMSs from inside!), may use **walkthrough mode**
   - **User interface**: CMSs are not simulating reality (e.g. like a FPS) => emphasis on convenience over similitude => pull down menu & the like

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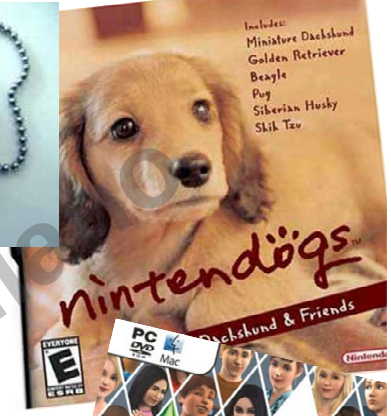
5.3. Artificial life simulation



- not so exploited => chances to create something really new

- **A-life**: modeling of biological processes to simulate life cycles
  - **Artificial pets** (Nintendogs, Tamagotchi): beware, they need A LOT of AI and they are more a toy than a real game!
  - **Doll's houses** (The Sims & the like)
  - **God'game** (Populous, Dungeon Keeper, Black & White)
  - **Genetic games** (Creatures): try to achieve a goal with the population as a whole. You'll need: genome, mutation, life span, natural selection
  - **Hybrid games**: Spore mixes A-life with RTS (Real Time Strategy)

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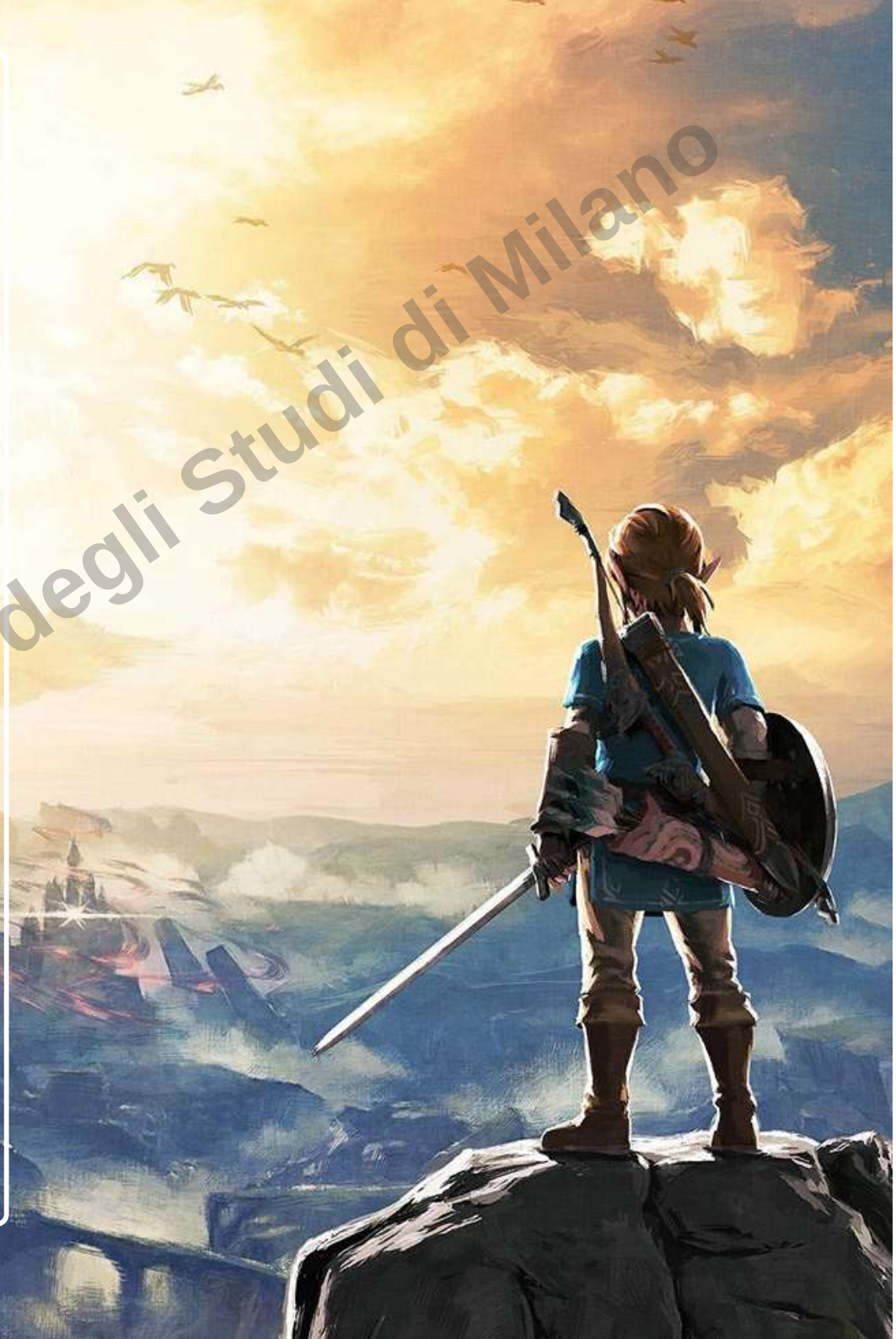
6. Adventure games

- Among the earliest games created (text adventure Colossal Cave Adventure in the 1970s)
- gameplay without reflex challenges or action
- require the player to solve puzzles by interacting with people or the environment, generally in a non-confrontational way



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6. Adventure

- Seldom a technological challenge, but always a **creative** one!
  - You have to **bring to life an entire world** (places, characters, plots, dialogues, puzzles, …)
  - You have to create **an interactive story** about a **character** (the HERO of the story!) **the player controls**
- Once very diffused and text-based. Graphics added only in a second time. Still diffused, but get less attention by specialized press (e.g. **action-adventure**, like Zelda)

MONKEY ISLAND !!

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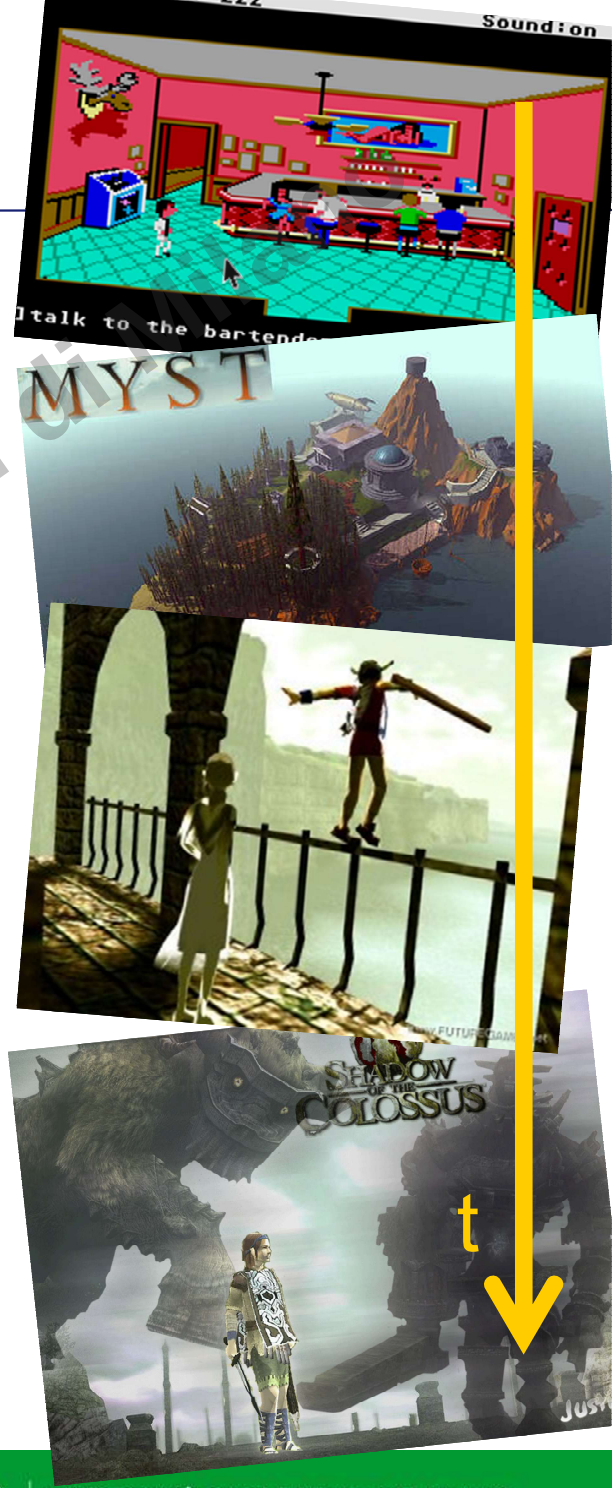
6. Adventure: game features

- The player's **avatar** visits an **explorable areas** containing a **variety of puzzles and problems** to solve (to open new areas and so on …)
- AGs are generally **single player**
- The **setting** is more important that in any other game!
- The game is **slower** than any other genre => opportunity to **create emotions** (Ico, Shadow of the Colossus, etc.)!
- Beware of using appropriately the **camera position**!



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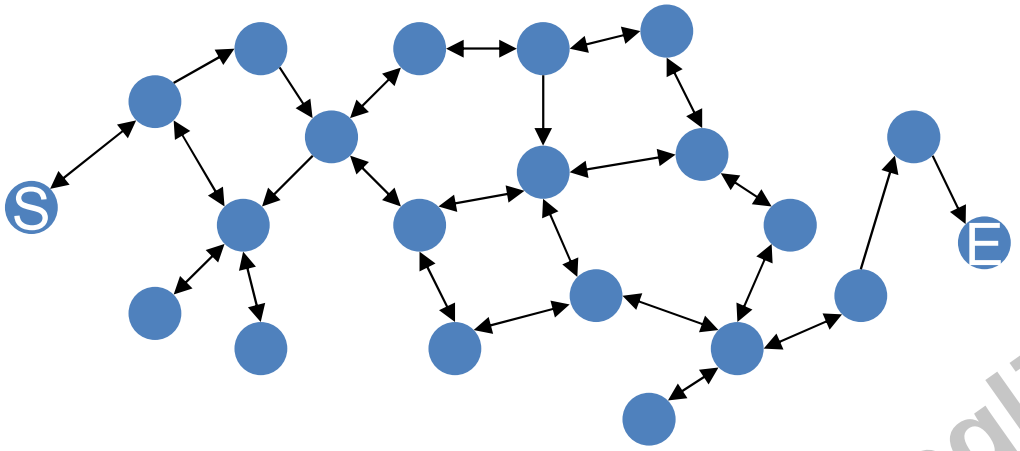
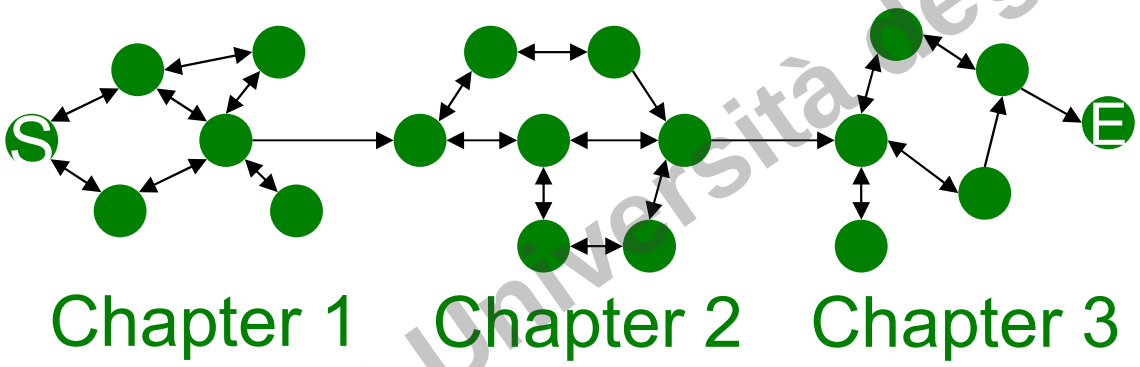
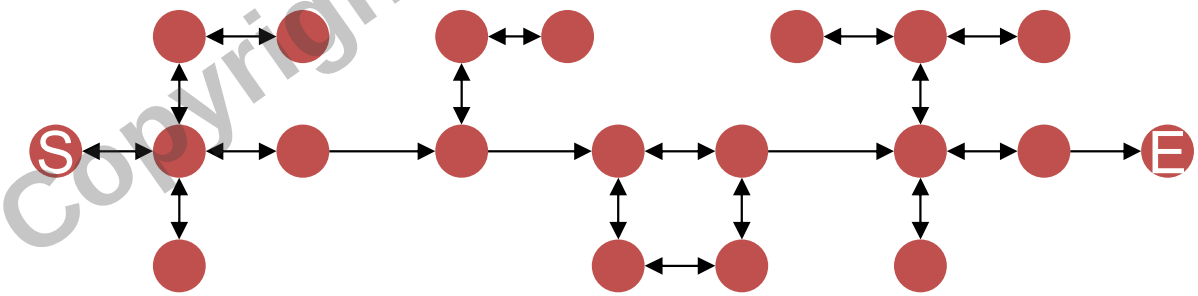
6. Adventure: game features – story and spatial structure



Early adventure game: exploration more relevant than story



Story-driven: once moved to the next chapter, no way back



Action-adventure (3D): emphasis on conflict over exploration

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6. Adventure: game features - challenge

- **Challenges:** are **conceptual** and require **lateral thinking** to be solved !!! Several examples:
  - Finding keys to locked doors
  - Figuring out misterious machines
  - Obtaining inaccessible objects
  - Manipulating people
  - Navigating mazes
  - Decoding cryptic messages
  - Solving memorization puzzles
  - Collecting things
  - Doing detective work
  - Understanding social problems

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6. Adventure: game features

- Things to avoid:
  - Puzzles solvable only by trial & errors
  - Conceptual non sequiturs
  - Illogical spaces
  - Puzzles requiring outside knowledge
  - Click-the-right-pixel puzzles
  - Too many backward puzzles
  - Too many FedEx puzzles

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7. Puzzle games

- about puzzle solving
  - can test many problem-solving skills including logic, pattern recognition, sequence solving, word completion, etc.
- often are integral part of many game belonging to a vast range of genres

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7. Puzzles

- **Puzzles**: appear in many games, puzzle design is essential in game design and … harder than you think!
- Provide a series of puzzles that are connected and/or form a storyline (the Incredible Machine)
- Players don't always find the solution the way that you envisioned it!

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8. Party games

- encourage social interaction
- generally have easy setups and simple rules
- they can accommodate groups of people
- Can be played in a short amount of time

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8. Party games

- Aimed at playing in groups
- May share features with some action games
- May have a variety of mini-games (collecting a certain item, having the fastest time at something, etc.)

- Ex.: Mario Party series, Crash Boom Bang!, Rayman Raving Rabbids

- NB: Versus multiplayer games are not generally considered party games

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9. MMOs and MMORPGs

- Games supporting up to thousands of player interacting at once in online (persistent) worlds
- Technical issues related to scalability, lag, etc.

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MMOs or MMOGs: Massively Multiplayer Online Game

- multiplayer supporting large numbers of players simultaneously (cooperating, competing or interacting)
- played on the Internet
- May have a persistent world, or large numbers of players competing at once without any lasting effect on the world
- include a variety of gameplay types, representing many video game genres

- Ex.: Minecraft

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MMORPG: Massively multiplayer online RPG

- emerged in mid/late 90s as a graphical variant of text-based MUDs (existing since 1978)
- **usual RPG objectives**, but with **thousands of players** interacting on the same persistent world in real-time
- MMORPGs are often hybridized with other genres

- Ex. – Fantasy: Final Fantasy XI, The Lord of the Rings Online: Shadows of Angmar, The Elder Scrolls Online, World of Warcraft, RuneScape, TERA
- Ex. – Sci-Fi: Phantasy Star Online, EVE Online
- Ex. – innovative: Second Life, Ingress.

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9. Online (massive) multiplayer games

We shall see them in the second half of the course … !!

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10. Board/card games

- Many popular board games and card games have computer versions

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10. Board/card games

- **AI opponents** should show sophisticated enough and convincing strategies and behaviours
- Critical factor: reproducing the game experience in a different environment (digital)

- Examples:
  - traditional games: Chess, Checkers, Othello (Reversi), Backgammon, Mah-jongg, Go, …
  - More recent games: Magic: The Gathering Online, Hearthstone, Pokemon TCG online, …

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11. Mixed genres

…

- Many popular games mix different geners …
- E.G. Forntnite Battle Royal
  - blends the survival, exploration, and scavenging elements of a survival game with last-man-standing gameplay.

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