

Scott Hennessey
Film 3720 – Alt. Game Dev.
Prof. K Coppersmith
02-09-2015

2nd Reading Response (Assignment 5)

The first section of Chapter Four is about the fun in the failure within video games, which points out what the author, and other researchers consider a strange phenomenon in which video game players find joy in failing, which is obviously different from failing in real life – very few people enjoy failing in real life. I personally have noticed this myself, in my own actions even while playing games. The very first time I picked up a plastic Guitar Hero guitar, I was nervous, and had no idea what I was doing.

With the difficulty set to 0 (Easy), I watched the buttons float down the screen, slowly, and seemingly random according to the part of the song, which they belonged to, and almost with the skill of a great river rafter missing a boulder, I missed the first button. With how easy it should have been, you would think I had to PURPOSELY miss - it was that easy! As time went on, and I continued playing, I SWORE to practice, and develop my meager GH skillz. I set the difficulty to Expert, skipping the “Normal,” and “Hard” settings entirely, allowing myself to fail again, and again, and again. My friends thought it was annoying to play with me, always botching the songs, but eventually I did indeed become an “Expert.” But why would I do that? Somehow I found it entertaining, and somehow encouraging...

The game my group and I have decided to work on is a Choose-Your-Own-Adventure style game, in which the player must make a series of decisions based on information given to them, but unbeknownst to them, they are destined for failure. At this point, we do not want the player to succeed because our game topic is so morally complex, we do not want them to come to any quick conclusions. But I can't help but wonder if lack in success will take away from our game. I wonder if the player will not want to walk down a dark tunnel that has no light at the end. One section of the chapter suggests showing the player their power within the game, showing the power in their agency, which gives hope that player interest will remain through choosing their own fate – or at least feeling like they can.