



COMP 376

Introduction to Game Development

Session 2

Game Genres and Characteristics

Based on Chapter 3 and 4 of the course text by McGuire & Jenkins
+ some slides from Fundamentals of Game Design by Adams &
Rollings (Adapted from Dr. Feven's Slides)

Lecture Overview

- Understand different game genres and their characteristics**
- Generating Game ideas**
- Converting an idea to a game concept**
- Tips for Making your Game Project**
- Learn how to write a Game Proposal**
- Learn how to write a Game Critique**

Game Development

Art, Engineering, or Craft?

- Games are **complex mathematical machines**, among the most complex software programs that we are producing today
 - **Technical proficiency alone** is **insufficient**; good enough to imitate(copy) but not to create
 - Innovation & creativity needed for a **unique vision**
- Game design is **not purely an art** nor an act of pure engineering. It is a **craft**, requiring **creativity** and **planning** that can be learned

Game Development

How Hard is it?

- Playing is fun! Developing is sheer **hard work**
- Among the most difficult software systems to estimate effort
 - Must not only be technically correct, but also **fun/playable**
- Even experienced people are **unable to correctly estimate** the effort involved in developing a game (**idea to market**).
- Most developers are **highly optimistic.**
Not artists though!
- Set your expectations accordingly

Game Development

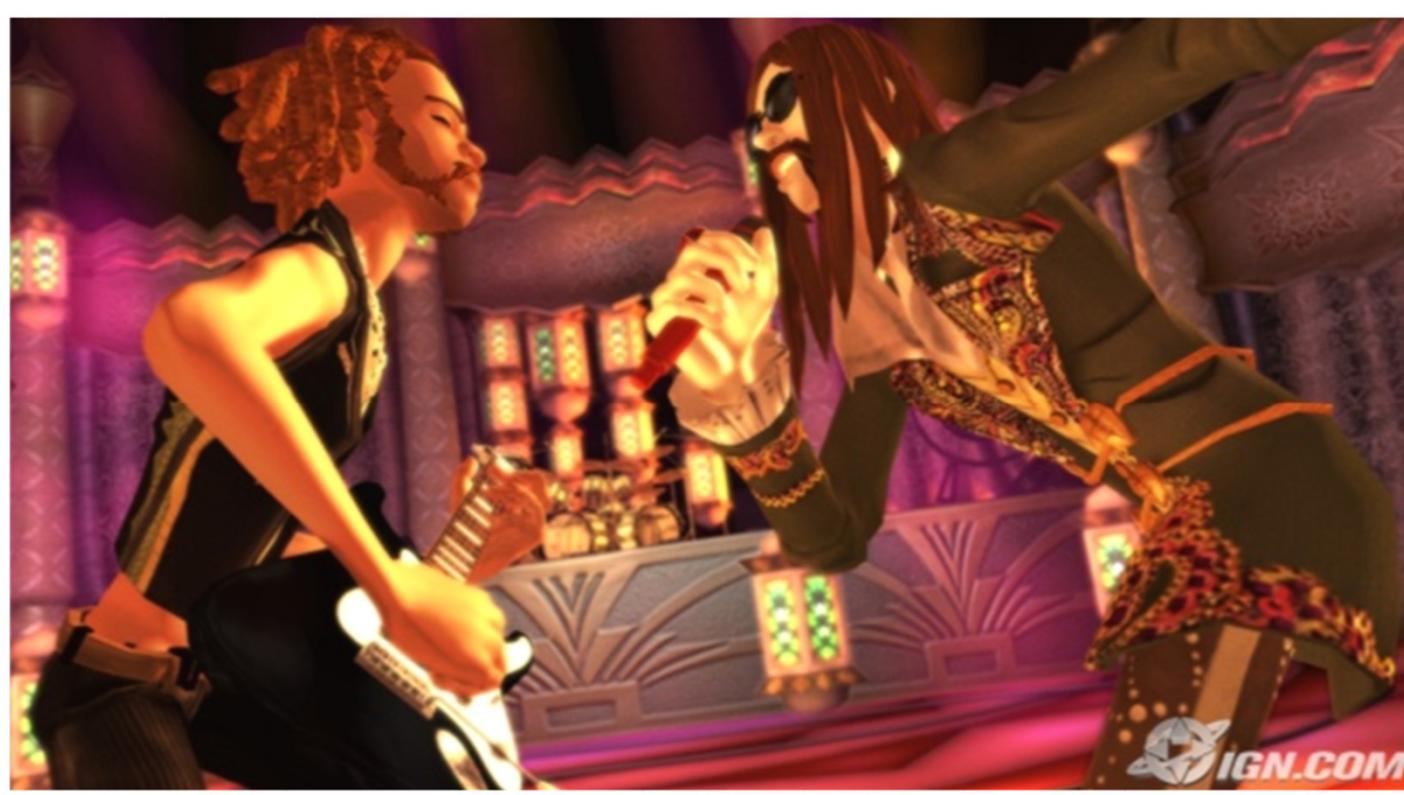
How Hard is it?



Star Wars: Old Republic – \$200M, 800 people from 4 continents, Six years, 1600 hours of game play, still more, 1000 actors have given voice over for 4000 characters in 3 languages Source: knowtechie.com

Game Development

How Hard is it?

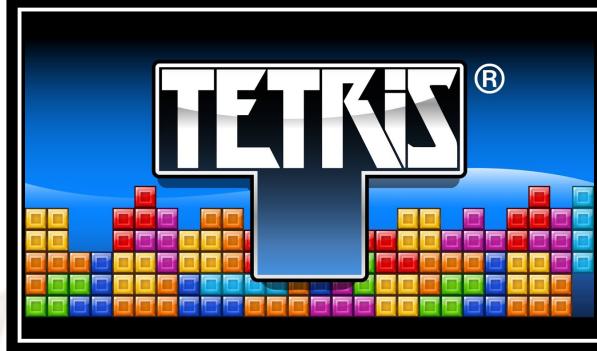
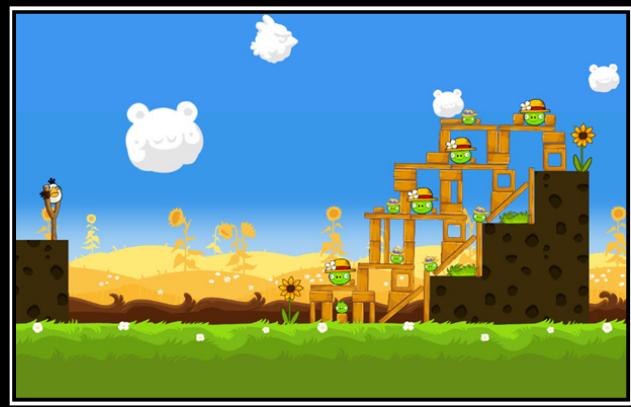


Rock band 2 – pitch and beat recognition, real-time multi-track audio mixing, support for custom input devices, stylized 3D

Source: <http://xbox360.ign.com/>

Game Development

How Hard is it?



Fruit Ninja – Angry Birds – Hill Climb Racing

Possible for a team to develop as part of a course

Game Development

How Hard is it?



Play with Fire (shareware) – puzzle game where the player controls a ball of flames which sets fire to everything in its path. Source: <http://www.gamershell.com/>
Possible for a team to develop as part of a course

Game Genres

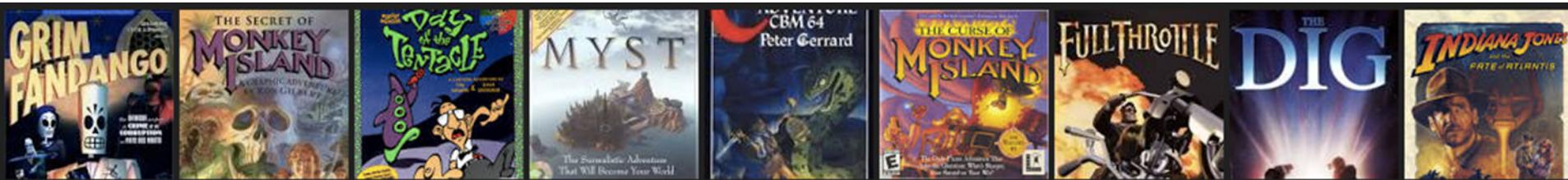
Adventure Games — exploration and puzzle-solving challenges

- Generally **story-based** games that rely upon **puzzle solving** to move the story along
 - Can be text based (requiring a parser of some kind) or graphical (point and click)
 - Can be **first**, **second**, or **third** person
 - Generally has a large, complex world with many interesting characters and a **good plot**

Game Genres

Adventure Games—exploration and puzzle-solving challenges

- Generally not real-time games
 - Can take **as much time as wanted** to take a turn; nothing else happens in mean time
 - Action-adventure **hybrids** can be real-time



Game Genres

Action Games—physical challenges

- Real-time games that require **quick reactions** to what is happening
- Includes **first-person shooters** (FPSs) like Quake and Unreal Tournament, platform games like Mario and **Sonic the Hedgehog**, maze games like Pac-Man, and shooters like Space Invaders, Metal Slug, or Gradius
- Opponents are either computer generated or other human players

Game Genres

Action Games—physical challenges

- Far less cerebral than adventure games
 - Players are looking for fast-paced action
 - Some action games, however, also add adventure, strategic, or tactical elements for a different kind of experience



Game Genres

Role-Playing Games (RPGs) —tactical, logistical, exploration, & economic challenges

- The gamer generally **directs a group of heroes** on a series of quests
 - Huge world with unfolding story
 - Players **micromanage** their characters
 - Through the game, **characters tend to grow in strength and abilities**
 - Combat is typically an important element – that is how **experience, money** and **strength** are accumulated

Game Genres

Role-Playing Games (RPGs) —tactical, logistical, exploration, & economic challenges

- Fantasy RPGs feature **complex magical systems** and **diverse races of characters**
 - Japanese RPGs – players guide the group of characters from the outside - **Leading a story**
 - Western RPGs – players take on the role of one of the characters, typically the **leader or hero**



Game Genres

Strategy Games — strategic, tactical, and logistical challenges

- Players must manage a **limited set of resources** to achieve a **predetermined goal**
 - **Resource management** entails deciding what units to create and how to deploy them
 - **Trade offs** in time, money, and raw materials
- Opponents can be computer generated, human players, or a **combination of the two**

Game Genres

Strategy Games — strategic, tactical, and logistical challenges

- Can be either **turn-based** or **real-time**
 - Turn-based strategies give you time to think and implement decisions at your own pace
 - Real-time strategies (**RTSs**) have all opponents thinking and acting at the same time; **no turns**



Game Genres

Real-world Simulations (vehicle simulations) —physical and tactical challenges

- Attempt to **emulate real world operating conditions with great detail**
 - The **more serious** the simulation, the **more important accuracy** is
 - **Great time and effort may be required** to learn all of the **intricacies** of the game

Game Genres

Real-world Simulations (vehicle simulations) —physical and tactical challenges

- Most simulate some kind of complex machinery, such as aircraft, tanks, cars, and so on
 - The result is racing games, flight simulators, etc.
- Not all simulations are so serious
 - Such games are referred to as arcade simulations



Game Genres

Sports Games — physical and tactical challenges

- Allow players to participate in a sporting event or activity of some kind
- Can take player, owner, manager, or coaching roles
- Can be a single match, series, entire season or life-time of the team or franchise
- Prowess in the real sport does not translate to the video game, but that is the point!

Game Genres

Sports Games — physical and tactical challenges

- Must accurately and realistically reproduce the rules and strategies of the sport
- Arcade versions with relaxed rules or reduced realism can also be entertaining



Game Genres

Fighting Games (Sports)

- Players control figures on the screen and use a combination of moves to **attack** opponents and **defend** from attacks
- Players expect a set of basic attacks and counters to start, as well as more complex combinations to **master over time**
- Most fights last only a few minutes, but there may be many rounds in a complete bout

Game Genres

Fighting Games (Sports)

- Games are generally viewed from the side
- Newer versions have **3D elements** and **multiple view angles** and camera positions



Game Genres

Puzzle Games—logic and conceptual challenges

- Puzzle games exist purely for the intellectual challenge of problem solving
- The puzzles are an end in themselves and are not integrated into a story, as is the case with adventure games

Game Genres

Puzzle Games—logic and conceptual challenges

- Puzzles can be non real-time or real-time
 - There are little or no time constraints in non real-time puzzles
 - Real-time puzzles have some timing elements and contain some action



Game Genres

Online Games

- Online games can include any of the preceding genres but their distinguishing feature is **multiplayer network play**
- Some can accommodate only 2-4 players, but others can take dozens, hundreds, or possibly thousands of players
- Hence the term **massively multiplayer** (as in MMORPG, Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game)

Game Genres

Online Games

- Often, communities grow around these games
- Online gaming is still **relatively immature**, with many technical and business difficulties unsolved



Game Genres

Casual Games

- Casual games are **easy-to-play**, **short session** games with little or no learning curve
 - Includes adaptations of traditional games like **chess**, hearts, and **solitaire**
 - Includes television games like **Jeopardy**, **Wheel of Fortune** and **Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?**
 - Also includes simple things like **Reversi**, **Minesweeper** and similar games
- Players are already familiar with the rules of the game and expect them to be followed here
- Players generally want to drop into and out of these games **quickly**

Game Genres

Educational Games

- Intended to teach while they entertain at the same time
 - Sometimes called **edutainment** as a result
- These games are generally aimed at a younger audience than most other gaming products
 - Designers must work closely with the subject matter to ensure the content is appropriate for the target group
 - Civilization, Brain Brain Academy, Assassin's Creed: History

Game Genres

Serious Games

- The premise is to **apply game design, technologies, and skills to non-entertainment applications:**
 - Medical applications
 - Educational applications
 - Social and public policy applications
 - Business and management applications
 - Military applications
 - Plus many other types of simulations and applications

Game Genres

Hybrid Games

- Games that cross genres
- Risky because it might alienate some of your target audience
- The most successful is action-adventure
 - Mostly action
 - Include a story and puzzles that give them some of the quality of adventure games
 - ODAMA: Real Time Tactical, Pinball
 - THE GUARDIAN LEGEND: Shoot 'em up, Action-Adventure

Game Genres

Combining Genres



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOQwakqWs7k>

Game Ideas

Game Development Initiation

Where do these ideas for games come from?

First path:

- Individual -> team -> management -> publisher
- Proposal -> Design -> prototype
- Publisher has to buy into your game idea

Second path:

- Publisher -> developer
- Essentially pre-approved

Game Ideas

Getting an Idea

- You can find game ideas anywhere
 - Dreams of doing something or achieving a goal
 - From media such as books or movies
 - From other games
- When evaluating ideas, remember that the game must provide entertainment
- Curiosity and research can help you find and develop a game idea

Game Ideas

The First Idea

- Most games begin with a single idea, typically revolving around:
 - A character
 - A setting
 - A story
 - A style of gameplay (e.g., Portal)
 - A philosophy (e.g., Spore / Myst)
 - A new technology (e.g., Wii)
 - Combination of existing ideas in a new way (e.g., Mario Kart)
 - ...

Game Ideas

Originality?

- Sometimes the idea is completely original (**to you**), but more often it may build on existing work
- Totally new ideas are great, but also unproven and untested
- New variations are usually safer, and probably more easily accepted by game publishers (and most players)
- So, while you do need something new, innovative or interesting, it's **OK if there are some similarities to existing games**

Game Ideas

Inspiration

- Books, plays, films, real life incidents, ...
- Immerse yourself in games - play, play, play...
- Many projects start with some variant of an existing game
- New Mechanic
- New Content
- New technology
(more on this later)

Game Ideas

Brainstorming

“The best way to have a good idea is to have a lot of ideas and throw out all the bad ones”

– Linus Pauling

Game Ideas

Brainstorming Steps

- Set a time limit
- Seed the discussion (6-3-5 Method)
- Write down every idea
- Do not criticize other's ideas
- Quantity and not quality
- Encourage others
- Seek outrageous and humorous ideas
- Build on and by modifying existing ideas

Game Ideas

Generating Game Ideas – Approach 1

- Start with **genre, setting, premise, & overall narrative**
- Advantages:
 - Easy to brainstorm this way
 - Good settings can make a game seem **very original**
 - Good for designing to a specific audience
- Disadvantages
 - Can **get trapped** into genre conventions
 - May not lead to great game mechanics
 - Can lead to **unfocussed, overly complicated games**

Game Ideas

Generating Game Ideas – Approach 2

- Start with **gameplay challenges & game mechanics**
- Advantages:
 - Most truly original games have original mechanics
 - Tends to lead to **simplicity and elegance**
- Disadvantages
 - Very hard to do without first framing a genre
 - Difficult to brainstorm good gameplay
 - Can lead to trivial or overly abstract settings
 - Difficult to sell to publishers

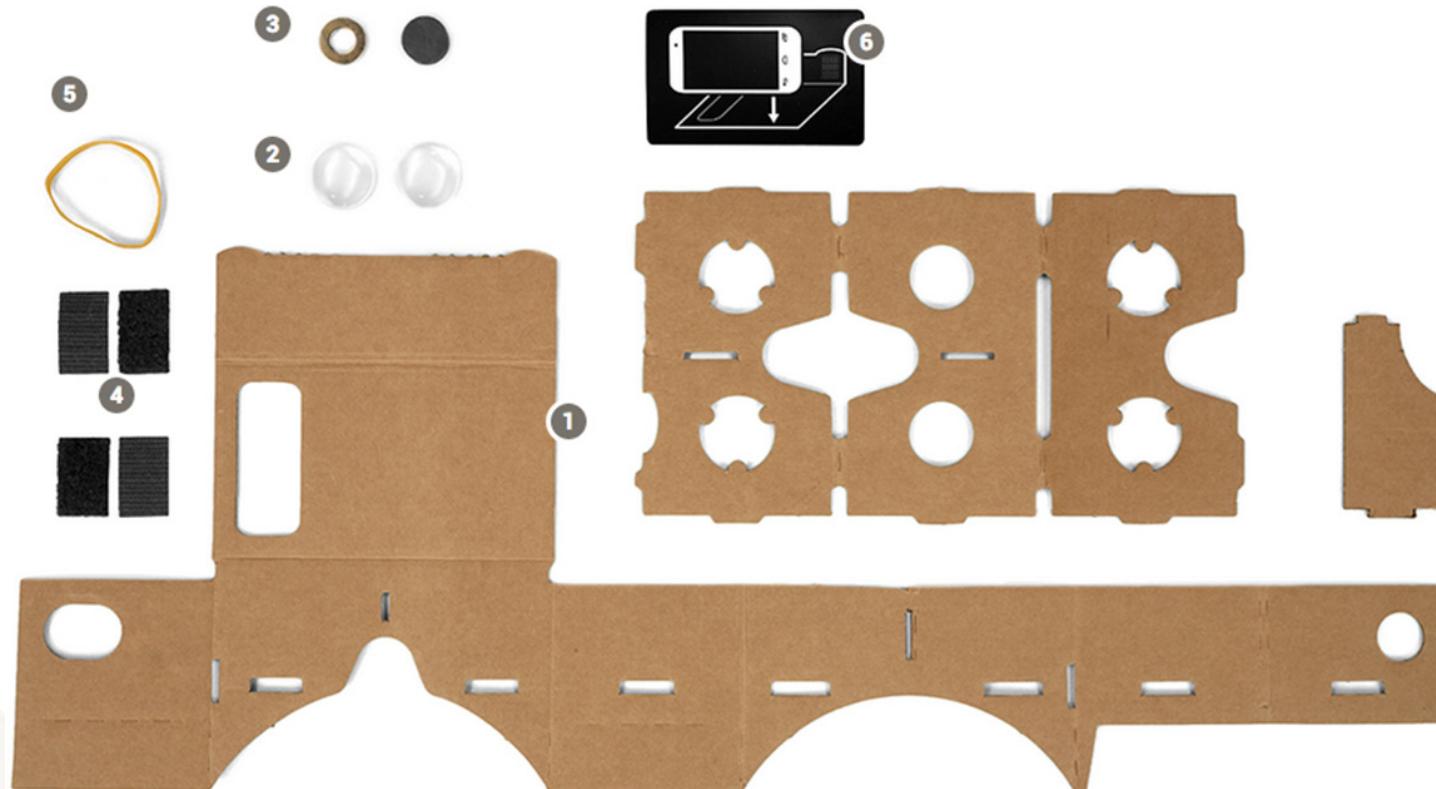
Game Ideas

Generating Game Ideas – Approach 3

- Start with **user experience** (e.g. see, hear, feel)
- Advantages:
 - Can draw upon personal gaming experiences
 - Provides an excellent overall game vision
 - A very player-centric approach
 - Can exploit great technology
- Disadvantages
 - Also hard to do without first framing a genre
 - Hard to turn into a cohesive game idea
 - Often leads to very long development times

Game Ideas

Brainstorming Session Example



Here's what you need

Game Ideas

Brainstorming Session Example



Here's what you can build

Ideas to Concept

What Attitude Do You Need

- **Bold vision shared by the entire team**
 - Game's general idea
 - The **target audience**
 - The player's role
- **Once the vision is fixed, should not change
(no second guessing)**
- **Various aspects of the vision may change
(probably will change)**
 - **Rarely** does the final game resemble what you originally **conceived**

Ideas to Concept

What Attitude Do You Need

- In a class **team**, each one of you is the lead
 - Set a good example, encourage other members. Champion their ideas.
 - There is no weak member!
- Always champion new ideas, **Don't reject them immediately**; less good ideas will drop out
 - Look for gems in the rough
- It is the team (**not the individual**) which owns the idea (**good or bad**)

Ideas to Concept

What Attitude Do You Need

- Be willing to **let go**; some work/resources are bound to be cut from the final game
 - “**Sunk cost**”
- Eyes on the prize – don’t get overly enthusiastic about any one element**
 - It is the whole game delivered that matters
 - Don’t get it perfect; **get it done**

Ideas to Concept

What Attitude Do You Need

- Don't keep adding features, or keep non-essential features**
 - Keep them for future enhancements/games
 - Target a **minimum feature set**
- Respect all aspects of development**
 - Respect your and your team's limitations**
 - Be flexible about accommodating how people get work done
 - Respect previous games; there are no new ideas**

Ideas to Concept

Game Industry Major Milestones

Pre-Production

- 1 • Game Design Document- GDD
- 2 • Technical Review
- 3 • Engine Proof
- 4 • Playable
- 5 • Interim Checkpoint
- 6 • Alpha
- 7 • Interim Checkpoint
- 8 • Beta
- 9 • Golden Master

Production

Final Stages

Ideas to Concept

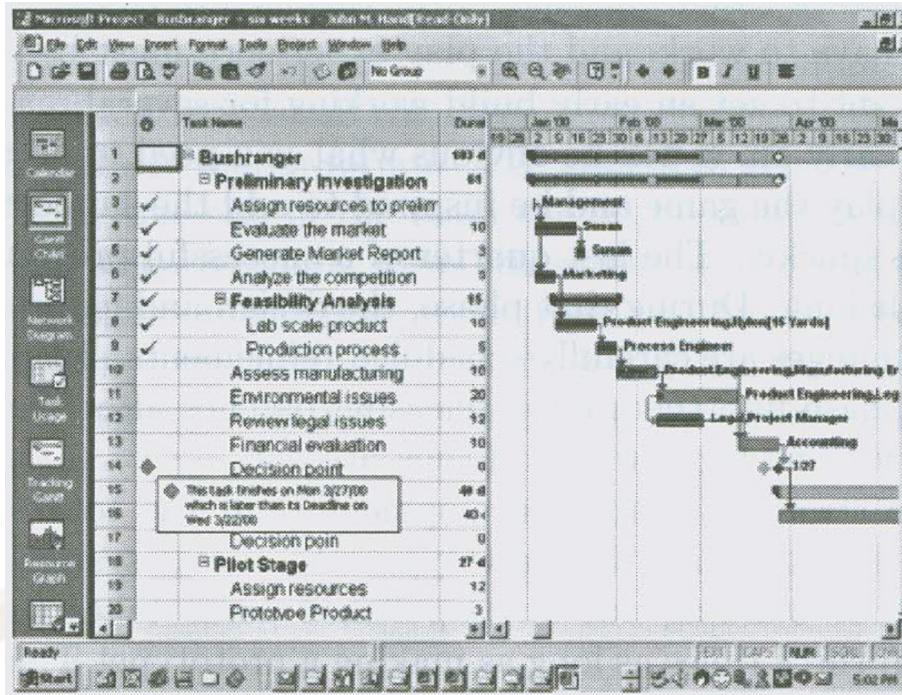
Development Schedules

- Begin with a list of regularly spaced calendar milestones:
 - Game Proposal
 - Game Prototype
 - Play testing Build
 - Complete Game
- Then work backwards from milestones to set of tasks needed for achieving that milestone
- Make time estimates for each task
- Work out task dependencies ($A \rightarrow B$)
- Assign tasks to team members
 - One task per team member in a time slot
- Create your project schedule

Ideas to Concept

Development Schedules

- Good idea to use Microsoft Project or similar tool for managing your team's schedule



Gantt Chart

Ideas to Concept

Some of the Best Practices

- Build early - A critical early milestone is a **working prototype** ($\frac{1}{4}$ th of the total project time)
- Engineers are **overly optimistic** in giving their time estimates
 - **Break down features into tasks that each take a few days**
- Fix existing systems; don't rewrite from scratch.
 - **Try not to build everything from scratch**
- **Cut features**, if the tasks for that feature do not fit into the time schedule
- Test continually

Ideas to Concept

Risk Management

- Risk usually comes from innovation, so don't want to avoid completely
- Research early, Learn use of tools ASAP
- Identify critical elements of your game and develop them first
- Build as early as possible – yes, it's worth repeating
- Innovate in one area, not several
- No member should be indispensable

Ideas to Concept

Consistency in Game Aspects

- **Consistent quality must be maintained** in all game aspects
- Amazing art but average music (music --).
- Two **major quality issues** in today's games
 - Plot (story or narrative)
 - very **hard to create** truly interactive stories which emerge with gameplay
 - Animation (robotic and not natural)
 - even if the 3D rendering and effects are superb, **poor animation** makes player perceive it as being less

Student Projects

Super Rainbow Force



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amQn7vl1MTI>

Student Projects

Singularity Conversion



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7P1sETjUhg>

Student Projects

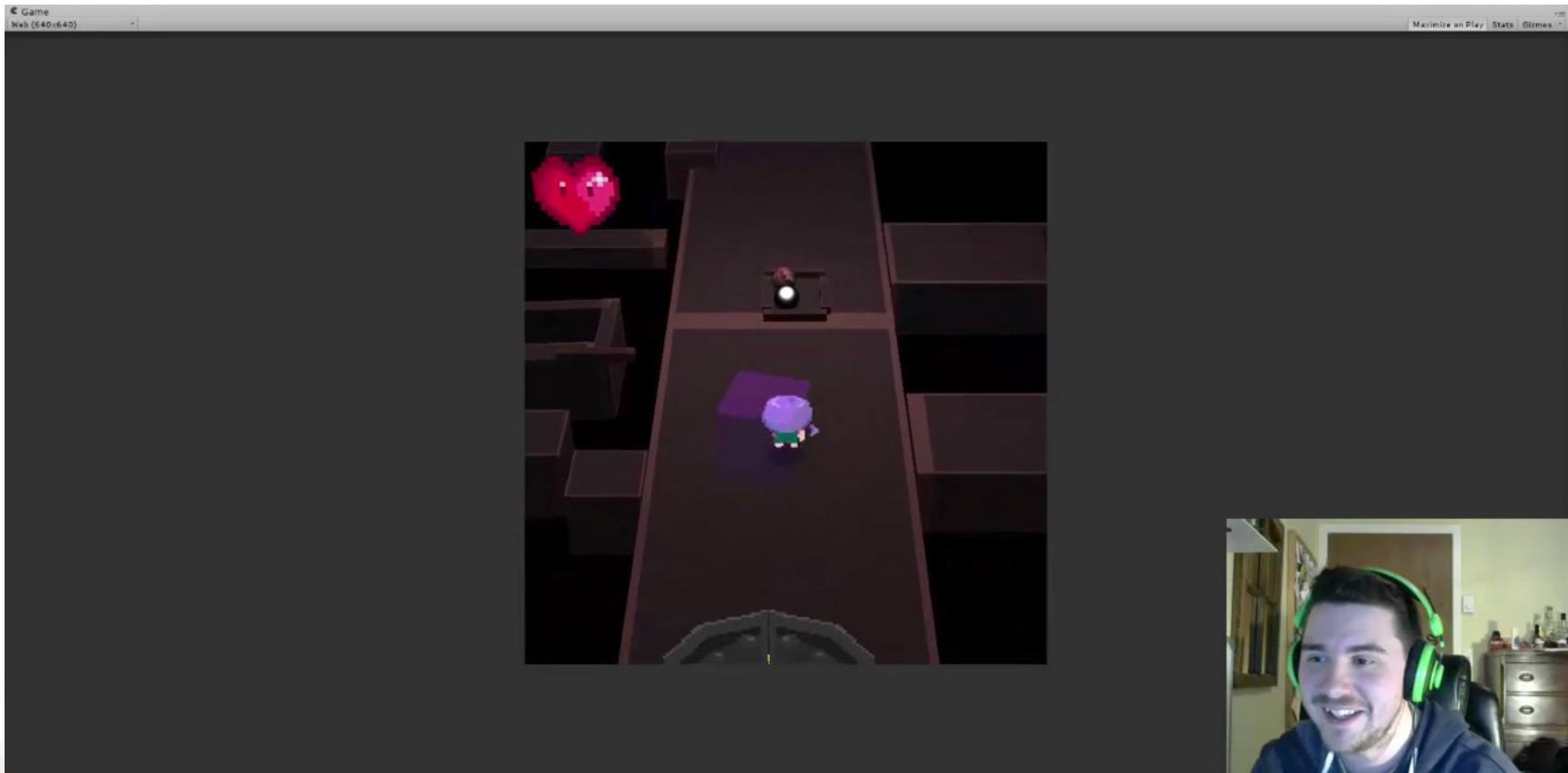
Continuum



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHCEh48auRM>

Student Projects

Can't Remember the name



Game Proposal

The Proposal Worksheet

- The format is relatively strict**
- Use this for:**
 - Brainstorming**
 - Proposing ideas to management**
 - Archiving **ideas** that emerged during one project, but meant for later projects**
 - Overview in the beginning of a more detailed game design document (GDD)**
 - Critiquing newly created and externally published games**

Game Proposal

Two Page Proposal Format

Title _____	 <i>Logo or Box Art</i>
Tag line _____	
Your name _____	
Genre _____	
Platform _____	
Market _____	
Setting _____	
Plays like <i>Popular Game A</i> meets <i>Popular Game B or twist</i>	
Summary _____ _____ _____ _____	
Mechanics 1. _____ 3. _____ 2. _____ 4. _____	
Reference Art 1. _____ 4. _____ 2. _____ 5. _____ 3. _____ 6. _____	

Related Games			
1.	Title	Publisher or Developer	Genre/Platform Year
2.	Title	Publisher or Developer	Genre/Platform Year
3.	Title	Publisher or Developer	Genre/Platform Year


Supporting Screenshot or Mechanic Analysis Diagram

Game Proposal

Proposal Format – Writing Tips

- Should be **concise** and **powerful**
 - Write **specific nouns** (coin, dragon, steel grate) over generic ones (bonus, thing, barrier)
 - Write **strong verbs** (soar, dash, pummel) over weak ones (fly, race, hit)
 - Avoid adjectives and adverbs; they consume space and conceal weak nouns and verbs
 - **Cut** everything that isn't core to the idea
Watch out for “and” “or”

Game Proposal

Proposal Format - Fields

- **Title:** While brainstorming just a place holder. In the final proposal it should be carefully crafted to inspire the reader with the setting, game mechanic and target audience
- **Tagline:** Expanded title, a phrase or short sentence that epitomizes the game. Also more like a mission statement of the game
Pokemon: “Gotta catch ‘em all”, Halo 3: “Finish the fight.”
- **Genre:** quick way to summarize gameplay.
- **Major Mechanics:** Identify primary and secondary mechanics
- **Platform:** Type of game machine

Game Proposal

Choosing a Genre

- A genre is a **category of games** characterized by **a particular set of challenges** (mainly driven by **game mechanics**), regardless of setting or game-world content
- Many players buy a particular genre because they like the **type of challenges it offers**

Game Proposal

Sample Mechanics

- How things happen in the game:
 - Shooting (or FPS Combat)
 - Puzzles
 - Physics
 - Internal Economy
 - Progression Mechanics
 - How to move though levels: levers, upgrades, etc.
 - Tactical Maneuvering
 - Racing
 - Precision Timing

Game Proposal

Mechanics: Action (Twitch and Arcade)

- Real-world agility to achieve in-game goals
 - **Avoidance** – ducking, dodging to demonstrate threat awareness and correct timing. Driving games combine obstacle avoidance and vehicle control
 - **Shooting** – instant hit or lead distance based which require more skill. Limiting ammunition, reload time, choice of weapon power and damage capability, secondary abilities etc. are strategic aspects

Game Proposal

Mechanics: Action (Twitch and Arcade)

- Real-world agility to achieve in-game goals
 - Jumping – Donkey Kong and Mario Bros. popularized this as an **action mechanic**. Can be used to negotiate pits, for locomotion, defense against incoming projectiles, for offense or in movement puzzles
 - Different **unrealistic elements** introduced in games – constant vertical velocity, running vertical jump, speed boost, air control, air jump, wall jump

Game Proposal

Mechanics: Lock-and-Key

- A **core mechanic** of adventure games
- Sometimes literal and sometimes implicit, often represented by **alternative fiction** – round up cattle before opening barn door, collect explosive for rubble-blocked passage, etc.
- Locks become **interesting** when they are nested, chained or interlaced

Game Proposal

Mechanics: Lock-and-Key

- Many more possibilities in **multi-player games**
- Universal keys create resource allocation strategies (red, blue, yellow keys in DOOM)
- Keys can be **dangerous** in **cooperative games** – one player can monopolize a key essential for progress. Accidental **deadlock** is another possibility

Game Proposal

Mechanics: Geometry

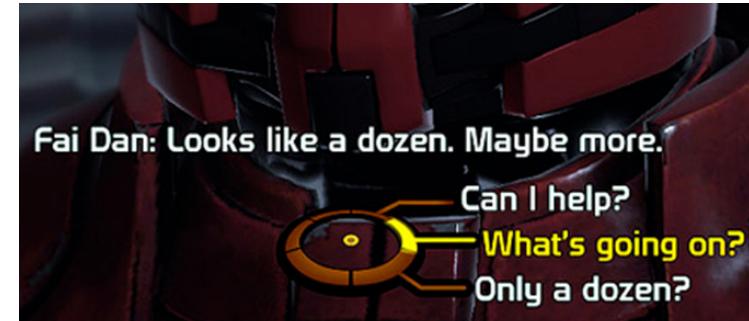
- Mostly used in **board games**
- Matching – Building on geometric properties of groups of discrete pieces. Mostly found in abstract or puzzle games. [Meteos](#) is an example.
- Tile placement – played pieces must match in some geometric or set-based sense. Mostly used in board games and casual game (e.g., .
- Encirclement – encircling an opponent's forces



Game Proposal

Mechanics: Dialogue Trees

- AI not yet capable of handling natural dialogue or qualitative interaction through conversation
- Dialogue trees are a way of simulating rudimentary conversations with an NPC
- AI makes a statement, then the player **chooses a response** menu of items
- Small amounts of **non-determinism** and **randomness** is normally introduced
- Response time may be controlled



Game Proposal

Target Platform

- Identify the target platform(s) on which the game will be played and defend:
 - Hardware requirements
 - Operating system requirements
 - Other software requirements
- As development costs rise, more and more games are cross-platform projects
 - Released on several systems to leverage costs and increase chances of success
 - Commercial Game Engines will deploy to numerous platforms from smartphone to consoles

Game Proposal

Types of Game Machines

- **Home game consoles (about 50% of game revenue)**
 - Simple, bold graphics
 - Standard controller
 - Excellent for **multiplayer games**
 - Personal computer
 - Keyboard, mouse, joystick
 - High-resolution graphics
 - Intended for **a single user**
 - License or special equipment not needed for game development
 - No standard configuration

Game Proposal

Types of Game Machines

- Handheld game machines (e.g., DSi, PSP, etc.)
 - Very popular and **inexpensive**
 - **Fewer control mechanisms**, Small LCD screen
 - **Less storage space** than a personal computer
- Mobile phones and wireless devices
 - Can provide **portable** networked play
 - License not required for game development
- Other devices
 - Personal digital assistants (PDAs)
 - Video **gambling** machines
 - Arcade machines

Game Proposal

Proposal Format – More Fields

- Picture/Logo
- Target Audience
- Plays Like: name 2 games which have some similar aspects. “**A meets B**”
- Goal: How does one score points or win?

Game Proposal

Target Rating

- The point here is to **identify the target Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rating for your game.**
- What rating are you aiming for?**
- Why?**



Game Proposal

Proposal Format – More Fields

- **Setting:** Where does gameplay take place?
Location, era, tone, ... -> drives the art direction
- **References:** six titles of previous books, films, games, etc. serving as reference for concept material
- **Key experiences:** 3 key experiences the player will undergo
- **Selling Points:** marketing arguments – combination of financial, trend and audience concerns

[For assignment 1 and the team project proposal, we skip the key experiences and selling points fields]

Game Proposal

Proposal Format – More Fields

- **Related games:** Select 3 closest games to this one and describe **how it is similar** and **how's it is different**, **how it performed in the market**, positive and negative criticisms.
Simply listing the plot of a game is insufficient
- **Supporting Screenshot or Mechanic Analysis Diagram:** Give a sketch of a **key scene** that will occur in the game (and will be particularly memorable to the player). Could be a combat situation, interesting puzzle, etc. Or, if the gameplay mechanics is novel, give a diagram outlining the novel interaction between the mechanics

Game Proposal

Game Proposal Example: Half Life 2



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iib5XsGAUdw>

Game Proposal

Game Proposal Example

Title: *Half-Life 2*

Tagline: “Run, Think, Shoot, Live. Again.”

Genre: First-person shooter

Platform: PC or next-generation console

Target Audience: Men age 18–40; sci-fi fans

Plays Like: *Myst* meets *DOOM*

Goal: Battle for the resistance forces against fascist troops and aliens

Game Proposal

Game Proposal Example

Major Mechanics:

1. FPS combat
2. Physics puzzles

Setting: City 17: a near-future Eastern European police-state under siege from both a popular resistance and alien invaders who are malicious to all

Setting References:

1. *Half-Life 1* and expansion packs
2. *X-Files* TV series
3. *1984* novel
4. *Equilibrium* film
5. *Fahrenheit 451* novel
6. *Night of the Living Dead* (for gothic horror sequences)

Game Proposal

Game Proposal Example

Key Experiences:

1. Creativity with the gravity gun, a handheld tractor beam, including hurling saw blades, knocking over gun turrets, and righting vehicles after collisions
2. Holding the roof of a brownstone with a shotgun as zombies rattle up the drainpipes
3. Skimming along a drainage channel in a hovercraft, under fire from Apache helicopters and shore batteries

Selling Points:

1. Repeat the design and leverage the reputation of *Half-Life*, a critically acclaimed and a blockbuster (over 8 million copies sold) hit
2. Engine designed for mod creation so that *HL2* is a platform as well as a game, thus extending its effective market lifetime
3. First 3D game with effective, realistic physics puzzles

Game Proposal

Game Proposal Example

Related Games:

1. *DOOM 3*, PC; Activision/id Software, 2004

Under development simultaneously with *HL2*. Both feature shader graphics, realistic physics, and FPS alien hunting. *D3* relies on superior technology and macho plot for tight, competitive FPS gameplay. *HL2* explores more beautiful locations, innovates with the gravity gun, and integrates detailed storytelling.

2. *Half-Life* for Windows PC; Sierra/Valve, 1998

Stay true to the original *Half-Life* story line, adding more realistic physics and graphics and expanding the plot with real-world political issues. Increase the conspiracy aspects of the original and introduce new, younger characters.

3. *Tomb Raider: Legend*, Xbox 360; Eidos Interactive/Crystal Dynamics, 2006

Also is story driven, with 3D platformer puzzles and action gameplay. *HL2* creates more interaction through the gravity gun and sidekick characters.

Game Critiques

Critique

- A specific process used in art for evaluating the qualities of a work. In game design we use this process for evaluating games
- The three steps/elements are:
 1. Describe
 2. Analyze
 3. Conclude

A critique can be **casual** (like an essay), or formal and **structured**. Both address the three elements

For an academic audience, begin a casual critique with a title which is a “thesis statement” you will defend (e.g., “Narrative creates tension in Indigo Prophecy”)

Game Critiques

Critiques, the three elements

1. DESCRIBE

Content: objective

- Begin with an Objective Description of the game
 - Give information such as title, publisher, developer, publication year, number of players, genre, etc.
 - The proposal worksheet can help organize this information
- Be **unambiguous**, and avoid subjective comments
- Because space is limited, focus your description down to **around one paragraph**

Game Critiques

Critiques, the three elements

2. ANALYZE

Content: Objective → Subjective

- Analysis is **critical reasoning** about one or more key aspects of the game; E.g., primary gameplay mechanic, how the art style serves the theme, ...
- The analysis should rely on **proven facts**, could be based on relation to known games, or from feedback from an experiment with players
- **Avoid judgments** like “good” or “bad”

Game Critiques

Critiques, the three elements

3. CONCLUDE

Content: Subjective

- Make a subjective conclusion based on previous analysis; **argue points** such as the game is not fun (fun?, and how)

The best conclusions are those that focus on **how** an element of the game **achieves** a goal such as **balanced mechanics** or **effective narrative**

What's Next?

Preparing for Next Class

- Assignment 1 – Game Proposal
 - Fill out the **Game Proposal** template for one the 4 existing games you played recently
- Game Project Idea
 - Once your team is complete, setup a weekly meeting time for the whole team
 - Start **Brainstorming**
 - Learn **Unity!**