Post-mortem: The Trial

The Trial is a top down 2D dungeon crawler with precision mouse-based controls. The best way to describe it would be Risk of Rain 2 meets League of Legends. Taking a lot of inspiration from the mechanics of Risk of Rain and using the controls of League of Legends. Initially I set out to accomplish a lot more than what was feasible in the time span that we had.

The initially plan overlooked a lot of the structure that would need to be put in place to get things on the screen in the right way. By putting less weight on the core mechanics initially and thinking that I could get to gameplay quick was a mistake. This caused a lot of stress for me early on as I felt overwhelmed by the number of tasks that I had to accomplish. This caused me to shut down from the project and lack motivation initially. Heading into the second milestone of the project I reevaluated the tasks necessary to accomplish the same game just with less features. This made things a lot easier as I had a better idea of what needed to be done. Getting my hands on the project narrowed down what I wanted to do and what I thought was feasible. The hardest part of the project was getting started.

Once I got started it got easier to find motivation to work on the project, and the more I got on screen the more fun I was having playing the game. As I played the game, I saw the potential of where it could go. Creating the ability system and data driving multiple elements were somethings that I really liked doing, making it easy to create new features that had similar architecture. I did not like the task of creating enemies and their behaviors so much so that I only implemented a simple solution to the problem. Another thing that was interesting to investigate was the start of a UI system with the implementation of a UI button. Making it in game code, I could test things out and set up some connectivity directly with the game. What I learned from this is that there are a lot of features that are needed to make a universal button. Simple behavior was simple but adding animations to the button was difficult the way that I had set it up. Also making buttons in code was a lot of copy and pasting of multiple lines of code. Moving forward I would try to solve this issue first to make it easy to use.

Working on The Trial from start to finish, as the sole developer, was a very informative experience. I found where I struggle to motivate myself in certain aspects of production. In planning I found it hard to keep things in scope and develop specific tasks that made progress towards the end goal. As the project progressed this became easier to manage with better task tracking and more time allotted to working on the project. Disregarding the minor pivot at the beginning of the project, I think that I did a good job of getting a game in some semblance of what my goal was. In the end I made a game that I was happy to work on, and I wish we had more time so that I could implement more features and gameplay elements.