# Game Genres

INTRODUCTION TO GAME GENRES:

ACTION, RPG, ADVENTURE, STRATEGY
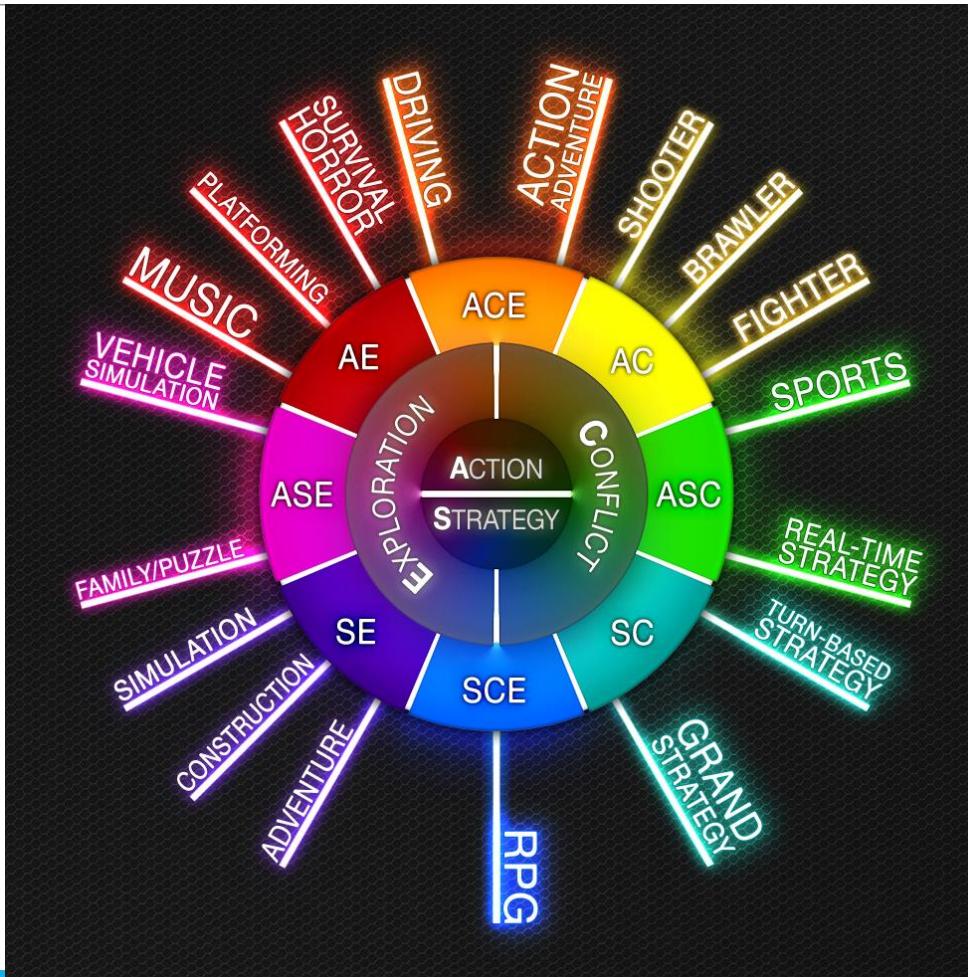
Game Genres

- There are about a dozen or so different types of video games, depending on how you decide to classify them.
  - Each video game belongs to one or more of these genres.

- While games in the same genre can look vastly different, they share many of the same properties.
  - Similar design issues and problems.
  - In some cases, similar gameplay mechanics.

Game Genres Overview
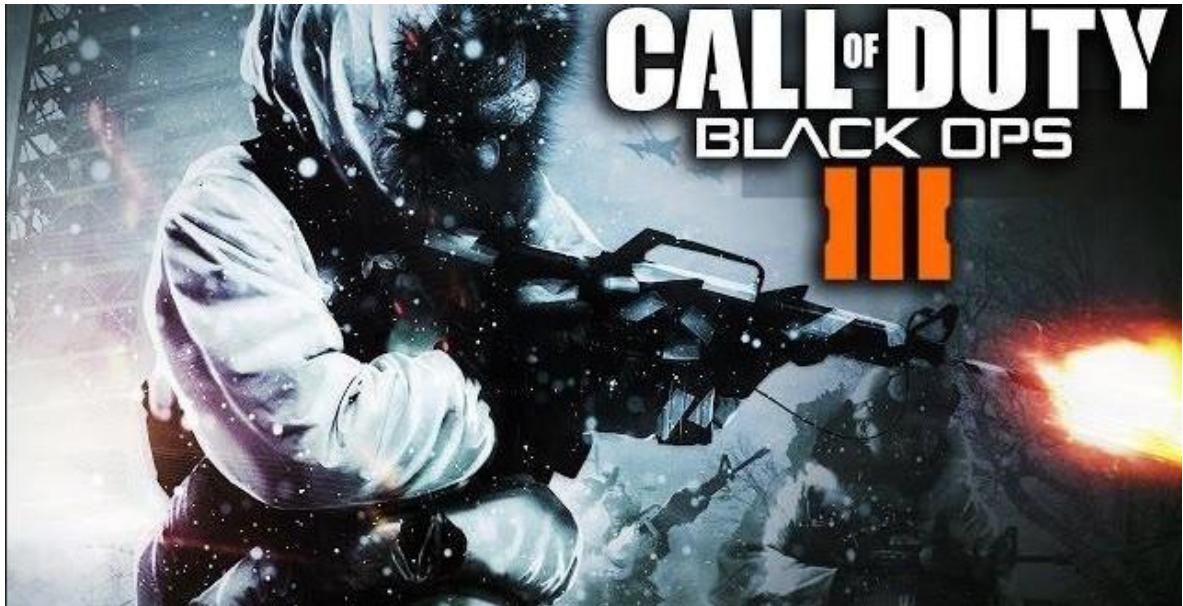
Action Games

- The general idea is to keep the player moving and involved at all times.

- The most important skills for a player are hand-eye coordination and quick reflexes.

- Deep thinking is generally not required.
  - Some action-adventure games need some puzzle solving abilities.
  - Some action games also benefit from tactical or strategic thinking abilities.

Action Games-examples

Call of Duty(First-person shooter)

Dead Space (Third-person shooter)

Action Games-examples

Tomb Rader(Action-adventure)

Uncharted (Third-person shooter)

Action Games: Point of View

- Having a good point of view is crucial.
  - The player must be able to see the action well in order to respond to it.

- Typically have a choice of first or third person.
  - First-person:
    - Tend to be faster paced and more immersive, but cannot easily "identify" with the character.
  - Third-person:
    - Good for action-adventure games as you can better see the character as he or she is being controlled.

    - Also allows one to better identify with character, which is important if emphasis in the game is placed on the main character (e.g. Lara Croft, Mario, …).

Action Games: Point of View

Screen shot from Resident Evil 4. A very impressive game, but some people found they spent as much time moving the viewpoint as moving their character.

Action Games: Level Design

- Good level design is crucial to the success of an action game.
  - Must be both visually appealing and functional, not sacrificing the speed of action just for looks.

  - Must reflect the story behind the game.

  - Must be well structured and able to regulate the flow of action in the game.

- Often it is careful balancing act.

- More on level design later!

Action Games: Level Design

Screen shot from Call of Duty Modern Warfare 2. The levels in this game are well designed and beautiful to look at too!

Action Games: Weapons

▪ Weapons are often an important part of most action games.
- They must be appropriate to the setting.

- They must have interesting characteristics
  that encourage players to use them.

- They must be well balanced.

- They must be synchronized with the difficulty of opponents faced in the game.

- They should be accompanied by good special effects, both in terms of graphics and sound.
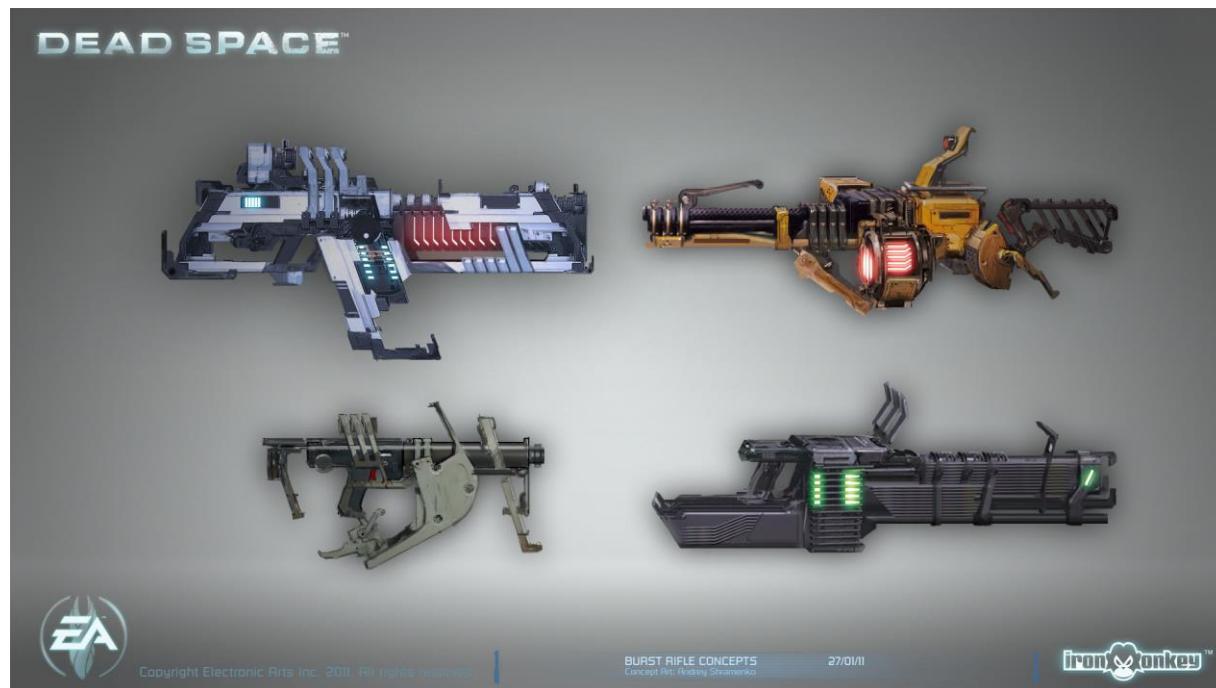
Action Games: Weapons

Screen shot from Resident Evil 4. The Inventory System and Weapon System was Designed Perfectly.

Action Games: Weapons
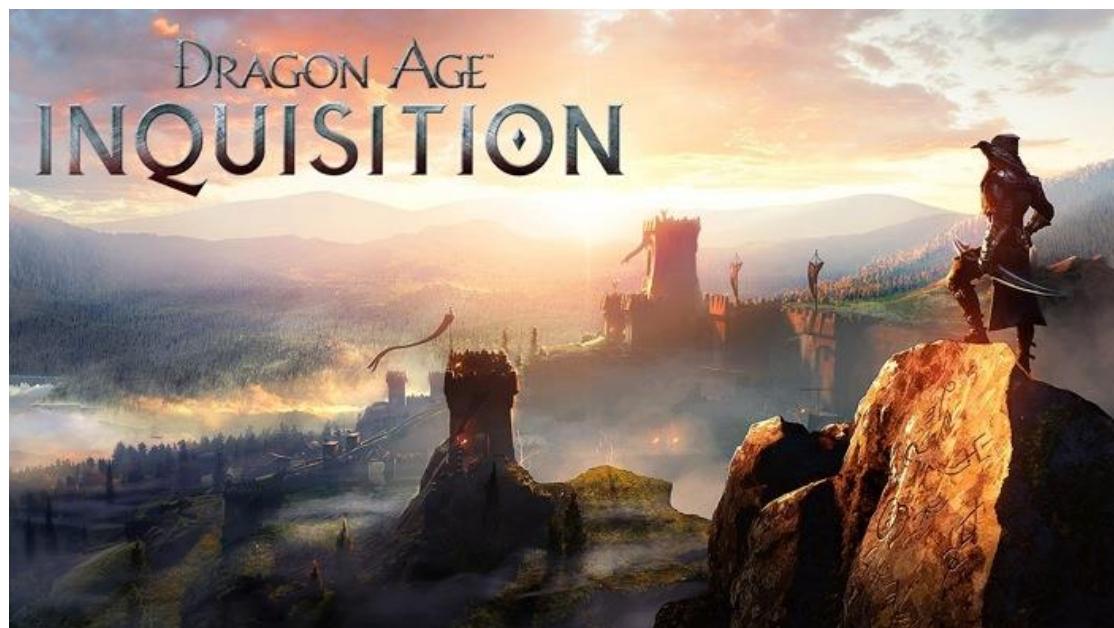
The Weapons System in Dead Space. Weapons are great!! . This game had some really unique and interesting weapons

Action Games: The Game Engine

- Build your own, or license one from a developer or middleware provider?

- Building your own …
  - Get exactly the features and functionality you need for your game.

  - Costly in time and money to develop.

- Licensing an engine …
  - Usually cheaper than developing your own, and you don't lose time in the process.

  - Often get lots of features, some you don't need.

BATTLEFIELD 4

BATTLEFIELD 4

EASYDRIVE

DRAGON AGE
INQUISITION

Action Games: The Game Engine

■Issues to consider in choosing an engine to license:
- ◦ Ease of use.

- ◦ Cross-platform capabilities.

- ◦ Look-and-feel.

- ◦ Support.

- ◦ Availability.

- ◦ Extendibility.

- ◦ Cost.

Role-Playing Games

■These games revolve around characters, story, and combat.
  ◦ Make sure these elements are done right!

■Take place in large expansive worlds.

■Frequently played over dozens or even hundreds of hours.
  ◦ The players will spend a lot of time with this game, so it is important that things like the user interface are done very well.

MASS EFFECT 3

Dragon Age Inquisition

Fallout 4

The Elder Scrolls V
SKYRIM
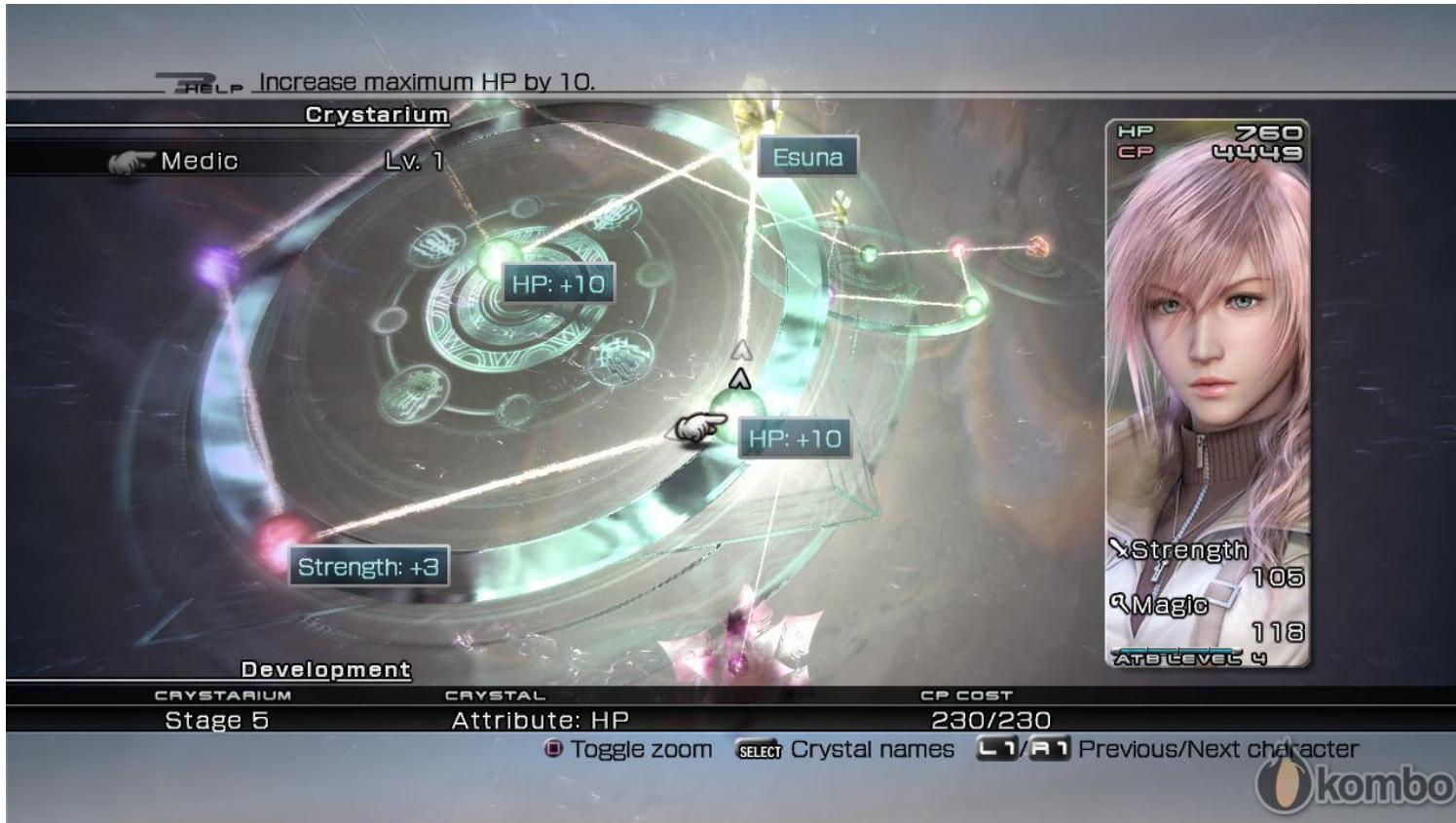
Role-Playing Games: Character Growth

- Characters should begin weak and vulnerable.
  - They gain strength and abilities through carefully arranged encounters and alliances.
  - In the end, they should be able to handle any villain.

- Players should have choices.
  - What attributes their characters possess.
  - What classes their characters belong to.
  - Ultimately, there must be limits on their choices to ensure balance in the game.
  - Players should also be able to choose to let the game do all of this for them.

- Players can grow personally attached to their characters … you must facilitate this feeling.

Role-Playing Games: Character Growth

Screen shot from Final Fantasy 13, Crystarium, The way of Character Development.

Role-Playing Games: Statistics

- Statistics play a critical role in this genre.
  - The attributes of each game element must be specified, as well as its interactions with other elements.

- Some players like this aspect of the game, and want to micromanage everything.
  - Others just want to get into the action and adventure, and skip over the micromanagement.
  - Allow both styles of play.

- Statistics are at the heart of this kind of game, but be prepared to hide them if the player doesn't want to be involved with them.

Role-Playing Games: Statistics

Screen shot from Dragon Age Inquisition, Character Attribute and setting

Role-Playing Games: Statistics

Screen shot from Final Fantasy 13, Character Attributes

Role-Playing Games: Story

- The story in an RPG is important.
  - Typically the story is delivered and told through a series of quests or missions.

  - This allows the player to explore the world and learn more about its inhabitants.

- Should the story be linear or nonlinear?
  - Usually best to give the player a small number or cluster of quests or missions at a time.

  - This way, the player has a choice in how the story unfolds, but isn't overwhelmed by too many choices.

  - The player should have several immediate goals, one or two midterm goals, and one final goal.

Role-Playing Games: Story

Screen shot from Final Fantasy 13. The Final Fantasy series has always been known for its elaborate and interesting story lines.

FINAL FANTASY XIII

WWW.FINALFANTASY13GAME.COM

Role-Playing Games: Combat

- Combat plays a key role in RPGs.
  - Design an interface that handles encounters gracefully and gives player a feeling of control.
  - Whether the game is real-time or turn-based, give the player a chance to make meaningful choices in combat situations.
  - Do not overwhelm the player … give them the chance to learn and master combat.
  - The first hour of gameplay is the most crucial … if the game is hard to learn and the player is killed again and again, the player will be frustrated and give up on the game.
  - Two major subgenres of RPG Combat: Turn based or Real time

Role-Playing Games: Combat-Real time

Screen shot Dragon Age Inquisition. The Combat Gameplay is almost likes 3rd person shooter

Role-Playing Games: Combat-Turn based
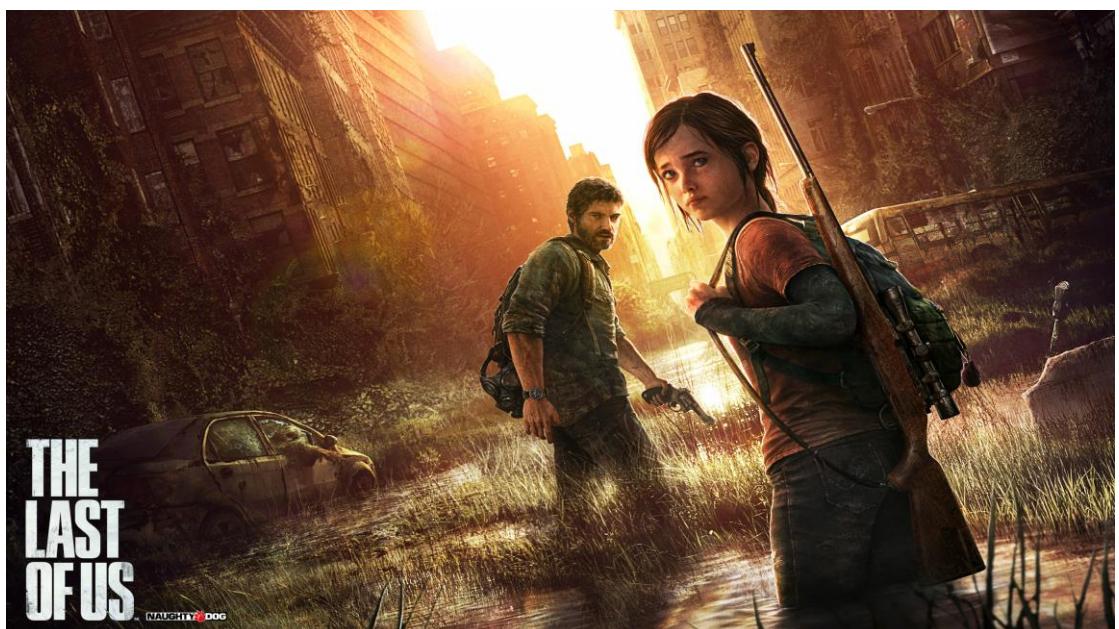
Screen shot of Final Fantasy 10. The Combat Gameplay is turn by turn.
Your turn and then Enemy turn.

Adventure Games

- Adventure games are primarily defined by their story and puzzle elements.

- If either one is done poorly, the game will suffer greatly as a result.

UNCHARTED 3
DRAKE'S DECEPTION
PS3

Beyond two souls

THE
LAST
OF US

How strong
can the Love
of a Father be?

HEAVY RAIN

Adventure Games: Story

- If you do not have a good story, you will not have a good adventure game.

- It is up to the game designer to decide what the story is.
  - You must decide what the story is about and build the player's activities around that central theme.
  - You must create interesting people, in interesting places, doing interesting things.

Adventure Games: Story

Screen shot from the Uncharted 2: Among Thieves. It has a very interesting story that unfolds as you progress through this action-adventure.

# Adventure Games: Puzzles

- After the story is developed, it is time to place obstacles between the player and their goals.
  - These obstacles tend to be puzzles.
  - They must flow naturally from the setting and story.

- A good puzzle provides a pleasant, temporary frustration that leads to that moment of inspiration when the puzzle is solved.

- A bad puzzle leaves the player angry, resentful, frustrated, and distrustful of the game and its designer.

Adventure Games: Puzzles

- Some quick tips on puzzle design:
  - Each puzzle must be appropriate to the setting. It must be reasonable for the obstacle to be there, and when the puzzle is solved, the player should know why the solution worked.

  - Puzzle ideas can be derived from the villain of the story … how is the villain likely to interfere with the hero's progress?

  - The puzzles must make sense. The player should have enough clues in advance to solve them.

  - Every puzzle is a storytelling opportunity. Each puzzle should somehow advance the story.

Adventure Games: Puzzles

Screen shot from the God of war 3: the music puzzle

Adventure Games: Interface

- The interface must be kept simple.
  - The player should be able to do as much as possible with a minimum amount of effort.
  - The player would be happier with an interface with basic functionality than one that has many features that is harder to use.

- Keep in mind the things the player will need to do in solving the puzzles to advance the story along. The interface must reflect this.
  - Exploration, communicating with other characters, examining the environment, object-on-object interactions, using inventory, and so on.

Adventure Games: Interface

Screen shot from Assassin's Creed 2. This action-adventure game has a simple interface that does not get in the way of either the fighting or acrobatic sequences.

# Adventure Games:
Linearity vs. Nonlinearity

- Players do not like it if they cannot make meaningful choices.

- If you give a player too many choices, however, they can get lost.

- A good solution is to design a linear series of open environments.
  - In each open area, the player has many activities that can be pursued in any order as the player deems appropriate.
  - When done, the designer closes off the area, does some storytelling, and moves to the next area.
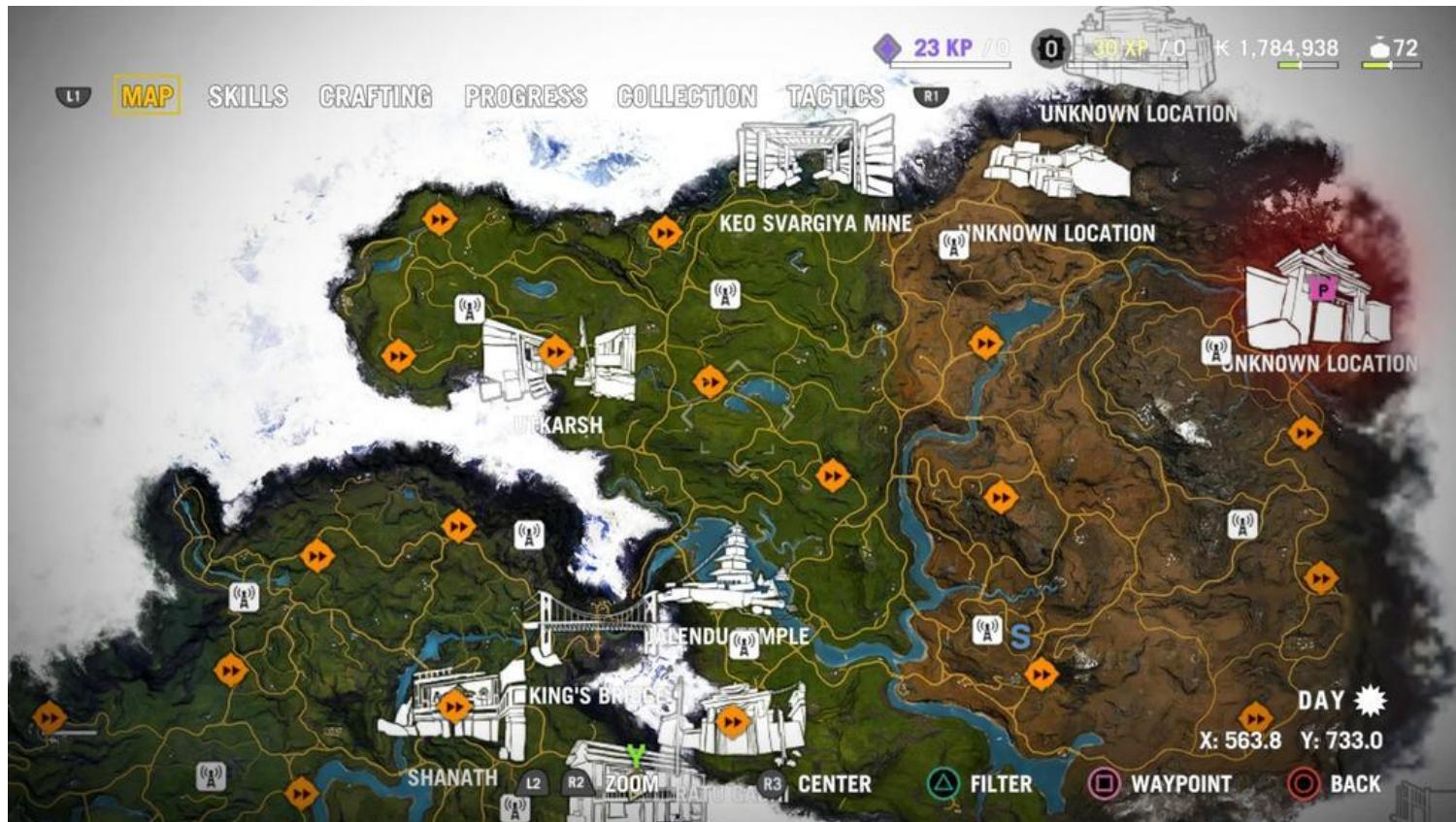
Adventure Games: Linearity

Screen shot from Ryse: Son of Rome, the game is completely linear in story and you have to do what game designer thinks for you.

Adventure Games: Nonlinearity

Screen shot from Far Cry 4, the game is Non linear. And player can do anything he likes.(of course the main story is almost linear)

Adventure Games: Nonlinearity

Adventure Games: Exploration

- Players are curious … they should be given the chance to explore the game world, within the confines of the story.

- Be careful not to give them total access to everything at once.
  - It can be overwhelming and they could get lost.
  - It leaves nothing left as a surprise to explore.

- Instead, use access to new places a reward for completing puzzles and to show the user that progress is being made.

Adventure Games: Exploration

Screen shot from Tomb Raider, the exploration in this game is extremely pleasure.

Strategy Games

- Balance is key to strategy games.
  - Unless exact symmetry is being used, this will require thousands of hours of play testing.
  - There will likely be a continuous loop of playing, tweaking, more playing, more tweaking, and so on.

- It is important to have a playable version of the game ready early on to permit play balancing.

- This balance applies to everything, including strategies and approaches used in the game.
  - If one strategy always succeeds against all others, the game will cease being fun to play.

Total war: Attila

XCOM: Enemy unknown

Civilization V

StarCarft 2

Strategy Games: Resources

- The amount of raw material must be balanced.
  - Too much, and players will never have to make hard decisions about it.
  - Too little, and players will worry too much about this aspect of the game, and not enjoy it.

- The material must also be spread throughout the environment to ensure each player has reasonable access to the resources.

- Lastly, the rate of resource consumption and unit production must be balanced across players and units.

Strategy Games: Resources
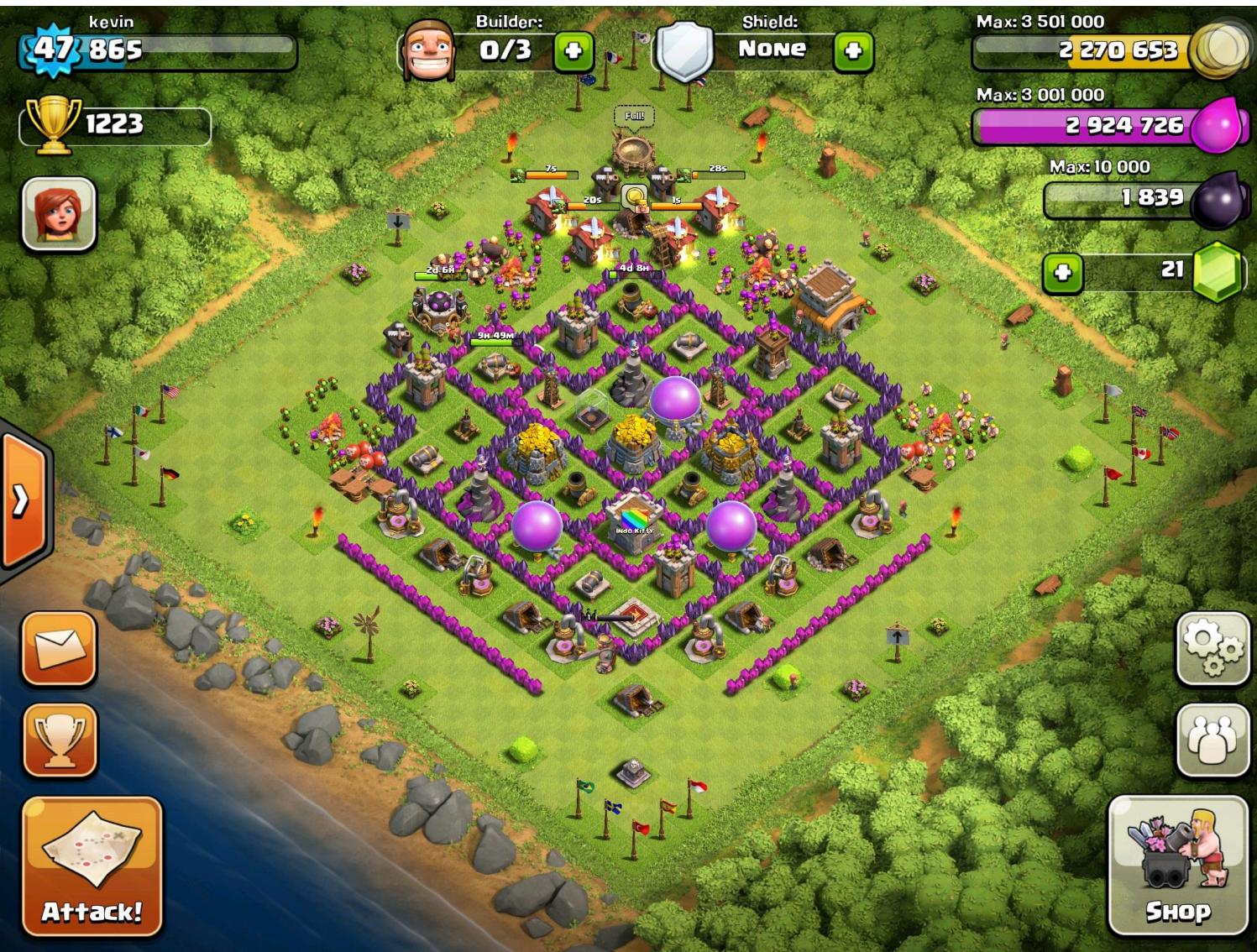
Image from Clash of Clans. The Gold, Elixir and Dark elixir are basic resource of the game. They are very important. And you need them for every things in the game

Strategy Games: Teams

- Many earlier strategy games have two teams of opposing forces, but more modern ones tend to have more.

- Regardless, each team in the game must have an equal chance to win.

- A good strategy player should be able to lead any side to victory.

- In other words, the teams must also be well balanced.

Strategy Games: Teams

Image from World of Warcraft.
This game consist of several races.
All of theme have special characteristics and abilities

Strategy Games: Units and Weapons

- Weapon and unit strength is important.
  - If everyone uses the same weapon or unit, it is likely too strong and should be made less effective.
  - If one is always ignored, it should be made better in some way.

- Each should have distinguishing characteristics, both visually and functionally.

- For interesting gameplay, the same units and weapons should not be given to all sides.
  - But, each side should have a defensive weapon or strategy for every offensive weapon created.
  - This helps to maintain balance in the game.

Strategy Games: Units and Weapons

Image from Clash of Clans.
This game consist of several Units and troops.
All of theme have special characteristics and abilities
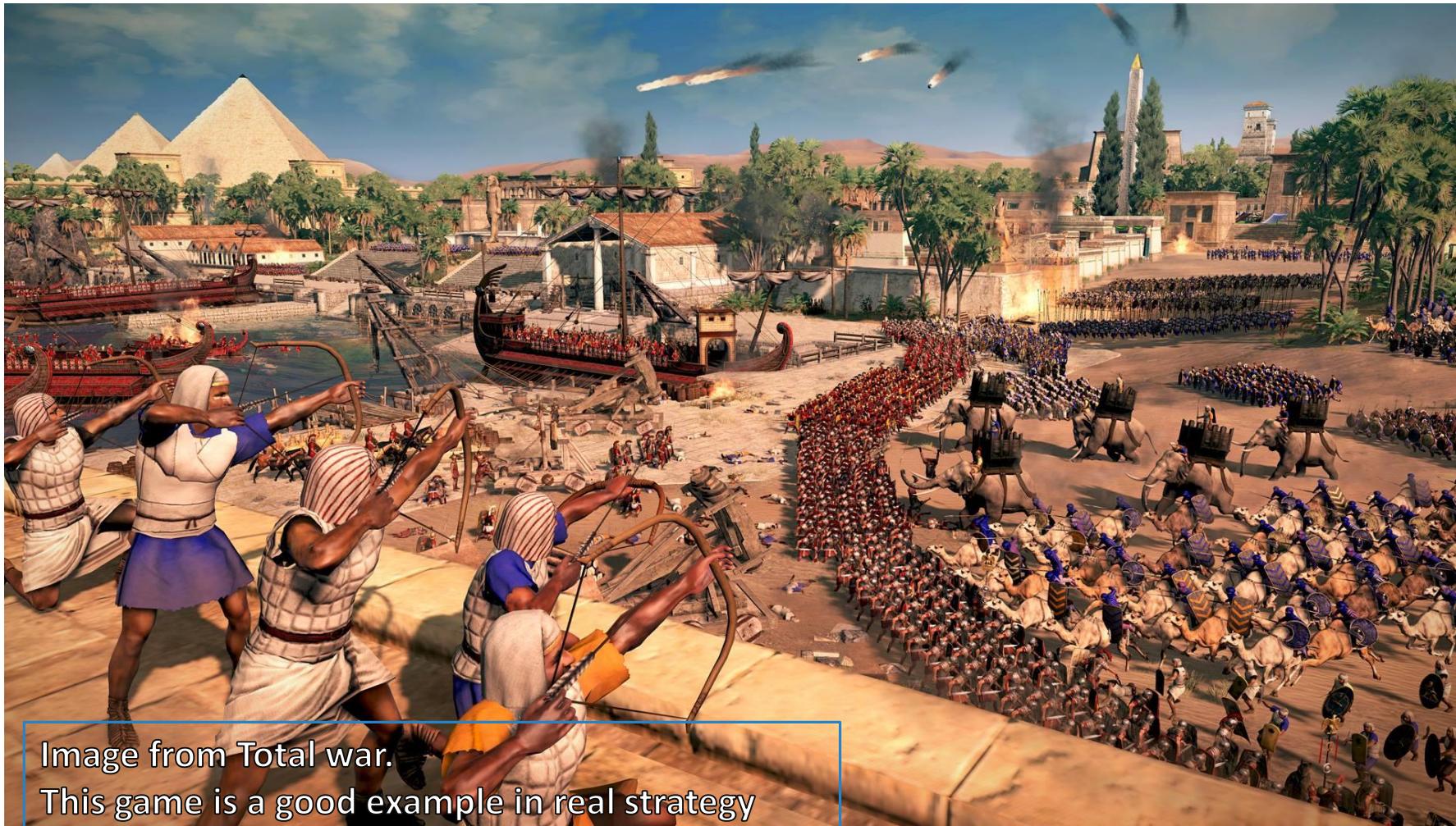
Strategy Games: Realism vs. Fun
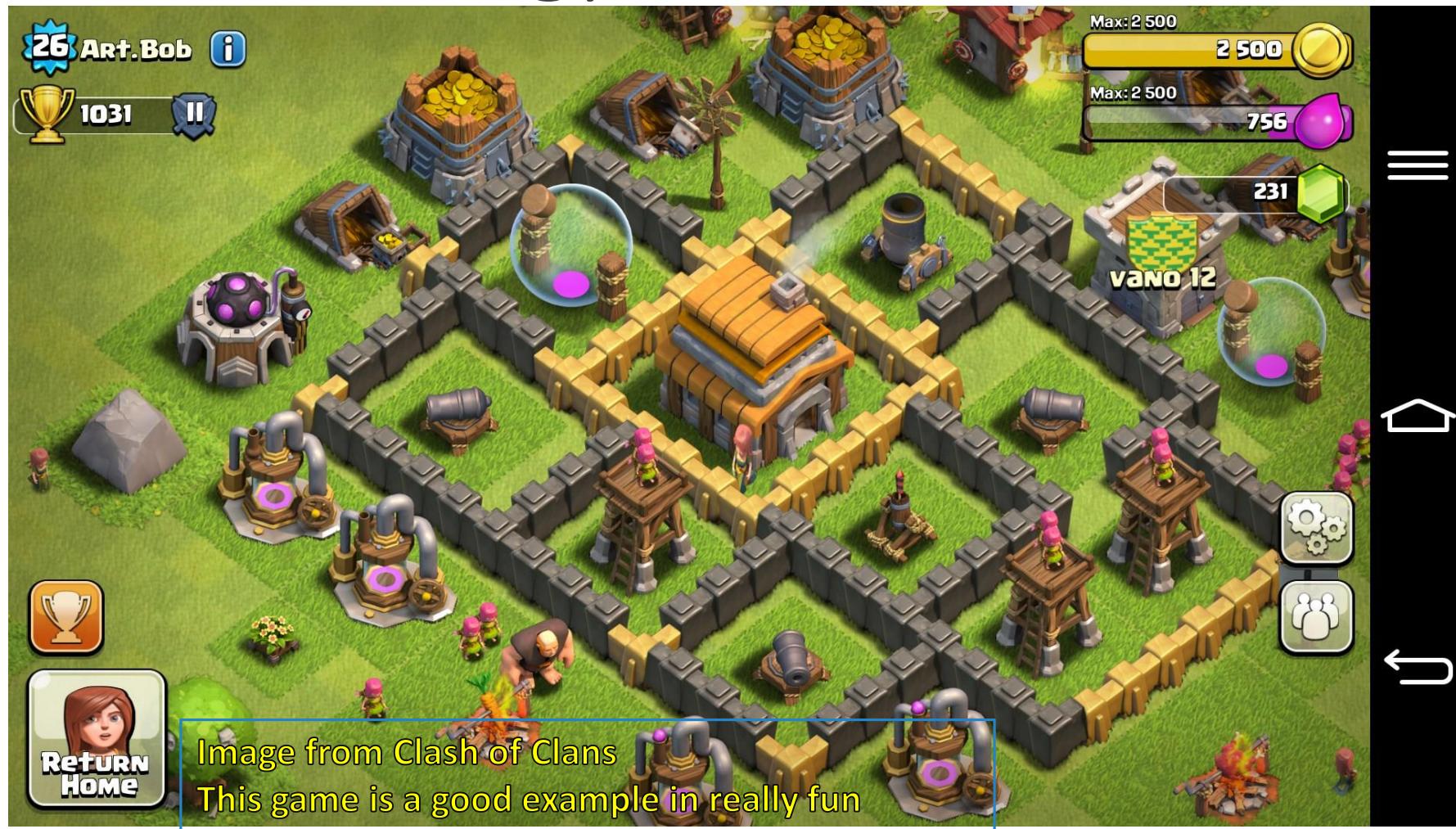
- If it comes down to realism or fun, fun should almost always win out.

- Even though units in a game often have real-world counterparts, it might be more fun or better balanced to have slightly different behaviour.

- It is a good idea to start with the real world in defining such behaviour, but ultimately, the game must be fun!

Strategy Games: Realism

Image from Total war.
This game is a good example in real strategy simulation of a real war.

Strategy Games: Fun

Image from Clash of Clans
This game is a good example in really fun strategy game

Strategy Games: Artificial Intelligence

- Artificial intelligence in strategy games is important.
  - If the computer always takes the same strategy or makes the same choices, the game will soon cease to be fun.

  - It can be difficult to balance the difficulty of the game ... the computer should neither be too easy or too difficult to defeat.

- Game designers must be clear on what behaviour is appropriate in certain game situations.
  - A certain amount of randomness is good too!

Strategy Games: Artificial Intelligence

Image from Total war series.
This game is a good example in really Strong Ai.
You can fell a real war against your enemy that
controlled by Ai.

Strategy Games: Testing

- Since balance is critically important to strategy games, so is testing.
  - An improperly balanced strategy game ceases to be fun quickly.

- Inside testing is crucial.

- If resources exist to support it, open beta testing with real end users can be incredibly useful as well.

- The more testing, the better!

Strategy Games: Missions

- Organize each mission around a single premise.

- Variety is important ... change the themes and structure of missions throughout the game.

- Quality is also more important than quantity.
  - It is better to have fewer missions that are well done with a lot of variety than lots of missions where the players keep doing the same things over and over again, and gets bored as a result.

- Make sure the player understands the objectives of each mission.
  - A cut scene is good at doing this.