Introduction to RPG Maker and Game Maker

Foundations of Interactive Game Design
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Astro Boy

• First Japanese television series using *anime* aesthetic
  ‣ Adapted from *manga* (Japanese comic book) series
  ‣ Astro Boy is English translation of Japanese *Tetsuwan Atom*
    ❖ Roughly translates to Mighty Atom, or Iron-arm Atom

• Created by Dr. Osamu Tezuka
  ‣ Considered to be the creator of the anime style
  ‣ Influenced by Disney’s Fantasia
  ‣ Introduced film-like storytelling
    ❖ Each short film-like episode is part of larger story arc
  ‣ Adopted Disney-like facial features
    ❖ Character’s eyes, mouth, eyebrows and nose are exaggerated
    ❖ Permits expressiveness with few lines
    ❖ Characteristics that are well adapted to computer games, with limited screen real estate for character faces.
Gamelog Assignment Feedback

• Many students did a good job describing game play experiences.
  ‣ Lots of fine detail
  ‣ Good emotion
  ‣ Likes/dislikes about gameplay

• Challenge for this quarter is to shift your perspective from that of a game player to a game designer.
  ‣ So, if a gameplay experience was positive, why was it positive
    ❖ What elements of level design, core game mechanic, challenge, conflict, etc. contributed to it being so positive?
  ‣ If a gameplay experience was negative, why was it negative
    ❖ Why was the level design not good?
    ❖ What specific aspects of the game were flawed, and hence contributed to your lack of enjoyment?
    ❖ Are there one or two things that could be changed to fix the game? What are they?
Many students did not do the assignment correctly
- Need 2 separate gamelog entries for each game
  - Many students only wrote one
  - Some students wrote two gamelogs, on two separate games
  - Idea is to play one game, write an entry, play the same game some more, write a second entry
- Missing gamelog entries for many students
  - They are either not done, or the email address used couldn’t be connected with a student’s name
- Grace period: you have until Thursday, 5pm to write the first gamelog entry, or add a second entry to an existing gamelog
  - Grades after 5pm Thursday for first assignment are final
- We sent email to every student’s UCSC email address with the assignment grade, or what was missing
  - This is the “@ucsc.edu” email address the registrar knows
- See the TA at end of class for your grade if you didn’t get the email
Upcoming Assignments

• Friday: Second gamelog assignment
  › Must write your gamelogs about a game from classics list
  › If you need to check out games from the library, do this early

• Monday: Team selection for game design projects
  › Maximum of two members
    ❖ Are working on getting a second XBox 360, if that’s an issue for you
  › Single person teams are OK, but far more work
  › Need to turn in
    ❖ Name of team
    ❖ Names of team members
    ❖ Two pieces of contact information for each team member, such as an email address or a cell phone number.
    ❖ Two times during the week when the team can meet for at least one hour.
    ❖ A location that can be used for meetings

• [Link](http://www.soe.ucsc.edu/classes/cmps080k/Winter07/)
RPG Maker Overview

- Game Maker is not well suited for creating RPG games
  - It is tedious to create the rooms, and add dialog
  - Have to write combat system from scratch

- RPG Maker is designed to support creation of 2D role playing games
  - Comes with substantial artwork for creating towns, castles, etc.
  - Has extensive built-in battle system
  - Permits designer to focus on creating settings and storylines
  - Allows a much broader story to be told in a shorter development time than Game Maker
  - http://www.enterbrain.co.jp/tkool/RPG_XP/eng/
  - Licenses cost $60 (PC only)
RPG Maker Demonstration

• *Nate Emond demonstration of RPG Maker*
• More in-depth overview of RPG Maker
  ‣ Tonight (Wednesday), 5:30-8:30PM
  ‣ Engineering 2 building, Room 280
Game Maker Demonstrations

- Demonstration of games made by UCSC students using Game Maker
  - The Fray
    - Ryan Callahan, Andrew Tysinger
  - Pixeland
    - Justin Rimando
  - The Life of a Chicken 2: True Fight
    - TJ Reid
What is Game Maker?

• Game Maker is a tool mostly for creating 2D games
  ‣ (though there is limited 3D support in the latest version)

• It uses a property-sheet approach to create a game
  ‣ Create a set of sprites, objects, rooms, sounds
  ‣ Each one of these has a series of properties that you can set – these affect its behavior

• Game Maker does not require programming
  ‣ It does have a scripting language (Game Maker Language, GML) you can use for more advanced features
    ‣ It’s possible to make very interesting games without knowing this language

• Though, of course, if you do learn the language, you’ll be able to make more complex games
  ‣ Creating games is somewhat less tedious using GML
Game Maker OS & Cost

• Game Maker runs on Windows PCs
  ‣ No Mac support, sorry
  ‣ Basic version is a free download
  ‣ www.gamemaker.nl
  ‣ See “Tools” section of CS 80K website
  ‣ Most students find they want and need the full version
    ❖ This costs $20, register via Game Maker website
    ❖ Can reduce the cost with a bulk order
    ❖ Have a signup sheet at front of class for those who are interested
  ‣ Full version of Game Maker is also available in ITS PC Labs
    ❖ UCSC has a site license

• Wait, I have a Mac! Don’t do this to me!
  ‣ CS 80K “Tools” page has links to “Power Game Factory” and “Unity”
  ‣ See also http://www.idevgames.com/
Game Maker Community

- A web site hosting discussion boards for users of Game Maker
  - [http://forums.gamemaker.nl/](http://forums.gamemaker.nl/)
- Has tutorials/examples board
- A novice user Q&A board
- Postings of games created by people who used Game Maker
- Pointers to third-party libraries to add neat features
  - Sophisticated particle systems
  - Lighting models