Foundations of Interactive Game Design (80K)

week three, lecture one
Today

- Demos of *Cursor* *10* and *Timebot* (& video of *The Misadventures of P.B. Winterbottom*)
- Outline of game project and game concept document
- What questions do you have on the reading?
- Game rules, part 1
- Paid note-taker position
Cursor *10

Timebot

http://www.piratejuice.com/games/timebot/
The Misadventures of P.B. Winterbottom

http://www.winterbottomgame.com
These three games

• What do we notice about them?
• You “collaborate with yourself” in all three, over time
• But the types of challenges and specifics of collaboration/time mechanic are different
These three games

- **Cursor * 10** focuses on mouse movement & linear progression in an abstract world

- **Timebot** focuses on logical door & trigger puzzles w/ overlapping time in world with robots, gears, energy levels, time travel, etc

- **Winterbottom** focuses on platforming challenges (getting to locations, gathering objects) and direct interaction with past versions in developed silent-film world
Game concept document
Game concept document

• Your project will be an innovative game — this document presents your concept

• So to start you need a concept!

• Play to your team’s strengths: game design, programming, visual design, writing, theme or world knowledge, etc.
Your goal

- A game you can submit to festivals, conferences, contests, etc
- A game you can explain in 30 seconds
- A game you can demo in 3 minutes and play in under 30 minutes
Game innovation

• A novel combination of mechanics. *Timebot* combines simple door/trigger puzzles & “collaborate with yourself”

• Familiar mechanics in a new situation. *American McGee's Alice* uses standard action mechanics in dark Wonderland
Game innovation

- A new mechanic for something familiar (wheel navigation of *Mass Effect* dialogue)
- A new mechanic for the unfamiliar (*Portal’s* portals)
Game ideas

• Gameplay: a puzzle game, a party game, a game like *The Sims*, a game like *Super Mario*

• Technology: a 3D game, an asynchronous multiplayer game, a Game Maker trick

• World, theme, story: HP Lovecraft, environmental education, espionage
Game ideas

• Brainstorm multiple ideas connected to your team’s strengths/interests

• “A 2D Sims-style game set in an HP Lovecraft world”

• “A mosaic-assembling puzzle game with mechanics inspired by art history”

• “A Diplomacy-style game of conflict and allegiance set in a suburban mall”
Project scope

• Your game prototype is due in three weeks. It must show your basic mechanics operating in your world/theme. This core needs to be challenging but achievable.

• Your completed, playtestable game is due in six weeks. This expands the core into a full game — but not a massive one. Mechanics and world complete, innovative, working.
Our contest

- 80K also has a yearly game contest
- We’ll have judges from industry
- We’ll have prizes (more details TBA)
- To do well in our contest you also need to be able to explain what makes your game unique in 30 seconds and demo in 3 min
Game concept document

• Includes: title, overview, bios, description, and design sketches

• Most important element: tell us what makes your game unique

• Details in the syllabus:
  http://www.soe.ucsc.edu/classes/cmps080k/Winter09/project.html#concept
Questions on the reading?
Rules, part 1
What are rules?

• Limit what can be done (Salen & Zimmerman)
• Specify opportunities for doing things (Juul)
• For Juul, include both gameplay rules and gameworld rules
• In essence, the structure
State machines

- States and transitions — a view of rules
- Computer games != FSMs, but have state
Game trees

A huge number of possible states for even very simple games: rules over time
Rules as algorithm: definiteness is key
• Paid note-taker position available via DRC
• Office hours only 3:30–4pm
• See you Friday!