Foundations of Interactive Game Design (80K)

week two, lecture two
An interesting opportunity

- A research study is being run soon on a topic related to this course
- You can sign up via a link posted on the forums
- It should be an interesting experience — but I can’t say more (shouldn’t bias you)
Today

• Demos of *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* and *Braid* — plus *Closure*

• Talking about your game projects

• Ran out of time for: demos of *Adventure* and *Ad Verbum* and discussion of Mary-Anne Buckles reading

• Preview of next week
but first...
Quiz #1

12 minutes, use both sides of paper, closed book, no notes, no collaboration, etc.

If you are a DRC student and have not come to my office hours — make note on your quiz, come ASAP.
Now games
Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time
Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time

- 2003 entry into long-running *Prince of Persia* series, first designed by Jordan Mechner since original (1989)
- The ability to rewind time (and slow, etc) is added to 3D platforming/combat mechanics
- Time manipulation is a resource to be collected, saved, and spent
Braid
Braid

• Engages the long history of 2D platformers (Mario, original PoP, etc) but is a new game largely created by Jonathan Blow

• The ability to rewind time is added to platforming mechanics

• The ability to rewind is infinite — but some elements are “out of time” (creating time-oriented platforming puzzles)
PoP:SoT and Braid

• A connection between the mechanics and the fiction

• In PoP, the same events explain the new mechanics and provide the story momentum (and reason to kill NPCs)

• In Braid the mechanics are thematically related to world’s backstory and motives (as made clear in level-entry texts)
But time isn’t just for platformers

Winterbottom is a platformer, but Timebot is not
Achron: Time travel RTS

Also not a platformer
Other platformer innovations
Portal

Obviously
Closure

http://www.newgrounds.com/portal/view/480006
Let’s play!
Spelunky

Rouge-style generation, destructable terrain
Snapshot

Capture objects/creatures with snapshots
reposition to move, solve puzzles, etc
Changing the platform space

• Changing space’s connections (*Portal*)
• Changing space’s presence (*Closure*)
• Changing space’s objects (*Spelunky*)
• Moving objects non-traditionally (*Snapshot*)
• If you’re thinking of making a platformer, places to start brainstorming...
Speaking of brainstorming
Fullerton on brainstorming

- Get together to brainstorm!
- Have a challenge for the session
- No criticism
- Vary the method

- Playful environment
- Put it on the wall
- Go for lots of ideas
- Don’t go too long
Alternate methods

- List creation
- Idea cards
- Mind map
- Stream of consciousness
- Shout it out
- Cut it up
- Surrealist games
- Research
Edit and refine

- Will Noah and the TAs think it is innovative?
- Do we have the skills needed?
- Do we have the time needed?
- Will we be happy to have made it?
- Do we know how to start prototyping a playable, formal system?
- Would it be compelling to play?
Your game projects
Your goal

- A game of the sort that does well at festivals, conferences, contests...
- A game you can explain in 30 seconds
- A game you can demo in 3 minutes and play in under 30 minutes
Game innovation

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

• A new mechanic supported by new element. Timebot combines simple door/trigger puzzles & “collaborate with yourself”
Game innovation

• A new mechanic for something familiar (wheel navigation of *Mass Effect* dialogue)

• A new mechanic for the unfamiliar (*Portal*’s portals are a new gameplay element, even if already in engines)
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 specific tool trick
- World, theme, story: HP Lovecraft, environmental education, espionage
Game ideas

• Brainstorm multiple ideas connected to your 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”
Questions?
Finally
Next week

- Tutorial #2 is due
- Team selections are due
- Start prototyping your game design ideas
- More reading from textbook and online sources — including covering first major home game console