Game Design Studio I

week 3, class 3
Today

- News
- Games
- Design
News

• We will have a round of pitches on the 12th, then more later.

• We won’t be asking outside judges to come twice — instead guest speaking.

• First guest speaker: Jim Rushing!
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 pitching a platformer, places to start brainstorming...
Discussing design
Player centric design

• You are creating an experience for the player – all design considerations must flow from the questions:
  • What does the player do?
  • What experience does this create for the player (why would they do it)?
• You are not your own typical player
• The player is not your opponent
Formal game elements

- Player manipulates controller and sees/hears/feels outputs
- User interface translates inputs into gameworld actions and translates challenges into something the player can perceive
- Core mechanics are the rules by which the gameworld and game operate
Games and simulations

- A simulation is a runnable model of a real-world situation that is less complex than the real-world.
- Aspects of the world have been abstracted away.
- The core mechanics of a game like a simulation (runnable model that describes how the world state evolves).
- What’s the difference between a simulation and a game?
- A simulation isn’t *playable*, specifically.
- It doesn’t necessarily provide for player *actions*.
- And even if it does, it doesn’t structure the output in terms of *challenges*. 
To do

Final pitches to Brandon by Sunday midnight — including presentation slides and document for judges to take away