E19.2176 Simulations and Games for Education
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Overview

- Educational Game Design: Narrative
  - Example
  - Definitions
  - Student Presentations
  - Empirical evidence
  - Activity

Game Narratives

- Narrative Examples
  - Metal Gear Solid
    - Trailer
  - Professor Layton and the Curious Village
    - Trailer

Game Narratives

- Game Narratives–Definitions
  - Bruner: mind as creator of meanings through narrative, not information processing
  - Juul: Narratives as back story
  - J. Hillis Miller: Components of a narrative:
    - Situation (initial state, change, insight = events)
    - Character: Personification of events (via a system of representations, signs)
    - Form: Representation is constituted by patterning and repetition
• Class Discussion
  ◦ Why does the non-linear quality of games challenge their narrative character?
  ◦ How can this challenge be addressed?
  ◦ Does every game have a narrative?

• Narratology
  - Games best understood by stories they describe
  - Games as alternative story telling medium

• Ludology
  - Focus on the nature of games as interactive system, rules, game process
  - Describe game as set of rules, structure
  - Games as own discipline

• Two Structures for Game Narratives (Salen & Zimmerman)
  - Embedded Narrative
    - Game narrative as crafted story interactively told
    - Narrative is relatively predetermined
    - Example:
  - Emergent Narrative
    - Players engage with narrative as an emergent experience that happens during game play
    - Narrative arises from set of rules governing interactions
    - Interactions are content dependent
    - Example:

  Games can combine embedded and emergent narratives.

• Game Narratives–Student Presentations

• Game Narratives–Empirical Evidence
• Narratives in Simulations
  ◦ Kinetic Theory of Heat
    ⊙ Narrative > Case Example > No scaffold

• Narratives in Simulations
  ◦ Game Narratives and Core Principles
    (Salen & Zimmerman)
    ◦ Goal of the Game
    ◦ Conflict
    ◦ Uncertainty
    ◦ Core mechanics
    ◦ Narrative Space

• Narratives Descriptors
  (Salen & Zimmerman)
  ◦ Depictions of one or more aspects of the game world
  ◦ Help player make sense of the world (Settings, events, characters)
  ◦ Appear on many levels:
    ◦ On the side panels of the physical arcade cabinets
    ◦ Explanations in game manuals
    ◦ Audio sound tracks
    ◦ Graphical elements in the game

• Cutscenes
  (Salen & Zimmerman)
  ◦ Surveillance or Planning tool
  ◦ Game Play Catapult
  ◦ Scene and Mood Setting
  ◦ Choice and Consequence
  ◦ Rhythm and Pacing
  ◦ Player Reward
  ◦ Example:
    http://www.gamespot.com/pc/strategy/homeworld/
    index.html
    http://nikon.bungie.org/misc/cutscenes/halo2.html
Class Activity: Game Narratives

- Develop a narrative for your educational game:
  - Decide on the type of narrative
  - Describe the narrative related to each core principle

What’s next?

- Next week: Presentations of Educational Games
- Following week: No meeting (Thanksgiving)
- Dec. 3: Review of Educational Game Design
- Dec. 10: Final Presentations