

Session 14 – NARRATIVE SPACES

Readings

Nitsche, Video Game Spaces, Ch. 1
Jenkins, Narrative Architecture

Concepts/Keywords

- Video game space
- Rule-based space
- Mediated space
- Fictional space
- Play space
- Social space

Refresher

- Embedded v. emergent storytelling
- Evocative narrative elements
- Miceorarratives
- Evocative spaces
- Inconsistent worlds (continued from previous)

Q: What are inconsistent worlds?

- Rules and fiction clash
- Rules aspects not explained by fiction
 - Mario has 3 lives
 - Planescape explains why The Nameless One keeps reviving

Q: Examples of inconsistency?

- “Inconsistency” may just be diegetic vs. non-diegetic elements
 - scores
 - “blue arrow” in GTA
- The Problem of “realism”
 - TV & Film serials, cartoons (Popeye) have a similar plot to Donkey Kong Country (the girl is constantly kidnapped)
 - is that a problem of the world?
- World set their own rules
- Saving games by sitting
 - ICO
 - No More Heroes
- Traveling through sleep:
 - Monkey Island
- “Inconsistency” may be the result of other effects
 - dream Logic / trippy spaces → Don't Eat the Mushroom (Knytt stories level)
 - Physics in GTA IV (no traction) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOYunqO-Tu0>

Types of Video Game Spaces

- Space is undefined and unique, but result of intersection

CMS.300 – Intro to Video Game Theory

- RULE-BASED: physics, sounds, game-level architecture
- MEDIATED: presentation, image plane, cinematic form
- FICTIONAL: imagined world (fictional world)
- PLAY SPACE: physical space where the player is
- SOCIAL SPACE: game space of other players

Q: How does it apply to games in Lab?

- Echochrome
- Pac-Man Vs.
- Chibi Robo

Narrative Spaces:

- Easiest point in common between games and narratives
 - Spaces BUILD stories – STORY BUILDING
- Inspiration on theme parks
 - BUT – theme parks have VISITORS, non-reactive, no exploration, theme parks have elaborate interfaces, imitate games now
- Physical spaces – SLEEP NO MORE
- Narration as device to ENGAGED player by inciting to MAKE SENSE OF SPACE – Evocative narrative elements

two strategies (refresher, apply to space)

- EMBEDDED storytelling
 - story of the space
 - detective stories
- EMERGENT storytelling
 - opportunities to generate stories
 - based on rules (the Sims)

EVOCATIVE NARRATIVE ELEMENTS

- stories

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