

# "On the Horns of a Dilemma"

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# What we're talking about today

• Game design - 5y284 programming pu)3t(EG-E igf)1ba)



# The Slides

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# Who am I?

- Ph.D. i am I?



# Traditional Game Design

# This changed in Video Games

- In traditional games – and arcade video games – if you make the wrong choice, you lose
- But in home video games, you go back to your save game







# “Depth”

- Another way to talk about the “horns of a dilemma” is to observe that we’re losing “depth”
- All the kinds of depth I’ve identified have to do with number and kind of decisions and the kinds of choices for each decision
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- I've identified four kinds of depth in games, but the new video game definition

# Gameplay Depth

- A matter of making good choices

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- You can't play a deep game once (or a few hours) and then have a good handle on how to win
  - You just haven't seen enough of it
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# Puzzles

- Beyond that we have single-player games that may not involve random elements such as “dice”
  - When you solve it, you “beat the game”
- Any game you can “speed run” in a few minutes is essentially a puzzle with an always-correct solution
- Good games never have always-correct solutions (a “dominant strategy” is bad)

# Story Depth

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# Model Depth



# Variety

- When modern gamers talk about

- In a loot-

# Some types of "Games"

- Games with human opposition
  - That'

# Human opposition

# "Contests"

- Parallel competition, competitors cannot directly influence one another's  $\pi_i$ .  $\pi_i = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n \pi_j$   $\pi_i = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n \pi_j$

# (Contests)

- In many cases there is a “do







# Resurgence of Difficulty?

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“Too much like work . . .”

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# Frustration

- People don't want "challenge" in their entertainments
- What was acceptable frustration 40 years ago, often is not now
- Many players want something like an interactive movie or TV show rather than a game
  - Movies don't require hard decisions
- A game of hard decisions requires the player to use his brain, but that seems to be going out of fashion.
- So, where an old guy like me WAS willing to work in most games, a young person may not be







# Or focus on something other than gameplay depth

- Puzzle depth appeals to many (especially abstract gamers)
- Story depth is becoming more and more popular
  - More like a movie
- Model depth can appeal
  - Though I think liking a model tends to go along with liking gameplay depth



Or perhaps you can  
suggest something.

Questions/Comments?