IMGD 1001 - The Game Development Process: Brainstorming Your Game

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(with lots of input from Mark Claypool!)

Outline

☐ Motivation

☐ Intro to brain storming

☐ Exercises

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Motivation

- Building a game (or doing *anything* interesting) is tough!
  - That's why you are here? ;-)
- Need to wrap your mind around the problem
  - Divide and conquer: split the problem into manageable parts
- Iterate multiple times
- Build team ownership
  - Ownership = commitment
- This process is done at multiple levels, usually with different people involved

High-Level Process: Brainstorming

- Start with a vague notion, and go from there
- Move towards concreteness
- Don't throw away ANYTHING!
  - There are no bad ideas
- Write down every idea (on a post-it notes, flip-chart, whiteboard, etc.)
- Don't make judgments on quality at this time
- MAIN IDEA:
  - Everyone should feel free to contribute

High-Level Process: Prune the Tree

☐ Now the group should have all ideas out there on post-its, a whiteboard, etc.

☐ First, remove anything obviously irrelevant, but be CAREFUL!

☐ Now remove or combine redundant things

High-Level Process: Draw Relationships

☐ Now draw charts for for each of the remaining things

☐ There are many solutions, so you will need to iterate

High-Level Process:
Validate the Design

☐ Go through each object *in detail*, and verify that it meets all the requirements

Gamestorming Process

☐ Come up with a one-sentence description of your game
  - This is tougher than you think!

☐ Use free association to generate ideas
  - No culling!
  - Use Post-It notes

☐ Group related ideas together, consolidate
  - Move the Post-Its around
  - Set aside unused ideas (might revisit them)

☐ Drill down through iteration

Gamestorming Drill Down

☐ Perform this process at a high level, then

☐ Same for...
- ...the STORY in your game
- ...the STRUCTURE of your game
- ...the ART in your game
  - ☐ Visuals/sound/"look and feel"
- ...the INPUT CONTROLS of your game

☐ Generate a timeline for when each thing will get done
- Assign a team member to the task

Exercises: Do Now!

☐ 15 min: Intro/Style/Story

☐ 15 min: Art/Sound/Tech

☐ 10 min: Discussion

Do you have...

- Goals?
- A feeling of how complex this is?
- Motivation for the player?
- Main mode of interaction?
  - Button-masher, platformer, etc?
- Humor?
- Violence?

What Next?

- Go home and do the same thing in much more detail for your assignment
- This should be fairly formal
  - Read through the examples
  - Don't write like you speak
  - Include appropriate visual support
  - Be thorough, ITERATE!