Today

- Quiz
- Prior 80K game demo
- MDA of Bartok
- Mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics
- What’s coming up
Quiz
Which of these is not a benefit of physical prototypes (Fullerton)?

A: Showcase for concept art
B: Fuller participation by non-technical team members
C: More design iteration
D: Focus on gameplay rather than technology
E: None of the above
Which is not one of Gingold’s prototype recommendations?

A: Always ask a question
B: Stay falsifiable
C: Persuade and inspire
D: Work fast
E: None of the above
I think the theme of *Congo Jones and the Loggers of Doom*

A: ... works well. It effectively dramatizes the difficulty of rainforest mapping through play.

B: ... presents a hard global problem, well-suited to difficult jumping challenges.

C: ... is disconnected from its mechanics, but the engaging play may spur reflection.

D: ... is at odds with its gameplay.
Demo: GrappleBall

by Eli Marable
& Chris Sanchez
Mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics

From Malcolm Ryan’s slides for a lecture given with Robin Hunicke, Ben Smith, and Ethan Kennerly

based on ideas of Marc "MAHK" LeBlanc
Form groups!

- Form groups of five or six
- Find a spot with a flat surface (the aisle, the stage, etc)
- Send one member of your group to the front
Rules of Bartok

• Deal 5 cards
• Turn over top card of deck
• First person from the dealer goes
• Play a card of the same suit or number – or draw a card.
• Jokers are wild.
• Play until someone has no more cards
Now: Change Rules

- *Cumulative Draw 2*
  — 2 if you can’t play, 4 if next person also can’t, 6 if next person also can’t...

- *See Last Card in Any Hand*
  — If you’re down to one card, it’s face up

- *Out of turn play*
  — Any time you can play a card, do it fast!

- Choose one, play for 10 minutes
What changed?

- How was the experience of Bartok++ different from Bartok Original

- How did the rule change bring about this change?
How do we get from…

Cards
Rules
Intrigue
Challenge
Drama
To...
What’s missing?

“Rules”

“Fun”
The causal link...

"Rules" → "Play" → "Fun"

This is what sets games apart...
Games As Software

“Rules” → “Play” → “Fun”
Games As Software

“Rules” → “Play” → “Fun”

Code → Process → Requirements
A Design Vocabulary

Mechanics ➔ “Play” ➔ “Fun” ➔ Requirements

“Fun”

“Play”

Process

Requirements
A Design Vocabulary

Mechanics → Dynamics → “Fun” → Requirements
A Design Vocabulary

Mechanics → Dynamics → Aesthetics
The MDA Framework

Mechanics → Dynamics → Aesthetics
Definitions

**Mechanics**: Player actions articulated with larger game / the rules and concepts that formally specify the game-as-system.

**Dynamics**: The run-time behavior of the game-as-system + players.

**Aesthetics**: The emotional responses evoked by the game dynamics.
The Designer/Player Relationship

Mechanics → Dynamics → Aesthetics

Designer → Player
The Player’s Perspective

- Mechanics
- Dynamics
- Aesthetics

Player
The Designer's Perspective

Mechanics → Dynamics → Aesthetics

Designer
So what about *Congo Jones*?
Congo Jones and the Loggers of Doom,
Congo Jones and game themes

- Game mechanics: classic platforming
- Game’s opening message:
  1: Stop the logging.
  2: Help local people take action.
- No *preserving* aesthetic
- No *collaboration* aesthetic
Congo Jones and game themes

• 3: Mapping is the first step.
• Maybe *traversal* aesthetic
• Feels at odds with real mapping challenges — they would require different mechanics

• 4: Get mapping equipment to village
• Platformers good for this challenge
• Do we think about rainforest during play?
A key challenge for your games:

Putting together engaging play and an appropriate world/theme
What’s next

• With friends, more Bartok MDA exercise — another mechanics change that amplifies aesthetic change you found (optional)

• Read Fullerton chapter for Monday

• Team selection, one-page mechanics analysis, and tutorial #2 due in section next week (details on syllabus)