Foundations of Interactive Game Design (80K)

week four, lecture one
Today

• Announcement
• What is a game?
• Quiz
• What’s coming up
DANM MFA show opening soon — fliers at edge of stage!
Previous quiz answers now on syllabus “Additional Resources”
Let’s play something
Is that a game?
Is *Candy Land* a game?

- It’s sold as a game
- It has *rules* and *objectives*
- It looks like a game and is called a game
- We *play* it with other people — and sometimes negotiate rules with them
- But something seems missing, especially as we get older...
- Is this a game? Is this even play?
What is a game?
Is this a game?
Is this a game?
Is this a game?
Is this a game?
Is this a game?
Is this a game?
Is this work?
Are these games?

- Jazz improvisation
- **Tug of war**
- **Wii Music**
- Russian roulette
- Renaissance fair
- **Dungeons & Dragons**
- Stock markets
- **Crossword puzzles**
- Slot machines
- Ring around the rosy
- Driving
- **The Sims**
Defining “game”

A “closed, formal system that engages players in structured conflict and resolves its uncertainty in an unequal outcome”

— Tracy Fullerton
Defining “game”

• “playing a game is the voluntary effort to overcome unnecessary obstacles”
  — Bernard Suits

• “A game is a form of art in which participants, termed players, make decisions in order to manage resources through game tokens in pursuit of a goal”
  — Greg Costikyan
Defining “game”

A “system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome”
— Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman
Artificial conflict

- They are a system that participants play
- This system “maintains a boundary from so-called ‘real life’ in both time and space”
- They “embody a contest of powers” that can be cooperative or competitive for players, single- or mult-player, etc
Defined by rules w/ quantifiable outcome

• Rules are the structure out of which play emerges for Salen & Zimmerman, subsuming Fullerton’s objectives, procedures, and rules

• For S&Z, a quantifiable outcome is what distinguishes a game from less formal play activities
Defining “game”

A “rule-based formal system with a variable and quantifiable outcome, where different outcomes are assigned different values, the player exerts effort in order to influence the outcome, the player feels attached to the outcome, and the consequences of the activity are optional and negotiable.”

— Jesper Juul
Quiz
Which is *not* one of Fullerton’s formal elements?

A: Objectives
B: Players
C: Rules
D: Conflict
E: None of the above
Penumbra’s prototype shown last time did not help determine …

A: ways to make levels challenging
B: camera placement
C: game pacing
D: how people respond to leading elements in the geometry
E: none of the above
For Fullerton, what would be the objective of *Candy Land*?

A: Capture or kill  
B: Alignment  
C: Chase  
D: Race  
E: Forbidden act
Upcoming

• Three online readings for Friday (linked from syllabus)

• Core concepts and physical prototypes due in section this week

• Design documents and schedules due in section next week

• Computational prototypes due the week after (week 6)