Foundations of Interactive Game Design (80K)

week two, lecture three
Today

• Quiz
• Prior 80K game demo
• MDA of Bartok
• Mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics
• What’s coming up
Demo: Astromice
Mitch Mastroni and William Cork
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 to the right of 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
To...

Intrigue
Challenge
Drama
Better to talk about “engagement” than fun.
The causal link...

"Rules" | "Play" | "Fun"

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

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

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Rules&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Play&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Fun&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```
A Design Vocabulary

Mechanics → “Play” → “Fun”
Mechanics → Process → Requirements
A Design Vocabulary

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

MDA has actually been written about with two ideas of mechanics, but both work for the concept.

Remember that “core mechanics” are almost always what players do over and over
The Designer/Player Relationship

Mechanics → Dynamics → Aesthetics
The Player’s Perspective

Mechanics - Dynamics - Aesthetics

Player
The Designer’s Perspective

Designer
Mechanics ← Dynamics → Aesthetics
So what about Congo Jones?
Congo Jones

Remember Congo Jones, and the weird flying chainsaws?
Would the real mapping challenges require stealth mechanics?

Could we do a game with mechanics and aesthetics about preservation?

What do you imagine the mechanics might be?
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 Prototyping on Tuesday
- Team selection, one-page mechanics analysis, and tutorial #1&2 due in section next week (details on syllabus)