DESIGN GOALS
Topics
Topics

- Designer-Centric Goals
Topics

- **Designer-Centric Goals**
  - Goals centered around what you want for yourself as a designer
Topics

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  - Goals centered around what you want for yourself as a designer

- Player-Centric Goals
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- Player-Centric Goals
  - Goals centered around what you want for your players
Designer-Centric Goals
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- **Fortune** – You want to make money
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- **Fame** – You want people to know who you are
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- **Greater good** – You want to make the world better in some way
- **Becoming a better designer** – You simply want to make games and improve your craft
Designer-Centric Goals: Fortune
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"You can literally make hundreds of dollars in the game industry."

– John "Chow" Chowanec
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- However, you can make a decent living
  - This is especially true if you work for a large studio
Designer-Centric Goals: Fame
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- I believe that Community is a better (and much more attainable) goal than Fame
Designer-Centric Goals: Community
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  - If you make great work, you will be respected
Designer-Centric Goals: Personal Expression and Communication
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    - Examples: Exercise games, Games about nutrition, etc.
Designer-Centric Goals: Becoming a Better Designer
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- You won't know if a game concept is good or bad until you implement it
Player-Centric Goals
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- **Fun** – Players enjoy themselves
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- Experiential Understanding – Players gain new understanding through interactive experiences
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- Fun is, of course, not the only goal of a game
Player-Centric Goals: Fun

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    - **Mimicry** - Play centered on make-believe and simulation (e.g., playing house, playing with action figures).
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  - Each of these are enjoyable in their own way
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Player-Centric Goals: Lusory Attitude
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Player-Centric Goals: Lusory Attitude

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  - With a lusory attitude, a player will happily follow the rules of the game for the joy of eventually winning the game by following the rules (and not cheating)
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- In *Imaginary Games*, Chris Bateman points out that in games of ilinx, a lusory attitude is responsible for the distinction between excitement and fear
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- The lusory attitude forms the *magic circle* of the game
Player-Centric Goals: Lusory Attitude

- In *The Grasshopper*, Bernard Suits states that a player must adopt a lusory attitude to play a game
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- To maintain a lusory attitude, show respect for your players
Player-Centric Goals: Flow
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  - If the player is too skillful for the challenge, she gets bored
  - If the challenge is too high for the player, she gets frustrated
Player-Centric Goals: Flow

![Flow Diagram]

- Frustration
- Player Feels Skillful & Powerful
- Boredom

Game Challenge vs. Player Skill
Player-Centric Goals: Flow

- But, optimal challenge is exhausting after 20 minutes
Player-Centric Goals: Flow

- But, optimal challenge is exhausting after 20 minutes
- It's often better to give the player breaks in flow
Player-Centric Goals: Structured Conflict
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  - Some Western RPGs like *Skyrim* allow the player latitude in the personality of her character
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  - Fighting games and RTS (Real-Time Strategy) games also have large move vocabularies that allow for elegant, performative play
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The four elements in relation to Attention and Involvement
Player-Centric Goals: Attention and Involvement
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    - Continuing the same community through multiple different games
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  - Ambiguous
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  - A player can guess how the decision will affect the system
  - But she can never be sure
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- Double-edged
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  - The decision has both an anticipated upside and downside
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  - But the choice itself must be clear
Player-Centric Goals: Interesting Decisions

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  - There are many ways a choice can lack clarity:
Player-Centric Goals: Interesting Decisions

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Player-Centric Goals: Experiential Understanding

Mainichi by Mattie Brice (2013)
Player-Centric Goals: Experiential Understanding

- The desire for players to understand something complex by experiencing it themselves

*Mainichi* by Mattie Brice (2013)
Player-Centric Goals: Experiential Understanding
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  - A simple decision like whether to pay with a credit card or cash has meaning in the game
    - Paying with a credit card will cause the barista to refer to you as "Ms… er… Mr. Brice" because he reads Brice's old, male name on the credit card.
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- Experiential understanding is one of the most interesting goals that we can seek to achieve as game designers
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