THINKING LIKE A DESIGNER

Topics

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- **Welcome to Game Design**

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- **The Definition of *Game***

Welcome to Game Design

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- **This book and these lectures cover all three topics as well as many other supporting topics that will make you a better game designer**

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  - So, what do you think?

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- **This is why it was so important for IGDPD to cover design, prototyping, and development**
  - Though they are not strictly necessary, both prototyping and development will make you a more effective and more capable game designer

You Are a Game Designer!

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- As of this moment, you are a game designer…

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- **As of this moment, you are a game designer…**

- **and I want you to say it out loud!**

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I am a game designer.

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I am an experience designer.

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- **Now that you're a game designer, it's time for your first game design exercise**

Bartok: A Game Design Exercise

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  - **Break into groups of 3-5 players each**

  - **Remove the Jokers from the deck**

  - **Shuffle the cards**

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  - **Each player must play a card onto the discard pile that matches the suit or number of the top card of the discard pile.**
  - **If she can't, she must draw a card.**

Bartok: A Game Design Exercise

- **Example**

The player can choose to play any one of the cards highlighted with blue borders (7C, JC, 2H, 2S).

Bartok: Asking the Right Questions

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- **Based on the number, add the following rule to the game:**

  - **Rule 1:** If a player plays a 2, the person to her left must draw two cards instead of playing.

  - **Rule 2:** If any player has a card that matches the number and color (red or black) of the top card, she may announce "Match card!" and play it out of turn. Play then continues with the player to the left of the one who just played the out-of-turn card. This can lead to players having their turns skipped.

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  - **Rule 3:** A player must announce "Last card" when she has only one card left. If someone else calls it first, she must draw two cards (bringing her total number of cards to three).

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- **You must playtest several times to ensure that you experience an average playtest and not a fluke**

- **However, you must also note any flukes that happen because they can also happen to players**

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- **Discuss the changes to these answers for each of the three rules**

- **Changing a single rule can have a drastic affect on the feel of the game!**

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  - **Work with your group to make the game your own**

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- **We'll explore each one in turn**

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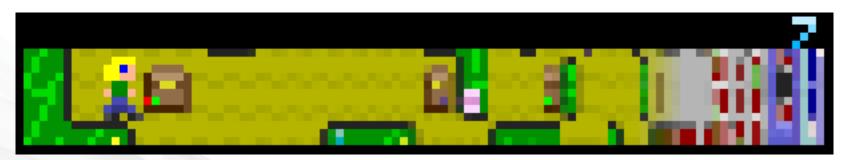 - **However, some open games have other goals**

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    - Players are complicit in the decisions of the character and therefore better understand the feelings of the game character
    - The first of our *designer's goals* (see Chapter 8)

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  - **Each option has both positive and negative potential consequences**
  - **The outcome of each option is predictable but not guaranteed**

Sid Meier's Definition

"A game is a series of interesting decisions" – Sid Meier

- **States very little about what the word *game* means**

- **But states a lot about his personal beliefs about what makes a good game**

- **What makes a decision *interesting*?**
  - **The player has multiple valid options from which to choose**
  - **Each option has both positive and negative potential consequences**
  - **The outcome of each option is predictable but not guaranteed**

- **Second designer's goal: *interesting decisions***

Tracy Fullerton's Definition

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- **Burgun attempts to restrict the definition to make it easier to understand the bounds of the field**

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  "Something can be accepted as a chair provided it is properly made for sitting on, whether it consists of a plastic balloon, a large blob of foam, or a basket slung from the ceiling. Provided you understand the need you can see whether it has the right characteristics, and aptness for that need is what chairs have in common" – Mary Midgley, "**The Game Game**" *(1978)*

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    - The IndieCade independent game festival will accept and consider anything that the designers want to call a game

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  - You should also read the source material for all of these definitions to expand your understanding of game design

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