Week 9: October 28, 2015

Intro to Game Design
It’s All in Your Head: Goals, Attitudes, Rewards

Fall 2015
Mondays & Wednesdays 9:30 AM-12:15 PM

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# Shooters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># in bag</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Turn Order**

1. Take a chip from the bag.
2. Place it on the table with part of it off the edge.
3. Tap the chip (the “shooter”) onto the table
   a. If it is still partially off the table, hit it again.
   b. If it falls off the table give it to the next player to put in his or her box.
4. If you “knock” into another chip you score it into your box
   a. If the knocked chip falls off the table, put it into the bag.
5. Repeat with next player.
Goals

**Purpose**

**Landmarks**

**Terrain**

**Subgoals**

**Objectives**

**Contested**

**Implicit** or **Explicit**

**Player-Chosen?**
## Attitudes towards Rules & Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cares about rules?</th>
<th>Cares about goals?</th>
<th>Lusory attitude (how “in the game”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Player</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dedicated Player</strong></td>
<td>Yes, wants to master rules in order to win</td>
<td>Yes, with strong desire to win</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unsportsmanlike Player</strong></td>
<td>Follows operational but violates implicit</td>
<td>Yes, with strong desire to win</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheater</strong></td>
<td>Tries to secretly violate operational</td>
<td>Yes, with strong desire to win</td>
<td>Pretends to have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spoilsport</strong></td>
<td>Not at all, openly violates</td>
<td>Nope, who cares?</td>
<td>Doesn't even pretend to have (not for long)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resistance

Classic idea of flow
(from the 70s, before videogames)
Resistance

Flow with tempo & pacing
Resistance

Breaking the rules once you know the rules
Rewards

What’s “rewarding?”

Getting to experience more of the story?

Audiovisual feedback that gives a feeling of success?
Rewards

What’s “rewarding?”

The simple relief of finally being done with something hard?

Beating your own high score? Or a friend’s?
Types of Reward?

- **Accomplishment**: You did it! You went for the goal and you made it! *That feeling*…

- **Relief**: you can finally rest!

- **Glory**: the recognition of peers, friends, community, competitors

- **Access**: you can get to new parts of the game (whether geographic, or a new ability / way of playing, greater challenges, etc)

- **Utility**: you got a resource (weapon, currency, etc.) that can be used in the game, sometimes to access something new, sustain the character, power a verb (“ammo” for “shoot”) etc.

- **Sensory**: amazing music, animation, fireworks, etc

- **Story**: finding out what happens next—or choosing to determine outcome

- **Score**: your number, it’s so huge! OMG it’s even bigger than it used to be!

- **Achievement**: a trophy, badge, record that you did something

- **Money**: cash out—a real-world reward
Rewards

What’s “rewarding”?

1. Sensation
   Game as sense-pleasure
2. Fantasy
   Game as make-believe
3. Narrative
   Game as drama
4. Challenge
   Game as obstacle course
5. Fellowship
   Game as social framework
6. Discovery
   Game as uncharted territory
7. Expression
   Game as self-discovery
8. Submission
   Game as pastime

Getting the best possible weapon in the game?
Rewards

Cash for getting good grades

*Does it work?*

Initially, yes

Over time, the effect fades

If the cash payments go away, grades drop even more than at the start
Rewards

**INTRINSIC REWARDS**

“Doing it for the sake of doing it.”

The rewards—and motivation—are built into the feeling of the activity.

**EXTRINSIC REWARDS**

“Doing it because of what I get for it.”

The rewards are external to the activity—a payoff that’s not inherent.
Fixed-schedule rewards: found to be best for punishment, learning what behaviors to avoid.
“Every time you touch the forbidden object, you get a shock.”
“Every time you step into the poison gas cloud, you start rapidly losing HP.”

Variable-schedule rewards: found to be best for reward—causing subjects to pursue something repeatedly.
“Sometimes when you press this lever, food will come out!”
“Sometimes when you kill this boss, a rare weapon will drop!”

“Doing it because of what I get for it.”

The rewards are external to the activity—a payoff that’s not inherent.
What is... Flow?

The experience of “being in the zone”
Resistance

Classic idea of flow
(from the 70s, before videogames)
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Flow with tempo & pacing
Resistence

Breaking the rules once you know the rules
What is... Flow?

Let’s listen to the creator explain it
Csikszentmihalyi’s Flow Theory

Key elements of a flow state include…

1. **Complete involvement** in what we’re doing—*focused and concentrated*

2. **Ecstasy**—being *outside of everyday reality*

3. **Inner clarity**—knowing *what needs to be done & how well we’re doing*

4. **Knowing it’s doable**—our *skills are adequate, we have personal control or agency*

5. **Serenity**—a loss of self-consciousness, we’re less awkward & self-aware

6. **Timelessness**—experience of time is altered, hours pass by in minutes

7. **Intrinsic motivation**—it’s something you’re doing for its own sake, not because you have to or because you’re working for compensation, etc.
Csikszentmihalyi’s Flow Graph
Csikszentmihalyi’s Flow Graph

WATCHING TV: No skill required. No challenge. Not even any effort!
**WHEN A GAME IS TOO EASY:** If there’s no skill required at all, it’s a *rote activity* like a chore. When rote activities are required for reward: **GRINDING**
When a game is too easy: If there’s no skill required at all, it’s a *rote activity* like a chore. When rote activities are required for reward: **GRINDING**

Csikszentmihalyi’s Flow Graph

If there’s some skill required, repeating something the player’s already mastered (like jumping across platforms in later levels of a platformer) can be relaxing, like just skipping along and seeing movement.
MASTERY & CONTROL: How do players get a feeling of control? From having very effective heuristics—the right strategy & methods to be sure to succeed.

Note that total control isn’t good for flow, though! This is why a overly strong heuristic is bad. There’s no challenge and stimulation left if there’s just “one best way to win”—a dominant strategy.
WHEN A GAME IS TOO HARD: Worry = a frustrating hassle. The feeling like you can’t actually learn & succeed—that it’s better to give up. Loss of intrinsic drive!

High anxiety isn’t always bad if it’s towards the “arousal” side—this is where learning happens under pressure. Lots of challenge, but the potential for skills to grow.
Csikszentmihalyi’s Flow Graph

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Players under pressure and anxiety can rise to the challenge and move this way, towards arousal and flow!

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