

Game Design

9

Psychology of Games

Sound Design

The Psychology of Games

- Players pick up a game
 - They play
 - If we did our job well... they play some more
- What is the pleasure in play?

Reasons for Play

- Different for men and women [2]
 - In general, the reasons are those given below

Why do Men Play Games?

- Mastery
- Competition
- Destruction
- Spatial Puzzles
- Trial and Error

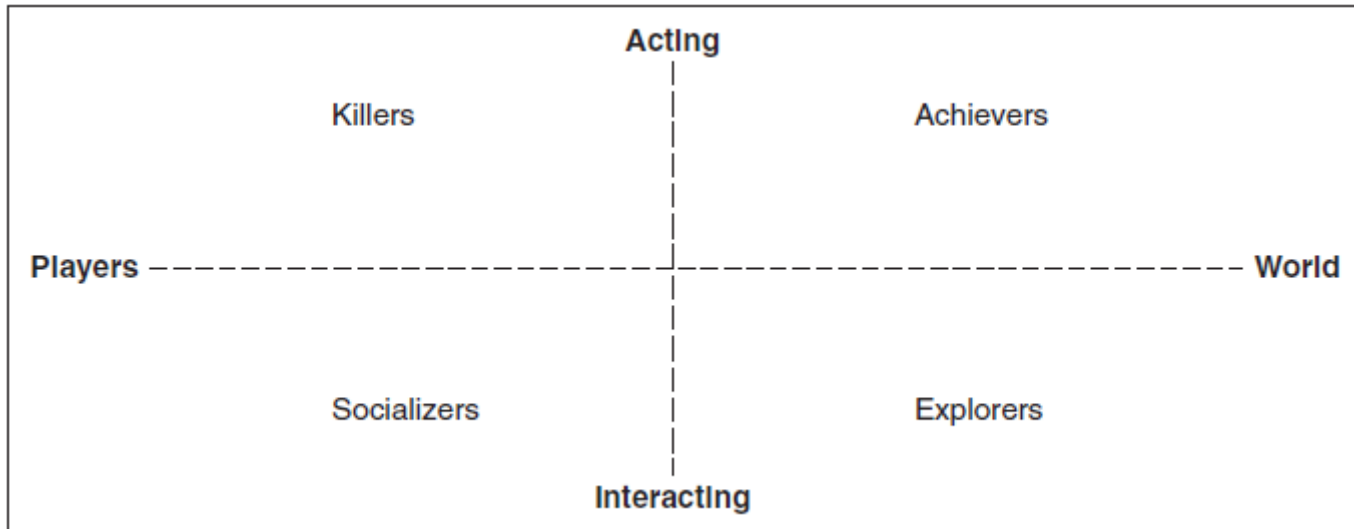
Why do Women Play Games?

- Emotion
- Real World
- Nurturing
- Dialog and Verbal Puzzles
- Learning by Example

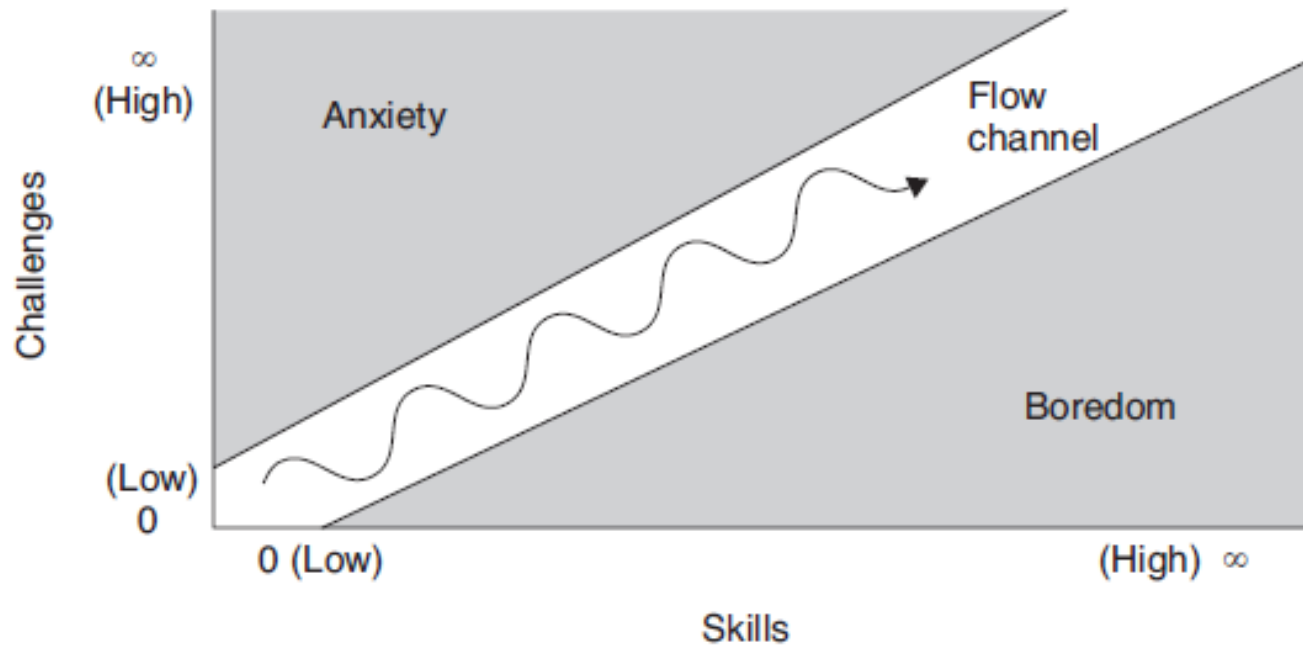
Psychographics (LeBlanc's taxonomy)

- Sensation
- Fantasy
- Narrative
- Challenge
- Fellowship
- Discovery
- Expression
- Submission

Psychographics (Bartle's taxonomy)



Flow



Level Design and Psychology

- Cyberpunk 2077 – mutable Crapsack world
 - Anything that can go wrong will go wrong
 - A determined protagonist can slightly improve it
- Night City in Cyberpunk 2077
 - The city is claustrophobic
 - The player feels lost
 - The player feels trapped



Level Design and Psychology

- Theme
 - Everything competes for attention
 - Buildings compete in height
 - Billboards are all flashy and shocking
 - When everything is trying to attract attention, nothing stands out



Level Design and Psychology

- Landmarks
 - Some landmarks, but they are either too big or not visible
 - Generic buildings block the view
 - You feel small and insignificant



Level Design and Psychology

- Narrative
 - If you want to be successful, come to Night City
 - You either win or you wind up in the gutter
 - No separation between the enemies and civilians
 - The environment promises a lot, but delivers nothing
 - The buildings are inaccessible (for the most part), but enemies are behind most corners

18 LEVEL

21 STREET CRED

L1

CRAFTING

INVENTORY

MAP

CHARACTER

JOURNAL

R1

FILTER

OPEN WORLD

LEGEND

SHION "COYOTE"

Buy Vehicle: Mizutani Shion "Coyote" (€\$115,000)

OPEN JOURNAL

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1:09 PM
WATSON
KABUKI

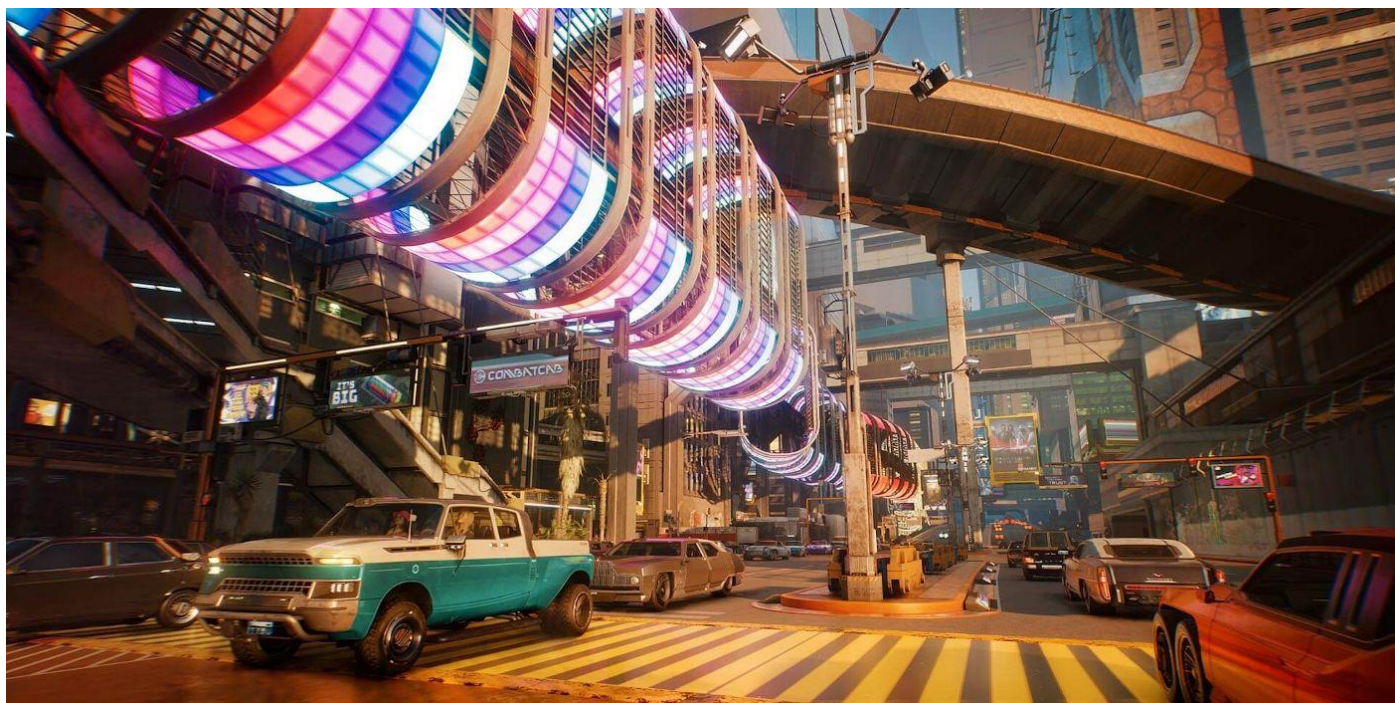
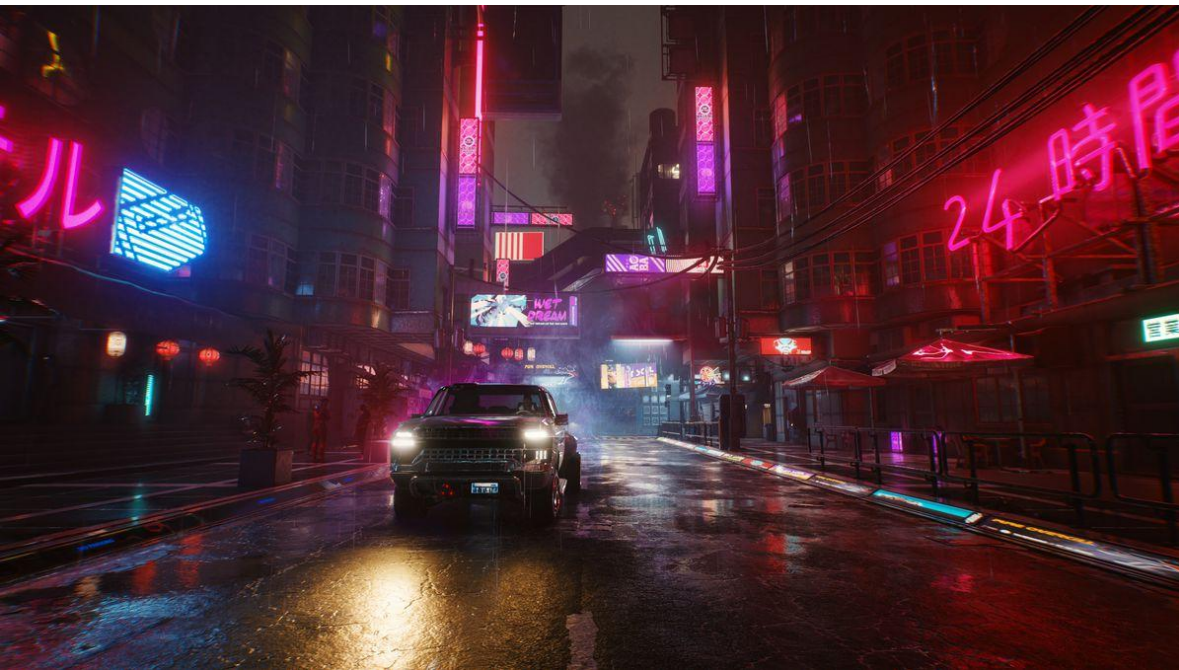


L Move L2 Zoom Out R2 Zoom In X Track Waypoint Triangle Jump to V Legend Free Camera Close

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Level Design and Psychology

- Narrative
 - If you want to be successful, come to Night City
 - The roads are too narrow for the height of the buildings
 - The façade is more important than what's behind
 - Most things are difficult to find without the HUD



Mood Setting and Level Design

- Case study – Red Dead Redemption 2
 - The look of the camp and the general questing area indicates the tone of the story

Mood Setting and Level Design

- Chapter 1 – Colter
 - The camp is dilapidated and undersupplied
 - Constant risk of death by cold, starvation, being found
 - Questing area is foreboding and hostile



Mood Setting and Level Design

- Chapter 2 – Horseshoe Overlook
 - The camp is well lit and well hidden
 - Environment is pleasant, green, and with plenty of supplies
 - The nearby town (Valentine) is rustic and friendly
 - Questing area is very open, with large and scenic vistas







Mood Setting and Level Design

- Chapter 3 – Clemens Cove
 - The camp is more constrained, but still in natural setting
 - Environment is still pleasant, but the river is replaced by a lake
 - The nearby town (Rhodes) is locked in conflict, into which the player is inserted
 - Questing area is less open, with some large spaces, but more elements of city life
 - Some hostile terrain (such as swamps)







Mood Setting and Level Design

- Chapter 4 – Shady Belle
 - The camp is set up in a broken down house, in the middle of the swamp
 - The house needs to be cleared out violently
 - The environment is constrained and either hostile (mostly swamps) or alien (the city of Saint Denis)
 - The quests become more gritty and violent



Mood Setting and Level Design

- Chapter 5 – Guarma
 - There is no camp
 - You have very few resources
 - Constant fight for survival

Mood Setting and Level Design

- Chapter 6 – Beaver Hollow
 - The camp is set up in a cave
 - All the surrounding areas are dark and closed in, either forests or dirty industrial towns
 - Most NPCs are devoid of hope or hostile

Sound in Games

- Music adds to the entertainment experience
 - Licensed or created music
 - “Song per level” or dynamic score
 - Mystery
 - Warning
 - Combat
 - Chase/fast movement
 - Victory
 - Walking

Sound in Games

- Sound effects
 - It's good to develop sound effects as you develop the moves for the characters
 - Movement
 - Attacks
 - Impacts
 - Weapons
 - Hit reactions
 - Vocal cues
 - Death
 - Success

Bibliography

1. Fullerton, T., Game Design Workshop: A Playcentric Approach to Creating Innovative Games, CRC Press, 2014