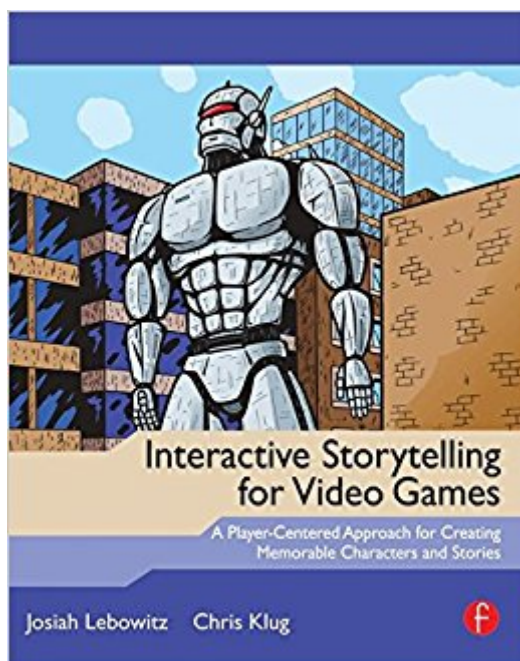## The book was found

Interactive Storytelling For Video Games: A Player-Centered Approach To Creating Memorable Characters And Stories

Synopsis

What really makes a video game story interactive? What's the best way to create an interactive story?How much control should players be given? Do they really want that control in the first place?Do they even know what they want-or are their stated desires at odds with the unconscious preferences?All of these questions and more are examined in this definitive book on interactive storytelling for video games. You'll get detailed descriptions of all major types of interactive stories, case studies of popular games (including Bioshock, Fallout 3, Final Fantasy XIII, Heavy Rain, and Metal Gear Solid), and how players interact with them, and an in-depth analysis of the results of a national survey on player storytelling preferences in games. You'll get the expert advice you need to generate compelling and original game concepts and narratives.With Interactive Storytelling for Video Games, you'll:

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Customer Reviews

Lebowitz and Klug's tag-team approach to the subject makes this an engaging read, even for seasoned interactive storytellers. The combination of Lebowitz's theory and Klug's field experience present both new and experienced game writers with both the promises, and the challnges,Â of experimenting with game narratives. The use of diverse case studies, which cover everything from the classic Final Fantasy VII to the Japanese visual novel genre, provide readers with the opportunity to engage Lebowitz and Klug's ideas and inspire innovation in their own writing. The exercises and questions both guide readers through the key points, and encourage application and exploration, perfect for a classroom setting.-Kathleen Dunley, Faculty Chair-English, Rio Salado

College

One of the things I liked about this book is it tended to cover the strength and weakness of the dichotomy of various game story types. Whether character or story driven, open ended or closed ended, optional or fixed, there is a way for most every game and sometimes only one kind will fit well. In today's massively multi-player games peoples experiences are about how they starred in or helped out in their quest. It may have been a loner thing, or a part of a small or larger group, the that is the adventure. The story is really the setting and the intermediate goals, kill the monster, get the treasure, interact with the group, the npc's etc. In a game like this you can have many close ended quests within an open ended story. The story is about you and your character at least from your perspective. If the quests are boring, too easy, too difficult, too lame a story behind it you will not want to play.Aside from the MMO's there are many other types of games. Strategy games like star craft, have a story that drives the missions in the single player mode. SC2 for instance, had a fairly fixed storyline and goal, but at least a few options to get from point A to point B. It capitalized on the characters of the original, and took it to a higher level. This I thought, enables them to release the game one expansion at a time as a trilogy. Had the story been minimal, they should have released the "missions" all at once. They way they did it creates value and incentive for doing a good part 2 and part 3 of the game. This book is about interactive storytelling, and although as I said here SC2 does not use that as much. Where it's used are optional missions they can be played for different goals (although there is only a few). The other element is the tech that is developed, you can only choose one choice going up the tech tree, and once chosen for that game, it cannot be changed, typically this is a choice between attack or defensive strength. You can go all attack, all defense or a combination of the two.I'm not an MMO player, I don't play a lot of games with player driven stories. I prefer the strategic or the flat out shoot-em-up types. Still I like to have a reason to keep interested, and I like surprises which story's can foster. Even the cheapie games of old it was nice to know something about the quest. One interesting game called Swords and Serpents for Intellivison had a deadly trap for playing as a single fighter. The goal was to kill the dragon in the lowest level, but you read scrolls along the way to find out things and gain powers. For some reason I remember there was a scroll that what it should have done didn't make sense so it should have been bypassed. However, curiosity can kill more than the cat, so you had to read the scroll. It read: "to read this scroll is a fools folly" and it immediately transported you to a small room with four walls and no door. If you had a magic user and a fireball you could escape, but as a fighter it was game over, and you were nearly at the end of the quest. A nice side track to a mostly linear story.This book explores all

the different types of stories that may drive a game, from multiple ending stories to, player driven stories, to traditional stories, branching path, to simple linear stories. It also describes a lot of games and what type of story was chosen for each. This should help if you are deciding what to do. Remember even a very simple story can drive a good game. Take angry birds, the storyline is they were mad about the pigs hogging something, I don't know what, but they have to destroy various structures to do in the pigs. Story, kind of crazy stupid, but without it, this is similar to games like rampart or other shoot-em-up puzzle games. Add the birds and piggies, and it's a run-a-way hit. What the book lacks is how the story should be told or developed, it's not much help there. The make something coherent, consider getting a book on the "Heroes Journey in literature", its what script fixers in Hollywood use to patch up bad stories for movies and TV. It should work for videogames as well.

As a writer, designer, artist, and avid video gamer, I've read my fair share of books relating to video game storytelling. It's rather difficult to find ones that are well-thought-out, cover all the bases, and really teach me something about the writing process.This book actually surprised me. What most impressed me was the inclusion of the Hero's Journey. I've written fiction for years and this is a particularly important lesson to learn. Every single novel, story, movie, whatever can be broken down into the Hero's Journey. A good story in a video game is no exception. Chapter three discusses that topic and the structure in video game stories. It's quite refreshing to really see the writing process applied to video games.Chapters include:1. Game Stories, Interactivity, and What Players Want2. A Brief History of Storytelling in Games3. The Hero's Journey and the Structure of Game Stories4. The Story and the Characters5. Making Stories Emotional6. Defining Interactive and Player-Driven Storytelling7. Fully Traditional and Interactive Traditional Stories8. Multiple-Ending Stories9. Branching Path Stories10. Open-Ending Stories11. Full Player-Driven Stories12. The Argument for the Supremacy of Player-Driven Storytelling13. The Argument Against the Supremacy of Player-Driven Storytelling14. What Players Really Want: The Most Important Issue15. The Future of Storytelling in GamesI think this book is very thorough in its exploration of video games and the stories behind them. Anyone interested in designing/writing for video games would definitely benefit from this book.

The video game has come into its own in recent decades and Josiah Lebowitz & Chris Klug have put together a wonderful guide for those who are motivated not just by the gameplay and action but the storyline within the game as well. Some games with great stories go along unappreciated .

Unlike writing for film, television or for fiction novels, writing for video games is a different beast and Lebowitz & Klug go over them in great detail. In a film, everything is according to the script. In game development, it's subject to change.The authors go into open-ended and multiple ending stories and the sstrengths and weakenesses of each as well as the considerations of storylines that are based upon the skill level of the gamer. The authors talk about what it is that gamers want and how to develop effective game stories that companies and players want to see. There are many games that are mentioned and with extensive screenshots of example games. I was rather disappointed that Assasin's Creed, which is probably one of the top games with an incredible amount of detail, gameplay, in depth storyline based in history was not mentioned except in the appendix.This is a completely new area of writing for me, but coming out of Focal Press, it was definitely a title and a method of storytelling that intrigued me. I think this is a definite not-to-miss if someone is considering writing for the game industry. There are tons of resources of various companies and groups that cater to the need of gamers and game development teams

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