



World Building (How to Get Beyond Cool in Video Games)

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Overview

- Getting Beyond the Cool
- Act One – The Six Problems
- Act Two – Micro vs Macro World Building
- Act Three – A Way Forward
- Epilogue
- Questions

The Six Problems

- Deus Ex Machina (Let God out of the Machine)
- I've Seen This Before
- Fish Out of Water
- The Super, Super, Super Powered Hero
- Never Ask Why, Just Play
- The Never-Changing Enemy

Deus Ex Machina

- Let God out of the Machine to solve the plot
- Examples –
- (Any line that says (It was lucky you got there in time))
- In Games it is being used in the hook or the start of the story (Stan Lee Syndrome)

Deus Ex Machina (Six Versions)

- Powers given by random environmental act
- Powers given by man-made accident
- Powers given by experiments from evil people/ aliens (also creates memory loss)
- The Royal Family - unlimited resources, money training etc... (Bruce Wayne, Prince Anywhere)
- The Weapon of Power (Hammer of Thor, Juggernaut,)

Reused Settings

- Medieval Times
- Middle Earth
- Urban Wasteland (societal decay)
- Post Apocalyptic City (aftermath of decay)
- Destroyed Lab
- Alien Planets that focus on a earth environment suitable for humans

Fish Out of Water

- One Man with Super Powers in the whole city (except for his allies who fight alongside him and his enemies who he fights)
- The Banished/Abandoned/Orphaned Prince in a land full of peasants
- A guy, a girl, a gun and zombies...

Super Super Powered Hero

- Hero begins the game with 30 power combinations
- No minion is difficult, only the bosses are
- Idea started with (wouldn't it be cool if He did blah blah blah...)
- Sets up the narrative with no arc. (The best games have an arc and measured skill level increments)

Never Ask Why – Just Play

- The Problem is Theme
- Save the world (Why is this world worth saving)
- What are the stakes for the character
- What are the bigger ideas
- How do we use them to get the player to care
- Go spiritual sometimes
- Ask Why the other six of the problems exist

World-Building

- World-Building – Two Approaches
- Macro – Top Down Approach – God Writer
- Micro – Bottom Up Approach

World-Building

- Macro – Top Down Approach – God Writer
 - World
 - Biosphere
 - Species
 - » Society
 - Characters
 - Advantages – Broad Scope, diversity in species, characters, range of ideas
 - Disadvantages – The world feels less personal, overemphasis on cohesion, too big in scope

World-Building

- Micro – Bottom Up Approach
 - Game Mechanic
 - Character – Friends, Allies, Enemies – Journey – Environments
 - Biosphere – World
 - Advantages –
 - Game Feels Personal
 - Characters are invested in the story
 - Details can be covered in depth
 - Disadvantages
 - Story can feel small,
 - Ideas may feel redundant

World-Building

- A Way Forward

- Inverting the Six Problems using Macro-Micro

- Deus Ex Machina –

- start with Macro – History of world

- End with Micro – History of the character

- Reused Settings –

- start with Macro –

- How did the location come into being –

- Who created it and for what purpose

- Does the location change throughout the seasons, the year

World-Building

- A Way Forward
 - Inverting the Six Problems using Macro-Micro
 - Fish Out of Water
 - Micro – Family History – develops character psyche and world relationship
 - What happened to them
 - Why are you the only one?
 - Are there spiritual/societal implications of you being the one
 - Does the character want the title or responsibility
 - How does the world interact when they meet that character

World-Building

- A Way Forward
 - Inverting the Six Problems using Macro-Micro
 - The Super Super Super Powered Hero
 - Macro – What is the world's relationship with the super powered?
 - Are there others with powers that do use them?
 - What dynamics has this created?
 - What are the viewpoints of the non super-powered
 - Is Super-Powered normal in this world

World-Building

- A Way Forward
 - Never Say Why
 - Micro – What Drives the character personally?
 - What are they fighting, discovering for?
 - Do you as the creator understand why
 - Do not be afraid of engaging at a spiritual level
 - Use the why as a world and game mechanic
 - Create mini games to answer why

Epilogue

- Using Andy's Techniques
 - Understand the backstory
 - Communicate only what is necessary
 - Prepare information for questions
 - Creation doesn't mean feature
 - Understand the world - Understand the story
 - Using Macro-Micro fills out the gaps

Questions

Thanks for your time