Final Fantasy III:

Compelling Environmental Storytelling

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Outline

- What is Final Fantasy III?
- Jenkins on Narrative and Games
- Evocative Spaces
- Enacting Stories + Example
- Embedded Narrative +Example

What is Final Fantasy 3?

- Traditional JRPG

- 14 Characters

Images removed due to copyright restrictions. Please see a list of FF6 character art, such as http://finalfantasy.wikia.com/wiki/Category:Final_Fantasy_VI_Character_Images

- One Really Evil Dude

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Henry Jenkins on Games and Narrative

"In this short piece, I hope to offer a middle ground position … one that respects the particularity of this emerging medium—examining games less as stories than as spaces ripe with narrative possibility"

What the Heck does he mean?

- Games do not **need** or necessarily have a story

- Games **can** tell a story by utilizing spacial design
  - Evocative Spaces
  - Enacting Stories
  - Embedded Narrative

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Enacting Stories

"Spacial stories are held together by broadly defined goals and conflicts and pushed forward by the character's movement across the map"

- Straightforward Narrative

- Short and Long Term Goals

- 'Accordion'

Enacting Stories

"The organization of the plot becomes a matter of designing the geography of imaginary worlds, so that obstacles thwart and accordances facilitate the protagonist's forward movement towards resolution"

- Example: Poisoning of Doma

- Long-Term goal: Defeat Empire

- Short-Term goal: Reunite at Narshe

- Obstacles: Swept off of raft

- Accordances: There is another path to Narshe through the Imperial camp

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Embedded Narrative

"Narrative comprehension is an active process by which viewers assemble and make hypothesis about likely narrative developments on the basis of information drawn from textual cues and clues"

- Embed the narrative within the space itself
- Two Narratives
- Rule of the 3
- Example: Dreams 1, and 2

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"Narrative comprehension is an active process by which viewers assemble and make hypothesis about likely narrative developments on the basis of information drawn from textual cues and clues"

Shadow's backstory is revealed through his dreams (town, thamasa)
Relm's dream – of father leaving
Shadows dog protects him and relm
Memento Ring
--power comes from a departed mothers love

Conclusions

- Games can employ any number of spacial storytelling techniques

- Final Fantasy III utilizes embedded narrative to extend the game beyond the main plot

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