VGS GAMEDEV WORKSHOPS

WEEK 4:

Competitive (PvP) Multiplayer: Viable Options, Yomi, and Donkeyspace

These slides and additional notes are available at drewwallacegames.com/vgsworkshops.html

Join the vgs_list listserv for updates on each week's workshops

Previously:

Week 1: Rules / Play / Culture
Week 2: p5.js / Processing; Meaningful Play
Week 3: Implementing Pong; Game Feel and Juice

slides and notes available at:
drewwallacegames.com/vgsworkshops.html

Solved Games

A strategy is known which never loses
eg Tic-Tac-Toe, Checkers
not chess, go, etc

(Mathematically) Optimal Play

Choose the action which, assuming your opponent also plays optimally, has the best result for you

If they play suboptimally, your result can only be better

In other words:
Choose the action which is least exploitable

Humans aren't optimal

Donkeyspace

Playing suboptimally (in the mathematical sense) to increase chances of winning against an opponent who is also playing suboptimally

Interesting Decisions

Viable Options

"Lots of meaningful choices presented to the player. They should be presented with enough context to allows the player to use strategy to make those choices."
– David Sirlin (Street Fighter HD Remix, Chess 2)

Dominant Moves

"Cards are usually banned from play if they enable a deck or play style that heavily skews the play environment. What does that mean? If the card were legal, a competitive player either must be playing it, or must be specifically targeting it with his or her own strategies."
- Magic The Gathering banned list intro

Yomi (Japanese for "reading")
(I know that you know that I know, etc)

"If you have a powerful move and use it against an unskilled opponent, I call that Yomi Layer 0, meaning neither player is even bothering with trying to know what the opponent will do. At Layer 1, your opponent does the counter to your move because they expect it. At Layer 2, you do the counter to their counter. At Layer 3, they do the counter to that."
- David Sirlin

Group Exercise

Analyze a competitive multiplayer game
(vote for Behead or Pong)
What works well? What could be improved?
Make improvements to the game.