

# Games and 3D User Interfaces: Past, Present, and Future

Lecture #2: Games and 3DUI\*

Spring 2008

Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

\*Special thanks to Ivan Poupyrev

Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI and Video Games – Why?

- Video games
  - multi-billion dollar industry: \$10.5 billions in 2005 in US
  - major driving force in home entertainment: average gamer today is 33 years old
  - advanced 3D graphics in HOME rather than universities or movies studios
- Driving force in technological innovation
  - graphics algorithms and hardware, sound, AI, etc.
  - technological transfer to healthcare, biomedical research defence, education (example: Folding@Home)
- Recent innovations in 3D user interfaces
  - graphics is not enough anymore
  - complex spatial, 3D user interfaces are coming to home (example: Nintendo Wii)
- Why 3D user interfaces for games?
  - natural motion and gestures
  - reduce complexity
  - more immersive and engaging
- Research in 3D UI for games is exiting
  - will transfer 3DUI to other practical applications, e.g. education and medicine



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI and Video Games – What?

- Goal of 3DUI in games
  - designing input devices and interaction techniques to effectively control highly dynamic 3D computer generated content
  - there are basic approaches
- Mapping 2D input to interact with 3D world
  - keyboard and mouse, joysticks, game controllers
  - traditional form of gaming user interfaces:  
e.g. Flight Simulator, Second life, Halo 3
- Simulating real world tools or using physical props
  - simulation: steering wheels, light guns, musical instruments
  - physical props: dance pads
- True spatial tracking of user gestures
  - camera, e.g. Sony Eyetoy
  - acceleration/infrared tracking: Wii controllers
- This talk focuses on last two interface solutions



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Lecture Outline

- Historical Perspectives
  - early consoles
  - arcades
  - early 3D/VR game interfaces
- 3DUI in the home today
  - new generation of game UI
- The Future of UI in games
  - AR/VR/mobile games
  - working towards the future
- Conclusions

Spring 2008

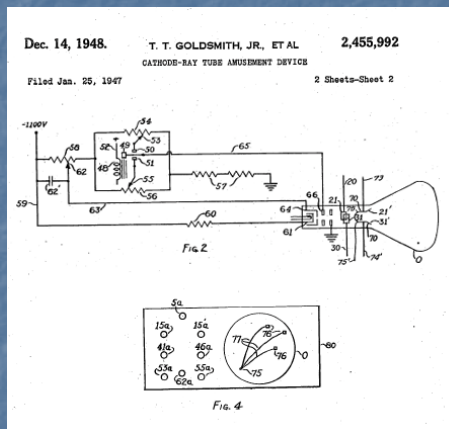
CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

# Historical Notes on Game UIs

## Early Video Games

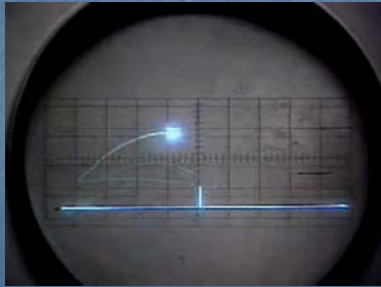
- 1947: Cathode-ray tube amusement device
  - probably the earliest proposal for electronic gaming device
  - not known if it was implemented
- Proposed interface
  - knobs and buttons





## Early Video Games

- **Tennis for two:** Second ever video game:
  - 1958 by William Higinbotham @ Brookhaven National Laboratory
  - display: oscilloscope, Input: dial and a button
  - first ever computer game was invented by Douglas, A. at Cambridge in 1952



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Early Video Games

- **Spacewar!** first (?) computer game:
  - 1961 by Russell, S., Graetz, M. and Wiitanen, W. at MIT used DEC PDP-1
  - interface: mostly buttons, but also joysticks and light pen



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Early video games

- 1971: “Computer Space” is a first ever arcade game
  - Spacewar! clone created by Nolan Bushnell
  - interface is mostly buttons
  - has not become very popular since its rules were too complex



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Early Video Games

- 1972: Magnavox “Odyssey” is a first ever home game console
  - invented by Ralph Baer
  - could play Ping-Pong game
  - collaborative: two people
  - first game controllers: button and dials: 1D
  - battery operated
- 1975: Atari creates Pong for home and arcades
  - game industry is born



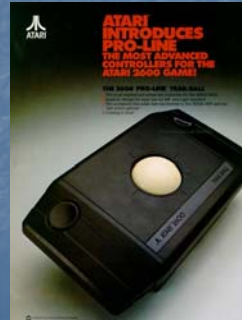
Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Early Video Games

- 1977: Atari 2600 console
  - cartridge based system, i.e. allows to change software
  - 2D controllers: Joystick as well as peripherals devices, i.e. trackball
  - introduce quality sound hardware: still popular today



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Early Video Games

- 1978: Magnavox Odyssey<sup>2</sup>
  - includes full-sized keyboard
  - used for educational software and programming
  - first home electronics device with speech synthesis



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.



# Modern Consoles

- 1983: Nintendo Famicom
  - modern controller layout: controls for both hands, directional buttons
  - increasingly complex controllers and interfaces: games are still 2D, but interaction is becoming more complex and rich.
- 1994: Nintendo 64
  - first “true” 3D console
  - adds joystick to controller, game pad gets more controls



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

# Modern Consoles

- 1996: Sony dual-shock controller
  - adds second joystick and shoulder buttons
  - standard controller for PS, PS2, PS3
- Some observations
  - gradually increasing complexity of game interfaces to allow more expression in games;
  - difficult to master
  - focuses more and more on “hard-core” gamers; casual gamers often find games difficult
  - similar situation was in early arcades games



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

# Arcade Games

- Arcade games:
- “Easy to learn, but difficult to master”
  - has to be learned immediately
  - can not have complex interfaces
  - specialized interfaces for particular games
  - many innovative and original interfaces
  - often based on simulation activities
    - shooting, driving, snowboarding, fishing, sliding etc.
  - many innovative and original interfaces has been developed: 3D, haptic response, realistic.



www.afterpicture.com

Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

# Arcade Games

- Video Arcades began in the mid 1970s
- (2D games only)
  - Pong
  - Breakout
  - Space Invaders
- First game with 3D graphics – Battlezone (1980)
  - vector graphics
  - very simple interaction
    - move and rotate on 2D plane
    - used two joysticks



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.



# Arcade Games – UI Innovation

BeachHead



Football Power



Aliens Extermination



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

# Arcade Games – UI Innovation

Manx TT



Dance Dance Revolution



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Virtual Reality Arcade Games

- Arcades were first to introduce Virtual Reality and 3DUI in games
  - head/body tracking
  - stereoscopic vision
  - immersive displays
  - 3D spatial interaction



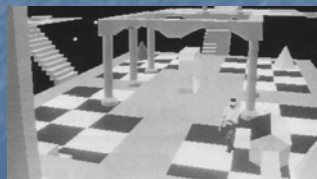
Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Virtual Reality Arcade Games

- Dactyl Nightmare: one of the first VR games
  - part of several other VR games: Legend Quest, Hero, Grid Busters
  - 1-4 players
  - basic shoot-em-up game
- Developed by W Industries/Virtuality in early 1990s
  - system sold as the 1000CS
  - used Amiga 3000 computer
  - HMD with tracked 3D joystick



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Virtual Reality Arcade Games

- VR entertainment centers
  - multi-user combat simulation in BattleTech universe
  - fighting robots
  - first opened in 1990
  - provided an immersive experience
  - very little in the way of 3D user interface
- Can still play in Houston, Texas
  - MechCorps ([www.mechcorps.com](http://www.mechcorps.com))



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Virtual Reality Arcade Games

- DisneyQuest: Indoor interactive theme park (opened in 1998)
- Several VR games
  - Pirates of the Caribbean: Battle for Buccaneer's Gold
    - uses motion platform, shoot cannons, navigate with steering wheel
    - surround screen display, users wear stereo glasses
  - Virtual Jungle Cruise
    - users sit in raft, steer and paddle
  - Aladdin's Magic Carpet Ride
    - users wear HMD, sit on motorcycle-like device to steer



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.



## 3D and VR on Game Consoles

- Several attempts to introduce 3D/VR
- for game consoles
  - Nintendo U Force
  - Mattel Power glove
  - Sega 3D glasses
  - Nintendo Virtual Boy
  - Not successful
    - low quality, did not work well
    - not really necessary since games were simple enough
    - considered to be a gimmick



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3D and VR on Game Consoles

- 1986: Sega Master System
  - 3D glasses
  - used active LCD shutters
  - few games were supported



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3D and VR on Game Consoles

- 1995: Nintendo Virtual Boy
  - Virtual reality goggles, monochrome, stereo



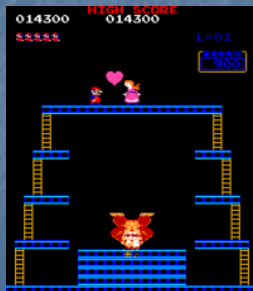
Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Some Conclusions From History

- Games complexity increases
  - 1970: Pong
  - 1980: Donkey Kong
  - 2000: Halo
  - interaction complexity increases



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Some Conclusions From History

- The complexity of controllers increased
  - use same interface components as in 60s
    - Buttons
    - Joysticks
    - Keyboard / mouse
  - combined together / increased number
  - more difficult to learn and master
  - less accessible to casual user
- 3D spatial controllers / 3DUI
  - very successful in arcades
  - failed in home devices
  - inaccurate/low quality



## 3DUI in the Home Today



## 3DUI in the Home Today

- Revival and rapid growth of 3D spatial interfaces for games today
  - cheaper and higher quality of sensors
  - fast game hardware can perform complex tracking/recognition
  - need for simpler and more intuitive interaction with games
  - games has become mainstream culture, more casual not only hard-core gamers
- The first 3D UIs in people hands
  - often based on previous research results and ideas
  - simplified for price

Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI in the Home Today

- 2003: Sony PS2 Eye Toy
  - video camera interface for PS2
  - casual/party games
  - significant success in Europe/US
  - based on several decades of research on visual tracking in robotics and computer vision
  - developed by Richard Marks



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI in the Home Today

- Nintendo Wii
  - latest game console from Nintendo
- Key innovation – Wiimote controller
  - provides 3D UI in the home
- Makes games accessible to casual users
  - Great competitive edge over Xbox 360 / PS3



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI in the Home Today

- Wiimote features
  - uses Bluetooth for communication
  - senses acceleration along 3 axes
  - optical sensor for pointing (uses sensor bar)
  - provides audio and rumble feedback
  - standard buttons and trigger
  - uses 2 AA batteries
- Supports two handed interaction
  - can use 2 Wiimotes simultaneously
- Easily expandable



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI in the Home Today



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI in the Home Today

- PS3 AR Game / Eye of Judgement
  - first 3D AR games on the market
  - 3D interaction and manipulation of 3D graphics images possible
  - based on Cybercode: technology for tracking 2D square markers
  - invented in 1990s at Sony CSL



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.



## 3DUI in the Home Today

- DLP – digital light projection
  - developed by Texas Instruments
- 3D DLP HDTV
  - high resolution 1920x1080
  - high definition 1080p
  - no special graphics card needed
  - runs at 120Hz (60 Hz each eye)
  - requires shutter glasses
  - 3D stereoscopic content sent to TV via DVI or HDMI port
  - available on Samsung and Mitsubishi TVs
- Play games in 3D
  - DVDs as well



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## 3DUI in the Home Today

- Some observations/conclusions
  - renaissance of 3D / spatial user interfaces in gaming
  - for the first time very successful with public
  - attracts casual gamers
  - allows for easier introduction of new 3D user interfaces in the future
  - still very simplistic when compared with 3DUI developed in research labs
  - great possibilities for the future growth!



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

# Future of Game UI

Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Future of 3DUI in Gaming

- What are the technologies that will influence future game 3DUIs?
  1. Transfer the body of VR research into games
  2. Development of complex Augmented Reality games
  3. Outdoor games with complex 3DUI
  4. Mobile 3D games
- Some examples follow

Toshiba Bubble Helmet (360 degree view)



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Future of Gaming: VR

- Port of Quake II to the CAVE
  - developed by Paul Rajlich (NCSA)
  - fully immersive experience
  - uses 6DOF wand as gun proxy
  - head tracking allows for peering around walls
  - players can physically jump and duck
- Quake III Area ported to CAVE as well



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Future of Gaming: VR

- SwordPlay: explore what 3D UIs are appropriate in gaming
  - developed as part of course in “Innovating Game development” (Brown U. 2006)
  - user has sword and shield/bow and arrow
  - uses Mine’s Over-the-Shoulder deletion technique to invoke bow and arrow
  - user can draw spells in 3D with sword



Spring 2008

<http://www.cs.brown.edu/courses/cs196-2/groups/swordplay/>  
CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.



## Future of Gaming: AR

- AquaGuantlet
  - developed at Mixed Reality Systems Laboratory, Japan (Tamura et al. 2001)
  - collaborative AR environment
  - players wear see-through HMDs
  - shoot creatures superimposed into real scene
  - guns have vibration feedback



[www.jello.net](http://www.jello.net)

Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Future of Gaming: AR

- Markerless AR technology
  - tracking natural features (SLAM techniques)
  - no visual markers: works in any unprepared environment
  - future of AR gaming



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Future of Gaming: Outdoor Games

- AR Quake where monsters are superimposed into real world (i.e., Quake in the physical world)
  - developed by Thomas, Piekarski et al. in 2000 (South Australia)
  - can walk around in both indoor and outdoor environments
  - equipment is somewhat cumbersome
    - getting smaller and cheaper



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Future of Gaming: Mobile Games

- Today mobile gaming platforms
  - PSP and Nintendo DS
  - interaction is still 2D
- Future mobile platform
  - true spatial interaction
  - location-based interaction
  - AR tracking and interaction



Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Moving Towards the Future of 3DUI and Games

- Body of knowledge on 3D user interfaces
  - interaction technique
  - interaction metaphors and styles
  - input devices
  - usability studies
- Want to transfer to the video game domain
  - reduce interaction complexity
  - provide more realistic experiences
  - exercise!!!

Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.

## Conclusions

- 3D UI for games is important and interesting research area
- Its real and possible to create new user interface culture
- Transfer to other areas of everyday human activity
- You can start developing 3D game user interfaces yourself

Spring 2008

CAP6938 – 3D User Interfaces for Games and Virtual Reality

©Joseph J. LaViola Jr.



# Next Class

- XNA BootCamp
- Readings
  - start reading XNA Game Studio Creator's Guide (Cawood and McGee)