



Design Document for:

Solitude

The Ultimate Survival Experience

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Game Overview

High Concept

How do you deal with fear when fear is all around you?

Overview

Solitude is a survival horror first-person shooter. The encounters with the enemies heighten the player's fear as well as the lighting and ambient sounds throughout the game which create an eerie atmosphere. The player's fear will affect the game with the use of a biofeedback device which take data from the player such as heart rate and causes the player, in game, to be affected with visual effects such as tunnel vision.

Target Audience and Rating

This game is intended for everyone ages 13 and up. We are seeking a T (Teen) rating.

"Titles rated T (Teen) have content that may be suitable for ages 13 and older. Titles in this category may contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood, simulated gambling, and/or infrequent use of strong language."

- ESRB : http://www.esrb.org/ratings/ratings_guide.jsp

Game & Movie Influences

Bioshock

Bioshock is a First Person Shooter based around the exploration of an underwater city and ultimately trying to escape from it. The main aspects of this game that we want to capture are the exploration and survival aspects. Although you're being guided through the facility ultimately is up to you to defend yourself from everyone else.



Bioshock : IGN.com

Dead Space

Dead Space is a third person action game that also features the main character exploring a facility. The setting and mood for Dead Space are much darker then what we're aiming for. What we want to capture from this game is that danger can strike from anywhere. It's this uneasiness that we want to transfer to our game and when tied in with the Biofeedback device it will add a great deal of challenge to the game.



Dead Space : IGN.com

District 9

District 9 is about a man from a corporation trying to evict aliens from their home in the slums of District 9. This same corporation also experiments on the aliens in a secret laboratory beneath their headquarters. Our setting is similar to this setting in that humans are being experimented on.



District 9: DVD

Theme

The game takes place in a secret genetic research facility on a remote island. It explores the ethical boundaries of human experimentation. As such the environment you explore

Example of Play

What do I control?

The play takes control of an unnamed test subject who unlike the rest has retained his humanity in spite of all the genetic experiments performed on him. The player will be able to move him around and solve navigate through the facility as well as handle a gun in times of need.

What is the main focus?

The player will be trying to navigate through the facility while collecting the scientist's test data and ultimately making it to the safe zone where the scientists are held up. Along the way the player will encounter the other test subjects who are on the loose and out for blood. The player will have to avoid conflict whenever possible and follow the objectives given to them by the scientists.

Why is it Fun?

Players getting to move through the facility while making quick, strategic decisions will make the game fun, while encountering or avoiding the enemies the players actual physiological state will play a role in the game. This bridges the gap between gaming and reality. What the player experiences will be uniquely their own and it creates a bond between the player and the character.

What's different?

The incorporation of the biofeedback device separates this survival horror from all the rest. Never before has a game been able to detect if a player is in fact experience a strong emotional response from the game. If a player is frighten or on edge this will be read into the game through a biofeedback device. The game will determine whether the levels exceed the normal levels and if so there will be adverse affects in the game. The MC will begin to suffer from symptoms such as tunnel vision, double vision, and some auditory effects. The player must calm themselves down for the character's symptoms to subside.

Story

Back-story

In the not too distant future, on a remote island called Basilisk Island is a genetic engineering facility. In this facility scientists conduct experiments on military trainees to increase certain attributes in the hopes of creating a military task force made up of genetically enhanced “super” soldiers. Some of these genetic enhancements include:

- Physical: superior muscular/skeletal strength (three – speed, strength, endurance), visual acuity, reduced sensitivity to pain, faster healing process
- Mental: perceptual awareness, reaction time, emotional stability, unconditional obedience

However over time these experiments yielded some unexpected and undesirable side effects which include physical mutations, weakness to the environmental conditions, and degenerative mental state. Out of all of the test subjects only one yielded positive results albeit not without side effects of their own. They achieved creating a soldier with increased healing factor, enhanced strength and agility, emotional stability, and increased perceptual awareness. The only significant side effects the subject experiences are the abnormal growths on his right arm, complete retrograde amnesia, and sensory disorientation in situations of high stress.

Due to virtually none of the test subject yielding positive results the scientists decide to start from scratch and dispose of the test subjects and put the only subject that did yield positive results in isolation for further testing. While the subjects are being rounded up they catch wind of what's going on and revolt. The scientists and personnel struggle to keep them contained while they put the facility in lock down. A single scientist escapes to the control room and put the facility in lockdown. Shortly afterwards they contact the MC.

- They surgically implant device into subjects' arms that monitor their vitals/results

Overall Story

The MC is awakened by a scientist with a small shock using the implant in his arm. The scientist informs him that the facility is in lock down and that he needs to get out quick because the other subjects are closing on his location. The MC freaks out when he sees his arm. The scientist tells him that there isn't time to explain and he unlocks the door. He tells him if he wants to be fixed he must first escape. The Scientist guides him toward the equipment room and seals the door behind him. In the equipment room the MC

collects a tranquilizer gun, flashlight and a radio to keep in contact with the scientist. The scientist then fills him in on the events leading up to his awakening. He informs him that if he has any hope of survival he must escape the facility but before doing that he has to gather the test data from the experiments they've been conducting. He tells him that with that data they'll be able to fix their mistakes and possibly turn him back to normal.

The MC navigates his way through the first wing gather the test data in the form of audio interviews as well as textual information. The interviews give insight into the MC's past and how the experimentation gradually affected him. The textual information gives a more broad sense of the experimentation and how it affected the subjects as a whole. After gathering all the data in the first wing of the level, the MC moves on to the next wing. Soon after he enters the next wing the power shuts off. The MC navigates his way through the wing using the flashlight to turn on the back-up generator. During this time he is still collecting files. After turning the power back on, the MC sees many subjects round the corner of the end of the hall and begins to flee to the exit. On the way there the MC ducks into a security room and closes the door. He then activates the security systems, which sends knockout gas into the hallway rendering the subjects in the hallway unconscious. The MC exits the security room and makes his way to the secure area right before he makes it to the door a subject attacks him he manages to fight him off and tranquilize it. The MC gets to the secure area and then game fades to black.

The Mood

In game sounds will add to the feeling of isolation and eeriness.

Gameplay

Gameplay Overview

Levels

There will be one level that is separated into three parts. This level will span a whole floor of the building and is estimated to take around 20-40 minutes.

Difficulty – Due to the limited amount of gameplay there will be no difficulty setting for the game.

The Tranquilizer Gun - The player will use a tranquilizer gun to render enemies unconscious. Ammunition may be found around the level.



Biofeedback Device

The use of the biofeedback device has been revised to fit as an integral component of the story. In the story, all subjects will be implanted with a device which monitors their vital signs and genetic changes occurring in their bodies. This provides a means of constant monitoring. The player will be equipped with a biofeedback device to reflect the device implanted in the main character. The data will be displayed through the visual interface (Panic Meter – working name) and will enable the player to be aware of their physiological condition and, through experience, manipulate that state.

The Panic Meter on the screen will be divided into five segments. Each segment will represent a different physiological state (regular, increased, high, decreased, low). Each state will be governed by a range of that state (IE heart rate).

The biofeedback device will serve two purposes. The first will be to create awareness in the player of their reactions. At the start of the game, there will be situations designed to arouse, scare, or calm the player/character. There will be certain objectives in the game which require a desired physiological state from the player. For example, there will be a point in the game where the character must sneak by a horde of enemies. There will be other points where the player must increase their physiological response (IE heart rate) to give the character a faster ability to run.

The biofeedback device will also indicate if the player has become too excited or passive. Given too excited, the character will experience an uncontrolled hyperactive state indicated by delusions and hallucinatory affects, such as blurriness and double vision. Given too passive, the character will experience debilitating effects, such as tunnel-vision and blurriness. In principle, the idea is to reflect a loss of control of mental faculties, and with each case is the risk of death (IE too excited, heart cannot maintain proper rhythm, and too passive, not enough blood flow to oxygenate the brain). Relating to the story of the game, the player literally takes on the identity of the character in that he/she must understand and maintain a certain level of control over the physiological state.

Objectives

Story Based

There are three main objectives for the game. These are little objectives while running through the game. The Fetch Quest(i.e. find a key to open a door, etc.), the Seek-and-Press-a-Button quest(i.e. turn on the power), and getting to the last room to activate the exit. A wave of enemy AI then comes through the passage that the MC has to go. In order to finish the level the MC must push his way through the wave to the exit of the level. In the last room the MC finds a bigger gun to take out the 'wave'. Presumably he gets out and it fades to black. (Fading to Black leaves it open for another level or for the player to think that The MC had gotten out of this building.).

Secondary Objectives

These include gathering the audio and text files. This is only if the player wants to know what is going on behind the scenes of the reason what and why the MC is there.

Obstacles

Test Subjects

These will be the main obstacles throughout the game. While navigating through the halls the player will encounter them. If the player is not seen it is possible to avoid contact with them. However if they are seen then they must render them unconscious with the tranquilizer gun.

Blockades

As the game progresses, a percentage of the hallways and doorways would be blocked off due to the lock down forcing the player to take an alternate route.

Panic Effects

When the panic meter (WIP) reaches a certain level these things will get worse. As your panic rises, which is narrated by the heart rate monitor then this will make it difficult to fight the enemy A.I. or do the objectives that have been laid out for you.

- **Tunnel vision** - First level of Panic. Focal point is clear, but around it is blurry



- **Double Vision** - Second Level of Panic. The enemy and the environment are doubled to cause disorientation.



- **Blurriness** - Third and final level of Panic and makes it really difficult for you to see anything.



Control

Mouse

Left click – shoot the tranquilizer

Keyboard

W – Move character forward

A – Move character to the left

S – Move character backwards

D – Move character to the right

R – Reload the tranquilizer

Space bar – jump

GUI

The interface will consist of a health bar, a panic meter, a targeting reticule, and ammo counter

Health - There will be a health bar along with an ammo bar. The player will need to have a health kit and use it in order to recover.

Camera - The camera will be solely in first-person perspective. The mouse will control the rotation of the camera.

Combat - Combat will consist of shooting the tranquilizer gun. Left mouse button is used to shoot. The 'R' button will be used to reload your tranquilizers into the gun.