

Interactive Storytelling

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The Big Question:

**What would it take
to create the
Holodeck?**

About Me



About Me

Bachelor of Computer Science (2002-2007)

Masters of Computer Science (2007-2009)

PhD Computer Science (2009 - now)



Why I Care:

I love games with stories

What is Interactive Storytelling?

Story + Interaction

What is Interactive Storytelling?

Story + Interaction

“A story follows an interesting protagonist seeking a clear goal by addressing an ever-escalating set of difficulties.”

Andrew Glassner

Stories have a complex structure, are usually about people rather than things, and involve conflict.

Chris Crawford

What is Interactive Storytelling?

Story + Interaction

Two or more agents that are

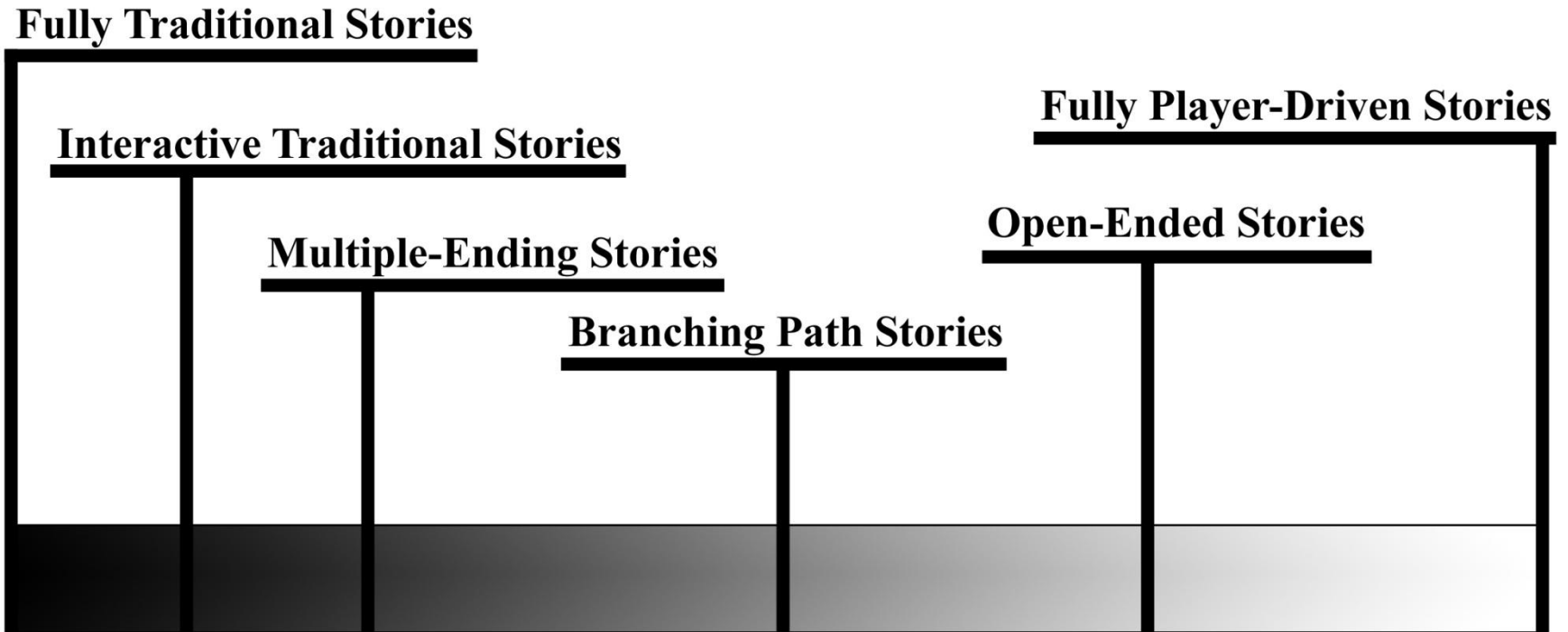
Listening

Thinking

Speaking

Chris Crawford

The Interactive Storytelling Spectrum



Josiah Lebowitz and Chris Klug

Hey! Games are interactive!



Think of your favourite game story

How much does the plot change?

How does player action change it?

Are major plot points enforced, or player-driven?

Nothing is *that* simple...



Problems With Story and Games

à la Chris Crawford

Stories are not usually puzzles

Problems With Story and Games

à la Chris Crawford

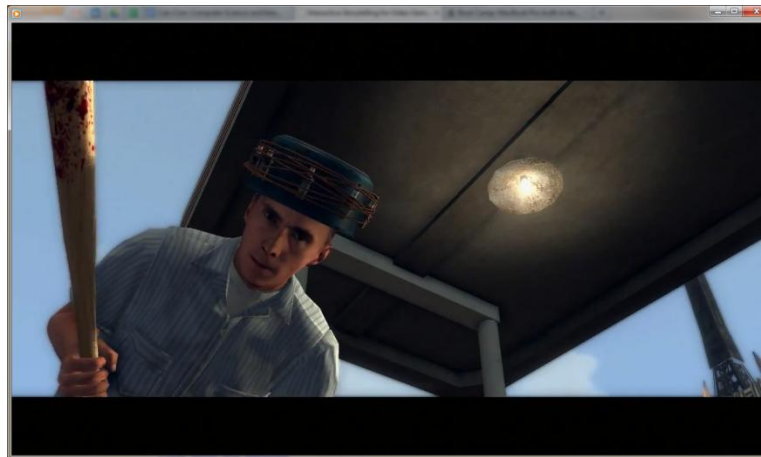
Stories are not usually puzzles

... Story – Puzzle – Story – Puzzle ...

Problems With Story and Games

à la Chris Crawford

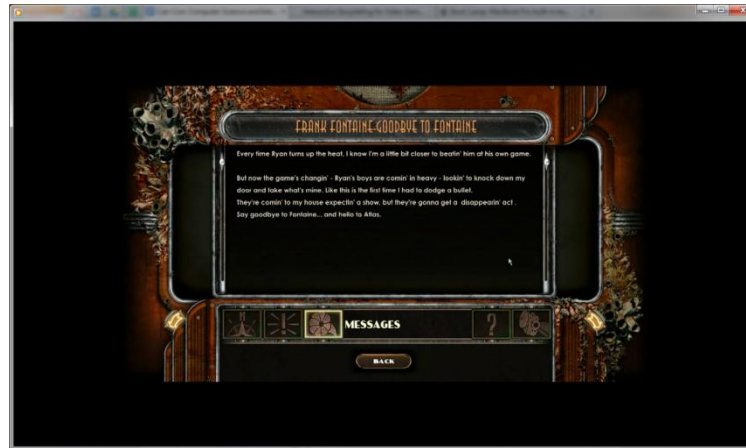
Stories are much more than spectacle



Problems With Story and Games

à la Chris Crawford

Stories often present events in nonlinear order



Problems With Story and Games

à la Chris Crawford

Games are usually focused on violent conflict



Violet rejects Gossip because she does not trust you enough.

Violet

You've been wanting to talk to me a lot lately.
Why not find someone else to bother for a change?

Problems With Story and Games

à la Chris Crawford

Choice in games comes from players, not characters



Problems With Story and Games

à la Andrew Glassner

Myth of interactivity: More interactivity
makes any experience better.

Problems With Story and Games

à la Andrew Glassner

An interactive experience must be fun,
interesting, or both.

Problems With Story and Games

à la Andrew Glassner

A player's time should be respected.

Problems With Story and Games

à la Andrew Glassner

Players should not be deceived.

Problems With Story and Games

à la Andrew Glassner

A player should have enough information
to make an informed choice.

Problems With Story and Games

à la Andrew Glassner

Players should not be required to make highly improbable connections or embark on exhaustive searches to collect magic items.

Problems With Story and Games

à la Andrew Glassner

Cut scenes should never show the player's character acting in ways that can contradict the player's mental model of the character.

What about technology?

Non-adaptive

constipated stories
non-interactive story planning
guided narrative path
immersion via ambiguity

Creative explanations

no explanation
flashbacks and memories
brain damage or hallucinations
time travel
episodic story
different framing devices

Narratology-based

automatic scene properties
sequence on dramatic principles
case-based reasoning

Environmental/emergent

interaction with a complex world
social/physical space of possibility

What about technology?

Minimally adaptive

```
graph TD; A[Minimally adaptive] -.- B[Branching structures]; A -.- C[Narratology-based];
```

Branching structures

choose your own adventure
hypertext narrative
implicit graph from symbolic notation
side quests
multiple endings

Narratology-based

motif context switches on user input

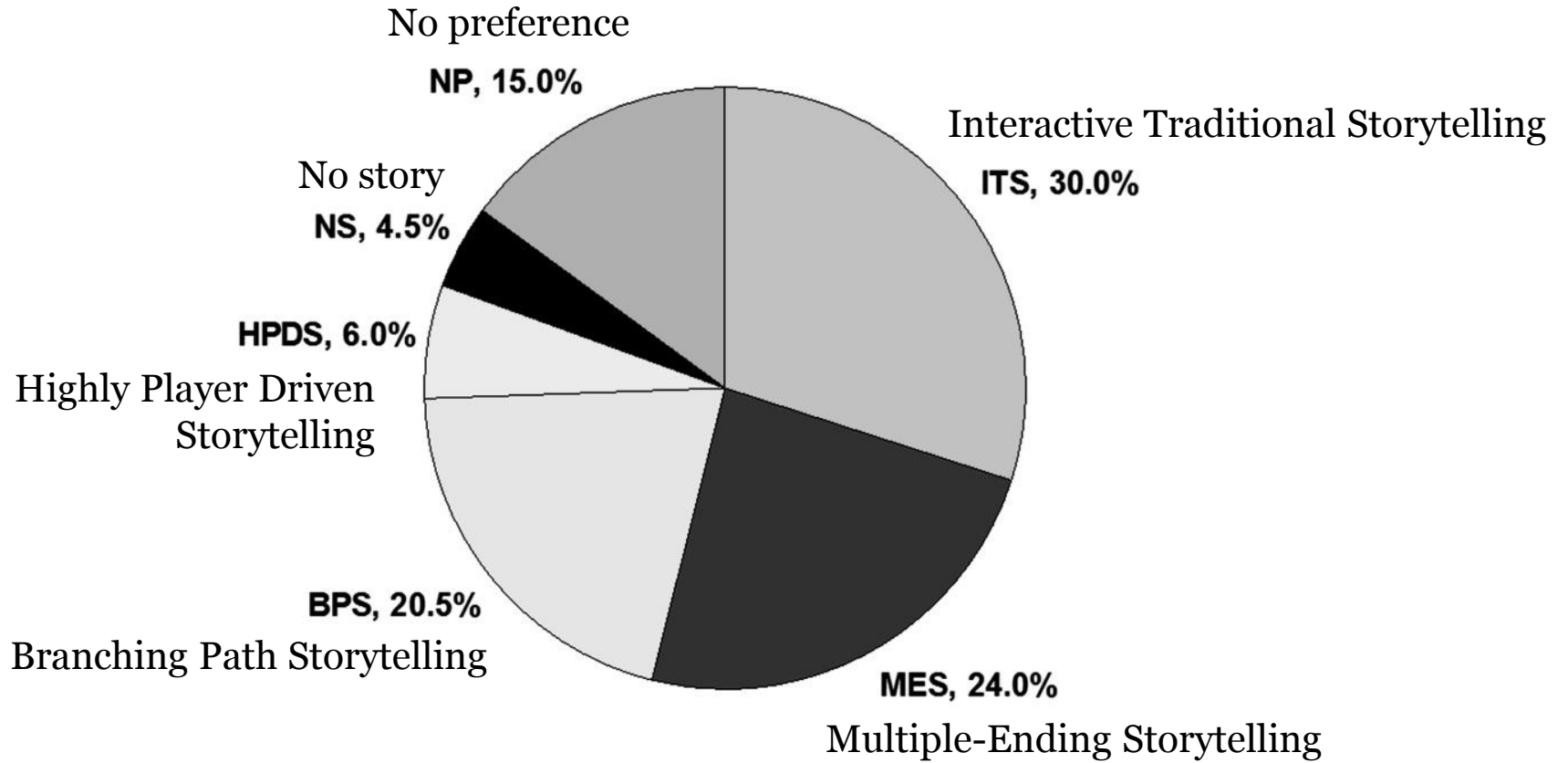
What about technology?



So interactive stories are hard...

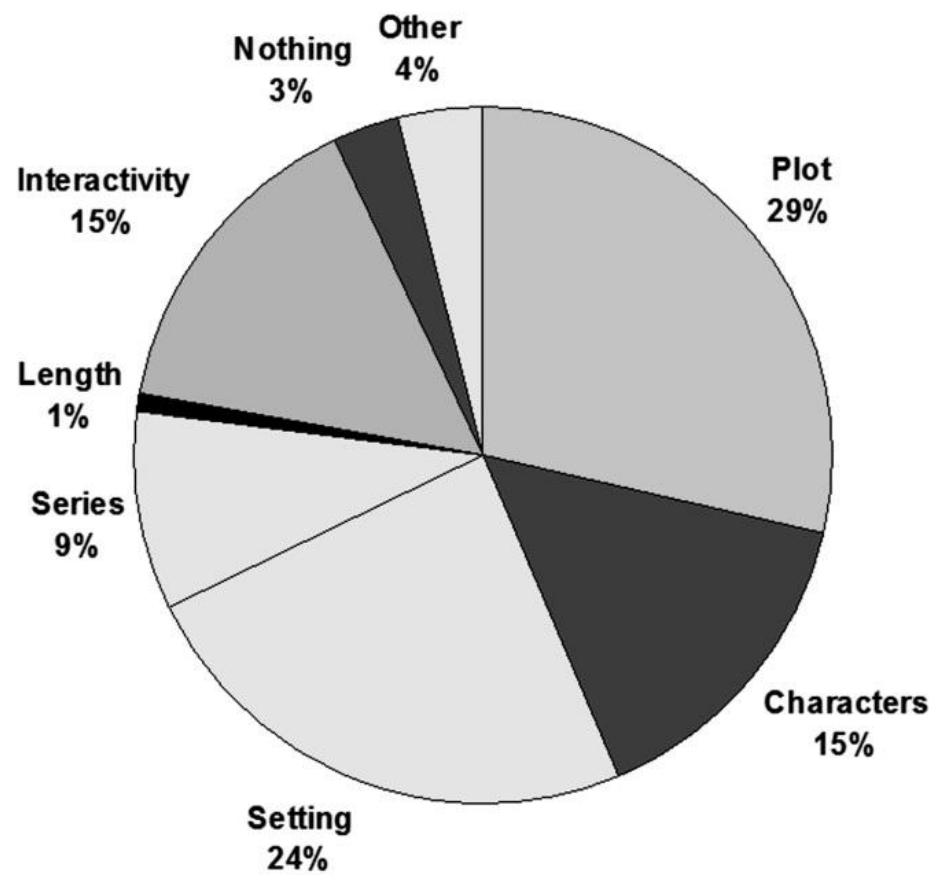
Does it matter?

Preferred Storytelling Styles



Josiah Lebowitz and Chris Klug

Most Important Story Elements When Buying a Game



Josiah Lebowitz and Chris Klug

Types of Story Enjoyment

M Pohjola

The Audience

Passive reception of narrative

Types of Story Enjoyment

M Pohjola

The Performer

Active performance of a character role
within an unfolding story

Types of Story Enjoyment

M Pohjola

The Immersionist

Immersion of the player in the character

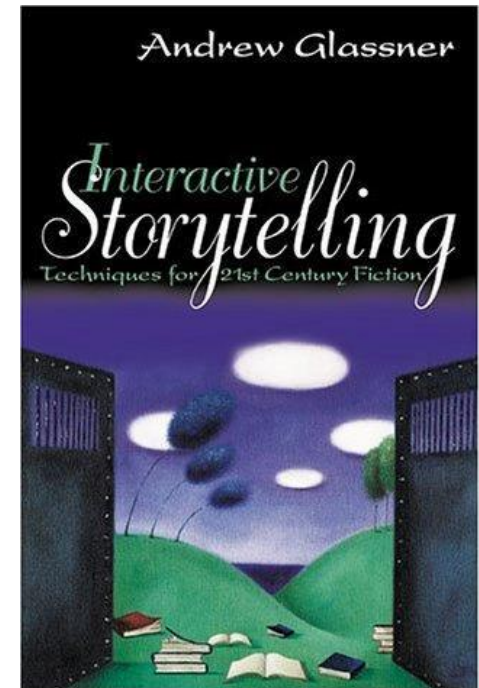
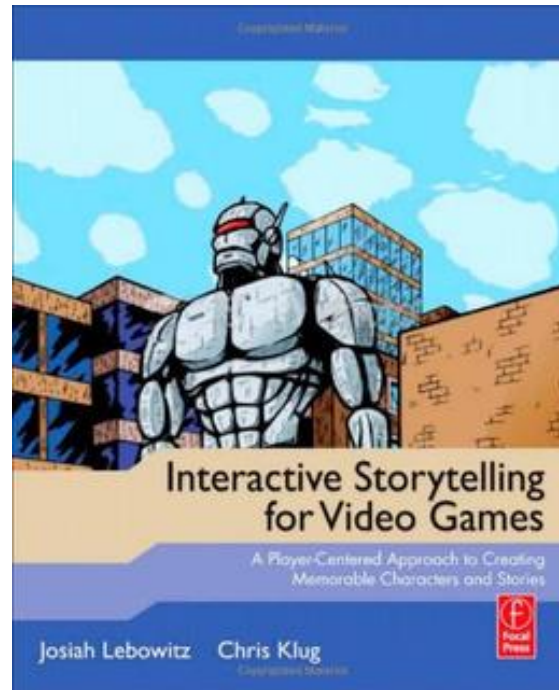
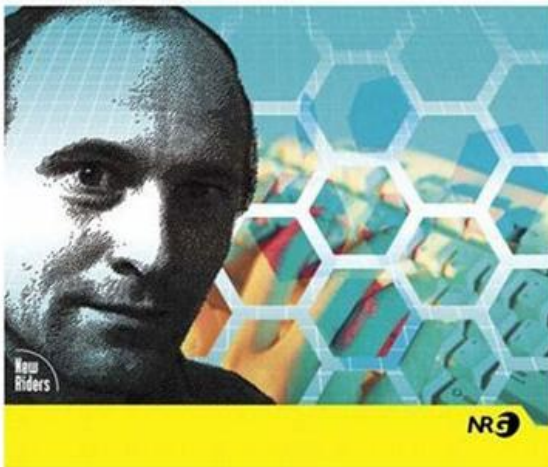


thedailygamepad.com

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chris crawford
on interactive storytelling



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