

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a network of light blue lines and small circles, resembling a circuit board or a neural network diagram. The lines are vertical and horizontal, with some diagonal connections, and the circles are placed at various points along these lines.

# FGD – CHAPTER 4 AND 5

## UNDERSTANDING THE PLAYER AND MACHINE

The background is a solid dark blue color. In the four corners, there are decorative white line-art elements that resemble circuit traces or neural network connections. These lines are thin and end in small circles, creating a sense of connectivity and technology.

# PLAYER PERSONALITY

# DOMAINS OF PLAY

- Mix of psychology and expert designer opinion
- Attempts to classify what might attract players to different types of games
  - In other words, what aspects of games do players seek out
- In general – you can't appease everyone, but you should know your target audience!



# DOMAINS OF PLAY

- Novelty vs familiarity
- Challenge vs "sandbox"
- Stimulation (social vs solo gaming)
- Harmony (cooperative vs competitive)
- Threat (unpleasant vs pleasant emotions)
- Storytelling
- Where do you lie in these 6 domains?



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# PLAYER DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORIES

# DO YOU HAVE STEREOTYPES?

- What do you think is the difference between genders as it relates to games?
- What about age?



- Keep these in mind as we discuss, and you may learn you have some misconceptions
- Additionally, the following information is representational of the current state of gaming; so (1) it may have bias and (2) it may change in the future

# MEN AND WOMEN

- Fact – women represent a large portion of the gamer market
  - More adult women than teenage boys actually
- Gender inclusiveness – you don't need to specifically design for stereotypically feminine interests
- Avoid
  - Hypersexualized female avatars
  - Repetitive play
  - Play without meaningful goals
  - Solitary play (or just be aware of this turn-off)
- A minority of men keep pushing various stereotypes; ignore them
  - Example: female protagonists won't sell



# MEN AND WOMEN

- A few generalities about gender differences (general trends, not rules!):
  - Learning
  - Attitudes toward risk
  - Degree of socializing
  - Conflict resolution style
  - Mental challenges
  - Customization
  - Leisure time and money
- Design rule: women are a market, not a genre!
- Consider inclusion of avatars/main characters of various genders
  - Remember to include differences so that female characters aren't simply a different skin on an inherently male oriented character





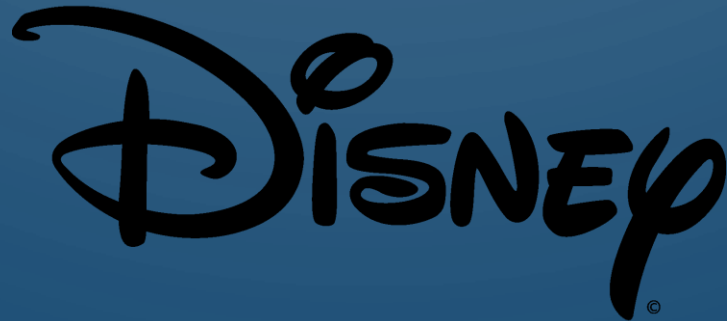
# CHILDREN

- General categories
  - Preschool and Kindergarten (3-6)
  - Early elementary (5-8)
  - Upper elementary (7-12)
  - Middle and high school (13 and up)
  - Late teens to mid-20s – brains still developing
- Each group has own interests and abilities
- As with gender, these are generalities, not rules



# CHILDREN

- Consider
  - Hand-eye coordination
  - Logic development
  - Systemic thinking
  - Immediate vs long-term goals
  - Visual design
  - Linguistic complexity
  - Experimentation
  - Reading
  - Appropriate content
- Kisses of death for children's entertainment – big misconceptions:
  - Kids love anything sweet
  - Give them what is good for them
  - All you do is have to amuse them
  - Always play it safe
  - All kids are created equal
  - Explain everything
  - Be sure characters are wholesome

The Disney logo is rendered in a black, stylized script font. The 'D' is large and features a prominent loop at the top. The letters 'I', 'S', 'N', 'E', and 'P' are smaller and more compact. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the bottom right of the 'P'.

# A NOTE ON GAMES FOR GIRLS

- Boy's and girl's interests diverge widely (for better or for worse)
- Many early efforts failed if the publisher let them attempt it at all
  - Caused by gender stereotypes!
- Look at places with market success, e.g., Mattel or Blitz



# A NOTE ON GAMES FOR GIRLS

- To make more inclusive strive for gameplay that allows
  - Characterization
  - Context
  - Control
  - Customization
  - Creativity



- Misconceptions
  - Girls don't like computer games because its techie
  - Girls don't like violence
  - Girls want everything sweet and happy
  - Girls don't like to be scared
- Remember that you don't need to enforce societal gender stereotypes for men, women, boys, or girls

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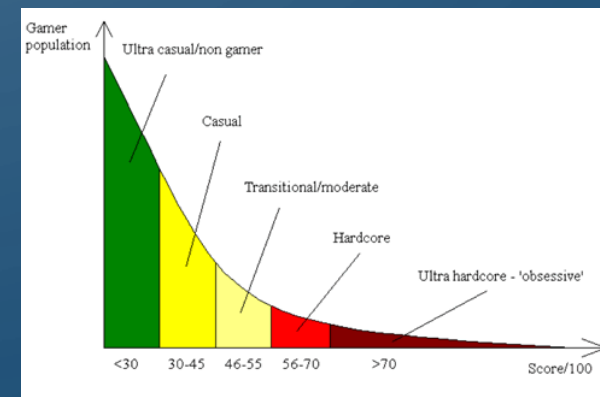
# GAMER QUALITIES

# GAMER DEDICATION

- Many aspects of gamer dedication level

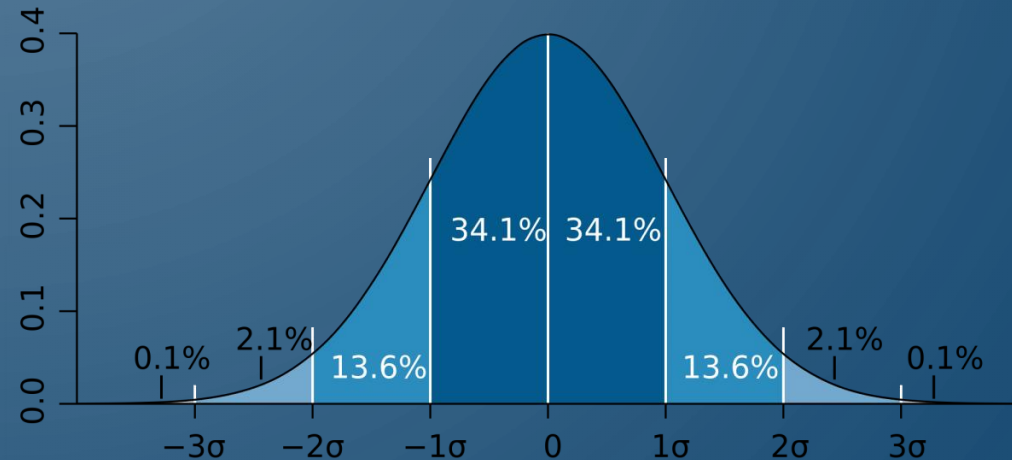
- Technology savvy
- Owns high-end gear
- Willingness to pay
- Preference for violence/action
- Preference for depth/complexity
- Plays over many long sessions
- Seeks game-related information
- Discusses games online
- Plays for completion (winning)

- Tolerant of frustration
- Engaged in competition
- Started playing at a young age
- Knowledge of the industry
- Early adoption
- Desire to modify/extend games



# DANGERS OF BINARY THINKING

- Can't make a game for everyone
- Reason statistically about the various factors we discussed
  - Avoid thinking in binary
- Design rule: Keep exclusionary material out of your game
  - Don't try to attract everyone
  - Strive for inclusiveness and avoid repelling people away from your game





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# UNDERSTAND THE MACHINE

A GAME CONCEPT IS INCOMPLETE WITHOUT A DESCRIPTION OF THE MACHINE



# HOME GAME CONSOLES

- Typical use
  - Placed in living room, player away from screen
    - Small text is bad idea
  - Controller
    - Limited inputs (possible motion sensor)
  - Excellent for local multiplayer games
  - Long usage
  - Dedicated hobbyists
- Internal workings are a trade secret and you need a license to develop (consoles protect their brand)



# PERSONAL COMPUTERS



- Typical use
  - On a desk, operated by one person
    - Supports small text and complex user interfaces
  - Keyboard and mouse (maybe joystick/controller)
    - Much richer input modality
- Anyone can develop but no two machines are alike
- Stand-alone vs browser-based games

# PORTABLE DEVICES

- Typical use
  - Carried around by single person
  - Size varies from small mobile phones to tablets
  - Screen realty is premium
    - Need simple interface
  - Player must hold device while playing
  - Touch screens or limited buttons on input
- Cartridge platforms necessitate small games
- Typical play is for a few minutes at a time
  - Play can be interrupted easily
- Mobile phones!
  - App store restrictions



# OTHER DEVICES



- Think of the following industries
  - Airlines?
  - Casinos?
  - Theme parks?
- Many other niche markets



# SUMMARY

- Design for inclusiveness – avoid binary thinking
    - Don't try to attract everyone, instead work to avoid repelling players
  - Understand your machine and how it affects gameplay
- 