

An open letter to Designers

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DESIGNERS:

AI does NOT
want yer job



So, this designer walks into a bar...

“I’m not sure how much AI we’re really gonna need. It’s primarily a multiplayer game.”

“We’ll need to have pretty tight control over the AIs. Can you ensure that?”

“You know I’m excited about getting some real AI into the game. What kind of scripting system were you thinking?”

“Your AIs aren’t going to ruin my story, are they?”

What's with the attitude?

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON???

DID WE BREAK UP??



When did we break up???

- AI and design are on the same side, right?
- We used to *be* designers. You remember, before there *were* designers?
- We love you guys, since you give us time to solve cool tech puzzles that we love.

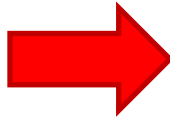
My Theory

- A* came along
- Gameplay programmers largely became AI programmers
- Artificial intelligence is a techy sounding, collegey phrase that makes people afraid.
- Designers maybe don't think of AI programmers as artists?
- Plus: Skynet. Hal. Agent Smith. Dammit.

Ah ha! Is that it?

- Game design is creative, AI is a science. Is it a class war?
- What we do is **NOT** science. Academic AI is, but not game AI.
- Game AI is just *informed* design. Game AI is way more about presentation and player experience than it is about intelligence.
- Is it the name AI? Combined with a silly fear that AI will someday rise up and take over?

Not Real



Time to clear some things up

- AI techniques are just tools, nothing more. General intelligence? We're not even trying, much less close.
- Adds richness to behavior
- Like shaders to a graphics engine. Does anybody think that shader programmers aren't artists?
- Programmers like engaging storylines too. We don't want to make *everything* procedural
- Programmers mostly just want to eliminate drudgery. That's what we do.

What do we want then?

- We want engaging, crafted experiences, that are easier to create and handle edge cases better.
- We want to put a bit of algorithmically dynamic power at the right points within the game in order to achieve more interactivity, less rigid scripting, and overall more fun.
- We want more realism. Emulating humanity is really hard, since humans are very powerful sensing/perceiving/thinking machines. Simulating humans requires AI techniques, until we find a better tool.

Takeaways

- Don't be afraid of AI.
- Don't be afraid of dynamic behavior.
- Don't be afraid. Period. AI **is** design. We don't want to get rid of design.

Besides...

When AI does rise up and take over, wouldn't you rather be on its good side?

Hey Buddy!

