

X-RATED, ADULT DESIGN

INTRO

Some weeks ago I have been involved into a psychological study about the relations between personality traits and preferences towards specific game genres in teenagers. The study also took into consideration the risk teenagers could be exposed due to games with explicit sexual contents, so I discovered Illusion Soft and some of its titles: Rapelay (RL), Sexy Beach 3 (SB) and Artificial Girl 3 (AG).

These games, that could be easily get ridden off as pure pornography, and quite extreme too, are interesting to me from a game design standpoint. Each one of these games deals with sex in a peculiar way, through design choices that are both coherent and intelligent in their simplicity.

GAMEPLAY

Generally speaking, the player of these games takes on the role of the man, who chooses a girl from those available, a location, and then the sex scene (H-scene) begin. It is possible to choose different positions to have sex and adjust the rhythm of sexual acts through mouse inputs, in order to affect the excitement levels of man and woman, so to define the outcome of the scene: he comes, she comes, they come together.

GAME OBJECTIVE

The most interesting part of these games is that the player is asked, so to say, to "unlock" the girls. Before the player can do as he pleases, the girls have to be "trained" to "open" to different kinds of sexual experiences. This is accomplished repeating several sex scenes with each girl, hammering on specific performances according to a predefined sequence. When all the traits are unlocked, the girls get "broken" and the real fun begins.

Let's begin with the analysis of each game.

RAPELAY



The first game I would like to talk about is Rapelay (RL). In RL the player controls a pervert that sets his sights on a mother and her 2 daughters (I know, these aren't the best premises for a product of entertainment...). They first must be molested and raped, all of them; after that the game gives the possibility to choose any of them for H-scenes.

RL is pure heavy metal! The beginning of the game is particularly shocking: the player molests and then rapes Manaka, the younger girl of the 3. She is very very young... Then he is asked to repeat the sequence with mother and sister. Only after this objective is achieved the player can start to train the girls in order to break them and make them his sex slaves.

All game features strongly support the extreme-core atmosphere of the game.

Locations to choose from consist of subway platforms, public toilets, hotel rooms and garden seats. These are all public places populated with passers-by.

Game modes, besides H-scenes, consist of an *Expose* mode that takes place on a subway platform, where the player-character cannot "touch" the girl but he can undress her in front of other people and give her orgasms with dildos, and a sexual harassment mode (*Nozoki*), where the girl can be "felt" on the train (but no actual sex is allowed).

Game interface is peremptory. Girls are undressed or put into specific sex positions through text commands from a list. As to say that the player-character gives orders and the girls must obey.

Girls can be selectively undressed during sex scenes. The player can rise the shirt, or slip the pants no more than necessary, or completely strip the girls. This feature reinforces the player to lord the girls over and humiliate them as he pleases.

Two more elements contribute to the peculiar atmosphere of the game.

One is the possibility to force a girl into oral sex: it is represented as a violent action, showing the male character as he firmly holds the head of the girl in his hands. Not exactly the standard for a first date with your girlfriend.

The other element is the implementation of the girls' periods. When the player chooses a girl he can verify if it is a safe day or not. Girls' periods affect sex with them and if the player doesn't pay attention it is possible to get the girls pregnant. If it isn't malicious...

As you can see, many game feature in RL are designed to completely support a sadistic and domineering player's attitude.

The other titles have a different approach. Let's see how.

SEXY BEACH 3



Sexy Beach 3 (SB) is about a man's holiday on a tropical island that he shares with 5 other girls. They are all alone, of different ages and beauties, all bored and in search for a company. Here I am!

The atmosphere in SB is far more relaxed than RL: there's no violence here and the girls are obliging. Sex with them is the outcome of intimacy achieved with time, obtained after many dates in suggestive locations and activities like oiling their bodies.

The designer asks the player to retrace, naturally in a stylized and simplified way, the steps of a true summer love. Girls cannot be forced into sex: they decide to "offer" only when they feel confident enough with the player-character.

How is this different atmosphere translated into gameplay mechanics?

First of all, game locations consist of spots like waterfalls, the grotto or the hot springs, surely nicer than street corners and public toilets. Moreover, there are no people passing by.

As in RL, the player can choose between 3 game modes: passive observation of a girl in her activities, oil her and H-scenes. Even if the player can "feel" the girls while oiling, this is done in a joyful and consensual context.

The game interface during sex scenes has subtle, yet important, differences from RL. Even if the list of commands is still there, cute-looking icons are added to text commands so to convey an idea of comfort and complicity between the man and the girls. There's even a *Her choice* option that would be completely out of place in RL.

Girls cannot be undressed piece by piece: they can be naked or dressed (bikinis are dresses, aren't they?). This detail relaxes, in my opinion, the fetish drive that is so strong in RL.

The last thing that supports a more *easy* atmosphere is that the player can change the girls' bathing suits (and accessories as well) at will. The parade that the girls offer to the player-character tastes a lot of complicity and none of unilateral domination.

As you can see, this is a game about complicity and play between the man and the girls, who offer themselves for sex in exotic and suggestive locations.

What can we expect from the last title of the three?

ARTIFICIAL GIRL 3



I left Artificial Girl 3 (AG) as the last game of the list because it is the most ambitious and complex game of the three: the sex galore mixed up with *sand-box* elements. Does the result match the potential?

AG offers two game modes.

In *Make* mode the player can create his own personal harem of up to 5 girls: every girl can be both physically and psychologically edited (curves, hair color and cut, personality traits, ...).

Then he can dress them up using an editor that allows to match different items of clothing.

As you can see AG is not a game "plug&play" like the others. On the contrary, the player is asked to invest time and efforts on his virtual lovers before having fun with them.

Once the girls and their dresses are created the player can finally access *Play* mode. And fall into despair! The game is some kind of 3rd person action game with classic WASD+mouse controls.

The player can't choose available locations from a menu: he controls his character in a 3D environment, a residential area made of several locations where the potential girlfriends roam endlessly. In perfect "Rape of the Sabine" style, the girls in AG 3 must be chased!

Each girl is described by a number of numerical variables that represent her drives and needs. The willingness to sex shows up only when the variables get to specific values, and is up to the player to make this happen.

It's clear that we are far from the "*make a selection and watch the outcome*" approach of the other two games. AG presents in fact all the benefits and flaws of many *sand-box* like titles: it is amazing to create game scenarios that are always different and original, but sometimes the player acts according to what happens, and not to what he wanted to do.

Game interface during H-scenes is complicated as well. After the character approaches a girl, if she's likely to have sex, the ongoing of the scene is controlled through an absurd system of mouse clicks and slides; penetration requires to aim from perspectives that would make Tinto Brass blush; controlling a girl's coitus requires the player to "read" in her gaze; and if you enjoy oral sex, do hope that the girl shares your interest.

On the other hand, once the steep learning curve has been overcome, the game literally "opens" up (ehm...).

Girls learn with practice and increase their performances (and yours!) play by play. They acquire new personality traits that positively affect their behavior (from a sexual gameplay standpoint!). In the 3D environment the player finds plenty of intriguing locations to celebrate his virtual lust. Then he can have fun with the dressing editor and provide plenty of collections for the girls.

Even if the animations during H-scenes don't change and the player obtained all available performances from the girls, he can always find a reason to go back into the game world, assuming he is perverted enough!

I would say that the core element of AG gameplay is the representation (very simplified, of course) of dedication and perseverance that are needed, in the real world, to obtain what any man wants from (almost) any woman. Girls in AG 3 need to be chased, you must spend time with them, and learn to choose the right places and the right moments. And most of all, have patience!

CONCLUSIONS

So, why this article? In my opinion game design choices are the means to convey the message of a game, the kind of experience it involves the player into. Therefore every design choice can and must be implemented taking into account the effect that it will arise in the player's experience.

It is up to the designers that the details of the game interface, setting, story and every other content of a game send that message in a coherent, simple and possibly intelligent way.

Whatever the game topic, target audience and category, because ability and skill transcend all of them.