

What are games?

- Games are art
 - What is art?
 - Expression

Sharing is caring and learning

The world is complex

- Deets of life
- There are details that are more complicated. They require understanding increasingly complex structures.

The value of a critic / criticism

- 4 chef questions.
 - 1) How valuable would a food critic's words/assessment be about food he/she has never eaten?
 - 2) How valuable is the criticism of a food critic who doesn't like sweet things, if the food is a dessert? e.g. ice cream
 - 3) How valuable is the criticism of a food critic critiquing a recipe (step by step instructions) if they have little to no cooking skills? Let's say this recipe is for med-advanced cooks.
 - 4) How valuable is the critique of a food critic who takes super hot sauce everywhere and pours too much on the food?
- What is the difference between a review (evaluating. Worth time?), analysis (break down), and a critique (a therefore)?

The common pitfalls of critics:

(in order of most severe/common to least):

- Over scoping
 - Opening cans of worms. Lighting a book of matches and throwing each in a different direction.
 - It takes so much more work to debunk and clarify. People do the conversation and the entire discourse no favors by overscoping and rushing through their ideas.
- Not comparing like-to-like
 - Due to a lack of understanding underlying structures
 - Evident when people contradict themselves as they search for examples
- Not doing research, putting enough effort, or learning about how their experience fits.
 - Especially with games, there are many emergent possibilities. Just playing once or not experimenting usually reveals huge experiential gaps.
- People just assume the first time they play something is the only way it can be played.
- Not having examples.
 - People operating mostly on feeling and the perceived “wisdom of crowds”
 - It’s as if what they say is so true and obvious that they don’t need the support of examples
- Not liking something on a fundamental level
 - You cannot discuss the merits of something if you don’t acknowledge or like it on a basic level.
 - You will likely not play around with it, experiment, or be curious about it. This attitude limits how we learn and understand it.
 - If the only thing you have to say is “I don’t like it.” or “I don’t think it should exist” then you have an opinion not a critique.
- Stating other people’s opinions as design reasons
 - Agreeing with someone’s feelings/opinions doesn’t make them right.
 - It also doesn’t mean they explained themselves in a way that’s insightful
- People often quote other critics but they fail to work out any reasonable underlying design principle.
- Not playing a game
 - As simple as people not playing games and trying to talk about them
 - As complex as people only playing a game once in one way, and not going back to experiment with alternative possibilities.

DO Scoring System

● Difficulty

- 1. Don't have to be familiar with video games
- 2. Have to be familiar with games in general
- 3. Have to be familiar with a genre
- 4. Have to be familiar with a series of a specific game
- 5. Have to be deeply familiar with the technique, history, and terminology of a game

● Scope

- 1) 1 sub topic (can have examples from different games)
- 2) 1 topic including its sub-topics (can have examples from different games)
- 3) 1 game covering multiple topics
- 4) 2+ games comparison (multi topic)
- 5) 3+ games in same/similar genre (multi topic look at genre conventions)
- -all games (general game design principles that can be applied to 90% percent of games)

● Argumentation

- 1. Demonstrates understanding of facts and ideas by organizing examples into categories and giving descriptions. (Comprehension)
- 2. States or implies an explanation for gameplay experiences or player phenomena. States that a design element/choice is good/bad design. Presents design questions that frame the issue and potentially introduce useful considerations.
- 3. Articulates the complexity and nuance of a topic, principle, or argument. Articulates the limitations of design principles based on sub-topics. Addresses counter arguments. Outlines a model for an experience.
- 4. Presents and defends opinion(s) by making judgments about information, validity of ideas, or quality of work. Breaks down an argument/opinion/example into (quantifiable, clear, objective) parts to create a criteria. (Evaluation)
- 5. Articulates why an topic, principle, argument is important. Frames the entire issue/argument concerning scope, scale, experiential, or cultural differences.

● Examples

- 1) 1 example
- 2) 2 examples
- 3) 3 examples
- 4) 4-9 examples
- 5) 10+ examples

• Quality

- **start with 5 and take away one point for any significant case of the below:
 - -unnecessary harsh, rude, or discriminatory language
 - -off topic
 - -click baity /inflammatory
 - -unnecessary exaggerations
 - -lack of cohesiveness/coherency
 - -Failing to complete thoughts or statements
 - -Failing to compare like to like.
 - -a clarity issue due to lack of defining terms or defining scope
 - -Using “rule of thumb” design ideas, buzz words, or other concepts without backing them up.
 - -excessive conjecture regarding the thoughts, lives, and opinions of other parties (e.g. game devs)



Sequelitis Zelda

“Isn’t it time we look at this game critically and make a fair analysis.” ~Egoraptor.

- General description of Zelda and link to the past https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=123
- Egoraptor has a personal definition of what Zelda is (undefined) and doesn't like to be told what to do (regardless of other freedoms in the game)
https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=140
 - Zelda is not a sandbox
- “The whole game feels more processed and more planned”
https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=184.
 - Yes. The OOT is designed along with every other Zelda (and Nintendo) game since Zelda 1. Now there's less getting lost. More diverse challenges and content. Gotta plan that kind of thing.
- Zelda roots? No hand holding? No goal? https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=198

- What about the instruction manual? The manual gives story details and sets the goal of the game in clear terms. See here: <http://legendsoflocalization.com/media/the-legend-of-zelda/manuals/ZeldaNESManual.pdf>
 - Egoraptor talks about a game as if he never saw the instruction manual (which came with story and a map). And he sounds like he made up his own adventure in his head.
 - Another example of how Ego think's he's the boss and everything should be governed by him. He takes things personally. This is not a critique. A critique upholds the original work, takes it for what it is, and then seeks the language to articulate something meaningful about it or the experience the player had in relation to it. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1247
- “You run the real risk of facing off against something that will kill you in a second”

 - Conflates “raw” gameplay experience and its lack of clear, balanced design with the concepts of “adventure” and “zelda core”
 - “A lot of charm from the original Zelda was how ruthless the game was https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=498
 - This is a simple statement that says “I like how hard the original game was” Egoraptor doesn't go into detail on what makes the game “ruthless”. No criteria given.
 - Just because Zelda is the first game in the series doesn't make it “the core.”
 - “The core” is better defined as the things that persist through the series. E.g. sword combat. Enemies. Items. Exploration. Secrets. Puzzles. Dungeons. Story.
- “Is it better or worse? Who knows. It's not the same” https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=232
 - This is not a critique. It's Egoraptor's job to do the work and figure out what he feels about specific things in these games after doing accurate comparisons. He doesn't have to have all the answers, but it definitely makes a tighter critique if he doesn't leave things hanging like this.

2D and 3D

- https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=293

- The general notion that making 3D games is harder than 2D games is generally true.
- Hitting bats is a “limitation of the medium”? https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=347

- I have no idea what he means by this. The bat flies around and you can hit it with anything if you're close enough. The farther they are from you the more you have to lead your shots (z-targeting doesn't work). This is how 3D works.
- "Z-targeting made combat complicated" https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=388
 - You used to point and hit. Hit and run.
 - You can still z-target (or not z-target) and hit and run on most enemies.
 - See list of enemies here: http://zeldawiki.org/Enemies_in_Ocarina_of_Time
 - Combat piece. World exploring piece? "They don't mix"
 - What does this even mean? Statements like this need to be defined. They don't make any sense.
 - Does he mean you don't move throughout a room when in combat because of z-targeting? You can.
 - Does he mean the puzzle interactive elements are separated in space from the enemies so you don't have to worry about fighting when you're pushing a block?
 - Zelda 1 and LTP generally have more rooms that have enemies in it and non-combat objectives like pushing blocks.
 - 1) These simple challenges aren't puzzles (or they are hardly puzzles)
 - 2) moving around a room isn't exploration. In a top down game, you can see nearly everything anyway (Zelda 1). And you have a wide field of view for LTP.
 - 3) All Zelda games since around Link's Awakening have more complex puzzles and dungeon layouts. Than the first 3 Zelda games.
 - Zelda 1 especially does not have a lot of gameplay variety (weapons, enemies, puzzles, overworld, bosses, etc.) across the board. So making some rooms with combat and non-combat objectives is all the game could do.
 - Link to the past = explore can combat in the same areas?
 - Egoraptor is unable to make a decent like-to-like comparison here.
 - Egoraptor makes so many comments crossing too many topics. This is a common result of over scoping and lacking the language/structure to keep different topic separate.
 - Topics include:
 - **Camera**



- Shoot eyeball “puzzles” https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=645
 - Shooting the eyeball switch is not even considered a puzzle in its most basic use. It’s a switch that opens a door. It exercises specific item use and reminds people to be aware of the 3rd dimension.
 - Zelda games (like Mario and other Nintendo games) build up ideas by sequencing them to have increasing complexity and difficulty.
 - Egoraptor just finds any example, describes it, and he makes up reasons how it works. No criteria. No valid comparison. No actual design principles.
 - He talks about camera -> puzzles -> forward motion -> soulless placement -> the he questions fun. This is not a critique. This is just utterances. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=648
- **Gameplay type (explore/ combat/ puzzle)**

- Egoraptor gives random theory that the z-targeting made OOT a “combat centric” game. I don’t know what this means at all.
 - If Egoraptor wanted to make a claim about the ratio of combat to puzzle to exploration to story in the zelda games, that requires doing a thorough and massive count.
 - The newer zelda games (past Link’s awakening) have more side quests and more puzzle content than the games that came before it.
- Combat world connection? https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=602
 - Egoraptor is just making up stuff about merging combat and exploration.
- A puzzle is something you have all the information for . You gotta put the pieces together in the right way. “Ah ha” moment. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=691
 - This is not a good definition of a puzzle.
- If you’re missing a piece you run around randomly and find the solution on a whim?
 - The Golden Gauntlets are not a puzzle. Figure out that they exist, where to use them, and where to get them is a long “quest” that you do in the late game before you can access the final boss area.
 - Also there should be some kind of hint about it somewhere in the game to clear up confusion.

- Compares puzzle design of OOT a Zelda 1 monster closet. This is not a valid comparison.

https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=728

- Of course being locked in a room until you defeat all the enemies is straightforward. Almost all you do in Zelda 1 is move and kill things anyway.

- **Exploration**

- Again. A random example with a description and random utterances behind it. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=792

- What sense does it make to find a simple jump in a game and complain that it's not a hard jump. Not everything has to be hard. Don't make up stuff about it being "treacherous". There's no point to claim the game "over sells" and idea when it doesn't.

- Contradicts himself when he says he wants more interesting combat scenario. The spike sliding around in the ice cave was the scenario he claims to want. He hated the ice scenario.

https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=809

- **Enemy variation**

- Damper on throway enemies ? Fun before? Now a pain? Focus on each one? https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=465
 - This is not true.
- Enemies are designed around waiting? https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=505
 - Stalfo, Deku Scrub, Lizardman , Skulltulas, Wolfoes, Skulltulas, clams.
 - "Waiting" is not a thing. It doesn't accurately describe the strategies at play or the enemies types. Players wait for all kinds of opportunities whether this is because of enemy movement / positioning, or their defensive stances.
 - Zelda combat on the base level is pretty straightforward. Just watch things, but that only works best on the simply, beginning enemies. Even in the original Zelda later enemies have shields and other defensive techniques like jumping (Tektites)
 - He's playing on the skill floor and complaining about it. For some enemies you can wait them out and attack, but that doesn't mean you don't have other more interesting options to use.
 - See full list of enemies here: http://zeldawiki.org/Enemies_in_Ocarina_of_Time
 - Defensive enemies are a type, but they don't make up the majority of enemies in the game.

- Some enemies are simple. You wack them and move on (baby dodongo, tektite, deku baba, leever, Gohma larva)
- Some have weak points that you move around to and attack (Dodongo,
- Some fly around you and swoop to attack (keese, poes, bubble
- Some put up defenses (skultula, gerudo thief
- Some should be attacked from a range (likelike, deku scrub,)
- Some use range against you (Mobiln)
 - There are so many types of enemies and even the more defensive type can often have openings using items or precise aim.
 - And even the ones that are really defensive, how is this difference from a boss that only let's you hit it occasionally or the original zelda Bosses that you have to weave in an out to attack because of their dangerous attacks/movements.
- Egoraptor has no language to actually break down and talk about enemies in terms of difficulty design or varied strategies.
- Egoraptor has not taken an accurate assessment of the enemies in any of the games.

Dungeon key design

- The boss key and getting the big chest in LTTP https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=935
 - Egoraptor claims the boss key design in LTTP “creates goals”
 - No it doesn't. The goals are set in the dungeon. The sequence that you have to do to complete the dungeon doesn't create goals.
 - Egoraptor claims the boss key design in LTTP “creates expectations”
 - Sure. When you're part of a known sequence of steps, you anticipate the next step. It's the same with all Zeldas. Dungeons tend to follow a general design style/philosophy.
 - Egoraptor praises quick animation for opening the LTTP chests.
 - He just tells us that the feeling of opening a LTTP chest is “real” and “very valid”. Sounds like he's trying to tell us instead of make an argument.
 - Egoraptor makes fun of OOT open chest animations.
 - Another example of Egoratpor simply describing the two, and then complaining https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=977

- Essentially, Ego doesn't like the 3D camera/design of zelda nor does he like the stories. So a cut scene showing off the 3D game with a cinematic approach doesn't appeal to him. It doesn't matter that he doesn't like this things. I'm saying the real reason has nothing to do with this nebulous concept of "waiting."
- Egoraptor claims LTTP has more variety.
 - He Doesn't compare the LTTP bosses to OOT. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1163
- Egoraptor only thinks items are useful when they're used against bosses?
 - What about the rest of the enemies, or puzzle, or exploration?
 - There's so much more to discuss here. Egoraptor's cherry picking isn't helpful or insightful.

Waiting

- Perfect example of Egoraptor just grabbing random examples.
 - Much of this same "waiting" applies to LTTP https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1010
 - The LTTP mirror example is not the same thing as traveling to a place to time travel. Even in LTTP you have to navigate between areas to effectively jump between the light and dark world.
 - In LTTP you don't start with the mirror, so at some point getting around the dark world and navigating wasn't as convenient as using the mirror.
 - OOT traveling through time has more world consequences. Places change and the NPCs change. The side quests change too. After you become adult link, you don't have to travel to the past to do much. So there isn't a big need to quickly jump through time. Because it takes more time to jump through time, players need to take care of business before jumping. This makes each time period more substantial when players can't flick back and forth at their convenience.
- Egoraptor complains about the dungeon design that revolves around getting a unique item, fighting a unique boss in a unique way. Claims it's predictable and anti-adventure. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1112
 - Even if the general structure is predictable, where you'll go, what you'll see there, what you'll do, and who you'll fight cannot be predicted. Spoiler alert, Mario saves Princess Peach in his games. The trick is, there's more to consider than the general trend. AND by embracing the common elements, you set yourself up to be delighted by the small twists in the formula.

- YET, Egoraptor's description of how the big /boss keys in LTTP worked because they built anticipation for the chest (which is also predictable) and then to the boss fight is the same kind of structure.
 - He's just finding examples and ranting. Not building an argument based on valid comparisons.
 - A reductive statement about hoops and roadblocks.
 - https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1125

Exploring.

- Egoraptor fails by comparing the dungeons in Zelda 1 to the secret holes in OOT. This is not a good comparison. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1147
 - OOT has many new kinds of side quests and optional secret areas/missions that lead to unique items, money, story stuff.
 - Again, OOT has more varied everything, (mechanics, enemies, towns, levels, dungeons, music, side quests, characters, storytelling elements, etc.) than Zelda 1.

Story

- Egoraptor claims OOT refuses to acknowledge the players innate sense of wonder? I don't know what this means. This is NOT how you critique a story. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1208
 - LTTP has story too.
 - Zelda 1 has a light story (it's more like a world set up than a story) and NPCs that talk.
 - Where's the valid comparisons.
- Egoraptor just rants here saying he doesn't "care". This is not a critique. It's a rant. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1236
 - Where's the basic description of the story (characters, setting, actions, plot?)
 - Where are the statements about story design? Narrative theory?
- Egoraptor wonders why even add dialog and extra detail to a game.
 - A classic example of "I like the original Zelda. Anything else is different. I don't like different."

- “And I don’t buy the argument that they’re only there to richen the world with story because adding those context to the situation is devaluing design aspects”... .? https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1291
 - I don’t even know what “devaluing design aspects” means?
 - Are there gives and takes (pros and cons) with any design decision? Yes?
 - Do mixed products (story+gameplay experiences) always have to struggle to find the balance between the two unlike things? Yes.
 - This isn’t something that you can “buy” or “not buy” . The game has a story. It presents scenes to the player throughout the experience. That’s what OOT IS.
- “The game stops to complete a story task”
 - In other words the game doesn’t let you skip through all the dialog instantly. Yes the game presents its story. If you don’t like story, say that. But you don’t have to pretend like the game’s earnest presentation of its story content is against design or out of bounds here.
 - OOT doesn’t tell you “why you want to go there.” He’s just making up stuff now. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1305
 - “Purposely misinforming the player about why they should care about what they are doing displaces their values” ... https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1345
 - I really don’t know what this means. Displaces their values. I find it concerning that Egoraptor takes OOT so personally; like he’s being attacked.

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- Zelda OOT and LTTP don’t have open worlds despite what Ego says.
 - Egoraptor complains about the gating in OOT because talking to NPCs is part of the necessary sequence.
 - Zelda 1 and LTTP have gating too. It’s the same functional idea. You gotta get weapons or items to access new areas. Sometimes you buy them. Sometimes you find them. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1410
 - Complains about story sequences because he hate story. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1442
 - I can imagine that Egoraptor didn’t read the dialog carefully, ignored details, and got stuck more than he needed to because of his attitude. The attitude makes his whole experience worse and worse.
 - Fake reverse engineering how the games were made. Bold claims that Zelda has no mystery anymore. No defined terms or evidence or good comparisons. https://youtu.be/XOC3vixnj_0?t=1509

- Skyward sword comments are just a dumb rant. Let off steam somewhere else.