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💡 TWiki Tip of the Day

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(2009-07-30, AmyGreen)

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7/30

We set up our demos this morning for practice. We discovered that bringing monitors down from VRAC to use would be more of a challenge than we thought it would. I guess this is why we had the practice.

[Add comment](#)

AmyGreen - 30 Jul 2009 - 16:26

So I looked at the quotes and I was so confused why mike was writing all that stuff and then someone told me it was you...and then it all made sense.

7/29

Yesterday we met with our mentors to go over more changes that needed to be made to our paper. It wasn't as bad as the first edit. We only needed to write one new paragraph. We finished making the changes they asked for this morning and sent a copy to our mentors. Hopefully that will do it with the exception of really small stuff. It's hard to believe we have finally completed all of our goals this summer (almost). At the beginning of the summer the thought of writing an academic paper in 10 weeks sounded like a cruel joke. The milestones throughout the 10 weeks really made the task manageable though. Now we just have to prepare for the presentation on Friday.

[Add comment](#)

7/28

Today I am participating in experiments. I'm pretty sure I'm not going to be paid for them like I was for the Tele Robotics experiment. We got our t-shirts today. They turned out really nice. There's some confusion about whether we're having a video game night today or tomorrow. It's hard to believe that this internship is almost over. When I get back to California I'll have to start applying to grad school right away. Pam talked about applying to the HCI program. They don't require that you take the GRE which is nice since I haven't taken it yet. But I doubt I will be able to only apply to programs that don't require GRE scores, so I'll have to take the test anyway. That's the first thing I have to do once I get back to California: studying for the GRE. Tomorrow we get another commented draft of our paper from our mentors, so Wednesday and Thursday will probably be spent trying to fix the changes they want. I have no idea how many there will be. Hopefully not many. After all, we'll only have a couple of days to get the changes done.

[Add comment](#)

7/27

Editing the paper. The next draft is almost ready for another review.

[Add comment](#)

7/24

Today I started reading the paper about the medial frontal cortex. It sounds like the medial frontal cortex is a region of the brain that includes the anterior cingulate cortex. I don't know if that helps me with writing the results and discussion sections. The PWSE poster session is today. Mina will be presenting our poster all by herself. Maybe hearing her present our poster will help me understand some of the explanations of the results which I don't understand completely. I'm a little unclear on the results that do not involve the error-related negativity because there isn't anything in any of the readings about these topics. Yesterday was a full day. Transformers was just as awful as we were told it would be. People that saw the first one said the second was worse. The actual theatre itself was really cool. There were so many times when I thought I was going to fall right out of my seat and through the screen. It was also really interesting to talk to the people who made the museum exhibits, although the museum itself was a little disappointing. It may have been the fact that there were a lot of little children running around and there were so many people I didn't get to see all of the exhibits that I wanted to see. Although it didn't look like there was a lot of information being presented and I was expecting to see big impressive exhibits, like full size replicas of important historical artifacts. The visit to Principle's usability lab was a learning experience. We mostly learned how they were able to function at all with such a small budget and such outdated equipment, but it was interesting that they had a computer screen for the subjects to use that they could watch in real time on a screen in another room, just like in the Digital Games lab.

[Add comment](#)

7/22

Finished the summary of Gehring et al. results and the comparison of those results with ours. Now I just need to read the paper on the mediofrontal negativity. Also I might have been wrong on part of the results section. I think I was wrong about why there isn't any error-related negativity for blue events in our study. After our team meeting today it sounds like I need to change that part.

[Add comment](#)

7/21

I finished writing a draft of the Results and Discussion section. I think I cover everything that is absolutely essential to have in the section. I do plan on trying to expand on it though. I would like to compare our results to the results of Gehring et al. because I assume that is how we know that the signal we have is an error-related negativity. It would probably also be good to mention the mediofrontal negativity in the brain maps on our poster, but I haven't read any of the papers on mediofrontal negativity on our wiki page. I'm going to do my best to read one of those papers so I can add to the results section.

We also had a speaker come talk to us about grad school at the luncheon lecture today. On one of the papers she gave us it said that we should know where we want to apply by the summer before your senior year. I have no idea where I want to apply.

[Add comment](#)

7/20

I've been working on the results section today. I finished the first two chapters of the Handy book which gave a really good overview of data analysis for the error-related negativity. I had no idea what kind of language I should use for describing the error-related negativity, but now I know that the time the signal starts, the peak amplitude, and how long the signal lasts are all important characterizations of the ERP. Unfortunately, every time the Handy chapters gave advice on analyzing the ERP, it gave two or three reasons why their advice wasn't good, so the book was pretty confusing in that regard. At least I have a start for my results section.

[Add comment](#)

7/15

Today the first draft of our poster is due. We made a draft for our faculty member to look at. He wants a lot of changes made. We're going to meet at 3:30pm to talk about the draft some more. The John Deer trip yesterday was pretty interesting. They had a VR lab there. The person in charge of the lab said that it was hard to get people that worked there to use the lab. At least she had found ways to make people more willing to try to use the lab. Today I got to be a subject for the Decision Tracing group's experiment. I liked seeing what other groups have been working on all this time.

[Add comment](#)

7/13

We couldn't run Taylor on our games today. I guess on Friday when we ran Ugonna nobody remembered to take the stretching band off of Ugonna's chest, so Curtis went to go get it today while Taylor waited in the lab. By the time Curtis was able to get back with the band it was 11:20. IRB training prevented us from letting Taylor miss lunch while he played our games. It should be okay though since we weren't even going to get a chance to add Taylor's data to our poster and on Sunday we were able to average all the good data we had so far and we were able to see an error related negativity. So no harm done.

[Add comment](#)**UgonnaOhiri - 14 Jul 2009 - 14:52**

My bad again man...I guess I really was a detrimental factor in your project

7/10

Today three people are going to be playing the FPS and blackjack games. Josh was first this morning. I didn't see how his session was because I was analyzing data while he was playing the games. The data analysis that we do mostly requires you to remember A LOT of steps rather than having special skills. You do have to learn to figure out which EEG spikes are blinks and which are not. They almost all look like blinks to me, but I think I did a decent job. I think I heard Mina mention something about having to do some data analysis with MATLAB after we were done with the program (the name of which I can't remember right now) we use to get rid of blinks and count the different kinds of events. I find the data analysis pretty interesting since the EEG is just measuring electric fields. It's so strange that I have been studying electric fields for a year and solving problems with them and now I am always in the presence of an electric field in

the lab.

Add comment

7/9

Today we ran Linh on the FPS game and on Blackjack. Right before we ran him he put eye drops in his eyes and he spent a lot of time during the FPS rubbing his eyes. The EEG doesn't give you useful data when you move the cap so a lot of the data from Linh will not be usable. We probably should have explained to him that he will need to not move during the experiment so he would have known to wait until after the experiment to apply his eyedrops. I guess we'll just have to chalk that one up to experience.

Add comment

UgonnaOhiri - 09 Jul 2009 - 23:26

I'm very worried about this "Goop" that will be in my hair tomorrow...

BellaManoim - 09 Jul 2009 - 15:24

please look at the email Pam sent and sign up for our study

LinhPham - 09 Jul 2009 - 13:10

Yea.. I didn't know the eye drops would be that strong...

7/8

Today we ran our first subject on the first person shooter game. Richard was the subject. Mina and Kira put the cap on his head and injected the gel. Then Mina analyzed some data while I watched the data coming from Richard to make sure he wasn't clenching his teeth or moving his forehead. I was pretty bored watching the first person shooter game. Although it is technically a video game it is designed solely for test purposes so it doesn't look like it's much fun. Blackjack looked like a lot of fun though. Richard lost all his money about five times and I had to start a new game. I guess I won't be taking him to Vegas with me anytime soon. There were some problems with the games which have to be fixed before we can run any more subjects. Hopefully everything will be good to go for tomorrow.

Add comment

RichardLebron - 09 Jul 2009 - 13:46

But the domino game will be fun

HamadiMcIntosh - 09 Jul 2009 - 13:04

Richard said they play blackjack in Puerto Rico. He said they just call it "21."

ZayiraJordan - 09 Jul 2009 - 10:16

You should have designed a domino game for Puerto Rican subjects!
: D

MinaChoi - 08 Jul 2009 - 23:44

LOL he lost 5 times? hahahaha

IvanOjeda - 08 Jul 2009 - 16:40

sorry bout the call while he was tested O_o

7/7

Today Kira showed us how to analyze the data from the EEG. She said they use an algorithm to subtract out blinks. It would be interesting to know more about the algorithm. Also, I'm still working on the Gehring paper. It's interesting and I think it will be a nice addition to our literature review. The paper does a good job explaining why the ERN is thought to be associated with reinforcement learning and how it is thought to work. Kira also says that there is information on the Digital Games page about how the brain generates electrical signals. There might not be a place in the paper for that information but I think it would be interesting to know what conclusions can be made about the physiology (if that's the right word) of the brain based on the electrical signals it generates, if there are any.

7/6

Today I've been reading the original paper on on ERN. I haven't gotten to the results yet. It probably wouldn't be a good idea to do a study on Error Related Negativity without mentioning the paper that started it all in yours. We also have a tour of the C & I Usability lab. I don't know what that is nor do I know what it stands for. We don't have a lot to do outside of our research progress these days so it should be interesting tour. Tomorrow we need to have a finished first-person shooter game. We've been trying to find a way to make the death of the player more dramatic, but none of us has had any success.

BellaManoim - 06 Jul 2009 - 16:46

great tour. didn't you think so?

MinaChoi - 06 Jul 2009 - 15:43

haha did you find the C & I Usability lab tour interesting?

7/2

Science doesn't show any mercy ... and neither do I.

BellaManoim - 02 Jul 2009 - 13:40

mmhm...

7/1

Still trying to figure out Torque. None of the tutorials I have followed have worked, except for a few. I was able to add a player to a game example that didn't come with a player. I was able to spawn aplayers in stronghold and make one take aim at and fire on another one. For some reason, all the changes that I have made to the scripts to create aplayers in the game haven't worked. I took a look at a book on Torque script over the weekend. That book is 500 pages. There's no way I could have read that in a week. But I bet the answer to all

my problems are in there.

Add comment

[AmyGreen - 01 Jul 2009 - 15:56](#)

you could read that book in all the free time you have...

6/30

Our luncheon lecture today was about agriculture and biosystems engineering. At lunch, the faculty lecturer said that she had someone working in her lab whose undergraduate degree was in physics. She said it worked because physics majors have to know a lot of the things that engineers have to know. One of my advisors at SJSU said I should think about going to grad school in engineering. Although I think I would be underprepared for engineering grad school. I've talked to engineering majors and they have to learn a lot of things that physics majors don't. It seems like the most similar engineering major to physics would be mechanical engineering, but physics majors don't really cover stress and torque in great detail. Instead we move on to topics such as quantum mechanics, electricity and magnetism, and thermodynamics. Sometimes its strange to think that I am not using any of that knowledge here. I wonder how much physics I'll end up using after I'm done at SJSU.

Add comment

[UgonnaOhiri - 01 Jul 2009 - 11:42](#)

Nicceeeeeee...you finally found one...you also might be interested in Tyler Streater's luncheon lecture tomorrow...I HOPE!

[RichardLebron - 30 Jun 2009 - 13:34](#)

Just try engineering grad school the other topics that you need you will learned in the way

6/29

Still working on our game. I tried reading some of the other two papers posted on the Digital Games webpage about the response ERN. They sounded mostly redundant. Unfortunately, we need at least one more paper for our literature review. I could try giving the papers another look over. Kira said that they were running a subject on the blackjack game today. It will be interesting to see the data from that.

Add comment

6/26

We have to have our game finished by next week. Since we switched from TGE to TGEA we can no longer use our tank, jeep, soldier model. But TGEA has a variety of player bodies that we can use. There's a space orc that looks really scary, and a killer robot, and a regular orc. We can probably use that model in addition to giving each bot a different weapon. I think there are rocket launchers, submachine guns, and rifles, so we can keep our basic game model. Today I've been experimenting with different types of AI. Unfortunately the first AI script I tried to download didn't work for me, so I had to start more basic and work my way up. So far I have learned to spawn bodies inside the game, load a weapon, make the bot aim at another bot and fire his weapon. I've also read about a function "schedule" that makes the bot shoot for a time interval. stop,

then shoot some more. I haven't figured out how to use the function exactly yet, but I can probably look it up in the Torque library. I've learned how to load a script and run it in the console, but I still don't know how to add bots to a game through scripting and not using the console. I hope to make a great deal of progress over this weekend.

[Add comment](#)**[BellaManoim - 26 Jun 2009 - 13:34](#)**

wow, finish the whole game next week? i'd like to see this 'space orc' and killer robot.

[UgonnaOhiri - 26 Jun 2009 - 13:32](#)

By your persistence and determination, you will finish the game by next week.

6/24

Today I've been reading Torque documentation. It turns out that most of the tutorials are blank pages that they plan to add content to soon. Fortunately there are a few tutorials on the website that are really good. You just have to do a lot of looking around. No classes today.

[Add comment](#)**[BellaManoim - 24 Jun 2009 - 13:17](#)**

no classes! yay! more time to be productive

6/23

Today we have our midterm powerpoint presentations. I know half of our time is over, but I don't think we've done half of the work. We've only just started developing a first person shooter on Torque. We also have to submit our methods paragraph on Friday. I think that will be more difficult to do than the problem and literature review paragraphs because it will talk specifically about what we are doing and not what other people have done. Although, we can probably look at other papers to get an idea of what we have to write. What we're doing is VERY similar to what the Swedish group did. We probably just need to make sure it includes our new contributions, the differences between our experiment and theirs. I've been reading the tutorial about Torque scripting today (when I wasn't working on our power point presentation). It starts out really basic with variables and different data types. That's probably good so they don't assume that you know anything that you really don't. At the same time it feels like I'm reviewing a lot of stuff I already know.

[Add comment](#)**[MinaChoi - 23 Jun 2009 - 15:37](#)**

yay! Presentation is over! Let me help you with the methods paragraph this time~

6/22

Today in our Ethics course Zayira had us write down how we identify ourselves on paper and then share that with each other. She said it was inspired by what I told her my Philosophy of the Mind class was about. I thought that was pretty funny. I've probably given everyone the wrong idea about what my Philosophy of the Mind class was

about, which was the distinction between your conscious and your subconscious thoughts. That it is physically impossible for your conscious mind to be aware of what your subconscious mind is thinking. I guess that sort of ties in to ethics because even if your conscious mind isn't aware of the ethical implications of your work, your subconscious mind could be trying to come to terms with it. I wonder whether the EEG cap measures E waves of your conscious or subconscious mind.

BellaManoim - 23 Jun 2009 - 13:12

Who is I?

ZayiraJordan - 23 Jun 2009 - 12:32

Mmmm... Much more insightful than your explanation in class!

6/19

I finished the Torque "Getting Started" tutorial yesterday. Unfortunately, for some reason, I was unable to save my mission, so I couldn't see if my game worked or not. It looks like adding objects and textures and altering altitude are all relatively simple. What looks complicated is adding the code that creates texture or that creating action. From what I gather so far, I don't think we're going to have to worry about any of that stuff though. Doing that would probably take a REALLY long time, but I think that it is probably also the most fun parts to do. Yesterday, Curtis and I were hooked up to the EEG machine and did testing. That's an hour of my life I REALLY wish I could get back. Yesterday we also played basketball at State gym for our extracurricular. It was a lot of fun playing with all the people from the program. It was interesting to see what kind of basketball personalities everyone had. Looking forward to Journal Club. It's too bad the cheap projector is down.

MinaChoi - 23 Jun 2009 - 15:40

lol!!! I fell asleep watching you guys do your tests. I bet it was torturous for you to HAVE to stay awake and look at all those disgusting pictures. LOL! Just think of it as taking one for the team~ thanks hamadi!

KiraBailey - 23 Jun 2009 - 14:24

I love psychology but the experiments can be terribly boring as you now know. That's why the project you are doing is so important because not only will it allow us to understand what the brain does while people are playing video games, but it will allow us to create interesting, realistic, non-boring psych experiments that can answer questions about the brain without driving the participant insane with boredom. 😊

HamadiMcIntosh - 22 Jun 2009 - 13:23

Yea. But I'm not sure how our experiments can be approved by the IRB if telling the subjects what the test will entail beforehand ruins the experiment.

PamShill - 22 Jun 2009 - 08:01

I hope your experience with the EEG helps you understand why the

IRB process is important! Sorry that it wasn't a great experience for you.

[HamadiMcIntosh - 19 Jun 2009 - 16:13](#)

It was like a real experiment. I thought it was just going to be fun. I thought I was going to get to play video games. There were no video games.

[MichaelOren - 19 Jun 2009 - 15:20](#)

Why didn't you like the EEG demo?

6/17

Today was the first day we've had a lot of free time in a long time. Curtis also I think is working on adding the poker chips I made into his program. Maybe if I had not taken so long to make the chips everyone could have seen them in the presentation, but at least they're in there now, I hope. I've been using today to familiarize myself with Torque. As with everything we do, a lot of reading is involved. At least reading saves you time. You could be using all the time you spend reading trying to do stuff on your own and never get anything to work. For some reason, I seem to be unable to email our literature review to Stephen Gilbert, Mike Oren, Zayira, and Kira. I don't know why. Maybe it will work if I put it as an attachment. I could ask Mina, she emailed our Problem paragraph which we still haven't fixed. Week 4 continues.

Add comment

[MinaChoi - 17 Jun 2009 - 13:53](#)

LOL, Sauron's tower... It does look like it belongs in Lord of the Rings or something. I think you have incredible retention of information in the articles or documentation you read. I have tried reading all the articles as well and the information does not stick! Good luck with the Torque documentation. Maybe you'll bring some information to the table that Curtis and I don't know. btw: Curtis finished adding your chip =)

6/16

We present our [OpenGL](#) projects today. I spent all day yesterday trying to make poker chips. I was so proud of myself for finally figuring out how to do texture mapping. I mapped the face of a poker chip onto a disc. It took me two days and over 100 pages of reading to do something that was supposed to be incredibly simple. I am proud of my accomplishment regardless however. It just feels really good to say that I actually learned how to do something in [OpenGL](#). From knowing nothing about [OpenGL](#) I figured out how to do something. I could have come away from our one week class not knowing how to do anything more, but I did not. That is my extremely optimistic way of looking at it. It is irrelevant that the part of the code Curtis and Mina have been working on (the larger more important part) was so much of a challenge that there was no time to incorporate my extremely simple poker chips (they weren't even able to finish the code). Hopefully, if we decide to use our blackjack game in our research project we will be able to add in my poker chips and I can say we used my code but if not at least I learned something.

Add comment

[MinaChoi - 16 Jun 2009 - 16:04](#)

yay!! Poker Chips!

BellaManoim - 16 Jun 2009 - 14:45

that's great you got texture mapping to work! I felt the same way after I got a textured cube. it took a long time to do something so simple, but it was great when it finally worked

6/15

We finished our literature review this weekend. It's only about a page long. I'm so happy that the article we reviewed was really simple to follow and explained everything that you needed to know to understand the article. Tomorrow we present our [OpenGL](#) projects. The bright side of this is that after tomorrow we can focus on making our first person shooter game. I think we also have to edit our problem paragraph, but hopefully that won't take too long. I'm amazed at how much I've learned about [OpenGL](#) in just one week. I hope I'll get the chance to use it again at some point in the future. Maybe I can take an [OpenGL](#) class.

Add comment

JoshuaSituka - 15 Jun 2009 - 17:20

Congrats Hamadi on the Lakers championship. Kobe 4, Lebron - 0. And just when people were tilting the debate towards the King's direction, the Black Mamba sneaks up and grabs the throne again. ughhhh.

6/12

The day we waited seven years for.

6/12

Today we have to submit our research question and a literature review. Yesterday we came up with a question at our team meeting. We tried our best to put it in words, but today at Craft of Research some of the graduate students helped us see some of the holes in our question. I have the feeling that this is going to be the kind of thing that we will have to continue to refine throughout the ten weeks as we find out more about our project. We haven't finished our literature review yet. We found a really good paper on reinforcement learning that spells out RL-ERN nice and explicitly that has been really helpful. We've already talked about the Swedish paper in our problem paragraph and Zayira explained to us that that should be in our literature review as well. Lots of work ahead of us.

Add comment

MichaelOren - 12 Jun 2009 - 14:06

I hope the session today with refining the research questions was helpful to you. It's one of the hardest things to do and it really helps to get a wide range of feedback.

6/11

Lakers Game 4 MVP = Dwight Howard.

6/11

Tomorrow we have to submit our research question and our literature review paragraphs for our project. We came up with a solid research question at our research meeting today. Now we just need to figure out how to word it in academic speech. The literature review article

shouldn't be too much of a problem since we've decided to study reinforcement learning in digital environments. It's great that all the papers we'll need to write this are already on the wiki page. I'm really grateful for Mina because I don't know anything about brain anatomy or EEG data and I'm going to need her help to understand some of the papers on the wiki.

PJ Campbell - 11 Jun 2009 - 22:05

I'll have to borrow that book on robots... But then again, if you're theory is correct, I don't know how helpful this book will be. If that day comes, how am I going to defend myself from a robot that is smarter than me? Also, if robots are smarter, then the book is pointless since it was written by a human...

LOL

I mean I'm just saying. But I like the way you think!

ZayiraJordan - 11 Jun 2009 - 15:16

I have a short paper called "Brain Facts" that can help you understand more. Email me if you want it and I'll bring it tomorrow (I have it at home).

UgonnaOhiri - 11 Jun 2009 - 15:13

Academic speech? what a poor choice of words...how about scholarly verbal dialogue?

6/10

Today we had to pick projects for [OpenGL](#). We're going to add graphics to our black jack game. We plan to have a table that has chips and cards. We'd like to add animations that take away your chips when you lose and that give you more chips when you win. We also want an animation that gives you your cards. VJ says that adding people to the black jack game shouldn't be hard. That there are already object files that make people that we can just load into our program. Fortunately with a game like black jack we won't have to worry about making the people hold the cards. That might be a complicated bit of programming. The [OpenGL](#) class is going at a really fast pace. Fortunately there are a lot of sample codes for us to read and we get a lot of help from VJ whenever we need it so the class isn't too scary.

MichaelOren - 10 Jun 2009 - 15:49

You could also add particle effects (smoke) or some videos (if you've played iPhone's Texas Hold 'Em all of the people have videos). [OpenGL](#) videos aren't too bad and you can find tutorials for doing particle effects. Add a little whiz bang to your project.

6/9

11:18PM on a Tuesday ... and I'm a sad sad man.

6/8

Yesterday I finished the IRB training. I didn't realize testing human subjects was such a big deal. It's strange to think of psychophysiological data acquisition in digital games as something that requires IRB training. From the training, it sounded like it was

mostly for trying out new medicines and trying new treatments. None of that applies to our research project, although the training said it was also required for psychological experiments. It's hard to think of a way that our project could do psychological damage to test subjects. That's probably a good thing though. I also installed Torque this weekend. I think I'm missing some of the Torque files. I should probably check with Curtis or Mina or Kira to make sure.

JoshuaSituka - 10 Jun 2009 - 13:18

HAPPY B-DAY Hamadi! And don't worry, if you ever feel sad about the Lakers just watch clips about how great they have been in winning 17 championships. I was reading on ESPN.com about the legendary skyhook that Kareem would dominate with.

ZayiraJordan - 09 Jun 2009 - 09:25

The IRB is all encompassing but is a response to past mistakes. When we talk about ethics you will appreciate the length that "scientists" can go to... scary! Your certification and approval will also help you better define what you're doing.

BellaManoim - 09 Jun 2009 - 08:55

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HAMADI!

MichaelOren - 08 Jun 2009 - 23:43

It's also so you know about protecting participant's identity/personal information. The training is too medically focused though, no argument there. It's also to make sure participants are fully informed and not being coerced or deceived. So it's mostly an ethical issue and less a 'risk' issue for most of these (although, as Mina points out, there is a potential risk involved in your study).

MinaChoi - 08 Jun 2009 - 18:40

Hi group member! =)

hmMmm EEG's can sometimes harm people... the amplifier amplifies the voltage given off from the brain from micro to millivolts. If the protection circuit is malfunctioning, the voltage can probably do some real damage since the patient is grounded. But those are probably extreme cases... good job on writing the problem paragraph! X)

BellaManoim - 08 Jun 2009 - 13:55

yeah, it seems too risk-free to require IRB training, but I guess it's just protocol

6/7

Oh happy day.

6/5

On Wednesday of the HCI course Mike showed us two alternative error messages. The first: "Now Chris, that's not right. You can do better than that. Try again." The second: "Incorrect. Try again." I was the only one who preferred the first error message. I thought the first message was better because it implied to the user that the problem was fixable by the user. There are so many errors that you can make on a computer that too many times you don't know how to fix. All of these errors are accompanied by error messages similar to: "Incorrect. Try again." You can spend hours trying to fix these kinds of errors when you do not have the knowledge to do so. A message

such as: "Now Chris, that's not right. You can do better than that. Try again." reminds you more of a classroom environment where you are not asked to solve problems that you do not have the resources to solve and where assistance is available if you get really stuck. I guess the reason that I was the only one who preferred the first error message was because other interns thought the computer that gave you the first error message wasn't going to provide more help than the computer that gives you the second error message. If this were the case, I suppose the first error message would frustrate the user more.

[Add comment](#)

6/5

Nothing could ruin today.

6/4

I finished the betting code for our blackjack game today. We couldn't figure out how to have the user input the number of players and then make all of our arrays that size so I just had the program assume there were five players including the dealer. It was fun to run the program even though my method for deciding which players win or lose the game is by asking the users. I could have just made everyone lose all the time no matter what, but I didn't want to be that cruel, for now. We also got to go to the psychophysiological data acquisition in digital games lab today. We got to see an example of a game. The graphics were great, but the game seemed kind of boring.

[Add comment](#)

HamadiMcIntosh - 05 Jun 2009 - 13:00

I think you have the makings of a brilliant sociology researcher Ivan.

IvanOjeda - 05 Jun 2009 - 01:31

LOL, I'd make everyone lose the game just so I can win it. **insert evil smile**

6/3

Today the Psychophysiological Data Acquisition in Digital Games team met (interns with graduate students). The grad students told us that we should try to finish the 100 page paper by the Swiss team read by tomorrow. I'm glad I started reading that paper over the weekend. A lot of the paper is really accessible, but the parts that explain how to add logging functionality in digital games was pretty obscure. Kira said not to worry about that, that the logging should be more clear tomorrow when we get to go to the lab. They also said we should try and read some of the video game research papers by the end of this week. I think all of those papers will only be around 8 pages so reading those shouldn't be a problem. It sounds like our research question will be based either on a first person shooter game or on a gambling game. I would prefer a first person shooter game since it sounds like we will be able to have a finished gambling game by the end of the first two weeks and we have allocated ourselves a lot more time than that for game development. I would like to spend more than just two weeks on game development since I've never done this before and it sounds really interesting.

[Add comment](#)

[HamadiMcIntosh - 05 Jun 2009 - 13:00](#)

We are going to make a test game first. We're making the test game first. Then we'll work with pre-existing environments. We've settled on Torque.

[ZayiraJordan - 04 Jun 2009 - 10:22](#)

So you guys are finally developing from scratch? I thought you would also get to use pre-existing ones... Are you going to work in a real-time BCI interface? That should be REALLY interesting stuff!

6/2

Yesterday we had our first HCI course. It was really interesting to learn what graduate classes for students in the HCI graduate program are like. I've never really thought about the kinds of things we talked about in the course. I have always just accepted interface designs, since I couldn't change them. I never thought that there were people thinking of how they could design an interface to communicate the way the interface was meant to be used. Today the graduate students for our research project let us know that they had decided to use the torque engine and gave us what we needed to download the engine onto our computers. I'm excited to get hands-on experience with the engine to help make some of the things I've read about in the papers more understandable. I also think it will be fun to play games on the torque engine.

Add comment

6/2

- HCI Day 1 HW:



The user wants to change direction while driving or continue driving in the same direction. The design of this round-a-bout makes the task more difficult than necessary. Four intersections would be simpler and easier to use. This design's biggest problem is that it is not efficient. This round-a-bout requires too much effort from the user. No matter which direction the user wants to go they must successfully navigate 3 round-a-bouts. One advantage of the design employed is that the design makes u-turns easier to make. U-turns are not a common course of action for drivers, however. This design also requires the user to drive farther than necessary to make turns. This is readily apparent when compared with an intersection. Distance traveled by the driver would be a good indicator of the poor efficiency of this round-a-bout when compared with an intersection. Additionally, this design is not error tolerant. The design could be improved in this regard with more clear direction arrows to prevent users from driving against the flow of traffic. The arrows employed can be easily confused with lines. Furthermore, an error on the part of one driver would prevent the use of the round-a-bout by all users.

- [emergencymeetingarea.bmp](#): HCI Day 1 HW

The user wants to find an emergency meeting area. The picture

employed in the design does not make it clear that this is an emergency meeting area because everyone has a different idea of what a meeting looks like. This sign would be better if there were the words somewhere on the sign that said "emergency meeting area." This design does not offer affordances for the possibility of a user that does not think that this is what a meeting looks like. It is not entirely unconventional to have signs with words on them, for example: "No U-Turn." Also, if I'm a user, I would not associate an arrow with a person inside of it to indicate "emergency." It would additionally be a good idea to use red instead of green because red is a universal color for emergency (traffic lights, red cross, ...).

6/1

Today we had the first meeting of our C++ programming class. It has been a long time since the programming class I took, but I remembered a lot of things from it. It seems like it will take a long time before we are able to make games, but they say we will be able to do that by the end of the week. They also said that we will spend a lot of time doing homework outside of class. It's at least good that we learn all the programming we need for our projects in the first couple of weeks. I do wonder when we will have time to do the background reading necessary for our research projects. Although I was able to do a lot of reading over the weekend. The paper I was reading read a lot faster than I thought it would. It was also really nice that the paper I was reading explicitly explains how to do what we need to for our research project. A lot of the questions I had the first week for my faculty research mentor are answered in this paper. I look forward to getting hands on experience with these video game engines that I am reading about in the paper and my faculty research mentor has spoken of.

Add comment

HamadiMcIntosh - 05 Jun 2009 - 12:58

Lol. It would also kill everybody. Hence demonstrating the round-about's lack of error tolerance.

MichaelCurtis - 03 Jun 2009 - 13:05

I'm sure I could power through that traffic circle. Going straight would probably work.

MinaChoi - 02 Jun 2009 - 00:24

Sorry for almost stealing your flash drive... It's too bad they all look identical.

5/29 10:41 PM Central Time

Today was the best day.

5/29

Today our research groups met and we came up with a tentative timeline for our project for the summer. We also came up with some tentative ideas for games that we could use to pose a research question. The most popular idea seemed to be for a first person shooter where the game requires the player to shoot another player to advance to the next level. It's too bad that we don't have more time so we can't explore more game options. Our research advisor mentioned that there was a study on a massive multiplayer online game. I think that that might be a good paper to read for our journal club. He said the results of the study were that there was no change in behavior in the test subjects that were playing the game. He also said that the study was not well controlled though. I would think that people would become addicted to the game, since I know people who

spend large amounts of time playing mmorpg's. I really wish I knew more about how to sink events in video games with readings from the EEG. Our research advisor says that this won't be hard to do or take a lot of time. I wouldn't have guessed that that would be the case.

Add comment

5/28

We had our first journal club today. The topics of the two papers were student faculty relations on Facebook and the relationship between high school student g.p.a.'s and use of Myspace and textmessaging. They were the kind of studies that I don't think I would ever have the opportunity to do as a physics major. I thought the papers were interesting though. My parents always told me they kept me from watching television in high school because they didn't want my grades to suffer. I don't know if there have been studies similar to the Myspace study that gave my parents that idea or not. Myspace and Facebook were new when I was in high school so I didn't get on those websites until I got to college. I don't use either website while I'm doing homework though because I don't have any friends who would be able to help me with physics. I don't know any professors at my school that have a Facebook page. All the professors in the physics department are too busy with their research and the masses of students who come to their office hours I think to have time to bother with Facebook.

-- [HamadiMcIntosh](#) - 28 May 2009

Add comment

[MinaChoi](#) - 01 Jun 2009 - 13:13

nicee~ which article was it? so I can read it to and be less confused than I am right now.

[BellaManoim](#) - 29 May 2009 - 15:07

first person shooter game? that sounds like fun

[MichaelOren](#) - 29 May 2009 - 13:38

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