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The Truth of *The Sims*

*The Sims* (2000) was a revolutionary game that was inspired by Will Wright’s personal tragedy. As Dustin Hansen mentions in *Game On!* a firestorm literally destroyed Wright’s home and belongings which sparked his idea for *The Sims,* even if he did not know it yet. (Hansen, 197-198). Robert Zubek addresses several key elements to the success of *The Sims* in his book *Elements of Game Design*. This iconic game achieved such heights due to its use of motivations not only in the game but also by appealing to its audience’s, as well as the use of conversion chains to hook players into the cyclical process. (Zubek, 85, 119).

While *The Sims* did a lot right that is not to say that it was perfect, according to Douglass Perry from IGN a game review journal “Some of the things that bothered me revolved around control. Often times my Sim would stand in front of a car that clearly wanted to leave.” (Perry). Trends like this one are a common occurrence in the franchise, but it seems to drive the prerogative that the Simoleans are indeed children that left unattended get into heaps of trouble. As Zubek noted in *Elements of Game Design* there are conversion chains that enhance the game if done right, in terms of *The Sims* the need to feed, bathe, and fulfill your Simoleans desires drives gameplay in a way that players can connect with. (Zubek, 85)

In terms of cyclical actions that the player is given access to none are more important than the action bar. Andrew Park from GameSpot addresses the results of failing to take action in his review of *The Sims* stating, “Since purposely neglecting a sim makes him depressed and often insubordinate. You can keep a sim productive and responsive to instructions by keeping him happy.” (Park) Without close attention to the actions your Simolean will take the player can quickly find themselves unable to control their character until they calm down. This is just one of many results that create such a devoted player base that keep coming back.

Overall, *The Sims* has many great things going for it, but like the characters players choose to play, there are hiccups in the road that can cause it to go off course. With cyclical loops designed to drive gameplay and an action bar that allows the player to create an itinerary of sorts for their character to follow this franchise has left its mark as a revolutionary game that many rightfully enjoy playing.

Works Cited

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