Cold War Cultural Language Transference into Modern Media: Fallout 3

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Location
Stephen F Austin State University, Baker Pattillo Student Center, Twilight and Grand Ballrooms

Start Date
10-4-2012 4:00 PM

End Date
10-4-2012 8:00 PM

Description
Video games are fun. The fictional environments and plots they generate are designed with solely this purpose: to entertain. Some try to accomplish this goal by creating environments that are novel to most gamers, but most get by with reusing plots, settings, and language from older games, movies, books or historical periods. One such game, Bethesda's Fallout 3, draws on the imagery, language, and structure of Cold War America to create a chilling, post apocalyptic Washington D.C., complete with anti-communist propaganda posters and giant, irradiated cockroaches. While entertaining in its own right, a basic knowledge of the Cold War culture it draws upon adds a campy flair to Fallout that actually strengthens the gamer's connection to the environment and increases the entertainment derived from it. The game-world is just familiar enough give the player with such knowledge an eerie chill, but ridiculous enough to dispel that chill with a fit of laughter moment later.

[Ron Perlman] War. War never changes. Since the dawn of human kind, when our ancestors first discovered the killing power of rock and bone, blood has been spilled in the name of everything: from God to justice to simple, psychotic rage. In the year 2077, after millennia of armed conflict, the destructive nature of man could sustain itself no longer. The world was plunged into an abyss of nuclear fire and radiation. But it was not, as some had predicted, the end of the world. Instead, the apocalypse was simply the prologue to another bloody chapter of human history. For man had succeeded in des Cultural transfers have occurred in all historical periods, but it is possible to discern trends and distinct periods. It is only through these transfers that history can become European (or global). Concentrations and accumulations of these transfers can be understood as a transcultural history of Europe and ultimately as Europeanization. The entities transferred can be defined in concrete terms as culturemes and structuremes. In addition to this macro-context of cultural transfers in the Renaissance and the early modern period, there were also a myriad of subordinate processes of cultural transfer from the 15th century up to the French Revolution, which included other models of medium extension and range (Spanish court, Dutch art, English constitutional law, etc.).