Twitter Thread by Andrew Woodhouse ■



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@wouldhaus



Cyberpunk 2077 is not fun: a thread

Thanks to someone generously lending it to me, I've been playing for the past couple of days. As a Japanese person, its really been nothing but bad vibes for me.

I'll list them in no particular order below:

Character Creation: lots of presets, little to no customization.

Can't change the size of any of the facial features (nose, eyes, etc) which really limited options.

ZERO, and I mean ZERO body options. You NEED to look buff, apparently, in a world where every body is possible.

This, of course, doesn't even touch on the gendered voice options, which many people much smarter than me have covered. https://t.co/WNxdWlBwMB

Combat: basically Borderlands.

Weapons are your standard types; pistols, rifles, SMGs, with a rarity level and a calculated DPS. Nothing wrong with this specifically, but unlike Borderlands, its really difficult to tell from a distance if a weapon will be worth it.

There is color coding, but the icon is really tiny and won't show up unless you're close enough. A far cry from Borderlands, where gear is very clearly highlighted.

Rarer items allow you to customize them with more slots, but the mods are all +% buffs and difficult to grasp.

Japanese representation: I fucking hate it.

I had low expectations, but holy fuck. This game really just dove RIGHT into every trope, and if it was intentional, they sure didn't do anything to make it obvious.

It isn’t just poor translation, either. The diner you meet Takemura in has incense burning at most tables... in a restaurant...

Misty, a white person, runs an “Esoterica” full of a mix of east asian cultural paraphernalia including Manekineko and... dragons?

At every step of the first few hours of the game, anything Japanese is portrayed with antagonism. Arasaka, the Japanese megacorp you rob from on your first heist, is portrayed as the enemy. A radio host makes a jab about Japanese whaling and atom bombs.

I have yet to see a Japanese character without a thick Japanese accent, even though Japanese Americans don't all have accents.

I understand that Japanese immigrants exist, but are you seriously telling me that there are no Japanese main characters with neutral accents?

The saving grace is that the Japanese VO is surprisingly good. When Tyger Claws goons talk in Japanese, I actually feel like a bunch of ■■■■ are talking.

But of all the things to get true-to-life, again, why does it have to be the things that portray JP in a bad light?

It's the small things like the incense, the VO, the samurai top-knots, and the objectification of Japanese people that makes it absolutely exhausting to play the game.

Because as a Japanese person, to immerse myself I need to ignore all these things.

And being an open-world game whose core offering is customization and leading a life you want to live, immersion is pretty fuckin' important.

Which made me realize: Cyberpunk isn't made for me. It's made for white westerners that can't see the small inconsistencies.

It’s made for the white people that want to revel in the Japantowns, the Little Chinas, the high-end hotels called something “exotic” like “Konpeki” (TN: Konpeki means “blue sky”) My companion literally called Yakisoba “exotic.”

To play Cyberpunk 2077 as a Japanese person is to subject yourself to countless cultural inconsistencies and objectification, and attempt to suspend your disbelief by saying “its part of the world building” or “they’re non-Japanese devs, so I should give them a pass”

Exactly this. The core issue of the game is that it portrays stereotypes of minorities, without commenting on whether or not said stereotype is good or bad.

https://t.co/j4pktIpZc4

> this game stereotypes literally everyone in it, from queer people to Asian people and Haitian people, and yet it doesn\u2019t have a single thing to say about any of those stereotypes, other than a throwaway line of optional

dialogue here or there

— Lauren Bastin (@redwing546) December 14, 2020