Dragon Age II User Analysis Report

Ian Hajnosz

Reviewed on Xbox 360

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Format and Prioritization

Good Practice

- Aspects of the game that should be kept (Good Job!)

Small Intrusion

- Infrequent or inconsequential issues that may only pose minor annoyances to some players

Medium Intrusion

- Issues of the game that may be common or difficult for players to engage with, but surmountable nonetheless

Priority Intrusion

- Aspects of the game that significantly hinder play-experience and/or occur frequently

Questions?

- Parts of the game that may be intentional design choices, oddities, or otherwise are of note

Character Creation/Customization 1/4

- Emergency Exits on Important Decisions:
  - Upon class selection, additional information about decision is given before a confirmation choice must be made, giving the player an exit if desired.
    - Players will likely not be unduly locked into a major character decision early on

Character Creation/Customization 2/4

- Typo/Text Inconsistency:
  - small typo/inconsistency between descriptions, however meaning is maintained

Character Creation/Customization 3/4

- Unclear Terminology and Mechanics:
  - No explanation is given for the utility of the "Portrait" part of the customization phase
    - Though an unfixed, purely aesthetic component, the utility of the feature is not apparent
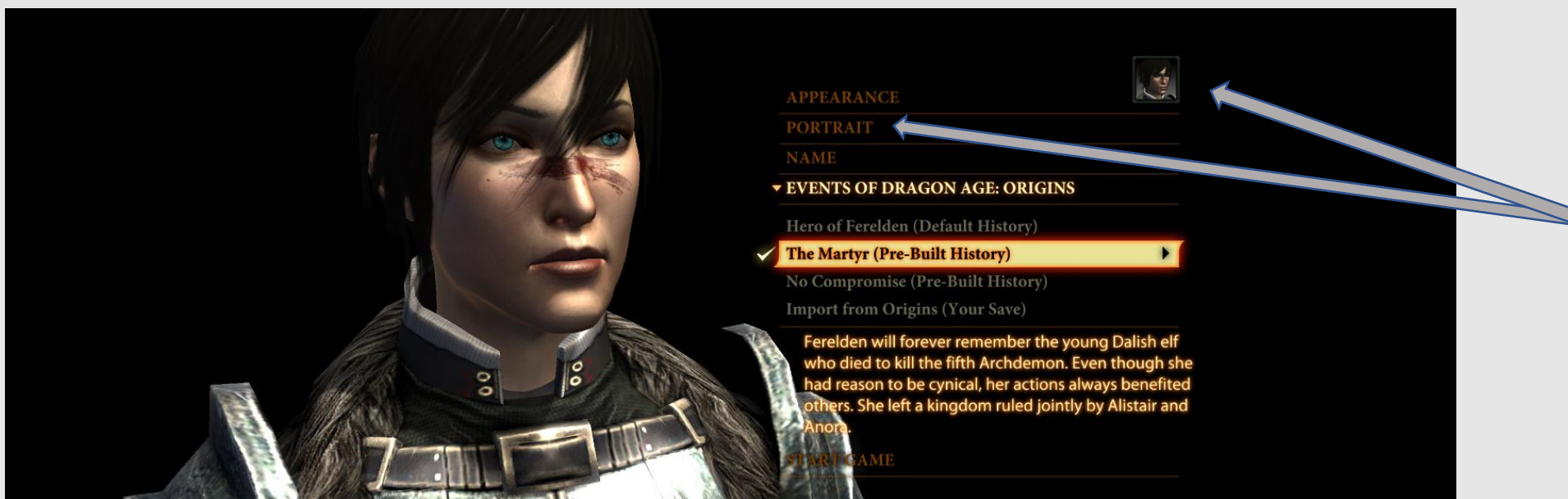
Character Creation/Customization 4/4

- ## Unclear Terminology and Mechanics II:
  - Though description of "Events of Dragon Age: Origins" is apt, no information is given as to how it matters to this game
    - Players may unintentionally make significant game world decisions without understanding future implications

Character Screen 1/3

- Friendship/Rival Mechanic Not Explained:
  - This mechanic is never fully described to have implications to both story, inter-character dialogue, and character abilities
  - The meter describing player relationship to companion NPC has poor contrast with the background, particularly when between "Friend" or "Rival"
  - Impact: Players may unintentionally miss out on content, or unintentionally lock themselves into important decisions or gameplay without being aware how they arrived at that point

Character Screen 2/3

- Abilities Easily Recognizable by layout:
  - Differently shaped and sized icons, with accompanying descriptions, display ability-type quickly and accurately while also showing necessary pathways to new abilities
  - With each skill tree in a different color, players would likely be able to differentiate between abilities more easily

Character Screen 3/3

- Stats, Attributes, Tactics Descriptions and Consistency:
  - Descriptions of attributes and stats describe utility for both all-classes and class-specific functions
  - Symbols describing stats (e.g. Damage, Attack, etc.) are consistently used throughout the game
- Players are given emergency exit before confirming their attribute allocation upon leveling up

Inventory

- **Condensing Important Information:**
  - 5 Star system quickly alerts players to general item quality per level & class
  - Class-locked items are dulled and non-selectable
  - Controls for moving tabs and performing actions are clearly labeled across every screen
  - Symbols consistent with character stats

Dialogue 1/3

- Player Friendly Minimalism:
    - Dialogue wheel moves dialogue without bogging down player with excessive information
    - (without subtitles)-dialogue appears in text to remind player if player doesn't respond promptly


- Skippable Dialogue:
    - Dialogue is skippable however there is no indicator how to do so and skip is immediate
   - Impact: players may unintentionally skip dialogue

Dialogue 2/3

- Investigate Dialogue Trees Difficult to Recognize:
  - Previously used dialogue is not distinguished from other dialogue
  - Players may repeat sections of dialogue over again whilst unsure of what dialogue options they have not tried yet
  - Impact: Players may struggle to navigate through dialogue sections to their liking, particularly players who want to exhaust all possible dialogue tree options before moving one
    - Consider greying out (but not disallowing) already dialogue options the player has already picked
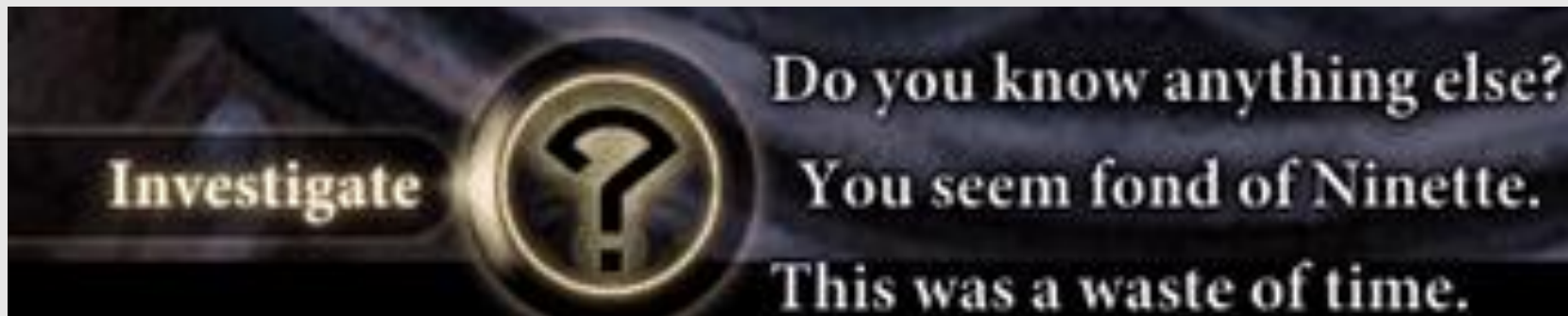
Dialogue 3/3

- Indicator Icons
  - Players may not understand different dialogue response types
    - Many different icons rotate into the three general dialogue options
    - The icons are not described in-game and descriptions are not available (e.g. a game controller menu)
    - Players must learn the icons by choosing those options, however even then the icon's associated dialogue option may not be clear after execution but the player may have already made an undesirable decision that they cannot retract without relying on opening old saves
      - Some dialogue emblems signify the player-character's tone, making it all the more important that players understand the context of their dialogue choices
  - Impact: Players may make significant game decisions without full or accurate information about their options
  - Particularly, the "fig" (being common, but unexplained) and "companion" have high risk to player control
    - The "companion" icon appears on the left side of the dialogue wheel, a side almost exclusively reserved for dialogue options that do not deliberately do not move the dialogue forward, however the companion dialogue option is not necessarily so
    - Players may become confused as to whether the companion option will move the dialogue forward or not
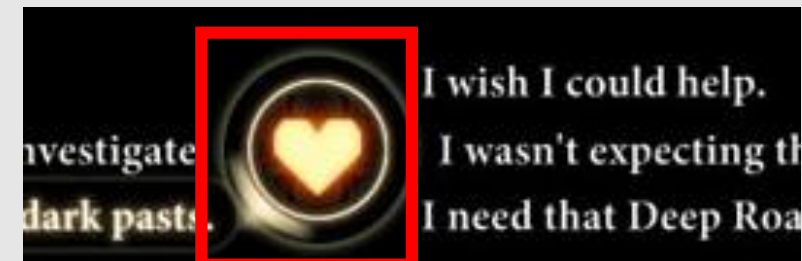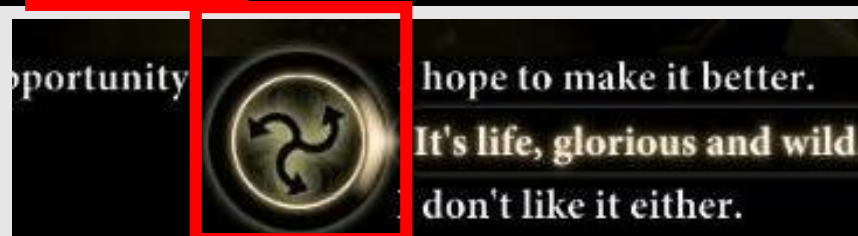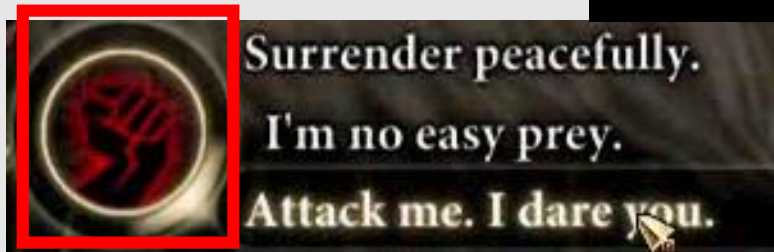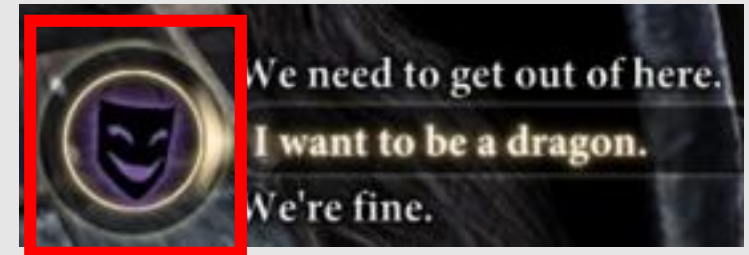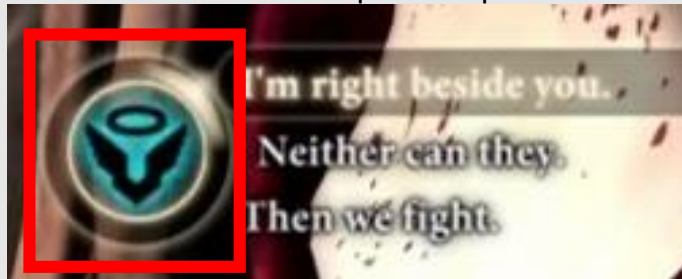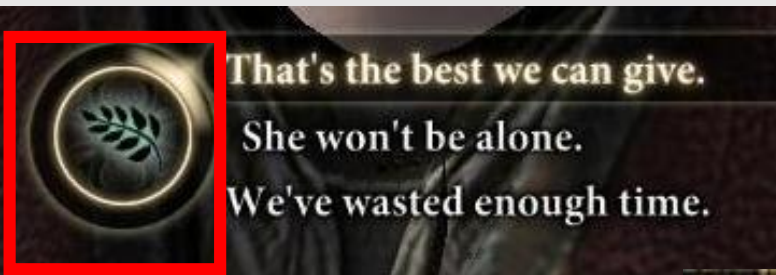
Journal

- Inconsistent Journal Markings to Map:
  - Marking side quests only adds the mark to the area selection map, not the play-area map
  - Impact: players who rely on the play-area map may miss or struggle to find their quest objectives
  - Impact: players may explore zones more thoroughly to find their objectives

Map

- Legend and labels:
  - Legend holds key information but can also be toggled away to reduce map clutter

- No Zoom Feature
  - Impact: Players may not be able to see detailed room layouts from map screen

Combat

- Enemy Targeting Difficulties (Console Specific):
  - Players may struggle to target the specific enemies
    - The ridicule for targeting enemies only appears in the action menu, otherwise players need to rely on the auto-targeting to engage enemies that the player-character is facing
    - Players trying to take out specific enemies may unintentionally target the wrong one, possibly wasting vital or resource expensive abilities on incorrect targets