Until Dawn™

In Until Dawn, players have the opportunity to play as one of eight characters in each section. Each character represents a common teen stereotype in the horror genre such as the jock, the nerd, the loner, the mean girl, etc. The game sets up these dynamics so that the gameplay and the choices the player makes can subvert them and create interesting outcomes.

Meet the archetypes, I mean Players!

Despite the game making a point to subvert horror tropes, it sticks too close to the genre in ways that potentially alienates diverse audiences and disrupts player immersion. The cast lacks diversity despite the number of characters, it's POC characters are stereotyped or underutilized compared to the white characters, and the female characters still lack complexity.

When cliches become a roadblock

The game works great as something to be played with a group a friends. Players can hand off the controller to each other whenever the POV character shifts and the remaining members can watch along and influence the main player. The game is can be replayed many times without becoming stale. Players can spend hours learning how each character dies.

Play with Friends

What future game writers can take from Until Dawn when wanting to make a game from a well known or beloved genre is to utilize the tropes and cliches for world building, try to build complex characters on top of the established archetypes of the genre, and finally, don't let genre tropes hinder diversity in the narrative.

What did we Learn?

Cliche
Stick to the Tropes of the Genre

Diversity
Expand Genre for better inclusion

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