

*Developer's Notes for:*

## Celesta U: New Girl Order v3.0 GENERAL RELEASE

First, thanks to Ulver who reminded me I had not submitted Dev Notes when initially released! My error and one I can now correct with the addition of this document which will accompany the General Release later this year.

With that said, I can still hardly believe this document would ever be required—as I never imagined revisiting this game once it had been released in its original format. The first iteration of this game—*Celesta U: Degrees of Depravity*—was released in 2016 and represented the first big stretch game goal I attempted. The *Corporate Raider* series was under my belt as well as *Spoils of War*, a mil sim effort that was an attempt to break out into a more ‘gamey’ experience. *Mysteria Lane* was a return to CR role play land and focused on training archetype slavegirl types. All good fluffy fun and enhanced with great voice over talent. My goal was a steady improvement of the game experience, without losing the story telling I knew fans enjoyed in CR and the kinks they wanted to see explored.

CU was an attempt to build on all that and do it on a BIG scale. Unfortunately, it was a game scale that resulted in “too big—so fail”. In retrospect, it was far too ambitious. It had a cast of loads of NPCs, a great big campus, and lots of stuff to do—and it was enhanced with loads of voice over talent (it was like herding cats to get that accomplished). And yet for all that, it failed the way many ill planned epics turn out (think David Lynch’s *Dune*)— too big, too many moving pieces, not enough explanation and ultimately exhausting and frustrating. Technically it worked insofar as you could finish the game—but it wasn’t easy and it wasn’t fun (at least not as much fun as previous games had been).

It was frankly a relief to take on a new challenge and leave it behind. *State of the Union* represented a whole new approach, ushered in our first live model component AND was enough of a hit to win back fans disappointed with CU. I had mentally tossed CU in the “lessons learned” basket and took some comfort in some of the things that HAD turned out right in the attempt—use of VO content, random events, commissioned maps/art and some other bits and pieces that were picked up in the process.

But there were many who not only weren’t ready to leave CU in game afterlife but who were pretty vocal about getting it fixed! The drumbeat was such that I tacitly agreed to a rematch with CU at some point, hoping for a bit more time to focus on new stuff. Fans who wanted a university based game REALLY wanted it. Eventually, following the release of *Exec2Sec: Suits to Skirts*, I relented. I HATE it when people don’t make good on their promises and was not about to be classified as one of those-- and so committed to... do something (what, I had no idea).

Scale was the biggest challenge and there were suggestions to break CU up into smaller related games. I resisted them stubbornly! No—I did NOT want to have to commit to do multiple games. But then... reality. Those suggesting a multiple game approach were right and I was wrong. Having created the world, I knew I didn’t want to sacrifice any of it, which a tighter single game would have required. It was easy enough to see the break lines—the game would have to become a trilogy. Game One would concentrate on subverting the university from the top down. Game two would focus on the professors and only in game three would the students come into it.

All fine and good but I knew damn well game three was what fans really wanted—like rushing through dinner to get to dessert! The challenge would be to make CU games 1 & 2 engaging enough to justify spending any time on them. Poor CR 1 is pretty primitive compared to CR 2 & 3 and I knew

I'd have to really lift the bar on CU Game 1 well beyond that level so as not to disappoint fans yet again. But how to do it? I made a few decisions, based on things I'd learned from other games. These were the calls, for better or worse:

- 1.) KEEP THE BABY, NOT THE BATHWATER- There actually were some good elements in CU v1.0. The campus map, the voice over work, the control dynamic, etc. could be recycled. Dumping the extraneous stuff still left enough to give a sense of a campus environment world to explore and move about in.
- 2.) IMPROVED UI- Big lesson from CU v1—ALWAYS let players know what they can do, how to do it and what impact/s an action will have! The new improved UI tries to do this and reduce the 'fog of play' that hampered CU v1 so much. Every scene contains about 90% of what a player needs to know without having to hunt for the info!
- 3.) EXPANDED NPCs- NPCs retained their original backstories BUT players had additional reasons to investigate them as NPC stats are now randomised—ensuring every game will be different. Learning the 'deep dark secret' is no longer sufficient on its own to dominate a NPC—you still have a chance to fail. Players may also decide how deeply they want to engage with an NPC. It is no longer necessary to grind them down to the bone each and every time! Players can pick and choose the NPCs they want to dominate and how deeply they wish to. You can go 'soft' and even 'angel' them (ie They are controlled but you agree not to humiliate them) or you can pound them into submission by forcing them to provide a symbol of submission and even perform in a porno designed to provide the ultimate blackmail leverage.
- 4.) RESOURCE MANAGEMENT- Players need to squeeze Authority out of NPC encounters in order to make stuff happen on campus. This represents your slow accumulation of power which is spent to subjugate the institution into your personal playground. You also need to keep an eye on the prize—mission score! At the end of the day, you're on the company clock and Mission Score is how you're graded!
- 5.) ALTERNATE VICTORY PATHS- There are now different paths to victory. You can earn mission score by pursuing 'Hidden Agenda' mini-quests; make changes to the Board, and even change the school name and motto to something more appropriate to an institution which will be used to train nubilees for a less than independent future! You can even earn a 'conversion' bonus if you dominate a NPC via a forced sexual approach.
- 6.) POLICIES- Control of a NPC now unlocks a bunch of 'policies'—actually the foundational operating system the school will need to transition from a feminist university into a slave training facility. CR and SOTU were replete with all kinds of rules and regs and players now have a bunch to choose from, which in turn also help in providing that 'sense of doom' that should foreshadow the future of Susan B. Anthony University.
- 7.) PUSHBACK- No more free rides either! In the original game, the Player was operating in a void. Now you have some resistance in the form of Board members who you'll have to fire and the Alumni Association, who aren't happy about all the changes you're making to their dear old alma mater! You can't lose to them but they can dampen your score if you don't

manage it right!

- 8.) LIVE MODEL- Probably the most obvious addition in the latest iteration—Melissa Worthington (AKA Ariel Anderssen). There were a couple reasons the live model component was added. First, it solved a problem. In take 1 of CU, the Player could take the President and proceed to do stuff without much of a drama. Now you need a lot more prep work as you need control of the Board before you can even try to control the President. This made for a much more interesting mid to late game, with training the President to your specifications a more satisfying and rewarding end game. The second reason was simple—I wanted to work with Ariel and Hywel! Once I made contact and we were able to schedule it all out, I knew fans would love the result. Hywel’s technical and artistic mastery complements Ariel’s exquisite acting, wardrobe and beauty perfectly. I don’t think there’s much debate—Ariel’s acting has set the bar for future games. Is it as explicit as some fans would like? No. But with that said, fans were exposed to a more powerful and headier experience that demonstrates how much more impact suggestion ultimately has over mere visceral physicality. That is NOT to say we won’t consider explicit scenes in the future but that the storytelling aspect will always be the first determinant.

So that’s the wrap on *Celesta U: New Girl Order*. I admit I’m rather pleased with the way it came out! It is a much more playable game and provides a solid foundation for the next two games. I owe the fans who demanded a re-do on CU a big thank you as I think you saw potential I didn’t see in re-visiting it. It was a lot more fun tromping through the Susie B quadrangle again than I thought it would be!

I’ll get to the rest of trilogy in a few months—I have a witchy/demonic/cult game to crank out before I can even think of doing anything else! That said, I have been playing with certain concepts in some arcanas, specifically Persephone Progression and Demeter Declension, that I think I can use in CUs 2 & 3.

Was that the bell? Sorry, I’ve got to go. President Worthington is expecting me, though I doubt she’ll be happy to learn how I just fired her last ally on the Board of Trustees. There are going to be changes at the university I sincerely doubt she’ll approve of—not to mention the changes I have in mind for Melissa herself!

Long live the Fans!!!

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