OPERATION OVERLORD
Dangerous Missions

Presented by
Dr. Janet Murray’s

ETV Project Studio
At the Georgia Institute of Technology

For

Designed by Paul Amsbury and Nate Olson
Operation Overlord: Dangerous Missions (OODM) is a first person text and graphics based adventure game set on D-Day. It is an interactive experience designed for the constraints of the present day mobile handset (phone).

With a “choose your adventure” conceit, the player is asked to use his/her knowledge and wisdom to navigate challenges drawn from the personal experiences of soldiers.

This demo focuses on challenges faced by the 82nd Airborne Pathfinder Paratroopers.
OODM is built for present generation mobile handsets that have limited graphics and audio capabilities.

It has been envisioned as an umbrella brand for a whole set of eventual interactive experiences that drive a tech savvy and potentially younger demographic to watching History Channel television content and participating in the History Channel online presence.
Players will be able to access several adventures from the main menu.

In addition, players will have the option to review TV listings for History Channel content that is directly relevant to their chosen adventures. They may even be able to choose to have a reminder email sent with the schedule information.

The game experience draws upon the information contained in History Channel TV and web content for its scenarios, problems, and solutions.
In the mission briefing screen, the objectives of the mission are outlined. These objectives are taken from actual 82nd Airborne mission objectives for the Pathfinders.

The Pathfinders were volunteer Paratroopers sent in early before the main body of paratroopers arrived. They were the first on the ground.

They were to set radars (radio devices) and signal lights to guide in the thousands of paratroopers who were only 30 minutes behind.

Only one of the 18 82nd Airborne Pathfinder squads succeeded in placing their radar in the right location.
The Gear Up interface will allow you accept the standard set of equipment that a Pathfinder of the 82nd Airborne carried on D-Day.

It will also allow for the addition of other items that have real consequences in the game play, such as which and how many knifes you decide to carry, and where you decide to locate them on your person.

Rations may come in handy if you get lost in the woods or engaging the Germans without reinforcements.

But, you may not want to try to take everything, because your legs can only take so much upon landing.
This is one frame of an animation that adds drama to the adventure. The trip between the bases in southern England and Cotentin Peninsula of Normandy was only an hour and a half to two hours. In the game it will be seconds.

They left shortly before midnight, early on June 6th in order to be in position for the ocean invasion that would come at dawn.

The planes flew with their doors open so that the paratroopers would be able to jump from the plane if it was damaged by anti-aircraft fire.
The paratroopers jumped from anywhere between 200 feet and 700 feet above the ground.

Some of the paratroopers jumped without their emergency shoots to save weight, though there was a risk that the main static line shoot would not open, or that a fellow paratrooper would collide and collapse your shoot during the fall.

OODM will incorporate every behavior that we can feasibly program into it. If you want to save weight by ditching the emergency shoot, you have that ability and right. But you can also wish that you had not.
It was only a partly cloudy night with a bright moon that illuminated the light fabric of the parachutes so that if the Germans were looking, the paratroopers were easily targeted.

Many paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne were killed in the air. Many were drowned in flooded fields when they landed carrying more than their body weight again in equipment.

OODM will use statistics in figuring the chances that the player will live or die at each point of the game.
This choice point illustrates how a well informed player, one who has been watching History Channel World War II content for example, would know that there were many German troops patrolling the forests where the paratroopers landed.

If you choose to call for help, you risk being easily discovered...that is if you were not already discovered in your descent.
Every second that you take to remember in which location you stored your knife is another minute that the German soldiers have to discover you.

In the case that you placed your knife in an inaccessible location, you better hope that it is your squad that gets to you first.

Navigation between choices on this screen will be much like a dvd player.
Decisions about which series of actions, and in which order you take them, can take have real consequences on the outcome of the game.

There is a pause button, but the choices will be covered up.

If you drop the equipment, it may break and you will not be able to set the Eureka radar to guide in your reinforcements. But if you drop 20 feet with 120 lbs of gear, you may break your leg.
There were many dangers for the invaders of Normandy. The OODM will be programmed to introduce and track many sorts of impediments, including wounds, hunger, full bladder, surprise attacks, and exhaustion.

Even the best soldiers were unprepared for all of the hardships and exigencies. It never went according to plan, and was not like the training exercises.
Choice points allow the player to have agency. The time it takes to make a crucial decision will be taken into account.

If you do not read German, you may want to find someone, maybe on the History International discussion boards to help you translate. What is said may, or may not, be important.
The action will play out with dramatic pauses but not quite in real time. The adventure is designed to be played in 3 - 5 minute stages while you are waiting for an appointment or your date.

A more graphically rich version of the experience may be designed as a widget that would play as a mini-application on desktop. Instead of Minesweeper or Solitaire.
The tactical use of certain weapons is the kind of knowledge that comes from training.

Thos who watch the History Channel documentaries may learn that there are situations where the use of grenades is preferable to using the “automatic” rifle, the M-1, which was standard issue for the Allied soldier.

Those who do not watch the History Channel, or who do not read the online articles might not have a clue.
The use of vernacular of the time hopefully enhances the authenticity of the experience.
These adventures might last a few turns or many turns, depending upon the skill and luck of the player.

One possibility is to provide a text based transcript to the player documented the challenges and choices in the experience, so that the player will have a reference, a story to relate with others in the OODM History Channel community.

We are investigating the multiplayer possibilities of this format.
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On D-Day, they were all dangerous missions.