

# 'Fallout: New Vegas' takes post-apocalypse play to Sin City

October 17 2010, by Glenn Chapman

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Screen capture, courtesy of Bethesda Softworks, shows a scene out of the videogame "Fallout 3," a post-apocalyptic adventure.

As luck would have it, Las Vegas was spared from the nuclear bombs responsible for the radioactive wasteland known and loved by fans of "Fallout" videogames.

While the city was not leveled or its inhabitants mutated to degrees seen in earlier titles in the blockbuster franchise, it remains treacherous ground that players will tread with the Tuesday release of "Fallout: New Vegas."

"The first part of the game you are basically shot in the head and buried," Obsidian Entertainment co-founder and chief executive Feargus Urquhart said with a laugh.

"You don't get killed," he added quickly. "You get dug up and wake up

with some clues as to who did it... it starts a little like a whodunit."

[Videogame](#) publisher Bethesda Softworks turned to Southern California-based Obsidian to craft the fourth installment in the "Fallout" series of role-playing shooter games.

Urquhart worked on the first two titles in the series while at Black Isle Studios and there were "Fallout" veterans on his team at Obsidian. The first title in the franchise was released in 1997.

"New Vegas" players start with a fresh cast of characters in a time set a few years after the end of the story in "Fallout 3," which won game-of-the-year honors after its release in 2008.

"Whenever you are tackling a sequel, taking something people have great memories of, it is a constant battle between the new and the old," Urquhart said.

"We tried to build on the experience that was there but not change how it feels intrinsically to play."

The new title embraces trademark "Fallout" elements such as an atomic-age spin on classic US lifestyles in the 1950s and 1960s.

"It's the future, but with vacuum tubes," Urquhart said of the comic contrasts that have become hallmarks of the game.

"It's the 1950s, but it's not. It's sarcastic in this weird contrast of the smiley, happy line-drawn guy ultimately showing a pretty horrible image."

Urquhart, 40, confessed to being influenced by growing up with 1950s pop culture such as "Leave It To Beaver" and "Father Knows Best"

television shows.

Celebrities providing voices for characters in the game include Wayne Newton, an entertainer who is such a legend in Sin City that his website bills him as "Mr. Las Vegas."

"New Vegas" introduces factions fighting for dominance. Player choices regarding friends and enemies influence how the story and action progress, according to Urquhart.

There is a New California Republic group fighting to restore the old government complete with its maddening bureaucracy and a Caesar's Legion out to shape a realm in the spirit of the Roman empire.

"Like all the 'Fallout' games, it is ultimately about water," Urquhart hinted, noting that Hoover Dam is near Las Vegas but not wanting to give too much away.

"When the game resolves it tells you a lot about what impact your actions had on the world."

Like its predecessor developed by Bethesda Game Studios, "New Vegas" should let people so inclined spend scores of hours on quests, missions and other in-game adventures.

"In real life, I can't be the hero or the anti-hero," Urquhart said. "And that is what 'Fallout' gives people."

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Citation: 'Fallout: New Vegas' takes post-apocalypse play to Sin City (2010, October 17)  
retrieved 10 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2010-10-fallout-vegas-post-apocalypse-city.html>

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