

CIS 487

GAME EVALUATION

CONSTANTIN-ANTONIO COSTEA

PS3

PlayStation Network

Exclusive Content

Only On PlayStation®

ASSASSIN'S CREED IV BLACK FLAG

Only on PlayStation®3

60 minutes
of additional gameplay

MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

UBISOFT

- DEVELOPER: UBISOFT MONTREAL
- PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
- DIRECTORS:
 - ASHRAF ISMAIL & JEAN GUESDON
- PRODUCER: SYLVAIN TROTTIER
- THIRD-PERSON ACTION ADVENTURE
 - ELEMENTS OF STEALTH
 - SAILING & NAVAL COMBAT
- PRICE:
 - \$59.99 (ORIGINALLY)
 - \$29.99 (CURRENTLY)

MINIMUM STATED HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

PLAYSTATION 3

- ONE 3.2 GHZ POWERPC-BASED POWER PROCESSING ELEMENT
- EIGHT ACCESSIBLE SYNERGISTIC PROCESSING ELEMENTS
- 256 MB RAMBUS XDR DRAM
- 550 MHZ NVIDIA RSX GPU + 256 MB GDDR3 RAM = 1.3 GHZ
- BLU-RAY DISC DRIVE
- 5 GB REQUIRED HARD DRIVE SPACE

ACTUAL HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

- HDMI CABLE & 1080P NATIVE DISPLAY FOR MAXIMUM 1080P HD VIDEO OUTPUT
- DUALSHOCK® 3 FOR CONTROLLER VIBRATION
- ONLINE PLAY REQUIRES BROADBAND CONNECTION
- DTS DIGITAL SURROUND COMPATIBLE SOUND SYSTEM
- HEADSET FOR VOICE CHAT

GAME SUMMARY

- QUICK OVERVIEW
 - HISTORICAL SETTING — 18TH CENTURY CARIBBEAN — AND MODERN-DAY SETTING — MONTREAL
 - SIXTH MAJOR INSTALLMENT IN ASSASSIN'S CREED SERIES
- STORY LINE:
 - WRITERS: DARBY MCDEVITT & COREY MAY
- PLAYER'S ROLE:
 - 18TH CENTURY PIRATE AND ASSASSIN EDWARD KENWAY
 - GRANDFATHER OF MAIN CHARACTER RATONHNAKE:TON FROM ASSASSIN'S CREED III
 - UNIDENTIFIED MODERN DAY CHARACTER



GAME SUMMARY

- **INSTALLATION**
 - ABOUT 45 GB INSTALLATION
 - LENGTHY
- **USER INTERFACE**
 - MAIN MENU AND IN GAME PAUSE MENU
 - SHIMMERS
 - HEADS-UP DISPLAY
 - MINIMALISTIC
 - ONSCREEN MAP
 - DIFFERS SLIGHTLY FROM CHARACTER TO SHIP
 - WORLDMAP
 - NAVAL SHIPPING AND COMBAT



GAMEPLAY

- ENGINE: ANVILNEXT
- OPEN-WORLD THIRD PERSON AND SMALL-SCALE FIRST PERSON
- EXPLORATION, COMBAT, HUNTING, AND STEALTH ON LAND AND UNDERWATER AS THE PIRATE
 - OVER 50 INDIVIDUAL LOCATIONS INCLUDING MAINLAND PORTS AND TINY UNINHABITED ISLANDS
 - HIDDEN TREASURES, TREASURE MAPS, HAND-DRAWN CLUES, ETC.
 - HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT, MELEE WEAPONS (E.G., BLADES, AXES, ETC.), LONG-RANGE WEAPONS (E.G., GUNS, DARTS, ETC.), AND EXPLOSIVES (E.G., SMOKE BOMBS, LETHAL GRENADES, ETC.)



GAMEPLAY



- PILOT A SHIP FOR TRAVEL, EXPLORATION, HUNTING, AND NAVAL COMBAT
 - OTHER SHIPS MAY BE DESTROYED, BOARDED, CAPTURED, AND LOOTED
 - SAILORS MAY BE RECRUITED
 - MAIN SHIP, THE JACKDAW, MAY BE UPGRADED OVER TIME WHEN FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE, I.E., MATERIALS AND CURRENCY.
- PARALLEL MISSION — FIRST-PERSON IN PRESENT DAY
 - EXPLORATION AND PUZZLE-SOLVING
- MINI GAMES WITHIN THE GAME, FANORONA, MORRIS, AND CHECKERS

GAME FEATURES

- SCORING

- CURRENCY ACQUISITION
- DNA SEQUENCE COMPLETION PERCENTAGE
- PLAYSTATION TROPHIES

- ARTWORK:

- PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL IS COMPOSED MAINLY OF HIGH-RESOLUTION GRAPHICS OF CHARACTER MODELS AND SET PIECES
- IN-GAME, THE GAME AIMS FOR REALISM IN ITS RENDERING, THOUGH STYLIZED

- SOUND AND MUSIC:

- COMPOSER: BRIAN TYLER
- MODERN CLASSICAL MUSIC IN THE STYLE OF FILM SCORES
- SEA SHANTIES SUNG BY SAILORS
- ADDITIONAL MUSIC BY OLIVIER DERIVIERE FOR THE DLC TITLE FREEDOM CRY

- SPECIAL FEATURES:

- MULTIPLAYER MODE
 - SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE WITH BUNDLE
 - ADDITIONAL MAPS, WEAPONS, AND CUSTOMIZATION ITEMS AVAILABLE WITH PREORDERS FROM CERTAIN RETAILERS
 - SIDE MISSION AND QUESTS NOT REQUIRED FOR MAIN STORY COMPLETION
 - EXTRA GAMEPLAY EXCLUSIVE TO PS3
- MANUAL:
 - EXTENSIVE MANUAL AND ENCYCLOPEDIA DATABASE OF THE MULTITUDE OF STORY ELEMENTS AVAILABLE IN-GAME
 - NO PHYSICAL COPY

BUGS

- ASSASSIN'S CREED SERIES RELIES HEAVILY ON PARKOUR ACTION
 - THE CHARACTER AND CAMERA ARE CONTROLLED SEPARATELY
 - OFTEN, THE PLAYER IS QUICKER THAN THE AVATAR
 - IF THE CHARACTER LAGS IN RESPONSE TO PLAYER REDIRECTION, IT LEADS TO UNFORESEEN LEAPS OFF LEDGES AND BUILDINGS, VERY OFTEN INTO TROUBLE
 - PARKOUR IS PUSHED LESS IN THE LATEST ITERATION LEADING TO FEWER BUGGY CHASE SEQUENCES

• RAGDOLL PHYSICS

- WHEN BODIES BECOME CONSTRAINED, WHETHER IN MOTION OR LIFELESS, THEY SOMETIMES CLIP THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTS, OFTEN FLICKERING IN AND OUT

• ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS ARE DRAWN AS YOU TRAVERSE

- SOMETIMES, OBJECTS WILL FLICKER IN AND OUT OF EXISTENCE AS YOU TURN THE CAMERA



GAME REVIEW

WHAT IS GOOD (FUN) ABOUT THE GAME?

- **E**XPLORATION AND FREE RUNNING
 - **A**S WITH PREVIOUS EDITIONS, THE ENVIRONMENTS ARE BEAUTIFUL AND IMMERSIVE — YOU ALMOST FEEL LIKE YOU'RE THERE
 - **I**T'S GREAT BEING ABLE TO EXPLORE HAVANA, FOR EXAMPLE, BUT IT'S EVEN BETTER TO BE ABLE TO CLIMB TO THE TOP OF A STEEPLE OR THE MAST OF A SHIP AND GET A PANORAMIC VIEW OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS
 - **M**INGLING WITH A DIVERSE POPULATION THAT SEEMS TO BE GOING ABOUT THEIR DAILY LIVES IS GREAT, BUT FREE RUNNING ACROSS ROOFTOPS IS AMAZING
- **B**OATING
 - **C**LUNKY IN THE LAST ITERATION, CAPTAINING THE SHIP IS NOW SMOOTH AND ALMOST EFFORTLESS
 - **T**HE USER MIGHT BE SURPRISED HOW MUCH IT CAN BE TO PILOT A SHIP, EXPLORE THE OCEAN, AND GET INTO NAVAL BATTLES
 - **T**HE SAILORS SINGING SEA SHANTIES IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE DEPTH OF DETAIL THAT ALLOWS THE USER TO BECOME IMMERSSED IN THE EXPERIENCE
 - **M**ANY MISSIONS ALLOW FOR MULTIPLE MEANS OF COMPLETION — YOU CAN BE STEALTHY OR YOU CAN BE HIGH PROFILE
 - **T**HE STORY AND CHARACTERS ARE REALLY WELL DONE (MANY BASED ON HISTORICAL FIGURES) WITH A GOOD SCRIPT AND OFTEN STRONG ACTING

GAME REVIEW – WHAT IS BAD (NOT FUN) ABOUT THE GAME?

WHAT IS BAD (NOT FUN) ABOUT THE GAME?

- PARKOUR ELEMENTS ARE STILL PROBLEMATIC AT TIMES
 - “REALISTIC” REACTION TIMES OF THE AVATAR SOMETIMES FEELS TOO SLOW AND CAN RUIN THE FLOW OF THE GAMEPLAY
- SIDE MISSIONS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE MAIN PLOT BUT ARE NECESSARY FOR COMPLETIONISTS
 - THESE SIDE MISSIONS CAN GET REPETITIVE QUICKLY
- LOOTING — BETTER THAN IN PREVIOUS GAMES, BUT STILL A TEDIOUS PROCESS OF WAITING WHILE HOLDING DOWN A BUTTON

HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO SIMILAR GAMES IN THE SAME GENRE?

- REMAINS A UNIQUE ACTION-ADVENTURE GAME, IN LARGE PART DUE TO THE FREE-RUNNING GAMEPLAY AND NOW THE SAILING
- OTHER ASPECTS OF THE GAME (E.G., COMBAT) ARE QUITE SIMILAR TO OTHER GAMES

WHY IS IT BETTER OR WORSE THAN SIMILAR GAMES?

- HIGH LEVEL OF QUALITY WITH RESPECT TO CHARACTER DESIGN, WARDROBE, AND FIDELITY TO REAL-WORLD ENVIRONMENTS AND ARCHITECTURE
- IMMERSIVE HISTORICAL FICTION, PLOT, AND SCRIPT WITH WELL-ROUNDED CHARACTERS THAT GROW AND CHANGE THROUGH

THE COURSE OF THE YEARS DURING WHICH THE GAME TAKES PLACE

WHAT IS THE APPROPRIATE AUDIENCE FOR THIS GAME?

- THOUGH VIOLENT, THE GAME APPEARS TO BE APPROPRIATE FOR TEENAGERS AND ADULTS
- THE GAME IS LIKELY TARGETED MORE TOWARD A MALE AUDIENCE BUT COULD VERY WELL BE ENJOYED BY FEMALE GAMERS, TOO
 - THE MAIN CHARACTER IS MALE AS IS HIS FIRST MATE AND THE ANTAGONISTS ARE ALSO MALE
 - HOWEVER, THERE ARE TWO FEMALE PIRATES WHO ARE PARTICULARLY STRONG CHARACTERS
- THE MULTIPLAYER GAME MODE HAS BROADER APPEAL
 - MULTIPLAYER IS DIFFERENT ENOUGH FROM SINGLE-PLAYER THAT IT'S POSSIBLE FOR A GAMER TO LIKE ONE AND NOT THE OTHER
- FOR PLAYERS WITH YOUNGER CHILDREN WATCHING, BLOOD CAN BE TURNED OFF AND BATTLES CAN BE WON WITHOUT KILLING; HOWEVER, THE GAME IS PROBABLY STILL NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THEM

ARE ANY DESIGN MISTAKES PRESENT?

- THERE ARE NO OBVIOUS DESIGN MISTAKES PRESENT

SUMMARY

OVERALL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- STRENGTHS:
 - IMMERSIVE STORYTELLING AND DESIGN
 - POWERFUL ENGINE
 - VARIETY OF GAMEPLAY
- WEAKNESSES:
 - UNRELIABLE CONTROLS
 - TEDIOUS TASKS AND GAMEPLAY

IS THE GAME WORTH PURCHASING?

- YES, BUT THE DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT IS NOT

HOW COULD IT BE IMPROVED?

- BETTER CONTROLS FOR FREE-RUNNING AND FURTHER USES FOR IT

- MORE VARIETY IN MISSION GOALS
- LESS SCAVENGING
- EACH ITERATION SORT OF DOUBLES DOWN ON THE PREVIOUS; AS FAR AS THE GROWING OVERARCHING STORYLINE GOES, IT'S BECOMING PREPOSTEROUS
- IT WAS AT TIMES TOO EASY AND THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY SETTING
- SOME ITEMS AREN'T ACQUIRED UNTIL THE END OF THE GAME MAKING THEM EFFECTIVELY USELESS SINCE THERE IS LITTLE REPLAY VALUE INHERENT IN THEM OR THE GAME AS A WHOLE. IF ANYTHING, THIS MIGHT BE THE SORT OF GAME ONE REVISITS DOWN THE LINE LIKE ONE WOULD RE-WATCH A FAVORITE SERIES

SOURCES

- [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/ASSASSIN%27S_CREED_IV:_BLACK_FLAG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassin%27s_Creed_IV:_Black_Flag)
- [HTTP://WWW.GAMESTOP.COM/PS3/GAMES/ASSASSINS-CREED-IV-BLACK-FLAG/108255](http://www.gamestop.com/ps3/games/assassins-creed-iv-black-flag/108255)
- ASSASSIN'S CREED IV: BLACK FLAG (PS3) CASE
- [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/PLAYSTATION_3_TECHNICAL_SPECIFICATIONS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_3_technical_specifications)
- [HTTP://WWW.IGN.COM/WIKIS/ASSASSINS-CREED-4-BLACK-FLAG/COLLECTOR%27S_EDITIONS](http://www.ign.com/wikis/assassins-creed-4-black-flag/collector%27s_editions)
- [HTTP://IMGS.ABDUZEEDO.COM/FILES/FRANCOIS/MELANIE-DES-GAGNE/M-DES-GAGNE_4.JPG](http://imgs.abduzeedo.com/files/francois/melanie-desgagne/melanie-desgagne_4.jpg)
- [HTTP://OYSTER.IGNIMGS.COM/MEDIAWIKI/API.S.IGN.COM/ASSASSINS-CREED-4/THUMB/E/E3/SCREEN_SHOT_2013-11-19_AT_2.40.26_PM.PNG/468PX-SCREEN_SHOT_2013-11-19_AT_2.40.26_PM.PNG](http://oyster.ignimgs.com/mediawiki/apis.ign.com/assassins-creed-4/thumb/e/e3/screen_shot_2013-11-19_at_2.40.26_pm.png/468px-screen_shot_2013-11-19_at_2.40.26_pm.png)
- [HTTP://CDN.GOTTABEMOBILE.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/12/PS4-SCREENSHOT-ASSASSINS-CREED-GAMEPLAY.JPG](http://cdn.gottabemobile.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/ps4-screenshot-assassins-creed-gameplay.jpg)
- [HTTP://CDN.CHEATCC.COM/GUIDE_SCREEN/ASSASSINS_CREED_4_BLACK_FLAG/AC_GCAYMAN2A.JPG](http://cdn.cheatcc.com/guide_screens/assassins_creed_4_black_flag/ac_gcayman2a.jpg)
- [HTTP://CDN.CHEATCC.COM/GUIDE_SCREEN/ASSASSINS_CREED_4_BLACK_FLAG/CK_FLAG/FLEET5.JPG](http://cdn.cheatcc.com/guide_screens/assassins_creed_4_black_flag/ck_flag/fleet5.jpg)
- [HTTP://DEV.DUALSHOCKERS.COM:8000/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2014/01/BDELKNOIYAARNZJ1.JPG](http://dev.dualshockers.com:8000/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/bdelknoiyarnzj1.jpg)
- [HTTP://GAMINGBOLT.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/03/ASSASSINS-CREED-4-HD-WALLPAPER.JPG](http://gamingbolt.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/assassins-creed-4-hd-wallpaper.jpg)
- [HTTP://ASSETS2.IGNIMGS.COM/2013/10/04/ACBFPS3BXSHT.JPG](http://assets2.ignimgs.com/2013/10/04/acbfps3bxsh.jpg)
- [HTTP://CLOUD.ATTACKOFTHEFANBOY.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/03/EDWARD-KENWAY-AC4.JPG](http://cloud.attackofthefanboy.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/edward-kenway-ac4.jpg)
- [HTTP://WWW.IGAMERESPONSIBLY.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/10/ACGA_SP_104_NASSAU_FREERUN_1080PTCM19115255.JPG](http://www.igameresponsibly.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/acga_sp_104_nassau_freerun_1080ptcm19115255.jpg)
- [HTTP://WWW.ITSARTMAG.COM/FEATURES/ITSART/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/09/ASSASSINS-CREED-4-BLACK-FLAG.JPG](http://www.itsartmag.com/features/itsart/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/assassins-creed-4-black-flag.jpg)
- [HTTP://WWW.JUSTPUSHSTART.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/10/ASSASSINPIRATE.JPG](http://www.justpushstart.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/assassinpirate.jpg)
- [HTTP://I.IMGUR.COM/LO4GStf.JPG](http://i.imgur.com/LO4GStf.jpg)
- [HTTP://OYSTER.IGNIMGS.COM/MEDIAWIKI/API.S.IGN.COM/ASSASSINS-CREED-4/D/D3/](http://oyster.ignimgs.com/mediawiki/apis.ign.com/assassins-creed-4/d/d3/)