





# Americans are angry.

And why shouldn't they be? With an exponentially expanding national debt, crippling foreclosures, corporate bailouts, degrading infrastructure, dwindling job market, and widening income gap between the haves and have-nots, it's getting harder to believe politicians when they speak of American exceptionalism as if it were a fundamental truth.

In response to gradual erosion of our beloved nation, resentful citizens of all kinds of political backgrounds are rising up in the form of new political movements like the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street. But unlike the 1960s, when protests and activism resulted in the discontinuation of the military draft, the Civil Rights Act, and the sexual revolution, the contemporary bickering government parties have proven largely ineffective at slowing or reversing the downward trajectory.

The media isn't helping matters. Rather than promote discussions about viable solutions moving forward, ad-driven 24-hour media outlets and radio programs are content to stoke the fires and sensationalize political differences. History proves that if leaders don't move swiftly to address these grievances, rage can sometimes find a more violent channel of expression. Case in point: the meteoric rise of militias over the past few years.

In 2009, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported a massive resurgence in anti-government paramilitary groups, which have jumped from 43 militias in 2007 to nearly 300 in 2010. The sudden surge has captured the attention of the Department of Homeland Security, NSA, CIA, and FBI, who all view these groups as a real threat to the stability of the nation. Moreover, many of these disenfranchised groups frequently put their members through intense military training exercises – for what, no one knows.

America's volatile political climate serves as the jumping-off point for *Rainbow 6 Patriots*. This latest game in the storied tactical shooter series eschews the exhausted Russian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern crises so common in contemporary shooters and challenges gamers' perceptions by placing them in the roles of the elite tactical unit, the homegrown terrorists, and the civilians caught in the crossfire. Do you have what it takes to pull the trigger on a fellow citizen?

» **Platform**  
PlayStation 3  
Xbox 360 • PC

» **Style**  
1-Player Shooter  
(16-Player Online)

» **Publisher**  
Ubisoft

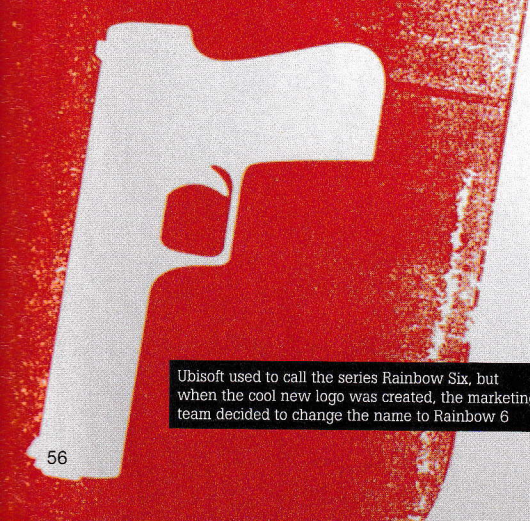
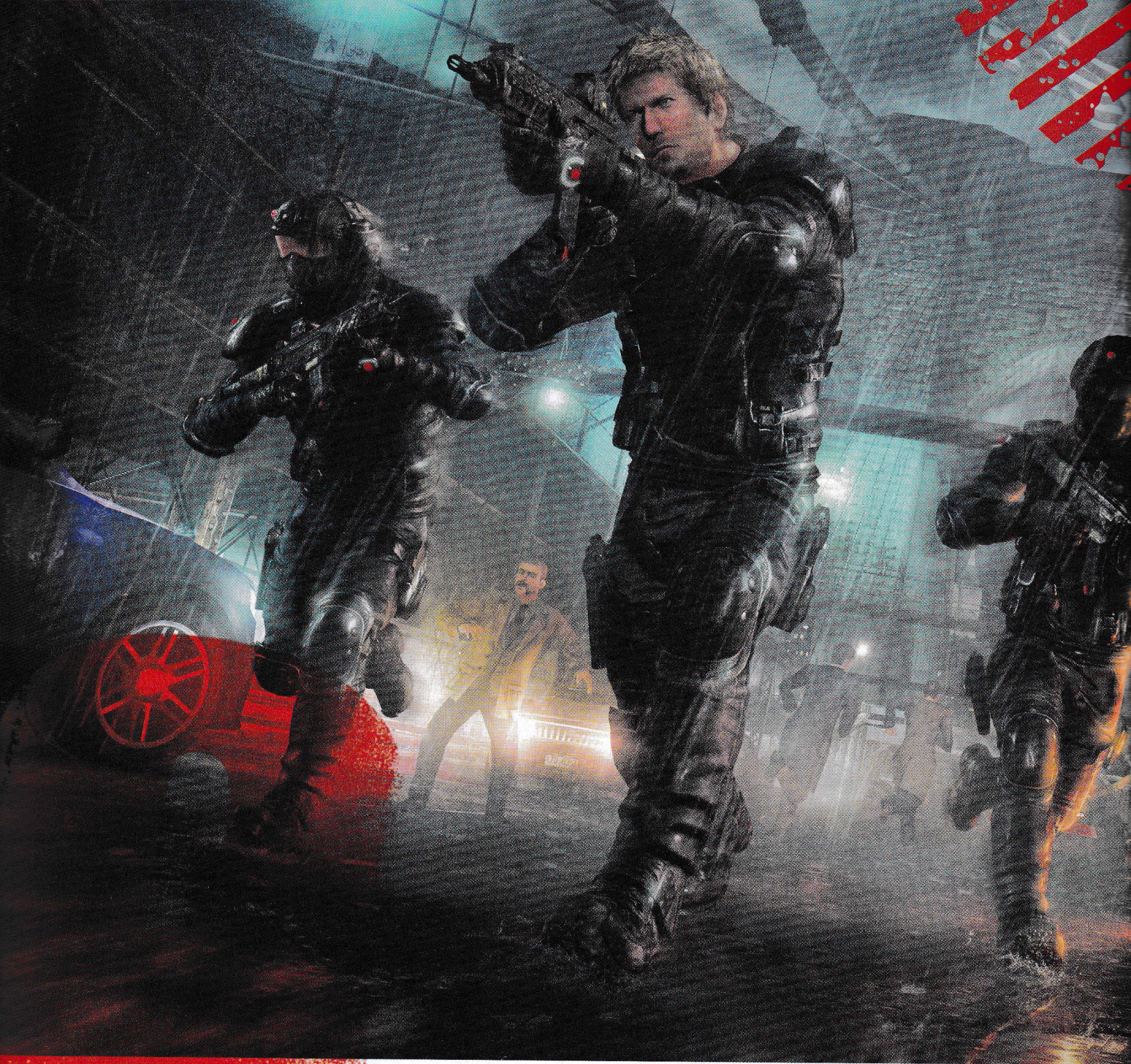
» **Developer**  
Ubisoft Montreal

» **Release**  
2013

You've fought Nazi,  
Russian, North Korean,  
and Middle Eastern threats.  
**Rainbow 6 Patriots**  
asks, can you turn the  
weapon on your  
fellow countrymen?

by Matt Bertz & Jeff Cork





Ubisoft used to call the series *Rainbow Six*, but when the cool new logo was created, the marketing team decided to change the name to *Rainbow 6*

### THE RETURN TO DUTY

Given the state of the shooter market, *Rainbow Six* has a lot of catching up to do. Though the popular franchise has always fared well critically, it's been three years since we last saw it in action. Over that time period, the popularity of the genre has exploded to the point that one game, *Call of Duty: Black Ops*, has sold as many copies (23 million) as the entirety of the *Rainbow Six* series.

Whereas once *Rainbow Six* ranked among the best shooters in both story campaign and multiplayer, *Call of Duty* is now the gold standard. *Battlefield*'s successful conversion from a PC exclusive to a multi-console property gives war buffs another elite option as well. So how do you recapture mind share from these highly successful properties?

To honor the *Rainbow Six* legacy and return the franchise to prominence, the development team at Ubisoft Montreal knows it needs to make a splash. Picking up the story

where it left off in *Rainbow Six Vegas 2* was a non-starter. "The story is particularly important to us this time," admits creative director David Sears. "We know from post-launch consumer data that most people couldn't remember who the characters were, why they were there, and why they were doing the things they were doing, or even what the story was all about." Not exactly a ringing endorsement.

When Sears joined the team two years ago, the United States was still in the throes of its biggest recession since the Great Depression (some argue we're still in the recession now). The anger in the nation was palpable, and Sears certainly identified with it, having lost the entirety of his 401k in two days during the economic collapse. In conducting their story research and reading up on the latest Tom Clancy books, Sears and his team realized there was no need to look outside our nation's borders for the next big threat facing the nation and Team *Rainbow*.





Creative director David Sears and narrative director Richard Rouse worked with Canadian filmmaker Erik Canuel and Hollywood screenwriters to storyboard the entire Rainbow 6 Patriots narrative and nail the pacing of the plot

"We knew we had to have a story this time that's very plausible, very relevant, and that touches on the current fears of U.S. citizens," Sears says.

If properly coordinated, the emerging rage-fueled paramilitary groups angered over the direction of the country could cause irreparable damage to our political and financial foundations.

"Fortunately there hasn't been a single leader to galvanize, orchestrate, and mobilize all these groups who have all this political energy and are so dissatisfied and angry," Sears said. For the sake of the next Rainbow Six story, however, Sears created him.

"Our enemies are inspired by these paramilitary groups, political radicals who we see all over YouTube, and former military men and women who have valiantly served their country but then return home and feel disenfranchised and forgotten," he says. "They don't return as heroes, and they

feel like they have been neglected. These are the people who would join a movement like our terrorist group."

This new collective of militias, known as the True Patriots, is led by a charismatic figurehead named Tredway, who has seen government treachery firsthand and has information that proves it lies to its people.

"He would like to overthrow the government, but he is

## GOING PLACES

**T**raditionally, Rainbow Six games involve a sense of "adventure tourism," with high stakes missions that take players to exotic locations around the globe they normally wouldn't go. Creative director David Sears assures us that just because Patriots takes places predominately in the United States, that doesn't mean the settings will be boring or conventional.

"I always point to the Salton Sea in the United States," he says. "It's a spectacular desert, a spectacular urban wasteland that's been largely forgotten by the Americans who created it in the '60s. My point is, we don't have to go to Afghanistan or Iraq to have a spectacular desert. Most of this geography and topography is available right here in North America."

Though 80 percent of the game is set in iconic locations like Pebble Beach, California and New York City, Sears says the remaining 20 percent takes players beyond the national borders to places like the Bering Strait and Poti, Georgia, a coastal city on the Black Sea.

really smart," Sears says. "He knows that a movement begun today will not necessarily result in a conclusive and lasting change tomorrow. What makes him particularly dangerous is that he is willing to martyr himself for this cause. By becoming a martyr, he firmly believes that his actions will reverberate throughout future history so that people will look at him as a founding father of a new country in which people have embraced the civil liberties that are granted to them in the Constitution."

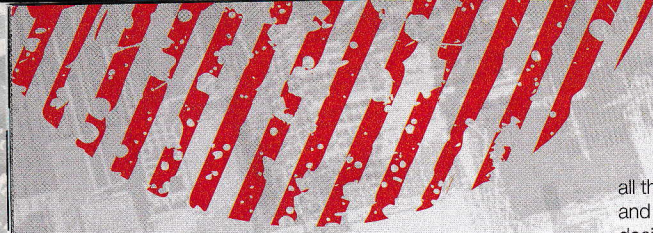
The main targets of Tredway's ire are the government and financial institutions, which he sees colluding at the detriment of the common man. To overthrow the corrupt leaders of the nation, he aspires to behead corporate America.

Stopping Tredway won't be easy, because the True Patriots don't operate like your traditional terrorist organization. Unlike the foreign threats from overseas, Tredway has a standing army of trained insurgents who look, act, and talk just like everyone else in America. Rather than take up arms against the military directly, the Patriots conduct strategic strikes when an opportunity arises, then disappear back into everyday society. As this implies, it is a very agile organization. By simply sending a text message, Tredway can have a flash mob of insurgency fighters anywhere in the United States at almost any time.

**"Why can't a game be smarter? Why can't a game embrace issues? We're not coming down with any kind of ruling or judgment about any of this. We're letting people talk amongst themselves."**

**— creative director David Sears**





But the True Patriots aren't just a hard-to-catch enemy. For the first time in the series, you don't just play from the perspective of the elite Team Rainbow outfit. Players also take the role of a True Patriot. Shifting perspective to give readers or viewers insight into the motivations and beliefs of multiple sides of the story is a common technique used in novels and films, but is rarely seen in video games.

"We very often see terrorists as a caricature of humanity," Sears explains, "but they're really people. Even if we completely disagree with their ideology – and certainly we disagree with the terrorist actions they are taking. No one wants to be shot or blown up."

Unlike the controversial "No Russian" level in *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2*, a lurid mission where players acted as an undercover CIA agent during an airport massacre, Ubisoft Montreal isn't just interested in generating shock value. The team wants to create context around these True Patriot members to give you insight into what led them to join this group.

"These people all have mothers," Sears says. "They want to be loved on some level, so we're actually stepping back and letting you get to know some of these people. It's very important to understand why they are doing the things they do, so we're taking the time to present it in a thoughtful way so that by the end of the game you've experienced a terrorist event from multiple angles.

"You'll understand better what it's like to be a terrorist, and you'll understand better what it's like to be a civilian in a terrorist event. That gives you a greater appreciation for the things that Rainbow does, particularly since when you know

all these people and you've had time to connect with them and you're asked as Rainbow to make these hard ethical decisions, it's more powerful. It makes you think."

### The New Face Of Team Rainbow

Since we last saw Team Rainbow, the organization has undergone a radical transformation. Just as Tom Clancy's novels have evolved as the world and terrorist threats change, the international strike team has adapted by transforming its personnel and tactics. Old-school counter-terrorism isn't an effective deterrent anymore, so new operational guidelines have been put in place. The driving force of this new direction is Zulu squad leader James Wolfe, a former Navy SEAL who fervently believes in doing whatever it takes to thwart the True Patriots.

"He sees that the True Patriots are operating by a new set of rules – it's not about making demands for something or taking a bunch of hostages and holding them for a while. It's about striking and disappearing again," says narrative director Richard Rouse. "James Wolfe realizes that to stop these guys he's going to have to push Rainbow farther than they've ever had to go before and make some really tough choices to take these guys down."

"He knows that if he doesn't eliminate the True Patriots' leader swiftly, the results to the United States could be catastrophic and long-lasting," Sears adds. "In order to do this, he's willing to take ethical shortcuts. For the first time ever, Rainbow is going to show up at the site of a terrorist event before the police show up and cordon off the hotel with yellow tape."

Players take the role of Echo squad's leader, a new member of Team Rainbow who looks up to Wolfe like a father figure. But once you are in the field, you have the



choice whether to adopt Wolfe's harsh tactics or go with another approach.

In previous games, allowing a civilian to die was game over. Now you're not exempt from tough situational decisions. Do you kill one civilian now and potentially spare hundreds of lives, or is the lone human life too critical to lose even if it means thousands of others may meet their untimely deaths down the road? In *Patriots*, you make the call.

*continued on page 1*

Like with *id Software's Rage*, Ubisoft Montreal wants the combat to feel more visceral, so it's taking measures to make sure different animations play when you shoot an enemy in the shoulder, leg, back, or front. The strength of the weapon impact on AI enemies will also be taken into account







## RECAPTURING THE MULTIPLAYER CROWN

**T**hough we haven't seen a new Rainbow Six game since 2008, Ubisoft Montreal is dead set on recapturing the series' past status as a top-tier multiplayer shooter. A lot has happened since its last appearance — namely Call of Duty became the most popular online shooter of all time — but rather than be discouraged in the face of such steep competition, the development team is encouraged by the growing popularity of the genre as a whole.

"The good news is that there are many more people now playing multiplayer than there used to be," says Rainbow Six Patriots lead multiplayer designer Simon Larouche. Even though Rainbow Six's strategic, squad-based action is different from the more frenetic pace of a Halo or Call of Duty, Ubisoft Montreal believes Patriots delivers everything players expect from a contemporary shooter, and more.

"This is all about recapturing our online crown," says creative director David Sears. "Rainbow has often been a number one online adversarial shooter. We've been away for a little while, so we've focused a lot on updating the features we had before and adopting features that we needed to adopt to be competitive in the immediate future. We're not just catching up. We're getting ahead again."

Rainbow Six Patriots' multiplayer is built around an interesting visual metaphor, called the HQ. This high-tech virtual space serves as an interactive, fully rendered pregame lobby where gamers can invite friends, explore squad tactics via the game's innovative new sandtable (see sidebar on page 64), sharpen skills at the firing range, tinker with weapon loadouts in the arsenal, and launch matches.

Rather than force players to navigate text-heavy menus for matchmaking, once you join a match you enter an area that the dev team calls the troop transport. Here, players can see the actual character models for their teammates and opponents before matches as they take their seats. Ubisoft says this approach makes the ordinarily dry moments before a match a bit more interesting. "It's not just a name on the screen, it's actually a 3D rendition of the player, so you can see them, you can see the cool weapon they have, their uniform, and things like that," Larouche says.

Once enough players enter the transport (by walking in from a side passage, not teleporting and breaking the sense of immersion) a familiar countdown begins and the screen rumbles as you make way to your destination.

Our multiplayer demo takes place in a large level called Waterworks. The lower portion of this abandoned structure is below the streets of New York. Its three-tiered design includes a well-lit open area ringed with stairwells, railings, and perches high above the action. Each level is color coded for easy navigation, though the paint is faded and flaked to match the rest of the dilapidated building.

In the story campaign Rainbow Six requires players to think strategically and work as a team. That approach traditionally carried over to multiplayer as well, but for Patriots, Ubisoft built in some tools to make it easier to assemble and work as a squad. The new commander and follower mechanic is similar to how squads work in most shooters, with some critical underlying differences. Ubisoft wants to encourage veteran players to mentor new recruits. When you see a player doing particularly well in the field, you can ask to be his follower. If he accepts, you then

gain access to the tactical settings that he created in the sandtable. Commanders can also issue waypoints and mark targets for followers. On the mini-map, commanders not only see where their teammates are located, but can also see their cones of vision on a small radar map near the bottom of the screen. When it's time to act as a team, commanders can issue go orders and countdowns so everyone knows when it's time to breach a door or swing down from above.

The dev team revisited player movement in the campaign to make the action feel more aggressive, and this philosophy carries over to multiplayer as well. Though the game still lacks a jump button, characters can now vault over low barriers and move from cover to cover automatically. Most importantly, rappelling is finally more effective than dropping a grenade at your feet.

"We've streamlined the hell out of rappelling, so it's very, very fast," says creative director David Sears. "Rappel locations offer cover or clandestine entry oftentimes, though if you are exposed, the offensive capabilities that you have while you're in rappel balance out the risks, so the reward is quite high. It's not slow, and it's not a death sentence anymore." In a game where a single headshot almost certainly means a kill, that kind of mobility is critical.

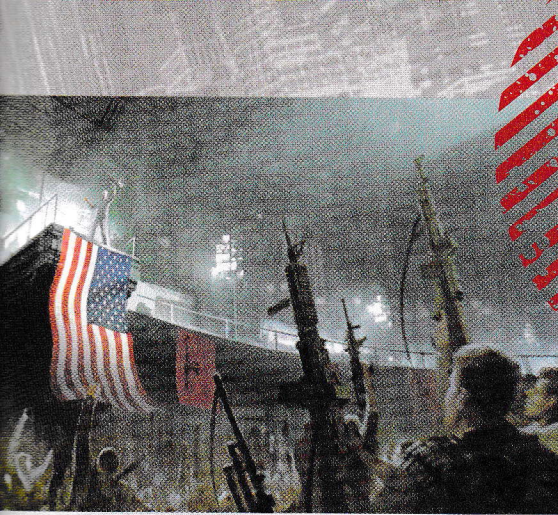
As with a lot of multiplayer games, Rainbow Six Vegas was prone to spawn camping. A highly skilled and coordinated team could box in opponents and kill them seconds after they popped into play. Patriots adds a few options that should alleviate those frustrations. If your team is pinned down in the default base spawn point, you can reenter the game next to a teammate or in a randomized safe zone away from the base.

At the end of a match, players are greeted with a typical results screen filled with progression bars and a tally of earned medals and ribbons. In one of the nice touches added to the feedback screen, player accuracy is not only represented by a percentage, but also with an outline of a human target that's peppered with the locations of your shots. It's a nice way to provide visual feedback to a stat as important as it is boring.

We saw the deathmatch mode in action, but Ubisoft promises new modes will accompany the traditional assortment of options. When asked if some modes or levels would require players to make the same tough decisions on collateral civilian damage as in the campaign, the team only offered up a cryptic "we have plans" response. The ACES progression system introduced in Rainbow Six Vegas will return with new enhancements, as will as the popular Persistent Elite Creation customization. Ubisoft Montreal wouldn't comment on the inclusion of terrorist hunt, though it's hard to believe the team would scrap such a popular mode.

Many of the other multiplayer details are being kept under lock and keycard at this point, including the scope of co-op. Still, it's obvious from what we saw that the studio hasn't been in stasis over the past three years.





"Collateral damage is unfortunate, but it's acceptable when combating terrorism now, particularly with the evolution of terrorism, which is 'strike anywhere and make no demands,'" Sears says.

For example, say a terrorist grabs a human shield in the subway system. You know he has a cell phone that can trigger multiple explosions throughout New York City, and he's positioned in such a way that you can neutralize him only by shooting through his meat shield. The True Patriots know they're forcing you into these impossible situations, and given how pervasive technology is today, if you pull the trigger and wound or kill that civilian chances are high it could end up on the evening news, severely damaging the public profile of a once-clandestine operation. What do you do?

"These are hard questions, and we do this consistently through almost every mission," Sears says.

#### Patriots In Action

Our live game demo doesn't start with Team Rainbow seated in the back of a chopper or outside a facility surrounded by police. Instead, our first glimpse comes from the perspective of a well-to-do real estate investor sitting in his idyllic American home. Judging by the polished wooden floors, large HDTV, and the iPad-like tablet sitting to his right, this guy is living the good life.

In walks the the man's wife, dressed only in a skimpy nightie. She turns off the TV and saunters toward him with a lit cupcake.

"Happy birthday. Go on, blow it out," she says.

Like a scene out of *Heavy Rain*, the player is given the option to blow out the candle or stroke his wife's cheek. The developer controlling the demonstration does both.

"You know what I wish for?" the man asks.

"Well, the baby is asleep," she replies seductively.

"Wishes do come true."

Suddenly, the doorbell rings. The woman sighs. "That's probably Dave from next door," she says. "Hold

To get more soulful performances out of the characters, Ubisoft doubled the quality of source animation and is dedicating more processor time to skin shaders, fabric shaders, hair, and lighting.

that thought."

The wife gets up to see who rang the bell, but just before she reaches for the doorknob the door bursts open. A group of men swiftly enter uninvited, knocking her to the ground.

"Get away from her!" the homeowner cries. He gets up to defend his wife but doesn't stand a chance against these rugged men. He's easily knocked out cold. When

he awakens, a bearded man in a military jacket who looks to be the leader of this group walks over and puts his knife to the wife's neck. You can hear the baby crying faintly from upstairs.

"Rise and shine, birthday boy," the intruder says with a wake-up blow. "You have a very nice place here. Seems you cashed in on everyone getting foreclosed. Today, you are going to make up for that."

The True Patriots' concept of restitution? Strapping him into a vest lined with explosives and going on a field trip.

The scene transitions to the back of a van stuck in traffic on the Brooklyn Bridge. The ringleader of this operation hands the birthday boy a trigger and warns him that if he doesn't hold the detonator button down, he'll go up in flames. If he doesn't make it to Times Square before he releases the button, his family is dead.

"This is living the American Dream on the worst day of your life," Sears says. "The guy has everything – a kid, a wife, and a beautiful house at the expense of many other Americans. Then he experiences what is tantamount to home invasion and emotional rape. Everything is ripped away, and in order to save his family he becomes a symbolic and real weapon."

Correspondingly, the player controlling the demo has to hold this detonation button down as well for the remainder of this sequence. Before the True Patriots have a chance to get the bomber across the bridge, gunfire rings out and bullets riddle the van, hitting one of the terrorists inside, who falls on top of the bomber.







The engine powering this experience comes from an unlikely source. Ubisoft Montreal built *Rainbow Six Vegas 2* with a heavily modified version of Unreal Engine 2. Instead of upgrading to Epic's latest engine for *Patriots*, the team chose Ubisoft's proprietary Anvil engine, made famous by *Assassin's Creed*. The studio undertook a huge amount of infrastructure work to retrofit the engine for the project, which explains the long break for the series.

"The team was busy turning a really cool parkour hand-to-hand combat engine into a really cool shooter engine," Sears says when asked why *Rainbow Six* has been absent for three years. "It's taken a lot of effort."

The *Patriots* pour out the back of the van and into the streets. Their leader beckons the player to remove the dead body and follow him. The scene unfolding outside the van is chaos, with civilians abandoning their cars and running for cover, car alarms blaring, and shots raining down on the van's position. As the duo moves forward under the hail of fire, a nearby car explodes, knocking the potential suicide bomber back. Luckily for his newborn baby and wife, the force of the blast doesn't trigger the explosives strapped to his chest.

Now the camera pulls out as the perspective shifts to *Rainbow Six*'s Echo team, which is positioned with sniper rifles on the top of the Manhattan side of the bridge. Zulu

squad, lead by James Wolfe, instructs Echo team to pick off terrorists from afar as they move across the bridge. Teammates call out positions of the enemies as they move into range. Going into the new scan mode, which gives players a thermal readout of the situation, it's much easier to pick out the targets.

When the bomber nears the police blockade, the cops don't see that he's strapped with explosives. With no time to get on the horn to give NYPD a heads up, the developer playing the demo chooses to plug the boys in blue in the legs to incapacitate them. Though not an ideal solution, this keeps the bomber from destroying the bridge. At least he exercised restraint – panicked players could just as easily kill the cops.

With the police blockade pacified, Echo team makes its way to ground level. This gives Ubisoft the chance to show off the new Rappel 2.5 technology powering *Patriots*.

**"I think this is a message that reverberates with a lot of Americans right now. Certainly, as someone who lost the entirety of his 401k in two days, I'm still kind of angry. Not that it's personal, but in terms of player fantasy this is a strong one for me, and I'm betting it's a strong one for millions of others right now."**

**– David Sears**



Rappelling got the job done in the Vegas titles, but it was a cumbersome process that could leave you exposed if you started your descent at the wrong time. After studying some of the pioneering rappel techniques employed by elite law enforcement teams in South Korea, Serbia, and Australia, the developers realized that these squads could do way more than they originally believed while descending from above.

"When you watch what they do in real life you think they are crazy, so of course I thought that we should let the players do this," Sears said.

Instead of a slow and methodical rappel, the new Rainbow teams move with energy and excitement down the faces of buildings and bridges. If you want, you can run down the side of the building at full speed while firing your gun on unsuspecting targets below. The transitions on and

off the rope are much more fast-paced, which should make rappelling a more viable option in multiplayer as well.

Echo team rappels down the bridge in rapid fashion, picking off enemies down below as they advance. Once they reach the ground, the Patriots are firmly entrenched on the bridge behind abandoned cars, so Team Rainbow gets in tactical formation.

With the soldiers on the ground we get a better feel for how combat is evolving. Gunplay looks more aggressive than in past games, with characters slamming in and out of cover violently enough to make the cars shake.

Lead campaign gameplay designer Philippe Therien, who has worked on the series since *Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow*, says players should also expect an evolved control scheme. You can still use the legacy controls introduced in *Rainbow Six Vegas* that allow you to control when your soldier

transitions from the first-person perspective into third-person in cover. But internally, most testers prefer a new control scheme. Ubisoft isn't sharing details, but Therien says it feels more in line with the contemporary shooters and transitions players in and out of cover more intuitively. The cover system also has new animations for vaulting, blind fire, and moving from cover to cover seamlessly.

Ubisoft Montreal is streamlining the tactical controls to match the faster combat pace. Shooter fans who would rather spend time firing their own weapon than issuing commands should be excited about the new one-button tactics, a smart interface that contextually determines what your team should be doing given the location of enemies and what they are doing. By placing the reticle over an environmental object like a door, your AI squad will select a smart breach and call out their intentions so you know their plans.

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## INTO THE BREACH

**B**reaching and infiltration have always been hallmarks of the *Rainbow Six* series, and Patriots is no exception. Ubisoft Montreal is giving players even more tools to surprise and overwhelm enemies with help from their squad.

Much like the team in *Ghost Recon*, as technology advanced over the years Team Rainbow has gained access to new battlefield gadgets. The newest toy is the scan mode, an informational HUD inspired by the TSA airport scanners that allows its user to more easily spot threats such as firearms, which are highlighted in yellow. With scan mode a part of Rainbow's regular equipment, the days of using snake cams in front of every door are over. If you want to

breach a room, turn on the intelligent technology and the scanner does the rest, outlining bodies thermally to give you a clear read on the situation. Not having to peer under each door with the snake cam gives you more time to ponder your options from a safe distance.

Ubisoft set up one mock scenario to show off this new tech and give us an idea of just how many options are available to the player for any particular breach. The setup is deceptively simple: A group of six terrorists is holed up in a garage that has three points of entry. To make the situation more volatile, there's a hostage on his knees with a shotgun-wielding thug behind him. Spook him, and the VIP is as good as dead. What do you do?





#### FRAG AND CLEAR

The squad assembles near the front door, quietly slides it open, and rolls a frag grenade into the garage. The blast knocks one terrorist down, and the remaining men turn and fire on the exposed Rainbow team. All of the terrorists are killed, though the hostage was also killed in the chaos. "In some rooms that might be great, that might be wonderful, but in this room it's a bad idea," says lead campaign gameplay designer Philippe Therien.

#### STEALTH ENTRY

The squad assembles near the front door and quietly slides it open, crouch-walking their way to cover at the player's instruction. They automatically stand up and recommend targets to the player when they're out of enemy sight, returning to cover when patrols are nearby. The player overrides the AI recommendations, instead telling one squad member to focus on the hostage-taker and the other on a terrorist on a patrol. On the player's go sign, the squad leaps into action. In a few seconds the team, with help from the player, clears the room and rescues the civilian.

#### STEALTH AND SMOKE

The squad assembles near the front door and quietly slides it open, crouch-walking their way to cover. One squad member is ordered to roll a smoke grenade toward the center of the garage as the other lines up a shot on the hostage taker. When the command is ordered, the AI knows not to take the shot until the smoke has started to discharge, providing cover. As before, the terrorists are systematically taken out and the hostage is saved.

#### MISDIRECTION

The squad is ordered to break down a door on the left side of the garage. Meanwhile, the player takes position on the far side of the building. The door bursts off its hinges, knocking down the enemy on the other side. The terrorists direct their attention on the disturbance, giving the player enough time to open the other door, take out the hostage-taker, and then engage the remaining confused terrorists.

#### LAST STAND

In this worst-case scenario, the terrorists have been alerted to Rainbow's presence before the squad gain strategic entry. Unlike in previous Rainbow Six games, the enemy AI kicks into what Ubisoft Montreal calls a last stand mode. Rather than file out of the building to investigate – becoming easy targets in the process – the terrorists take strategic positions in the garage. "Considering how frag grenades are going to be in such a limited quantity, when you have to use two of three grenades to clear the room because they're all in defensive positions, you've expended a lot of resources to compensate for that mistake," Therien says. If the player is an ineffective leader, for instance by failing to help his team by calling out hidden targets he sees using scan mode, this situation can be catastrophic.

These are just some of the many ways breach situations can play out. When you factor in tools such as det cords (explosives used to blast open doors, turning enemies on the other side into porcupines), nonlethal neutralization, explosive ceiling breaches, rappel breaches, and explosive insertions, you can imagine just how many different ways you can approach each encounter.



## A TACTICAL APPROACH TO MULTIPLAYER

When *Rainbow Six* moved to Las Vegas, it gambled away the pre-mission planning that was a staple of the series (we're pretending *Lockdown* never happened, too). That concession was a welcome change for multiplayer participants who wanted to put their boots onto the ground as soon as possible and create strategies on the fly in the field. For *Patriots*, Ubisoft Montreal is reincorporating some of those strategic elements with a feature that could prove invaluable to both new players and elite competitors.

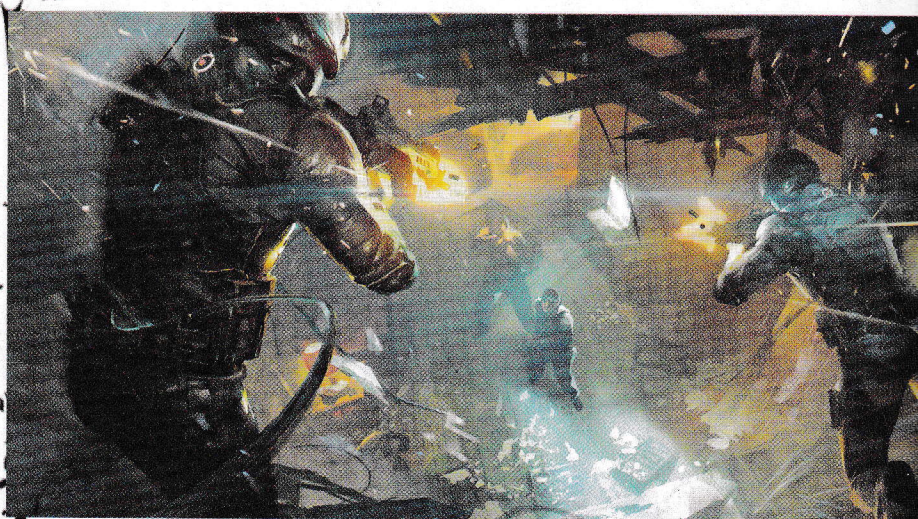
The sandtable is an in-game holographic environment in the multiplayer HQ. At its base level, the sandtable allows players to get acquainted with maps. "You can explore the multiplayer environments without having the stress of competing or having other players shooting at you," says lead multiplayer designer Simon Larouche.

While in this red-tinged virtual world, players can wander around levels alone or with friends. Even though the crimson presentation is different, the layouts are identical to their online counterparts. Points of interest such as doors, ladders, and rappel spots are highlighted in yellow to call attention to their importance. While navigating the interiors, players can drop markers and signs pointing out notable spots. For instance, a favorite sniping position can be flagged with a few taps of the d-pad and a button press or two. If there's a doorway leading to a popular camping zone, the player can create a quick advisory message to recommend chucking a grenade through the door before proceeding.

Once you're in the game, you can share this information with your squadmates or the community at large. Players can rate these tips, which can be strung together in virtual playbooks. Rather than saying "Everyone meet up by that red thing," players who use the sandtable effectively can share their plays and then say "Rally at point A." Hardcore strategists can create three different strategies for every map and game mode, which gives them the flexibility to provide plans for beginners, intermediates, and elites.

"It's really important to give players the opportunity to explore maps before they get shot in the face the first 30 or 40 times," explains creative director David Sears. "This is the story of my life; I used to be a really, really excellent adversarial multiplayer guy, but now I'm pretty old and people like Simon just own me. For me, the sandtable was an opportunity to give me the edge I need to get back into the game. So I go into a non-threatening environment, and I can see where the most dangerous crossfires or ambushes are going to be set up. I can see where the best sniping positions are. Also, I can see paths that I should take highlighted through augmented reality, and only the people on my team using these sandtable plans can see.

"If I need to get from point A to B and there's a very high likelihood that I'm going to be shot while I'm in transit, there's a plan for me. It tells me what I should be doing, how I can get there, exactly where I should put my feet – if I want that level of detail. As I mature as a gamer, then I just know the maps naturally and I don't have to spend time looking at a newbie plan or a beginner plan or an introductory plan. Then I can look at plans that are for more elite play. I think that's what's really cool about the sandtable: It scales from easing entry for first-time squad-based online adversarial shooter players or for people whose skills have atrophied over the decades, but then as I grow and mature as a player, I sort of rejuvenate myself and I start looking at elite plans that give me an edge over people who aren't studying the environments in this type of detail."







The more morally gray or even black your actions, the greater or lesser effect you'll have on some AI teammates. Their opinions of you may only be expressed in purely aesthetic way in terms of their performance and the dialogue, but you will know when you are pushing someone's buttons

"We wanted to give players a simple way to act on what that voice in the back of their head tells them would be the smart thing to do in this particular situation," Sears says.

Old-school Rainbow Six fans who savor the ability to micromanage their squad aren't being forsaken in the quest to appeal to mainstream players. Patriots still has an extended team command menu that gives players serious strategic depth. Here, you can control your team actions right down to the type of grenade you want them to use in a particular breaching scenario (see Into The Breach sidebar on page 62).

As Echo team moves forward down the bridge, Therien issues contextual commands and the squads react intelligently, taking cover and selecting targets automatically. Building this intelligent systemic AI is another major reason Rainbow Six has been dormant for so long. Ubisoft wanted the AI companions to not only take on unique personalities, but be capable of reading the scenarios at hand and acting as a spec ops soldier would in that context. If you arm a squad member with close quarters combat gear, he knows to advance on enemy positions. If you outfit another with a sniper rifle, he will hang back and pick out targets from afar.

The AI enhancements also extend to the enemy soldiers. To make the targets act in a more varied and believable fashion, Ubisoft crafted several AI archetypes, some of which even allow them to make mistakes. You may occasionally see an enemy trip and fall as he heads for a new cover position. On the other side of the combat spectrum, the best enemies you face have the full AI capabilities of your squad mates, making them just as smart as many of the players behind the controllers.

Therien also promises that the shootouts won't devolve into whack-a-mole, with enemies poking their heads out of cover every few seconds.

"We're going to be a game a lot more about positioning," he says. "If a guy goes in cover and returns fire, you're going to have to find a way to get a line of sight on him. He'll relocate if he realizes the cover is compromised."

Enemies also won't stand around mindlessly like AI robots just waiting for their turn to get gunned down. Every enemy has a job or agenda, like loading a truck with explosives or guarding a hostage.

"They're always doing something," Sears says. "They aren't just standing around talking about their CD collections."

As Echo squad moves down the bridge taking fire from walkways above and from behind abandoned cars, it sometimes proves difficult to distinguish between enemies charging their position and civilians running for their life. Properly selecting targets is going to be one of the major challenges during these urban combat sequences, and Sears says the team plans to track your performance and upload your results for the world to see.

"What we're looking at doing is taking regional data to find the bloodthirstiest communities," he says. "We may take aggregate data based on the way people are playing the game and choose to unlock or award different regions with bonuses – content that nobody else will get or you will only get when your region reaches a certain threshold in terms of performance."

After downing a few remaining Patriots, the playtester finally reaches the bomber, who frantically tries to explain the situation. Here Echo leader faces the unenviable task of deciding this man's fate. The team tells him he's running out of time, and Wolfe asks him if he wants to save one life or lose 200. This turns out to be the suburban man's worst birthday ever, as Echo leader makes the tough call and pushes him off the bridge. Screaming as he plummets to his untimely demise, this man thrust into an impossible situation finally takes his finger off the detonator, exploding right before hitting the water.

"I could have stopped it," one squad member says in disgust.

"No, no you couldn't have," Wolfe replies.

## Breaching The Envelope

These types of "bad or worse" situations define the story campaign in Rainbow 6 Patriots. Given the sensitive subject matter of Americans turning on each other, we asked the team if they were prepared to face a media controversy propagated by news networks that move so quickly and ignorantly to condemn video games as youth-corrupting trash. We can see the sensational headline now: "Liberal Game Publisher Paints Tea Party as Terrorists."

"We're not concerned about any kind of media backlash because we're not an exploitative game," Sears reassures us.

"This [subject matter] wasn't picked to be controversial on purpose," Rouse continues. "We're trying to set a game that feels current and doesn't feel like it's old terrorism. If you continue to do a game with the same enemies or the same foreigners and you just sort of ignore things that are changing in the world it just starts feeling fake. It feels like 'this is just a video game.'"

"Why can't a game be smarter?" Sears asks in all seriousness. "Why can't a game embrace issues? We're not coming down with any kind of ruling or judgment about any of this. We're letting people talk amongst themselves. We're making a game that we want to provoke discussion and deeper thought. We certainly welcome the opportunity to talk intelligently and thoughtfully about mature subject matter. As the game industry evolves, we're going to face these issues more and more often." ♦

To learn more about Rainbow 6 Patriots, check out our developer interviews at [gameinformer.com/rainbowsix](http://gameinformer.com/rainbowsix)