THE GAME THAT CHANGED

A SEMINAR ON RECENT VIDEO GAME THEORY

Video games have been studied for at least 20 years by now, but video games continue to change and turn into something that nobody had anticipated. How can we understand the changing content, values, and contexts of video games?

This informal seminar, with three international speakers, emphasizes work-in-progress research on video games, as well as discussion among speakers and attendees.

March 27, 2017. 13:00-16:20

Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design

Philip De Langes Allé 10, 1435 Copenhagen K, Room 90.2.01 (the white building)

Contact: Jesper Juul, jjuul@kadk.dk

Program

13:00-13:25 **Eric Zimmerman: Manifesto for a Ludic Century - a Critique of Eric Zimmerman's Misguided Essay**

13:25-13:50 **Miguel Sicart: Making Digital Play**

13:50-14:15 **Andreas Gregersen: A cognitive approach to genre**

14:15-14:30 *Break with refreshments*

14:30-14:55 **Solip Park: South Korean PC Game Crash: Early Development of South Korean MMO Industry in the late 1990s**

14:55-15:20 **Alejandro Lozano: Replay. Creative possibilities of repetition in videogame design**

15:20-15:55 **Anne Mette Thorhauge: Problem gaming as broken life strategies**

15:55-16:20 **Jesper Juul: The Fear and Attraction of being a Game**

Abstracts and bios

Eric Zimmerman: Manifesto for a Ludic Century - a Critique of Eric Zimmerman's Misguided Essay

Abstract: A few years ago, game designer Eric Zimmerman wrote "Manifesto for a Ludic Century" - a short essay that celebrates the relevance of games to our cultural and historical moment. I will make it clear why Zimmerman's writing takes a misguided position that presents a cheapened and simplified version of what games are.

Bio: Eric Zimmerman is a game designer and a Professor at the NYU Game Center in New York City. He has worked in the game industry for 25 years and creates award-winning games on and off the computer. His writing on games includes *Rules of Play* (MIT Press, 2004) a foundational textbook for the field.

Miguel Sicart: Making Digital Play

Abstract: In this talk I will propose a definition of play design as an area of research and practice within the broader field of (digital) design. Play design will be characterised as a critical technical practice that allows designers to create play experiences across different application areas, from games to services.

Bio: Miguel Sicart is an Associate Professor at the IT University's Department of Digital Design. His research and teaching is focused on videogame design and development, and digital play design. He is the author of *The Ethics of Computer Games*, *Beyond Choices: The Design of Ethical Gameplay*, and *Play Matters* (The MIT Press, 2009, 2013, 2014).

Andreas Gregersen: A cognitive approach to genre

Abstract: I will start by outlining three perspectives on genre, i.e. the formal, the cognitive, and the social (there may be a reference or two to existing genre theory frameworks in this part). These three general perspectives correspond (very) roughly to games, players and gameplay when transposed to video game theory. My argument is then the following: The formal aspect of genre can be analyzed as assemblage of generic components at several levels. The cognitive aspect can be analyzed as a species of cognitive experientialism a la that proposed by Lakoff and others. Finally, the social aspect can be analyzed with some help from cognitive sociology. Most of this builds on Gregersen (2014). I will end my talk by outlining some ways in which one might go about making connections between the aforementioned three levels of analysis – this is supposedly one of the virtues of genre theory, so I shall attempt to demonstrate a modicum of utility in this regard.

 Bio: Andreas Gregersen is Associate professor at Department of Media, Cognition and Communication at University of Copenhagen. His research on video games focuses on cognition and genre. These days, he doesn't really have much time to play games himself, but he still likes the general idea.

Solip Park: South Korean PC Game Crash: Early Development of South Korean MMO Industry in the late 1990s.

Abstract: The talk will cover South Korean video game crash from the mid-1990s and then ended in 2001, and explains how it formed and shaped the South Korean video game industry that we now know today.

Bio: Former researcher and starting member at Nexon Computer Museum (South Korea), and currently a master degree student in Aalto University, (Finland). www.parksolip.com

Alejandro Lozano: Replay. Creative possibilities of repetition in videogame design

Abstract: My main idea is that repetition is a core feature of videogames that can be found in different layers (game mechanics and creation of the fictional world). I also discuss about the expressive capabilities of repetition and its value to videogame design. I will conclude offering some examples.

Bio: Alejandro Lozano is a predoctoral student at Universidad de Salamanca (Spain). He has a degree and a master in Philosophy and his area of research is Aesthetics. His focus is new technologies aesthetics, and as a part of his work he studies the design of videogames from a philosophical point of view.

Anne Mette Thorhauge: Problem gaming as broken life strategies

Abstract: On the basis of a mixed-methods study on gaming among Danish children and youth I will demonstrate how gaming serves very different purposes in everyday life and becomes part of very different life strategies. In extension of this I will discuss 'problem gaming' as a matter of 'broken life strategies' among young adults.

Bio: Anne Mette Thorhauge is associate professor at department of media, cognition and communication, university of Copenhagen and chair of the Danish media council for children and young people.
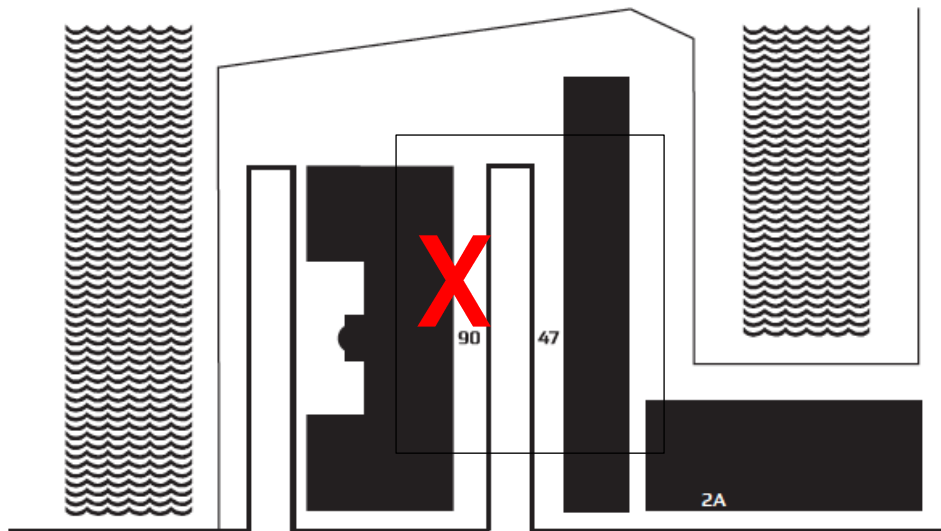
Jesper Juul: The Fear and Attraction of being a Game

Abstract: Do we know what a game is? Recent works such as *Proteus*, *Everybody's Gone to the Rapture, Mountain* or *Dys4ia* lack the most of challenge and gameplay development that tend to be associated with video games, yet the developers still assert that they are making games. Who cares if they are games or not? In this talk I will examine the changing investments that both players, developers, and theorists have in the word *game*.
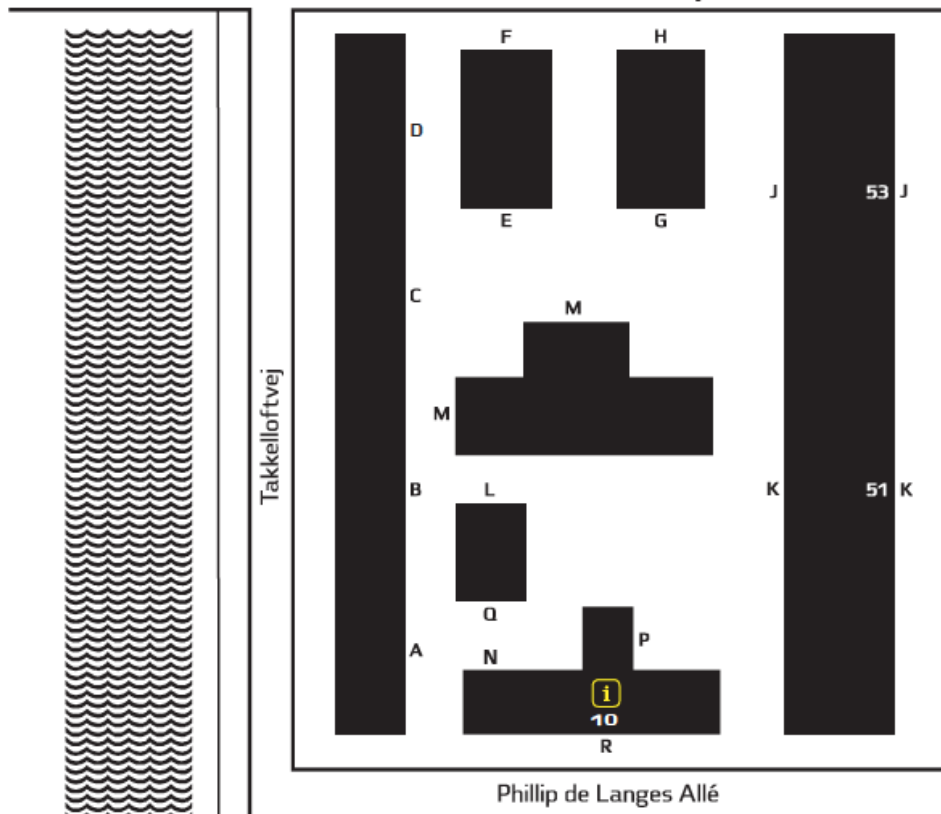
Bio: Jesper Juul is a video game theorist and occasional video game developer. He has been working with video game research since the late 1990's. He is an Associate Professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts - School of Design and a Visiting Associate Professor at MIT. He has published three books with MIT Press: *Half-Real* (2005), *A Casual Revolution* (2009) and *The Art of Failure* (2013). He is also a co-editor of the Playful Thinking Series (also on MIT Press).

Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademis Skoler
for Arkitektur, Design og Konservering

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