Games for Making Friends and Enemies: A Small Theory of Games in Social Contexts

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12:30-1:45 pm on Friday, March 28, 2008
Indiana University Bloomington, Dept. of Telecommunications, Room RTV 226

A reception will follow the talk, outside the seminar room in RTV.

ABSTRACT

It is easy to forget that before the single player video game, most video games were for more than one player. In this work in progress talk, I will argue that many of the more successful multiplayer games, from Parcheesi to Rock Band to Animal Crossing acquire their power by piggybacking on existing social relations, thus acquiring many layers of meaning when played, as well as ambiguously threatening to rewrite these relations. By use of digital and non-digital examples, I will outline a theory of how games acquire meaning from the context in which they are played.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jesper Juul is a video game theorist at the Singapore-MIT GAMBIT game lab in Cambridge. He was previously an assistant professor in video game theory and design at the Centre for Computer Game Research Copenhagen where he also earned his Ph.D. His book Half-Real on video game theory was published by MIT Press in 2005.

His blog, The Ludologist, can be found at http://www.jesperjuul.net/ludologist. His home page is available at http://www.jesperjuul.net/.