

How are capitalist biases and principles applied to game mechanics in video games, and how does this affect the way we play?

MOTIVATIONS

Since its creation, the video game industry has been directly linked to the principles of profitability, expansion and productivity. I have sometimes observed that this situation, as well as the influence of the society in which we live, means that video games are sometimes imbued with these characteristics in their very mechanics. With this thesis I want to find out to what extent video games can be tainted by this kind of bias, and to identify it so that we can think about gameplay differently.



METHOD

INTERVIEWS

–Game Developers

Paolo Pedercini

Gareth Damian Martin

Jorg Tittel

...

–Game Study Essayist

Braxton Soderman

AcheUnderscore

Jacob Geller

...

READINGS

Games of empire: global capitalism and video games

Against Flow: Video Games and the Flowing Subject

The Video Game Industry: Formation, Present State, and Future

Critical Play: Radical Game Design

...

USER TESTING

Select multiple games and make a selection of various people play them and then ask them questions about their experience.

Goal is to understand and observe how they are reacting to different gameplay experiences and what they are getting from it.

ACADEMIC WORK

Alienated Playbour: Relations of Production in EVE Online

Reves d'accumulation : l'économie dans les jeux vidéo de science-fiction

The End of Capitalism: Disengaging From the Economic Imaginary of Incremental Games

The work of play: Marx and the video games industry in the United Kingdom

Politics of Production: Videogames 10 years after Games of Empire

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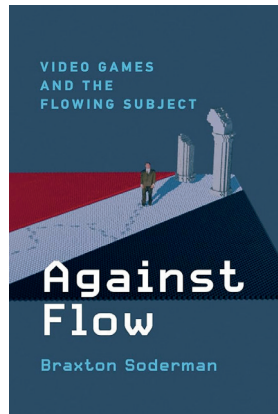
DATA – GAMEPLAY

Against Flow: Video Games and the Flowing Subject

Feeling of floating \neq
Mechanics that make sense

Flow theory is a kind of pre-
mise of gamification

Cutting off flow = Oppo-
sing resistance, allowing the
player to think about what
they're doing



Online Multiplayer games and financial model

planned obsolescence of goods in online
multiplayer games

Playbour and predatory financial practice
how to keep people engaged in the game
with gameplay and psychological tricks

Rise of the game-as-a-service type of
game

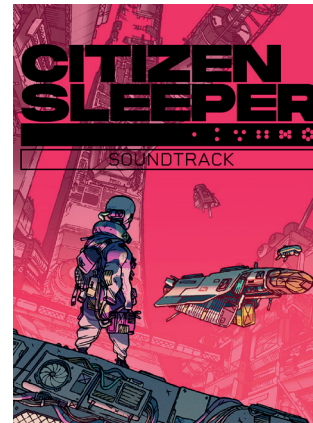
Temporary or virtual acquisition of goods

Garreth Damian Martin

Exposed to chance
(NeoLiberalism is the
individualisation of fate)

-> the game doesn't
help you -> against flow

Minimum Viable Design



DATA – INDUSTRY

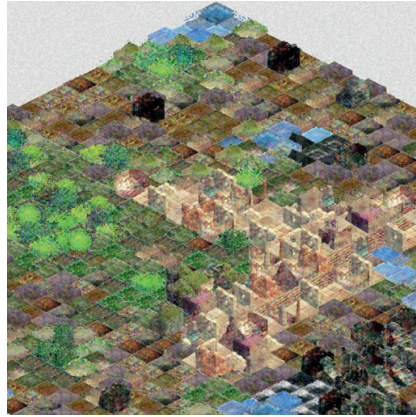
Paolo Pedercini

Use game as educational items for what they have to convey in the same way you could use historical movie

Contributes to game literacy [...] training people to think about games as artefacts

Game are still attached to the imperative that they have to entertain you

Investigate the very nature of game by making games



Jorg Tittel

Need to get inspiration from our own everyday life and issues to create games that makes sense

Make game extra human

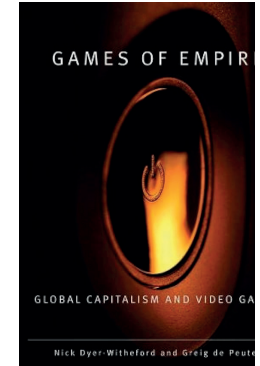
-> Making Content not art



Games of Empire

Service industry = Immateriality of Worker production, Entertainers only produce data

History of the industry = Tennis for two was made to show off tech => Video games always chased technical innovation to show off



"Games today are meant to be so much, overdeveloped"

"Game design as a practice today is locked into an anti-historical context"

"Eliminate concepts, keep solutions that work without calling into question their foundations"